

### PURPOSE

This fact sheet provides answers to frequently asked questions from Facility Partners interested in mentoring other federal organizations. Mentoring is a requirement for receiving the Federal Electronics Challenge (FEC) Gold level award.

### MENTORING GUIDANCE

#### **What does “mentoring” mean in the context of the Federal Electronics Challenge?**

To satisfy the FEC Gold level award mentoring requirement, an FEC partner needs to provide direct support to two federal facilities or agencies to assist them in implementing more sustainable electronics management strategies. The assistance can be provided to any facility, including those within the partner’s own agency. Also, it is not necessary for the facilities to be FEC partners. The level and depth of support are determined jointly by the mentor and mentee.

Examples of mentoring activities include:

- Meeting with individual facility representatives to answer questions related to the electronics life-cycle or FEC participation.
- Providing support in completing FEC documentation, such as the baseline survey or goals identification.
- Working with an individual facility to implement FEC goals, such as developing acquisition language, authoring a power management policy, or selecting an electronics recycler.
- FEC Champions that provide assistance or support to a federal agency or facility may also count these activities as mentoring activities.

Alternatively, a partner may fulfill one of its two facility mentoring obligations by developing a new tool or white paper on a specific, relevant topic and making it available to FEC partners and other federal facilities. Distribution may be accomplished through a variety of means, including presenting it at conferences, trainings, and/or FEC monthly partner calls; distributing it via the FEC listserv; and/or posting it on the FEC or partner’s Web sites.

#### **What activities are NOT mentoring in the context of the Federal Electronics Challenge?**

Mentoring activities are intended to provide direct, specific support to one or more federal facilities or agencies.

The following activities are generally not considered mentoring, because they do not meet the above requirements:

- Activities aimed primarily at a non-federal audience, such as promoting a residential electronics recycling program to the general public or working with State or local governments on electronics issues.
- Working within your own FEC partner facility to promote and implement your internal FEC program.

If you have a question as to whether or not an activity you are planning will meet the mentoring requirements, please send an e-mail to [partner@electronicschallenge.net](mailto:partner@electronicschallenge.net).

### **Why does the FEC require mentoring?**

The federal agencies and facilities participating in the FEC will be among the best teachers for other agencies and facilities. As partners make progress in achieving FEC goals, they will uncover barriers as well as successful paths toward purchasing greener electronics products and managing electronic assets in an environmentally sound manner. These hard fought lessons need not be reinvented by each partner. By establishing mentoring, or peer-to-peer relationships, mentees can accelerate their progress, and mentors can gain recognition for their efforts and solidify their knowledge base.

### **What are the benefits of being a mentor or mentee?**

#### *Mentors:*

- Gain positive recognition as environmental leaders.
- Gain increased knowledge and experience learned from assisting others in solving problems or implementing improvements.

#### *Mentees:*

- Learn how others achieve successes.
- Save time and money by not having to “reinvent the wheel.”
- Receive access to the tools and support needed to achieve success.

#### *Mentors and mentees together:*

- Leverage resources.
- Gain exposure to new ideas, knowledge, and best practices.
- Experience accelerated progress toward meeting FEC goals.
- Experience opportunities for leveraging purchasing, as well as end-of-life e-waste management contracts.

### **How do I identify potential mentees?**

- You can seek out your own mentees from past or present relationships.
- FEC Champions can refer mentees to you.
- If you have a specific topic area in which you would like to provide mentoring, the FEC Champions can put out a call for mentees needing that type of assistance.

### **What are the reporting requirements?**

Reporting requirements entail a brief written narrative that documents the following:

- Who was your mentee? Please provide their contact information.
- What was the nature of the interaction?
- What were the key issues addressed?
- How was it helpful to you and the mentee?

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### What are examples of mentoring activities undertaken by FEC partners?

An FEC Gold level award applicant can meet its mentoring requirement through a wide range of activities. Many different models and examples of environmental mentoring relationships have proven successful. Some relationships remain active for years, while other mentors and mentees work together for a short time to exchange information or achieve certain goals.

The following are examples of mentoring activities completed by 2007 Gold Level Award recipients:

*U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Agricultural Research Service (ARS), Cropping Systems and Water Quality Research Unit (CSWQRU)*

CSWQRU approached two other federal facilities in Columbia to share information and experiences regarding the Federal Electronics Challenge. CSWQRU representatives met with representatives from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Ecological Services on October 11. On October 27, CSWQRU representatives also met with representatives from the USDA Farm Services Agency. At both meetings, CSWQRU described their electronics stewardship activities and the Federal Electronics Challenge in detail, discussed the information CSWQRU had assembled in a 2006 Green Computing brochure and left brochures and a Technotrash® Can for the mentee offices to use. Both offices frequently donate computers to schools, but policies prevent them from shutting down over night to save energy. Neither office was aware of Technotrash® cans and both were eager to recycle disposable media and other Technotrash®.

*U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Administration and Resource Management (OARM)*

A representative from OARM met with a representative from the Government Accountability Office (GAO) on November 7, 2006 to discuss OARM's participation in the FEC. This session included details about OARM's approach to obtain the Gold Level Award in 2006. The data gathering methodology for completing the award application was also discussed, especially as it relates to the data sources and inputs for reporting on the Baseline Survey. Of particular interest to GAO was the methodology for establishing costs and revenue generated from recycling electronics equipment in an environmentally responsible manner. Additionally, OARM stressed that GAO should also practice greater stewardship of its electronic assets. This included discussing alternatives for excessing and disposing of property, such as the options available both under General Services Administration (GSA) and EPA's Recycling Electronics Asset Disposition (READ) services contract.

*U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10*

The Region is a member to the Seattle Federal Executive Board's Interagency Environmental Leadership Committee. This committee includes many of the larger agencies in the Region, such as the Army Corps of Engineers Seattle District, Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Regional Headquarters, U.S. Navy, U.S. Army, and GSA. The Region has given two dedicated briefings on the FEC program and EPEAT. As part of these efforts, there have been two new partners from Region 10, Naval Facility Northwest (NAVFAC NW) and FAA Area Operations Center (AOC) Renton.



## Answers to Frequent Questions: Mentoring

Updated: 08/03/2007

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### REFERENCES

For more general information on environmental mentoring, visit the Mentoring Topic Hub of the Pacific Northwest Pollution Prevention Resource Center:

<http://www.pprc.org/hubs/toc.cfm?hub=1002&subsec=7&nav=7>.

For information about the 2008 FEC awards process, please see:

<http://www.federalectronicchallenge.net/recognition.htm>.

### CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have questions related to this resource or need other assistance with the Federal Electronics Challenge, please contact your Regional Champion. The list of FEC Regional Champions is available at <http://www.federalectronicchallenge.net/champions.htm>.

Partners may also request technical assistance via email to [partner@electronicschallenge.net](mailto:partner@electronicschallenge.net).

### FEDERAL ELECTRONICS CHALLENGE

Web site: <http://www.federalectronicchallenge.net/>

E-mail: [info@electronicschallenge.net](mailto:info@electronicschallenge.net)