

Accredited Economic Development Organization (AEDO)



INTERNATIONAL
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
COUNCIL

*The Power of
Knowledge and Leadership*

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Organizational Accreditation



INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

AEDO

Accredited Economic Development Organization

Recognizing
Professional
Excellence

in Economic Development
Organizations

IEDC's Accredited Economic Development Organization (AEDO) Program is a means of recognizing the professional excellence of economic development entities. The AEDO Program provides economic development organizations with independent feedback on their operations, structure, and procedures. To date, more than 30 organizations have gone through the accreditation process.

An Elite Network

The AEDO Program offers your organization the opportunity to be part of an elite network that is the "best of the best" in the profession.

In today's competitive and challenging economic environment, it is vital to show that your organization is at the top of the field.

Organizations that achieve the AEDO status become part of a distinguished network in the economic development field. This level of professional excellence heightens the visibility of your organization in the community and validates your commitment to higher achievement.

"The AEDO designation is a statement to our community, clients and stakeholders that we take economic development seriously and that we are committed to strategic planning, organizational performance and excellent customer service. It is not just a designation; it is a description of the way we operate as one of the best!"

— PAUL SALDANA, CEcD, PRESIDENT & CEO,
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION,
SEQUOIA VALLEY/TULARE COUNTY, CA



Benchmarking Excellence

AEDO organizations benefit from the unique partnership between IEDC and the Georgia Tech Enterprise Innovation Institute to benchmark excellence in quality management among AEDOs located across North America. The AEDO Program has informed other economic development organizations (EDOs) about the attributes needed to be a high-performing organization in economic development, as well as identified opportunities for continual improvement. It has provided a set of often-cited benchmarks.

Who Achieves Accreditation?

- State and Local Government Economic Development Departments
- Regional Public-Private Economic Development Partnerships
- Private Non-Profit Business Associations
- Utility Economic Development Departments

New! Accreditation for Utilities

IEDC is offering economic development departments of utilities the unique opportunity to go through the AEDO accreditation process. The process is the same, but gives specific consideration to the industry's unique responsibilities and objectives.

“St. Louis County is very proud of the Economic Council’s AEDO accreditation. We strive to deliver the best professional services and programs in all our economic development endeavors, and this special recognition reinforces our credibility, knowledge and expertise to clients and community leaders.”

— CHARLIE A. DOOLEY, ST. LOUIS COUNTY EXECUTIVE, ST. LOUIS, MO

AEDO Communities

- The Beacon Council, Miami, FL
- Berks Economic Partnership, Reading, PA
- Brooks Development Authority, Brooks City Base, San Antonio, TX
- Business Development Board of Palm Beach County, West Palm Beach, FL
- Cabarrus Economic Development, Kannapolis, NC
- City of Virginia Beach Department of Economic Development, Virginia Beach, VA
- Coordinating and Development Corporation, Shreveport, LA
- Cornerstone Alliance, Benton Harbor, MI
- Delaware Economic Development Office, Dover, DE
- Fond du Lac County Economic Development Corporation, Fond du Lac, WI
- Greater Conroe Economic Development Council, Conroe, TX
- Greater Houston Partnership, Houston, TX
- Hampton Roads Economic Development Alliance, Norfolk, VA
- HuntingtonAreaDevelopment Council, Huntington, WV
- HuttoEconomicDevelopment Corporation, Hutto, TX
- Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission, Metairie, LA
- Laredo Development Foundation, Laredo, TX
- Muncie-Delaware County Indiana Economic Development Alliance, Muncie, IN
- North Carolina’s Eastern Region, Kinston, NC
- Ponca City Development Authority, Ponca City, OK
- Research Triangle Regional Partnership, Morrisville, NC
- Roanoke County Department of Economic Development, Roanoke, VA
- Roanoke Valley Economic Development Partnership, Roanoke, VA
- Sacramento Area Commerce and Trade Organization, Sacramento, CA
- St. Louis County Economic Council, St. Louis, MO
- Tulare County Economic Development Corporation, Tulare, CA
- Tyler Economic Development Council, Inc., Tyler, TX



Accreditation

Critical Issues for Accreditation

The designation recognizes the professional excellence of EDOs and provides independent feedback on their operations, structures, and procedures. The AEDO review team assesses each applicant organization based on four critical issues for accreditation:

- Mission, Vision, and Strategic Plan
- Professional Leadership and Staffing
- Budget and Resources
- Relationships with Community Stakeholders

Why Accreditation?

Successful accreditation adds value to your organization!

- Increases the credibility of your economic development efforts with local leaders, investors, clients, and other stakeholders.
- Provides mentoring and networking with experts in the field.
- Gives your organization the distinction of being an authority on economic development.
- Promotes accountability to local leadership and key stakeholders.
- Differentiates your economic development organization from competitors.
- Enhances team awareness.

From beginning to end, the entire AEDO accreditation process is an excellent way to benchmark your organization and develop sustainable best practices.

Accreditation Process

The AEDO accreditation process is a voluntary procedure undertaken by economic development organizations that are striving for professional excellence.

This peer review process is unmatched and consists of two phases designed to gather specific information about the candidate organization. Transitioning from one phase of the process to the next is contingent upon a rigorous review from Certified Economic Developers (CECDs) and economic development leaders.

Phase 1: Documentation Review

- Candidates submit documentation demonstrating that the organization has the systems, policies, and procedures in place to successfully achieve its mission.
- The AEDO review team will then meticulously review the documents before making its decision as to whether the applicant organization is suited to go on to the second phase. If questions arise, the review team will follow up directly with the applicant organization. Successful demonstration is necessary before the applicant moves on to the second phase.

Phase 2: Site Team Visit

- An on-site visit is scheduled with an expert team of economic development peers.
- The AEDO team assesses the operations of the organization during a 1.5 day site visit.



Benefits & Maintenance

Benefits of AEDO Status

- Exclusive use of the AEDO logo
- A profile in Economic Development Now, IEDC's bi-monthly newsletter
- Assistance with the media announcement of your AEDO accreditation
- A link to your organization's homepage on IEDC's website
- A plaque to proudly display your organization's achievement
- Participation in the Annual Meeting of AEDO Communities at IEDC's Annual Conference

Maintaining Accreditation

Organizations that become accredited must go through a review and reaccreditation process every three years by the AEDO committee. The reaccreditation process provides an opportunity to regularly assess areas where improvements would be beneficial.

"As President & CEO of the San Antonio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, I was pleased to be asked to participate in the AEDO peer review process on behalf of the Brooks Development Authority (BDA). The Hispanic Chamber recently received its four-star accreditation from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and we understand the importance of such a distinguished professional designation in terms of both organizational excellence and in attracting private investment!"

— RAMIRO A. CAVAZOS,
PRESIDENT & CEO, SAN ANTONIO HISPANIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, SAN ANTONIO, TX

Getting Started — Take the Next Step
Download the Guide to Becoming an AEDO at

www.iedconline.org



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About IEDC

The International Economic Development Council (IEDC) is the premier membership organization dedicated to helping economic development professionals create high-quality jobs, develop vibrant communities, and improve the quality of life in their regions. Serving more than 4,500 members, IEDC represents the largest network of economic development professionals in the world. IEDC provides a diverse range of services, including conferences, certification, professional development, publications, research, advisory services, and legislative tracking.

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