

Peer Learning Exchange: Supporting the Value in Face-to-Face Knowledge Sharing

As of December 2016, the USDN Peer Learning Exchange grant program has awarded \$137,484.15 to fund 34 exchanges, with a total of 164 participating USDN member communities. Sixty-eight percent of members have collaborated on proposals through its first 4 years.

The full Peer Learning Exchange 2016 Annual Report can be accessed [here](#). The following summarizes highlights from this report.

The Peer Learning Exchange grant program is designed to support USDN members to meet in person with their peers to learn and share together about one or more practices, policies, or programs. Through the program, members convene for:

- In-Depth Exchanges: Detailed discussions between two or more members to deeply explore several shared priority topics, creating value for all participants,
- Best Practice Disseminations: Collaborative work to deeply share a member's specific and unique policy/practice with one or more peers who are ready to adapt it, and
- Peer Reviews: Critical assessments of and/or recommendations for a member's selected policy/program by one or more peers.

2016 USDN Peer Learning Exchange Committee Members:

- Jacqui Bauer; Bloomington IN, *co-chair*
- Lisa LaRocque; Las Cruces NM, *co-chair*
- Celia VanDerLoop; Denver CO
- Erin Miller; Columbus OH
- Jennifer Green; Burlington VT
- Kristopher Stenger; Winter Park FL
- Peter Nierengarten; Fayetteville AR

In 2016, USDN Peer Learning Exchange grant program funded 12 in-person exchanges for participants from 61 member communities:

- *Eugene OR* received \$5,000 to convene with Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, Mexico City, Richmond, and Washington DC to learn about sustainable event policies, immersing attendees into the workings of the certified 2016 U.S. Olympic Trials. [Read more.](#)
- *Burlington VT* received \$5,000 to travel with Fort Collins to Austin to discuss how municipally owned utilities can leverage technologies and practices like micro-grids and fiber optic networks to meet sustainability goals.

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- *Vancouver BC* received \$3,215 to host Portland OR to discuss how each has improved local deconstruction programs to manage demolition waste and to build a more consistent approach for certifying regional contractors.
- *Seattle WA* received \$4,930 to host Los Angeles, Portland OR, San Francisco, and Vancouver to explore how West Coast cities can participate in the EV charging ecosystem through policy design, public investment, and facilitating partnerships.
- *Alexandria VA* received \$5,580 to travel with Alexandria, Blacksburg, Fairfax, Falls Church, Roanoke, and five non-member communities in Virginia to Richmond to work with ACEEE staff to develop customized local energy efficiency road maps.
- *Vancouver BC* received \$3,085 to host San Francisco to compare efforts to engage residents in climate resiliency planning and emergency management.
- *Oakland CA* received \$6,160 to travel with Eugene and San Francisco to Portland OR to discuss consumption-based GHG emissions goals, reduction strategies, and inventories and implications for climate action planning.
- *Aspen CO* received \$4,200 to travel with Western Adaptation Alliance members Boulder, Denver, El Paso, Flagstaff, Fort Collins, Lakewood, Las Cruces, Park City, Phoenix, Salt Lake City, Santa Fe, and Tucson to Las Vegas to discuss climate adaptation efforts, including municipal staff training and using the results of a collaborative project to develop story maps as communications tools.
- *Boulder CO* received \$3,900 to travel with Boston, Boulder, Burlington, San Francisco, and Washington DC to New York City to build a market-driven decarbonization of thermal energy sectors with public and private sector partners.
- *Leon County FL* received \$4,480 to host Orlando, Sarasota County, Tallahassee, and three non-USDN member communities in Florida to discuss sustainability in local tourism industries.
- *St. Peters MO* received \$4,650 to host Columbia, Fayetteville, Johnson County, Lawrence, and two non-USDN member communities in the Heartland region to discuss managing hard-to-recycle waste materials in current city systems.
- *Vancouver BC* received \$7,000 to travel to New York City with Jersey City and Newark to discuss the human health and environmental sustainability concerns about cooling towers in buildings' HVAC systems.