Affiliate Maturity Matrix

Effective operating standards help ACE National and its affiliates improve the quality, consistency and continuity of programming and administrative functions throughout all the communities we serve. This set of standards, as reflected in the Maturity Matrix created by ACE National, demonstrates our commitment to excellence and our accountability to our students, schools, mentors, and sponsors.

The Maturity Matrix is a tool that allows affiliates to evaluate themselves against program standards. In addition, ACE National can use the tool to assess ACE's overall operation. Each program standard has four levels of maturity ranging from basic to outstanding performance.

Each category is broken down into four levels of maturity.   An affiliate may rank low on the Maturity Matrix (level 1) in some categories and high (level 4) in others. This will help the affiliate learn areas of its operation where improvement is needed.

Affiliate Self-Assessment

The first step is for an affiliate to perform a self-assessment based on the eleven Matrix categories. The affiliate should review the criteria for each category and rate itself accordingly. This will give the affiliate a snapshot of its strengths and weaknesses and identify areas needing future improvement. Not only does the Maturity Matrix give an affiliate a subjective assessment, but it also provides ACE national leadership a comparison of the ACE program across the country.

Category	Maturity Levels			
	Level 1	**Level 2**	**Level 3**	**Level 4**
Board Development and Effectiveness	Board members for the most part are the leaders who launched affiliate. The board directly conducts most operations and functions of affiliate including mentoring. Board list appears on affiliate page on national website and is uploaded to affiliate profile in database.	Board membership is expanded beyond initial core of affiliate organizers. The board draws from different segments of the industry and reflects demographic diversity. Board undertakes strategic planning. New board members receive orientation.	Board has transitioned from operational to largely policy and fundraising functions. Board relies on committee structure and division of responsibilities. Board reviews affiliate by-laws at least every 3 years. Board membership includes key people from non-industry organizations (e.g., school systems, colleges, other important community groups).	Board implements a succession plan to regularly replace leadership and board members. Relative to the size of local A-E-C industry, board effectively generates adequate resources (mentors, funding) to enable affiliate to expand. Affiliate shares its best practices throughout the ACE network. Board assists with start-up or coaching of other affiliates (if requested).

Category	Maturity Levels			
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Mentors	All mentors are registered in the national database with an approved background check. Affiliate Mentor Liaison is assigned and completes required annual training.	Most mentor teams show a balance of professionals from A-E-C fields. Affiliate begins to expand its mentor recruitment activities. Mentors advise and assist students with post-secondary school plans. Affiliate nominates a candidate for the national ENR/ACE Outstanding Mentor Program.	Affiliate has developed a strong network of mentors. Affiliate has effective system for supporting mentors to take lead mentor positions and rotates leader positions. A "mentor coordinator" or committee oversees recruitment, training, coordination and needs of mentors.	Affiliate creates and shares new hands-on activities for ACE network. Affiliate formally recognizes or spotlights mentors for their contributions and has developed effective strategies to minimize mentor burnout. Affiliate regularly asks mentors to evaluate its program and modifies the program accordingly.
Programming and Student Participation	All students are registered in the national database with a completed parent consent form. Affiliate conducts a pilot/abbreviated program. Students are recruited from one or two schools which the affiliate has direct contact with.	Affiliate operates a full program with a final presentation. Affiliate's growing reputation stimulates additional schools to request an ACE team.	Affiliate has a strong relationship with a local school system which helps promote ACE to schools and attract dedicated school champions. Demographic profile of ACE students reflects that of local school system(s). Program includes special enrichment activities such as construction site tours.	Affiliate has structured programming in order to keep returning students engaged. Affiliate organizes special affiliate-wide activities for all students such as a trades day. Affiliate regularly asks students to evaluate its program and modifies the program accordingly.

Category	Maturity Levels			
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Community Connections and Visibility	Affiliate's connections in its community derive solely from mentor firms, sponsors, and school(s) where it operates.	Affiliate has begun to actively widen its base of connections and establishes some informal partnerships with community and industry organizations. Board members regularly promote ACE to other organizations and represent the affiliate at meetings of other organizations.	Affiliate has developed mutually beneficial formal partnerships with community and industry organizations (e.g., local AIA chapter) and established ties to local institutions of higher learning. Affiliate has a marketing plan for press coverage, PR and is active on social media.	Affiliate and/or its leaders earn recognition/awards due to ACE accomplishments. Affiliate receives visibility in local press. Affiliate is beneficiary of fundraising events by other organizations.
Financial Management	Affiliate has a treasurer on the board. Affiliate fully reimburses ACE National for insurance premiums, background checks, and administrative fee. Affiliate annually files tax reports and, if required, renews charitable registration. Affiliate annually develops a budget and prepares profit & loss and balance statements.	Affiliate has accounting expertise available. Affiliate has established internal system of financial checks and balances so that basic fiscal responsibilities are divided among different individuals to prevent possible fraud. Affiliate has created a fundraising strategy to achieve financial goals.	Affiliate board has established committee that sets and oversees financial policies and procedures. Affiliate has a reliable stream of contributions. Affiliate has accumulated a reserve of 3-9 months operating expenses.	Affiliate has created a safe investment strategy for funds held against future obligations, especially scholarships. Affiliate has begun to secure multi-year sponsorships. Affiliate has accumulated a reserve of 9-12 months operating expenses.

Category	Maturity Levels			
	Level 1	*Level 2*	*Level 3*	*Level 4*
Scholarships	No scholarships are offered. Affiliate nominates a student for CMiC scholarships each year. Affiliate shares National Scholarship Opportunities available on ACE National website with students each year.	Affiliate has developed a scholarship program and objective method for determining recipients. Affiliate has set terms for scholarship distribution to winners. Affiliate uses the national database scholarship section.	Affiliate runs a robust scholarship program, including multi-year awards and awards of different values. Affiliate has a tracking system for winners and distribution of their awards. Restricted funds are tracked for future obligations.	Affiliate has established relationships with institutions of higher learning that offer students scholarships, and special admission consideration (i.e., matching dollar). Affiliate offers scholarships for alumni.
Administration	Affiliate ensures all mentors and students are registered in the national database with respective requirements completed.	Administrative functions are coordinated and assigned. Students are promptly notified whether they are accepted into program and then placed on a team. Affiliate fulfills all annual compliance requirements. Affiliate updates affiliate page on national website with board list and contact information each year.	Affiliate has strong, clear workplan for all necessary administrative functions and requirements. Affiliate explores options to obtain dedicated administrative assistance to relieve burden on ACE volunteers. Affiliate uploads all compliance documents to the affiliate profile in the national database each year.	Affiliate effectively manages logistics of complicated special events such as fundraisers or all-team activities. Affiliates may hire part- or full-time administrative assistant, or work out arrangements with another organization for some form of in-kind services.

Category	Maturity Levels			
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Alumni	No alumni tracking or contact.	Affiliate/mentors stay in touch with alumni informally.

Students are encouraged to register as alumni in the national database. | Affiliate has an established process to stay in contact with all alumni.

Affiliate has a formal process of getting alumni to register in the national database.

Affiliate regularly communicates with alumni and invites them to affiliate events. | Affiliate has an alumni committee that oversees alumni initiatives.

Affiliate is a resource to alumni by providing guidance, internships and scholarships.

Alumni regularly attend affiliate events.

Some alumni serve as mentors for affiliate or other affiliates. |
| **Internships – High School** | No internship program. | Affiliate has an informal internship program. ACE students intern with various companies. | Affiliate establishes a formal internship program. 5% of ACE students have internships each year. | Affiliate has established a formal internship program. 10% of ACE students have internships each year. |
| **Internships - Alumni/College** | No internship program. | Affiliate has an informal alumni internship program. ACE alumni intern with various companies. | Affiliate establishes a formal alumni internship program. 5% of ACE alumni have internships each year. | Affiliate has established a formal internship program for alumni. 10% of ACE alumni have internships each year. |

Growth	Affiliate leadership provides no impetus for growth. It is non-existent or slow.	Board takes steps to develop a strategic plan including growth.	Board actively works to implement strategies for growth of students, mentors, and funding. Affiliate improves its student retention rate.	Affiliate consistently achieves or exceeds growth targets for students, mentors, and funding. Affiliate maintains strong level of student retention.