

## Frequently Asked Questions Community Energy Savers Grants

### 1. 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.

### 2. Can the applicant organization serve populations outside Baltimore City?

Organizations applying for grants within this program must primarily serve Baltimore City populations.

### 3. What types of grants are available through this program?

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

**Type 1:** Funding will be awarded for applicants to conduct energy audits at their facilities.

**Type 2:** Up to \$50,000\* will be awarded for applicants to implement recommended energy saving upgrades and retrofits to their facilities and/or equipment.

**Type 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.

\* Note: Few, if any, applications will be awarded up to \$50,000.

### 4. When is the application deadline?

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

First round: June 18, 2010 (deadline past)

**Second round: April 15, 2011** for **Type 1** (energy audits) and **Type 3** (education/outreach) applications  
**June 30, 2011** for **Type 2** applications for energy efficient upgrades/retrofits

Third round: Withdrawn, no applications will be accepted

### 5. How do I apply?

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

Link: <http://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](mailto:kathleen.igreclima@baltimorecity.gov).

### 6. Can I apply for a grant in each round?

Applicants can submit one 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.

### 7. Can I receive \$50,000 in each grant round?

No. \$50,000 is the maximum grant amount available to applicants over the course of the grant program.

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

Yes. You are required to include an estimate and scope of work from an energy auditor with your application. To find a list of auditors and other energy assessment professionals, visit the Marketplace at [www.baltimoreenergychallenge.org](http://www.baltimoreenergychallenge.org).

**9. 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.

**10. 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 a type 1 grant for energy audits and type 2 grant 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.

**11. I'm doing upgrades for my building, what regulations will my contractor need to comply for the grant program?**

- The contractor(s) should be familiar with the Davis-Bacon Act if the grant request for your project includes labor in addition to materials. For more information about the Davis-Bacon Act, visit <http://www.dol.gov/whd/contracts/dbra.htm>
- The contractor(s) should be familiar with all Federal (EPA), state and local regulations for handling waste stream.
- Whenever possible, all goods and materials purchased for the project shall be from US vendors and/or manufacturers.

In addition, your organization will need to be aware that all construction projects will require approval from the Maryland Historical Trust or Baltimore City's Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation (CHAP). If your application is selected for a grant, the Department of General Services can acquire approval on your behalf. More information will be provided if your application is selected for a grant.

**12. 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 will be awarded for applicants to conduct public education and outreach

activities that result in direct energy savings by their target audience. This can include incentives for your program participants, such as raffling off compact fluorescent light bulbs or purchasing energy monitoring devices to loan out for education purposes.

**13. 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 example, if your project cost is \$30,000, you may qualify for up to \$15,000 through BGE's program and the remainder (\$15,000) may be requested via the Community Energy Savers Grant application.

For more information about BGE's Smart Energy Savers Program, call 877-685-7377, email [business@bgesmartenergy.com](mailto:business@bgesmartenergy.com), or visit [www.bgesmartenergy.com/business.html](http://www.bgesmartenergy.com/business.html).

**14. If my application is approved, what happens next?**

If your application is selected for funding, you will be asked to provide additional information about your organization and/or proposed project. For example: type 1 applicants will be asked to contact a certified energy auditor for an estimate and scope of work for an energy audit.

1. Once we have all information on hand, a grant agreement will be prepared and six copies will be sent to your organization for review and signatures.
2. After the grant agreement is returned to the City of Baltimore **and** approved by the Board of Estimates, the projects can begin. Unfortunately, we cannot reimburse expenses for work completed prior to the agreement approval.
3. Grantees will have the option to send a monthly reimbursement request to the Department of General Services for project related work completed at that time. Supporting documentation will be required to accompany the reimbursement request, such as invoices, bills, and receipts. Payment for the reimbursement request should be disbursed within 90 days.

**15. What is the program timeline?**

The timeline for round two of the grant program is as follows:

- Applicants notified of results within 1-2 months after the deadline.
- Grant agreements sent to selected applicants for review and signatures.
- Once agreements are signed, they go back to the City of Baltimore for final approval by the Board of Estimates.
- Projects can begin after the agreement is approved by the Board of Estimates.

**The Department of General Services cannot reimburse project costs incurred prior to the final approval of the grant agreement.**

*Note: the program timeline is subject to change. See the Baltimore Office Sustainability website at <http://www.baltimoresustainability.org> for Community Energy Savers Grant program updates.*

**16. How is the grant payment disbursed?**

The Community Energy Savers Grant is on a reimbursement basis only. Additional instructions for reimbursements will be provided to applicants awarded the grant.

**17. What is the time frame for reimbursement?**

Awardees should be reimbursed within 90 days.

**18. What are the reporting requirements for grantees?**

Grantees will be required to submit monthly reports to the Department of General Services. Reports will include, but not limited to, the following:

- Detailed financial expenditures for the project
- Number of jobs created as a result of the project, either at your organization or by your contractor(s)
- How the project was implemented (date energy audit completed)
- Submit any materials related to the project (audit report)
- Energy usage prior to and after project implementation (organizations receiving energy audits will be expected to report potential energy savings as outlined in auditor's report)

**19. We would like to start working on our project now. Can we apply for grant funds and seek reimbursement for the cost of the completed project?**

Unfortunately, we are not able to fund projects that have already been completed before the application deadline. Similarly, we cannot reimburse project costs incurred prior to the final approval of the grant agreement, which occurs after the application has been approved and the grantee has returned signed agreements to the City of Baltimore for final approval from the Board of Estimates.

*Note: The grant agreement is not the same as the grant application. An agreement will be drawn AFTER you have been notified that your organization's application was selected for funding.*

**20. We have questions! Who do I contact?**

For questions related to the grant program in general or the application, contact Katie Igreg Lima at [kathleen.igreclima@baltimorecity.gov](mailto:kathleen.igreclima@baltimorecity.gov) or 410-929-7754.

For technical questions, such as calculating energy savings or contractor specifications, contact Sam Grillo at [sam.grillo@baltimorecity.gov](mailto:sam.grillo@baltimorecity.gov) or 443-794-2371.