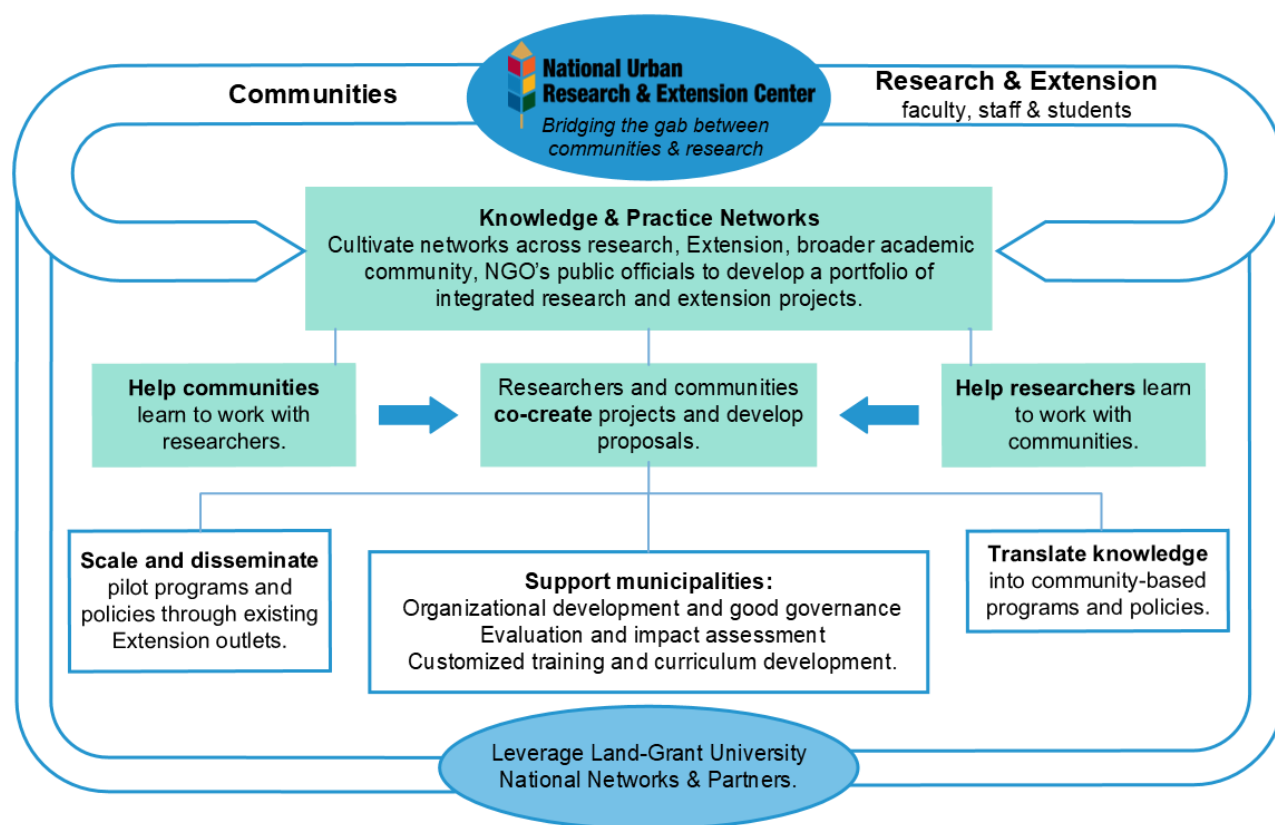


BUILDING COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH AND EXTENSION NETWORKS TO ADVANCE THE APPLICATION OF SCIENCE WITH URBAN COMMUNITIES

We are a collaborative membership-based nationwide organization for land-grant universities that facilitates the co-creation and application of knowledge; enabling urban communities to improve the health and wellbeing of all residents, achieve equitable economic growth, and steward their natural environments – delivering on the land-grant mission for urban residents, communities and the organizations that support them.

Mission

To address our nation's urban challenges, the National Urban Research and Extension Center (NUREC) bridges the gap between community and research by applying the unparalleled power and reach of the land-grant university system, rooted in Extension's community-centered approach.



We accomplish our mission by ...

Engaging

...cultivating a nationwide network of urban land-grant professionals to develop innovative research and Extension programming and share best practices to benefit metropolitan regions across the country.

... collaborating with communities to identify projects, co-create outcomes, and achieve those outcomes.

Innovating

...establishing ourselves as a leader in innovative approaches to emerging urban issues for external stakeholders and the land-grant university system.

...conducting, interpreting, and disseminating leading edge research that builds the capacity of communities, organizations, or government agencies to address emerging challenges.

Advancing

... leveraging the unprecedented reach of Extension through subject-matter based professional societies¹, cross-disciplinary organizations², the National Urban Extension Leaders, and the Extension Foundation.

...applying existing knowledge to novel or place-based issues and developing, piloting, refining, expanding, evaluating, and updating programs and influencing policies for local to national impact.

...disseminating research results through direct service and educational activities such as Extension's legacy programs including 4-H Youth Development, Master Gardeners and more recent programs.

...supporting the advancement of urban Extension, and development of the urban Extension workforce by identifying best practices, providing opportunities for skill building, career progression, and other initiatives.

Our Values

In Service to All for the Public Good - Land grant universities have a mandate to serve all the people of the nation. They work through a tripartite mission of creating, disseminating, and applying knowledge through research, teaching, and Extension.

Front Door to the University – NUREC's vision is aligned to that of Extension, the front door to the University...Extension builds the capacity of individuals, organizations, businesses, and communities, empowering them to find solutions for local issues and to improve their quality of life. We fully embrace the 'Extension approach' by starting with the community's need, assembling the expertise to address that need, and ensuring applicable solutions are developed and implemented. We work alongside communities to address key issues, leveraging both community and university assets; we do not test theories on communities.

Unbiased and Science-based - We bring the full breadth of our nation's land-grant university research and analysis to our projects and partners, facilitating unbiased evaluation and science-based results.

Community Engaged - We are community-focused, committed to working with diverse groups and forging effective partnerships. We identify local, state, regional and national needs and seek connections

¹ Including the Joint Council of Extension Professional (JCEP) Associations: ANREP - Assoc of Natural Resource Extension Professionals; NACAA - National Assoc of County Agricultural Agents; NACDEP - National Assoc of Community Development Extension Professionals; NAE4-HYDP - National Assoc of Extension 4-H Youth Development Professionals; and NEAFCS - National Extension Assoc of Family & Consumer Sciences and Extension Committee on Organization and Policy (ECOP) Program Action Teams (PATs).

² For example, NECI (National Extension Climate Initiative) and EDEN (Extension Disaster Education Network).

across our projects to proactively serve our communities. The mission of public service extends to our selection of clients.

Outcomes of NUREC

Through a strong and impactful national urban Extension profession and organization we will support:

The Health and Wellness of Individuals and Families – The components of a healthy lifestyle will be available to all including fresh affordable food, science-based nutrition information, safe spaces to be active, and equitable access to physical and mental health care.

The Health and Vitality of Neighborhoods, Communities, Cities, and Metropolitan Regions – The places where we reside will encourage civic engagement and civil dialogue; foster collaboration and a sense of belonging; and our municipal leaders will have the information to implement sound, equitable policies that allow all residents to thrive.

A Healthy Environment – In the face of climate change and the unique aspects of living in dense populations, individuals, families, businesses, organizations, and governments will engage in decision-making that positively affects their environment, building resilience and sustainability.

A Healthy Economy and Workforce – Individuals and communities will have equitable access to meaningful careers that support a high quality of life; economic advancement; and training and education that prepares them for those careers. Businesses will have access to skilled workers to support profitability, resilience and innovation in a changing world.

A Strong and Impactful National Urban Extension Profession and Organization – Extension professionals will have ready access to the tools and training that will help them succeed in complex metropolitan settings. Land-grant universities will adapt internal policies to support the unique needs of urban Extension work, encourage the development of a diverse Extension workforce, and provide opportunities for career advancement for urban Extension professionals within the academic system.

Our Unique Strengths

An Unprecedented Reach

- Able to leverage the assets of 112 land-grant universities (including 19 Historically Black and 35 Tribal Colleges and Universities), over 32,000 professional staff, and more than one million volunteers.
- Existing relationships with core funders in state and county governments, the U S Department of Agriculture (USDA), U S Forest Service (USFS) and others.
- Extensive experience in partnering and engaging with government agencies, school districts, and non-governmental organizations.
- As part of Extension, we have been embedded in the community for over 100 years developing, delivering, and evaluating educational programs such as 4-H Positive Youth Development, Health and Nutrition programs, and Master Gardener and Master Preserver/Food Safety trainings.

- A strong track record of working in multicultural settings to meet the needs of emerging populations and under-served groups.

Dynamic and Responsive

- We are responsive to emerging issues and able to access resources to incorporate up-to-date information into projects and programs.
- We have expertise in mobilizing community volunteers to disseminate information.
- We develop programs, including curricula, for diverse audiences of all levels of experience, including youth.

Innovative

- We navigate through complex, diverse data to find innovative solutions.
- We infuse new content into programs for key audiences.
- We are a learning organization; we build on existing expertise and incorporate research findings into new and existing projects while learning in partnership with those we serve.

Integrated Solutions

- **Our** approach is transdisciplinary, we work across typical subject matter and organizational silos to develop integrated solutions to societal issues and problems.
- We offer the flexibility to provide exactly what is required, whether it is a specific task or an entire project from inception to evaluation.
- We are an effective interface between municipalities, businesses, NGOs, and the vast resources of our nation's land-grant universities.
- We are sensitive to the operational and organizational complexities of our partners, collaborators, and stakeholders

Cost Effective

- We are based on cost recovery, not profit, making our services cost effective; we provide a greater return on investment for the community as a whole.
- We have the capacity to act as the fiscal agent for complex, multi-agency projects, and handle large grants and contracts.
- We can access funding streams unavailable to private consultants due to our land-grant university status and not-for-profit affiliation.
- Our solutions build the capacity of our partners, leaving their operations stronger.
- We secure extramural resources in support of institutional missions and allocated funds.

Our Core Activities

Community-centered Applied Research and Extension

Communities identify issues and needs and search for solutions; researchers develop hypotheses and test for significance; however, the two are not always connected. We bridge the gap between community and research by applying the unparalleled power and reach of the LGU system and 'process' to address

our nation's urban challenges. NUREC will be an issue and innovation leader for both the LGU system and external stakeholders – a place where new knowledge is generated; existing knowledge is applied to novel or place-based issues; and policies and programs are developed, piloted, evaluated, and updated for local to national impact.

Issue Identification

By positioning ourselves between community and research we are able to identify and prioritize emerging issues that are important to both, then elevate those issues to our members as opportunities for collaborative problem solving.

Supporting Municipalities

By leveraging the land-grant university network and Extension, we can support municipalities with wrap-around services beyond programming, and increase their organizational capacity to implement:

- Organizational development and good governance.
- Evaluation and impact assessment.
- Customized training and curriculum development.

Professional Development

We support the advancement of Urban Extension as distinct field requiring specific expertise by:

- Supporting urban Extension professionals in career advancement.
- Helping Extension leaders understand the unique attributes of urban Extension and support their urban Extension professionals in career advancement.