



CNCA Membership Criteria and Participation Standards

Effective 25 October 2018

Membership Criteria

Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance (CNCA) member cities constitute the climate vanguard cities. The Alliance thrives on member participation. It is expected that all members contribute actively to the discussions on the opportunities and challenges connected to city climate action.

To be considered for membership, cities must fulfill the following membership criteria:

1. City Council has formally adopted community-wide carbon neutrality goals across all sectors (electricity, thermal, transportation, waste).
2. City has developed, or is currently developing, a community-wide carbon neutrality implementation plan.
3. City has budget and staff dedicated to implementing its carbon neutrality implementation plan.
4. City is committed to active participation in the Alliance (i.e. interested in learning from other cities, committed to sharing with other cities, and committed to advancing urban carbon neutrality goals globally).

Participation Standards

CNCA Participation Standards are divided into the following categories: (1) Network Activities, (2) Communications Standards, and (3) Vanguard City Standards. The rationale for these categories is that the Alliance's success in supporting members depends on the members actively:

- Contributing to the Alliance's activities and initiatives;
- Communicating internally and externally on their climate; and
- Maintaining the necessary capacity to implement ambitious climate strategies.

Network Activities

The Alliance is based on peer exchange and active participation from our members. It is a member driven network. Members place high value on in-depth discussions with their peers to solve sustainability challenges. This part of the Participation Standards, then, aims to ensure that all members actively contribute to the work of the Alliance.

All CNCA members are required to:

- Participate in the CNCA Annual Meeting by sending at least one City representative.
- Serve on at least one leadership committee within a five-year period. Current leadership committees include the Steering Committee, Innovation Committee and Game Changer Committee.
- Respond to annual Member Impact Survey.
- Pay annual member dues (Appendix A).

Communication Standards

The leading climate action cities – the cities that constitute the CNCA membership – are particularly well-positioned to be the voice of the subnational movement. CNCA is keen to elevate this city voice globally and requires the following in order to enhance the role of CNCA and its membership in climate communications:

All CNCA members are required to:

- Display the CNCA badge prominently on the City website (e.g. on the City’s sustainability/climate homepage).
- Submit to CNCA staff annual updates for the City’s profile page on the CNCA website (the more frequent the better).

All CNCA members are required to do at least two of the following, annually:

- Publish at least 1 op-ed by the City’s mayor or sustainability director, mentioning CNCA (and in coordination w/ CNCA).
- Participate in CNCA-led sign-on letters, press statements where/when appropriate.
- Mention CNCA in conversations w/ reporters and make referrals where appropriate.
- Organize a workshop/training w/ CNCA staff to build out a communications strategy.
- Identify City staff messengers that can work w/ CNCA on media moments (e.g. TV interviews, quotes for reporters).

Vanguard City Standards

CNCA maintains a high bar for membership. CNCA members are committed to both achieving carbon neutrality and implementing ambitious climate strategies in rapid pursuit of these goals. This Participation Standard addresses what it means to be a global climate Vanguard City.

All CNCA members are required to:

- Develop a detailed community-wide carbon neutrality implementation plan. The plan should:
 - Follow best practices for what should be contained in a carbon neutrality implementation plan, as outlined in the CNCA Framework for [Long-Term Deep Carbon Reduction Planning](#);
 - Include an institutional capacity strategy for how the city plans to organize itself internally to implement and resource the work; and
 - Include a plan for monitoring and evaluating implementation strategies to ensure they contribute to emissions reduction as intended.
- If the City does not yet have a carbon neutrality implementation plan, it should develop one within the next two years.