



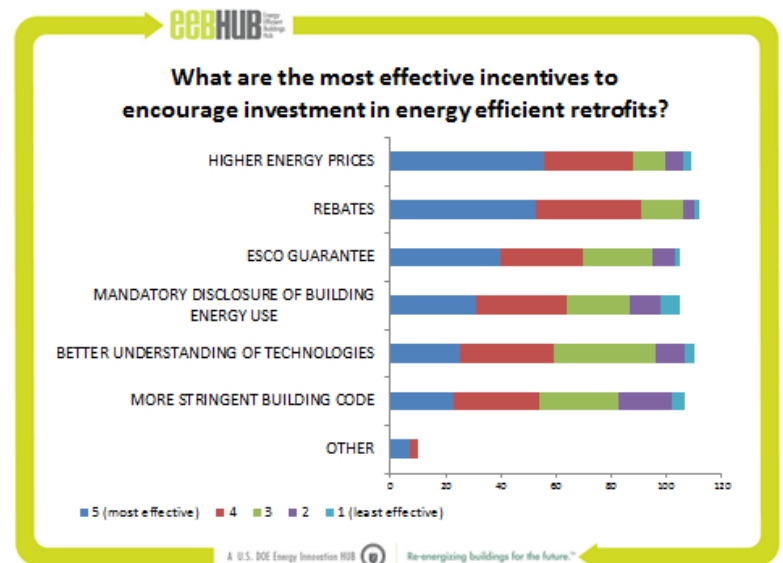
EEB Hub Engagement Platforms: Connecting with the regional marketplace

The EEB Hub has convened a set of regional stakeholder groups that will be vital to help the Hub’s growth and success in its multi-faceted goals for the regional energy retrofit market. These groups, branded as “Platforms”, will provide an infrastructure to connect the EEB Hub with the regional marketplace. The Platforms satisfy a need among EEB Hub members for organized engagement opportunities with local market actors to understand the sector’s current practices, tools, and readiness to innovate. Further, the Platforms will support learning, testing, and deployment of EEB Hub project content. In this way, Platform members become expert reviewers and form a first external audience for EEB Hub content and inquiry.

Four initial Platforms have been created that represent the integration the EEB Hub is promoting in the market: Building Owners, Operators, and Tenants; Architects, Engineers, and Construction Managers; and Education and Workforce. There is considerable potential for future integration both within each of the Platforms and between them. The Platforms are led by a set of EEB Hub investigators from the University of Pennsylvania, UTRC, Penn State, and Bayer Materials. These investigators have partnered with building industry professionals situated in each realm who will co-chair the Platforms to provide leadership from externally situated positions.

On May 1 and 2, 125 market actors from almost as many different privately and publicly help organizations attended the kick-off meetings for the EEB Hub Platforms. A meeting-wide survey revealed that attendees had an average of 16 years of experience in the retrofit industry. During the kickoff meetings, the EEB Hub aimed to gain a better understanding of the customer experience and the most relevant challenges facing the market. The event was also designed to collect information to help guide content and tool development. The Platforms will serve as the primary market engagement strategy for the EEB Hub to enable integrated energy efficient building retrofits in the Greater Philadelphia region.

The agenda provided for structured and open conversations organized around the building “value chain” phases, or the parts of the process each building project must go through to complete a retrofit. These discussions focused on generating lists of advantages and limitations and then categorizing these lists to discern the main priorities for market transformation. The perspectives shared included everything from actual participation in the market to what has been heard and read about the market. Attendees shared their perspectives by writing them down and posting them to boards created in each breakout group. This feedback will aid content and tool development going forward and help to sharpen EEB Hub-wide project agendas.



Responses from the Platform kick-off meeting-wide survey

Early impact

Since the May kickoffs, the Platform leads have had a chance to synthesize the findings from the event. While some findings were simply single arguments articulated during the event, other ideas emerged as clear priorities that resonate with one another and point to common solutions. For instance, all of the value chain breakouts highlighted the importance of recognizing the tangible and intangible value of energy efficiency from the very beginning of the retrofit process so that the appropriate resources are unlocked early and the processes, tools, and technologies are enabled along the way.

Many of the priorities generated by Platform participants will become project work for the EEB Hub, especially where they imply market transformation through education and information creation. Other priorities will be incorporated into existing research, retrofit demonstration projects, the creation of software tools, and policy initiatives. The full Platform Kickoff results will be published on the EEB Hub website by the end of July, 2012. Two videos taken during the event will also be posted in August of 2012.

Next steps

The next round of Platform meetings will be designed to act on the feedback received by participants in the Platforms kickoff. Participants indicated the Platforms would be helpful to them by providing ideas, networking opportunities, and tools to those who participate.

The project anticipates hosting between two and four meetings per Platform in 2012. Leaders of the Owners, Operators, and Occupants Platform convened a meeting on the split incentive issue faced by building owners and tenants on June 9 where several experts from around the country gave presentations and joined in discussions with members from the regional building industry.

The Architects, Engineers, and Construction Managers Platform will host their second meeting on energy modeling practices on retrofits with an invited presentation from the practitioners working on the Building 661 retrofit at The Navy Yard in late July. The aim of the meeting will be to connect those that are designing the energy modeling tools with those that use them.

And the Retrofit Suppliers convened in late June to build intelligence into a market and policy modeling initiative that illustrates the effects of broad-reaching market and policy changes. The collaborative thinking that will take place at these events between building industry professionals, investigators, and educators is vital to catalyzing the transformation we seek in the region.