

EENC Shared Leadership Statement

Shared leadership describes a non-hierarchical approach to organizational structuring that prioritizes collaborative accountability and decision-making responsibilities to define and achieve strategic goals.

There are many models of shared leadership; EENC has adopted a model grounded in transparent, shared decision-making power among board members and staff members leading different spheres of the work. Our leadership is a collective effort, promoting a resilient and adaptive organizational structure.

We use a unique decision-making model to guide our shared work. Important decisions may be made among staff, between staff and board members or committees, or at the board level. All staff members report to one another regularly on progress and challenges. Staff serve as liaisons to board committees and routinely communicate with board leaders to plan and implement projects. Team members must be able to self-motivate and take ownership of their individual tasks while contributing effectively to shared goals and initiatives. Ongoing, transparent, frequent communication among team members is integral to this model.

The decision to operate outside the traditional nonprofit hierarchy led by an Executive Director stemmed directly from our organizational values. These values require us to examine our practices and update them to reflect our commitment to systemic justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion. We recognize that all team members should be integrally connected to the guidance of our mission, not only to its implementation. Applying a shared leadership model allows team members to make empowered decisions, both individually and collectively. Strong collaborative relationships, which are essential to this model, ensure all team members receive the support they need to further EENC's vision while continuing to grow as leaders in our field and world.

Learn more here about our [organizational values](#) and [decision-making model](#).

In the traditional Executive Director-led nonprofit structure, the Board of Directors formally employs the Executive Director, and the Executive Director employs all additional staff. In the EENC model of shared leadership, all staff are employed by the board. All staff are accountable for their individual responsibilities, for their commitments to the staff team, and for progress toward the organization's mission and deliverables. The Board of Directors Personnel Committee offers additional support to develop team members' progress and lead human resources.

As part of this shared leadership model, EENC is adopting a comprehensive 360-degree review process which allows the staff and board of directors to reflect on the organization's work. It focuses on progress and needs across several categories: the mission-driven work of EENC, the success and functioning of the staff team, and the strengths and growth opportunities of each team member. This process promotes self-awareness and authentic self-evaluation for each team member, identifies needs in training and mentoring, and promotes transparency throughout the organization.