

# Pioneering Center, on the Front Lines of Energy Efficiency, Expands Its Reach and Impact.

April 20, 2018

On Monday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>, the **Building Energy Exchange** (BE-Ex), a unique energy efficiency resource center in Manhattan, celebrates a significant expansion with the official opening of a 100-seat, 21<sup>st</sup> century connected classroom, as well as new exhibit and technology demonstration spaces. Opened to the public since 2015, BE-Ex is an independent non-profit organization playing a central role in the climate action plans of both New York City and State through education, exhibits, and critical tools to advance energy efficiency in buildings, which are responsible for almost 70% of New York City's greenhouse gas emissions. BE-Ex is made possible by a partnership between the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), the New York Power Authority (NYPA), the NYC Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS), the Mayor's Office, and private sector supporters, all acting together in service to common energy efficiency goals. Providing an objective information hub for all industry decision-makers, including building owners and managers, architects, engineers and construction managers, this resource center has already attracted over 12,000 visitors to more than 500 programs.

"Congratulations to the Building Energy Exchange on the grand opening of its modern educational facility. We're proud to have supported this hub of innovation that is reducing the city's reliance on fossil fuels in our buildings and supporting our OneNYC goals to be the most sustainable big city in America," said **Mayor de Blasio**.

The expansion of the Building Energy Exchange is expected to triple the number of professionals receiving education on building energy efficiency, a fundamental tool in addressing climate change. New technology embedded in its learning spaces will allow BE-Ex to share pioneering New York climate action knowledge and programs globally, helping the hundreds of other communities in the US and abroad that have committed to the COP 21 Paris Climate Agreement goals to dramatically improve the performance of their buildings.

"Today the Building Energy Exchange celebrates a significant expansion of our reach and impact," said **Richard Yancey, Executive Director of the Building Energy Exchange**. "Adding a 100-seat, 21st century classroom and new exhibit and technology demonstration spaces to our Manhattan resource center amplifies our capacity and allows us to share building efficiency resources globally. Our education, exhibits, and critical tools have ensured that we play a central role in the climate action plans of both New York City and State. We are grateful to our dedicated board and enthusiastic supporters, including NYSERDA, NYPA, the City of New York, and our incredible Founders Circle, who have helped us to make this expansion such a success. With 12,000 visitors attending more than 500 programs it is clear that providing an information hub for all industry decision-makers was the right idea. The expansion of our center confirms that we are just getting started."

Working with an award-winning design team, including Architecture Research Office and BuroHappold Engineering, this major expansion is also an exemplary retrofit project – designed to save over 40% of the center’s annual energy usage, through intelligent lighting and controls, and an upgraded heating and cooling system, while sensitively modernizing BE-Ex’s historic spaces.

At the opening, BE-Ex will unveil a new exhibit, *Celebrate NYC: Building a Sustainable City*, that features more than 60 significant energy efficiency retrofit projects recently completed throughout the city. Running the gamut from single-family homes to the Chrysler building, the exhibit celebrates the leadership demonstrated throughout New York City to combat climate change, providing both inspiration and valuable lessons.

**Council Member Costa Constantinides, Chair of the Council’s Environmental Protection Committee**, said, “The Building Energy Exchange expansion helps educate even more professionals on sustainability and addressing climate change. As buildings contribute to 70% of our city’s emissions, organizations like BE-Ex provide resources, education, and tools for professionals. We are proud to have BE-Ex as partners as our city decreases emissions 80% by 2050.”

The event also marks the ten-year anniversary of the *New York City Carbon Challenge*, with the Mayor’s Office and others honoring the incredible leadership shown by the more than 100 private and institutional sector owners who have committed to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by 30% or more in ten years. Currently, participants represent over 5,600 buildings, totaling 510 million square feet, an amount equal to the entirety of built square footage south of 23<sup>rd</sup> Street in Manhattan. The ten-year anniversary celebrates the 21 participants that have achieved their Carbon Challenge goals as well as the college, university, and hospital participants that have committed to even deeper reductions of 40% to 50%. BE-Ex is proud to have partnered with the NYC Carbon Challenge, hosting meetings and developing demonstration projects and case studies with the participants.

“Buildings account for more than two-thirds of the city’s greenhouse gas emissions and are the key to reducing our emissions in line with the Paris Agreement,” said **Daniel Zarrilli, New York City’s Senior Director of Climate Policy and Programs and Chief Resilience Officer**. “Congratulations to the Building Energy Exchange as they expand their ability to provide the resources and partnership with the design community that are crucial to reaching the City’s ambitious climate goals. We are thrilled that their expansion will allow them to share best practices and knowledge from New York City with cities around the world.”

“The Building Energy Exchange continues to be a model of how an innovative organization adapts to both technology shifts and the needs of New Yorkers aggressively working to reduce the amount of energy our buildings consume,” said **Mark Chambers, Director of the Mayor’s Office of Sustainability**.

The expansion of the BE-Ex resource center will dramatically increase the impact of an organization dedicated to improving the energy performance of buildings new and old. Educating and connecting everyone with a stake in the performance of buildings, BE-Ex develops education and training for professionals, case studies and retrofit playbooks for decision makers, and interactive exhibits that make new technology tangible. Visitors can

learn about which technology might be right for their building, how much money they can save, and how to pay for the project. The new classroom will allow BE-Ex to live-stream events and connect with communities all over the world. This capability as well as the success of the resource center to date has led to a partnership with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe to designate a network of similar resource centers around the globe, called the *International Centers of Excellence on Energy Efficiency in Buildings*. UNECE-designated Centers of Excellence are underway in Vancouver BC, New York City, and Ireland. Additional Centers are already slated for Brussels, Pittsburgh, Astana and Kiev.

**Scott Foster, Director, Sustainable Energy Division, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)**, observed, "The Building Energy Exchange resource center is an inspiring model for communities around the world, and UNECE is excited to see the facility expanding. If there is one action that can advance the world's development agenda, it is wide deployment of high performance buildings. BE-Ex addresses climate issues by improving energy efficiency in buildings, and it sets the stage for investment, innovation, and jobs. BE-Ex has been a strong partner in developing our Framework Guidelines for Energy Efficiency Standards in Buildings, and we look forward to formalizing our partnership with them as a leader among our International Centers of Excellence on High Performance Buildings."

While providing tangible tools and critical lessons for anyone in the industry, BE-Ex also plays a special role in Mayor de Blasio's signature climate action program, the *New York City Retrofit Accelerator*. This program marshals a team of efficiency advisors to assist private sector buildings in the pursuit of energy efficiency retrofits. BE-Ex is tasked with developing tools and resources, like case studies, to support the work of the efficiency advisors, and connecting building stakeholders with education and training. The expansion of the center will improve the capacity of these efforts and allow BE-Ex to offer multiple simultaneous trainings.

"Embedding deeper energy efficiency throughout New York's building stock is a critical component of Governor Cuomo's nation-leading effort to fight climate change and transition to a clean energy future," said **Alicia Barton, President and CEO, NYSERDA**. "The expansion of the Building Energy Exchange will highlight the pathbreaking approaches being pioneered here in New York and serve as an ongoing resource to our world-class ecosystem of clean technology companies, firms and building owners that are together creating the next-generation of energy efficiency approaches that will deliver bill savings as well as operational and environmental improvements in buildings for decades to come."

"The expansion of the Building Energy Exchange will be a boon to building owners and industry decision-makers looking for additional resources to significantly improve the energy efficiency of their facilities," said **Gil C. Quiniones, president and CEO of the New York Power Authority**. "This unique learning center, which will provide access to events, inspiring exhibits, technology tools and programming, illustrates how public and private interests can come together in support of New York State's climate action goals."

Speakers at the opening will include John Rhodes, Chair of the NYS Public Service Commission; Alicia Barton, President & CEO of NYSERDA; Gil Quiniones, President & CEO of NYPA; Daniel Zarrilli, the Mayor's Senior Director for Climate Policy and Programs

and Chief Resiliency Officer; Mark Chambers, the Director of the Mayor's Office of Sustainability; as well as Jonathan Flaherty of Tishman Speyer and Donna De Costanzo of Natural Resources Defense Council representing the BE-Ex board of directors. Event attendees will include many other city and state leaders, along with more than 200 environmental advocates, private sector professionals and other supporters of this singular organization.

"On behalf of the entire Building Energy Exchange board of directors, we are very excited to open this amazing facility to the public and the many partners around New York that have a stake in the performance of buildings," said **Jonathan Flaherty, Director of Sustainability at Tishman Speyer and Chair of the Building Energy Exchange Board of Directors**. "BE-Ex is the only organization of its kind, dedicated entirely to advancing energy efficient buildings and playing a central role in the climate action plans of the City and State, while also catering to the needs of the private sector. The expansion will allow us to deliver more programs to more decision makers, and continue our role as educators, conveners and advisors on some of the most critical issues facing our region."

**Donna DeCostanzo, Director, Eastern Region, Climate & Clean Energy Program, Natural Resources Defense Council and Vice-Chair of the BE-Ex Board of Directors**, noted, "The expansion of the Building Energy Exchange is a great milestone. NRDC is looking forward to continued collaboration with BE-Ex, connecting New Yorkers with the resources they need to improve the energy performance of their buildings. The technology in the new classroom will allow BE-Ex to share lessons from New York City with other communities, throughout New York State and around the country."

In addition to the City and State leaders described above, key supporters of the Building Energy Exchange include: Tishman Speyer, the Durst Organization, Vornado Realty Trust, the Rudin Management Company, the Real Estate Board of New York, the Natural Resources Defense Council, National Grid, Con Edison, SL Green, Brookfield Properties, Goldman Sachs, Mechosystems, Illuminating Engineering Society of NYC, and ASHRAE New York.

**John H. Banks, President of the Real Estate Board of New York**, said, "We congratulate the Building Energy Exchange on their expansion and the *Celebrate NYC* exhibit as we recognize the great success being achieved by our members to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and encourage more sustainable development throughout the five boroughs."

"As New York City's public and private sectors expand their investment in energy conservation, the role of BE-Ex as a resource of information and forum for exchange of best practices is more important than ever," stated **Kathryn Wylde, President & CEO, Partnership for New York City**.

The *Celebrate NYC* exhibit will be on view through December 2018. To accompany the exhibit a series of panel discussions featuring many of the projects included in the exhibit will run at BE-Ex throughout 2018. Educational programming at BE-Ex will also include their highly popular WISE (Women in Sustainability & Energy) series, and the 5<sup>th</sup> year of the Daylight Hour, a global social media engagement campaign that raises awareness about using daylight in lieu of electric lighting in offices. BE-Ex recently published a series of "playbooks" outlining the most effective methods of upgrading traditionally wasteful

equipment, like steam heating systems, leaky building facades, and commercial lighting. The organization also offers a free, one-hour primer course on the popular Passive House certification system—a standard developed in Germany that is gaining ground in the New York City market for its emphasis on interior comfort, occupant health and dramatic energy savings. BE-Ex will unveil more technical training and resources on high performance buildings in 2018, as well continuing education on common energy conservation measures.

“National Grid is committed to helping our customers increase their energy efficiency, reduce energy usage to lower their bills, and improve the air quality of our communities. The Building Energy Exchange hub has provided meaningful information to help our customers make smart energy choices. We are pleased to have worked with the founding partners to launch the initiative and congratulate them on the center’s expansion as a model to help tackle climate change around the world,” said **Louis Rizzo, National Grid- Manager of NYS Energy Program Operation.**

“The new classroom and exhibit area will give the Building Energy Exchange a great venue to provide important education and advocacy programs to keep New York a clean, efficient city,” said **Vicki Kuo, director of Energy Efficiency and Demand Management for Con Edison.** “The Building Energy Exchange shares the goals of our Energy Efficiency programs, which connect building owners with technologies that save energy, reduce electric and gas bills, and help New York City and State meet their climate goals.”

“New York has already made impressive strides on energy efficiency, and now is a critical time to harness that momentum and go further on reducing pollution from buildings. Expanding the Building Energy Exchange is an exciting development that will help address climate change, while continuing New York’s leadership,” said **Rory Christian, New York Director, Clean Energy, Environmental Defense Fund.**

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[yr@nec.nygrid.com](mailto:yr@nec.nygrid.com)