What is a Better Buildings Accelerator?

The U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Better Buildings Accelerators are collaborative peer-to-peer networks designed to facilitate learning and leadership opportunities that result in new strategies and practices in clean energy deployment. Accelerators focus on partner-identified areas that aim to overcome persistent barriers to clean energy options. Better Buildings Accelerators are:

ISSUE SPECIFIC   TIME BOUND   RESULTS-DRIVEN

Through Better Buildings Accelerators, public and private sector partners and key stakeholder organizations forge connections and access valuable best practices that lead to smarter and longer-lasting energy savings solutions. Accelerators create the framework to work through clean energy deployment barriers by facilitating problem-solving among participants, peer-to-peer sharing, and targeted technical assistance. In addition to problem-solving, the Accelerators can sometimes identify new barriers, issues, or challenges that may be addressed subsequently by DOE or other organizations. This approach does not work for all types of barriers. If it becomes clear that an Accelerator cannot solve an issue within the specific timeline, the Accelerator is sunset and the issue may become part of a larger program that DOE works to solve over a longer timeframe.

SPOTLIGHT – TOOLKIT: ENERGY SAVINGS PERFORMANCE CONTRACTING

The U.S. Department of Energy's Better Building Energy Savings Performance Contracting (ESPC) Accelerator was a three-year partnership with states, local governments, and K-12 schools to expand access to performance contracting. The ESPC Accelerator catalyzed public-sector energy efficiency investments exceeding $2 billion from January 2013 to December 2016 and supported the use of innovative and best-practice approaches to enhance performance contracting programs over this period and beyond.

The ESPC Toolkit was developed to enable communities to learn and benefit from the work of the Accelerator partners. These resources included:

▶ Considering ESPC – Tools to help determine if ESPC is the right fit for a project

▶ Implementing ESPC – Practical tips for carrying out an ESPC

▶ Establishing an ESPC Program – Guidance for state and local governments

▶ Expanding ESPC to New Markets – How to introduce ESPC to unfamiliar sectors

▶ Accessing ESPC Results – Strategies for measuring and sharing positive impacts

GET IN TOUCH FOR MORE INFORMATION

Share your challenge with us today. DOE is looking to engage on the next set of market or technical barriers by bringing new, impactful Better Buildings Accelerators to a community near you.

Interested in participating? Contact betterbuildings@ee.doe.gov to learn more about joining.

Better Buildings Accelerators Focus on Key Market Issues to Increase Clean Energy

Accelerators focus on topics that are recognized to have significant barriers that are impeding progress to reducing energy and have reached a critical point with a number of organizations rallying to overcome the challenge. The Energy Department is working with hundreds of organizations across the Accelerators.

ACTIVE ACCELERATORS

▸ **Clean Energy for Low Income Communities:** Cities, states, community organizations and utilities have committed to developing programs to better support their low-income households, aiming to increase energy efficiency and solar installments to these communities by 2018.

▸ **Combined Heat and Power for Resiliency:** As a collaborative effort with states, communities, utilities, and other stakeholders, partners will develop plans by 2018 for communities to capitalize on CHP's strengths as a reliable, high-efficiency energy source to keep critical infrastructure operational regardless of external events.

▸ **Data Centers:** Participating organizations including national laboratories, universities, and businesses commit to reducing the infrastructure energy intensity of one or more of their data centers by 25 percent by 2019.

▸ **Home Energy Information:** This Accelerator aims to expand access to reliable home energy information included in residential real estate transactions by incorporating it into the multiple listing system (MLS) in five regions by 2018.

▸ **Home Upgrade Program:** Administrators of home energy upgrade programs are demonstrating the ability to bring services to more homes across the country by minimizing costs associated with managing and operating energy upgrade programs and improving overall program effectiveness.

▸ **Smart Labs:** Universities, corporations, national laboratories, hospitals, and federal agencies will work together to develop standardized approaches to overcoming common energy-efficiency barriers in labs. Partners will identify model strategies including operational changes, technological upgrades, and strategic energy management.

▸ **Sustainable Wastewater Infrastructure of the Future:** State, regional, and local agencies are engaging water resource recovery facilities in their jurisdictions to accelerate a pathway towards sustainable wastewater infrastructure. Partners will seek to improve the energy efficiency of their participating water resource recovery facilities by at least 30 percent and integrate at least one resource recovery measure.

▸ **Zero Energy Districts:** Partners will demonstrate the practicality of taking action to cost-effectively meet zero energy goals and commitments by completing a detailed energy master plan, governance and business case model, and development pathway for a Zero Energy District that can be shared and replicated.

▸ **Zero Energy Schools:** Working with key stakeholders including states, school districts, and others working toward Zero Energy Schools construction, partners will demonstrate that Zero Energy Buildings can be constructed with today's technologies at the cost of a conventional code-compliant school.

COMPLETED ACCELERATORS

▸ **Energy Data Access:** This two-year partnership with cities and utilities demonstrated that energy data could be made more accessible to building owners. As a result of this Accelerator, 18 utilities serving over 2.6 million commercial customers nationwide will provide whole-building energy data access to building owners by 2017.

▸ **Energy Savings Performance Contracting (ESPC):** Partners catalyzed more than $2 billion in public-sector energy efficiency investments through the use of innovative and best-practice approaches captured in a toolkit on how to develop and enhance ESPC projects and programs during this three-year partnership.

▸ **Industrial Superior Energy Performance:** Manufacturers, utilities, and energy efficiency program administrators collaborated to demonstrate cost-effective approaches to implementing strategic energy management programs in their facilities and service territories. Manufacturers in the Superior Energy Performance (SEP) Enterprise-Wide Accelerator scaled SEP implementation at multiple plants within their portfolios and shared their successes through four case studies, while utilities and program administrators developed ratepayer-funded programs that promoted SEP and similar initiatives to their customers and collaborated on a toolkit to help others do the same.

▸ **Outdoor Lighting:** Cities, states, and regional groups converted over 1.3 million poles to more efficient outdoor lighting options and compiled solutions to overcoming the financial, technical, and regulatory barriers to system-wide replacement processes into a web-based decision-tree and toolkit.

Through Better Buildings, DOE aims to make commercial, public, industrial, and residential buildings 20 percent more energy-efficient over the next decade. This means saving hundreds of billions of dollars on energy bills and creating thousands of jobs. Better Buildings partners represent public and private sector organizations across the country, working with DOE to share and replicate positive gains in energy efficiency. Read about how partners are catalyzing change and investment in energy efficiency in the Better Buildings Solution Center.