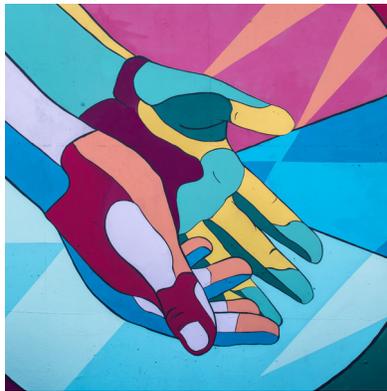
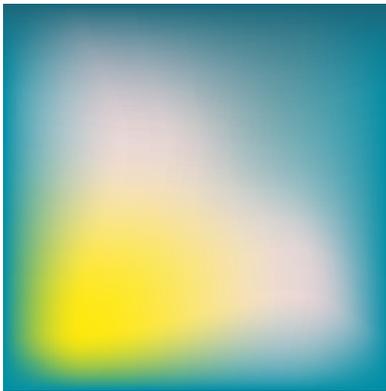


November 2020

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# USGBC All In: Building Equity Together





## Building a healthier, more equitable future

USGBC's new vision and global economic recovery strategy announced earlier this year—**Healthy people in healthy places equals a healthy economy** – articulates the interconnected role buildings and communities play in people's health and the economy at large. The strategy outlines a series of actions and priorities to support the global pandemic recovery effort and leverage the power of our community to shape a healthier future for all. A key commitment in this strategy includes accelerating the implementation of the USGBC equity program, and ensuring that sustainability, health and wellness and equity are grounded in all of USGBC, GBCI and Arc's programs.

At Greenbuild 2019, we announced the formation of a USGBC equity program to accelerate our organizational efforts around this critical topic. We did so because we were not satisfied with how we were addressing it. Over the past year, we have dedicated ourselves to being part of the solution because we believe now is the time for USGBC to double down and to put our budget and resources toward building a more inclusive vision.

Green building and social equity go hand in hand, and we know that addressing and emphasizing sustainability throughout the building industry can provide communities with resources and access to opportunities that can help them reach their full potential. A sustainable future is meaningless without an equitable future.

Social equity is the foundation upon which USGBC's mission was built. For more than a quarter century, USGBC has been working to encourage sustainable building practices that create an environmentally and socially responsible, healthy and prosperous environment that improves quality of life for all. But we know that in order to achieve our mission and vision, we need to address some challenging questions and take bolder action as an organization.

We acknowledge we aren't yet leaders in equity, and we wholeheartedly are ready to do the work in changing that. Social equity cannot be an add-on. It must be a core belief and foundational pillar. It requires deeply personal, often uncomfortable discussions around painful experiences. It demands a conversation where USGBC does far more listening than talking and it requires us to amplify voices that have gone unheard for far too long. The USGBC equity program will address these issues so we can make real, measurable progress toward building a healthier, more equitable future for all.

To kickstart this effort, we started by listening to equity leaders inside and outside of our community through a series of summits throughout 2020. Hundreds of USGBC members, LEED professionals, sustainability advocates, key social and environmental justice leaders and economic and community development experts shared stories on how they've been able to overcome, empower others and help them succeed. They showed us how their work prioritizes equity and moves the needle for equity in the building industry. They pushed us with new ideas and rooted us with guiding principles for how they are striving to champion inclusivity. We learned strategies and examples of bringing new and different stakeholders into the process of developing green buildings, cities and communities – and empowering these partners to become involved in and influence the planning process and benefit from these project's outcomes.

Summit attendees voiced that they want USGBC to lead, but differently. They called on USGBC to do this by, first and foremost, empowering community members impacted by inequities to be involved with, and lead, the process of coming up with the solutions to address those inequities. Next, they want USGBC to play a proactive role by serving as a hub to provide tools, resources and expertise to those community members to legitimize, model and elevate these solutions to disrupt the market. Finally, to meet the moment, they urged USGBC to act now.

These summits called on us to be clear in our beliefs and accountable in our actions. After listening to and learning from equity leaders inside and outside of our community, we strive to embed equity in everything we do. This is our commitment as an organization, a community and a market leader.

**USGBC sees our role in equity as taking inclusive action to empower all people to reach their full potential and improve their standard of living regardless of race, class, gender, ability, age, health or economic status. We will do this by working collaboratively to develop tools, resources and knowledge to amplify their voices.**

And now, we are excited to announce **USGBC All In**, the new name for our equity program. All In will serve as the roadmap for how USGBC will lead on equity and includes a series of commitments and actions that the organization will make to ensure we work with our stakeholders to address the social, health and economic disparities within their communities, while we continue to listen, learn and evolve as an organization.

All In will encourage every member of our community—from member companies to projects to individuals—to participate in and share the efforts they are making around increasing equity. We will not only celebrate and recognize the leadership of the people getting it right, but also identify opportunities for our community to be effective allies and partners in this work and provide resources and tools to help advance equity in green building. And by collaborating with a variety of partners around the globe, we'll evolve a detailed, global vision for USGBC All In, while also acknowledging and addressing regional and local needs and implications.

In support of All In we are outlining a series of actions and priorities to seek feedback from our community to finalize and launch the program in the first quarter of 2021.

- 1. Expand scholarships, grants and funding.** We will expand our offering of a variety of scholarships and grants to help members of underserved communities. In addition to providing our own funding, we will work to raise capital to incubate ideas and solutions that benefit underserved communities and address inequity.
- 2. Make LEED more accessible through Arc for All.** LEED is the most widely used green building rating system in the world and we aspire for all buildings to use LEED to transform the spaces where we live, learn, work and play. While more than 100,000 projects are participating in LEED, there are millions of buildings in the world that are not participating in green building yet or thinking about certification and this is where the greatest potential for impact lies. To ensure all projects can access LEED, we will offer Arc for All for free to projects from underserved and underrepresented communities to meet them where they are and help them take the incremental steps towards LEED certification.
- 3. Establish a USGBC equity scholar program.** We will partner with colleges and universities to establish an equity scholar program to onboard students from underserved communities as staff at USGBC and provide them with mentorship and training to support their career development.

- 4. Recognize people, projects and organizations.** All In will offer a framework to verify the equity practices, including governance practices and achievements, of people, projects, products and organizations, which will be independently verified by GBCI. For LEED projects, which includes cities and communities, this framework will complement LEED certification and assess design, construction, operations and performance management practices, to ensure they are inclusive and equitable.
- 5. Evolve equity strategies in LEED.** We will refine and enhance the LEED intent, pilot credits, credits, regional priority credits and the integrative design process to ensure projects pursuing LEED certification prioritize and implement inclusive design, construction and operational strategies.
- 6. Educate and develop a new workforce of green building leaders.** We will develop new credentials and certificates, commit to strengthening our current credentials and their approach to equity and undertake an effort to build capacity for current and future credentials (including the LEED AP) from those from underserved and underrepresented communities.
- 7. Transform USGBC internal governance.** We will review and transform USGBC's governance structure including its board and committees, and the policies by which it operates, to include and empower those who have not historically been able to participate in shaping the vision for USGBC, GBCI and LEED. We will also establish CEO Advisory Councils around the world to advise and support USGBC's CEO on how to evaluate, evolve, implement and grow USGBC All In. This will start with a call for engagement for equity advocates from inside and outside our community to join us. We will also continue to empower our staff to include equity across their workstreams to holistically evolve our programs, staff and community engagement.
- 8. Evolve equity strategies in the suite of GBCI rating systems.** We will refine and enhance the intents, credits, pilot credits and scorecard of the GBCI suite of rating systems to encourage projects pursuing these certification programs to adopt inclusive strategies through all phases of their projects.
- 9. Build partnerships.** We will continue to develop partnerships within and outside our community to educate us and hold us accountable on the effectiveness of USGBC All In. We will align with and integrate the best practices developed by our partners to unify and accelerate adoption.
- 10. Convene education sessions.** We will organize events to educate our community to understand the challenges faced by underserved communities as it relates to green spaces, buildings, communities and cities, including but not limited to topics such as accessibility, affordability, exclusion and empowerment. We will include and listen to the people who have experienced inequities and integrate them with and proactively connect them to our community members to help solve problems.
- 11. Conduct research.** We will conduct periodic research and public opinion surveys to understand the effectiveness of All In, overcome any inherent biases and to ensure that everyone's voice is included. We believe that measurement leads to refinement, which leads to progress. That means collecting data, learning from it and adapting strategies to deliver better results. Many members of our community are already collecting data on inequities, whether it be on issues like gentrification, access to green space, fresh food inaccessibility, educational attainment and health. We encourage this data collection and will recognize leaders who show how they are creating places that promote social equity as part of their projects and activities.
- 12. Raise the Living Standard for all.** Through the Living Standard campaign, we will engage everyday citizens in leadership to create a more inclusive USGBC community. We will do this through amplifying the voices of underserved community members through storytelling — telling the success stories of the ways in which our member companies, projects and people are addressing inequity in their communities. And by highlighting the personal stories behind the health, social, and economic benefits of green building — both from the perspective of the USGBC members leading projects and community members who are engaged throughout the process.

We commit to these actions, because we know that they are the foundation for our shared vision: **Healthy people in healthy places equals a healthy economy.** This vision will be realized when we have more:

- Buildings and homes that incorporate equity strategies to help underserved communities reach their full potential
- Communities and cities that meet the needs of All Inhabitants
- Organizations that lead by contributing to an equitable society
- People who thrive in a more equitable society

[Join USGBC](#) in making this a reality.