



New England Heat Pump Accelerator RFI Response: Jan. 29, 2025

Overarching Program Goals:

1. What recommendations do you have for the New England Heat Pump Accelerator to encourage market transformation for heat pumps and heat pump water heaters across the region?
 - a. Create a standardized approach/form for contractors or savvy homeowners to evaluate their homes and to ensure proper sized equipment.
 - b. Set a goal for acceleration and track progress on a per state basis.
 - c. Standardize heat pump equipment lists that guarantee eligibility across programs, including IRA tax incentives for both customers and contractors to evaluate different options about performance and cost.
 - i. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t5DVB92RoqY&t=708s>
 - d. Target replacement of delivered fuels and electric resistance systems.
 - e. Prioritize weatherization before heat pump installation. (bigger is not better)
 - i. <https://bsesc.energy.gov/training-modules/hvac-cold-climate-heat-pump-sizing>
 - ii. <https://basc.pnnl.gov/resource-guides/cold-climate-heat-pump-sizing-and-selection#edit-group-description>
 - f. Communicate annual operations and maintenance - create fact sheets that include comparisons to oil/gas systems operation and maintenance expenses to inform decision-making.
 - g. Emphasize marketing, education, and outreach to educate customers and installers. Ensure there are guardrails against oversizing equipment, especially post-weatherization.
 - h. Commissioning and Quality Control should be built into the program to allow for evaluation and customer follow up.
 - i. Use and grow the Energize CT Heat Pump Installer Network
 - j. Educate about refrigerant recovery and installation practices.
 - k. Pair weatherization and energy recovery ventilation for optimum healthy performance.
 - l. Design rebates to prevent any upfront costs by low-income customers.
 - m. Gather data about costs of all installations. Compare with historical heat pump installation cost information. Create guardrails to prevent inflation or price-gouging by incentives and rebates.
 - n. Consider establishing lower residential electric rates for all-electric homes with a lower rate for all electric homes with electric vehicle charger(s).

- o. Coordinate across industries - insurance, finance, etc. to determine if there are synergies that can translate to meaningful benefits to consumers. For example, can heat pumps reduce homeowner insurance costs (due to elimination of onsite combustion and carbon monoxide exposure), or allow homeowners to refinance their mortgage? When people buy homes, can the heat pump cost be incorporated into the mortgage?

2. The Accelerator will invest a portion of Market Hub funds and 100% of Innovation Hub funds in LIDACs. How can the Accelerator prioritize equitable outcomes? What recommendations or insights do you have for program design and implementation that can center equity?

- a. No out-of-pocket costs for early adopters with qualifying income
- b. Ensure heat pump installation doesn't increase utility costs.
- c. Pair heat pump installations with solar to reduce utility costs.
- d. Data transparency and access to energy audit and utility data.
- e. Track program progress and reporting by EJ community.

3. What resources and practices currently exist to promote heat pump and heat pump water heater workforce capacity, trainings, and certifications, and what more is needed at the state and regional level? What role should the Accelerator play in addressing these needs? How can the Accelerator help to align the region on heat pump and heat pump water heater workforce trainings and certifications?

- a. Emphatic yes! The Accelerator should play an important role.
- b. Prevent misinformation. Proactively work to dispel myths among contractors and customers.
- c. Provide an accessible website with relevant information in easily understandable format including case summaries and best installation practices. Consider including introductory videos for customers to know what to look for or what questions to ask throughout the process... "What to expect when you're expecting a heat pump."

5. What other recommendations do you have for the Accelerator? What have we not asked that is important to consider?

- a. Enable nonprofit organizations, community partners, and agencies who are interested in participating in the Accelerator to identify and contact each other for potential collaboration and partnerships in time to respond to the RFP.
- b. Engage local nonprofits and community partners to provide marketing, education, and outreach about the Accelerator and concierge services. Specifically, for customer-directed education, engage existing community partners and nonprofit organizations such as BuildGreenCT.org which attracts a wide-range of different stakeholders that include homeowners, realtors and building owners who look to the organization for guidance on how to make their homes more energy efficient. Specifically, BuildGreenCT has hosted a dedicated 'Green Homes' community for over twenty years which includes a monthly discussion roundtable, programs that feature high performance homes, and provides resources on its website. Additional Connecticut-based nonprofit organizations

with programs that support weatherization and heat pump adoption outreach and education include [PACE](#) and [I Heart my Home CT](#).

- c. Enable and reward supplier diversity and workforce development in EJ communities

Market Hub: Midstream Program, Design and Goals

7. What are best practices for monitoring equipment costs for potential inflation?

- a. Enable supply of equipment to meet demand from consumers
- b. Encourage manufacturing or assembly in New England
- c. Tariffs may cause price increases on equipment made outside the USA

9. What are lessons learned from previous midstream programs that can be applied to the Accelerator? What practices or policies should be avoided?

- a. Expenses for safe removal of home fuel oil tanks by approved companies should be an eligible expense for zero to low interest loan programs

11. What mechanisms could be employed at the midstream level to ensure proper equipment installation practices and sizing for New England? Are there examples of replicable models the program can learn from? Please include links to program information where possible.

- a. Certified installer auditors for system commissioning and random QA/QC audits of system sizing records
- b. Maine has a comprehensive weatherization and heat pump adoption program that should serve as a resource for lessons learned and potential adoption by other states.

12. There are existing programs in Connecticut, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and Maine that the Accelerator will complement and interact with. How the regional implementer works with these programs will vary by state. What are some best practices and lessons learned from how other midstream programs have interacted with downstream programs? Please provide details on these programs and any information on how the Accelerator can best work with existing programs.

- a. Use concierge programs to guide decision-making, where possible. Existing programs include EnergizeCT Abode (single technology focus) or I Heart my Home (whole-house customer focus). Concierge programs should include pricing information about heat pump equipment and installation, ideally using a whole-home energy efficiency perspective.

18. How could the Accelerator be visible to end-use customers while not adding additional complexity to a heat pump purchase process? What are best practices for ensuring midstream incentives reach end-use customers? Credit Card/ Gift Cards mailed directly to consumer for reaching insulation rating, blower test metrics, removal of fossil fuels for heating/cooling/cooking whole house electrification loan approval milestones

- a. Provide an equipment costs database to promote pricing transparency that customers can readily access to verify and compare equipment costs to inform decision-making. This information will help reassure consumers that they are paying a fair market price for equipment while legitimately receiving the incentives that they are eligible for.

19. What are the best practices states should consider incorporating into the Accelerator to enhance the delivery of weatherization measures alongside heat pump installations as a means to minimize grid impacts of heat pump adoption and maximize cost reduction for customers?

- a. Stack EnergizeCT and other weatherization incentives with heat pump installations to achieve comprehensive installations.

Innovation Hub: Community and State Grants, Design and Goals

22. What kind of projects should the Innovation Hub prioritize at the state- and community-level?

- a. Projects that leverage existing community partners such as the North Hartford Partnership at the Swift Factory.

27. What best practices for designing and deploying stipends for stakeholder or community engagement should the Accelerator use? Please include any examples of past or current programs that used stipends.

- a. Engage existing leaders who are already working in this space for guidance on community engagement and stipends. In Connecticut, these leaders include Brenda Watson, Executive Director, of the North Hartford Partnership at the Swift Factor and Tenaya Taylor, Executive Director of the Nonprofit Accountability Group (NAG). BuildGreenCT.org partnered with NAG in 2024 to engage members of NAG's community to learn more about the impact of energy burden.

Resource Hub, Design and Goals

33. Are there best practices related to technology awareness campaigns that the Accelerator should look to emulate?

- a. People's Action for Clean Energy (PACE) has a [HeatSmart program](#) which is aimed at helping municipalities encourage heat pump adoption through an emphasis on a whole-home solutions approach. This program has a variety of components: educational meetings/events (in-person and virtual), website resources, a community-based person available to field questions, help with scheduling home-energy audits, etc.

34. Are there aspects of heat pump and/or heat pump water heater sales, installation, and operation that would benefit from regional alignment in New England? Are there any specific tools or resources that would provide value at the regional level, such as trainings, education materials, or sizing guidance? How might this information differ to account for regional or state-by-state differences?

- a. Whether it is at the regional level or by state, the Resource Hub should enable nonprofits to identify and connect with other nonprofits who are interested in/or are participating in

the Accelerator program to spur collaboration and potential partnerships. Ideally, the Resource Hub should serve as a resource for all participating organizations, agencies and businesses to facilitate connection to amplify the program's impact.