

Frequently Asked Questions Community Energy Savers Grants

Who is eligible to apply?

Non-profit organizations located in Baltimore City are eligible to apply. Applicants must be a qualified 501(c)(3).

Public schools are not eligible to apply but charter schools with a 501(c)(3) designation are eligible. Faith based programs with a 501(c)(3) designation are also eligible to apply.

Can the applicant organization serve populations outside Baltimore City?

501(c)(3) organizations applying for grants within this program must primarily serve Baltimore City populations.

What types of grants are available through this program?

Three types of grants will be awarded during each grant round.

1. Technical assistance will be awarded for applicants to conduct energy audits at their facilities.
2. Up to \$50,000 will be awarded for applicants to implement recommended energy saving upgrades and retrofits to their facilities and/or equipment.
3. Grants of up to \$50,000 will be awarded for applicants to conduct public education and outreach activities that result in direct energy savings by their target audience.

When is the deadline?

Grants will be awarded in three rounds. Applications for grants are due on the following dates:

- First round – June 18, 2010
- Second round – December 8, 2010
Please note that the deadline for the second round has been extended from October 13 to December 8, 2010
- Third round – March 23, 2011

How do I apply?

Visit the Sustainability Office website and review the Request for Applications. If you meet the eligibility requirements, download the application, also available in the website.

Link: www.baltimoresustainability.org/media/newsDetail.aspx?id=152

Applications will only be accepted electronically. Send the completed application form, copy of 501(c)(3) letter, and supporting materials (e.g. energy audit report) as email attachments to kathleen.igreclima@baltimorecity.gov.

Can I apply for a grant in each round?

Applicants can submit a proposal for each grant round. For example, an organization may use the first round for technical assistance grants, such as to conduct an energy audit, and then apply for a grant in the second round to implement energy savings upgrades and retrofits recommended in the energy audit.

Can I receive \$50,000 for multiple grant rounds?

No. \$50,000 is the maximum grant amount available to applicants over the course of the three grant rounds. Applicants may apply for \$50,000 in one round and not apply for other rounds, or they can choose to apply for a smaller grant in the first round and request additional funds in a subsequent round.

We are applying for technical assistance (energy audit). Do we need to include cost or an estimate for the audit on the application?

If you are applying for type 1 grant (technical assistance/energy audit), you are not required to include the estimated cost for an audit on the application. It would be helpful to note the size of your property in the application since auditors generally price their services based on that information.

For applicants awarded grants for energy audits, no money will change hands between the City of Baltimore and the non-profit organization. The City of Baltimore will send energy professionals to the site to conduct energy audits for grantees.

Do we need to own our building in order to apply for funds to upgrade or retrofit our facilities?

Applicants that OWN their facilities may apply for grant funds for building retrofits and upgrades, such as installing insulation, efficient lighting, HVAC, or replacing windows. Applicants that rent or lease their facilities in a for-profit space may use grant funds for non-building equipment upgrades, such as light bulbs, Energy Star/energy efficient appliances (e.g. printers and computers), or other equipment for your organization. Applicants who do not own their building, but are in a long-term lease in a building owned by an eligible non-profit, may submit a joint application with their non-profit landlord for building retrofits.

What if our lease is with a city-owned building - are we eligible to apply for building upgrades or retrofits?

Non-profit organizations leasing a facility at a city-owned property are eligible to apply for type 1 (energy audit/technical assistance) and type 2 grants for building upgrades and retrofits. Applications of this nature will be reviewed on a case by case basis, with the following minimum requirements:

- If the City of Baltimore does NOT pay the energy bills for the facility, be able to show documentation, e.g. a copy of the lease outlining that the leaseholder is responsible for all of the facility's energy payments.
- If the city of Baltimore does currently pay energy bills for the facility, the non-profit organization should show that their energy fee from the City will be lowered as a result of the grant, e.g. commitment letter from the City agency to reduce energy payment if you receive the grant.
- The lease is for a minimum of 5 years

We want to give money to members of our community so they can use the funds to purchase energy efficient appliances or equipment for their homes. Can we use grant funds for this purpose?

Grant funds are not eligible to be passed through from non-profit organizations to their target audience. However, grants of up to \$50,000 will be awarded for applicants to conduct public education and outreach activities that result in direct energy savings by their target audience. Some examples include:

- Design and operate energy efficiency and conservation programs,
- Identify effective methods for achieving maximum participation and efficiency rates,
- Public education, and/or
- Develop systems to measure and verify energy usage.

We are participating in a BGE Smart Energy Savers Program for the energy efficiency upgrades and retrofits. Can we still apply for a type 2 grant?

Yes, but the cost covered by the BGE incentive plus the grant must not total more than the cost of the proposed project.

We are applying for a type 2 grant for upgrades/retrofits in our building. Are we required to match the funds for the project(s)?

Applicants are technically not required to match funds for type 2 grants. However, applicants awarded Type 2 grants will be asked to leverage the grant with BGE's Smart Energy Savers Program for businesses, in which non-profit organizations are eligible. (If you are not a BGE customer, check for incentives available through your own utility company.) For more information about BGE's Smart Energy Savers Program, call 877-685-7377, email business@bgesmartenergy.com, or visit www.bgesmartenergy.com/business.html.

What are the reporting requirements for the grant?

Grantees will be asked to submit a progress report 6 months after receiving the award notification. They will be asked to report how the project was implemented, the change in energy usage as a result of the project (if apply), and other information to assess the impact the grant has made on the energy usage or energy conservation behaviors within your organization or among your target audience.

How are the grant payments disbursed?

Federal and City grants are reimbursable programs. However, we are exploring ways to assure that this is not a barrier to applicants and awards for the program.

What is the time frame for reimbursement?

Awardees should be reimbursed within 90 days.

We have questions! Who do I contact?

Contact Katie Igrac Lima at kathleen.igreclima@baltimorecity.gov or 410-396-4556.