



NYC Materials Exchange Development Program

Strengthening NYC's materials exchange and reuse sector

Introduction

As a result of positive feedback from the 2007 Materials Exchange Conference (where reuse professionals discussed the challenges shared by their organizations) and two recent workshops (Low/No Cost Marketing Strategies and Nonprofit Liabilities) the NYC Materials Exchange Development Program (MEDP) has developed the Materials Exchange Certificate Program.

The Materials Exchange Certificate Program is a series of seven interactive workshops designed to strengthen NYC's materials exchange organizations. The program will enable MEDP to provide an entire series of progressive workshops to support reuse organizations more effectively and allow for a deeper level of commitment to the sector.

Specifically, this program gives MEDP an opportunity to:

- **Invest in Leadership:** This project will increase the capacity of reuse sector staff to provide the kind of training and technical assistance that will make them more effective leaders, both in their communities as managers of volunteers, and in their agencies as professionals skilled in the areas of strategic thinking, marketing, fundraising, and program development.
- **Improve Operations:** Through the sharing of knowledge among during skilled training workshops and peer-to-peer discussion opportunities (listserve, conference calls, etc).
- **Increase Sustainability:** By laying the groundwork for long-term systemic change, this program will create new partnerships that will build the leadership and volunteer base to grow strong reuse sector programming in new communities. It will also create training and retention tools that may help participants decrease staff and volunteer turnover.

The Certificate Program

This 21-hour certificate program, consisting of seven workshops, will be designed to assist reuse professionals in developing, expanding or improving their programs. Registered participants who attend at least five of the seven sessions will receive a certification of completion upon graduation and additional technical assistance, for up to one year post course.

During the first year of implementation, the program will open to those working in junior, mid, and senior level programmatic and administrative staff within the materials exchange and reuse sector. If there is a second year of implementation, we could make the program to board members and volunteers as well.

Each of the seven workshops will be approximately three hours in length, and will be interactive and group-work oriented. The series includes the following workshops:

- **Orientation Breakfast / Goal Setting & Effective Planning Workshop:** Participants will be get an introduction to the materials exchange and reuse sector, including the historical

context and the current social, economic and environmental impacts of reuse. Participants will then work to define their mission and vision, sets goals and develops action steps to help focus its present and future resources toward fulfilling its vision.

- **Board Development and Volunteer Management Workshop:** Participants learn effective tools to recruit, retain, and develop volunteers and Board Members to buy in to programs and support agency efforts.
- **Marketing Skills Workshop:** Participants will learn to create a simple, effective marketing plan to position their organization in a unique niche
- **Taxes, Risk and Liability Workshop:** Participants learn about tax regulations that affect their triple bottom line. In addition, participants will learn tools for risk management, insurance and liability issues specific to donated goods and services.
- **Budgeting & Fundraising Skills Workshop:** Participants learn the various tools and techniques that may be used to develop sustainable program budgets and secure needed program support.
- **Warehousing and Logistics Workshop:** Participants learn the various tools and techniques that may be used to effectively manage the warehousing and logistics of their reuse warehouses.
- **Program Evaluation & Reporting Success Workshop / Graduation Luncheon:** Participants learn the importance of formal evaluation of their programs and will be introduced to basic tools for evaluation (on and offline approaches). The luncheon will be open to colleagues and family of the participants.

Participants

The application process for participants requires an 1) application form with personal statement of interest and resume; and an 2) organizational recommendation for each applicant. A panel will review and select up to 15 members to participate in the first year of implementation. Those accepted must complete an organizational analysis survey. This analysis will provide participants the ability to set goals for the series of workshops and allow MEDP to monitor results.

The workshops will be take place once a month. Upon completion, they will receive their certificate and be offered a set amount of one-on-one technical assistance that will reinforce their organizational integration of the learned skills.

Program Evaluation

From the beginning of the Materials Exchange Certificate Program, MEDP will measure and evaluate impact. MEDP will utilize several methods of inquiry including a retrospective post-then-pre questionnaire for certificate participants, evaluations of each workshop, and a six-month post attendance evaluation for participants.

This will allow MEDP to produce reports on a quarterly basis, illustrating self-reported behavioral changes among participants, in addition to additional feedback from stakeholders at their organization. Using the current web-based resources provided by MEDP, data can be collected from each participant and this can easily be monitored and analyzed by MEDP program staff. Data will be compiled and analyzed leading to a snapshot/online publication of results each quarter.