
July 10, 2018 — FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Building Energy Exchange is founding hub of global resource center network created to support development of high performance buildings

The **International Centres of Excellence on High Performance Buildings** will be a knowledge sharing framework among progressive cities to provide on-the-ground implementation assistance for building owners and developers, architects, engineers, contractors and policy officials, with the **Building Energy Exchange** a founding centre.

The **United Nations Economic Commission for Europe**, or UNECE, is one of the five United Nations Regional Commissions working to implement the UN Sustainable Development Goals. In 2017 UNECE adopted the **Framework Guidelines for Energy Efficiency Standards in Buildings** which promotes the adoption of aggressive, performance-based codes for buildings. To support deployment of the Framework Guidelines and to advance the performance of buildings broadly, UNECE is launching a global network of **International Centres of Excellence on High Performance Buildings** that will provide on-the-ground implementation assistance for building owners and developers, contractors, architects, engineers and planning officials.

“Improving buildings’ energy performance is one action item that can have a powerful, near-term impact at global scale by drastically reducing energy consumption and CO2 emissions, and by cutting citizens’ energy bills”, noted **Ms. Olga Algayaerova, Executive Secretary of UNECE**. “By pursuing a high-performance buildings agenda we can improve not only energy efficiency, but also health, safety, affordability, comfort... indeed overall quality of life is enhanced. The agenda will also contribute to gender equality, which is an important objective of our energy sub-programme.”

On July 10th, **Building Energy Exchange** (BE-Ex) will become a founding hub of this critical knowledge sharing network to bring high performance building best practices to scale. Additional centers are underway in Vancouver, British Columbia; Wexford, Ireland; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; and Brussels, Belgium. The event, to be held at BE-Ex, will commemorate the creation of the network and mark the beginning of knowledge and

resource sharing among these progressive communities. The network will expand as other communities join.

The signing ceremony at BE-Ex follows briefings on the Framework Guidelines and Centres of Excellence network made before the **United Nations High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF)**, the primary UN platform for pursuit of the **UN Sustainable Development Goals**.

Scott Foster, Director of Sustainable Energy at UNECE, observed that “the recipe for success in achieving the 2030 Agenda is not complicated, but it requires being bold. It requires being innovative. And it requires mobilization at scale. A critical component is addressing the energy equation of buildings. The launch of the international centres of excellence on high performance buildings in tandem with the academic Global Buildings Network is a major step towards our destination.”

“Congratulations to Building Energy Exchange for serving as an innovative resource center which will help drive comprehensive, scalable energy efficiency solutions in buildings to cut emissions and reduce energy costs,” said **Alicia Barton, President and CEO, NYSERDA**. “Public and private partnerships play a significant role in helping New York achieve Governor Cuomo’s aggressive clean energy and climate goals and NYSERDA is looking forward to continuing to work with our partners in the BEEEx on addressing some of our most pressing energy efficiency challenges.”

The goals of the network are directly aligned with the **Paris Agreement** and will provide access to best practices and fully vetted solutions for communities pursuing those goals, including the many cities, states and businesses that committed to those goals through **America’s Pledge**. The network will also support the relevant elements of the **UN Sustainable Development Goals**, and will work with participants in the network to advance solutions that reduce energy demand within the built environment and enable the adoption of renewable energy.

“Addressing the challenge of climate change and fulfilling our commitments to the Paris Agreement require leadership and collaboration,” said **Daniel Zarrilli, New York City’s Senior Director of Climate Policy and Programs and Chief Resilience Officer**. “Today’s recognition of the Building Energy Exchange for its global leadership is well-deserved and comes at a critical time, as cities like New York step up to lead and fill the void of federal

leadership. New York City is proud to partner with BEEEx as we all work together to build a more resilient city.”

Donna DeCostanzo, Director, Eastern Region, Climate & Clean Energy Program, Natural Resources Defense Council added, “Sharing knowledge to scale solutions and drive innovation is a powerful and critical tool in increasing the deployment of clean energy. The International Centres of Excellence network provides an opportunity for forward thinking cities to learn from each other and leverage efforts around the globe. We look forward to supporting the Building Energy Exchange’s role as a founding hub of this important program.”

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. Their recently renovated facility includes technology that allows for easy sharing of educational content globally and their track record of producing highly relevant, digestible resources makes them an excellent hub for knowledge sharing with other cities.

Richard Yancey, Executive Director, Building Energy Exchange stated, “The entire board and staff of the Building Energy Exchange are honored and excited to be a founding hub of this important network and look forward to sharing knowledge among progressive cities around the globe. If the building and design sectors are going to contribute meaningfully to mitigate climate change and help meet the goals of the Paris Agreement, we can’t afford to duplicate efforts or deploy anything less than the most effective solutions. The UNECE network will drive us to an inflection point where building owners, designers and engineers are working together to create a sustainable future.”

Collaboration within the international network will begin immediately, with BE-Ex live-streaming selected events to the newly launched Zero Energy Building Exchange (ZEBx) in Vancouver, Canada, and sharing other high performance building resources. BE-Ex and ZEBx will also co-produce high performance building workshops featuring public presentations and discussions of innovative projects, technologies, and best practices from each city.

Representatives from other proposed Centres of Excellence will attend the signing event, as will representatives from **Penn State University**, who has partnered with UNECE on the companion Global Buildings Network, an academic consortium for research in ultra high

performance buildings, in support of both the Guidelines initiative and the International Centres of Excellence network.

The **Framework Guidelines for Energy Efficiency Standards in Buildings** can be downloaded (PDF) here: <https://be-exchange.us2.list-manage.com/track/click?u=2c6e5ccee81b2c2885fc8eee0&id=d1459e3371&e=9568995faa>

The essential elements of the **Paris Agreement** are here: <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement/the-paris-agreement>

Learn more about the states, cities and businesses committed to the goals of the Paris Agreement through **America's Pledge**, here: <https://www.americaspledgeonclimate.com/>

Details about the **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals** can be found here: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/>

WHAT: UNECE + BE-Ex Signing Ceremony
International Centres of Excellence on High Performance Buildings

SPEAKERS: **Olga Algayerova**, Executive Secretary, UNECE
Scott Foster, Director, Sustainable Energy Division, UNECE
Greg Hale, Senior Advisor, Energy Efficiency Markets & Finance, NYSERDA
John Lee, Deputy Director for Buildings & Energy Efficiency, NYC Mayor's Office of Sustainability
Donna DeCostanzo, Director, Eastern Region, Climate & Clean Energy Program, Natural Resources Defense Council (BE-Ex Vice-Chair)
Richard Yancey, Executive Director, Building Energy Exchange

WHEN: Tuesday, July 10th
6:00 – 8:00 pm, remarks/signing at 7:00pm

WHERE: Building Energy Exchange
31 Chambers Street (Surrogate's Courthouse), 6th Floor, NY, NY 10007

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