



Eastern Connecticut State University

NEWS

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For Immediate Release
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One example of an energy efficient building is Eastern Connecticut State University's Science Building, which opened in 2008. The building is "Silver Certified" through the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program.

Eastern Collaborates to Maximize Efficiency of Next-Generation Buildings

Willimantic, Conn. – The Institute for Sustainable Energy (ISE) at Eastern Connecticut State University is collaborating with prestigious national partners to launch a groundbreaking pilot program that will transform the procurement paradigm for the construction industry. The ISE,

the National Renewable Energy Lab (NREL) and Seventhwave have entered into a \$2 million cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) to maximize energy efficiency in the construction of new buildings.

The national initiative, “Accelerate Performance,” will deploy innovative DOE resources that focus specifically on the performance-based procurement approach. Building owners will be empowered to include required energy outcomes in new construction contracts and to ensure accountability for building performance after construction. This approach will shift the market from energy analysis that focuses on relative savings versus a baseline, toward one where the expected performance is clearly stated up front and measured during operations. This brings results within typical construction budgets without sacrificing other building functions or amenities.

Buildings are more advanced than ever, yet often do not achieve the energy reductions promised in the design phase. By including an energy performance metric in the contract, new buildings will be required to hit that number. “The current procurement methodology for new buildings is outdated and has not kept pace with the innovations of new design concepts and technologies,” said Paul Torcellini, principal engineer for commercial buildings research at NREL. “Accelerate Performance has the opportunity to bridge policy and practice for the next generation of new buildings.”

Accelerate Performance will impact 100 buildings nationally over the next three years. It will equip utility incentive programs to reward achievement of energy goals in buildings while supporting owners and developers to adopt the approach across their portfolio. The ISE will work with Eversource and United Illuminating to integrate the use of this program in pilot

projects in Connecticut. Other focus areas for the national partners include ComEd, the electric utility that serves Chicago and northern Illinois.

“Performance-based procurement allows design teams to bring their best approaches forward for superior building performance and teaches owners how to evaluate these approaches for energy performance and quality,” said Lynn Stoddard, director of the ISE. “The approach will also allow room for designers, contractors and owners to benefit financially from cost savings in both construction and operation.”

Accelerate Performance is part of a greater \$6 million effort by the DOE to support innovative pilot programs in the commercial building sector that will increase energy efficiency in buildings across the country. By leveraging the DOE investment, Accelerate Performance will revolutionize the way building contracts are established. It will make energy performance a key metric for selecting design teams and contractors, and will catapult performance to the forefront of design decisions. “New buildings will account for 25 percent of building energy use by 2030,” said Adam McMillen, director of energy consulting at Seventhwave. “Codes aren’t always enforced, but contracts are.”

The Accelerate Performance team is currently seeking building owners interested in constructing the next generation of low- and zero-energy buildings with little or no cost premium. Projects should be in the pre-planning phase and before the design team is selected.

Learn more by contacting Lynn Stoddard at (860) 465-2813 or stoddardl@easternct.edu, or visit www.seventhwave.org/accelerateperformance.