

## LEED and the Hospitality Industry

### **Can hotels, motels, resorts and other hospitality facilities use the LEED green building certification program?**

Yes, the suite of LEED rating systems includes a range of environmental and performance measures that can be implemented in a variety of different space types, including lodging and conference facilities. In the case of some space types, such as schools, healthcare facilities, and retail spaces, USGBC has developed specific modifications to LEED that recognize unique building opportunities and challenges. Such modifications are being developed for lodging properties (see more information below) but until they are released, LEED for New Construction and LEED for Existing Buildings: Operations & Maintenance remain the appropriate rating systems for hospitality projects to use.

### **How many hospitality projects are involved with LEED?**

To date, 40 lodging properties have achieved LEED certification. An additional 900 lodging projects have registered with LEED and are working towards certification. Non-lodging hospitality projects, mainly conference and convention centers, represent another area of growth: 17 such properties are currently LEED certified, and an additional 85 are pursuing certification.

### **Will there be a LEED certification program (rating system) specific to Hospitality?**

Hospitality properties can present unique challenges and opportunities in certain areas of environmental performance, often due to features such as on-site amenities, food and beverage operations, pool and laundry operations, convention facilities, frequent renovation cycles, and transient guest populations. The U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) brought together a group of hospitality industry leaders in 2008 in order to identify the areas of LEED that need further attention in light of hospitality-specific circumstances. From this work, USGBC produced a needs assessment outlining technical and non-technical changes that would allow LEED to better capture environmental opportunities in lodging and other hospitality properties. Through its established committee structure, USGBC formed a formal Hospitality Adaptations Working Group comprised of industry experts from USGBC member companies. This group is currently working with the LEED Steering Committee, USGBC staff, and the LEED Technical Advisory Groups to modify certain LEED credits in order to adapt existing LEED credits to better match the environmental impacts of hospitality projects.

### **When will these refinements to LEED be available to the market?**

The process of changing a LEED certification program is no small task. LEED is developed through an open, consensus-based process. The key elements of USGBC's consensus process include a balanced and transparent committee structure, technical advisory groups that ensure scientific consistency and rigor, opportunities for stakeholder comment and review, member ballot of new rating systems, and a fair and open appeals process. While it does take some time, the transparent process ensures industry involvement as well as the rigor, integrity, and appropriateness for the industry of the resulting requirements. USGBC will provide further information on the expected timeline as possible.

**Is USGBC's certification system refinement work focused only on newly constructed hotels?**

The needs assessment examines the potential changes to all applicable rating systems, including those focused on design & construction, as well as LEED for Existing Buildings: Operations & Maintenance. All future refinements of the rating system will look holistically at design, construction, operations and maintenance. Improving the environmental performance of existing buildings' operations & maintenance represents a significant portion of the environmental opportunity in real estate.

**Will the changes to the LEED certification program be significant?**

It is anticipated that the bulk of the rating system will remain the same but that certain credits will be refined to better suit the hospitality market. Six LEED credits will be significantly adapted. Clarifications will be made regarding many other credits.

**Should hoteliers use the existing LEED rating systems until the hospitality version is released?**

Yes, hotelier use of the existing LEED rating systems helps the industry begin adjusting its practices and serves as an extremely valuable source of feedback for USGBC.

**How can I be sure that my product or service is represented in LEED?**

USGBC does not certify, promote, or endorse products and services of individual companies. Products and services do play a role in LEED and can help projects meet the requirements of certain LEED credits in order to achieve those credits (note that products and services do not directly earn LEED points for projects.)

Since LEED does not specifically reference specific products or services, it is suggested that you learn about the LEED Rating System to find out how your product or service can help projects meet credit requirements. Please visit [www.usgbc.org](http://www.usgbc.org) for more information.