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MEMORANDUM

USGBC Chapter Membership Policy

Intent

This policy replaces the existing policy approved in December 2004 and the requirements set forth in the 2005 Chapter Guidelines. The purpose of this policy is:

- To facilitate consistent member expectations among Chapters.
- To incentivize USGBC national membership.
- To promote connection between USGBC and the Chapter Community.
- To establish parameters for chapters in setting dues amounts.
- To consolidate existing membership guidelines and policy into one coherent policy.

Rationale

The USGBC Chapter Membership Policy was last reviewed and updated by the Chapter Steering Committee (CSC) in December 2004. Since that time, both USGBC and its chapters have evolved greatly as organizations, and there is a need to revise the policy so that it accommodates that evolution, affording the opportunity for greater participation among all members of a USGBC chapter regardless of their organizations' national member status. This is critical as we recognize that chapters are a path to engage interested individuals with USGBC, even though their organizations may not yet be national USGBC members. Through such engagement at the local level, it is the hope that chapter members may eventually persuade their organizations to join USGBC at the national level.

While member categories are currently described in the *USGBC Chapter Guidelines, 4th edition, 2005*, and the December 2004 policy also sets out member categories, the two are not entirely congruent, and there is confusion among chapters about what is required vs. what is simply a guideline. By consolidating the existing documentation as policy, we make clear USGBC's requirements of chapters with respect to membership.

This membership policy helps incentivize national membership by requiring that chapters discount member dues for employees of USGBC national member organizations.

The policy also helps promote connection between USGBC and the chapter community by retaining the requirement that certain leadership roles including Officers of chapters and regional and national positions be filled by chapter members who are employees of USGBC national member organizations.

Clearly defining the benefits accorded those who are both chapter members and employees of national member organizations effectively allows us to discontinue the category of "Associate Member," a designation that has been a source of confusion for many chapter members.

Similarly, by requiring a reduced dues rate for the Student category, USGBC hopes to encourage participation with and affinity for USGBC among students, which will carry forward into their professional careers.

The development of the proposed policy revision has been thorough, involving a year-long process including discussion, numerous calls, feedback from various stakeholders, etc. The resulting document represents a significant improvement, which was approved by the USGBC Chapter Steering Committee on its December 10, 2009, call.



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POLICY

1. Eligibility

- a. Chapter membership shall be open to individuals only.
- b. All individuals who comply with the Chapter's rules for membership shall be called Chapter Members.
- c. Organizations may sponsor and donate to Chapters, but may not become Chapter Members.
- d. Only organizations may be USGBC members. Chapter membership does not include membership in USGBC or any of the associated USGBC member benefits.
- e. An organization's membership in USGBC does not entitle its employees to chapter discounts.

2. Dues

- a. Chapter Member dues are recommended to be \$65 annually.
- b. Chapters must provide a discount of 30% to USGBC member employees.
- c. Chapters must provide a discount of at least 60% to full-time students at an accredited college or university.
- d. Chapters may set their own dues levels as long as they do not exceed 200% of the recommended amounts, to afford chapters some flexibility to take into account regional economic differences.

The recommended dues amounts within this policy will be revisited annually and may be changed per the recommendation of the Chapter Steering Committee. The recommended dues amounts listed will be used for the USGBC-hosted online membership registration and payment system. The CSC will therefore consider the needs of the Chapters served by this system in setting dues amounts. If desired, chapters may vary dues amounts (within 200% of recommended levels), establish membership categories at higher levels (e.g., Friend, Contributor, Supporter), and extend discounts to members of other organizations; HOWEVER these will not be included in the USGBC hosted membership system.

3. Governance

- a. Chapter members in good standing include chapter members who are employees of USGBC national member organizations and chapter members who are not.
- b. All chapter members in good standing shall be eligible to vote on chapter matters, including referenda and elections, and otherwise participate in chapter activities according to the chapter's bylaws.
- c. Committees Chairs of a Chapter are selected and appointed according to chapter bylaws and must be a chapter member in good standing.
- d. Two-thirds (66%) of the Board of Directors of a Chapter must be chapter members who are USGBC national member employees.
- e. Three quarters (75%) of the Officers of a Chapter must be chapter members who are USGBC national member employees.
- f. All Chapter Members who officially participate in the USGBC governance and other leadership roles, including as Regional Council members, Chapter Steering Committee Members, and Regional Board members must be USGBC national member employees.

Chapters may set additional requirements for various Chapter leadership and governance positions based on self-defined membership categories, as long as such requirements are consistent with USGBC policies. For instance, a Chapter may wish to restrict student members to serving on local committees but not as committee leaders or Chapter board members.