

Businesses Reducing Impact on the Environment (BRITE) Program

Frequently Asked Questions

What are some examples of projects, specific products and equipment upgrades that the BRITE Grant may cover?

- Replacement of equipment that uses PERC with a newer model that uses a safer alternative cleaning agent such as hydrocarbon
- Funding to help pay for waste reduction trainings, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as gloves, goggles, masks, etc., safer cleaning products (i.e., EPA Safer Choice verified)
- Purchasing and installing process equipment that would conserve energy and water
- Purchasing cleaning products that are EPA Safer Choice verified
- Initial funding of commuter benefit incentives for staff

Does my business need to undergo an assessment prior to receiving an award from the BRITE Grant?

- Yes, to receive grants all businesses must undergo an assessment. Upon completion, the specialist will inform business owners of any recommended projects or equipment to reduce environmental impact.

How much does the assessment cost?

- Nothing. The assessment is completely free.

Do I have to implement recommendations made by the specialist to reduce my business's environmental impact?

- No, the business owner can decide whether to follow the recommendations of the specialist.

What can the BRITE Grant dollars be used for?

- Grant dollars awarded from the BRITE Grant must be used to improve business operations and practices to reduce environmental impact. The BRITE Grant will only cover costs of recommendations made during the time of assessment.

What type of assessment will my business undergo?

- DES will conduct a pollution prevention technical assessment. The assessment may identify things like toxic and pollution reduction, renewable energy, energy and water efficiency and waste reduction practices.

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Who will conduct my assessment?

- A representative from DES will conduct your assessment. In some cases, DES will require additional expertise to assess certain business categories. In these cases, the representative will request a specialized environmental consultant to conduct the assessment.

How do I prove that my business experienced a negative economic impact due to the COVID-19 pandemic?

- Examples of negative economic impacts include decreased revenue or gross receipts, financial insecurity, increased costs and inability to afford materials, lost capacity to manage financial hardship, challenges covering payroll, rent or mortgage and other operating costs.

What are some sustainable practices recommended by BRITE specialists for dry cleaners?

- Generally, dry cleaners are encouraged to upgrade from equipment that uses hazardous chemicals and switch to energy efficient equipment that runs on environmentally friendly cleaning alternatives.
- It is also recommended that all businesses upgrade to LED lighting, conduct preventative maintenance on all equipment, use non-toxic detergents/spotting solutions and use paper or reusable garment bags instead of plastic. Recommendations may vary for each dry cleaner.

Does the County offer any additional support to small businesses?

- Cook County offers many types of support to small businesses:
 - [Cook County Small Business Source](#) directly connects small business owners with expert guidance and support to take businesses to the next level.
 - [Cook County's C-PACE Program](#) helps property owners secure low-cost, long-term financing for energy efficient upgrades.

Further questions? Please email BRITE [@cookcountyl.gov](mailto:BRITE@cookcountyl.gov).