



Solar PV Pilot Scheme Application Guide

1 About the scheme

A new government funded support scheme has been introduced to assist homeowners install microgeneration system in their home. This new scheme launched in July 2018 and provides a grant towards the purchase and installation of a solar PV system and/or battery energy storage system.

This will take the form of a once-off payment to a homeowner based on the installation of products which meet the requirements of the scheme. The eligible technologies will be solar PV systems (including metering etc.) and battery storage systems.

The scheme is expected to operate for 2 years with regular reviews expected every 6 months. Residential homes will be eligible for support once per technology.

Solar PV Pilot incentives are not retroactive. If equipment was purchased or installed prior to 31st July 2018, it is not eligible for support.

2 Grants available:

Grants are available to eligible applicants for undertaking the following works, in accordance with the requirements of the contractor Code of Practice as published on the SEAI website.

The maximum grant support levels are as follows:

Solar PV Systems	€700/kWp
Battery Storage	€1,000

2.1 Solar PV Systems

Solar photovoltaic systems (Solar PV Systems) are solar panels which generate electricity, such as silicon or thin film panels. This energy they generate can be used to power electrical devices in your home. It is important that the system is sized for self-consumption of the energy within the home as per the Code of Practice. Eligible systems are:

Solar PV Systems	up to 2kWp (about 6 to 8 panels)
Solar PV system with battery storage	up to 4kWp Battery to meet scheme requirements

2.2 Battery Energy Storage Systems.

Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) is a system for storage of energy, which would otherwise export to the grid, is eligible for a fixed grant when:

- Battery minimum storage of 2kWh
- Connected to minimum 2kWp system

All systems installed must comply with the requirements set out in the Code of Practice (<https://www.seai.ie/grants/home-grants/solar-pv/>) and works must be completed and signed off by a Solar PV Scheme Registered Installer.

The maximum grants levels are outlined above, where the level of expenditure is below the maximum grant value, the actual expenditure will be reimbursed.

Homeowners are required to complete a Building Energy Rating (BER) on their home after the supported works have been completed. No additional support is provided for the BER as this is included in the grant support for the technologies described above.

In the instance where a Contractor is completing works within their own home then only the cost of materials will be deemed qualifying expenditure.

Grants may only be claimed after the measures are fully completed and the contractor has been paid by or has entered into a financing agreement with the homeowner.

3 Access to Data

The applicant must be prepared to participate in research as may be commissioned by SEAI to establish the scheme's impacts and achievements. This involves the acquisition and recording of meter data for the solar PV system and electricity use in the home. This will be used to understand the scheme impact, homeowner interaction and energy use and for the development of case studies for wider dissemination (protecting as appropriate all confidential or commercially sensitive information / data).

Data collected during this pilot will be used for evaluation of the scheme by SEAI and its agents. Aggregated data may be made available to participating host sites and to third parties for analysis subject however no personal data of applicants will be included in this data and it will not affect your privacy rights.

4 Who is eligible for the programme?

Support is available to all homeowners of dwellings built and occupied before 2011. [Homes built from 2011 onwards are required to have been constructed to the 2008 Building Regulations.]

To be eligible to apply to the domestic solar PV Pilot scheme, the following criteria must be met:

- Applicants are required to complete an ESB Networks NC6 form for the application for a connection to the electricity distribution system for a micro-generator.
- Applications for payment can only be made after October 2018 and all applicants to the eligibility checker will be informed by email.

- Applicants must use registered contractors who are active on the Solar PV Pilot Scheme Registered Contractor List at the time of works.
- The electrical works must be completed by a Safe Electric Ireland electrician.
- The system is for newly fitted materials and new products and cannot have been incentivised previously in the particular home under any other grant programme.
- Qualifying expenditure includes materials and labour, except in the instance where a Contractor is completing works within their own home in which case only the cost of materials will be deemed qualifying expenditure.
- Post-works BER is completed.

5 Registered Contractors

All works must be completed by a registered contractor (Solar PV Pilot Scheme Registered Contractor List) available on SEAI website or on request from 01 808 2100. The contractor must be registered for Solar PV systems.

Contractors are registered by SEAI on the basis of a commitment to:

- Installing the works in accordance with the Technical Specification
- Adherence to a professional Code of Practice
- Demonstrated tax compliance and sufficiency of insurance cover
- Use of a standard contract with the homeowner for all jobs
- That they are competent to install and commission the works

SEAI requires contractors to carry the relevant insurance policies provided by the insurance sector, to specified minimum cover levels. SEAI does not however prescribe the specific Terms and Conditions of those insurance policies.

The contractors on the SEAI's registered list referred to above have not been authorised by the SEAI in accordance with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013. The Grantee acknowledges and agrees that SEAI is not the "client" for the purposes of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013 and the Grantee will assume all responsibilities of the "client" as detailed within the Safety Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013.

A contractor who appears on the SEAI "Solar PV Pilot Scheme Registered Contractor List" does not infer any warranty or endorsement of that contractor by SEAI. 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, material, system or installation in respect of which grant approval was given by SEAI.

6 Planning

The installation of solar panels on domestic properties is exempt from planning permission under the Planning and Development (Amendment) Regulations 2007, subject to certain conditions. These conditions are as follows:

- The size of any such panel together with any other such panel previously placed on or within the said curtilage, shall not exceed 12 sq. m or 50 per cent of the total roof area, whichever is the lesser;
- The distance between the plane of the wall or a pitched roof and the panel shall not exceed 15 cm;
- The distance between the plan of a flat roof and the panel shall not exceed 50 cm;
- The solar panels shall be a minimum of 50 cm from any edge of the wall or roof on which it is to be mounted;
- The height of a free standing solar array shall not exceed 2 metres at its highest point, above ground level;
- A free standing solar array shall not be placed on or forward of the front wall of the house;
- The erection of any free standing solar array shall not reduce the area of private open space to the rear or side of the house to less than 25 sq. m.

Where the proposed works do not comply with the foregoing, it will be necessary to contact your local planning department for specific guidance. In addition, depending on the exact classification (e.g. protected structure) or location of the property (e.g. architectural conservation area), further requirements may need to be considered. We recommend that you contact your local authority for guidance.

7 Application process

Before applying have the following information available to hand:

1. MPRN is the Meter Point Reference Number. This number appears on your electricity bill, and is 11 digits long. The address associated with the MPRN will be the contact address used by SEAI for all postal correspondence. You should ensure that the details registered with ESB networks for this MPRN are correct and accurate.
2. The year in which your house was built and occupied (must be prior to 2011).

7.1 Eligibility Check

Log onto <https://www.seai.ie/grants/home-grants/solar-pv/>

Select the Eligibility Checker

Complete the web form

Follow the steps to check your home's eligibility

Eligibility check will be completed and if successful go ahead and do the works.

7.2 Get the works done

When preparing to complete the works:

Agree a formal contract with your chosen Contractor - this is an explicit requirement for Contractors. It is there for the purpose of consumer protection and may help avoid disputes which might otherwise arise.

Organise for the works to be carried out and fully completed.

Pay the Contractor in full, or enter into a financing agreement, for measures completed and ensure the Contractor signs the Declaration of Works form. They will ensure:

- ESNB microgeneration NC6 application is completed and submitted – you will need a copy
- The electrical works are carried out by a Safe Electric Ireland electrician – you will be provided with a certificate demonstrating compliance and your contractor will submit the Completion Certificate No. 3 to Safe Electric Ireland.
- A BER Assessor undertake a BER assessment of your home (see www.seai.ie/energy-ratings/building-energy-rating-ber) – you will be provided with a certificate

7.3 Claim your grant – You will not be able to claim until after October 2018

Once your solar PV system has been installed and commissioned and the BER Assessment completed you are ready to claim the grant.

Your contractor will complete a **Declaration of Works Form** which describes the works completed and contains all the information you need to claim your grant on our website.

The following is needed to request payment of your grant:

Your contractor will upload this information to SEAI.

1. Declaration of Works
2. Test and Commissioning Certificate
3. Safe Electric (RECI) copy of Certificate3
4. Completed ESB Networks NC6 Form
5. Completion of post-works BER of the property
6. Invoice describing works completed
7. Photographs of the installation as described in the Declaration of Works Form

Following your contractor uploading the documents you will receive an email asking you to enter your bank details.

SEAI will verify your installation meets the scheme requirements through the information you submit online. If information is incomplete or missing, then your payment request may be rejected.

Once all criteria are met, payment will be made by electronic funds transfer (EFT) into the bank account you submit online. Please ensure that the account you provide is able to accept EFTs. If you are unsure, please check with your bank. Please note that currently we cannot process payments to Credit Union accounts.

Please note incomplete or missing forms will result in your grant claim being rejected. This in turn may result in a delay in your grant claim.

8 Homeowner Records

During the upgrade works you may receive various documents from your Contractor. It is very important that these documents are kept in a safe place and are available for either your BER Assessor or for an inspection by SEAI.

The information that you will receive may include some of the following:

- Test and Commissioning Certificate
- Safe Electric (RECI) copy of Certificate3
- Completed ESB Networks NC6 Form
- Completion of BER of the property
- Invoice describing works completed
- Photographs of the installation
- Datasheets for Solar PV Modules, Inverters, and Battery Energy Storage System
- Warranties for Solar PV Modules, Inverters, Mounting System
- O&M Manual for Homeowner

This information may also be useful if you wish to sell your house or if you encounter a problem with any of the work. SEAI recommends that you keep all this information together in a safe place for future reference.

9 Home Insurance

While verified appropriate insurance for works are a requirement for contractor registration it is recommended that homeowners advise their own home insurance companies of the planned works before they commence.

10 Contract for Works

It is a requirement of registration that all Contractors have a written contract with homeowners for all works. Homeowners are therefore required to comply with this requirement and ensure that there is a contract in place between the Homeowner and the Contractor, which will ensure appropriate levels of consumer protection.

We SEAI have made a so called model contract available on its website to help in this process. In instances where a Contractor refuses to comply with this requirement then homeowners are urged not to proceed with this contractor and to notify SEAI accordingly at (01) 808 2100.

11 Verification Inspections

All installations may be subject to inspections by SEAI to verify that they match the grant claim, meet the requirements of the scheme or for quality purposes. Properties may be selected by a random sampling process or may be selected for specific reasons and homeowners will be notified by SEAI prior to such inspections.

It is important to note that, under the Terms and Conditions of the grant (See Clause 14 and 15 in the Terms and Conditions below); applicants must grant access to their home for inspection within 14 days of initial request save in exceptional circumstances demonstrated to the satisfaction of the inspector and SEAI. Failure to grant access to the home for inspection may lead to grant refusal or grant repayment to SEAI.

Verification Inspections will precede payment of the grant and we will need to verify that the works are installed to the scheme requirements. SEAI also reserves the right to carry out post-payment inspections for verification purposes and support scheme development.

Technical inspections consider the workmanship and quality aspects and typically take place once installation is completed and possibly after the payment of the grant; they will be scheduled for an appropriate time thereafter, and will not delay payment.

The inspections programme is used to inform ongoing development and delivery of quality installations for the homeowner.

12 Terms and Conditions

The Solar PV Pilot (the “Scheme”) is funded by SEAI through the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment. The funding for the Scheme is limited and all applications are subject to the following conditions:

1. The Application Guide, Application Form 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 Scheme after the Applicant’s submission of an application and these revised or supplemented Terms and Conditions (as published on the SEAI website) will apply to the application unless the Applicant chooses to withdraw its application or withdraw from the contract. The Applicant must monitor SEAI’s website in order to learn of any such changes to the Terms and Conditions.

Overall eligibility

2. It is a condition of the Scheme that the Solar PV system is installed in a home that is a private residence.
3. Any installation or expenditure incurred prior to the scheme opening will be deemed ineligible.
4. Applications will only be accepted on the SEAI website. Applications may be submitted by private individuals.
5. Only one Solar PV system will be supported at a property.
6. Any home which received SEAI support for a solar PV system under another scheme is not eligible for grant support under the Solar PV Pilot scheme (e.g Better Energy Communities, Deep Retrofit, Micro-generation Trial). The applicant vouches that the measures applied for have not already been supported by other government programmes.
7. The applicant must be the owner of an existing home built and occupied before 2011, located in Ireland.
8. The applicant must have a Building Energy Rating (BER) assessment of their home undertaken by a registered BER Assessor following completion of the upgrade works.
9. Any claim for grant payment must be made within 6 months of completion of the works as stated on the Safe Electric (RECI) Certificate 3.

Data, monitoring, research

10. The applicant must be prepared to participate in follow-up research 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 sensitive information / data).

11. The solar PV system, battery energy storage system and meter point data may be used by SEAI or its agents to assess the impact of micro-generation on the local electricity system and the development of future methods. SEAI may assess this data directly or share aggregated data with third parties for analysis purposes.

Payments

12. Claim for payment must be made through our website www.seai.ie along with all of the applicable support documents as outlined.
13. Payments are only made by electronic fund transfer into the bank account nominated on the Payment Request Form.

Site visit, inspections, verification

14. SEAI or its agents reserves the right to conduct visits to properties in receipt of a Solar PV grant to satisfy itself that the installation has been completed in line with these terms and conditions either prior to making a payment in respect of any claim or following a payment in respect of any claim. Failure to accommodate such visits will result in either complete revocation of the Grant or repayment of the Grant.
15. The householder must facilitate any reasonable request made by SEAI or its agents requiring the contractor to return to the house in order to make good any works deemed not to meet the standards of the Programme.

Contractor, installation, regulation

16. The applicant must engage a Contractor listed on the SEAI Registered Contractor list to carry out the supported measure. The Contractor must be active on the SEAI Registered Contractors list at the time of application and when works are being carried out.
17. Installations must meet all relevant regulations and meet the Code of Practice for the scheme, Solar PV Pilot.
18. All electrical work must be undertaken by a fully qualified and authorised electrician registered with Safe Electric Ireland.
19. Applicants must ensure that all electrical work complies with National Rules on Electrical Installation. A Safe Electric Ireland Certificate Number 3 will be required to evidence this compliance.
20. SEAI accepts no liability or responsibility, whether for breach of contract, negligence 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 or the qualification or performance of the Contractor in respect of which a Grant Offer has issued, or grant approval or payment was given 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 Scheme.

21. The applicant must obtain all necessary consents, permissions and statutory approvals and have authority to install the measures in his/her home

General

22. Full responsibility for the information presented in the application form and supporting documentation submitted rests with the applicant concerned. SEAI or their agents shall not accept any responsibility for errors or omissions contained in applications for grant aid or any required supporting documentation.
23. It is the responsibility of the Applicant to familiarise him/herself with the scheme Terms and Conditions, the specifications and any amendments thereof and with the consequences for breaches of the scheme.
24. SEAI has the right to revoke funds where there are issues with project delivery e.g. quality, safety, timelines, completion and incorrect products as per the Code of Practice.
25. In the event of any breach of the Scheme Terms and Conditions, the specifications and any amendments thereof by the Applicant, and where the Applicant has received payment pursuant to the Scheme, SEAI shall, amongst its remedies against the Applicant, be entitled to demand the complete repayment of and fully clawback the Grant. The Applicant agrees to comply with any such demand within one month of the date of the letter from SEAI containing such demand.
26. 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 Scheme.
27. Any false, fictitious or fraudulent statements or claims knowingly made on grant applications, or supporting documentation, submitted in respect of previous grant applications / claims or otherwise made to SEAI, its authorised officers, or Inspector, or any breach of these Terms and Conditions of the Scheme 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 Scheme, Clause 25 shall also apply.

Information, privacy

28. Any personal information which an Applicant volunteers to SEAI will be treated with the highest standards of security and confidentiality, strictly in accordance with the Data Protection Acts, 1988-2018, as amended or replaced from time to time, and pursuant to the General Data Protection Regulation (meaning Regulation (EU) 2016/679 and all applicable data protection legislation. Further information about how SEAI will use and hold your personal data and your personal data right are contained in the Solar PV Scheme Data Protection and Privacy Statement.
29. The Applicant acknowledges that SEAI is subject to the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act 2014 ("FOIA") and shall assist and co-operate with SEAI to enable SEAI to comply with its information disclosure obligations. SEAI undertakes to use its reasonable endeavours to hold confidential any information provided by the Applicant, subject to the SEAI's obligations under law, including the FOIA.
30. The Applicant understands that all of the data collected in the administration of the Scheme will be aggregated by SEAI as a means of analysing the overall Scheme effectiveness e.g. in terms of cumulative achievements, market trends, and/ or environmental impacts. The disclosure of this data will not involve the release of any personal data.
31. SEAI may contact you occasionally to gather your valuable opinion on micro-generation or related matters. We will seek your consent for participation in research surveys.