

# Empire Building Challenge

## Overview



**\$50 MILLION**  
NYSERDA  
investment

**\$250 MILLION**  
private sector  
investment

**16**  
real estate  
portfolio owner  
partners

**138 BUILDINGS**  
& **125 MILLION**  
**SQUARE FEET**  
committed to  
achieving carbon  
neutrality

**Join the  
challenge**

visit:  
[nyscrda.ny.gov/EBC](https://nyscrda.ny.gov/EBC)

email:  
[ebc@nyscrda.ny.gov](mailto:ebc@nyscrda.ny.gov)

## Ushering in a new era for high-rise buildings

To achieve New York State's ambitious climate goals over the next 30 years, large-scale adoption of low carbon retrofits of existing buildings is needed on a broad scale.

In New York City alone, there are approximately 3 billion square feet of existing commercial office and multifamily buildings, and close to half of New York State's energy-related greenhouse gas emissions come from buildings. Additionally, 70% of buildings in the State were constructed prior to energy code, and it is likely that at least 90% of these buildings will still be in operation in 2050.

Through the Empire Building Challenge, NYSERDA is investing \$50 million to demonstrate the technical and economic feasibility of retrofiting tall buildings to low carbon standards, and generating blueprints so building owners can replicate the solutions across their portfolio of buildings.



*"By harnessing the combined expertise of our innovators and real estate experts, we can develop scalable and cost-effective solutions for large-scale energy efficiency improvements in our high-rise buildings, creating more comfortable, sustainable, and healthy living environments for residents and owners."*

– Doreen Harris, President and CEO NYSERDA



**NYSERDA**

## The power of partnerships

**Accelerating private sector commitment and investment in carbon reduction is a foremost goal of the Empire Building Challenge.**

### BUILDING OWNERS

NYSERDA competitively selected sixteen real estate portfolio owners to participate in the Challenge. Empire Building Challenge partners collectively control over 220 million square feet of real estate in New York State, including more than 250 buildings that contain affordable housing. These partners have jointly committed to achieve carbon neutrality in **138 buildings**, totaling **125 million square feet**, in the next 10-15 years.

Empire Building Challenge partners are working with leading engineering firms and solution providers to develop long-term capital plans that achieve carbon neutrality, and devise scenarios to scale the solutions in their portfolios. These plans will lead to the creation of playbooks that will be shared with the market to enable knowledge transfer and further replication.

Through a competitive process, Empire Building Challenge partners are eligible to receive funding to implement their proposed low carbon retrofit projects.

Visit [nyserdera.ny.gov/EBC-partners](https://nyserdera.ny.gov/EBC-partners) to view a full list of Empire Building Challenge Partners.

### SOLUTIONS PROVIDERS

The Empire Building Challenge also supports dialogue and matchmaking between leading real estate portfolio owners and solution providers to make New York a hub for low carbon retrofits.

This will spur economic growth by attracting best-in-class manufacturers, solution providers, and clean tech entrepreneurs and businesses from around the world to help transform our existing building stock into the buildings of the future.

These companies are encouraged to learn more about opportunities to develop business in New York State and meet a growing market demand for building decarbonization technology appropriate for New York's climate zone.

Contact us at [ebc@nyserdera.ny.gov](mailto:ebc@nyserdera.ny.gov) for more information.

## Innovation and economic development

New York State has many of the tallest, largest, and most iconic buildings in the world. These high-rise buildings face unique challenges when it comes to implementing carbon emissions reduction measures, ranging from tenant disruption to upfront costs for renovations, and the sheer size and scale of these structures. Technical barriers to decarbonization require product development and innovation from a broadened supply chain, which in turn will drive new technology risk reduction and job creation for New York.

### Innovation to Address Market Gaps

As part of the Empire Building Challenge, NYSERDA has launched a **\$10 million Empire Technology Prize** focused on supporting entrepreneurs with breakthrough solutions that can disrupt the retrofit industry, overcome persistent technical and economic barriers, and accelerate broader market adoption of low carbon retrofits. By joining forces, the real estate industry and clean technology sectors will surface new solutions for low carbon high-rise buildings in New York, establishing repeatable pathways to decarbonization, and set the stage for a broad-based market adoption of low carbon technologies.

### Green Jobs Recovery through Retrofits<sup>1</sup>

By making New York a global leader in low carbon retrofits, the Empire Building Challenge will help generate thousands of construction and engineering jobs. A recent analysis by Urban Green Council estimates that over the next few years, Empire Building Challenge partners will invest more than \$250 million into the buildings they committed to carbon neutrality. Combined with NYSERDA funding, \$300 million will soon flow into the energy efficiency retrofit market and could generate 2,600 jobs. If further deep energy retrofits are pursued, this first EBC cohort alone could create 2,400 more jobs. Visit the UGC website for the [full analysis](https://www.urbangreencouncil.org/content/news/recovery-through-retrofits).

## Join the challenge

Visit [nyserdera.ny.gov/EBC](https://nyserdera.ny.gov/EBC) or email [ebc@nyserdera.ny.gov](mailto:ebc@nyserdera.ny.gov) for additional details on the Empire Building Challenge and to learn how to partner with NYSERDA, reduce carbon emissions, and get involved in the clean energy economy.

<sup>1</sup> Recovery through Retrofits, <https://www.urbangreencouncil.org/content/news/recovery-through-retrofits>