The International Economic Development Council’s Accredited Economic Development Organization (AEDO) Program

Recognizing Professional Excellence in Economic Development Organizations

INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

AEDO

Accredited Economic Development Organization
AEDOs in their Own Words

Why did you decide to pursue the AEDO accreditation?
AEDOs in their Own Words

“We wanted to truly look at what we’re doing and to have a third party verify that this is world-class economic development.”

--Bryan Daniels, The Blount Partnership
AEDOs in their Own Words

“We needed to tell our story, and we needed to be able to set ourselves apart from the rest of Nevada…We are the upper echelon of economic development, and we needed a way of communicating that to our community and to out-of-state businesses”

--Melissa Evans, City of Las Vegas Economic and Urban Development Department
AEDOs in their Own Words

“No matter the type of organization you work for, there is always a burden to prove that the initiatives you are spending your money and investment dollars on have purpose and are showing results. The AEDO accreditation helps reinforce our organization, and helps tell those investors and stakeholders that we are on the right path.”

--Peter Tokar III, City of Alpharetta Office of Economic Development
AEDOs in their Own Words

“In the process of creating our strategic plan, we not only outlined a mission statement defining economic development for our community but also developed a vision statement for our department to achieve by 2019...There was no better way to become a best-of-class organization and be recognized for a high level of professionalism than by pursuing AEDO accreditation.”

--Danielle Casey, City of Scottsdale, Arizona Office of Economic Development
AEDO Program Goals & Benefits

• Recognize excellent EDOs
• Heighten the EDO’s visibility in its community
• Provide EDOs with independent feedback on their operations
• Acknowledge the organizational leader’s vital contribution to the economic development process
What Critical Issues Does the AEDO Program Examine?

• Does the organization:
  o Have professional leadership and staffing adequate to its mission?
  o Retain the necessary budget and resources?
  o Possess the support of the community or region with active commitment and participation?
  o Maintain and follow a strategic plan while allocating resources based on the mission and identified opportunities?
What EDOs Earn Accreditation?

- Public-private economic development partnerships
- Utility EDOs
- State and local economic development departments and corporations
- Private, nonprofit business associations
- International EDOs
- SBA Lenders
Benefits of Accreditation: Internal Value

- Heightened recognition as a leading EDO
- Enhanced authority on economic development issues
- Increased private-sector investment
- Celebrated in the community
Benefits of Accreditation: External Value

- Differentiates you from competitors
- Demonstrates your mechanisms and resources
- Provides prospects with confidence that you have capable leadership and active community support
How AEDOs Rate the Program

• **Most Important Benefits:**
  - Recognition of Accomplishments
  - Recommendations and evaluation from report

• **Very Important Benefits:**
  - Peer mentoring provided during site visit
  - Added credibility to funding and support efforts
  - Marketing opportunities
  - Compiling materials for the application
  - Increased exposure through IEDC
The Accreditation Process
Phase 1: Documentation Review

Not “pass or fail,” but a process…

• Applicants submit documents demonstrating the organization’s development, structure, and activity
• Mission & Goals Statement
• Strategic Plan
• Marketing Plan & Materials
• Annual Budget
• Review of Successful Development Projects
Documentation Review

1. Mission & goals statement
2. Articles of incorporation & bylaws
3. Last audited financial statement
4. Last annual report
5. Minutes of last four board meetings
6. Description of officers’ roles & responsibilities
7. Org. chart & employee job descriptions
8. Marketing plan
9. Strategic plan
Documentation Review (con’t.)

10. Copies of all current marketing materials
11. Annual budget
12. IRS letter of exemption
13. Most recent IRS Form 990 (if applicable)
14. Staff policy & procedures manual
15. Commitment of support to CEO
16. Review of successful development projects
17. Organizational newsletters
18. Press releases
19. Resumes for Executive Staff
The Accreditation Process
Phase 2: Site-Team Visit

• An AEDO Review Team will assess the organization in action
  o Community tour
  o Corporate visits
  o Meetings with community leaders
  o Staff interviews
    * Site visits are conducted by members of the AEDO committee, CEcDs, and/or EDO CEOs

• Reaccreditation every three years
Accreditation Notification & Awards

• Custom-designed AEDO Award Plaque
• Official IEDC Press Release
• Announcements in IEDC Publications
  - ED Now
  - ED Journal
  - IEDC News
  - IEDC website
• AEDO Logos
• Site Visit Report with Recommendations
How Much Does It Cost?

- Application Fee: $275
  - $300 for State-level Organizations
- Sliding Scale: Accreditation Fee Based on Organizational Budget ($1,200 to $10,900)*
- Reimbursement for the 2-3 Person Review Team’s Transportation (Coach Airfare), Meals, and Accommodations

*Member discounts are offered
Congratulations to Newly Accredited Members!

Since last year’s Conference, the AEDO committee voted to accredit nine organizations including:

- City of Las Vegas Economic and Urban Development Department (Las Vegas, Nevada)
- Blount Partnership (Maryville, Tennessee)
- New Orleans Business Alliance (New Orleans, Louisiana)
- City of Alpharetta Office of Economic Development (Alpharetta, Georgia)
- City of Scottsdale Office of Economic Development (Scottsdale, Arizona)
- City of Mesa Office of Economic Development (Mesa, Arizona)
- Provo City Mayor’s Office of Economic Development (Provo, Utah)
- Tampa Hillsborough Economic Development Corporation (Tampa, Florida)
- Regional Economic Development, Inc., (Columbia, Missouri)
Congratulations to
Reaccredited Members!

Over the past year, the AEDO committee voted to reaccredit ten organizations:

• St. Louis Economic Development Partnership (St. Louis, Missouri)
• Ponca City Development Authority (Ponca City, Oklahoma)
• Gilbert, Arizona Office of Economic Development (Gilbert, Arizona)
• Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corporation (Bethlehem, Pennsylvania)
• Richardson Economic Development Partnership (Richardson, Texas)
• City of St. Charles Office of Economic Development (St. Charles, Missouri)
• Arvada Economic Development Association (Arvada, Colorado)
• Greater Akron Chamber (Akron, Ohio)
• Business Development Board of Palm Beach (West Palm Beach, Florida)
• Hutto Economic Development Corporation (Hutto, Texas)
Congratulations to Newly Accredited & Reaccredited Members!

60 Total AEDOs
2 Canadian AEDOs
2 Mexican AEDOs
2 Utility AEDO

4 Accreditations Pending
Accredited Economic Development Organizations
For more information, download the “Guide to Becoming an AEDO”
www.iedconline.org/AEDO

or contact:

Dana Crater
AEDO Program Manager
dcrater@iedconline.org
(910) 833-7020