

CUSPNews

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NYU's Center for Urban Science & Progress and the Natural Resources Defense Council Team Up to Identify Energy-Efficient Commercial Real Estate Tenants in U.S.

New York University's Center for Urban Science and Progress (CUSP) announced that it will team up with The Natural Resources Defense Council's (NRDC) Center for Market Innovation to develop benchmarks for commercial tenant energy performance. The project has been made possible through a CBRE Group, Inc. (CBRE) Real Green Research Challenge grant awarded to NRDC earlier this month.

"We are thrilled to work with NRDC and CBRE on this important project and to bring CUSP's unique informatics capabilities to understanding tenant energy efficiency," said Dr. Constantine E. Kontokosta, PE, CUSP Deputy Director and Research Lead for the project. "Commercial tenants represent a critical stakeholder in the effort to reduce energy consumption in buildings, and this research will set the standard for data collection, analysis, and benchmarking of tenant energy performance."

Tenant spaces frequently account for more than one half of a building's overall energy use. However, minimal efforts have been made to increase energy efficiency of these spaces. CUSP and NRDC will identify approximately 1,000 commercial real estate tenant spaces in five major cities across the country and work together to create a rating system that compares energy use among these tenants. Such a rating system positions CUSP and NRDC to provide tenants with valuable feedback related to their energy performance while recognizing leaders in the field. The belief is that such a benchmark tool would motivate tenants to improve the efficiency of their spaces and could create a competitive advantage for those that do so.

This initiative will also examine the effectiveness and long-term impact this information has on tenants by monitoring their energy consumption for the 12 month period after they receive feedback. In the U.S., commercial buildings account for 41% of energy consumption and corresponding carbon consumption. This endeavor will provide significant opportunities for building owners and managers to improve the energy performance of their properties.

"Buildings are the largest single source of energy usage and carbon pollution in the U.S., and tenant spaces—which have been largely unaddressed to-date—often account for more than half of that consumption. Our project will tackle this vexing challenge in the commercial real estate sector. The end result will be less emissions and money-saved for commercial tenants who take action," said Yerina Mugica, Associate Director of NRDC's Center for Market Innovation.

From a pool of more than one hundred submissions, five RGRC financial award recipients were chosen as part of CBRE's \$1 million commitment to fund leading-edge sustainability research and innovation in commercial real estate. "The projects supported through the Real Green Research Challenge will add



significant knowledge to some of the key sustainability issues in commercial real estate, such as the relative value of sustainable buildings, the most effective energy efficiency initiatives and the location of green building market growth,” said Dave Pogue, CBRE’s Global Director of Corporate Responsibility.

About New York University’s Center for Urban Science & Progress

CUSP is an applied science research institute created by New York University and NYU-Poly with a consortium of world-class universities and the foremost international technology companies to address the needs of cities. At the heart of its academic program, CUSP will investigate and develop solutions to the challenges that face cities around the world. This research will make CUSP the world’s leading authority in the emerging field of “urban informatics”. For more news and information on CUSP, please visit <http://cusp.nyu.edu/>.