



## A kick-start to your sustainability projects

No doubt about it: Investing in energy-efficiency improvements helps a business reduce operating costs. In fact, sustainability initiatives can deliver more than bottom-line savings—they often form an essential, competitive component of an organization's growth strategy.

### Sustainability growth

Record numbers of facilities—from universities and hospitals to factories and office buildings—continue to undergo a transition to more energy-efficient buildings. What are the top three motivating forces? Superior technologies, substantial incentives, and return on investment.

### Government incentives: where, what, and why?

There's no shortage of government incentives and policies to help businesses reduce their carbon footprint. However, knowing which ones align with your facilities footprint and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) goals can be a tedious task. Interactive and easy to use, the Database of State Incentives for Renewables and Efficiency website ([dsireusa.org](https://www.dsireusa.org)) is a comprehensive and reliable source.

### Far-reaching return on investment

The general rule is obvious: Increased efficiency = reduced utility bills = better bottom line. But there's another part of the equation you may be overlooking—the increasing value linked to the social and environmental drivers of corporate sustainability efforts.

At right is a snapshot of industry trends, including savings you may realize with effective sustainability plans and practices.

### Sustainability by the numbers

# 26–54%

Savings typical commercial buildings in the U.S. could realize by making facility-wide energy enhancements. Inefficient buildings could save up to 59%.<sup>1</sup>

# \$150+ Billion

Spent by the Buildings sector in 2019 (up 2% over 2018), which continues to lead the nation for energy efficiency.<sup>2</sup>

# 93%

Percentage of the world's largest 250 companies that now publish annual CSR reports, almost 60% of which are independently audited.<sup>3</sup>

# ≈50%

Percentage of U.S. consumers representing an estimated \$128.5 billion spend on sustainably branded goods that would shift their buying habits to reduce their perceived personal impact on our global ecosystem.<sup>4</sup>

## Seven steps to get started

<b>1</b>	<b>Start with strong alliances</b> Find and vet a provider of funding options—an equipment financing professional with Clean Energy expertise, a proven track record in lease structuring, and a clear understanding of your business. Take a similar approach to qualifying your choice of engineering firms and equipment vendors. Working together, they can help identify and implement the most optimal and profitable sustainability strategies.
<b>2</b>	<b>Consider business goals and strategy</b> The project and its financing should align with your business objectives.
<b>3</b>	<b>Start with a pilot program</b> For instance, if you plan to replace all your fluorescent lighting with LEDs, implement the idea initially on a small scale, perhaps on just one floor of a building. Measure and track outcomes to ensure future large-scale success.
<b>4</b>	<b>Keep on metering</b> Throughout every phase of a sustainability project, diligent metering and tracking can precisely evaluate a project's energy-use reduction and cost savings—and serve as a valuable CSR reporting tool, too.
<b>5</b>	<b>Communicate your results</b> Share your metering results with your financing professional. He or she can incorporate your energy savings into a lending strategy. Its goal: Keep your annual project payments lower than your annual utility savings.
<b>6</b>	<b>Accelerate return on investment</b> Grants, rebates, and tax incentives can expedite return on investment for sustainability initiatives and help cut capital expenses, too.
<b>7</b>	<b>Secure your funding</b> Once the project gets approval, look to your financing professional to secure the funding and incentives best suited to your business. Congratulations! You're on your way to lower utility costs and a sustainable future.

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According to a recent study, CSR is more than a capitalist having a heart; it creates significant value, increases innovation, and benefits the bottom line. It's good for business.<sup>5</sup>

**Forbes Business Council**

## Let's talk today

Key Equipment Finance brings seasoned experience plus established industry relationships you can trust. Contact me today to discuss potential sustainability opportunities for your organization.

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## Key Equipment Finance



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<sup>1</sup> Department of Energy, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, <https://www.pnnl.gov/news-media/cut-us-commercial-building-energy-use-29-widespread-controls>

<sup>2</sup> International Energy Agency, <https://www.iea.org/reports/world-energy-investment-2020/energy-end-use-and-efficiency#abstract>

<sup>3</sup> International Council of Museums [https://oecdobserver.org/news/fullstory.php/aid/4369/Corporate\\_Social\\_Responsibility:\\_Emerging\\_good\\_practice\\_for\\_a\\_new\\_era.html](https://oecdobserver.org/news/fullstory.php/aid/4369/Corporate_Social_Responsibility:_Emerging_good_practice_for_a_new_era.html)

<sup>4</sup> Nielsen, <https://www.nielsen.com/us/en/insights/article/2018/was-2018-the-year-of-the-influential-sustainable-consumer/>

<sup>5</sup> Forbes Business Council, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesbusinesscouncil/2020/04/14/how-commitment-to-csr-improves-the-bottom-line/#68ae3e472944>

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