

Innovation and Design Credits

Earn More Points!

Innovation and design credits are available on every LEED project and give project teams the opportunity to earn up to 5 points for either a LEED credit they done really well at (call exemplary performance) or for something cool that they've incorporated that LEED doesn't already award points for. You can almost always earn at least one exemplary performance credits (reaching the 30% threshold for MR4 and MR5 on most larger projects happens often, and offsetting 70% of electricity use with Green E RECs for EA6 is almost a given), but you cannot earn more than three this way.

That leaves you with 2 more points to earn with innovative practices and procedures. This can certainly be an all-inclusive list of measures that LEED doesn't currently award points for, but there are some that are tried and true and can earn you points on almost any LEED NC or CI project Here are two:

Education and Outreach - An innovation credit can be earned for implementing a robust education and outreach campaign in your project. This program must contain two of three components - tours highlighting the sustainable features, educational signage around the building informing occupants about LEED, green building, and the components included in the building, and/or a building case study must be developed. Reviews tend to give leeway on what must be included for each of the three options, so customize your program to work with your building. But be warned - you have to have a robust program - one 3.5" sign isn't going to cut it!



Low Mercury Lighting - The low mercury lighting ID point can be earned by following the guidance given in LEED EBOM MR4. This requires that all light bulbs purchased for the project have an average mercury content of less than 70 picograms per lumen hour. This is easily achieved by using T5 lamps, and most T8 lamps come in low-mercury models (such as the Philips Alto pictured). All light bulbs must be accounted for, so if there are a lot of CFLs (which have higher mercury content) make sure to specify low mercury and track them diligently. The LEED limit is based on lamp mercury content and bulb life, so choose wisely! There are a number of online calculators which will provide the information for you as well.

The USGBC provides a catalogue of other ID credits that have been attempted if you're looking for more ideas. Find it here: www.usgbc.org/ShowFile.aspx?DocumentID=3569

