

National Retrofit Programme Communities Energy Grant Call for 2023

Application Guidelines

IMPORTANT NOTICES

- It is the responsibility of each applicant to ensure that they have read and fully understood, the Application Guidelines, the Application Form and complete the accompanying Technical Workbook before submitting the signed Application Form. Failure to fully adhere to the provisions of this Application Guidelines and the Application Form will result in application being rejected, grant offer revocation or grant claim refusal, depending on the particular status and stage of the application.
- SEAI accepts no liability or responsibility, whether for breach of contract, negligence or otherwise, in respect of any claim or cause of action arising out of, or in relation to, any equipment, product, work, system or installation in respect of which grant approval was given by SEAI.
- The National Retrofit - Communities Energy Grant Call is subject to any State aid clearances required from the Commission of the European Union and any consents, clearances or licenses which might be required from any other competent body. SEAI reserves the right to alter or amend any aspect of this programme as a consequence of any directions, conditions or requirements of any such consents, clearances or licenses.
- SEAI reserve the right to update this document.

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PREFACE

This document is the National Retrofit Programme Communities Energy Grant guidelines updated for 2023.

The Programme for Government and the Climate Action Plan set ambitious goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from buildings, including our homes, with targets to retrofit 500,000 homes to a Building Energy Rating of B2 and to install 400,000 heat pumps in existing buildings by 2030.

These targets represent a very significant increase in both the volume and depth of retrofit activity. A half million homes equates to almost 30% of all residential buildings in Ireland. In order to achieve these targets, we must transform the way we deliver retrofits by scaling up existing approaches that work and developing new, innovative solutions.

In this regard, the Government envisages that communities have a significant role to play in the development of the National Retrofit Programme. This includes working with and through One Stop Shops to make retrofit easier to do and more attractive to homeowners. Communities working with OSS's can facilitate larger more efficient aggregated projects and will bring benefits for homeowners and help the development of the supply side. Together they can combine the different components associated with retrofit projects including demand generation, home assessments, grant application, contractor engagement, project management, quality assurance and finance provision. The scale of our targets offers a tremendous opportunity for the development and growth of One Stop Shops, project co-ordinators, contractors and other elements of the supply chain with significant job growth potential.

The following guidelines aim at helping interested parties to create the best applications for their projects by outlining the necessary criteria and documentary requirements, as well as offering helpful advice, contacts and resources for those preparing to apply.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch about prospective projects or applications. We would be delighted to discuss the feasibility and financing possibilities of all proposals and look forward to working with you to make good ideas become great projects.

1. OVERVIEW

1.1 About SEAI

SEAI has a mission to play a leading role in transforming Ireland into a society based on sustainable energy structures, technologies, and practices. To fulfil this mission SEAI aims to provide well-timed and informed advice to Government, and deliver a range of programmes efficiently and effectively, while engaging and motivating a wide range of stakeholders and showing continuing flexibility and innovation in all activities. SEAI's actions will help advance Ireland to the vanguard of the global green technology movement, so that Ireland is recognised as a pioneer in the move to decarbonised energy systems.

SEAI programmes are funded by the Government of Ireland through the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications.

1.2 The Communities Energy Grant Overview

The Communities Energy Grant is part of the Government's National Retrofit Programme aimed at upgrading building stock and facilities to high standards of energy efficiency and renewable energy usage, thereby reducing fossil fuel usage, energy costs and greenhouse gas emissions.

By supporting project structures that can be easily replicated, the Communities Energy Grant hopes to showcase retrofit project models that can be implemented without government support in the future.

As part of this initiative, the Communities Energy Grant supports new approaches to achieving high quality improvements in energy efficiency within Irish communities. By bringing together groups of buildings under the same retrofit programme, communities projects facilitate community-wide energy improvements more efficiently and cost effectively than might otherwise be possible. The primary objective of the scheme is to support and maximise the number of home energy upgrades delivered. Non-domestic projects are supported to support the engagement of communities to build low carbon and sustainable communities.

The ambitions of this Communities Energy Grant are to:

- a. Build on the success of the previous Communities Energy Grant schemes to support delivery of large-scale projects through the support of the project coordinators to deliver larger and more technically challenging schemes.
- b. Support cross-sectoral, partnership approaches that deliver energy savings to a range of building types including public, commercial and community buildings with a particular focus on using the projects to deliver home retrofits.
- c. Help develop the supplier market for delivery on government energy retrofit targets.
- d. Build strategic and working relationships directly with businesses and managers of larger quantities of domestic units.
- e. Empower Businesses, Public Sector Organisations, Communities, Housing Associations & Local Authorities (Subject to Department of Housing approval) to lead deep energy efficient upgrades on the buildings and housing stock under their control or in their region.
- f. Encourage the retrofitting of rental properties¹.
- g. Develop community skills to manage capital projects and empower communities to lead small to medium scale projects in their own communities. Project partnerships which include at least one member of SEAI's SEC network are preferred and will score higher in accordance with the evaluation process set out at section 1.7 below. While this is not a mandatory requirement it is strongly encouraged.
- h. Support the SEC network members in advance on their Learn - Plan – Do process. Build and maintain energy awareness and knowledge locally. This will be achieved by assessing projects by their ability to showcase and disseminate the benefits of energy projects to the wider community.

More information available here: <https://www.seai.ie/sustainable-solutions/community-projects/>

¹ The landlord is the homeowner in the case of rental properties not the occupant. Grant funding provided to non-corporate landlords is subject to the de minimis regulation (see point 30 of the terms and conditions) and the landlord will be required to sign a declaration in relation to their de minimis funding.

Projects are required to demonstrate a building **fabric first approach** in line with the SEAI definition in the following order of priority to:

- Be as energy efficient as possible (fabric first approach)
- Decarbonise heat considering and utilising renewables where feasible
- Improve ventilation
- Adopt smart technologies as appropriate

1.3 Eligible Projects

This call aims to fund a comprehensive suite of projects that deliver energy savings to communities, including public buildings, homes, and businesses. All projects applying for funding should be community oriented, include a cross-sectoral approach and demonstrate an ability to sustainably finance the proposed project. The priority for all projects should be the delivery of homes to B2 with heat pumps.

A partnership approach is essential for successful application. Interested parties should seek partnership from organisations that fall into the [Eligible categories](#). Innovative and pioneering partnerships for delivery between sectors, such as collaborations between public and private sectors, residential and non-residential sectors, commercial and not-for-profit organisations, financing entities and energy suppliers, are of particular interest. Projects that are part of a larger energy efficiency project or engage with other SEAI programmes are welcome.

Projects should include an SEC in their application in order to score well. Where an SEC is included, some works are required to be completed in the county where the SEC is based to enable learning benefits for the SECs and efficiencies in delivery. Exceptions may be made where an organisation has a number of facilities in multiple counties.

Demonstration Projects are welcomed as part of the Communities Energy Grant call where the project represents an opportunity to showcase the Sustainable Energy Community leadership ability and influence the wider community and encourage future involvement. For example, the project selected could be a single building which is used/accessed by the local community and should represent a moderate to deep retrofit.

Single measure upgrades to demonstration buildings are not encouraged e.g. solar PV upgrade or glazing only. It should be noted that fossil fuel boilers are not eligible for grant funding and their installation is actively discouraged by SEAI.

Where a beneficiary has an existing contract offer for works, a new application may not be made for the same works at the same location. Where this does arise, the works will not be contracted for a second time and this element will be withdrawn from any application. Project Coordinators will be required to verify that no beneficiaries have an existing offer.

1.4 Grant Amount Available

The maximum grant available per application in the Communities Energy Grant is €5,000,000. We recommend applicants consider grant applications of at least €100,000 due to the level of administration involved in this programme.

Eligible categories

All applications should try to include more than one of the following categories.

- **Residential housing energy efficiency upgrades** to stock built prior to 1 January 2011. All homes are required to meet a minimum B2 final BER. There is no minimum BER start point for homes however we suggest homes which are already a C1 will find it challenging to achieve the uplift required. These homes, therefore, require prior SEAI approval before works commence. Home upgrade with single measures is not supported under this scheme. Energy poor homes must have a pre BER of D2 or lower to qualify. **Note: It is mandatory to include 10 home retrofits for applications valued up to €1M. The domestic requirement increases by 20 for each and every additional €1M of non-domestic works requested. For example, an application with a non-domestic value of €2M will have a mandatory domestic requirement of 30 Homes, or an application with a non domestic value of €3M will have a domestic requirement of 50 homes.**
- **Private sector** non-residential building works
- **Commercial organisations**
- **Voluntary organisations**
- **Community-based organisations**
- **Public sector** non-residential works

Note: Further details and explanations on these terms are available later in these Guidelines. Individual organisations and Project Coordinators are permitted to submit more than one application for support, but projects should be bundled where appropriate. Where multiple applications are submitted it is essential that sufficient resources are clearly demonstrated to deliver on all the projects outlined and identified in the Application Form. All works proposed for an individual facility/address must be contained within one application.

1.5 Evaluation Process

Applications will be assessed on a first-come first-served basis but must meet the minimum criteria as set out below. Funding will be awarded to completed and approved applications until such time as the available budget is allocated. The approval cycle will be quarterly with a cut-off point 4 weeks prior to the end of any quarter. Indicative dates for contract approval for 2023 are per below:

April	Cut off 31st March
June	Cut off 31st May
September	Cut off 31st August *Subject to budget

SEAI, in undertaking the evaluation process, accepts no responsibility for the Applicants design and any errors or omissions that might be contained therein.

Subsequent to the SEAI evaluation and granting of a letter of offer, if the Applicants design is found to contain material errors or omissions, SEAI reserves the right to cancel the Application or re-calculate the grant amount.

During the evaluation process SEAI will require evidence that projects delivery dates are appropriately contracted and agreed, and the minimum delivery requirement can be achieved.

The evaluation process can only commence once a valid application is received. SEAI deem a valid application to be received when we have an online submission and a workbook to support the on-line submission. However, without other supporting documentation including energy audits a successful evaluation is unlikely. Once a project is submitted, although clarifications may be provided at the request of the evaluator no additional documentation may be submitted until the evaluation is complete.

Where the evaluation is unsuccessful or does not meet the minimum score the Communities team will send the project coordinator the evaluator's comments and allow the project coordinator to resubmit additional documentation and allow changes to the application and Workbook. The resubmission must be received within 5 working days of the notification and must be submitted on the PEP system.

Where a second submission is received, the Communities team will ask the same evaluator to re-evaluate the new submission. If the new submission meets the criteria, it will move along to the next phase in the evaluation process. If it does not meet the criteria the application will be returned to the project coordinator and a third submission will be allowed. If the evaluation of the third submission does not meet the criteria the project will be marked unsuccessful, and no further evaluation will be allowed on this application.

Projects must score at least **65 Marks** to qualify for funding. Projects that do not reach this minimum score will be rejected with comments though we encourage your Project Co-ordinators to self-score from the guidance below in advance of submitting.

All contracted works must have a nominated completion date which must be within the 12-month contract cycle and must be nominated at application stage. All projects must be completed within this 12-month period. Project Coordinators who have any projects exceeding these nominated contract dates will not be permitted to make new applications until such previously contracted works are completed to SEAI's satisfaction.

EXPLANATORY NOTE ON GRANT ELIGIBILITY AND STATE AIDS

Charities and not-for-profit-run facilities may be eligible for 50% funding, subject to prior agreement with the SEAI Communities team. This is on the basis that they are not regarded as economic undertakings under State Aid rules. For example, a charitable shop would be deemed an economic undertaking on the basis that it is in competition with other shops selling similar goods. However, it may be the case that other activities carried out by the charity could be regarded as non-economic and eligible for up to 50% funding. In the case of community centres to the extent that the centre is serving the local community, only such organisations would generally not be considered economic undertakings and eligible for up to 50% funding.

Section 38 organisations are treated as public sector bodies and are eligible for up to 30% funding. This similarly applies to all hospitals where funding is received from patients or from their insurance. As such they are regarded as economic undertakings and eligible for up to 30% funding.

Public schools are eligible for up to 50% funding. Third-level colleges are considered as part of the public sector and are eligible for up to 30% funding. Private or fee-paying schools are deemed eligible for 30% support only.

Where organisations or facilities are publicly funded and have 'charity status' SEAI reserve the right to determine the level of grant support offered.

Funding from Other Government sources

Where funding is subject to State Aid the cumulation rules of State Aid apply. These provide that in the case of Communities Energy Grant funding the maximum grant intensity from all State Bodies for the same eligible costs is capped at a maximum grant percentage of 30%. However, this does not prevent a number of funders funding different elements of the same project. For example, in the case of the retrofit of a building SEAI may fund the energy efficiency works up to 30% while another State Body could fund the non-energy efficiency works for the same project.

Energy Credits and Community Transfers

All applications must clearly indicate the estimated monetary value of the energy credits. Project Coordinators at the application stage must provide a clear value and proposed distribution or community benefit associated with these credits.

1.6 Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation criteria are:

1. Value for Money (**40 Marks, - minimum score requirement is 20 Marks**)
2. Community and innovation (**35 Marks**)
3. Quality & Delivery (**25 Marks -minimum score requirement 12 Marks**)

1. Value for Money (40 Marks, Minimum score requirement: 20 Marks)

Value for money is broken down into 3 sections:

- a. Total Eligible Cost per kilowatt-hour (kWh) of energy saved;
- b. % energy savings over existing usage
- c. Carbon savings. Total Cost per Kg CO₂ saved (€)

Applications not scoring 20 marks and above will not be evaluated any further and the application will be rejected at that point.

a. Total Eligible Cost per kWh (Max = 5 Marks)

This figure extracted from the first page of the application form is automatically calculated by the information provided in the application form and is contained on the workbook application form Section A eligible costs.

Cost per kWh will be evaluated as follows

	>2.30	0 Marks
2.16	2.3	1 Marks
2.01	2.15	2 Marks
1.8	2.0	3 Marks
1.5	1.79	4 Marks
0	1.49	5 Marks

b. Energy Savings % (Max = 10Marks)

≤5%	0 Marks
6-10%	2 Marks
11-15%	4 Marks
16-20%	6 Marks
20-25%	8 Marks
26-30%	10 Marks

This figure extracted from the Workbook application form Section A

c. Carbon Savings: Total Cost per Kg CO2 saved (€) (Max = 25 Marks)

>€15.01	0
€12.51 - €15.00	5 Marks
€10.01 - €12.50	10 Marks
€8.01 – €10.00	11 Marks
€6.01 – €8.00	12 Marks
€5.01 – €6.00	18 Marks
€2.51 – €5.00	20 Marks
€0.00 – €2.50	25 Marks

This figure is found in the workbook application form section Cell H8.

To encourage activity on the islands the Cost per kWh score will be increased by a factor of 20% to support activity in these locations. Only the Cent per kWh score will be adjusted which would give islands a maximum score of 6. Domestic grant offers are in line with OSS offering for island homes. Note domestic costs are not included in the VFM calculation

2. Partnership and Innovation (35 Marks)

This grant is targeted at supporting communities including SECs in the delivery of Community Energy Grant projects. To ensure that the projects involved in this grant are aligned with this ambition this section will give additional supports to SEC involvement in the project. This grant is also targeting innovative approaches to delivery and marks are awarded for this accordingly.

This score area is divided into the following:

1. B1 **Partnership and community Approach including SEC participation** (10 Marks)
2. B2 **Beneficiaries and partners** (15 Marks)
3. B3 **Innovation** (10 Marks)

<u>B1 Partnership and community Approach including SEC participation</u>	Marks (10)
Registered SEC with completed EMP	10
Registered SEC	5

SEC Communities:

Groups of people come together to improve how energy is used for the benefit of their community. SECs register their interest by making an application to SEAI to be recognised as an SEC. They look at how we can use energy in a sustainable, holistic way. Energy communities often look at projects in homes, transport, and local business. They also look at community buildings such as schools, community centres, and sports facilities.

B2 Beneficiaries and partners: (15 Marks)

Projects that include a wide range of beneficiaries have a bigger impact in their community.

The Beneficiary types are as follows:

1. Not for profit/community (including sports)
2. Private Sector (Commercial)
3. Public sector
4. Social service/Charity (e.g., Churches and services to disabled people service provides and centres)
5. Educational/Cultural

**There is a mandatory requirement to include a minimum of 10 Domestic homes in each Communities project application.*

5 Beneficiaries included	10 Marks
4 Beneficiaries included	8 Marks
3 Beneficiaries included	6 Marks
2 Beneficiaries included	2 Marks
Housing association	5 Marks

B3 Innovation: (10 Marks)

Delivery of the government’s goals in the Climate Action Plan will require continuous improvement in the delivery of decarbonisation projects and development of new ways to decarbonise our communities. Delivery of these new approaches and innovative ways will be supported through this scheme. Innovation will apply to projects which address the following challenges:

- Improving supply chain issues
- Addressing skills shortages (provision of training opportunities, apprenticeships, etc...)
- Accelerating the delivery of domestic retrofits through new ways and generating demand
- Incorporating financial and innovative financial options

The application needs to describe in detail under four areas (1) the challenge being addressed, (2) the proposed solution, (3) how it will be implemented and (4) how the innovative project will be assessed. The details of this score area should be addressed separately from the main application, in a format you feel would best support your application.

3. **Quality of Delivery and project team (25 Marks - minimum score requirement 12 mark)**

This section is divided into 5 parts:

- a. Project Coordinator and previous experience (5 Marks)
- b. Quality of the resources proposed to be deployed on delivery of the project (5 Marks)
- c. Risks and Mitigation plans (5 Marks)
- d. Demonstrated ability to deliver on time (5 Marks)
- e. Quality of previous experience (5 marks)

a. Lead Applicant/ Project Coordinator (5 Marks)

SEAI will evaluate the expertise of the Lead Applicant/Project Coordinator in project delivery. Where an SEAI Communities Energy project has not been delivered previously the applicant will need to demonstrate that the project lead understands the requirements and responsibilities of the scheme. A CV should be provided in relation to the nominated Lead Applicant/ Project Coordinator.

b. Quality of the resources (5 Marks)

SEAI will evaluate the quality of the proposed team members in terms of delivery of the projects. Technical ability and the quality assurance of the project team must be detailed. Previous experience in similar energy or engineering projects is a distinct advantage. Meeting deadlines and project handover are important considerations. CVs/ short biographies of experience for key team members are required and will be evaluated.

c. Risks and Mitigation plans (5 Marks)

Project Coordinators must complete a risk evaluation of the proposed project prior to submission to SEAI. In this section the applicant should detail what the significant risks to delivery are and how these risks are to be mitigated against. Any risks to the project related to supply chain issues must be fully assessed and appropriate mitigation measures must be identified. For public sector organisations tendering is a significant factor and projects which have not completed tendering prior to an application may be rejected.

d. Demonstrated ability to deliver on time (5 Marks)

Project Coordinators should provide their experience in high quality project delivery on a timely basis for evaluation. Where the Project Coordinator has not delivered Communities Energy projects previously SEAI will give appropriate consideration to other time restricted projects delivery. Tidy Towns and other community led projects will be scored favourably.

A project timeline must be included identifying how the project completion dates and targets will be achieved on the project. Project Coordinators who previously failed to meet previous BEC/CEG project deadlines will not score full marks under this section or failed to deliver previous contracted minimum requirements.

Quality of previous delivery (5 marks) Project co-ordinators will be scored on the basis of their most recent previous delivery inspection results (averaged across domestic and non-domestic) under the Communities Energy Grant programme (or earlier BEC programmes). Where more than one grant was delivered by the project co-ordinator in a grant year, the average pass rate across all approved grants will be used.

80% +	5 Marks
75% - 79%	4 Marks
70% - 74%	3 Marks
65% - 69%	2 Marks
60% - 65%	1 Marks

1.7 Funding Levels

Listed below are the maximum available funding levels for each component of a community project.

Domestic support rates are in line with the grant offering available under One Stop Shop relevant grants are available to review on SEAI’s website using the link:

<https://www.seai.ie/grants/home-energy-grants/one-stop-shop/>

[Also available in Appendix I.](#)

Fuel Poor homes will be supported at the rates applying to Approved Housing Bodies indicated in the OSS offering. The rates for OSS, AHB and Fuel Poor are attached in Appendix I. The 2 measures listed below will receive additional support for Fuel Poor homes as follows:

	Detached	Semi Detached	Terrace	APT
External Wall Insulation	€14,000	€11,000	€6,500	€4,500
Internal Wall Insulation	€9,500	€7,000	€4,500	€3,000

SEAI will limit the grant of funding for any one application up to €5,000,000. The recommended minimum grant application value will be €100,000. No single project within any application may exceed a grant funding level of €2,000,000.

Industrial or Commercial projects will be funded up to a limit based upon the individual project cost of carbon. For projects with a grant request up to €500,000 a limit of €1,000/tCO₂ saved will be applied and for projects with a grant request exceeding €500,000 a limit of €850/tCO₂ saved will be applied.

The grant support percentage is based on the legal ownership of the facility that is being upgraded.

Please note that **all homes** require a pre- and post-works Building Energy Rating (BER) to be completed and published. Local Authority Homes are exempt from publishing a pre-BER, subject to the minimum 10-home requirement, but must publish a post-works BER (no grant funding is available for Local Authority BERs). In line with the NHEU scheme (OSS service), SEAI will allow for HEA costs on homes where works may not progress. Project Coordinators must indicate the volume at the application stage. Retrospective approval is not allowed.

A post-works BER rating of B2 must be achieved for all homes. In certain cases, with SEAI agreement, homes may be allowed to achieve cost optimal levels if it is shown that achieving the B2 level is cost prohibitive. All domestic buildings completed must deliver a minimum BER uplift of 100 kWh/m²/yr. Fuel Poor homes require a D2 pre-works BER.

Guidance on Part L is available on the SEAI web site. Costs for single measures for homes may be eligible where the install demonstrates innovative new technology, otherwise single domestic measures do not qualify as eligible costs. (Example: installing heat pumps only is not an acceptable proposition). SEAI reserve the right to conduct 100% pre inspection of all domestic and non-domestic sites in advance of any contract award. SEAI also reserve the right to examine homeowner contracts in advance of works starting on all domestic properties.

Public bodies must comply with public procurement. All other Beneficiaries receiving funding will need to adhere to procurement rules with regard to a competitive tendering process. Where a competitive tendering process is not completed at application stage this must be notified to SEAI. This poses an additional risk to delivery and SEAI and the project will be scored accordingly. If there is no mitigation offered, then the project is unlikely to be supported..

SEAI requires applicants to ensure that an open and transparent tender process has been engaged by the Project Coordinator. SEAI reserves the right to seek evidence from project elements that a competitive tendering process has been applied. This will include seeking evidence of three quotes, or evidence that a tender process has been complied with. A contract will not be issued until SEAI are satisfied that the appropriate market rates have been achieved. We therefore recommend that all projects are fully tendered at the time of application. While every effort will be made to issue contracts on a timely basis SEAI takes no responsibility for any delays which may arise due to delays in finalising specifications or costs with the grantee. Key programme delivery dates will not be extended in such circumstances.

1.8 Eligible Energy Upgrades

The following energy efficiency upgrades are eligible for funding as part of a Communities Energy Grant project.

Eligible works

- **Technological improvements:** Technological improvements that boost energy efficiency significantly are eligible.
- **Fabric upgrades:** This includes wall insulation as well as energy-smart walls and doors. In the case of insulation work on homes, an optimal whole-element solution must be implemented. Partial solutions will not be eligible for grant support without prior agreement.
- **Renewable energy solutions:** Renewable energy solutions like wind turbines, biomass plants, and photovoltaic systems (PV and thermal) or other are eligible where included as part of a broader retrofit.
- **Energy efficient lighting:** Lighting projects are no longer supported under the Communities scheme unless part of a suite of measures on a building (3 additional measures which may include fabric or heating measures), sports facilities completing floodlighting works will be permitted.
- Heat recovery solutions
- Micro generation

- Smart metering
- Schools
- EV chargers
- Solar PV (Note there are no deemed energy credits for PV). Solar PV installations as a single measure are not supported unless self-consumption can be **independently verified**, and this measure follows the fabric first principles. Solar PV installs **up to 200KW** will be supported. Solar PV projects will be supported at a **grant rate of 20% of eligible cost**. Installations above 200KW may be permitted under the scheme but are not grant supported above the limit indicated.
- Stoves, including eco stoves **are not supported** under the Communities scheme

Note:

1. Where premises are leased or rented works must have the consent from the legal owners as part of any application.

Schools

Where schools wish to install solar PV systems, SEAI will support primary schools up to 2kWp systems and secondary schools up to 4kWp systems. Installs outside of this range are not supported under the Communities programme.

Energy Efficiency measures undertaken on schools are unique, primarily due to the low annual occupancy hours and nature of occupants. Typically, 60-70% of energy consumption in a school is expended on heating demand, with 30-40% on electrical demand (lighting and services). SEAI welcome schools as part of Communities Energy Grant applications, and all measures will be considered during the application process. However, SEAI and our partners in the Department of Education note that the following are considered the optimum energy efficiency measures for schools.

- Building insulation - including cavity wall insulation, dry lining, external insulation, attic insulation, roof insulation.
- Other building fabric measures - including doors and windows, where a case exists for upgrading
- Mechanical system upgrades - including renewable heating solutions, heat pumps, zoning of heating system, classroom level heating control, pipe insulation, heating controls, water conservation
- Building Management System (BMS)

Applicants should note that all works undertaken in schools must be compliant with the relevant Department of Education Technical Guidance Documents (TGDs) which are available at the below link: <https://www.education.ie/en/School-Design/Technical-Guidance-Documents/>

This is not an exhaustive list. If you are unsure which aspects of your project are eligible for inclusion, please contact us.

1.9 Eligible Costs

Payment of the grant is retrospective. All beneficiaries (i.e., recipients of works as listed in the technical workbook project summary tab) will at application stage be required to provide a written confirmation stating that: -

1. They have the financial resources in place to complete their project.
2. They understand that the proposed cost for the grant is €X and expected grant funding is €Y (i.e., figures as set out in the technical workbook)
3. They are not an undertaking in difficulty as defined under State aid rules. Evidence of this will be provided by signing a declaration of solvency.

Expenses eligible for grant payment

- **Project coordination:** For project management costs to be considered eligible for support, they must not exceed 8% of the total eligible grant costs (non-Domestic only) and are funded at the grant percentage. Only **external** Project Management fees for the coordination, management, and delivery of the project, are eligible. Domestic works are excluded from the PM fee, the PM grant for domestic is indicated in the OSS service offer and will be the same under communities.
- **Labour:** Costs of employing **external** labour in order to implement the building upgrade.
- **Material:** Materials, equipment, hardware, or control systems necessary to implement the project are an eligible expense. Second-hand equipment will not be eligible for funding.
- **VAT:** VAT is considered eligible for grant payment **in cases where it cannot be reclaimed**. VAT is the responsibility of the project coordinator to administer correctly.
- **BER domestic projects:** All successful applicants with the exception of Local Authorities, will be required to complete and publish pre-works BER prior to requesting the first interim payment for proposed upgrade works. Post-BERs are required to be published for all upgraded homes. BER's must be supplied to the homeowner as part of the documentation, certification and handover pack provided to all homeowners.

The pre and post work BER are supported through the HEA. The same BER assessor should complete both the pre- and post-works BERs, and a separate site visit to the home must take place prior to each BER being published.

- **Energy monitoring equipment:** Metering equipment for verifying and measuring energy savings for the purpose of preparing the M&V reports is an eligible cost (excluding domestic) where this additional cost can be justified. Typically, modern renewable and energy efficient equipment incorporates energy monitoring capabilities.
- **Professional fees for M&V report: Are no longer supported.**
- **Solar PV Installations:** All PV installations must be completed in line with SEAI's solar PV programme requirements. Non-Domestic PV installation must be supported with an energy audit, SEAI support self-consumption only and PV should not be included as a single measure on any site. Details are available on SEAI web site below. www.seai.ie/technologies/solar-energy/electricity-from-solar/

1.10 Ineligible Costs

- **Unrelated costs**: Any costs not directly related to improving the energy performance of stock through the proposed project will be considered ineligible for payment.
- **Application costs**: The cost of preparing and submitting an application is not eligible for payment.
- **Internal staff costs**: Internal staff costs are not eligible for payment.
- **Design fees**: Design fees are not supported under CEG. Projects should be fully designed before they are put forward to SEAI to fund. Poorly designed projects will not be supported or projects which have not gone through an appropriate design process will also be refused support.
- **Ongoing monitoring costs**: Ongoing monitoring costs, except those required for the M&V report, are not eligible for payment.
- **Pre-project costs**: Any costs that predate formal letter of offer will not be paid.
- **Crossover**: The cost of measures completed in homes or non-domestic facilities which have previously received an SEAI grant for the same measure are not eligible.
- **Baseline costs**: The cost of bringing the facilities up to the standards required by legislation for such a facility are not eligible for payment.
- **Corrections**: The cost of remedying defective works and installations undertaken previously by others (e.g., geothermal remedial works, solar remedial works) are not eligible for payment.
- **Unexpected**: Un-commissioned equipment, and any other **costs that have not been clearly outlined** in the Application Form, will be considered ineligible for payment.
- **Unfinished works**: Work that has not been completed, or 'fit for use' by the agreed deadline will not be eligible for any or part grant support.
- **Energy upgrades to new buildings or domestic extensions**: The Communities Energy Grant programme aims at supporting retrofits for older building stock and facilities. Homes constructed on or after 1 January 2011 are not eligible for measures. Communities does not support works carried out during construction (extensions), or new fit-out, of non-domestic facilities.
- CHP projects are not supported under the Communities Energy Grant.

This is not an exhaustive list. If you are unsure which aspects of your project are eligible for payment, please contact the Communities team.

2 PLANNING YOUR PROJECT

2.1. Project Structure

The Communities Energy Grant is designed to encourage group retrofits and access to existing funding streams through innovative mechanisms. There are a number of key elements to structuring a suitable project, and these are outlined in this section.

2.2 Community Approach

There is more than one way to develop a standalone project into a community initiative.

Once you have identified desired energy upgrades for a building, consider whether there are any other **buildings or amenities in the area** that could benefit from the same kind of measures.

The community approach does not necessitate physical proximity for all works. Consider whether the building could be identified as **part of a network**. A charity building, for example, could be linked with similar buildings in different parts of the country.

Where the project proposed is for a single building only, there must be a demonstration component to this project. It is important to consider how the building can be accessed by the wider community, if site visits are possible, how the impacts of the upgrade will be captured and communicated to the wider community and if the proposed upgrades will be visible at the end of the project. For example, upgrading the insulation in the floor, walls and roof of a building can be hard to showcase after the project but using thermographic imaging before and after can help show the difference, so could temperature monitoring of the occupied space, as well as surveys of the occupants before and after. It may also be possible to take photographs during the project or a video of the major changes.

Single building applications will only be eligible for this programme where they can demonstrate significant energy improvements to the wider community and encourage wider participation in the SEAI community programmes, subject to the minimum domestic requirement being fulfilled.

2.3 Traditional Buildings and Protected Structures

Applicants should be aware that energy upgrades may result in material alteration of the building or buildings involved. Where a project incorporates protected buildings or structures, advice should be sought from a conservation architect prior to application, to confirm whether the proposed works require approval from the Local Authority before proceeding. SEAI will accept no responsibility for verification of works or seeking permission that works may be applied to any protected structure. Applications received without the specified permissions will be declined and removed from the application at evaluation stage.

2.4 Key Roles

Lead Applicant

It is the responsibility of the Lead Applicant to distribute funds, organise access for SEAI inspections, and ensure that M&V requirements are met. The Lead Applicant signs the letter of offer and agrees to all the terms and conditions of the scheme on behalf of the Project Partners. The lead applicant is

responsible for receiving and distributing the grant funding from SEAI to all the beneficiaries. They may defer administration and day-to-day project management of the grant to a Project Coordinator who works on their behalf.

When filling out the online Application Form, the Lead Applicant can choose to make the Project Coordinator the main contact. Provided the Project Coordinator agrees, and indicates so on the form, the Lead Applicant will be considered a secondary contact, and will not be copied on all correspondence.

Contractors delivering upgrade works cannot be the Lead Applicant. We advise that contractors wishing to apply for the scheme should collaborate with another organisation, such as a Local Authority, community-based voluntary organisation or local business that owns or manages the buildings. The Partner organisation can act as the Lead Applicant.

Project Coordinator

The Project Coordinator is responsible for managing all aspects of the project. Project Coordination is an eligible expense (i.e., project management) under the programme, to support applicants in employing experienced and qualified managers who will be dedicated to the project and deliver it in a professional manner. A Lead Applicant may also be a Project Coordinator.

It is important that your application demonstrate that the chosen Project Coordinator can bring the following to the project:

- The relevant experience and knowledge of the management requirements and risk mitigation involved in carrying out the proposed works;
- A plan to manage quality throughout the project;
- The competence to ensure that quality deliverables (photos, Competent Person reports, etc.) are released throughout the project as part of the payment applications and that these quality deliverables are aligned with milestones.

It is the responsibility of the Project Coordinator to select the BER assessor(s) and ensure that they fulfil all duties and obligations under the BER [Regulations and the Code of Practice for BER assessors](#). No BER assessor should complete more than 150 BERs (Pre and post together) under any Communities application. See the link below for BER code of practice.

<https://www.seai.ie/publications/BER-Assessor-Code-of-Practice.pdf>

The Project Coordinator must select a BER assessor who is not an employee of any of the contractors or organisations involved in the delivery of the project upgrades.

There is no requirement for a project to appoint a Project Coordinator and Beneficiaries may act as their own Project Coordinator where they can demonstrate they have the appropriate technical skill set. No internal project management costs may be claimed in this instance.

Beneficiary

A grant Beneficiary is a project participant who ultimately benefits from the works being carried out and is listed on the Application Form and/or the technical workbook, who will incur and pay for the costs involved in carrying out the project. The Lead Applicant will transfer any grant payment from SEAI in respect of eligible costs incurred by a Beneficiary to the Beneficiary as soon as the payment is received from SEAI and subject to the agreement in place between the Beneficiaries and the Lead Applicant.

Individual homeowners cannot be listed as Beneficiaries on the Communities Energy Grant Application Form. They should be grouped under a particular Beneficiary acting on their behalf. The application should ideally only include **ten** Beneficiaries to ensure successful delivery of the project. Additional Beneficiaries will be permitted by prior approval only. Projects are encouraged to refine the delivery model to reduce the numbers of Beneficiaries while not impacting on the ambition of the project.

Participating Energy Supplier (PES)

Under the Energy Efficiency Obligation Scheme, certain energy suppliers must support energy efficiency projects in businesses and homes across Ireland. For more information on this scheme and contact details for energy suppliers please see our website at this link: [Energy Efficiency Obligation Scheme](#).

Partnership with a PES is recommended under the scheme. Projects who do not have access to a PES should contact the Communities Energy Grant team for further information.

There are a number of ways for a PES to be involved in a project, SEAI require a financial contribution from a participating PES or demonstration of costs associated with and CEG application. For fuel poor credits the value of these credits must be used to discount the cost of works on these homes. Advice and other services are not sufficient, on their own, but this may form part of an overall package of supports. Predicted energy credits from the project can be used as leverage in negotiations with PESs to secure the best package of supports.

The Energy Savings achieved by a project are measured in Kilowatt hours (kWh). Each kWh is potentially equivalent to 1 energy credit, which can be traded with a PES for monetary value. PES are looking to achieve energy credits in Residential and Energy Poor Residential as well as in the non-residential sector. PES may offer different levels of support depending on the relevant sector. A detailed schedule of the estimated value of these credits and who will benefit from these credits must be submitted at application.

Projects and Project Coordinators are encouraged to contact a number of different PES to discuss delivery of potential energy credits. A project is not limited to partnering with their current energy provider or indeed just one PES.

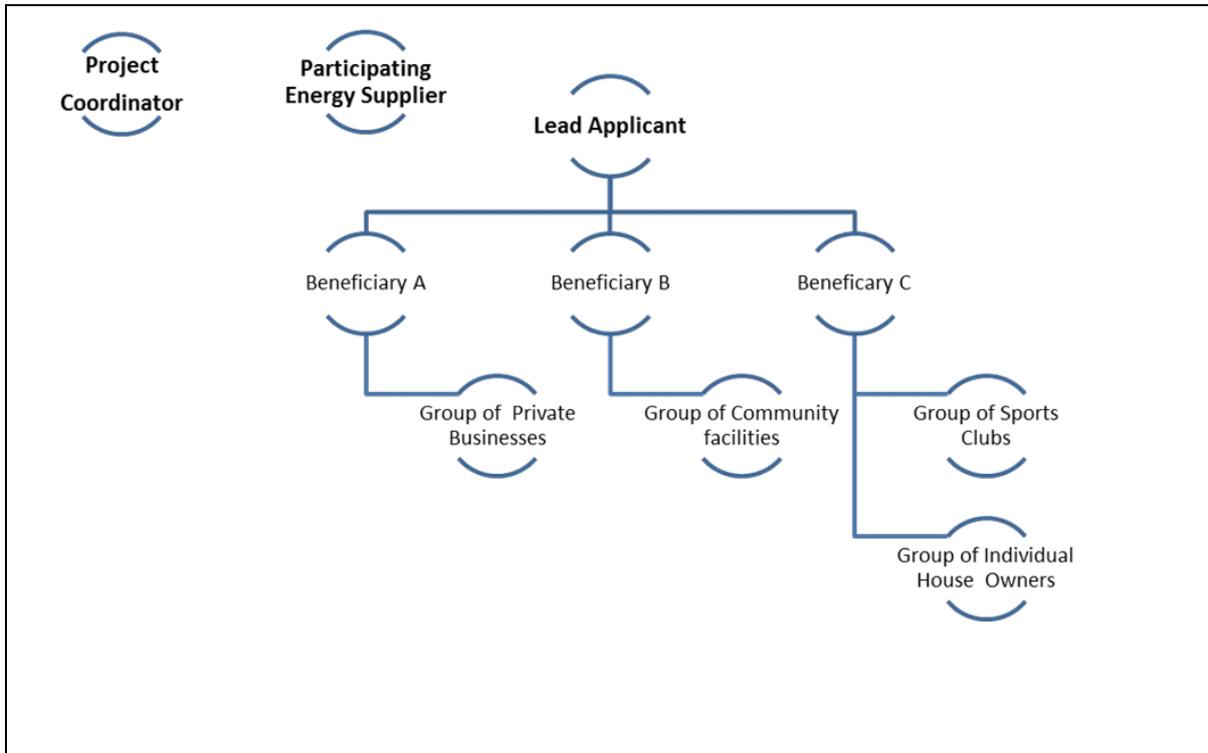
Where a PES is providing monetary support in exchange for potential energy credits, the application should state **clearly if and how** these funds are being used to support the community. This financial transfer does not form part of the Score Criteria 3: Innovation or Financial innovation.

Where an obligated party agrees in advance to provide financial support towards an energy efficiency improvement project but subsequently withdraws their support following completion of the works, another obligated party which matches the original offer of support will be considered to meet materiality requirement 2(b). This is on the basis that the offer of EEOS support influenced the original investment decision.

This flexibility will not apply to the residential target for second or subsequent upgrades at a dwelling where the minimum requirement is not met.

The PES is also responsible for uploading Domestic Energy Credits to SEAI's ECMS (Energy Credit Management System) once homes have been completed, which is a condition of grant payment.

The illustration below shows an example structure of a Communities Energy project where a PES is acting as a Partner, they can act also as Project Coordinator or Lead Applicant



IMPORTANT NOTE: The Energy Efficiency Obligation scheme is in place in Ireland pursuant to Article 7 of the EU’s Energy Efficiency Directive. Changes to this legislation will mean that a new phase of the Energy Efficiency Obligation Scheme is commencing in Q1 2023.

SEC Network Member

A Sustainable Energy Community (SEC) is a community in which everyone works together to develop a sustainable energy system for the benefit of the community.

SECs must be registered on the Register of SEC Network Communities at the date of application to be considered a registered SEC. SEAI will require evidence that any SEC included in an application is aware of their participation. This will be done by way of the SEC completing a SEC participation form at application.

The application must include letters of support from the SECs in the application setting out what their role was and how they participate in the project and what tangible benefits they expected from participation for the community.

3 FINANCING and PROJECT DELIVERY SOLUTIONS

3.1 Minimum Financing Requirements

A Beneficiary will be required to indicate that they have sufficient funds available to complete the project SEAI will look to ensure that 33% funding is available at contract stage. The Beneficiary will also be required to submit in writing confirmation of their project costs along with their grant awarded. This should be agreed with the Project Coordinator and must match the Beneficiary's schedule in the application workbook. See section 1 for more information.

3.2 Specific Financing Options

Finance is available to Approved Housing Bodies from organisations such as the [Housing Finance Agency \(HFA\)](#)

SEAI has previously worked with individual Credit Unions in developing models for loans for 'Energy Efficient Upgrade' works.

SEAI has also supported some innovative companies in developing Salary Incentive schemes for their employees similar to the 'Bike to Work' scheme. If you wish to find out more about this, please contact us at bec@seai.ie.

Many banks offer specific Energy Efficiency loans for domestic and commercial retrofit

Loan finance known as 'Social Finance' is available from organisations like [Clann Credo](#) or Community Finance to fund projects considered to be of value to society. Projects that improve energy efficiency and sustainability are considered to be socially beneficial.

3.3 Financing Balance

In principle, where private commercial projects are combined with not-for-profit or residential projects the application should aim at balancing the funding being sought in favour of the not-for-profit Partners. Where a public or private sector organisation is part of an application, they must demonstrate how they are adding value to the project by providing cash flow, management services or technical advice to the not-for-profit elements of the projects.

4 PROJECT COMPONENTS

4.1 Residential Projects

The Communities Energy Grant scheme will only fund residential housing upgrades to stock built **prior to 1 January 2011** we do not recommend homes with a starting BER of C1 are included unless the minimum BER uplift can be achieved, but with prior approval by SEAI they may be included.

There is no limit on the volume of domestic homes which may be applied for on any single Communities project. Projects must demonstrate their ability to deliver at scale before SEAI will consider an evaluation of any application. There is a mandatory requirement for all projects to support 10 homes for applications below €1M, for every additional €1m of grant works there is a requirement for 20 additional homes (see Section 1.4 above). As part of this requirement 10 pre-work BERs must be submitted to support any application. There is not a requirement to submit more than 10 BERs to support other homes which the Project Coordinator may wish to include as part of any application.

Local Authority houses may be considered as part of an inclusive community of mixed-ownership houses, where Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage provide approval to co-fund. Housing Associations and Local Authorities should contact SEAI directly to discuss options for participation in the Communities Energy Grant scheme in 2023 in relation to domestic works.

Rental Properties

Works can be carried out on rental properties, but the tenant must have the written **consent of the landlord**. These works will be subject to the landlord completing a de minimis declaration (see point 30 of the terms and conditions).

Local Authority Homes

Unoccupied Local Authority homes known as ‘voids’ may be granted aid, but SEAI must be made aware that the projects contain voids at application stage subject to Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage approval on co-funding.

Energy Poverty

The qualifying criteria for the Energy Poor grant rate is linked to the Better Energy Warmer Homes scheme criteria as set out in the WHS guidelines (linked below). Please note that AHB homes are not eligible for energy poor grant support. The grant rate of support is linked to the Housing Association offer on the OSS scheme.

<https://www.seai.ie/publications/Scheme-and-Application-Guidelines.pdf>

The qualifying criteria may change therefore all Fuel Poor homes must have prior approval in advance of any works and the requirements and qualifying criteria will be checked and verified by SEAI to ensure that the home and homeowner qualify at the time of works commencing. Where written approval is not provided in advance SEAI reserve the right to refuse payment on these fuel poor homes.

In the case of Local Authorities or Housing Associations who have access to the Department of Social Protection Database, SEAI will accept a signed letter from the Data Officer (or equivalent) confirming the numbers of energy poor homes being claimed for and detailing each of them by name and address. Energy credits for Local Authority and Housing Association projects will be awarded as energy poor based on the proof received. This is a pre works requirements for Fuel poor.

Special Requirements for Residential Projects

All proposed works for domestic stock should be in line with standard and specification guidelines issued by SEAI such as the [Better Energy Homes Scheme Contractor Code of Practice](#) (incorporating [SR54 for retrofit works](#)) and with current building regulations.

All Contractors working on Communities Energy Grant scheme domestic upgrades must be a registered Better Energy Home (BEH) Contractor where the works completed are similar to BEH measures. Where PV installs are being included the installers must comply with the same standards as apply under the SEAI's Solar Electricity Grant. Other measures which are to be deployed must comply with any SEAI requirement pertaining to that measure at the time of install.

Domestic Contractors will apply and fully comply with the Better Energy Homes Scheme Contractors Code of Practice, QADP, Standards and Specification Guidelines for all measures covered under that scheme, including Heat pumps. Installers of PV must comply with the SEAI Solar Electricity Grant requirements. For the avoidance of doubt, the applicable version of the above is the one which is in force and as published on the SEAI website at the time the work or service is carried out when undertaking any works or services in respect of which funding is claimed pursuant to this Agreement.

A Technical Helpdesk for domestic contractors is available at 01 277 6977. The following technical requirements should be noted

- a) A pre- and post-works BER is required to be carried out for all properties. Local Authorities will be required to submit 10 Pre BERs to meet the application criteria only.
- b) Evidence that the pre-works BERs have been completed should be submitted to SEAI before any interim payments can be made
- c) Final post work BERs must be at least a B2 rating (Subject to Part L requirements). Post BERs of B3 and C1 may only be acceptable with **prior approval** from SEAI. All domestic buildings completed must deliver a minimum BER uplift of 100 kWh/m²/yr this minimum standard **cannot** be waved under any circumstances.

Where a BER Audit determines that a minimum BER Rating specified in the grant agreement has not been achieved and that the BER Assessment is to be revoked, SEAI will require that:

- remedial works are undertaken to achieve the specified BER rating and
- a new BER Assessment is published which meets the requirements

Grants relating to the domestic elements may be withheld if not already paid until the action identified above has been undertaken to the satisfaction of SEAI.

- d) Where significant retrofits are proposed for energy poor, Housing Association or Local Authority homes, a funding model should be submitted outlining how the tenant will contribute to the cost if applicable.

- e) In the case of insulation work, an optimal whole-element solution must be implemented. Partial solutions will **not be eligible for grant support**. For example, windows, SEAI assume every window will be replaced; failure to replace all existing windows will result in this measure being withdrawn from the grant.
- f) Changes to domestic homes do not need prior approval once the measures installed are consistent with the measures contained within the original workbook, and the overall eligible costs are within the Domestic envelope of funding agreed per contract.

Where doors are specified, the application must indicate front and back door as a single unit of measure. An explanation can be found on the [buyer's guide page](#) of the SEAI website. A fabric first solution is **mandatory**.
- g) Energy credits for individual domestic works are based on the requirements under the EEOS. Please see the EEOS for full details of the methodology for credit calculation for domestic homes.
- h) SEAI reserve the right to look for all homeowner work agreements or contracts in advance of any works commencing on domestic work.
- i) SEAI will (as noted under the funding levels section) look for evidence that a competitive procurement process has been followed – either a full tender process has been carried out or at a minimum three quotes have been sought for the works. Where prices are found to be unreasonable *SEAI will be entitled to require the Applicant to re-submit the pricing for the works in line with market value*. This may form part of the evaluation process however post evaluation changes may be affected by SEAI prior to the award of a contract and without notice. As advised all projects should be fully tendered prior to application. Refer to evaluation process in 1.7.

4.2 Non-residential Projects

The appropriate **grouping** of large, small, and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) and retrofit measures into bundles and forming part of an overall community structure is an opportunity for a community application structure. Larger organisations are encouraged to facilitate or act as coordinators for SMEs and Communities in their supply chain or relevant sector. We strongly encourage private and public sector businesses to use the technical [Project Assistance supports](#) cited online, and to develop projects to at least initial feasibility before applying for Communities Energy Grant support.

Public sector non-residential projects

Local Authorities and public-sector organisations must demonstrate how they are adding value to the project by providing cash flow, project management or technical advice to the community and not-for-profit elements of the projects.

Commercial organisations

Commercial organisations should provide financial or technical support to the community or not-for-profit elements of the projects, e.g., the value of energy credits supporting non-profit organisations or domestic energy upgrades.

Voluntary and community-based organisations

Charities or Not-for-profit run facilities may be eligible for 50% funding, subject to **prior written agreement** with the communities team. Section 38 organisations are treated as public sector bodies and are eligible for up to 30% funding.

Schools (State) with charitable status are eligible for up to 50% funding. Third level colleges are considered as part of the public sector and are eligible for up to 30% funding. Private or fee-paying schools are deemed eligible for 30% supports only.

Where organisations or facilities are publicly funded and have 'charity status' SEAI reserve the right to determine the level of grant support offered.

Please refer to the additional explanatory notes at the end of this document

Special requirements for non-residential projects

- a) Energy Audits, an Initial Appraisal or feasibility assessments should be carried out on all non-residential stock before application.
- b) Large businesses are required to submit their energy audits as per the [Energy Audit Scheme](#) as required per [SI 426:2014](#).
- c) **All non-domestic** projects are required to carry out Measurement & Verification (M&V) as part of the energy upgrade works. The M&V requirements for the Communities Scheme are as per [Energy Efficiency Obligation Scheme \(EEOS\)](#) requirements. Where appropriate, SEAI encourages projects to employ [ISO 50015](#) to measure and verify energy savings for the non-residential elements of the project. The [International Performance Measurement and Verification Protocol](#) (IPMVP) is also acceptable.

The Technical Workbook and preliminary M&V plans should identify measures/sites where M&V is proposed and describe how it will be done. For more information please see Sections 3 and 6 of the online resource, [Guidance on Authenticating and Claiming Energy Credits](#).

When a PES is involved in the project, and is benefiting from the energy savings, it is a requirement that they will be responsible for authenticating the M&V of the project and for submitting the M&V report to SEAI.

- d) SEAI will withhold 10% of funding on Projects receiving €150,000 or more for the combined non-domestic energy efficiency works. This retention sum will be released on receipt of an acceptable M&V report by the deadline as indicated on the letter of offer.
- e) Works proposed should be retrofits to existing facilities or replacements of existing equipment and fittings. SEAI may request evidence of the baseline or 'existing' energy used, fittings or equipment as part of the evaluation process.
- f) Items such as Electric vehicles (excluding charging infrastructure) do not qualify for funding under the Communities scheme. New build or elements such as extensions to existing premises are excluded from funding.
- g) Where a building is not owned by the proposer, SEAI must be provided with the consent of the landlord in order for works to be approved.

5 APPLICATION PROCESS

5.1 Before Applying

It is essential that the project is clearly mapped out before application. Please ensure that the choice of Lead Applicant, Project Coordinator, SEC Network Member, PES, and all participating organisations have been finalised before application. SEAI will hold workshops to provide guidance on applications however these workshops are subject to demand.

Financial, administrative and site delivery resources should be identified at application stage. Remember to clearly and thoroughly outline the in-house team as it is a critical part of the project. The Application form should highlight any approvals required before the project or sub-projects can proceed e.g., Planning Permission, EPA Licence, Waste Permit, and CRU Licence, Financial Approval (Board, Management or Lending Institution).

The online Application Form should inform SEAI with regard to the proposed tender process, and completion dates of same. Tenders, which are not complete or substantially under way at the time of application will be viewed less favourably and the scores awarded will reflect the increased risks associated with this status. SEAI reserve the right to refuse applications where we believe the tender is not of an appropriate standard or does not comply with good governance rules. SEAI will not allow cost revisions in excess of the values applied for at application so it is important that tendered prices should be available at that point. SEAI reserve the right to revoke any contract on the basis of delays in tenders, for any reason including delays affecting the project, the contractor or any other party involved in the delivery of the project.

Before application, carefully read the **requirement guidelines** regarding requirements for residential projects and requirements for non-residential projects then carefully read the checklist and ensure that you have all the **necessary documentation ready**. **Design specifications** must be agreed before application, and **design calculations** finalised.

Only those applicants who have completed all parts of the Application Form A and submitted a completed Technical Workbook will be evaluated. Applicants should ensure every project has sufficient technical data to support energy savings. All applicants must verify by way of email to the Communities team that they have read and understood the Communities guidelines in order for an application to proceed to evaluation.

All projects must be complete by the contracted date which will be dependent on the contract award date. SEAI will allow **12 months** for all projects to be completed. All projects must be completed by this contracted date, extensions may be permitted by SEAI however written approval in advance is required otherwise SEAI will revoke projects not delivered after the 12-month contract period has expired. In the event a contract is completed prior to the contract date SEAI will close the contract and issue final payments in line with the contract. Projects not delivered by this date will not be eligible for the Communities grant funding and all works not complete after the contract date will be revoked. **Note Contract changes of any description are not permitted under any circumstances with the exception of Domestic elements as indicated in 4.1 (e)**

Project Coordinators may request advice technical or other advice/assistance from the Communities team prior to submitting an application. While every effort will be made to provide assistance prior to an application, a meeting will only take place if an appropriate agenda is agreed in advance.

5.2 How to Apply

Applications must be submitted via SEAI's online Project Evaluation Platform

<https://pepportal.seai.ie>

Applications submitted by email or as a hard copy will not be accepted. All necessary documentation must be submitted at the point of application. Additional data submitted post the application submission will not be reviewed. Applications requesting SEAI grant funding must be received by 13.00 on the following dates:

- **31ST March**
- **31ST May**
- **31ST August**

Where SEAI has exceeded the commitment level no further applications will be sent for evaluation, but these applications may be held in reserve. Please refer to 1.5 for evaluation process.

5.3 Application and Project Timeline

Evaluation time will depend on the volume of applications received and their complexity. The evaluation period for all projects is expected to be between 6 and 8 weeks.

Only completed online applications will be evaluated those with an appropriate workbook to support the figures submitted. Where an incomplete application is submitted it will not be sent for evaluation. SEAI takes no responsibility for incomplete applications submitted under the PEP portal.

An evaluation is paused when SEAI seek additional information. Applications which are incomplete or missing supporting information take longer to evaluate. SEAI reserve the right to reject an application where we have insufficient information to complete the evaluation.

The deadline for project completion including submission of all project documentation will be indicated on the SEAI contract and the project must be closed within this time frame. Projects which cannot deliver to the appointed time frames should not be submitted as part of the application. Elements of individual projects not delivered by the contract end date will not be supported for grant funding.

5.4 Checklist

Submit the following with the online Application Form A and B for evaluation:

Technical documents

- a) **Completed Technical Workbook** This is a critical component of your application. Failure to thoroughly, adequately and accurately complete the Technical Workbook would seriously jeopardize the success of the application. Ensure all fields in the Technical Workbook are fully completed, clearly indicating energy savings, project cost, and grant sum requested, existing specifications and proposed specifications. The energy upgrades proposed should be detailed and the methodology to measure and verify energy savings and cost per kWh saved should be included. Please see the [Technical Workbook Guide](#) for more information. SEAI will provide supports to assist Project Coordinators to complete the workbook however SEAI will not complete workbooks on a Project Coordinator's behalf.

The technical workbook is deemed to be part of the grant agreement (Section 2 of the attached Terms and Conditions). For the avoidance of doubt the grant agreement will be capped at the value per measure applied for in the technical workbook.

- b) **Technical and quantitative** relevant documents supporting the technical details and proposed energy savings of the project **as set out in the Technical Workbook**.
- c) **Contractor details should be provided**. Where possible at the application stage Project Coordinators should provide details of the BEH (Better Energy Homes) registration.
- d) **Sample plan** A sample of a proposed management plan by the Project Coordinator.
- e) **Relevant energy audits**
- f) **PES Declaration** A completed Form B is required where a PES is involved.
- g) **Evidence** Include any relevant evidence that shows the project M&V
- h) **Quality and Assurance plan for all projects.**
- i) Any other relevant information to support your project proposal – e.g. feasibility studies or options appraisals relating to your project or how your project fits into wider local development plans etc
- j) SEC letter of support
- k) Planning approvals where appropriate. Where PV projects require planning SEAI will allow these projects progress to contract award pending planning. No works should commence without planning approval, otherwise SEAI will revoke the project.

Financial documents

- a) **Tax Clearance:** eTax clearance must be verified for the Lead Applicant and Beneficiaries who are required to provide the relevant tax reference number and access number to SEAI.
- b) **VAT status verification:** If the Beneficiary is seeking a **VAT inclusive grant** from SEAI, a letter, or letters, from the **Revenue Commission** confirming the VAT status of the Beneficiary must be included.

The letter must state that the Beneficiary is not registered for VAT and/or does not have VAT recovery status on the specific costs (energy upgrades) being claimed under Communities Energy Grant and cannot reclaim any VAT incurred on the project costs.
- c) **Declaration of financial resources:** A declaration, signed by all Project Beneficiaries must be provided that they have the financial resources to complete the project. This should also indicate the value of the grant they are requesting on their element of the project.

6 GRANT PAYMENTS

6.1 Validating the Offer

If the application passes the evaluation and is approved, a letter of offer will be issued to the Lead Applicant. The grant offer will only become valid upon SEAI receipt of a signed Grant Agreement **within 14 days** of date of issue.

Should SEAI propose to support projects at a lower percentage than that requested in the application, the project contact will be notified in advance of a letter of offer. SEAI will not entertain any appeals on changes made to applications during the evaluation process, due to the lack of technical details being provided at application stage.

6.2 During the Project

Workshops

SEAI may host workshops or clinics for successful projects to assist Project Coordinators in the delivery of their project. It is advised that Project Coordinators attend these workshops

Project Milestones

In order to assist with cashflow and project delivery SEAI require a staggered confirmation of work completions. This will act to ensure that our payment and inspection processes are ready to assist project delivery.

Project milestones will be set by the applicant. **An applicant must outline their 50% and 70% delivery milestone dates within their application the percentages relate to projects completed not value of works.** All projects need to have a completion date specified at application

Payments should be requested by the applicant once all project elements-listed under the milestone are delivered. SEAI will make interim payments only on fully completed homes which are supported by a published post works BER.

During the project the applicants must deliver to the milestone dates and SEAI will review progress with applicants at each milestone. This may result in an amended grant offer if the project is unable to meet the milestones. Failure to meet milestones will result in SEAI refusing future applications.

Inspections

SEAI may carry out inspections, in advance or following completion of works, for compliance with the Grant Agreement. Grantees will be notified by SEAI prior to such inspections.

Interim Inspection

Interim Inspections may be carried out on Non-Domestic Projects, typically when an Applicant confirms a key milestone has been met.

Interim inspections also occur where upgrade works may be difficult to access or inspect on completion of works. It is the Applicants' responsibility to highlight this to SEAI well in advance of completion while access equipment is still available on site. In such exceptional cases, the Applicant

may propose alternative means to demonstrate that works have been installed in accordance with the agreed specification. Acceptance of any such alternate proposals will be at the sole discretion of the Inspections Unit and must be obtained in writing in advance of completion of works.

Advisory Inspection (Domestic Project)

Advisory inspections are intended as a training aid to ensure Project Coordinators understand relevant quality standards and technical requirements, early in the installation process.

Evidence shows that Advisory Inspections lead to improved final inspections and the timely release of payment. For this reason, Advisory inspections are not mandatory but a minimum of 2 are recommended to be carried out. The upgrade measures chosen for advisory inspections should be representative of the measures to be repeated across the scheme and include any homes or measures that are technically challenging. The results of advisory inspections do not count towards the overall pass rate for the project.

First Inspection (Non-domestic projects)

The first Non-Domestic Project Site completed will be inspected to help the Project Co-ordinator to understand the process for Non-Domestic Inspections.

Inspection Process

On completion of a project and updating of all relevant documentation an Inspection log is required to be submitted for domestic and non-domestic projects. Projects will be selected for inspection from these using a risk-based approach.

The Project Coordinator is responsible for quality assurance on the project and will be notified of the properties selected for inspection. The Project Coordinator must provide access for SEAI's inspectors within 5 working days of being contacted to arrange an inspection. The Project Coordinator is not required to be present at the inspection but must assign a representative who is familiar with the layout of the site, the upgrade works completed and has access to all required certification documentation and manuals. Where the Project Coordinator cannot be present SEAI reserve the right to proceed with the inspection without the presence of the project coordinator or any of their representatives being present.

Inspections will be undertaken during normal working hours. The Project Coordinator will be required to provide the inspector with a safe working environment and suitable access to the project area. Any representative of the Project Coordinator should have all the necessary documentation and technical knowledge of the project. They may also be asked to retrieve equipment (e.g., light fittings) in areas which are difficult to access, to verify compliance with quality and safety standards.

Poor inspection results may result in additional inspections being conducted and re-inspection of remedial works for non-compliance.

Reworks

Following inspection, the inspector will send a written report to the Project Co-ordinator detailing any non-compliant works recorded and requesting that reworks be carried out. Where evidence is found that works were completed after the project completion deadline (other than snagging) these works

will be deemed ineligible for grant funding. A declaration of reworks is required to be submitted within 14 calendar days of the date of the inspection report and evidence of completion should be submitted with these (e.g., photos, reports, and certificates). Any re-works identified in the inspection report should be addressed on all other properties completed on the project.

The Project Coordinator may be asked to meet SEAI to confirm the remedial actions being taken to bring the project in line with quality requirements.

If satisfactory evidence of quality and safety standards is not available, SEAI may, at its discretion, reduce the grant amount proportionally. Excessive additional inspections arising from persistent poor quality may be chargeable at the cost to SEAI.

Payments between 50% and 80% must be supported by satisfactory inspection data. Payments in excess of 80% will only be made when inspection data has been finalised, energy credits uploaded, and all outstanding documentation received. All reworks must be completed before final payment will be released.

Appeals

Inspection results may be appealed using the Reworks Appeal Form which can be emailed to becinspections@seai.ie.

Appeals must be received in writing within 14 calendar days of the date of your Inspection Results Notification. Appeals must outline any evidence to dispute the inspection findings and advise on any mitigating factors that may have affected the outcome of the inspection. It is essential that your appeal be supported by appropriate supporting documentation such as photos, certification, and other relevant information.

Post payment Inspections

SEAI may at its own discretion carry out post payment inspections to verify the quality of works performed under the Communities Grant Scheme. Where requested to do so the Project Coordinator will be required to provide contact details for the homeowners and non-domestic properties to enable SEAI to contact the homeowner or Beneficiary directly. Schedule F forms must be completed for each and every Domestic and non-domestic location completed. Post payment inspections will normally be undertaken independently of the Project Coordinator. Where fails are identified re-works will be required as noted above. SEAI reserves the right to clawback any grant funds where reworks are not completed, or no works are identified.

6.3 Payment Procedure

Grant payments will be made to the Lead Applicant in accordance with the Grant Agreement. Changes to the contract in relation to payment are not possible once the contract is signed.

The level of grant payment will be strictly proportional to documented eligible payments made to suppliers and contractors connected to the project. Invoices must be dated after the date of letter of offer and must be addressed to the Grantee or the Beneficiaries named on the Grant Agreement. Invoices which predate the letter of offer, or which are not addressed to the Grantee or Beneficiary are not eligible for payment.

Once the reports and financial documents are deemed satisfactory, SEAI will transfer grant funds electronically to the Grantee's bank account and issue an accompanying letter notifying the main contact of the payment.

- a) Final payments are conditional upon satisfactory receipt by SEAI of the below by the contract completion date Project completion confirmation including verification that the technical specifications have been completed
- b) A completed Payment Request Form
- c) A completed Grant Claim Workbook
- d) **Invoices** for all approved itemised **eligible costs**. Invoices should list energy upgrade measures included and identify the locations where these works were carried out.
- e) Proof of payment of invoices in the form of a copy of the Grantee's bank statement which shows the payment(s). Where multiple invoices are being paid using a single Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT) or cheque i.e., batch payments, a breakdown of all amounts in that payment is required.
- f) Valid tax Clearance for all Beneficiaries
- g) For self-accounted VAT, supporting documentation as evidence that VAT has been paid to Revenue, e.g., VAT return extract and bank statement, or a letter indicating that VAT will be paid (this in the case of Local Authorities and other Government Bodies only SEAI will accept a letter from an authorised official outlining that VAT has been paid or will be paid to Revenue for each invoice. This also applies to RCT and PSWT).
- h) Domestic Energy Credits uploaded to ECMS (Energy Credit Management System) by PES

Confirmation of

- i)
- j) Energy **Poverty** eligibility documentation for relevant homes
- k) [Declaration of Independence](#) signed by BER assessor(s)
- l) Signed [Client Organisation Declaration for Energy Credits](#)
- m) A report on the status of the project in relation to financing aspects including a description of the mechanism used, the repayment situation and feedback on the success of the mechanism where applicable
- n) BER costs should be separately identified and invoiced, and this invoice must separately identify the properties assessed.

Project management costs

Applicants can only claim for PM support in-line with project expenditure. Invoices accounting for the relevant values must be submitted at each stage.

Non-domestic Design Fees

Non-domestic design fees are no longer supported.

Every design project is different and has differing needs. It is the responsibility of the design engineer to consider fully all design requirements. It is the duty of the design to ensure compliance with all relevant legislation and regulations and codes of practice. CIBSE / BSRIA Design Checks for HVAC and Electrical Services provide design guidance for design engineers.

6.4 Important Notes

Interim payments

SEAI will make interim payments on projects where works are fully complete on the buildings being claimed for. Works must be completed for any invoices submitted i.e., deposits or payments on account are not acceptable. Payments for partially complete measures are not permitted. Payments for partially complete homes are similarly not permitted and payment for fully completed homes can only be considered where the final BER is published. Where SEAI are concerned at that the minimum domestic requirement may not be met SEAI reserve the right to hold payment on all milestones until these concerns can be addressed.

Final payments will be withheld on all projects until all documentation has been submitted, and all inspections and any necessary re-works have been completed and approved by SEAI.

Where the number of energy credits delivered is less than those committed to in the Grant Agreement, the maximum project management amount will be adjusted on a pro rata basis for any reduction in energy credits in excess of 5% of the amount committed to in the Grant Agreement. This may result in the PM fee being reduced, with the noted exception of reduced credits due to changes in the obligation scheme.

Where grant support of €150,000 or more is offered for the combined non-domestic upgrade projects, 10% of funding for the non-domestic projects will be withheld until satisfactory M&V information is received. This must be submitted **within 9 months following the end of the contract period**. Projects should identify at application stage; sites where proposed M&V will be carried out. SEAI will confirm in the Grant Agreement if additional M&V is required at other locations or on other measures. The PES is responsible for authenticating and submitting the M&V. Any amount retained for M&V will not be paid if a satisfactory M&V report is not received within this 9-month period. It is the project Coordinators responsibility to remit and claim the M&V payment. SEAI will not issue reminders and late submission will not be entertained.

Payment revocation

SEAI may revoke payments in the following circumstances:

- Ineligible invoices submitted
- Insufficient proof of payments submitted
- Invoices are deemed invalid
- Back-up documents have not been submitted to SEAI by the assigned project deadline
- Requests for payment have not been submitted to SEAI by the assigned project deadline
- Works have not been completed to standard
- Works have not been tested and commissioned

- Works have not been ‘switched on’
- Work was commenced or completed prior to letter of offer being issued
- No access has been provided to inspect the upgrade works
- Upgrade works completed do not match proposal and specification submitted and approved by SEAI in accordance with the programme guidelines
- Energy credits completed are less than that proposed in the Grant Agreement
- Invalid or insufficient Energy Credits uploaded
- Energy credits for upgrade works have already been claimed for

Inspection of Projects

The cost of additional inspections will, at the discretion of SEAI be deducted from the grant payment due where the quality of work is repeatedly poor and additional inspections are required as a direct result. Both inspection costs and re-inspection costs are deductible at the cost of such inspections to SEAI.

Triple E register

The Triple E Products Register is a benchmark register of best-in-class energy efficient products including eco-design. Products on this register all meet a minimum set of stringent efficiency criteria and typically will be of a best-in-class efficiency standard. As such, procuring against this register will provide you with the assurance that you are purchasing a product of very high efficiency.

Projects are encouraged to commit to the purchase of plant, machinery or equipment from the relevant product/technology categories listed on the [Triple E register](#) or equivalent where appropriate. The Project Coordinator should identify such products in the Technical Workbook. This is a mandatory requirement for public sector organisations only.

‘Green’ Public Procurement Regulations

Public sector organisations should meet their obligations to procure products in accordance with [SI 151: 2011](#) European Union (Energy Efficient Public Procurement) Regulations 2011

Accelerated Capital Allowance

The ACA is a tax incentive for companies paying corporation tax and aims to encourage investment in energy efficient equipment. The ACA offers an attractive incentive whereby it allows companies to write off 100% of the purchase value of qualifying energy efficient equipment against their profit in the year of purchase. Qualifying products from the defined ACA equipment categories are listed on the ACA Specified List which is updated on a regular basis.

For Grantees eligible to claim the Accelerated Capital Allowance (ACA) linked to the Triple E register, it should be noted that any ensuing claim to the Revenue Commissioners for the ACA should be made on the basis of costs net of the Communities grant.

Publicity and Case Studies

As with all grant schemes, successes and lessons learned are a key ingredient in maximising replication. This is particularly true with Community Energy projects, where successfully funded projects are the flagbearers driving wider and deeper community engagement. It is essential therefore that all applicants do their utmost to publicise the successful outcomes of their endeavours. This means:

- Actively seeking opportunities to promote the successful grant application, project progress and project completion in local and regional media (print and broadcast). This should also extend to local representatives and elected officials.
- All such activities should explicitly acknowledge the funding received from the SEAI Communities scheme. Where signage or displays are being created in relation to particular buildings or events then you should request the SEAI logo from SEAI for inclusion accordingly. SEAI should be provided with copies of any press releases or promotional materials prior to finalisation for approval.
- If deemed appropriate to host an event at project completion, then SEAI must be advised of same and afforded an opportunity to attend / participate as appropriate.
- At project conclusion, the Project Coordinator must provide a short case study to SEAI which sets out the main elements of the project (key partners, numbers of properties, and types of works, project costs (totals), project duration, critical success factors / learnings accompanied with high-res photos of key buildings). These may be used for further promotion by SEAI or inclusion in reports from SEAI.
- SEAI may request that an SEAI provided plaque is displayed in a prominent and visible location in buildings where Communities grant funded work has taken place. The estimated size of this plaque is no greater than A4. The installation of this plaque is considered part of the participation in this grant programme and recognises the programme is a Government of Ireland initiative. The project Coordinator must provide SEAI with a photograph of the installed plaque where a plaque is provided for installation.

6.5 Assessment and Reporting

Calculating savings

Energy Conversion Figures

Fuel	Unit of Supply	kWh/unit	kg CO ₂ /kWh
Electricity (2019)	kWh	1.00	0.224
Kerosene/Light Fuel Oil/Heating Oil	Litre	11.21	0.257
Gas Oil/Diesel	Litre	10.55	0.264
Residual Fuel Oil/Heavy Fuel Oil	Litre	11.45	0.274

Coal	Tonne	7,759.20	0.341
Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG)	Litre	7.09	0.229
Natural gas	kWh	1.00	0.205
Wood pellets	Tonne	4,800	0.005
Wood biomass		3,500	0.005

Sustainable energy

In the case of sustainable energy generation such as that facilitated by biomass plants built as part of the project, efficiency savings can be logged as energy savings or credits and taken up by a supplier.

Energy credits

If a PES is a project partner, the Lead Applicant on the project may give them permission to count the energy savings achieved against their EEOS target. This permission may only be given before the project commences. The PES should be identified on the Application Form and potential credits cannot be assigned retrospectively. It is the responsibility of the PES to upload all completed domestic credits to ECMS (Energy Credit Management System) for completed work and payment to the Grantee is conditional on the credits being uploaded. SEAI will upload the credits associated with non-domestic projects.

All of the savings and reductions are potentially eligible to be considered as energy credits. They only get converted to credits once the relevant work is completed and verified. Note possible changes to the obligation scheme in terms of credits referred to on page 23.

Your Communities grant offer states the agreed number of energy credits to be delivered by your project(s). A successful project **commits** to achieving the potential Energy Credits as set out in the evaluated Technical Workbook and included in the Grant Agreement. At the conclusion of your grant the potential energy credits will be uploaded on to the ECMS system. Where the number of validated energy credits is less than those committed to in the grant agreement a reduction to your project management payment will be made on a pro rata basis.

Domestic

Please note that to claim domestic energy saving credits, the applicant must collect the meter point reference numbers (MPRNs) and BERs of the relevant dwellings.

Non-Domestic

Where appropriate, applicants should use the [online calculation engines](#) provided by SEAI to calculate savings. In other cases, clearly outline the calculation methodology used to arrive at the savings figures. The expected impact on the BER and/or Display Energy Certificate can be used in the calculations. Where similar projects have been completed a detailed M&V report, carried out in accordance with Internal IPMVP could be submitted to verify similar savings.

7 THE COMMUNITIES ENERGY GRANT TEAM

SEAI’s Communities Energy Grant Team are happy to provide advice and support to potential applicants on any questions not covered in these guidelines and to support them in developing their applications for grant support.

If you are interested in making an application, please email BEC@seai.ie with ‘expression of interest’ in the subject line so that we can track applicants interested in the programme. Please contact us at BEC@seai.ie or 01 808 2162.

Counterfactual costs

In certain circumstances it is necessary to apply a counterfactual cost in order to determine the eligible costs.

The counterfactual cost is the cost of activities and equipment necessary due to legislation, regulation, or necessity. Where applicable, the counterfactual cost is subtracted from the capital cost of an opportunity to determine the eligible cost. The grant percentage level is then applied to this eligible cost to determine the grant amount that will be offered.

The eligible costs shall be the extra investment costs necessary to achieve the higher level of energy efficiency. They shall be determined as follows:

- a) The costs of investing in energy efficiency should be identifiable in the total investment cost as a separate cost, or
- b) The costs of investing in energy efficiency can be identified by reference to a similar, less energy efficient investment that would have been credibly carried out without the aid. The difference between the costs of both investments identifies the energy efficiency-related cost and constitutes the eligible costs also referred to as the ‘counterfactual cost’.

The counterfactual design is expected to be a detailed costed alternative exercise. SEAI will assess costings provided for the counterfactual and only the incremental expenditure will be eligible for funding. See Table below for some illustrative examples of counterfactuals in a range of scenarios.

Scenario		Counterfactual
A	Design and build of new asset	Cost of works required to achieve building regulations (relevant to the particular opportunity)
B	Upgrade of existing equipment which is at or nearing end of life	Cost of new, replacement equipment compliant with current regulations
C	Opportunity which provides a significant additional commercial benefit in addition to energy performance improvements	The cost of achieving the same additional commercial benefits without the energy performance benefits

D	Major renovation works triggering Technical Guidance Document Part L 2017	Cost of achieving building regulation compliance for mandatory energy-related upgrades
E	Upgrade of existing equipment which is in poor condition due to lack of maintenance	Cost of repair/maintenance necessary to extend the life of the existing equipment
F	The proposed solution is providing a new energy service, for example, heat via a biomass boiler with integrated dust extraction	A counterfactual delivering the same new energy service. In the example shown, the cost of a standard gas boiler could be applied.
G	Upgrade of existing equipment or process which is not currently delivering the energy or business service required. For example, the existing boiler is too small and is being replaced with a bigger one.	Cost of meeting the energy or business service required. In the example shown, the cost of a larger boiler with sufficient capacity to meet demand.
H	Replacement of existing equipment or process which is currently working well, meeting the need and does not need to be replaced or repaired. For example, an existing gas boiler space heating system identifies a heat pump as a more efficient solution.	Counterfactual is €0

8 TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. The Communities Energy Grant Application Guide, Application Form, Technical Workbook and Terms and Conditions are those published on the SEAI website on the date of submitting the application. However, SEAI may, if required by law or otherwise and without incurring any liability, vary, revise or supplement the Terms and Conditions of the programme after the application submission date. These revised or supplemented Terms and Conditions (as published on the SEAI website) will apply to all applications unless the Applicant chooses to withdraw the application or withdraw from the Grant Agreement. It is the responsibility of the Applicant to monitor the SEAI website in order to learn of any such changes.
2. The Applicant's Grant Agreement with SEAI in the event of a grant offer being accepted will comprise the Letter of Offer from SEAI including the Terms and Conditions and the Schedules contained therein, the Application Guidelines including these Terms and Conditions as amended in accordance with clause 1, and the Application Form including the Technical Workbook completed and submitted by the Applicant. The Applicant having communicated acceptance of the grant offer to SEAI, shall comply with and agree to be bound by the provisions of these documents. In the event of any conflict arising between these documents the order of precedence shall be:
 - 2.1. the Letter of Offer and the Terms and Conditions including Schedules contained therein;
 - 2.2. the Application Guidelines including these Terms and Conditions; and
 - 2.3. The Application Form.
3. Applicant must ensure that the application is submitted online via the [PEP portal \(https://www.pep.seai.ie\)](https://www.pep.seai.ie). Applications submitted by e-mail or in hard copy will not be accepted.
4. The project in respect of which the application is made, must be located in the Republic of Ireland.
5. Only new products shall be installed for the purposes of the project.
6. The Applicant and SEAI are of the view that there is no supply of goods or services between them and therefore there is no VAT chargeable to SEAI by the Applicant in relation to the payment of the grant. In the event that the Revenue Commissioners determine that, in their view, VAT is chargeable then the grant payment shall be regarded as inclusive of any VAT charge.
7. VAT is not an eligible project cost unless the Applicant can provide a letter from Revenue confirming that VAT cannot be reclaimed on the particular project. The only exception to this is where the ultimate beneficiaries of the works are private homeowners in which case the presumption will be that they do not have VAT recovery.
8. Any costs, e.g. orders, purchases or works, which predate formal Letter of Offer are not eligible.
9. Applications by public bodies must ensure that energy suppliers were selected through an appropriate process.
10. The applicant must obtain all necessary consents and statutory approvals and have authority to implement the project.
11. The grant offer only becomes valid upon receipt by SEAI from the applicant of the signed Letter of Offer.
12. A grant, once approved, is only payable in respect of the project(s) identified in the Application Form and set out in the Letter of Offer.

13. SEAI's prior written consent is required to approve any changes to the itemised eligible costs. For the avoidance of doubt, SEAI reserves the right to refuse such consent at its absolute discretion.
14. Once approved, the total grant amount will not be permitted to escalate under any circumstances.
15. The Applicant acknowledges that the timing of payment to approved grantees is subject to the funding allocated by Government to the programme in a particular calendar year, in accordance with public financial procedures. Where all other conditions are met, payment will be made on a 'first come, first served' basis. Where funding is exhausted in a particular calendar year, payment to remaining applicants will be deferred until such time as further funds may become available. Deferred payments will receive priority, if and when those funds become available.
16. The Applicant and project beneficiaries must ensure that compliance is achieved with the relevant principles of Irish and EC law regarding the spending of this funding and, where applicable, the laws and guidelines concerning public procurement and State aid. The Applicant acknowledges and agrees that, if it or a Beneficiary of the project is a public body, it is a condition of the grant that all products being procured by or on behalf of the grantee or the Beneficiary concerned, as the case may be, shall comply with the European Communities (Energy Efficient Public Procurement) Regulations (S.I. 151 of 2011) which oblige public bodies when purchasing or leasing products to only procure products that are explicitly listed on the SEAI Triple E Register, or satisfy the energy efficiency criteria published by SEAI for the relevant product categories.
17. The Applicant understands that for non-domestic works if a grantee fails to comply with the conditions regarding an efficient and effective mechanism for energy use data collection, measuring, or verification of savings, SEAI, shall amongst its remedies against the grantee, be entitled to demand the complete repayment of the grant.
18. The Applicant must ensure that all participating homes/facilities are prepared to be contacted and asked to participate in follow-up site visit(s) to verify impacts and achievements and to participate in follow-up research (telephone or questionnaire) as may be commissioned by SEAI to establish the programme's impacts and achievements. This will also include the acquisition of information and data for the development of case studies for wider dissemination (protecting as appropriate all confidential or commercially and personal sensitive information/data). The Applicant acknowledges and must ensure that it is a contact for participating building/facility owners and that SEAI will have to provide certain contact details to third party contractors in relation to these matters and the applicant hereby consents to SEAI making these disclosures.
19. The Applicant must ensure that access can be provided to SEAI and its agents to inspect a project location the Project within five business days of request for access except in exceptional circumstances demonstrated to the satisfaction of SEAI. Failure to satisfy this full access requirement will be considered a breach of these Terms and Conditions (see clause 20 below).
20. In the event of any breach by the Applicant of these Terms and Conditions of the programme or the other documents referred to in clause 2 of the Terms and Conditions and where the Applicant has received payment pursuant to the programme, SEAI shall, amongst its remedies against the Applicant, be entitled to demand the complete repayment of and fully claw back the grant. The Applicant agrees to comply with any such demand immediately on receipt of a written demand from SEAI.
21. SEAI accepts no liability or responsibility, whether for breach of contract, negligence, breach of statutory duty or otherwise, in respect of any direct or indirect loss, expense, dispute, claim, proceedings or cause of action arising out of, or in relation to, any product (or its suitability), any materials (or their suitability), equipment (or its suitability), work, system, service, specification, standard, installation in respect of which a Grant Offer has issued, or payment granted by SEAI. No undertaking, guarantee, assurance or other warranty, express or implied, is given by SEAI, or any of

its agents or servants, in respect of the cost, quality, efficiency and/or benefit of any work, equipment, materials, product, service or installation provided under the Community Energy Grant programme.

22. Any false, fictitious or fraudulent statements or claims knowingly made on grant applications, or supporting documentation, submitted in respect of previous grant applications/requests for payment or otherwise made to SEAI, its authorised officers, or a SEAI inspector, or any breach of these Terms and Conditions may result in current and future applications being deemed ineligible by SEAI. In respect of applications where the applicant has already received payment pursuant to the programme, clause 20 of these Terms and Conditions shall also apply.
23. Inspection results may be appealed in accordance with provisions in 6.2.
24. The applicant shall follow the SEAI complaints procedure in relation to any disputes between the applicant and SEAI concerning any matter in connection with the Grant Scheme
25. In relation to any complaints or appeals under the Communities Energy Grant programme, the applicant shall follow the SEAI Complaints and Appeals Policy contained within the SEAI Customer Charter, published on the SEAI website and amended from time to time.
26. The Applicant acknowledges that SEAI is subject to the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act 2014, as amended (“FOIA”). SEAI undertakes to use its best endeavours to hold confidential any information provided by the Applicant subject to its obligations under law, including the FOIA. Should the Applicant wish that any of the information supplied by him/her should not be disclosed because of its sensitivity, he/she should, when providing the information, identify the same and specify the reasons for its sensitivity. SEAI will consult with the Applicant about such information before making a decision on any Freedom of Information request received.
27. Any personal information which an Applicant provides to SEAI will be treated with the highest standards of security and confidentiality, strictly in accordance with the Data Protection Acts, 1988, 2003 and 2018 as re-enacted, amended or replaced from time to time, and pursuant to the General Data Protection Regulation (meaning Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC) and any related legislation. SEAI, as data controller, and its agents, will store such information on its database and fully respect the confidentiality of the data provided. The information provided by applicants will be used for evaluation purposes and to facilitate the administration of the grant process. This may require that data be supplied to and discussed, in confidence, with any person or organisation appointed by SEAI to assist in assessing or monitoring this application. These persons will be subject to the same requirements for protection of confidentiality. The Applicant’s signature on the Application Form is treated as confirmation that SEAI and its agents may use the information thus supplied for the aforementioned purposes.
28. An Applicant is under no direct or indirect obligation to undertake and/or complete the project outlined in their application. Rather, it is up an Applicant whether or not they wish to undertake and complete the project.
29. An Applicant must notify SEAI immediately of a decision not to undertake and/or complete their project. If a successful Applicant decides not to undertake and/or complete the project, SEAI will not pay the grant and instead may (but is not obliged to) allocate some or all of the funds provisionally allocated to that Applicant to a different applicant.
30. For State aid purposes the Communities Energy Grant has not been notified to the European Commission under Article 108(3) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and is instead being granted in reliance on Article 38 of the General Block Exemption Regulation.

31. In the case of rented properties only (excluding social housing provided by Local Authorities and Registered Housing Associations) this funding for Communities Energy grant funding is classed as 'De Minimis aid' in accordance with Commission Regulation (EU) No 1407/2013 of 18 December 2013 on the application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty (the '2013 Regulation') on the Functioning of the European Union to De Minimis aid.

De Minimis aid is small amounts of aid given to an enterprise, which cannot exceed €200,000 over any three fiscal years, to any company irrespective of size and location and irrespective of the form of the aid or the objective pursued. De Minimis aid can come from any State body, agency or department even when financed entirely or partly by the European Union. If a company is part of a group, then the €200,000 limit applies to the group. The funding is made on the understanding that the Communities Energy grant combined with any other De Minimis aid received by you in the last three fiscal years does not exceed the ceiling of €200,000 for all De Minimis aid. A declaration must accompany your application describing any other De Minimis aid received by the Applicant over the past three years.

Appendix I

Private Homes

Private Homes				
Measure	Detached	Semi-Detached / End Terrace	Mid Terrace	Apartment
Heat Pump	€6,500			€4,500
Central Heating System for Heat Pump	€2,000			€1,000
Heat Pump Air-to-Air	€3,500			
Heating Controls only	€700			
Launch bonus for reaching B2 with a Heat Pump	€2,000			
Ceiling Insulation	€1,500	€1,300	€1,200	€800
Rafter Insulation	€3,000	€3,000	€2,000	€1,500
Cavity Wall Insulation	€1,700	€1,200	€800	€700
External Wall Insulation	€8,000	€6,000	€3,500	€3,000
Internal Wall Insulation	€4,500	€3,500	€2,000	€1,500
Windows (Complete Upgrade)	€4,000	€3,000	€1,800	€1,500
External Doors (max. 2)	€800 per door			
Floor Insulation	€3,500			
Solar Thermal	€1,200			
Solar PV	0 to 2 kWp €900/kWp 2 to 4 kWp €300/kWp			
Mechanical Ventilation	€1,500			
Air Tightness	€1,000			
Home Energy Assessment	€350			
Project Management	€2,000	€1,600	€1,200	€800

Approved Housing Body Homes

Measure	Approved Housing Body			
	Detached	Semi-Detached / End Terrace	Mid Terrace	Apartment
Heat Pump	€6,500			€5,500
Central Heating System for Heat Pump	€2,000			€1,000
Heat Pump Air-to-Air	€4,000			
Heating Controls only	€700			
Launch bonus for reaching B2 with a Heat Pump	€2,000			
Ceiling Insulation	€1,500	€1,300	€1,200	€800
Rafter Insulation	€3,500	€3,500	€3,000	€2,000
Cavity Wall Insulation	€1,700	€1,200	€800	€700
External Wall Insulation	€10,000	€8,000	€4,500	€3,500
Internal Wall Insulation	€5,500	€4,250	€2,500	€2,000
Windows (Complete Upgrade)	€5,000	€3,700	€2,200	€1,900
External Doors (max. 2)	€1,000 per door			
Floor Insulation	€4,500			
Solar Thermal	€1,200			
Solar PV	0 to 2 kWp €900/kWp 2 to 4 kWp €300/kWp			
Mechanical Ventilation	€2,000			
Air Tightness	€1,000			
Home Energy Assessment	€350			
Project Management	€2,000	€1,600	€1,200	€800

Energy Poor Homes (CEG)

Energy Poor Homes				
Measure	Detached	Semi-Detached / End Terrace	Mid Terrace	Apartment
Heat Pump	€6,500			€5,500
Central Heating System for Heat Pump	€2,000			€1,000
Heat Pump Air-to-Air	€4,000			
Heating Controls only	€700			
Launch bonus for reaching B2 with a Heat Pump	€2,000			
Ceiling Insulation	€1,500	€1,300	€1,200	€800
Rafter Insulation	€3,500	€3,500	€3,000	€2,000
Cavity Wall Insulation	€1,700	€1,200	€800	€700
External Wall Insulation	€14,000	€11,000	€6,500	€4,500
Internal Wall Insulation	€9,500	€7,000	€4,500	€3,000
Windows (Complete Upgrade)	€5,000	€3,700	€2,200	€1,900
External Doors (max. 2)	€1,000 per door			
Floor Insulation	€4,500			
Solar Thermal	€1,200			
Solar PV	0 to 2 kWp €900/kWp 2 to 4 kWp €300/kWp			
Mechanical Ventilation	€2,000			
Air Tightness	€1,000			
Home Energy Assessment	€350			
Project Management	€2,000	€1,600	€1,200	€800