

# EcoDistricts Organizational Membership Talking Points

**NOTE:** Refer to the Board Fundraising Guide to qualify your prospects, prepare your ask, and frame the conversation around the prospects needs and goals. These talking points are offered to support you to consistently talk about EcoDistricts and the role/value of organizational membership.

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## **START WITH WHY YOU CARE ABOUT ECODISTRICTS' WORK.**

What part of the industry are you in? What got you initially excited about the work EcoDistricts is doing, and why do you think this work is important?

## **GIVE A LITTLE BACKGROUND ON THE ORGANIZATION. THINK ABOUT TELLING A STORY. ADAPT THIS EXAMPLE:**

“EcoDistricts — under its current name and structure — is only two years old, but its story starts several years ago when it was still part of the Portland Sustainability Institute at the cusp of the green buildings movement in Portland, OR — a city that we all know has been a global leader in that work.

“Rob Bennett discovered something very important in those early days. First, practitioners across the industry were very passionate about spurring innovation, to get better, more sustainable outcomes for cities, but we were often falling short in delivering great outcomes in equity and resilience, and in moving our outcomes beyond the building. He also discovered that the district- and neighborhood provide a very unique value: their scale is small enough to innovate but large enough to spur meaningful impact in infrastructure and public policy.

“Fast forward to 2016, and EcoDistricts' work now is entirely driven around the mission of building just, resilient, sustainable cities across North America and beyond. They do this through an integrated line of consulting and advisory services provided directly to projects; project certification and practitioner accreditation to reward innovative leadership; annual convenings to drive thought leadership and to accelerate use of the Protocol; and by building a global community of city makers who recognize what's at stake, and with us want to build a common course of action for our cities.

“EcoDistricts is in a very exciting time right now:

- “Global launch of the EcoDistricts Protocol in late April — after a few years of development, the Protocol is available for use by practitioners and cities everywhere. This process-based framework reinforces existing rating tools because it arms teams with the governance structure and roadmap they need to build equity, resilience, and sustainability into every urban development decision. This framework sits at the heart of everything EcoDistricts does.
- “Powered by the Protocol, also scheduled is the global launch of certification and accreditation at the September EcoDistricts Summit.”

**POSITION THE VALUE OF ORGANIZATION MEMBERSHIP IN RELATION TO THE PROSPECT'S GOALS:**

EXAMPLES: “Organizational members are the backbone of EcoDistricts. They serve a vital role in our ability to support meaningful projects outcomes in cities throughout North America, including low-income and traditionally underserved communities that otherwise wouldn’t have our support.

“Members also serve as vital organizational partners. Our members receive our highest level of attention. We actively seek ways we can work together to open new doors for one another, to bring innovation, district-scale sustainability, and cutting-edge solutions to North America’s fastest growing cities. EcoDistricts is taking a stand — we’re introducing a new model of urban sustainability and we’re actively seeking innovative partners who are willing to take that stand with us — AND to differentiate themselves as a leader in building truly vibrant cities.

“Beyond the benefits you see listed in the prospectus, this partnership is really where we believe the greatest mutual value is provided.”

**CUSTOMIZE THE REMAINING TALKING POINTS TO THE PROSPECTS ORGANIZATION AND GOALS:**

**NOTE:** While the membership prospectus pinpoints benefit offerings, we encourage board members to customize the benefit package based on what is most important to the prospect. Some ideas include:

- Guest lecture from Rob Bennett
- Joint webinar or op-ed pieces that help position the member organization as a partner and leader in sustainable district-scale development
- Member spotlight article in EcoDistricts’ newsletter and social channels
- Reduced-rate group pricing on EcoDistricts Accreditation with baseline commitment — When members commit to accrediting a set number of practitioners by 2018, we can offer a 25%-30% discount on Accreditation Training and exam fees to the entire organization.