Welcome to The Current, the North Central Region Water Network’s Speed Networking Webinar Series

Helping Rural Communities Thrive: 2PM CT

1. Submit your questions for presenters via the Q&A panel. There will be a dedicated Q&A session following the last presentation. The Q&A panel can be found via the Q&A icon at the bottom of the webinar screen.

2. If you are experiencing technical issues or have questions about the North Central Region Water Network or The Current Webinar Series, please use the chat feature. The chat feature is accessible via chat icon at the bottom of the webinar screen.

3. A phone-in option can be accessed by clicking the up arrow on the mute icon and clicking ‘Switch to Phone Audio’.

This session will be recorded and available at northcentralwater.org.

Follow us:  northcentralwater.org

Join our Listserv:  join-ncrwater@lists.wisc.edu
Today’s Presenters:

- **Bonnie Keeler**, Associate Professor, University of Minnesota Humphrey School of Public Affairs: *Technical assistance for remote, rural and disadvantaged communities: introducing the Great Lakes TCTAC*

- **Davina Resto**, Senior Community Outreach Associate, Environmental Protection Network: *Pro-bono Technical Assistance for Capacity Building*

- **Rachael Young**, Director of Grantmaking, Just Transition Fund: *Helping Coal Impacted Communities Access Federal Funding for Economic Development*
Bonnie Keeler is an associate professor and Charles M. Denny Chair of environmental policy at the Humphrey School of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota. Keeler’s research evaluates the equity implications of environmental policies at state and regional levels, with a focus on water resources science and management. Keeler co-directs the Center for Science, Technology and Environmental Policy at the University of Minnesota and serves as a subcommittee member of the Environmental Protection Agencies Board of Scientific Counselors.
EJ Thriving Communities Technical Assistance Centers (TCTAC)

Bonnie Keeler (keeler@umn.edu)
Associate Professor
Co-Director, Center for Science, Technology, and Environmental Policy
University of Minnesota
Humphrey School of Public Affairs
Federal Policy Context

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law
Federal Policy Context

Investing In America
The Inflation Reduction Act

- Clean Energy Deployment
- Conservation and Resilience
- Manufacturing and Industrial Decarb
- Climate-Smart Agriculture
- Pollution Reduction and Environmental Justice
- Clean, Energy Efficient Buildings
- Electric Vehicles and Clean Fuels
- And much, much more
Federal Policy Context

The Path to Achieving Justice40

"Justice40 is a whole-of-government effort to ensure that Federal agencies work with states and local communities to make good on President Biden’s promise to deliver at least 40 percent of the overall benefits from Federal investments in climate and clean energy to disadvantaged communities."
Service region:
- 6 States
- 35 Tribal Nations

2 TCTACs led by:
- Blacks in Green
- UMN

UMN-led TCTAC service providers:
- 6 University Extension Offices
- MTERA
- Great Plains Institute
- Environmental Protection Network
- Community Engineering Corps
TCTAC Services

- Capacity building
- Grant navigation
- Translation and interpretation
- Budget and cost-share support
- EJ analyses
- Grant writing
- Post-award management
- Evaluation and reporting
INVESTING IN AMERICA

Technical Assistance Guide
A list of resources to help communities access infrastructure and clean energy funding
September 2023

PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN
BUILDING A BETTER AMERICA

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Rural Playbook:
A roadmap for delivering opportunity and investments in rural America
Region 5 TCTACs: Services, Timing, Eligibility

When will technical assistance be available?
Support will be available starting fall 2023 and continue for five years.

What kinds of technical assistance will centers provide?
Grant navigation, budget support, assistance in identifying partners and matching funds, project design and development, legal and engineering support, and translation and interpretation services.

Who is eligible for technical assistance?
Centers support applicants who have not traditionally had the resources to apply for federal grants. The Centers are a key implementation strategy for the Biden Administration’s Justice40 Initiative, which aims to deliver 40 percent of the benefits of certain federal investments to disadvantaged communities. Additional priority communities are remote & rural populations and current and former minelands.
Great Lakes Environmental Justice TCTAC

How to learn more: greatlakestctac.umn.edu
Thank you for your interest in the Great Lakes TCTAC!

By filling in this form you are agreeing to receive future email correspondence from the Great Lakes TCTAC, including a newsletter and other promotional emails. You can unsubscribe at any time to stop receiving emails.

Email Address

How to learn more: greatlakestctac.umn.edu
Davina Resto

Davina Resto is a Senior Community Outreach Associate with Environmental Protection Network's pro bono capacity-building technical assistance program. Davina concentrates on creating new and deeper connections between disadvantaged communities to provide assistance to community identified projects in EPA Regions 1 and 2. Davina also facilitates and leads EPN's partnerships with Tribes and indigenous people.
Environmental Protection Network

- Founded in January 2017
- 550+ EPA alumni across the country volunteering their time to protect the integrity of EPA, human health, and the environment
- Unique perspective of former regulators with decades of historical knowledge and subject matter expertise
Pro Bono Technical Assistance

- Bridge divide between communities and government
  - Former engineers, scientists, lawyers, permit writers
  - Communities and the NGOs who support them
  - Under resourced state, local, and Tribal agencies

- Navigate regulations, data, policies, and funding opportunities

- Achieve tangible public health benefits
Types of Assistance

- Translate documents into lay language
- Navigate regulatory and grants programs
- Assist on Permits/Appeals
- Identify individual contacts at agencies
- Connect groups with others
- Share lessons learned
- General Grant Assistance
An Overwhelming Opportunity

- Inflation Reduction Act, Bipartisan Infrastructure Law
- Most significant government investments in climate
- Once-in-a-generation opportunity
- Benefit underserved communities
How EPN Can Help…

● Solar for All
● Climate Pollution Reduction Grants
● DOE Energy Improvements in Rural and Remote
● Meet with us to plan your projects!
  ○ Grants.gov
  ○ J40 Accelerator Database
How We Work....

● Day 1-3: We receive the request
  ○ Generally through email, our website, or an intake form
● Day 1-5: Associate begins Phase 1 of Volunteer outreach
● Days 5-10: If no response from Phase 1, we begin Phase 2
  ○ Once a volunteer is identified, we connect them
● Day 10+: If no volunteer identified, we notify the community
Davina Resto, Senior Outreach Associate
davina.resto@environmentalprotectionnetwork.org
347-255-9301
Rachael Young

Rachael develops and oversees grantmaking and fundraising strategies at the Just Transition Fund. She previously worked for over a decade at the Mertz Gilmore Foundation, where she led place-based and national grantmaking initiatives at the nexus of climate, energy, and economic and racial justice. This work included long-standing engagement with coal transition efforts, and Rachael was an early JTF funding partner. She is also currently a co-chair of the Energy and Natural Resources Working Group at the Appalachia Funder Network. Her previous philanthropic experience includes leadership roles with many funder networks and collaborative initiatives, including a pooled fund dedicated to inclusive and accountable community development, an affinity group of rural and urban community engagement funders in New York State, and a funder collaborative focused on capacity building.
FEDERAL ACCESS CENTER

The Current Webinar Series
October 11, 2023
We created the Just Transition Fund, a national philanthropic hybrid, to help communities overcome the economic challenges brought about by the decline of the coal industry.

**Experts in the Just Transition Field**
- Worked on the ground with coal communities for almost 10 years
- Long track record of helping coal communities access federal funding
- Advocated for the historic federal funding levels we’re seeing today, via our National Economic Transition Initiative

**What We Do**

**Access**
- **Federal Access Center**
  - Grants and technical assistance to help communities access federal funds

**Advocate**
- National Economic Transition Initiative
- State and federal policy grantmaking

**Convene**
- Annual convenings and peer-to-peer learning exchanges
Where We Work

- Rural communities across the country impacted by the decline of the coal industry.
- 372 counties—more than 10 percent of the country—are home to a coal mine, plant, or both.
- We prioritize communities that are hardest hit – places with the most economic distress and that are home to the most marginalized populations.
Framework for Economic Transition

The most sustainable economic development projects build from the assets of a place and are created by local leaders. Communities need the right mix of economic development strategies, workforce programs, and infrastructure investments—which collectively build local capacity to catalyze change. We support:

- Economic diversification initiatives across a range of sectors, including but not limited to clean energy, sustainable agriculture, remote work, outdoor tourism, manufacturing, and mine land and plant reclamation.

- Workforce development programs providing targeted “wraparound” services (such as pay, education, childcare, counseling, etc.) ensure trainees have what they need and can link to in-demand, high-quality jobs.

- Broadband infrastructure and affordability initiatives. Broadband access is linked to increased job and population growth, higher rates of new business formation, and lower unemployment.
Community Barriers to Federal Access

The opportunity to leverage federal funding to strengthen local economies has never been greater. But this funding is difficult to access for capacity-constrained organizations and localities. A range of barriers prevent many effective organizations from submitting competitive proposals:

1. Navigating over 400 programs spread across more than 10 agencies that support rural economic development
2. Stringent eligibility and match requirements
3. Complex application processes that often require professional grant writers
# Federal Access Center

Our **resource hub** that provides grants and technical assistance to help coal communities secure public funding for local economic solutions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Application-Ready Support</th>
<th>Early-Stage Support</th>
<th>Informing and Coordinating with Federal Agencies</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grants of up to $100,000 to support costs associated with developing federal applications, including grant writers and match.</td>
<td><strong>Capacity building and project development support</strong> to build readiness to apply.</td>
<td>Share lessons learned back with agencies about barriers for communities applying for federal funds.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Technical assistance from experts who can review proposals before submission, provide guidance on program requirements, and more.</td>
<td><strong>Coal Communities Get Ready! Challenge</strong> will announce cohort of awardees this fall.</td>
<td>Work with IWG and their Rapid Response Teams where there is geographic alignment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Coal Communities Get Ready! Challenge</strong> will announce cohort of awardees this fall.</td>
<td>We will develop <strong>future Early Stage programming</strong> based on the needs we are hearing from communities. If you need support with accessing federal funds, reach out!</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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*Reach out and contact us for support!*
Recent Project Examples

**Thrive West Central (Indiana)**
- **Project:** Revolving loan fund to capitalize small businesses with barriers to receiving traditional financing
- **Federal program:** Economic Development Administration Assistance to Coal Communities program
- **JTF provided:** matching funds
- **Outcome:** funding awarded

**Arrowleaf (Illinois)**
- **Project:** Workforce programming in the tourism, hospitality, healthcare, and social services sectors
- **Federal program:** Economic Development Administration Recompete Pilot program
- **JTF provided:** funding to hire a grantwriter

**Current Innovation (Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, Wisconsin)**
- **Project:** Collaborative effort, known as Great Lakes ReNEW, to develop a circular “blue economy” across region
- **Federal program:** Finalist for the National Science Foundation’s Regional Innovation Engines program
- **JTF provided:** funding for finalist site visit costs
How To Receive Support

Eligibility

- 501c3 or local government
- Located in coal-impacted community
- Economic development, workforce, or broadband infrastructure project
- Plan to apply for federal funds

Process

(Rolling basis, with ability for us to fast track as needed)

1. Submit Inquiry
   Fill out 1 minute form with basic project and organizational information.

2. Eligibility Check
   If needed, we'll schedule a brief call to learn more and help determine eligibility to apply for specific JTF services.

3. Submit Application
   If eligible to apply for Application Ready support, we'll send a 1 page application for a grant, technical assistance, or both. If need is for Early Stage support, we'll be in touch with future opportunities.

4. Decision
   We'll provide feedback within a few weeks of receiving application.
Federal Programs with Upcoming Deadlines

Community Economic and Workforce Development
- DOE | Energy Infrastructure Reinvestment Program (EIR)
- EDA | Recompete Pilot Program
- USDA | Empowering Rural America (New ERA), Powering Affordable Clean Energy (PACE), Rural Energy for America (REAP)
- NOAA | Climate Ready Workforce for Coastal and Great Lakes States, Tribes, and Territories

Broadband Infrastructure
- NTIA | Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program
- USDA | ReConnect
- US Treasury | Capital Projects Funds (allocated through state grant programs)
Impact to Date

$393 Million
To date, we've helped communities leverage $393 million in federal funding.

157x
We've generated a 157x return on investment!
Get Started

Is your organization interested in applying for federal funds?
Fill out our 1 minute interest form!

justtransitionfund.org/fac-interest-form

Do you know organizations who may be interested in applying for federal funds?
Please help us spread the word! PDF one-pager available at the link below or you can scan this QR code:

justtransitionfund.org/fac-outreach
Contact Information

Rachael Young
Director of Grantmaking
ryoung@justtransitionfund.org
Question and Answer Session

We will draw initial questions and comments from those submitted via the chat box during the presentations.

Today’s Speakers

Bonnie Keeler – keel0041@umn.edu
Davina Resto – davina.resto@environmentalprotectionnetwork.org
Rachael Young – ryoung@justtransitionfund.org
Thank you for participating in today’s *The Current*!

Visit our website, [northcentralwater.org](http://northcentralwater.org), to access the recording and our webinar archive!

Upcoming Webinar from our soil health team:

**Soil Health & Microbiology**
Wednesday, October 18\(^{th}\) at 2pm CT
[https://soilhealthnexus.org/](https://soilhealthnexus.org/)