

Q&A from the FY26 MAC Application Webinar: Tips from the TAB Providers

Q: Where can one find the NOFO?

A: NOFOs can be found here: [Multipurpose, Assessment, RLF, and Cleanup \(MARC\) Grant Application Resources | US EPA](#)

Q: Do you need a draft ABCA for the Cleanup portion of the Multipurpose grant?

A: You do not need to have an ABCA for the proposed cleanup site in a multipurpose grant. You must own an eligible site at the time of application, but it does not have to be characterized.

Q: What is "Site Characterization"?

A: "Site characterization" means environmental investigations - conducting research, soil, groundwater, and air quality sampling to determine type, extent, and location of contamination. Having a "fully characterized site" means you have a good understanding of what type of contamination is present on the site and how you will clean it up.

Q: Our Target area received an Environmental Justice grant which was later cancelled by EPA in 2025. Would it be a good or bad idea to mention this in the application?

A: It likely wouldn't make a big difference. Due to space limitations on your response, we recommend focusing on the prompts that are included in the guidelines.

A: You will want to address the specific criteria in each section. Referencing a received grant could be used to support the criteria in section 4. Simply stating the target area received this grant in section 1 will not earn you points in that section.

A: I'm sorry to hear that your EJ grant was rescinded. You can re-use a lot of the data and narrative that you have in that EJ grant narrative to write your brownfield grant! As my fellow TABs have said though, be sure it aligns with the guideline prompts.

Q: If a city is the lead applicant, can the county which includes the city within the county boundary be a non-lead applicant? Re: the 'overlapping' point

A: Likely yes. Geographic boundaries may overlap (municipal boundaries like county and city jurisdictions), but target areas may not overlap.

A: Correct. Refer to J.15 in EPA's FAQs: [FY26 Frequently Asked Questions for Multipurpose, Assessment, RLF, and Cleanup Grants](#)

Q: Can the clone of EJ Screen be used?

A: EJ Screen (and its clone) pull information from other resources. The EJ screen clone could likely help you identify data, but we recommend quoting the original source of that information.

Q: The indirect costs are not supposed to go over 5%, correct? Is that a real dealbreaker?

A: Administrative costs are not supposed to go over 5%; that could be direct or indirect. Yes, going over the 5% threshold would be a dealbreaker.

Q: How do personnel costs relate to administrative costs?

A: Not all personnel is considered administrative costs. Personnel hired to do the work of your grant are considered direct costs that are programmatic.

A: Direct Administrative Costs, including those in the form of salaries, benefits, contractual costs, supplies, and data processing charges, are costs that are not included in the recipient's indirect cost pool and are necessary to comply with the provisions of the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards at 2 CFR Part 200.

Indirect Costs are those that are not specifically related to implementing the EPA award and are not readily identified with a specific project or organizational activity but incurred for the joint benefit of both projects and other activities. Overhead costs are a typical example of an indirect cost. Indirect costs are usually grouped into common pools and charged to benefiting objectives through an allocation process/indirect cost rate; 2 CFR § 200.414 and other provisions of the Uniform Guidance.

EPA's interpretation of the term "Administrative Cost" in CERCLA § 104(k)(5)(B) is based on similar limitations on administrative costs contained in sections 117(a)(1) and 319(h)(12) of the Clean Water Act.

Direct administrative costs include costs in the form of salaries, benefits, contractual costs, supplies, and data processing charges, incurred to comply with most provisions of the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and

Audit Requirements for Federal Awards contained in 2 CFR Part 200 and 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E.

A: The budget section can be tricky! We recommend looking at the budgets included in previous years' successful grants. This can be helpful in figuring out how to categorize expenses and providing justification.

Additionally, your state brownfields office and/or your TAB provider may be able to provide guidance on how much grant activities typically cost if you're not sure where to start.

Q: Could you clarify; the template budget tables include a column for Administrative Costs. If a grant applicant does not have administrative costs, can we remove that column? Should we say that the grant applicant will not need/use/have administrative costs.

A: You could say something like, "you will not be charging administrative costs to the grant".

Q: We are a nonprofit in KCMO. Can we name our KC Brownfields as a partner if we get advice from them? How about MDNR since we will be using the MO VBCP?

A: 100% - these are all excellent partners to include. Just make sure a partner's involvement is meaningful to the project, assessment, cleanup and redevelopment (beyond the grant period).

Q: Can the draft Cleanup application undergo edits between when it's posted for public review/comment and submission? For example, if we're still collecting cost estimates for remediation and edit the budget accordingly, is that ok?

A: Yes

Q: The 14 day notice is only for clean up grants, yes?

A: That is correct.

Q: Since the guidelines are pushing more this year to use geospatial mapping tools for demonstrating need, if we can fit, is there any wiggle room to include any map as a graphic or still a no as in year's past?

A: Applicants may include a map of their community as an attachment to the Application Information Sheet. Maps, photos, etc. within the narrative are not recommended as they are not specifically asked for in the narrative and you want to maximize content for addressing requested information.

Q: Ok thanks, so similar to previous years?

A: Yes, addition of a map is newer and intended as an attachment not to address any narrative criteria.

Q: Re coalition grants - is it 2 priority sites within each target area or one?

A: You have to have at least 3 target areas and at least one site from each mentioned in the narrative. But you will have to assess at least 2 sites within each target area if you receive the grant

Q: In the narrative, do you need to discuss the two sites per target area? Or just one?

A: You just need to discuss at least one in each target area.

Q: If we identify a site as a priority site, and circumstances change where the owner/community partner no longer want that site assessed, what happens? (Assuming we are a successful applicant for a CWAGST grant)

A: Target sites are your best intention now. It's understood that things might change.

Q: What if a target area crosses jurisdictions?

A: Ideally both jurisdictions are part of the coalition. If one is a member and one is not, then you would need legal opinion or ordinance or justification proving that you are able to spend the funds outside of your own jurisdiction.

Q: So in theory, a COG could be the lead agency and have 2-4 cities and/or counties in that region be non-lead agencies. Then you would need at 3 target areas in 3 different jurisdictions with 2 sites in each TA? Is there a max on TAs? Is it beneficial to have a TA for each non-lead?

A: You need one target area in three jurisdictions (a total of at least 3 target areas, not 9). There is no defined max on target areas, but there are space limitations in the guidelines. It is recommended to focus on quality over quantity. There should be a target area for each non-lead.

Q: Is there an environmental study need for your application?

A: You have to submit an ABCA for cleanup grants, which you will need Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessments to complete. For all other grants, you do not need to include any environmental studies.

A: Depends on which grant - yes, you need a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment and be ready for remediation if you are going for the Cleanup grant. But, if you have a need for other planning studies, that is an eligible activity for assessment grants

Q: Can you share your draft application in the TAB EZ with another people who is working on components of the grant application?

A: Yes, you can share the draft application within TAB EZ using the steps outlined in the webinar. The person you're sharing it with MUST have a KSU TAB account to access TAB EZ