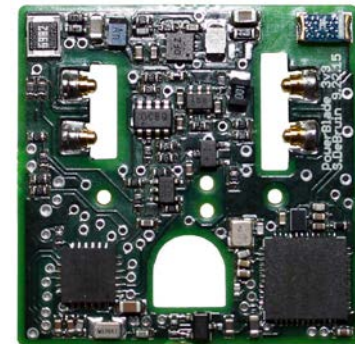


# Low-Cost Identification and Monitoring of Diverse MELs in Residential and Commercial Buildings with PowerBlade



UC Berkeley | Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory | National Renewable Energy Laboratory

Prabal Dutta, Associate Professor

[prabal@berkeley.edu](mailto:prabal@berkeley.edu)

# Project Summary

## Timeline:

Start date: January 1, 2018

Planned end date: December 31, 2020

## Key Milestones:

1. \$10-12 sensor unit cost in volume (Q2)
2. Cloud DB schema and queries (Q4)
3. Sensor accuracy verification (Q4, Q6)
4. Scaling sensor manufacturing (Q5)
5. Field deployment and analysis (Q8)

## Budget:

### Total Project \$ to Date:

- DOE: \$0
- Cost Share: \$0

### Total Project \$:

- DOE: \$2,025,000.00
- Cost Share: \$225,095.00

## Key Partners:

|  |
|--|
| Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (LBNL) |
| National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL)  |
| CubeWorks, Inc                               |

## Project Outcome:

- Automatically identify/monitor miscellaneous electrical loads (MELs) across a representative sample of homes in two geographies.
- Provide a blueprint and proof-of-concept for a cost-effective, scalable, MEL monitoring and identification system.

# Team



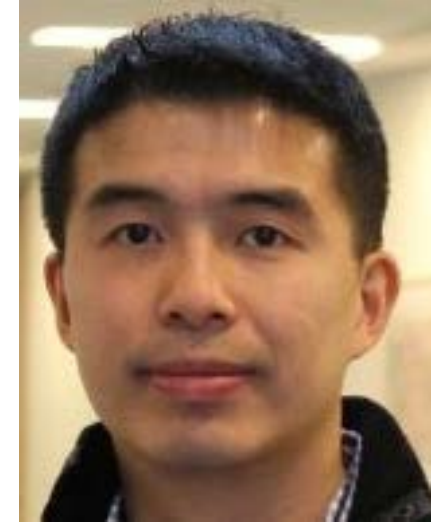
**Prabal Dutta**  
**UC Berkeley**  
Focus: Sensors,  
Networks, Analytics



**Rich Brown**  
**LBLN**  
Focus: Design  
Testing & Validation



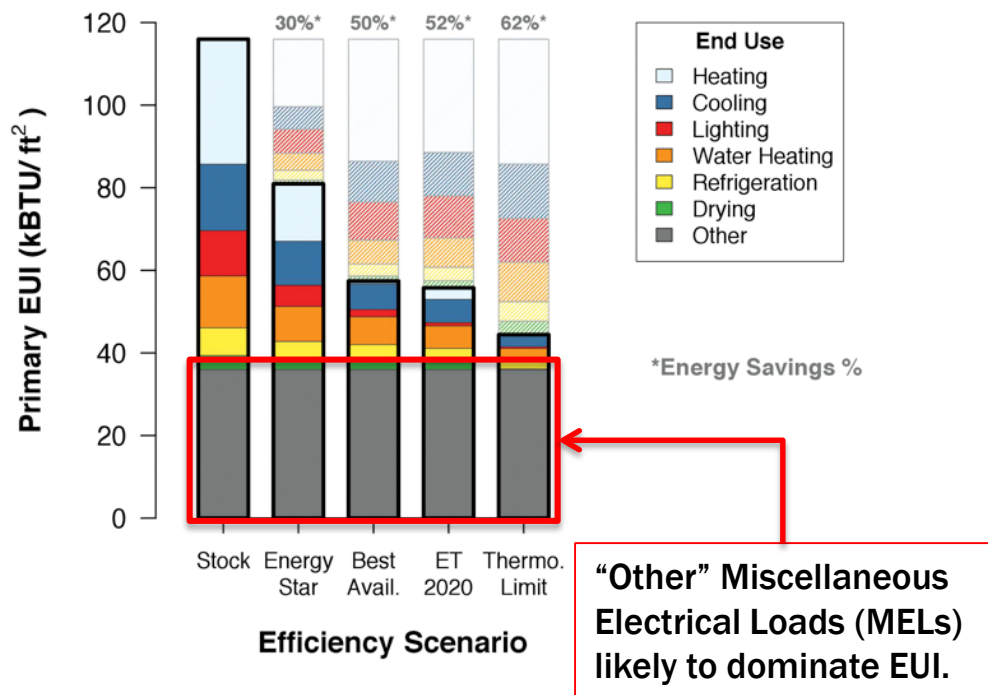
**Lieko Earle**  
**NREL**  
Focus: Deployment  
Design & Execution



**ZhiYoong Foo**  
**CubeWorks**  
Focus: Nano-power  
Timekeeping

- Dutta is a leader in dense, large-scale, low-power sensor systems and networks.
- Brown is a leader in characterizing and addressing MEL energy use in buildings.
- Earle is a leader in field testing, including for the Building America Program.
- Foo is a leader in nano-power “smart dust” sensor technologies and components.

# Challenge: MEL Monitoring and Identification



Source: U.S. Department of Energy, Quadrennial Technology Review (QTR): An Assessment of Energy Technologies and Research Opportunities, Sep. 2015.

## The Problem

- MELs are a large and growing fraction of end-load EUI
- MELs are fragmented so little visibility into them today
- Hard to identify “offenders” given wide mix of MELs
- No good solution to identify and characterize MEL energy use and usage patterns

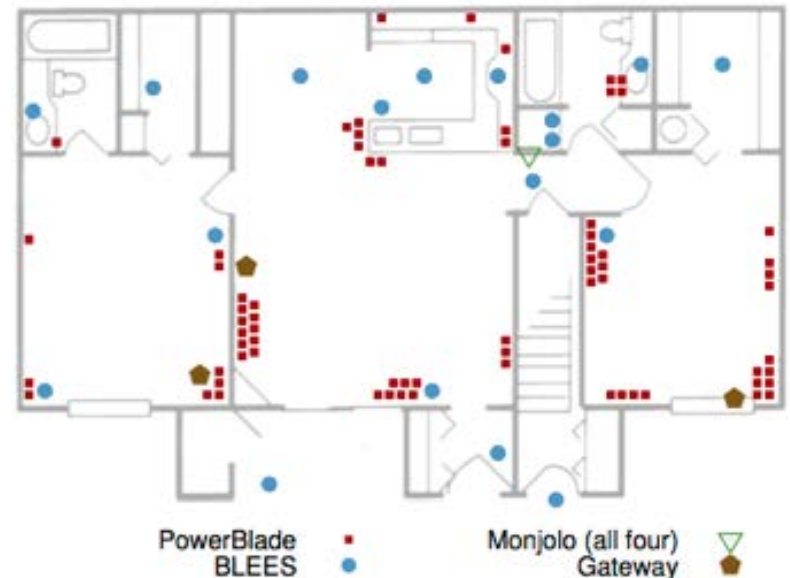
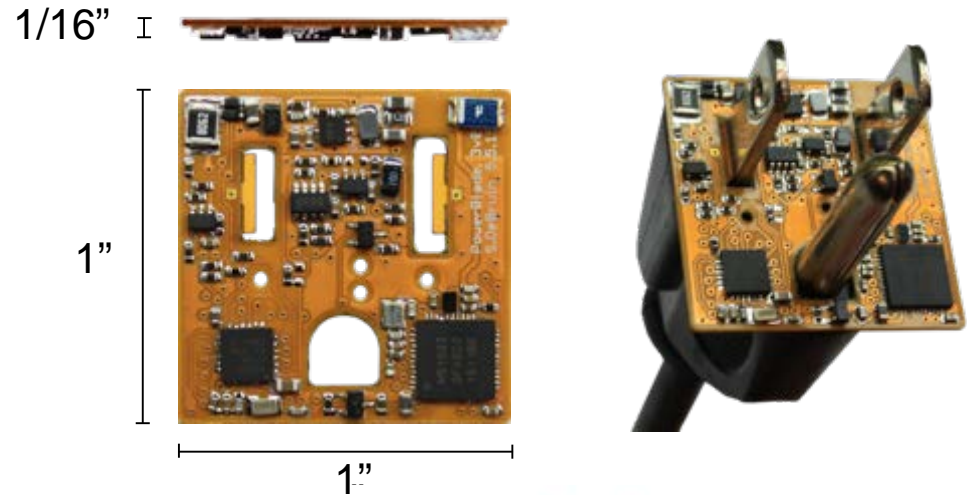
# Approach: PowerBlade at Every MEL

## Our Solution

- A small and ubiquitous sensor
- Attaches to every MEL plug-load
- Identifies and monitors every MEL
- In 200-500 residential dwellings
- Using advanced data analytics
- Enabling unprecedented density

## Technical Risks/Challenges

- Achieving target cost
- Ensuring metering accuracy
- Ensuring load identification accuracy
- Reliably delivering data to cloud

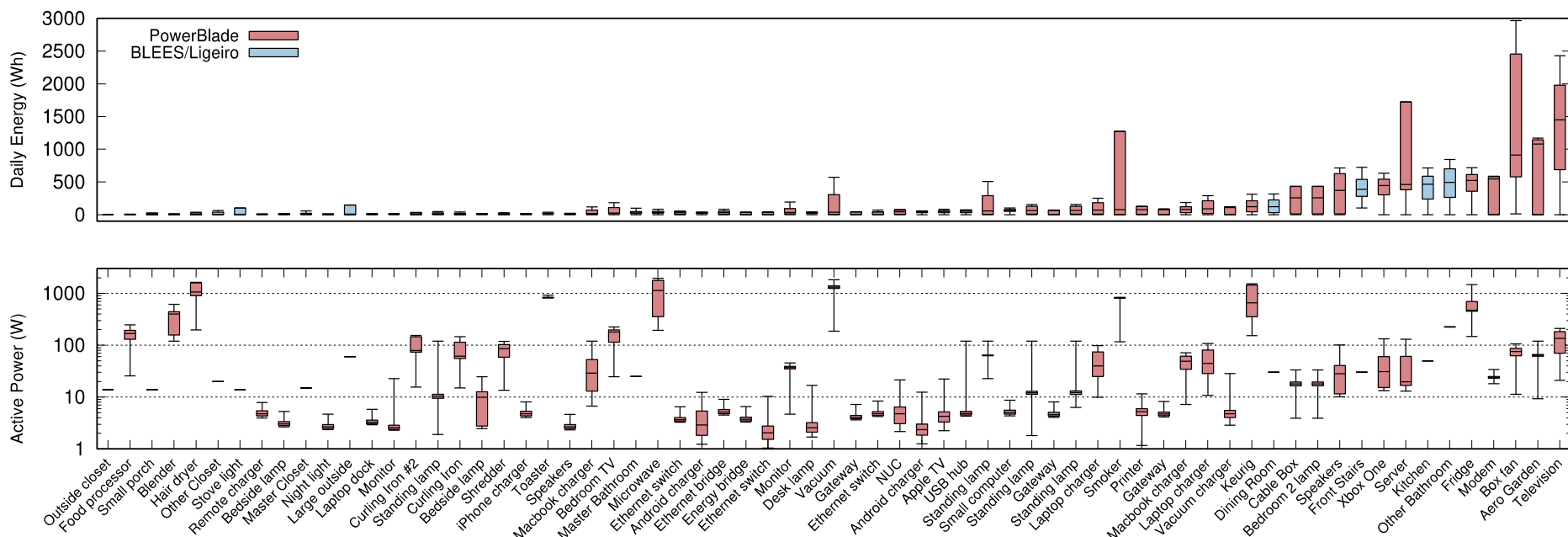


S. DeBruin, B. Ghena, Y.-S. Kuo, and P. Dutta. PowerBlade: A low-profile, true-power, plug-through energy meter, In *Proc. of the 13<sup>th</sup> ACM Conference on Embedded Networked Sensor Systems (SenSys'15)*, pp 17–29, 2015.

# Impact: Inventory MEL Usage and Trends

## Advantages, Differentiation, and Impact

- Small size and dense deployment enable novel analytics and new insights
  - The six devices that draw the most power (> 500 W)
  - Collectively account for a small fraction of total energy use (2.9%)

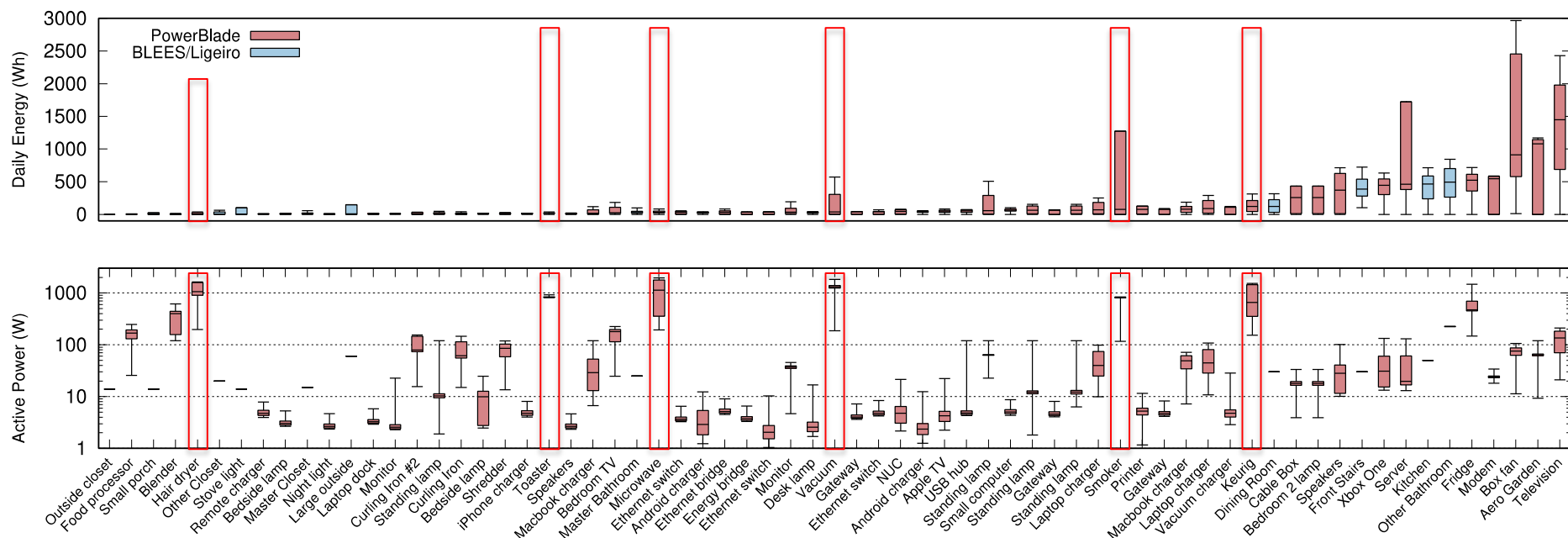


S. DeBruin, "Enabling Visibility Into Building Energy Consumption Through Novel Metering Designs and Methods," Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Michigan, 2017.

# Impact: Inventory MEL Usage and Trends

## Advantages, Differentiation, and Impact

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S. DeBruin, "Enabling Visibility Into Building Energy Consumption Through Novel Metering Designs and Methods," Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Michigan, 2017.



# Progress: Low Cost Sensors (Tasks 1 & 3)

- Analysis of PowerBlade sensor yielded three design issues

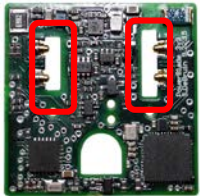
- Issue 1: Insufficient insertion depth with short plugs

- Many older appliances/lamps have short plugs that barely meet standard
- Prevalent in older homes, especially with well-used receptacles
- Reducing insertion depth by an additional 1/16" to 3/32" is an issue
- Issue is less likely in newer homes and with newer loads



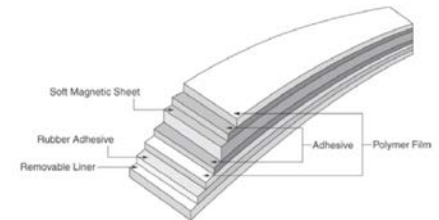
- Issue 2: Insufficient creepage and clearance tolerances

- Tolerance between high-voltage and low-voltage circuits too small
- Mainly an issue since PCB design is open-air design and exposes signals
- Easily mitigated via PCB change or changing dielectric (e.g. overmolding)



- Issue 3: Magnetic interference from noisy loads

- Caused by highly inductive/noisy loads
- Magnetic field affects sense electronics
- Requires magnetic shielding to reduce impact
- Mu-metal tape/shielding offers one possible route

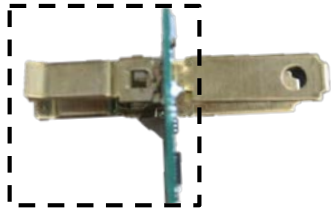




# Progress: Potential Mitigations to Issues



- Option 1: PowerBlade++
  - Creepage → Change PCB, overmold to increase isolation
  - Interference → Use mu-metal shield to reduce susceptibility
  - Insertion Depth → Include extension cord for when needed



- Option 2: PowerCube
  - Creepage → Change PCB, overmold to increase isolation
  - Interference → Use mu-metal shield to reduce susceptibility
  - Insertion Depth → Add standard receptacles and prongs



- Option 3: PowerCord
  - Creepage → Change PCB
  - Interference → Use mu-metal shield to reduce susceptibility
  - Insertion Depth → Integrate into standard plug housing

# Stakeholder Engagement

- NIST
  - Interested in available COTS/R&D MEL metering technologies
  - Project will adopt a variation of NIST-designed testing procedures
  - Project will supply sensors to NIST for independent verification
- Residential homeowners/occupants
  - Interested in understanding energy usage and reduction pathways
  - Engage with Boulder residents; leverage NREL ↔ Boulder relationship
  - Tune & test deployment strategies with local sites; then scale up
- Electric Utilities
  - Interested in helping ratepayers reduce demand, replace appliances
  - Project will supply potentially actionable data at the level of homes
  - Project will engage with stakeholders through contacts at local utilities
- State and National Laboratories
  - Interested in understanding, monitoring, and regulating MELs
  - Project can provide key missing data for decision-making and policy
  - Project will engage with stakeholders through meetings and on-site visits



# Remaining Project Work

| Task # | Task / Milestone Description                      | Duration | Precedence     | Milestone | Budget Period #1 |       |       | Budget Period #2 |       |       | Budget Period #3 |       |       | G/NG | Milestone Verification Process |
|--------|---|----------|----------------|-----------|------------------|-------|-------|------------------|-------|-------|------------------|-------|-------|------|--------------------------------|
|        |   |          |                |           | M1-Q1            | M1-Q2 | M1-Q3 | M2-Q1            | M2-Q2 | M2-Q3 | M3-Q1            | M3-Q2 | M3-Q3 |      |                                |
| 0      | Intellectual Property Management Plan             | M1-M3    |                | 0.0       | Q1               | Q2    | Q3    | Q4               |       |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 1      | <b>Low Cost Sensors</b>                           | M1-M12   |                |           | Q1               | Q2    | Q3    | Q4               |       |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 1.1    | Impl. hardware improvement/ cost reductions       | M1-M6    | 3.1            | 1.1       | Q1               | Q2    | Q3    | Q4               |       |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 1.2    | Manufacture > 100 sensor nodes                    | M7-M12   | 1.1            | 1.2       |                  | Q1    | Q2    | Q3               | Q4    |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 1.3    | Wirelessly reconstruct MEL power profiles         | M1-M6    | 1.3            | 1.3       | Q1               | Q2    | Q3    | Q4               |       |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 1.4    | Identify loads using extracted waveforms          | M7-M12   | 1.3            | 1.4       |                  | Q1    | Q2    | Q3               | Q4    |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 1.5    | Define sensor-to-gateway network services         | M1-M6    | 1.5            | 1.5       | Q1               | Q2    | Q3    | Q4               |       |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 1.6    | Time-stamp data and report to cloud               | M7-M12   | 1.1            | 1.6       |                  | Q1    | Q2    | Q3               | Q4    |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 1.7    | Define RTC interface                              | M9-M12   | 1.1            | 1.7       |                  | Q1    | Q2    | Q3               | Q4    |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 2      | <b>Data Collection Network</b>                    | M1-M12   |                |           | Q1               | Q2    | Q3    | Q4               |       |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 2.1    | Implement gateway network services                | M6-M9    | 1.5            | 2.1       | Q1               | Q2    | Q3    | Q4               |       |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 2.2    | Impl. data logger to log/extract high-freq traces | M9-M12   | 2.2            | 2.2       |                  | Q1    | Q2    | Q3               | Q4    |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 2.3    | Design and implement cloud DB and stored procs    | M7-M12   | 2.3            | 2.3       |                  | Q1    | Q2    | Q3               | Q4    |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 3      | <b>Laboratory Testing</b>                         | M1-M12   |                |           | Q1               | Q2    | Q3    | Q4               |       |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 3.1    | Analysis and feedback on sensor design            | M1-M3    | 3.1            | 3.1       | Q1               | Q2    | Q3    | Q4               |       |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 3.2    | Devil. and document laboratory sensor test plan   | M4-M6    | 3.2            | 3.2       |                  | Q1    | Q2    | Q3               | Q4    |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 3.3    | Perform accuracy testing in lab [round #1]        | M7-M12   | 3.2            | 3.3       |                  | Q1    | Q2    | Q3               | Q4    |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 4      | <b>Field Evaluation and Data Analysis</b>         | M1-M12   |                |           | Q1               | Q2    | Q3    | Q4               |       |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 4.1    | Prepare draft field deployment plan and materials | M1-M3    | 4.1            | 4.1       | Q1               | Q2    | Q3    | Q4               |       |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 4.2    | Obtain Institution Review Board approvals         | M4-M6    | 4.1            | 4.2       |                  | Q1    | Q2    | Q3               | Q4    |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 4.3    | Update field deployment plan and materials        | M7-M9    | 4.2            | 4.3       |                  | Q1    | Q2    | Q3               | Q4    |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 4.4    | Design participant recruitment strategy           | M10-M12  | 4.4            | 4.4       |                  | Q1    | Q2    | Q3               | Q4    |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 4.5    | Quarterly reporting                               | M1-M12   | 4.5.1-4.5.4    | 4.5       | Q1               | Q2    | Q3    | Q4               |       |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 5      | <b>Low Cost Sensors</b>                           | M13-M24  |                |           | Q1               | Q2    | Q3    | Q4               |       |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 5.1    | Manufacture 10-100 2nd generation sensors         | M13-M15  | 3.3            | 5.1       |                  | Q1    | Q2    | Q3               | Q4    |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 5.2    | Manufacture >2,000 2nd generation sensors         | M16-M18  | 5.1            | 5.2       |                  | Q1    | Q2    | Q3               | Q4    |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 5.3    | Prototype 3rd generation sensor w/ COTS RTC       | M19-M21  | 5.2            | 5.3       |                  | Q1    | Q2    | Q3               | Q4    |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 5.4    | Implement/improve embedded power profiling        | M13-M18  | 1.4            | 5.4       |                  | Q1    | Q2    | Q3               | Q4    |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 5.5    | Implement sensor-side of network services         | M19-M24  | 1.5            | 5.5       |                  | Q1    | Q2    | Q3               | Q4    |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 5.6    | Implement zero-crossing network time sync         | M19-M24  | 5.1            | 5.6       |                  | Q1    | Q2    | Q3               | Q4    |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 6      | <b>Data Collection Network</b>                    | M13-M24  |                |           | Q1               | Q2    | Q3    | Q4               |       |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 6.1    | Design and implement 10-20 low-cost gateways      | M13-M18  | 2.1            | 6.1       |                  | Q1    | Q2    | Q3               | Q4    |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 6.2    | Manufacture >100 low-cost gateways                | M19-M24  | 6.1            | 6.2       |                  | Q1    | Q2    | Q3               | Q4    |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 6.3    | Tune database to support energy analytics         | M13-M18  | 2.3            | 6.3       |                  | Q1    | Q2    | Q3               | Q4    |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 6.4    | Implement DB queries to support field tests       | M13-M21  | 2.3            | 6.4       |                  | Q1    | Q2    | Q3               | Q4    |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 7      | <b>Laboratory Testing</b>                         | M13-M24  |                |           | Q1               | Q2    | Q3    | Q4               |       |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 7.1    | Perform accuracy testing in lab (round #2)        | M15-M18  | 3              | 7.1       |                  | Q1    | Q2    | Q3               | Q4    |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 7.2    | Develop and validate load ID test procedure       | M19-M24  | 7.2            | 7.2       |                  | Q1    | Q2    | Q3               | Q4    |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 8      | <b>Field Evaluation and Data Analysis</b>         | M13-M24  |                |           | Q1               | Q2    | Q3    | Q4               |       |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 8.1    | Develop cloud support for field evaluations       | M13-M21  | 4.1            | 8.1       |                  | Q1    | Q2    | Q3               | Q4    |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 8.2    | Recruit participants for field trials (#1, #2)    | M13-M15  | 4.3            | 8.2       |                  | Q1    | Q2    | Q3               | Q4    |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 8.3    | Execute field trial #1 with 20-40 households      | M16-M18  | 4.2, 4.3, 8.2  | 8.3       |                  | Q1    | Q2    | Q3               | Q4    |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 8.4    | Analyze and report on field trial data            | M19-M21  | 8.3            | 8.4       |                  | Q1    | Q2    | Q3               | Q4    |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 8.5    | Execute field trial #2 with 20-40 households      | M22-M24  | 8.2, 8.4       | 8.5       |                  | Q1    | Q2    | Q3               | Q4    |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 8.6    | Recruit participants for field deployments        | M22-M24  | 4.3            | 8.6       |                  | Q1    | Q2    | Q3               | Q4    |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 8.7    | Report on field trial findings and improvements   | M13-M24  | 8.3, 8.5       | 8.7       |                  | Q1    | Q2    | Q3               | Q4    |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 9      | <b>Low Cost Sensors</b>                           | M25-M36  |                |           | Q1               | Q2    | Q3    | Q4               |       |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 9.1    | Manufacture > 20,000 sensor nodes                 | M25-M27  | 5.2, 7.2       | 9.1       |                  | Q1    | Q2    | Q3               | Q4    |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 9.2    | Incorporate CubeWorks Real-Time Clock             | M28-M33  | 5.3            | 9.2       |                  | Q1    | Q2    | Q3               | Q4    |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 9.3    | Perform BLE network scaling study                 | M28-M36  | 8.3, 8.5, 9.1  | 9.3       |                  | Q1    | Q2    | Q3               | Q4    |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 10     | <b>Data Collection Network</b>                    | M25-M36  |                |           | Q1               | Q2    | Q3    | Q4               |       |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 10.1   | Manufacture >1,000 low-cost gateways              | M25-M27  | 6.2            | 10.1      |                  | Q1    | Q2    | Q3               | Q4    |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 10.2   | DB mgmt to support field evals and analysis       | M28-M33  | 8.1            | 10.2      |                  | Q1    | Q2    | Q3               | Q4    |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 10.3   | Implement and execute algorithms for load ID      | M25-M30  | 1.4, 7.3       | 10.3      |                  | Q1    | Q2    | Q3               | Q4    |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 11     | <b>Field Evaluation and Data Analysis</b>         | M25-M36  |                |           | Q1               | Q2    | Q3    | Q4               |       |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 11.1   | Analyze and report on field trial data            | M25-M27  | 8.5            | 11.1      |                  | Q1    | Q2    | Q3               | Q4    |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 11.2   | Ship kits w/40-100 sensors to 200-500 households  | M28-M33  | 8.6, 9.1, 10.1 | 11.2      |                  | Q1    | Q2    | Q3               | Q4    |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 11.3   | Monitor and support field trials                  | M34-M36  | 11.2           | 11.3      |                  | Q1    | Q2    | Q3               | Q4    |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 11.4   | Analyze data from field trials to identify loads  | M34-M36  | 11.2, 11.3     | 11.4      |                  | Q1    | Q2    | Q3               | Q4    |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 11.4   | Analyze data from field trials to identify loads  | M34-M36  | 11.2, 11.3     | 11.4      |                  | Q1    | Q2    | Q3               | Q4    |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 11.5   | Post all MELs data collected from deployments     | M34-M36  | 11.2, 11.3     | 11.5      |                  | Q1    | Q2    | Q3               | Q4    |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 11.5   | Post all MELs data collected from deployments     | M34-M36  | 11.2, 11.3     | 11.5      |                  | Q1    | Q2    | Q3               | Q4    |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 11.6   | Share data with external partner (e.g. utility)   | M34-M36  | 11.2, 11.3     | 11.6      |                  | Q1    | Q2    | Q3               | Q4    |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |
| 11.6   | Share data with external partner (e.g. utility)   | M34-M36  | 11.2, 11.3     | 11.6      |                  | Q1    | Q2    | Q3               | Q4    |       |                  |       |       |      |                                |

## Low-Cost Sensors

- Y1: Hitting target cost \$10

- Y1: Hitting target accuracy

- Y1: Address design feedback

- Y2-3: Scale up: 100 → 1-2K → 10-20K

## Data Collection Network

- Y1: Hitting target cost \$20

- Y1: Sensor ↔ gateway protocols

- Y2-3: Scale up: 10 → 100 → 500

## Laboratory Testing

- Y1: Testing plans and procedures

- Y1-2: Metering and load ID accuracy

## Field Evaluation and Data Analysis

- Y1: Getting IRBs & plans finalized

- Y2: Recruiting participants

- Y2: Field trials (20-40 homes)

- Y3: Deployments (200-500 homes)

- Y3: Data collection & sharing

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# Thank You

UC Berkeley | LBNL | NREL | CubeWorks  
Prabal Dutta, Associate Professor  
[prabal@berkeley.edu](mailto:prabal@berkeley.edu)

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# REFERENCE SLIDES

# Project Budget

**Project Budget:** \$2,250,095.00 (total) project budget (start date: 1/1/2018)

**Variiances:** Below BP1/Q1 spending target due to contracting delays.

**Cost to Date (1/1 - 2/28):** \$28,493.93 (govt. share) + \$9,276.82 (cost share).

**Additional Funding:** None.

## Budget History

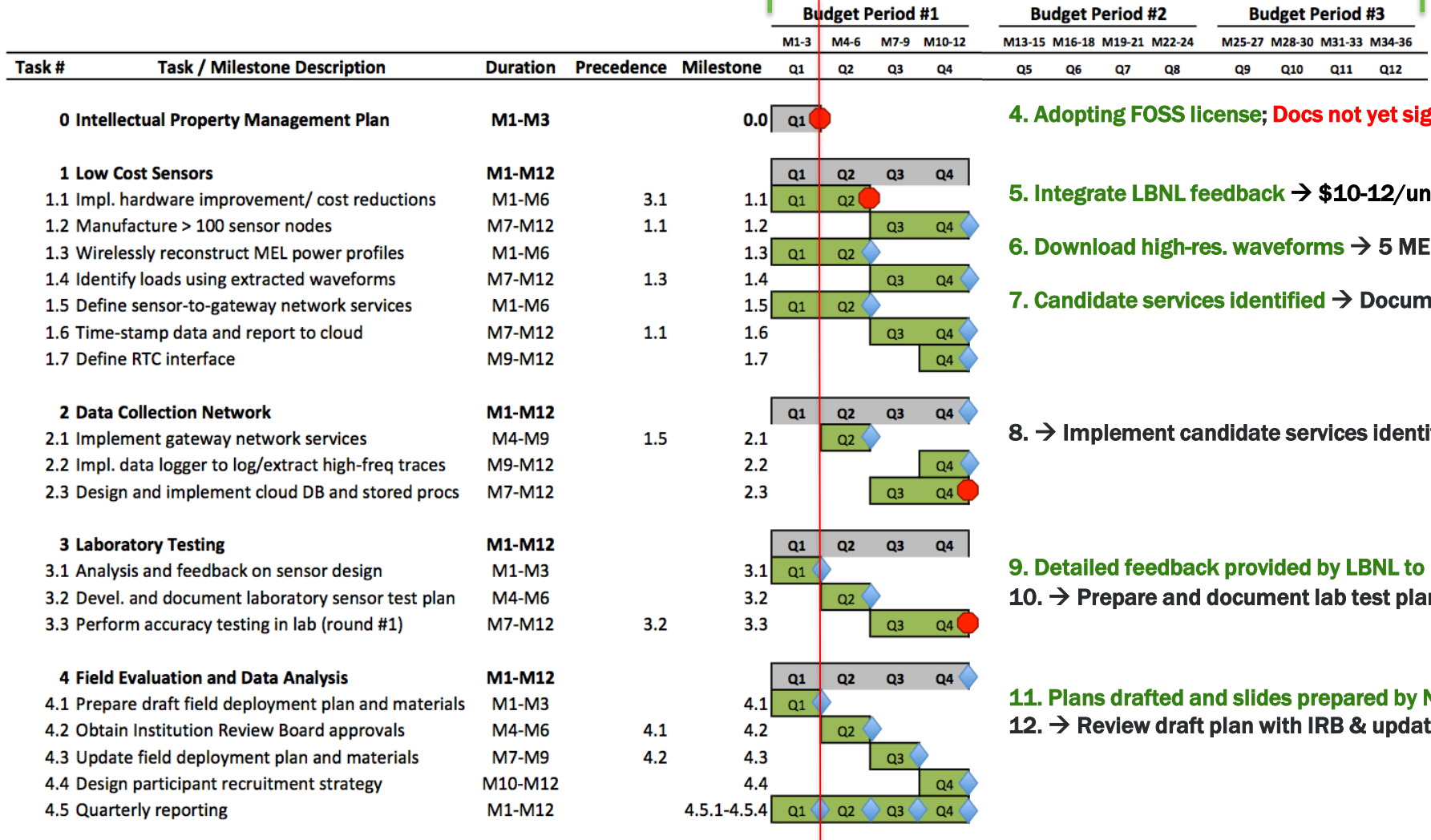
| FY 2017<br>(past) |            | FY 2018 (current) |            | FY 2019 – FY 2020<br>(planned) |            |
|-------------------|------------|-------------------|------------|--------------------------------|------------|
| DOE               | Cost-share | DOE               | Cost-share | DOE                            | Cost-share |
| \$0               | \$0        | \$700,001         | \$77,812   | \$1,324,999                    | \$147,283  |

# Project Plan and Schedule

← 1. Started on 1/1/2018

3. Today

2. To be completed on 12/31/2020 →



4. Adopting FOSS license; Docs not yet signed

5. Integrate LBNL feedback → \$10-12/unit

6. Download high-res. waveforms → 5 MELs

7. Candidate services identified → Document

8. → Implement candidate services identified

9. Detailed feedback provided by LBNL to UCB

10. → Prepare and document lab test plan

11. Plans drafted and slides prepared by NREL

12. → Review draft plan with IRB & update