

TCTAC Focus Group Discussion Topics

In partnership with the U.S. Department of Energy, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency selected {Name of TCTAC} as one of the Thriving Communities Technical Assistance Centers (or TCTACs).

Our job is to remove barriers and improve accessibility help underserved and overburdened communities across the country. We will do this by providing training and other assistance to build capacity for navigating federal grant application systems, writing strong grant proposals, and effectively managing grant funding. In addition, we will provide guidance on community engagement, meeting facilitation, and translation and interpretation services for limited English-speaking participants.

Thank you for your participation in today's focus group. We want to better understand how to best support you to navigate applying for and effectively managing federal grants.

Burden Statement Template

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Discussion topics for focus groups:

- Discussion on how satisfied the potential applicant is with the TCTAC services
 - Ease of accessing TCTAC services and obtaining timely responses
 - Usefulness of TCTAC services
 - Areas of improvement of TCTAC services, including additional services to offer
- Discussion on environmental justice and energy justice challenges faced in the community
 - Historic and current challenges and solutions that work
 - Future challenges and ways to address those challenges
 - Technical assistance, training and support needs to address those challenges
- Discussion on experience with federal grants
 - Experiences with federal grants
 - Barriers/Solutions to applying for federal grants

- Barriers/Solutions to managing federal grants
 - Problems identified with the federal grants system and creative solutions
- Discussion on approaches to strengthening knowledge and skills for applying and managing federal grants
 - Experience with training or knowledge/skills development programs
 - Knowledge and skills needed
 - Successful approaches to strengthen knowledge and skills
 - Services or products TCTACs could offer/develop
- Discussion on outreach to potential program participants (i.e., people from communities with EJ concerns who may apply to federal grants)
 - Communication mechanisms to reach potential program participants for their awareness on TCTAC services
 - Ways to explain how to access to eligible services
 - Types of events or activities to reach potential program participants
 - Accessibility approaches to fully engage everyone
 - Ways to explain the TCTAC Program
- Discussion on how to effectively engage with decisionmakers at all levels of government and private sector entities to inform policy development and program design and delivery
 - Successful experience with government agencies' or private sector entities community engagement approaches
 - Ways to meaningfully engage with government agencies or private sector entities
 - Knowledge and skills needed
 - Successful approaches to strengthen knowledge and skills
 - Services or products TCACS could offer/develop
- Discussion on how to engage community members
 - Experiences with leading community engagement and building partnerships and coalitions
 - Knowledge and skills needed
 - Successful approaches to strengthen knowledge and skills
 - Services or products TCTACs could offer/develop
- Discussion about how to make accessible all the various federal grants for environmental justice and energy justice projects
 - How to communicate this information in organized and accessible ways
 - Services or products TCTAC could offer/develop
- Discussion on finding and understanding financing options for pursuing environmental justice and energy justice projects
 - Partnership opportunities
 - Ways to minimize duplication of efforts with federally funded programs
 - Services or products TCACS could offer/develop