

## **Quick Start Guide for ASHRAE Community Sustainability Projects**

**Introduction:** ASHRAE Community Sustainability Projects typically involve three distinct tasks: identification of a local non-profit beneficiary and planning for the project (1<sup>st</sup> task); fundraising (2<sup>nd</sup> task); and design, construction and commissioning of the actual project itself (3<sup>rd</sup> task).

In most cases, there will be overlap between all three tasks. However, most projects flow from Task 1 to Task 2 to Task 3.

This quick start guide is broken down into these three tasks.

### **Task 1 – Planning**

1. Select a not-for-profit charity active in your local community with following criteria:
  - The charity financially supports facilities that are owned.
  - The charity is looking for ways to lower annual operating costs.
  - The charity is willing to participate and provide staff support for fundraisers.
  
2. Consider partnering with another organization for the event:
  - Partnering with another professional society broadens the reach and provides synergy for the event.
  - Lessens the workload on the chapter, ensuring the project is more sustainable for the long term.
  - Performing the chores associated with pulling off the event and raising sponsorships is easier with a partner of equal status.
  
3. Establish leadership and working committees:
  - Incoming president-elect is responsible for sponsorships, budget and oversight of the event with all working committees reporting.
  - Ensure any partnering professional organizations understand its responsibilities. This group is responsible for its own ticket sales and sponsorships.
  - Working committees are responsible for food, venue setup, venue breakdown and cleanup, alcohol permits, band, advertising and promotion, security detail, charity contacts, event program, event posters, event sponsor recognition and ticket sales.
  - Establish a budget for the project. Performing an energy audit as outlined in Task 3 can help identify project opportunities. Work with the design team to establish a realistic budget based on projected materials donations or low cost purchases.

## **Task 2 – Fundraising**

4. Establish fundraising boundaries based on what your consistent supporters can budget:
  - Based on other events held by your chapter, establish sponsorships that allow participation of loyal supporters from research, scholarships, etc.
  - When seeking sponsorships, consider that many companies establish their budgets in early fall. Proposition regular supporters of the upcoming year's chapter events and sponsorship opportunities.
  - Based on the number of supporters, the fundraiser will then be established. Tickets for the fundraiser should cover the cost of the event. The sponsorship money will serve as the charitable gift.
  
5. Selection of a venue and timing of event:
  - The venue should be centrally located to most of the membership.
  - Typically, Wednesdays or Thursdays are the best days for fundraisers.
  - The fundraiser should not conflict with other annual chapter activities. If outside, preference is for cooler weather.
  - Check other professional groups that cater to same sponsors for scheduled events to avoid having two events at the same time.

## **Task 3 – Project design, Construction and Commissioning**

6. This task should be conducted similar to a design-build project where all three teams – design, construction and commission – work in parallel with each other vs. the traditional plan and specification project delivery method. Using chapter membership and committee resources, this should be the easiest and most enjoyable part of the Community Sustainability Project!
  
7. Use available ASHRAE resources, such as the procedures to performing energy audits, and the [“Advanced Energy Design Guide”](#) series. The ASHRAE publication [“Procedures for Commercial Building Energy Audits”](#) details the procedures for the various energy audit level procedures, and is an ideal starting point when in the design stage of the project.