



# Community Engagement and Partnerships

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**Playing well with others pays off in the  
brownfield world.**

1



# Your Presenter

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## Amanda LeFevre

Kentucky Brownfield Redevelopment Program-  
KY. Dept. For Environmental Protection

- Working with brownfield grant writers for 6 years
- We won our own RLF last year
- I've been there too ☹️



You are about to get grant  
writing advice from this person.

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# Before You Begin

- Are you ready for a grant
- If the information and ideas I am about to present are new to you, you may want to assess your overall readiness
- We want a win-win for all.....successful project for your community and continued health of the federal BF program.



# By the Numbers- Ranking Criteria

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## Community Engagement and Partnerships

- Assessment 30
- RLF 15
- Cleanup 15

*Don't give up any points.*

***READ YOUR GUIDANCE***

*and address everything question whether it applies or not!!!!*

*If they ask you twice, answer it twice.*

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# Ranking Criteria

## 3. Community Engagement and Partnerships

Points: A:30, R:15, C:15

**Community Engagement and Partnerships** - Under this criterion, proposals will be evaluated on 3 sub-criteria:

- *Applicant's* plan for engaging the targeted community in the project to be funded under this grant;
- *Extent* to which the applicant has identified and established relationships with the partners necessary to achieve the project's goals; and
- *Extent* to which the support letters provided by community-based organizations involved with the project demonstrate specific and valuable commitments to the project.



# 3a. Community Engagement



# 3a. Community Engagement

Describe your Plan For Community Involvement:

- Discuss how the targeted community will be involved in site selection and reuse planning.
- Discuss plan for communicating the project progress to the citizens.
- Demonstrate that plan is tailored to the needs of the targeted community.
- Address any language barriers – **whether or not special considerations are needed!!!**





# In a Nutshell.....The Plan

- Be proactive in your plan. Passive community notification is not impressive. Describe involvement efforts, such as outreach strategies, frequency of events and potential outcomes.
- Target impacted citizens
- Describe how you have already involved the community, if applicable.
- Diversity is important!!!
- Target a spectrum of groups, such as neighborhood organizations, church groups, nonprofits, service organizations, redevelopers, etc.
- Consider forming a brownfield steering committee (include engaged groups) as a decision maker and communication vehicle.
- Include multiple modes of communication for public notification and input-  
    traditional media+social media+in-person interactive events=community engagement
- Make info available in applicable languages, for illiterate, etc.





# Describe Why You Are Involving Citizens

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- Can help identify properties
- Assist in prioritization of sites
- Identify needed services in the community
- Greenspace needs
- Tell you what they absolutely don't want
- Facilitate conversations about environmental justice issues



# Describe Why You Are Involving Citizens

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- Helps them understand a project- help with feelings of being bulldozed
- Reduces miscommunication and misunderstandings
- Informs them of health and safety issues
- Shows them potential benefits from the project



# Vehicles for Interactive Communication



The methods and delivery of communication can have big impacts on your project. Variety is best.



# Public Meetings



- Good for site identification and reuse ideas
- Can be combined with surveys and other input-generating tactics
- A must if there are possible human health impacts
- Schedule public meetings to meet the time demands of your community
- Also consider open house events, focus groups, interactive booths at community events and public places.



# Visioning/Charettes





# Getting the Word Out Before & After

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How to get people to your public meetings and charettes and continue communication after those events.



# Tried and True

- Flyers
- Church bulletins
- Radio
- Public access
- Community bulletin boards
- Newspapers
- Local news
- E-mails and E-blasts through established communication channels



Public  
Access  
Television





# Website and Project Pages

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the Lexington, Kentucky website. The browser's address bar shows the URL <http://www.lexingtonky.gov/index.aspx?page=2646>. The website header includes the text "LEXINGTONKY.GOV" and "Horse Capital of the World". A navigation menu at the top contains links for "eNews", "News", "Calendar", "Jobs", "LexCall 311", and "GTV3". A search bar is located on the right side of the header. Below the header, there is a secondary navigation menu with links for "Home", "About Us", "Lexington Now", "I Want To...", "Community", "Businesses", "Visitors", and "City Government". The main content area features a sidebar on the left with a tree view of the site's structure, including "Chief Administrative Officer", "Council Clerk's Office", "Environmental Quality & Public Works", "Division of Environmental Policy", "Energy", "Urban Forestry Program", "Events & Volunteer Opportunities", "Green Initiatives", "Lexington's Brownfield Assessment Grant", "Frequently Asked Questions", "Public Document Repository", "Community Gardens", "Lead-Free Kids", "Wolf Run Watershed Management Plan Project", "Live Green Lexington Games", "Cans for Cash Recycling Challenge", "Environmental Partners", and "Grant Opportunities". The main content area displays a news article titled "Lexington's Brownfield Assessment Grant" under the "livegreenlexington" logo. The article text describes the grant's purpose and details. A graphic with the text "Vision-to-Action Lexington" and a link to see photos from a visioning session is also present. The browser's taskbar at the bottom shows the system clock as 3:15 PM.





# Social Media.....



....the Holy Grail of cheap, easy interactive communication.  
Tweet your way to better communication.





# The Net of Social Media

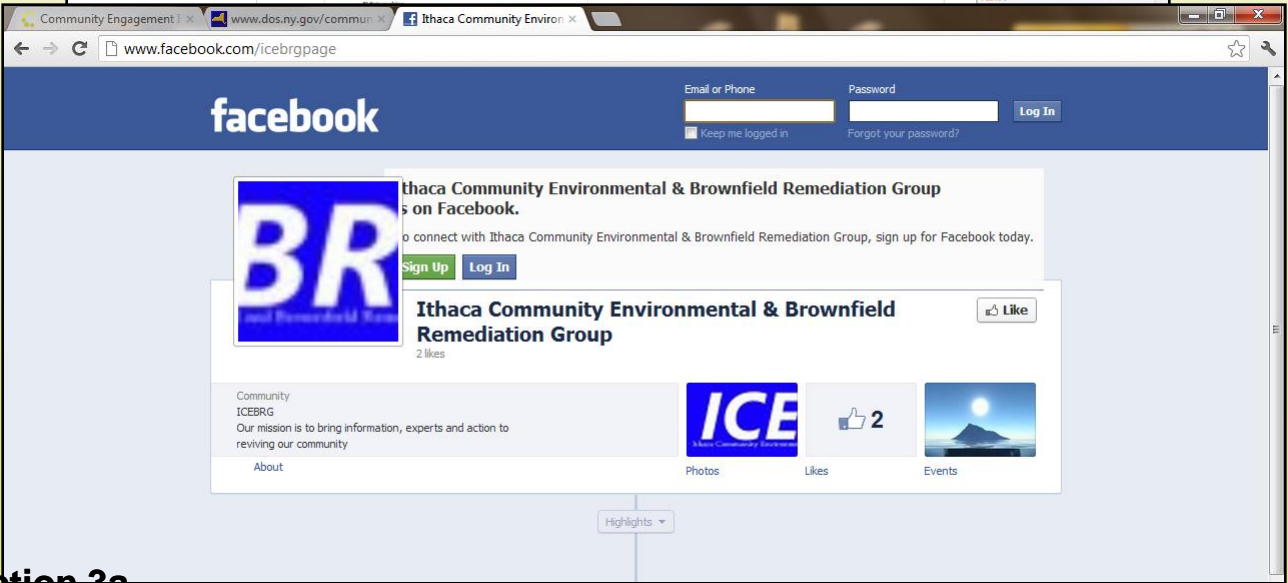
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- If my dad has a Facebook page, so does most everyone else.
- Create a FB page for your site or redevelopment group.
- Post pictures of meeting and site work
- Tweet from meetings and gatherings.
- Post videos of meetings, interviews, news stories, etc.
- Blog about redevelopment.
- Have people comment on planning and ideas.
- **FREE** and easy to use, but make sure you post often to keep people involved.



The U.S. EPA established a Facebook page for the Gowanus Canal Superfund site in Brooklyn, N.Y.





# Really Wacky...QR Codes

- Free generators on Internet
- Link them to a program website.
- Easily incorporated into publications





# Communicating Engagement

## Sample of Community Outreach Language

The City, community groups (including Community Ventures Corporation) and area residents held a "listening session" on June 14, 2008, to obtain residents' input on revitalization of the East End. Residents voiced the need for multiple redevelopment actions, including: paying job programs for teens, greenspace and walking tracks, affordable housing for homeownership, ways to reduce crime and increase residents' safety, the need for more retail businesses (grocery, drug store, floral shops, barber shops, etc.) in the community, assisted living for the elderly, and restoration of the historic Lyric Theater.

Most importantly, East End residents voiced a commitment to active participation in and community responsibility for redevelopment efforts. Many residents repeatedly voiced their strong desire that the community's residents retain control and ownership of redevelopment efforts. Among key comments were: "If we don't come together, we don't have to take what other people say we need; let's get what we want." "The East End must take care of its problems -- not pass problems off -- and strengthen neighbors." "To make the neighborhood better will take a lot of things, but one key is that we must offer things to young people -- positive things to do."

Actual quotes/comments are a nice touch.



# 3b. Partnerships



# Partnerships

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**Partnerships**- Describe your efforts to develop partnerships with the following agencies and what role they will take to assist and ensure a successful program

- *Your state/Local/tribal environmental and health agencies*
- *Other relevant federal and state agencies*
- *Any local environmental job training programs*
- **Note:** If there are no environmental job training programs in your immediate local area, describe any efforts you plan to link members of the community to potential employment opportunities in brownfields assessment, cleanup or redevelopment related to you proposal.



# Partnerships

- Are you doing health monitoring with this grant?
- Are there other federal funders for this project with which you are working?
- Are there tech programs at the community college or vocational school?
- Does the project have a potential end-use involving employment and how can you play a role in preparing impacted citizens for that employment





## **3c. Community Based Organizations**



# Ranking Criteria

## 3. Community Engagement and Partnerships

**Community-based Organizations (CBOs)** - Provide a **description of, and role of, the key community-based organizations involved in your project.**

- Describe Organizations
  - Describe Role In Project
  - Describe Any Commitments By Organizations
  - Commitment Letter From EACH Organization
    - Proposal Attachment
    - Must Describe Role
    - Must Describe Commitments
- Community-based organizations are NOT your Congresspersons or other elected officials. It is NOT the mayor's office. Look at the guidance in the guidance.
- Commitment Letters **Required – Describe role CBO will play and don't use a form letter**

\*EPA will focus on the unique contributions and strength of partnerships, instead of the sheer number of letters an applicant submits.



## **CBOs**

- Service clubs
- Veterans organizations
- Local universities, community colleges or other education institutions
- Fraternal orders
- Youth organizations
- Watershed protection groups
- Faith-based organizations.

## **Not CBOs, but good as players in your project**

- Local government departments,
- Local planning department/district/office
- Local contractors
- Mayor's office



# Why CBO Partners?

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- Larger pool of resources from which to draw
- Complimentary skills and experiences
- Safer investment of funds if there is less risk of failure
- Avoid duplication of services
- Evidence of being focused on what is best for the community
- Willing to work as a team
- Can help generate greater program support and community participation
- Leveraging



# Who Is a Good Fit? Ask.....

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- Which organizations have similar missions and visions
- Who already touches your target populations
- What are the organization's motivations
- Can this partner bring needed resources to the table
- Can you work well together and are your expectations of each other reasonable
- Help meet an in-kind grant match



# Partnership Planning Worksheet

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- Who governs the program activity
- Who makes budget decisions
- Who makes programmatic decisions



# Too Small For CBOs

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If Community-based organizations do not exist in your area, please provide background information affirming the lack of such organizations. Then, demonstrate how the community is engaged and involved in your project (can be demonstrated by resident support letters, letters to the editor, attendance at public meetings, etc.).



# Letters of Commitment





# Letters From Partners

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## Letter of Support

- Good to show community support for a project
- Describe who they are and what they do in the community
- Number of people they reach

## Letters of Commitment

- Stronger
- Shows a commitment of time, staff, resources
- Details of what is to be provided and an estimate of dollar value
- Describe who they are and what they do in the community
- Number of people they reach



# Letters of Commitment

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Letters from CBOs should be attached and should:

- *Include specifics on what they will bring to the party.*
- *Provide description of their commitment to the project.*
- *Be current and not from last year's application.*



# Letter Etiquette

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- Should be one of your first tasks in assembling the grant
- Give potential partners plenty of time, 2-3 weeks, to produce a letter
- Get hard and electronic copies of the letters
- Make sure that the letter is signed by the highest-ranking person in the organization and that the person is made aware of the project



# If Requesting a Letter

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- Provide the full name of the grant for which you are applying
- List the names and physical addresses of the agencies and contact person(s) to which the letter of support should be addressed.
- Include your organization's complete physical mailing address and telephone number.
- Provide a brief 2- 3 page summary describing your organization, its service and how grant funds will be used
- A copy of the project summary

**Section 3c**

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# If Requesting a Letter

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- Provide a brief 2- 3 page summary describing your organization, its service and how grant funds will be used
- Provide the CBO with a copy of the project summary afterward- EPA has called some CBOs in the past. Not guaranteed to happen, but be prepared.



# If Requesting a Letter

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- Provide a deadline. What is the date the letter needs to be returned to you or submitted to the awarding agency?
- Give them a sample, but watch out. You may get letters that all sound the same.



# But we all know reality.....

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- You'll have to write it for them.
- Make sure to change dates, language if you are recycling.
- Make sure to vary language so it doesn't sound like a form.



# Sample Language

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**Qualifications.** NKU's Center for Applied Ecology provides professional, science-based environmental services to the local community while offering practical work experience to NKU students. The Center's primary contribution to the program will be the participation of Scott Fennell, PE. Scott has over 20 years professional experience in brownfields identification, assessment, and remediation, having served as the principal engineer and project manager on 37 brownfields sites in 11 states. Scott served as the principal investigator developing a GIS inventory of potential brownfields in the City of Covington and Kenton County. Scott is a Certified Professional in the Ohio EPA Voluntary Action Program, and is a licensed professional engineer in Kentucky.

**Contributions to the Initiative.** Scott will contribute to the project by serving on the Partners' Committee. In this capacity, he will provide advice to ensure resources are expended in the most useful and economical way, while achieving the necessary degree of technical quality, to accomplish as much work as practicable with the available funding. For example, Scott can evaluate competing consultants' proposals to ensure that efforts are focused and effective relative to numbers and types of environmental samples, chemical analyses, QA/QC, human health and environmental risk assessments, and remedial actions. Scot and/or other CAE professional staff can also provide consultation as to redevelopment landuse, particularly relative to potential for restoration as a natural area / greenspace.





# Sample Language

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**A+ Language**

Gateway's mission is to provide high quality, affordable, accessible, and inclusive postsecondary education and training resulting in a positive contribution to the economic vitality of the region and enhanced quality of life for all citizens. The college specifically provides the following: certificate, diploma, associate degree and transfer programs; developmental, adult, and continuing education; workforce and customized training; and support services for the enhancement of student learning and success. To increase access to residents of the urban core, Gateway is planning a new urban campus in the heart of downtown Covington located near these potential sites.

As a full partner in this project, Gateway plans to support grant activities in the following ways: 1) serve on the Partners Implementation Committee to provide timely feedback and input on grant-related efforts; and 2) provide the opportunity for faculty to incorporate learning activities to expose students to hands-on experiences related to their coursework. Dr. Yohanes Honu will represent Gateway on the Partners Implementation Committee. Both of these actions are aligned with Gateway's strategic priorities related to strengthening economic vitality and partnerships and maximizing learner success.



# Resources

## Other resources:

1. <http://epa.gov/brownfields/applicat.htm> for guidelines and FAQs
2. <https://www.tabez.org> assistance with grant writing (Note: currently reflects 2011 guidelines- be sure the criteria is up-to-date.)
3. <http://www.epa.gov/region4/rcra/bflr/index.html> EPA Region 4's Brownfields team
4. <http://clu-in.org/live/archive/> search for “brownfields” or “brownfields guidelines” to find training sessions/information from other regional offices
5. [http://epa.gov/brownfields/proposal\\_guides/FY12-Assessment-Guideline-Checklist.pdf](http://epa.gov/brownfields/proposal_guides/FY12-Assessment-Guideline-Checklist.pdf) Checklist of items and content from 2011 guidelines



# Best Grant Writing Practices

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- Answer all parts of the questions
- Look for keywords and address those keywords
- Check out the FAQ on the EPA website. There is great information there.
- Should be clear and easy to read. Be kind to your reviewers.
- Read the guidance!!!!
- Make it memorable by painting a good picture
- Make sure you label sections according to guidance to make it easier for reviewers



# Questions



**Write a best-seller but please, no fiction.**