

Promising Approaches to Accelerate Workforce Development for Building Energy Upgrades

Below are several ideas for Better Buildings programs seeking to accelerate **workforce development** to support building energy upgrades. These ideas are organized by general level of effort and include roughly estimated cost ranges required for implementation: \$ = low cost (<\$50,000), \$\$ = significant cost (\$50,000-\$250,000), \$\$\$ = major cost (\$250,000+).

Please note that these approaches are offered only as examples and may not be appropriate or effective for all programs. Please consider your own program needs carefully before deciding which, if any, of these approaches to undertake. Any modifications to your program should be reviewed in advance with your Account Manager and approved in writing by DOE prior to making any changes.

Activity	Cost	Partners With Experience
Low-Hanging Fruit		
Purchase for or loan tablet computers to contractors for use in conducting home energy evaluations.	\$	Eagle County, CO
Create a standardized evaluation template to ensure consistency.	\$	Eagle County, CO
Provide coupons to contractors to offer to their customers.	\$	Rutland County, VT
Offer contractor/auditor referral bonuses.	\$	Rutland County, VT
Organize regular sessions for contractors to provide feedback on the program.	\$	Austin New York (Babylon)
Streamline program reporting forms for contractors.	\$	Austin Maine Lowell, MA
Hold contests between contractors (e.g., for signing up the most households at an event) to motivate additional productivity.	\$	Philadelphia, PA
Cover the cost for contractors to receive Building Performance Institute or other professional certification.	\$-\$\$	Cincinnati, OH (subsidizes cost)
More Effort		
Whenever there is a need, hire temps, support contractors, and/or student volunteers to do work.	\$	Connecticut Maine
For grants that are eligible, buy bulk products for consumers and/or contractors to lower costs.	\$	
Offer a "lending library" of equipment for contractors starting up in the energy efficiency market. (All equipment purchases require prior DOE approval).	\$-\$\$	Cincinnati, OH Los Angeles County, CA
Supplement the cost for newly trained contractors to shadow seasoned professionals.	\$\$	New Hampshire

Engage in cooperative marketing with contractors. (Cooperative marketing require prior DOE approval).	\$\$	Connecticut Philadelphia, PA Rutland County, VT
Provide or pay for contractor sales and business training, including financial management tools.	\$\$	Bedford, NY Maine Michigan Philadelphia, PA Rutland County, VT Learn more from the January 19, 2012, Peer Exchange Call: Contractor Sales Training .
Offer commercial buildings workforce training via community colleges (Building Performance Institute Multifamily, certified energy manager, etc.).	\$\$	Kansas City, MO Cincinnati, OH Maine Fayette County, PA
Bigger Undertakings		
Set up an organization to loan qualified workers to building contracting firms so they can scale up to meet demand with less risk. Identify existing temporary employment, Weatherization Assistance Program, or Community Action Agencies that can offer qualified workers to building contractors who need short-term staffing to meet demand.	\$\$	New York (Babylon) Rutland County, VT
Offer loans or lease options to contractors for equipment (e.g., vehicles, infrared cameras, blower doors). (Consult with DOE prior to initiating any equipment loans or purchases.)	\$\$	Fayette County, PA Rutland County, VT
Help process the necessary paperwork for contractors who are backlogged.	\$	
Contract with Weatherization Assistance Program or Community Action Agencies for home energy upgrade implementation.	\$\$	

Learn More

For more information about these workforce development ideas, contact your colleagues at the programs listed above or ask your DOE Account Manager. Also, don't forget to revisit the Better Buildings Neighborhood Program website's [Run a Program](#) or [Innovations](#) sections for additional approaches. If you're interested in having a [Peer Exchange Call](#) to learn from successful grantees about specific workforce development approaches, send your ideas to betterbuildingsupport@erg.com.