

Community Areas Housing Efficiency Strand 2020

Application Guidelines

IMPORTANT NOTICES

- It is the responsibility of each applicant to ensure that they have read and fully understood, the Application Guide, 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 Guide 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 Community Areas Housing Efficiency Strand 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. For the avoidance of doubt, the applicable version is the one which published on the SEAI website on the closing date for receipt of applications.

Community Areas Housing Efficiency Strand

1.0 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 is financed by Ireland's Structural Funds Programme, which is co-funded by the Irish Government and the European Union (EU). The funding for this scheme is Irish exchequer funds and no element of EU funding is provided to support this programme.

1.1 Housing Strand Objectives

This strand is aimed at engaging groups of private households, registered Housing Associations and Local Authorities who wish to participate in delivering energy efficiency works. SEAI wish to build working relationships directly with Housing Associations, Local Authorities and other residential service providers in order to facilitate large scale residential energy upgrades.

The Objectives of this scheme are to:

- a. Upgrade homes towards achieving the All of Government Climate Action Plan home energy retrofit targets.
- b. Upgrade housing stock in accordance with Part L of the Building Regulations 2019 and in doing so facilitate high standards of energy efficiency and renewable energy usage, thereby reducing fossil fuel usage, energy costs and greenhouse gas emissions.
- c. Promote a building fabric first approach in line with the SEAI definition and order of priority to:
 - be as energy efficient as possible (fabric first approach),
 - consider renewables where feasible,
 - adopt smart technologies as/if appropriate.
- d. Test and Develop the One-Stop-Shop model in Ireland, referenced in the Climate Action Plan 2019, with a view to informing and providing learnings to the All of Government Climate Action Plan taskforce developing the model for delivery of energy targets to 2030
- e. Work to develop the supplier market for delivery on government home energy retrofit targets.

- f. Bring together groups of homes under the same retrofit programme to facilitate energy improvements in an efficient and cost-effective manner to an exemplar standard.
- g. Build strategic and working relationships directly with owners or managers of larger quantities of domestic units.
- h. Empower Housing Associations & Local Authorities to lead energy efficient upgrades on the housing stock under their control.
- i. Build and maintain energy awareness and knowledge throughout these organisations. This will be achieved by showcasing the benefits of energy projects to the wider community.

1.2 Eligible Projects

The Housing Strand aims to fund a comprehensive suite of projects that deliver energy savings to homes. An eligible application must target one of the following;

- a single **County application**. i.e. a single application should include a group of homes in one county only.
- a **companywide or finance provider district led application**. Where applications are submitted by a company or financial institution on behalf of their employees or members, the application may consist of dwellings across multiple counties. An example of a finance provider led submission may be an application, supporting members of a specific Credit Union district and managed by a Project Co-ordinator. See section 2.2 for further details.

1.3 Grant Amount Available

The maximum grant available is €750,000. We recommend applicants consider grant applications of at least €100,000 due to the level of administration involved in this programme.

1.4 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 complete applications until the available budget is allocated or until it becomes unfeasible for the project to be delivered and inspected by 12.00 the 15th of October 2020.

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 recalculate the grant amount.

The evaluation process can only commence once a valid application is received. SEAI deem a valid application to be received when we have Participating Energy Supplier Declaration Form B and a completed application form containing the technical workbook. Once these 2 documents are received an evaluation is possible. Once SEAI send a project for evaluation no additional documentation may be submitted until the evaluation is complete.

Where the evaluation is unsuccessful or does not meet the minimum score the housing strand team will send the project coordinator the evaluator comments and allow the project coordinator to re-submit additional documentation and allow changes to application form containing the technical workbook. The resubmission must be received within 5 working days of the notification and must be submitted to BEC@seai.ie.

Where a second submission is received, the housing strand 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 closed, marked unsuccessful and no further evaluation will be allowed on this application. Any further submissions from the project coordinator will be treated as a new submission and will rank accordingly in date order.

Where the budget is fully subscribed SEAI will operate a reserve list. Projects will only be evaluated once funding becomes available, evaluations will be evaluated in date sequence only.

Applications for projects with a grant value in excess of €220,000 must be received by 13.00 on 31 January 2020. Any application received after this time and date which exceeds the lower limit set will not be evaluated and will be deemed unsuccessful.

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 you to self-score from the guidance below in advance of submitting. Project Coordinators who have outstanding reworks on Housing Strand 2019 projects, and who make an application will not have their 2020 application evaluated until all the contracted works and reworks under the previous project(s) are complete to SEAI's satisfaction.

The evaluation criteria are:

[Value for Money \(30 marks\)](#)

The project's value for money will be assessed in terms of energy savings (Primary kWh savings as per SEAI Energy Credits table) relative to the cost of implementation and the cost of the project / floor area (m²).

Energy credits for individual domestic works are based on a published table available on SEAI web site. The credits assigned to the project on completion shall be those listed on the published table on the date of your application to this scheme.

SEAI will at evaluation stage review all prices against a set pricing schedule. SEAI will (as noted under funding levels section) look for evidence that a competitive procurement process has been followed. In addition, SEAI will at evaluation stage review all prices against its pricing database (incorporating

pricing data from across SEAI's domestic programmes) for reasonableness. 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. There will be one-average unit rate, e.g. €/m² for external wall insulation, per measure accepted. SEAI will grant support all technologies, with the exception of fossil fuel-based measures, on the energy credits table. In addition, solar PV will also be supported.

Total Cost (€)/ Primary kWh saving

<1.76	15 Marks
1.76-1.90	14 Marks
1.91-2.05	13 Marks
2.06-2.20	12 Marks
2.21 – 2.35	11 Marks
2.36 – 2.50	10 Marks
2.51 – 2.65	8 Marks
2.66 – 2.80	6 Marks
2.81 – 2.95	4 Marks
>2.95	2 Marks

Total Cost (€) / Total Floor Area (m²)

< 381	15 Marks
381 - 440	13 Marks
441 - 500	12 Marks
501 - 560	11 Marks
561 - 620	10 Marks
621 - 680	8 Marks
681 - 710	6 Marks
711 - 740	4 Marks
>740	2 Marks

Technical Proposal (35 marks)

This section of the evaluation assesses the technical solutions proposed. Projects will be assessed on the provision of a whole house solution which includes a fabric first approach and will be assessed on the depth and effectiveness of the proposal. This will include the important elements of retrofit that will be addressed to ensure the integrity in the performance of installed solutions.

The suite of measures proposed will be assessed against the fabric first principle of the programme and should also be appropriate for the dwelling.

This section will be scored based on averages, e.g. average wall U-Value only across homes in the application with that specific measure being installed. The score per measure will also be adjusted by the percentage of homes receiving the measure; E.g. 7 out of 10 homes receiving a 350% Air to Water heat pump = $(7 / 10) \times 7$ score = 4.9

Technical Solution Proposed, i.e. fabric first & Re. heat (25 marks max).

Windows/Doors		Walls		Roof		Renewable Heating	
Score	U - Value	Score	U - Value	Score	U - Value	Score	% Efficiency
6	<1.0	7	< 0.21	5	< = 0.16	7	> = 300% main space heating > = 160% main water heating
5	1.0 - 1.4	6	0.21 - 0.27				
		4	0.28 - 0.35			0	Fossil Fuel

NOTE: Scores only linked to measures being upgraded.

Average Energy Uplift (10 marks max)

> 200 kWh/m ² /year	10 Marks
176 - 200	7 – 8 Marks
151 - 175	5 - 6 Marks
126 - 150	3 - 4 Marks
< 126	2 Mark

Quality and Delivery (35 marks)

The quality of the proposal with respect to the delivery of the project and how it demonstrates a commitment to ensure that the full value of the project is realised for the customer will be assessed.

Consideration will be given to the viability and robustness of the project plan through an analysis of the project management, demonstrated organisational commitment, commitment to quality assurance, evaluation of potential project risks and mitigation measures and the capacity to deliver the project to programme standards and by the deadline. Demonstration of previous experience in delivering similar projects should be provided.

Where Local Authorities (or any organisation subject to public tendering) are participating they must provide clarification on the status of any tenders required to complete the proposed works.

Projects will be assessed on their end-to-end engagement with customers to ensure that they understand the measures being implemented and how to operate any technologies in the home to optimise their performance.

Projects will be assessed on whether specific homes are identified, and the level assurance provided confirming full participant buy in. Demonstration of an engagement plan to capture homes should be provided where in place e.g. has a target market been identified and has a route to engagement been outlined as well as a marketing plan.

Robustness of Project Plan (10)	<p>8 - 10 = Project tendered, key dates identified, budgetary planning is robust, QA provided, risks identified and mitigated.</p> <p>4 - 7 = Project is reasonable state to commence, budgets provided, approved to proceed to tender, Value for money (VFM) tendering proposed, risk identified.</p> <p>1 - 3 = Simple or no plan in place or evident, insufficient detail provided on budgets,</p>
Project Team Competence & relevant experience (10)	<p>8 – 10 = Delivery, Financial and Administrative Team identified with relevant experience and competency. CVs /short biography provided for key team members. Project Team have successfully delivered similar upgrade projects within set deadlines.</p> <p>4 - 7 = Partial Team Identified and /or Project Team have delivered similar projects with assistance</p> <p>1 - 3 = Partial Team Identified and /or Limited or poor experience in delivery such projects</p>
Customer Engagement (8)	<p>6 – 8 = Fully engaged with participants through an engagement or marketing plan and has assurance of participant buy in. Handover documentation, i.e. Operation and Maintenance (O&M) manuals, training and commitment to post-occupancy follow up, planned end to end customer service approach.</p> <p>3 - 5 = Has engaged with participants through awareness & marketing plan, reasonable level of assurance with respect to participant buy in. O&M manual & training only and commitment to post-occupancy follow up. End to end customer approach partially considered.</p> <p>1 - 2 = Participants identified however no evidence of an engagement or marketing plan. Limited assurance with respect participant buy in. O&M manuals only and commitment to post-occupancy follow up.</p>
Integrated Finance (7)	<p>7 = An fully integrated delivery model which includes an attractive low-cost financing product.</p> <p>3 - 6 = An integrated delivery model where finance is on offer as part of the offering to householders.</p> <p>1 – 2 = A model where there are specific links to energy related finance products available in the market.</p>

1.5 Funding Levels

Listed below are the maximum available funding levels based on the home type.

	Home type	
Residential	Private	Up to 35%
	Local Authority homes	Up to 35%
	Housing Association homes	Up to 50%

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**. A BER rating of B2 is SEAI’s preferred minimum however where works comply with the new Part L of the building regulations and deliver a C1 these works may be allowed. It is the responsibility of the project coordinator to make the appropriate justification to SEAI (if BERs are B3 or C1) and all such justifications must be agreed in advance of works commencing. The minimum post works BER is C1, subject to the Part L requirements. Homes which do not achieve a minimum C1 and do not have a valid reason for not achieving B2 will be refused grant funding. Guidance on Part L is available on the SEAI web site. Costs for Single measures for homes can only be installed 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 works inspection of all domestic sites in advance of any contract award.

Public bodies must comply with public procurement. All other Beneficiaries receiving funding will need to adhere to procurement rules regarding a competitive tendering process. Where a competitive tendering process is not completed at application stage this needs to be highlighted. 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 process has been applied. This will include seeking evidence of three quotes, or evidence that a tender process has been complied with. SEAI requires to ensure that an open and transparent tender process has been engaged by the coordinator. 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.

1.6 Eligible Energy Upgrades

The following energy efficiency upgrades are eligible for funding as part of the Housing Strand 2020

Eligible works

- **Technological improvements** Technological improvements, such as heating upgrades, 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 heat pump technology and photovoltaic systems are eligible where included as part of a broader retrofit.
- Heat recovery and demand control ventilation solutions,
- Airtightness
- Ventilation provisions
- LEDs
- Energy upgrades to homes constructed prior to 1 January 2006,
- **Or for Heat pumps prior to 1 January 2011 in line with Better Energy Homes guidelines including HLI requirements**
- **PV Installs** All PV installs must be completed in line with SEAI's PV programme requirements. Details are available on SEAI web site below. www.seai.ie/grants/home-grants/solar-pv

Note:

1. Deep Retrofit (min A3) is not supported at the higher levels previously available. It is a requirement that all homes should meet BER requirements subject to Part L of the Building Regulations.
2. Where premises are leased or rented works must have the consent from the legal owners as part.

1.7 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 total cost of works is €X and expected grant funding is €Y (i.e. figures as set out in the technical workbook)

Expenses eligible for grant payment

- **Project coordination** for project management costs to be considered eligible for support, they must not exceed 7% of the total eligible grant costs and are funded at the grant percentage. Only **external** Project Management fees for the coordination, management and delivery of the project, are eligible.
- **Labour** Costs of employing an **external** labourer in order to implement the building upgrade.
- **Material** Materials, equipment, hardware, software and 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 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 maximum eligible cost for a pre and post BER is €250. To be eligible for support, the work must be completed on the home. SEAI will not support pre-works BER costs if the work is not carried out. Local Authority homes are not eligible for this support but a post-works BER must be published for these properties nonetheless. BER costs will only be funded at the end of the project when both pre- and post-BERs have been published. 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. The minimum BER for homes completed under this Housing Strand is B2 (or C1 with prior agreement) subject to Part L requirements. Where heat pumps are installed SEAI will make a €100 contribution towards the HLI assessment costs of these homes. Excluded from this HLI contribution are local authority and apartments or other domestic multi units installs.

Note: homes with a single recommended measure are specifically excluded.

1.8 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.
- **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 which have formerly 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 programme deadline will not be eligible for any or part grant support.
- **Energy upgrades to new buildings:** The Housing Strand 2020 aims at supporting retrofits for old building stock and facilities. Homes constructed after 1 January 2006 are not eligible for standard measures or after 1 January 2011 for heat pump installs. The Housing Strand does not support works carried out during construction.
- Concessions awarded around marketing costs which were allowed under Better Energy Finance previously will not be eligible.

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

1.9 Key Roles

Lead Applicant

It is the responsibility of the Lead Applicant to **distribute funds** and **organise access** for SEAI inspections. 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 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 apply as the Lead Applicant. We advise that contractors wishing to apply for the scheme should collaborate with another organisation, such as a Local Authority. **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 [Regulations and the Code of Practice for BER assessors](#). No BER assessor should complete more than 100 BER's (Pre and post together) under any Communities application. See link below for BER code of practice.

<https://www.seai.ie/publications/BER-Assessors-Code-of-Practice-New.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 Application Form. They should be grouped under a particular Beneficiary acting on their behalf. The application should include not more than **ten** Beneficiaries to ensure successful delivery of the project. Additional Beneficiaries will not be

permitted. 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, 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 Housing Strand team to have a PES appointed or introductions made.

There are a number of ways for a PES to be involved in a project, such as providing project management, financial contribution, provision of materials, installation of works, monitoring, energy audits or advice, or a combination of some or all of the above. Advice and other services are not sufficient, on their own, in 2020 this may form part of an overall package of supports. Predicted energy credits from the project can be used as leverage in negotiations with the energy suppliers to secure the best package of supports.

The Energy Savings achieved by a project are measured in Kilowatt hours (kWh). Each kWh is equivalent to 1-energy credit, which can be traded with an Energy Supplier for either monetary, project management or other supports. Energy Credits from projects under this strand are categorised as Residential.

Projects are encouraged to contact a number of different Energy Suppliers to negotiate the best deal for their energy credits. A project is not limited to partnering with their current energy provider or indeed just one energy supplier.

Where energy credits are being 'sold' to a PES, the application should state **clearly if and how** these funds are being used to support the project.

The PES is also responsible for uploading Domestic Energy Credits to SEAI's ECMS (Energy Credit Management System) once homes have been completed.

2 FINANCING and PROJECT DELIVERY SOLUTIONS

2.1 Minimum Financing Requirements

A beneficiary will be required to indicate that they have sufficient funds available to complete the project. 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.

2.2 Specific Financing Options

Under the Better Energy Finance pilot programme SEAI has worked with a number of finance providers and financial institutions to fund residential projects.

These include individual and groups of **Credit Unions** in developing models for low-cost 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 now offer specific **Energy Efficiency loans** for domestic retrofit including Green Mortgages. A number of other financial entities may also be willing to lend or invest funds in larger scale housing energy upgrade projects.

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

2.3 Financing Balance

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.

3 PROJECT COMPONENTS

3.1 Residential Projects

The Housing Strand will only fund residential housing upgrades to stock built **prior to 1 January 2006** or prior to 1 January 2011 for heat pump and solar PV technology as per SEAI's Better Energy Homes programme requirements.

Projects may not contain more than 100 domestic units for delivery under any single application. Projects of up to this size must demonstrate their ability to deliver on this scale before SEAI will entertain an evaluation of any application.

Rental Properties

Works can be carried out on rental properties, but the tenant must have the written **consent of the landlord**.

Local Authority Homes

Unoccupied Local Authority homes known as 'voids' may be granted aid, but the SEAI must be made aware that the projects contain voids at application stage. Such homes will be treated as non-energy poor homes for Energy Credits.

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 Domestic Technical Standards and Specification document <https://www.seai.ie/publications/Domestic-Technical-Standards-and-Specifications.pdf> (incorporating [SR54 for retrofit works](#)) and, with current building regulations.

All Contractors working on Housing Strand 2020 grant scheme 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 and works must be complete by a Contractor on SEAI's Solar PV installer register. 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, Quality Assurance Disciplinary Procedures (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 with the exception of Local Authority homes where only a post works BER is required. Evidence that the pre-works BERs have been completed should be submitted to SEAI before any interim payments can be made.
- b) Final post work BERs should be a B2 rating or above (Subject to Part L requirements). BERs of B3 and C1 may be acceptable with **prior approval** from SEAI and where in accordance with Part L. Homes with a post BER result lower than a C1 will **not be funded** as part the Housing Strand 2020.

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 may require that:

- the BER Assessment is re-published and
- remedial works are undertaken to achieve the specified BER rating

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.

- c) Where significant retrofits are proposed for Housing Association or Local Authority homes, a funding model should be submitted outlining how the tenant will contribute to the cost if applicable.
- d) In the case of insulation work, an optimal whole-element solution must be implemented. Partial solutions will not be eligible for grant support without prior agreement. 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. Where in rare circumstances a partial replacement is not required a deviation or scope change must be agreed in writing and in advance with the programme manager. Any install which is not a full install and has no written approval will be deemed incomplete and no part of the expenditure will be permitted as eligible.
- e) 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 or 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**.

- f) Energy credits for individual domestic works are based on a published table available on the SEAI web site. The values assigned to the project on completion shall be those listed on the published table on the date of your application to this scheme.

- g) 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. In addition, SEAI will at

evaluation stage review all prices against its pricing database (incorporating pricing data from across SEAI's domestic programmes) for reasonableness. 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.

Deep Retrofit Upgrade Packages

The Communities Energy Grant scheme will not provide increased funding for Deep Retrofit homes in 2020.

3.2 Project Milestones

Project milestones will be set by the applicant. Where the milestones are not in line with SEAI's delivery requirement the application will be rejected. Payments may be requested by the applicant once all projects listed under the milestone are delivered. SEAI will only make interim payments on fully completed homes.

SEAI require a staggered confirmation of work completion to assist our inspection and payment process. This is achieved by introducing 2 or more milestones into an application.

4 APPLICATION PROCESS

4.1 Before Applying

It is essential that the project is clearly mapped out before application. Please ensure that the choice of **Lead Applicant, Project Coordinator, PES and all participating organisations** have been finalised before application.

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 can proceed e.g. Financial Approval (Board, Management or Lending Institution).

The 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, incurred as a direct or indirect result of Brexit

Before applying, carefully read the **requirement guidelines** regarding requirements for residential projects then carefully read the checklist and ensure that you have all of the **necessary documentation ready**.

Only those applicants who have completed all parts of the Application Form (Form B is required where a PES is involved) and submitted a completed Technical Workbook will be evaluated. Applicants should ensure every project has sufficient technical data to support energy savings.

All works must be complete by the 15th of October 2020, with necessary paperwork submitted, so it is important that applicants consider carefully the ability to deliver by this deadline as extensions are **not** available.

Projects may request technical advice or other from the Housing Strand team prior to submitting an application. While every effort will be made to provide assistance prior to an application face to face meetings can only happen if an appropriate agenda is provided in advance.

4.2 How to Apply

Applications must be submitted via email to BEC@seai.ie.

Enter the following in the email subject bar: *Housing Strand 2020 Application: Name of your project*, with completed Application Form & PES Declaration Form B (see checklist under section 4.4)

Applications submitted as a hard copy will not be accepted. Applications requesting SEAI grant funding of greater than €220,000 must be received by the 31st January 2020 at 13.00. Applications above this amount received after the appointed date will not be evaluated and will not progress. Applications below this value may be submitted subject to budget being available. Where SEAI has exceeded the commitment level no further applications will be sent for evaluation.

4.3 Application Timeline

Projects that are submitted earlier will be considered more deliverable as there is a longer period for them to be completed. Please endeavour to submit as soon as possible. Evaluation time will depend on the volume of applications received at that time. The evaluation period for larger projects is expected to be between 8 and 10 weeks. Smaller projects will take a shorter time to evaluate.

Only completed applications will be evaluated. Where an incomplete application is submitted it will not be sent for evaluation. Once the application deadline passes or the budget figure is exceeded these applications will be deemed unsuccessful. SEAI takes no responsibility for incomplete applications submitted.

Please note the clock stops ticking when SEAI seek additional information therefore evaluations which are incomplete will 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 is the 15th of October 2020. 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.

4.4 Checklist

Checklist

- a) Completed application form under *Tab 1 Applicant Details and Delivery* on the Community Area Housing Efficiency Strand Application Form.
- b) Completed Technical workbook within the Application Form, reference *Tab 3 Project Summary, Tab 5 Domestic Energy Credits* and *Tab 6 U-Value and Efficiency*. 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. 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 coordinator's behalf.

The technical workbook is deemed to be part of the grant agreement, for the avoidance of doubt, the grant agreement will be capped at the value per measure applied for in the technical workbook.

Contractor details should be provided. Where possible at application stage coordinators should provide details of the BEH (Better Energy Homes) registration.

Sample plan A sample of a proposed management plan by the Project Coordinator.

Quality and Assurance plan for all projects.

- c) **PES Declaration** A completed Form B is required where a PES is involved.
- d) 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

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 looking for a **VAT inclusive grant** from SEAI, a **2020-dated** 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 the Housing Strand 2020 and cannot reclaim any VAT incurred on the project costs.

The exception to this is where the Lead Applicant is required to account for VAT on the value of goods/services provided to private homeowners in which case VAT is an eligible cost on the basis that although the applicant is entitled to VAT recovery, the homeowners are not. In this instance Homeowner invoices showing VAT charged to individuals must be supplied in order for this to be deemed payable

- c) **Declaration of financial resources** A declaration signed by all Project Beneficiaries must be provided stating 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.

5 GRANT PAYMENTS

5.1 Validating the Offer

If approved, a grant 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. Evaluator decisions on technical issues are final and 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.

5.2 During the Project

Project Milestones

Project milestones will be set by the applicant and approved by SEAI. Where the milestones are not in line with SEAI's delivery requirement or deemed unrealistic for the scale of the project, the application will be rejected. Payments may be requested by the project coordinators once all homes listed under the milestone are delivered.

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.

Inspections

SEAI will 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.

Advisory Inspection (Domestic Project)

Advisory inspections are intended as a training aid to ensure Project Co-ordinators 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 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.

Inspection Process

On completion of a project a domestic Inspection log is required to be submitted. Projects will be selected for inspection from these using a risk-based approach.

The Project Coordinator is responsible for quality insurance 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 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 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 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 70% must be supported by satisfactory inspection data. Payments in excess of 70% 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 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 Strand. Where requested to do so the Project Coordinator will be required to provide contact details for the homeowners' properties to enable SEAI to contact the homeowner or Beneficiary directly. Schedule F forms must be completed for each and every 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.

5.3 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.

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.

Final Payments are conditional upon satisfactory receipt by SEAI of the below by the **15th of October 2020** at the latest:

- a) 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 statement from the contractor/supplier confirming that the invoice has been paid and
 - 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) All relevant
- h) Financial documents

- i) 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).

- j) Domestic Energy Credits uploaded to ECMS (Energy Credit Management System) by PES

Confirmation of

- 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.
- o) Schedule F for every home must also be provided, signed by the homeowner or in the case of local authority or housing associations certification from the project lead.

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.

5.4 Important Notes

Interim payments

SEAI will make interim payments on projects unless 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 is not permitted. Payments for partially complete homes is also not permitted.

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 grant payment being reduced.](#)

Payment revocation

The SEAI will 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 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. 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

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 Community Housing Strand. 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.
- If deemed appropriate to host an event at project completion, then SEAI should be advised of same and afforded an opportunity to attend / participate as appropriate.
- At project conclusion, the project co-ordinator will 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.

Also, SEAI may seek to contact Beneficiaries to request their participation in surveys (telephone or questionnaire) to determine the impact and achievements of the Grant Scheme and may develop and publish case studies (protecting as appropriate all personal, confidential or commercially sensitive information/data);

Energy credits

If an energy supplier is a Project Partner, the Lead Applicant on the project may give them permission to count the energy savings achieved against their energy target. This permission may only be given before the project commences. The energy supplier should be identified on the Application Form and 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. SEAI will upload the credits associated with domestic Solar PV.

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.

Your Housing Strand grant offer states the agreed number of energy credits to be delivered by your project(s). A successful project **commits** to achieving the Energy Credits as set out in the evaluated Technical Workbook and included in the Grant Agreement. At the conclusion of your grant the energy credits will be uploaded on to the ECMS system. Where the number of 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.

6 THE HOUSING STRAND GRANT TEAM

SEAI's Housing Strand 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.

7 TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. The Communities Areas Housing Efficiency Strand 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:
 - a. the Letter of Offer and the Terms and Conditions including Schedules contained therein;
 - b. the Application Guidelines including these Terms and Conditions; and
 - c. The Application Form.
3. Applicant must ensure that the application is submitted by e-mail. 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 dated 2020 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 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.

18. 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 19 below).
19. 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.
20. 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 Areas Housing Efficiency Strand.
21. 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.
22. Inspection results may be appealed in accordance with provisions in 5.2
23. 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
24. In relation to any complaints or appeals under the Communities Areas Housing Efficiency Strand, 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.
25. 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.

26. 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.
27. 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..
28. 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.