



Wise
Window
Hub

Request for Proposals ("RFP"): Cost-Optimized High-Performance Windows

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Wise Window Hub (a program operated by Center for Energy and Environment) seeks to increase the energy efficiency, comfort, and thermal performance of residential buildings in the Midwest (including Minnesota and Illinois) by promoting energy efficient window technology. The Wise Window Hub defines High-Performance Windows (HPWs) as window products that provide a thermal transmittance (U-Factor) of 0.22 or less; this performance level is typically reached using triple-pane glazing. It has been noted that products with this level of performance have limited market share, and high-performance glazing is typically bundled with premium features, which can dramatically increase the cost and decrease the affordability of these performance products. This RFP aims to increase the availability of builder-grade high-performance products. As a category, builder-grade high-performance products contain minimized features needed to reach 0.22 or less U-factor, so as to optimize for cost at that performance level.

Without affordable, builder-grade product options for builders, the installation of HPWs has been, and likely will remain, drastically low. Therefore, our initiative will be offering funding to incentivize window manufacturers operating in and/or distributing products in the Midwestern region to accelerate the production of builder-grade, triple glazed products (U-Factor 0.22 or less).

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Interested manufacturers are encouraged to apply for funding. The total funding available is \$200,000, and funding may be awarded to one or more manufacturers that meet the criteria outlined below. Estimated award amounts are from \$50,000-\$200,000 per awardee depending on volume and strength of submissions. Either expansions of existing products, or newly developed products are eligible.

To be eligible for incentive dollars, you must meet the required criteria outlined below. The preferred criteria will also be considered in scoring. The scoring criteria are as follows:

Required:

- Your company operates and/or distributes window products in the Midwestern region of North America.
- Your company can share sales and market share data in Minnesota and Illinois. Your company ensures durable products through a warranty or another measure.
- Your company will provide an expected price range for your builder-grade high-performance window products.

Preferred:

- Speed of execution preferred, e.g. commit to launching affordable, builder-grade products with a U-factor of 0.22 or less by no later than April 13th, 2026.
- Durability data relating to a longer service life (for example, as evidenced by a longer and/or fully transferrable warranty, accelerated weathering results, etc.). More durable products preferred.
- If your company currently partners with ENERGY STAR and/or has existing ENERGY STAR certified window products.
- Your company agrees to partner with the Wise Windows Hub on the promotion of new products meeting outlined criteria.
- Your company agrees to provide sales training and support on new products launched through this effort.
- Higher sales volumes in and/or in-state manufacturing in MN and IL preferred

TIMELINE

RFP launched May 26th, 2025.

Submission window closes July 11th, 2025.

Assessment and question window through August 8th 2025.

Awardees selected by August 8th and the first half of funding is expected to be distributed by September 15th, 2025. Target product launched by end of Q1 2026.

AWARD REQUIREMENTS

Upon closure of the submission window, Center for Energy and Environment (“CEE”) will review the applications against the required and preferred criteria outlined above. During the review period, CEE may choose to interview some applicants to clarify their application.

If awarded, an agreement (between the awardee and CEE) will be initiated outlining the terms and conditions of receiving the funds. The agreement will include expectations around deliverables applicable to your project, including marketing and training efforts, meetings with CEE to convey progress, and deliverable timelines. Upon execution of the agreement, half of the funds will be awarded and upon confirmation of the product launch, the remainder of the funds will be awarded.

Any agreement shall not be construed to create a subcontractor, vendor, or subgrantee relationship between CEE and the Awardee, but is intended to ensure incentive dollars are spent in a manner consistent with the goals of this RFP.

CEE reserves the right to withdraw the request and repurpose funds if no applicants meet program requirements.

CEE is the sole administrator of this RFP: the operation of the award program, and evaluation of applications and the award decisions are solely the responsibility of RFP and not any sponsors or contributors to CEE regarding this program.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. Applicant company:
2. Where is your company headquartered?
3. Does your company distribute window products anywhere in the Midwestern region? Ex. Minnesota, Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin, North Dakota, South Dakota
 - If so, what is your approximate sales volumes into MN?
 - What is your approximate sales volumes into IL?
 - What is your approximate sales volumes in the Midwest?
4. Do you manufacture windows in MN and/or IL?
 - a. If so, what is your approximate window count manufactured in MN and/or IL?
5. What is your company's target customer base? (e.g. Builders, homeowners, distributors, or some mix thereof)
 - Is your company an ENERGY STAR partner and/or offering ENERGY STAR certified window products?
6. Does your company offer high-performance windows? (0.22 U-factor or less)
 - If yes, does your company offer or plan to offer these types of windows at a builder-grade price point?
 - What is the expected price range for a product meeting this RFP's requirements (builder-grade products with 0.22 or better U-factor)? What is the historical price range for an equivalent traditional/non-high-performance window builder-grade product? Do your products have a warranty or another measurement of expected service life?
 - a. If so, what is the length of your builder-grade product's warranty?
 - b. What other supporting information do you have on your product's durability (e.g. transferability, weathering test data, etc.)?
7. Would your company partner with Wise Window Hub for the marketing and promotion of the product(s) resulting from this award?
 - a. If yes, is your company open to sharing sales and market data for MN and IL to support our efforts to track high-performance windows in the market?
8. Would your company provide sales and training support for the new products launched through this effort?
9. How would you use this incentive this to further your affordable, builder-grade high-performance products (0.22 or less U-factor)?
 - When would the products affected by this effort be launched to the market and available for purchase? Note that we are targeting a launch no later than April 13th, 2026, with sooner rollout being favored over later.