

# ITHACA 2030 DISTRICT:

## Financing Guide for Commercial Buildings

*Version 5 - Updated May 8, 2020 - Includes Programs on Pause due to COVID-19*

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This guide includes funding opportunities for energy efficiency improvements and renewable energy systems that are available for the members of the Ithaca 2030 District. For additional resources available through the 2030 District, visit [www.2030districts.org/ithaca/resources](http://www.2030districts.org/ithaca/resources). This guide will be updated periodically, but contact [pbardaglio@gmail.com](mailto:pbardaglio@gmail.com) for any errors or suggestions.

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## NYSERDA PROGRAMS

Many of these programs require a [Consolidated Funding Application \(CFA\)](#) to apply. CFAs were created to streamline and expedite the grant application process. The benefit of the CFA is that in addition to New York State Energy Research and Development (NYSERDA) funds, you may qualify for funding sources from other New York State Agencies.

### Agriculture Energy Audit Program

**ELIGIBILITY:** Farms, including but not limited to dairies, orchards, greenhouses, vegetables, vineyards, grain, and poultry or egg producers. Farms must be customers of a New York State (NYS) investor-owned utility and contribute to the System Benefits Charge (SBC).

**SUMMARY:** The [Agriculture Energy Audit Program](#) offers free energy audits to identify energy efficiency measures for eligible farms. When farms request an audit, NYSERDA assigns a FlexTech Consultant to perform the energy audit.

**HOW TO APPLY:** Download, complete, and submit the [Agriculture Energy Audit application](#) via email to [aEEP@nyserda.ny.gov](mailto:aEEP@nyserda.ny.gov).

### Charge Ready NY

**ELIGIBILITY:** Public and private, for-profit and not-for-profit entities.

**SUMMARY:** [Charge Ready NY](#) provides \$4,000 per installed electric vehicle (EV) charging port to applicants who purchase and install qualified Level 2 EV charging equipment at NYS locations. These locations must provide public charging, workplace charging, or charging at a multi-unit dwelling (MUD).

**HOW TO APPLY:** Select a [qualified charging station and network service provider](#), and then [sign up to participate in Charge Ready NY](#). **On pause as of April 3rd, 2020.**

## Commercial New Construction Program

**ELIGIBILITY:** Businesses and not-for-profit and private institutions interested in electric efficiency for new or substantially renovated buildings. Buildings must be served by electric utilities participating in the System Benefits Charge (SBC).

**SUMMARY:** This program offers objective technical and financial support to commercial building owners and tenants to effect a permanent transformation in the way buildings are designed and constructed in NYS. NYSERDA project managers and consultants will work with building owners and their design teams to analyze efficiency opportunities. Additional support is available for projects which are being designed for deep energy savings, zero net energy and for projects which incorporate smart building technologies.

**HOW TO APPLY:** Apply through the [Consolidated Funding Application](#). Email [NewConstructionProgram@nyserda.ny.gov](mailto:NewConstructionProgram@nyserda.ny.gov) or visit their [website](#) for more information.

## Community Energy Advisors

**ELIGIBILITY:** Small businesses, non-profits, and multifamily building owners and developers.

**SUMMARY:** [Community Energy Advisors](#) make it easier for community members to participate in NYSERDA's energy efficiency programs. Your local Community Energy Advisor is one of 12 constituency-based organizations (CBO) across NYS that can help cut energy waste, save money, and live or work more comfortably and make the most of what NYSERDA has to offer.

**HOW TO APPLY:** If you are interested in participating but are unsure about the steps to follow, contact your [local CBO](#) for assistance. The local CBO contact for Ithaca is Karim Beers from Cornell Cooperative Extension. Contact him at [kwb6@cornell.edu](mailto:kwb6@cornell.edu) or (607) 272-2292 for more information.

## Flexible Technical Assistance Program (**FlexTech**)

**ELIGIBILITY:** Commercial, data centers, healthcare, industrial and manufacturing, and retail facilities. Facilities must be NYS electricity distribution customers of a participating utility that pays the SBC.

**SUMMARY:** FlexTech provides site-specific technical assistance and analysis to inform the implementation of clean energy technologies. Eligible study areas include targeted clean energy technical analyses, strategic energy management assistance, and on-site combined heat and power (CHP) feasibility studies.

**HOW TO APPLY:** FlexTech shares the cost of technical assistance with the facility owner. Apply using the [FlexTech application](#). For more information see the FlexTech Funding Opportunity [online](#) or email [flextech@nyserda.ny.gov](mailto:flextech@nyserda.ny.gov) for more information.

## Multifamily New Construction Program

**ELIGIBILITY:** Developers of multifamily high rise new construction and gut rehabilitation projects.

**SUMMARY:** The Multifamily New Construction Program offers technical support and incentives to developers. The multi-tiered incentive structure is intended to promote increased levels of performance, up to and inclusive of net zero energy performance.

**HOW TO APPLY:** [Applications](#) are accepted online. For more information, visit their [page](#).

## NY Generation Attribute Tracking System (**NYGATS**)

**ELIGIBILITY:** Generators, energy service companies, aggregators, green power marketers, and consumers.

**SUMMARY:** NYGATS is an online certificate-tracking system that records information about electricity generated, imported, and consumed within NYS. Using unique serial numbers, it can issue, track, and manage energy attribute certificates and renewable energy certificates (**RECs**). NYGATS also serves as the platform for applying for [Renewable Energy Standard \(RES\)](#) certification under the New York’s Clean Energy Standard. NYGATS retains records of resources that have received a statement of qualification and designates the RECs created by a facility as eligible for RES Tier 1 compliance.

**HOW TO APPLY:** Visit their [page](#) to register.

## NY-Sun Incentive

**ELIGIBILITY:** Residential, small commercial, large commercial, and industrial buildings.

**SUMMARY:** The NY-Sun Incentive Program provides financial incentives to help reduce the installation costs associated with solar electric systems. The incentives are built around customized [megawatt \(MW\) blocks](#) tied to specific regions of New York State.

**HOW TO APPLY:** Apply by working with a [participating contractor](#). The contractor will determine the appropriate size of the system and assist with paperwork. Email [info@nyserda.ny.gov](mailto:info@nyserda.ny.gov) or visit their [website](#) for more information.

## On-site Energy Manager Pilot

**ELIGIBILITY:** Commercial and industrial facilities.

**SUMMARY:** NYSERDA seeks applications from facilities to demonstrate how a dedicated On-site Energy Manager can improve a company’s profitability by delivering energy, process, and operational improvements. The Pilot targets commercial and industrial facilities or campuses that do not have an existing, dedicated, full-time energy manager on-site.

**HOW TO APPLY:** Applications will be accepted via email to [OnSiteEnergyManager@nyserda.ny.gov](mailto:OnSiteEnergyManager@nyserda.ny.gov) until December 31, 2019 or until funds are exhausted, whichever comes first. Visit their [website](#) for more information.

## Real Time Energy Management (**RTEM**) Program

**ELIGIBILITY:** Multifamily, commercial, and industrial facilities.

**SUMMARY:** RTEM systems continuously collect live and historical performance data through a cloud-based or on-site system. That data can be analyzed to uncover optimization opportunities for the site's energy usage. NYSERDA will cost share up to 30% of your overall [RTEM project](#) expenses and provide the tools and support you need to reap the benefits of building performance optimization.

**HOW TO APPLY:** Contact a [NYSERDA-qualified RTEM vendor](#) or fill out this [form](#) for more information.

## Renewable Heat NY (**RHNY**)

**ELIGIBILITY:** Small and large commercial facilities.

**SUMMARY:** [RHNY](#) provides incentives toward the installed costs of high-efficiency, low-emission wood heating systems for businesses (and homeowners) without access to natural gas.

**HOW TO APPLY:** Contact a qualified installer for your specific system type. Different incentives are available for different system types. The installer will prepare and submit necessary paperwork. Email [RHNY@nyserda.ny.gov](mailto:RHNY@nyserda.ny.gov) for more information.

# NEW YORK STATE ELECTRIC & GAS (NYSEG) PROGRAMS

## Commercial and Industrial (C&I) Rebate Program

**ELIGIBILITY:** This program is open to RG&E nonresidential commercial, industrial and institutional customers and municipalities who pay an electricity and/or natural gas System Benefits Charge (SBC) on their utility bills. More eligibility information can be found on their [website](#).

**SUMMARY:** The [program](#) delivers energy efficiency options in prescriptive rebates and custom rebates. Prescriptive rebates are available for lighting and controls, HVAC and plumbing, kitchen equipment and refrigeration, and process systems. Site-specific, cost-effective measures for retrofit opportunities that are not eligible under the prescriptive rebate program may be eligible for the custom program.

**HOW TO APPLY:** Applications are available on their online [Program Portal](#) powered by Efficiency Navigator. Contact the Implementation Contractor of Franklin Energy at [Cenergysavings@franklinenergy.com](mailto:Cenergysavings@franklinenergy.com) or (888) 316-8023 for more information. **Temporarily suspended.**

## Multi-Family Energy Efficiency

**ELIGIBILITY:** Multi-family residences with an active RG&E electricity and/or natural gas service.

**SUMMARY:** The [program](#) provides equipment replacement and rebates designed to reduce electricity and/or natural gas use in apartment and condominium complexes. They offer free installation of energy-efficient products and rebates for installing qualified lighting measures.

**HOW TO APPLY:** Complete and submit a [direct install application](#). **Temporarily suspended.**

## Small Business Direct Install Program

**ELIGIBILITY:** Business customers with an average demand of less than 100 kW per month.

**SUMMARY:** Eligible businesses will receive free energy assessments, and up to 70% of the cost of recommended equipment upgrades will be covered. Equipment upgrades could include: replacing fluorescent fixtures with high efficiency lamps and ballasts, changing incandescent bulbs to compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) or light-emitting diodes (LEDs), upgrading exit signs to LED signs, installing occupancy sensors or dimmer switches, LED canopy lighting, commercial refrigeration upgrades, LED parking lot lights to replace both pole-top and wall-mounted metal halide lighting, and high intensity discharge (HID) fixture replacements.

**HOW TO APPLY:** Enroll [online](#) or call (877) 359-9814 to schedule an appointment. Call Lime Energy at (877) 359-9814 or visit the [website](#) for more information. **Temporarily suspended.**



# TAX INCENTIVES

## Alternative Fuels and Electric Vehicle Recharging Property Tax Credit

**ELIGIBILITY:** Individuals or businesses who invest in new alternative fuel vehicle refueling or recharging property.

**SUMMARY:** The credit for each installation of property is equal to the lesser of \$5,000 or 50% of the cost of property less any cost paid from the proceeds of certain grants. More information can be found [online](#).

## Energy Conservation Improvements Property Tax Exemption

**ELIGIBILITY:** Any facility with a renewable energy system installed on the property.

**SUMMARY:** The additional property value of a building as a result of renewable energy systems will not increase the property tax incurred on the building. Visit the [NYS Department of Taxation and Finance \(DTF\) website](#) for more information.

**NOTE:** Some municipalities have chosen to “opt out” of the property tax exemption, allowing them to collect taxes. A list of municipalities that have opted out is available [online](#).

## Modified Accelerated Cost-Recovery System

**ELIGIBILITY:** Commercial, industrial, and agricultural facilities.

**SUMMARY:** Under the federal Modified Accelerated Cost-Recovery System (**MACRS**), businesses can recover investments in renewable energy technologies through depreciation deductions. For more information, visit the [DSIRE website](#).

## Solar Energy System Equipment Credit

**ELIGIBILITY:** Anyone who purchased solar energy system equipment, entered into a written agreement for the lease of solar energy system equipment, or entered into a written agreement that spans at least ten years for the purchase of power generated by solar energy system equipment not owned by you.

**SUMMARY:** The credit is equal to 25% of your qualified solar energy system equipment expenditures and is limited to \$5,000. The solar energy system equipment credit is not refundable. However, any credit amount in excess of the tax due can be carried over for up to five years. Visit the [NYS DFT website](#) for more information.

# FINANCING OPTIONS

## Alternatives Federal Credit Union (**AFCU**)

**SUMMARY:** [AFCU](#) offers small business loans to local area small businesses located in Ithaca, Tompkins County, and the surrounding counties of Schuyler, Chemung, Tioga, Cortland, Cayuga and Seneca. For more information call (607) 273-4611.

## Empower Equity (**EMPEQ**)

**ELIGIBILITY:** Commercial and industrial buildings.

**SUMMARY:** [EMPEQ](#) is a financial technology (Fintech) company that utilizes technology to provide small- and mid-size businesses, nonprofits, and municipalities easy to use and simple to understand finance options and tools for HVAC commercial contractors to close more sales, faster. EMPEQ deploys traditional financing as well as its unique subscription model.

**HOW TO APPLY:** Fill out the simple application on their [website](#). Contact the company at (347) 903-6737 or at [hello@empeq.co](mailto:hello@empeq.co) for more information.

## Energize NY Open Commercial Property-Assessed Clean Energy (**C-PACE**) Financing

**ELIGIBILITY:** Commercial, multi-family, light industrial and nonprofit owned buildings.

**SUMMARY:** The Energy Improvement Corporation (**EIC**) offers the [Energize NY Open C-PACE Program](#) to eligible property owners in order to provide financing for property improvements that are energy efficient or that incorporate renewable energy systems. EIC is a local development corporation and a New York State nonprofit established specifically to assist municipalities and property owners with improving buildings to lower energy costs, generate renewable energy, and support the growth of a clean energy economy. C-PACE is an innovative form of financing in which third-party capital providers provide direct funding to the property owner for up to 100% of the cost of the energy improvements. The loan is secured by a voluntary special assessment on the Property (a “Benefit Assessment Lien”) and is repayable by the property owner in annual installments over a term not to exceed the useful life of the Improvements.

**HOW TO APPLY:** The first step is to fill out a pre-application, which is available [online](#). Once the building has been pre-qualified for financing, an energy study must be done on the building. NYSERDA can help you find a list of qualified contractors who can guide you and help you calculate your best options for incorporating Energize NY financing. Contact the Energize NY Finance team (Susan Morth & Robert Fischman) at (914) 302-7300 option 2 or at [info@energizeny.org](mailto:info@energizeny.org).

## Farm Credit: Renewable Energy Financing

**SUMMARY:** [Farm Credit](#) funds farmers, ranchers, and rural businesses through smaller installations in the distributed generation model, where individuals or businesses generate their own alternative energy, such as solar panels to power processing facilities or wind turbines to power livestock facilities. For more information email [ask@farmcredit.com](mailto:ask@farmcredit.com).

## Key Bank

**SUMMARY:** Since 2009, Key Bank, through its Key4Green initiatives, has financed renewable energy projects and services for companies of all sizes and scopes by using a solutions based approach for each need individually. For more information check [online](#), or contact Jeff Eades, Key4Green Specialist, at (315) 470-5173 and [Jeffrey\\_J\\_Eades@KeyBank.com](mailto:Jeffrey_J_Eades@KeyBank.com) or the Ithaca Key Bank at (607) 273-1431.

## M&T Bank

**SUMMARY:** [MT&T](#) provides small business loans to local businesses. For more information call (607) 274-8948.

## NY Green Bank

**ELIGIBILITY:** Private sector financial institutions or other third-party capital providers that are financing, or intending to finance, clean energy investments in New York State and/or industry participants including developers, Energy Service Companies (ESCOs), owner/operators, equipment manufacturers, or others that provide equipment, materials and/or services related to eligible investments.

**SUMMARY:** NY Green Bank is a state-sponsored, specialized financial division of NYSERDA working with the private sector to increase investments in New York's clean energy markets. Currently, NY Green Bank is offering five [investment opportunities](#):

- **[RFP 1: Clean Energy Financing Arrangements.](#)** NY Green Bank invites private sector capital providers and other clean energy industry participants to propose transactions involving NY Green Bank that facilitate the financing of clean energy projects in New York State, consistent with its mandate, mission and priorities in addressing financing market gaps and barriers.
- **[RFP 7: Construction & Back-Leveraged Financing for Ground-Mounted Solar.](#)** NY Green Bank's RFP 7 is targeted at developers of photovoltaic (PV) solar projects selling to commercial, industrial and other institutional organizations (C&I) in New York State which plan to utilize third-party tax equity and seek back-leveraged financing for projects that: (1) generate revenue by selling net metering credits (or equivalents) to C&I power users under applicable laws, regulations or administrative proceedings; (2) use Tier-1 Technology; (3) are in the advanced stage of development; and (4) are ground-mounted, canopy-mounted and non-residential rooftop PV solar projects.
- **[RFP 8: Efficiency & Renewables Financing Arrangements: Building & Property Owners.](#)** NY Green Bank's RFP 8 is targeted at commercial and multi-family building owners, relevant lenders and investors, and clean energy contractors/service providers focused on such properties, who seek to finance the purchase of energy efficiency and/or renewable energy assets.

- **[RFP 10: Financing for CDG Solar Projects Including Projects Paired with Energy Storage.](#)** NY Green Bank’s RFP 10 is targeted at developers and/or owners of solar photovoltaic (PV) projects that: (i) are in advanced stages of development; (ii) form part of the Community Distributed Generation Program; (iii) are compensated under the Value of Distributed Energy Resources Phase One Tariff; (iv) comply with all applicable provisions established under the Uniform Business Practices for Distributed Energy Resource Suppliers; (v) generate power using Tier 1 technology; (vi) earn revenue by selling volumetric or monetary credits to project members under revenue contracts; (vii) are 500 kWac to 5 MWac in size, ground-mounted, canopy-mounted or non-residential rooftop PV solar projects at a single location; and (viii) may be paired with an electrical energy storage component.
- **[RFP 13: Financing for Energy Storage Projects.](#)** NY Green Bank’s RFP 13 invites energy storage developers and other storage market participants targeting New York State energy storage projects, to propose transactions to NY Green Bank that contemplate the financing of the purchase and ownership of energy storage projects.

## Small Commercial Energy Efficiency Program

**ELIGIBILITY:** Small business and not-for-profit organizations. For more information on what projects are eligible, visit the [NYSERDA website](#).

**SUMMARY:** This program offers two low-interest loan options to finance energy efficiency projects. Option 1 is a Participation Loan in which NYSERDA partners with a lender of the borrower’s choice. NYSERDA provides 50% of a loan, up to \$50,000, at 2.0% interest, and the lender provides the rest of the loan at market rate. Option 2 is On Bill Recovery Financing, in which The borrower works with a participating lender of their choice to secure a NYSERDA loan of up to \$50,000. The borrower repays the NYSERDA loan through a charge on their monthly utility bill.

**HOW TO APPLY:** Apply online for a [Participation Loan](#) or [On-Bill Recovery Loan](#).

## OTHER PROGRAMS

### Finger Lakes Climate Fund

**ELIGIBILITY:** Individuals, Businesses, non-profits.

**SUMMARY:** The [Finger Lakes Climate Fund](#) will initially fund residential energy efficiency projects for low to moderate income households in the Finger Lakes region. The fund will help pay for insulation, air sealing, energy efficient heating equipment, and other upgrades to reduce energy use and greenhouse gas emissions. The energy efficiency upgrades are carried out by Building Performance Institute accredited contractors using guidelines provided by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority. The Finger Lakes Climate Fund offers carbon offsets for individuals, businesses, non-profits, academic institutions, and special events. For more information on purchasing carbon offsets contact them at [info@sustainabletompekins.org](mailto:info@sustainabletompekins.org) or (607) 272-1720.

### Tompkins County Business Energy Advisors

**ELIGIBILITY:** Business owners and facility managers

**SUMMARY:** The [Business Energy Advisors \(BEA\)](#) program assists in setting energy goals and understanding energy options during the earliest stages of project design and conceptualization. For more information, contact Andrea Aguirre, Energy Specialist, at [gaguirre@tompekins-co.org](mailto:gaguirre@tompekins-co.org) or (607) 274-5560.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

### 2030 District Marketplace

**ELIGIBILITY:** Ithaca 2030 District Member

**SUMMARY:** Members of the 2030 District can access the [2030 District Marketplace](#), a purchasing alliance which offers HVAC controls, advanced metering, LED lighting, high performance windows, electric vehicle chargers, and plug load management devices at significant discounts.

**HOW TO APPLY:** To access the marketplace, you must be a member of a 2030 District. To join the Ithaca 2030 District, visit our [website](#) and fill out a Commitment Letter.

### Database of State Incentives for Renewables & Efficiency (DSIRE)

**SUMMARY:** DSIRE is the most comprehensive source of information on incentives and policies that support renewable energy and energy efficiency in the United States. Established in 1995, DSIRE is operated by the North Carolina Clean Energy Technology Center and is funded by the U.S. Department of Energy. For more information, visit their [website](#).

### Sustainable Finger Lakes

**SUMMARY:** [Sustainable Finger Lakes](#) is a shared web platform that is being developed to provide a central entry point for anyone wishing to learn about sustainability and social justice projects in the region, as well as to help find others interested in a particular issue or emerging solution related to crafting a more resilient and just economy. This new platform can advertise what organizations are doing, and can be a valuable resource to create partnerships to work on sustainability solutions.

## APPENDIX: DISCONTINUED PROGRAMS

### Combined Heat and Power (**CHP**) Program (NYSERDA)

**ELIGIBILITY:** Industrial, commercial, institutional, and multifamily facilities. Installation site must pay the SBC surcharge on its electric bill.

**SUMMARY:** Incentives of up to \$2.5 million are available for the installation of CHP systems in NYS. Customers can choose between pre-packaged CHP systems up to 3 MW, or custom-engineered systems greater than 1 MW. CHP systems recover the heat created during power generation and use it as an energy source to fuel industrial processes, heat domestic hot water, and provide space heating and cooling. CHP systems are generally designed to run during grid outages to power the site's priority loads.

**HOW TO APPLY:** Applications will be reviewed on a first-come, first-served basis until December 31, 2019 or until funds are exhausted, whichever comes first. Visit their [website](#) for more information.

### Ground Source Heat Pump Rebate

**ELIGIBILITY:** Residential, commercial, institutional, and industrial buildings that pay/will pay the SBC surcharge.

**SUMMARY:** NYSERDA has made \$15 million available to support the installation of ground source heat pump systems. Funding is available only to eligible designers and installers of ground source heat pump systems that have been approved by NYSERDA.

**HOW TO APPLY:** [Applications](#) are accepted online. For more information, visit their [page](#).

### Industrial and Process Efficiency (**IPE**) Program

**ELIGIBILITY:** Manufacturing facilities and data centers, both new construction and existing facilities.

**SUMMARY:** Performance-based incentives can help manufacturers, data centers, and other production facilities implement energy efficiency and process improvements that will improve productivity and reduce costs. IPE's goal is to help increase production output and data processing as efficiently as possible. Therefore, incentives are calculated, when appropriate, based on a reduction in energy usage per unit of production or workload.

**HOW TO APPLY:** Applications will be accepted through the [Consolidated Funding Application \(CFA\)](#). For more information, contact [IPEOutreach@nyserda.ny.gov](mailto:IPEOutreach@nyserda.ny.gov) or visit their [page](#).

## Small Wind Turbine Program

**ELIGIBILITY:** Residential, commercial, institutional, or government users. The maximum equipment size is 2 MW per site per customer.

**SUMMARY:** Approximately \$6 million in incentives are available to support installation of behind-the-meter, on-site wind energy systems. NYSERDA's incentive is for up to 50% of the total installed cost of the system.

**HOW TO APPLY:** Contact a [participating eligible installer](#) and make arrangements for them to inspect the location for sizing and placement, provide a quote, assist and submit paperwork to NYSERDA, and perform the installation. For more information, visit their [page](#).