

Accelerating transformative research to
deliver Ireland's energy revolution

SEAI Energise Fellowship Programme 2025

SEAI National Energy Research, Development & Demonstration Funding Programme

Date April 2nd 2025

SEAI Presenters: Francesca Martini, Joanne Fitzgerald Robert Egan, Manasa Hegde, Louise O'Connor



Dr Francesca Martini

Funded Research Programme Manager, SEAI

Welcome and Introduction



Housekeeping

This event is being recorded



Attendees are muted with cameras off



Questions submitted by clicking Q&A bubble



Questions will be answered at the end of the webinar



A recording and slides will be distributed after the event



An FAQ will be created from all questions submitted and shared



Agenda

1. Introduction
2. Programme description & objectives
3. Who can avail of the programme?
4. Key timelines
5. SEAI-Based Fellowships
6. Dr. Robert Egan – SEAI-Based Fellow (TCD)
7. Academic Fellowships
8. Dr. Manasa Hegde – Academic Fellow (SETU)
9. Application process
10. Evaluation process
11. Submitting your application
12. Q&A with SEAI panel

**Send your questions
in the Q&A window at
any time during
the webinar !**

The Targets

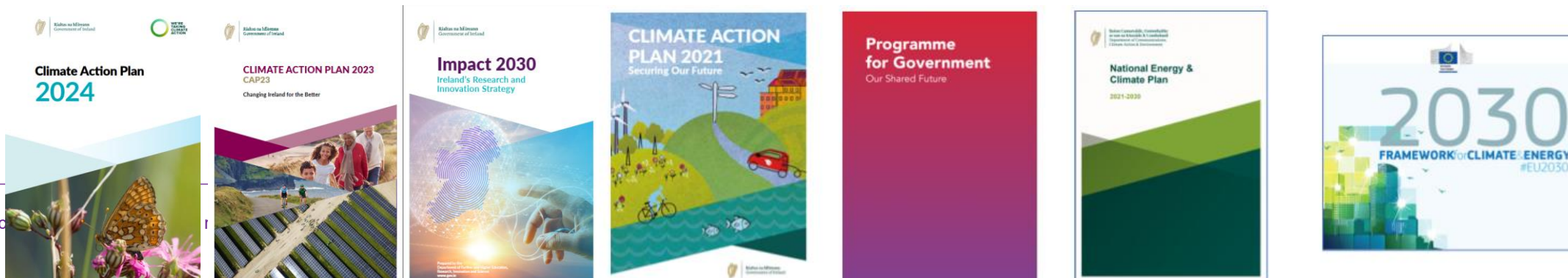
- Ireland's 2021 Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act commits **to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 51% by 2030 and to achieving economy-wide carbon neutrality by 2050.**

This requires immediate emissions reductions in every sector



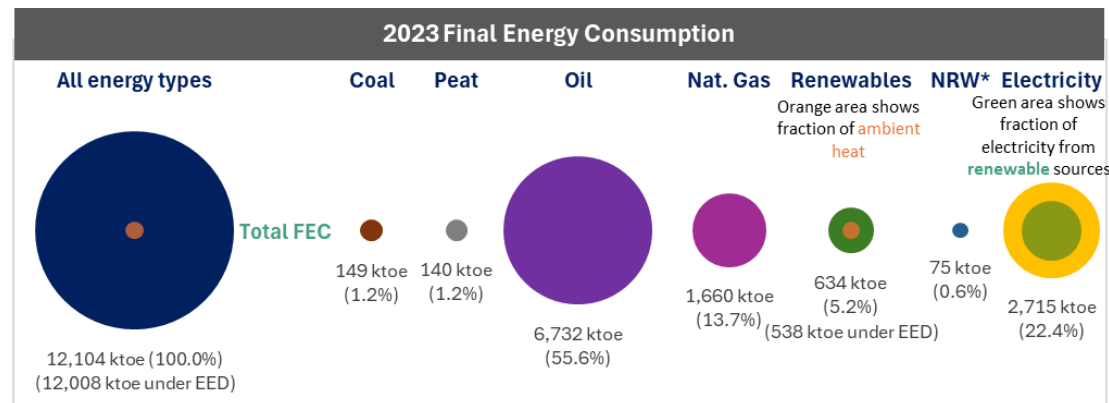
Number 32 of 2021

Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021

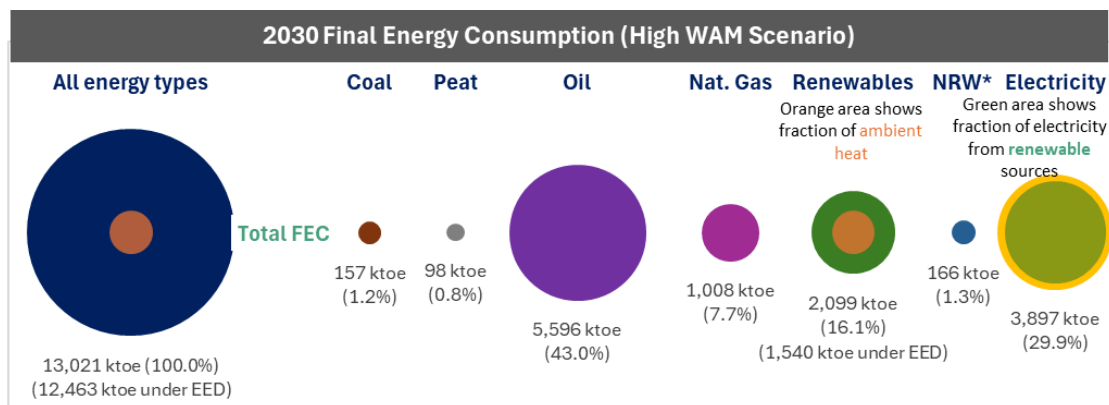


Energy Balance

Meeting the 2030 targets requires a fundamental transformation of Ireland's energy system across all sectors.



2023



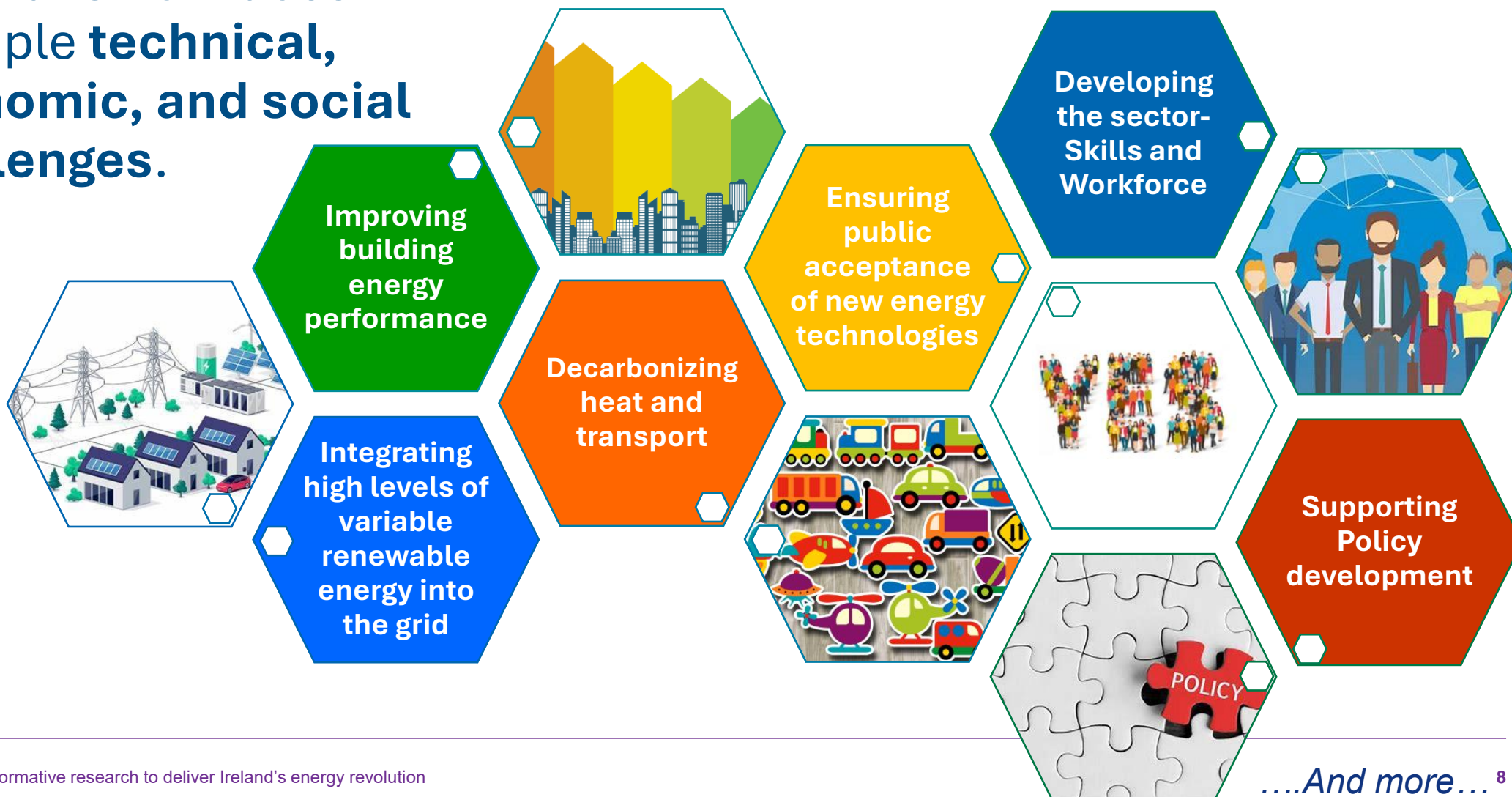
2030

The Role of SEAI

- We are at the heart of delivering Ireland's energy revolution
- We are driving the replacement of fossil fuel usage in all sectors and across society



This transition faces
multiple **technical,**
economic, and social
challenges.



The critical Role of Research



Research plays a vital role in identifying **optimal pathways** forward, developing and validating **new technologies**, addressing **implementation barriers**, understanding **social behaviors** and providing **evidence** to support effective **policy making**.

The Role of SEAI

- We are at the heart of delivering Ireland's energy revolution
- We are driving the replacement of fossil fuel usage in all sectors and across society
- We fund **energy research & Innovation**
- Provide **energy policy guidance & support**

What is new in 2025?

- The new 2025 **Energise Fellowship Programme** provides the opportunity to apply for **two categories of fellowship** awards:
 - **Academic Fellowships**
 - **SEAI-Based Fellowships**
- There will be **no Fellowships in the 2025 SEAI RD&D Funding Call**

For more info:

- <https://www.seai.ie/seai-research/research-funding/research-fellowship>
 - [Research, Development & Demonstration Fund | Research Funding | SEAI](#)
-

Dr. Joanne Fitzgerald

Programme Executive, SEAI

SEAI Energise Fellowship Programme Overview



SEAI Energise Fellowship Programme Objectives

Build

Build capacity in the sustainable energy sector

Enhance

Enhance national capabilities and capacities at the energy-policy interface

Bridge

Build capacity in bridging the gap between policy and research

Strengthen

Strengthen knowledge to support the clean energy transition

Career

Provide career development opportunities for participating fellows

Skills

Provide researchers considering a transition from academia to the private or public sector with relevant skills and experience

Research

Provide researchers with funding in their own name to advance academic career progression, while rounding out professional experience during the fellowship

Experience

Provide opportunity for experience in energy policy and strategic development and implementation

Who can avail of the programme?

Open to applicants who have support of **3rd level educational bodies:**

- 3rd Level body must be based in the Rep. Of Ireland.
- Applicant must have a PhD or equivalent experience

SEAI defines PhD equivalent as 4 years' full time research experience after primary degree

Funding available

- Applicants may request up to €300,000 (including overheads)
- Project duration 2 years



Eligible 3rd level educational bodies

Atlantic Technological University	Technological University Dublin
Dublin City University	Technological University Shannon
Dundalk Institute of Technology	Trinity College Dublin
Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology	University College Cork
Munster Technological University	University College Dublin
National University of Ireland, Maynooth	University of Galway
South East Technological University	University of Limerick

2025 Fellowship Call – Outline timelines

Key Dates	
Call Open	March 18 th 2025
Application Deadline	Wednesday May 14 th 2025, 12 noon
Stage 1: Eligibility	May 2025
Stage 2: Evaluation	June 2025
Stage 3: Interview (SEAI-Based only)	July 2025
Award Notification	July/August 2025

All call details are available at:

<https://www.seai.ie/grants/research-funding/research-fellowship/>

SEAI-Based Fellowships Vs Academic Fellowships

- Based in SEAI
- Applicants apply to one of five topics
- Funding provided for salary plus overheads only

- Based in 3rd level educational body
- Applicants can propose to develop their own research idea
- Some research costs allowed

SEAI-Based Fellowships



SEAI-Based Fellowship Overview

- Applicants submit a research proposal to one of five topics
- Applicants have the support of a 3rd level institution and an academic sponsor.
- After successful evaluation, funding awarded to 3rd level institution.
- Fellows are based in SEAI.
- Fellows research areas of Irish energy policy priority, while immersed in the diverse activities carried out by SEAI.
- Fellows develop key skills that may open up further opportunities at the energy research-policy interface.

Definition of Project Roles – SEAI-Based Fellowships



Fellowship
Applicant

Academic
Sponsor

Organisation
Sponsor

SEAI
Supervisor

Definition of Project Roles – SEAI-Based Fellowships



Fellowship Applicant:

The Fellowship Applicant will be responsible for the research activities, reporting, dissemination and other duties associated with the proposed fellowship in-line with SEAI policies.

Definition of Project Roles – SEAI-Based Fellowships



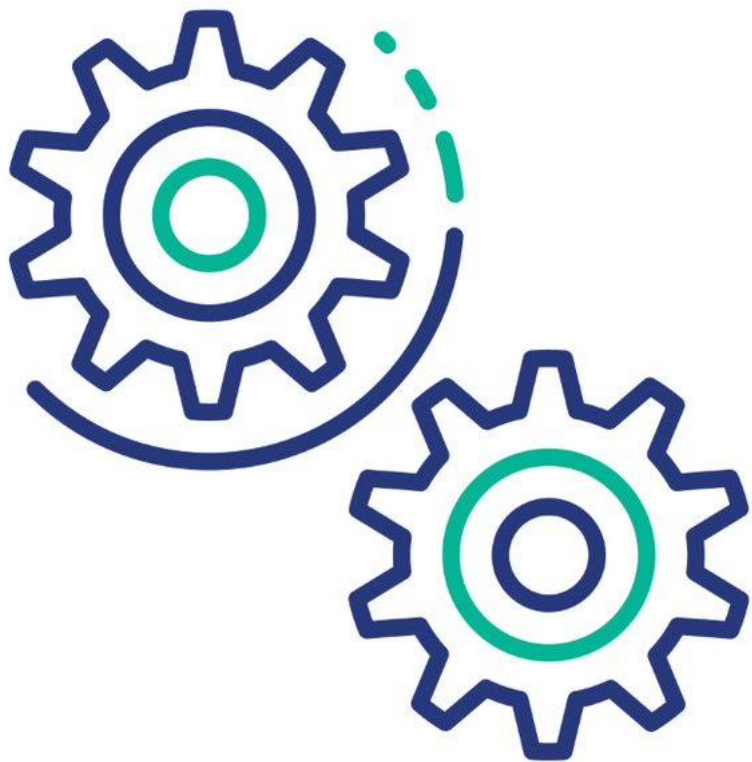
Academic Sponsor:

Based within the Sponsor Organisation

Takes **administrative responsibility** for the Fellow

Academic Sponsors **must be core-funded members of academic staff** with an employment contract that covers the entire duration of the fellowship.

Definition of Project Roles – SEAI-Based Fellowships



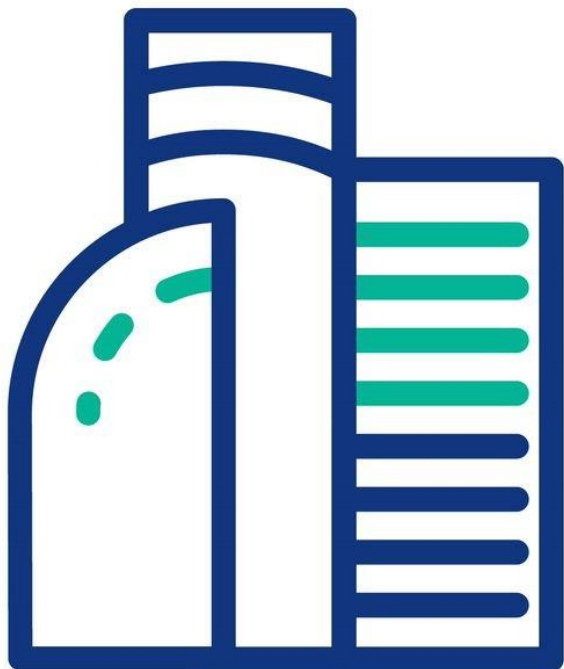
Fellowship Applicant

Academic Sponsor

Organisation Sponsor:

The confirmed 3rd Level Educational Body supporting the fellowship application.

Definition of Project Roles – SEAI-Based Fellowships



Fellowship Applicant

Academic Sponsor

Organisation Sponsor:

SEAI Supervisor:

Provides support and guidance for the duration of the Fellowship.

SEAI – Based Fellowship Topics

- 1 Applying an innovation to impact framework to achieve Ireland's clean energy transition
- 2 Measuring the incidence and distribution of energy programmes' costs and benefits
- 3 Evaluating energy programme outcomes using mixed and qualitative approaches
- 4 Behavioural science approaches to understanding and changing energy-related behaviours
- 5 Investigating the opportunity to future proof households from fossil fuel price fluctuations (with a focus on low income and vulnerable households) through utilisation of storage devices and other technologies

5 Topics

Fellows located in
Research & Policy
Insights Directorate,
SEAI

Full fellowship topic details
available in the Call Document

SEAI-Based Fellowship topic-related questions will be accepted until April 23rd 2025 and answers will be published in an FAQ document.
Email into energyresearch@seai.ie

SEAI Fellowships – Important information

- Fellows shall comply with all relevant SEAI workplace policies.
- Fellows will be provided with an appropriate workspace and the necessary IT equipment to fulfil their duties.
- SEAI is operating a hybrid working model and it is expected that fellows would be in the office at least two days per week in 2025, however this is subject to change.
- Fellowships will be 2 years' duration with longer considered in exceptional circumstances if justified.
- Successful applicants will commence fellowships in Q3.

SEAI- Based Fellowship Programme: My Experience

Dr Robert Egan

Research Fellow – SEAI Behavioural Economics Unit

Centre for Transport Research, Trinity College Dublin



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

The SEAI-Based Fellowship

1. Pursue original research in your own name
 2. Doing research for climate policy impact
 3. Diversifying skills and abilities with an organisation leading climate action in Ireland
 4. Learning how research is done in a policy-focused context outside of academia
-

Academic Fellowships



Academic Fellowship overview

- Applicants submit a research proposal based on their own research idea
- Applicants have the support of a 3rd level institution and an academic mentor.
- After successful evaluation, funding awarded in applicants name to 3rd level institution.
- Fellows are based within their third level institution.
- Opportunity to develop your own research idea/area

Definition of Project Roles – Academic Fellowships



Fellowship
Applicant

Academic
Mentor

Organisation
Sponsor

Definition of Project Roles – Academic Fellowships



Academic Mentor:

Based within the Sponsor Organisation and will take **administrative and mentoring responsibility** for the Fellow if the applicant is successful.

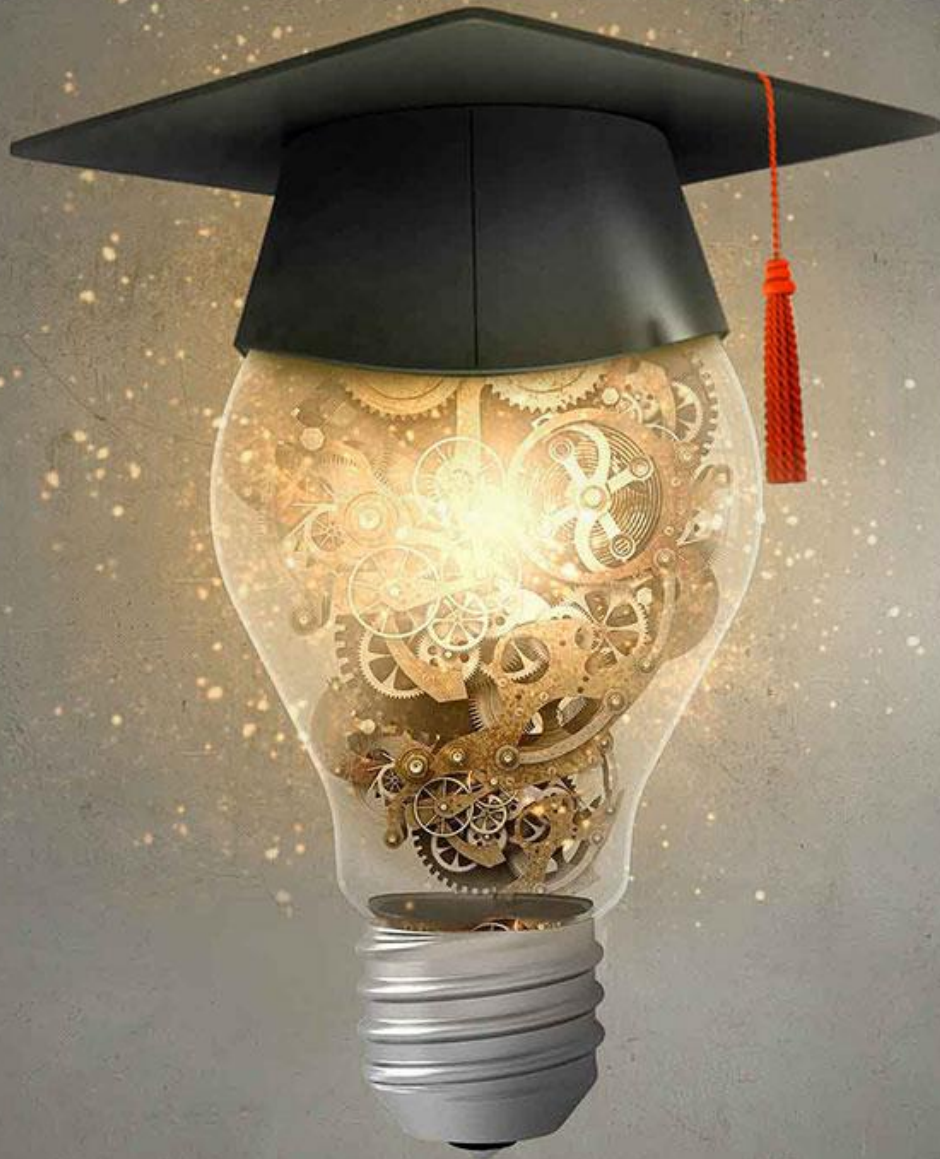
Academic Mentors **must be core-funded members of academic staff** with an employment contract that covers the entire duration of the fellowship.

Academic Fellowships – Important information

- Opportunity to develop your own research idea/area
- Research proposal **must align with the SEAI remit** and this should be highlighted in the application.
- Fellows will be based in their sponsor third level educational body
- Fellowships will be 2 years' duration with longer considered in exceptional circumstances if justified.
- Successful applicants will commence fellowships in Q3.
- Up to €300,000 in funding available
- Some research costs can be requested. Refer to the RDD Budget policy

Programme Documents

- [SEAI Energise Fellowship Programme 2025 Call Document](#)
- [SEAI Energise Fellowship Programme Application form 2025](#)
- [SEAI RDD Budget Policy](#)



A Short Reflection on the Impact of My Fellowship

SEAI RDD Academic Fellowship

Dr Manasa Hegde
Postdoctoral Researcher, SETU Carlow



About Me: Research & Academic Path



Bachelor's Degree in Electronics

Completed a Bachelor's in Electronics and Communication.



Master's in Nanotechnology

Pursued a Master's in Nanotechnology.



PhD in Materials Engineering

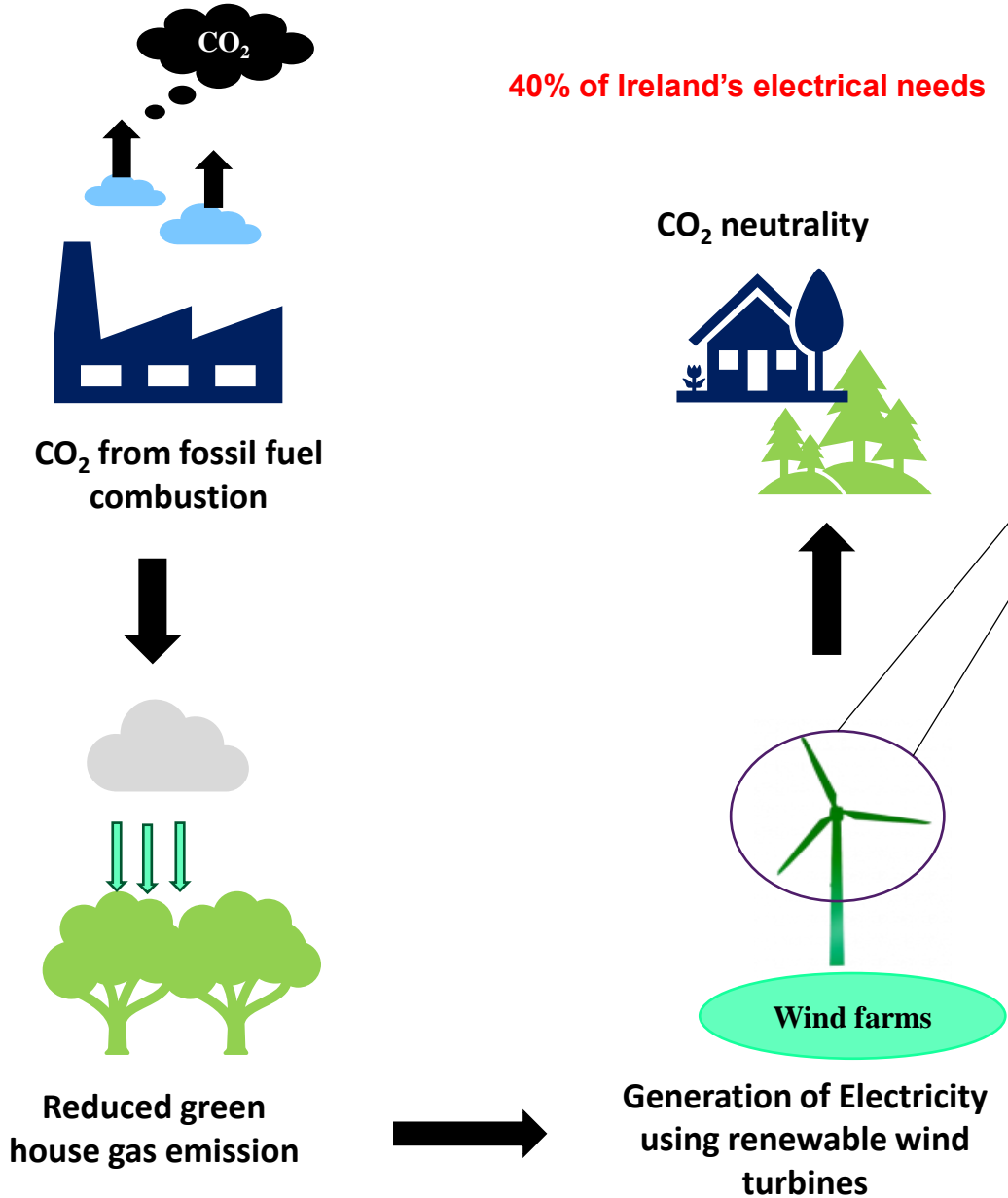
Completed a PhD in Materials Engineering in Ireland, funded by the Irish Research Council.



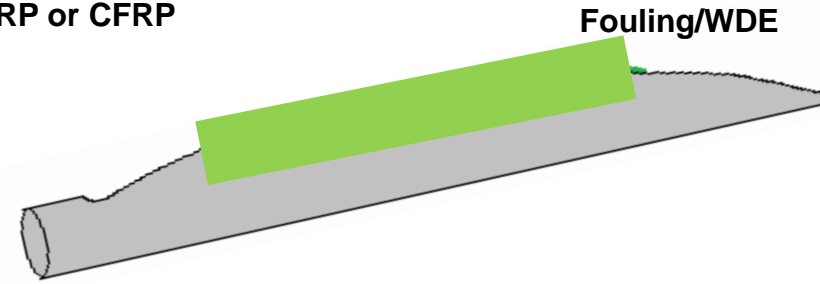
Postdoctoral Researcher Role

Currently a postdoctoral researcher funded by SEAI RDD, working on innovative solutions in specific project or research area.

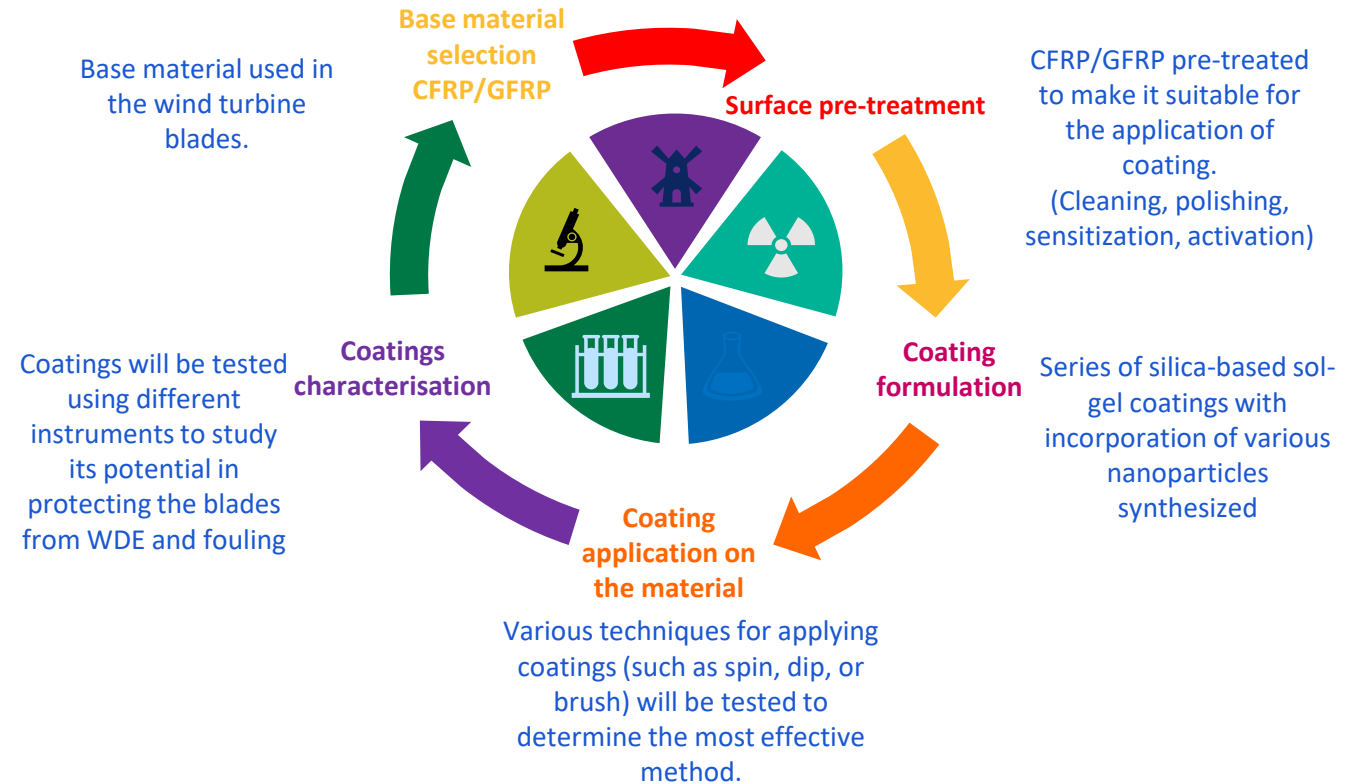
Research Focus



Blades mainly made from GFRP or CFRP



Proposed Study



My Motivation: Why This Fellowship Matterred



**Career Advancement
in Energy Research**



**Essential Research
Funding**



**Support for
Innovative Projects**

**PROJECT
SUCCESS**



**Networking
Opportunities**



**Collaboration
and Mentorship**

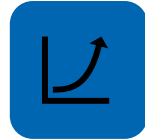


**Alignment with
Research Interests**

My Fellowship Experience: Growth, Learning & Progress



Skills Gained in Research



Professional Growth Through Conferences



Visibility in the Energy Community



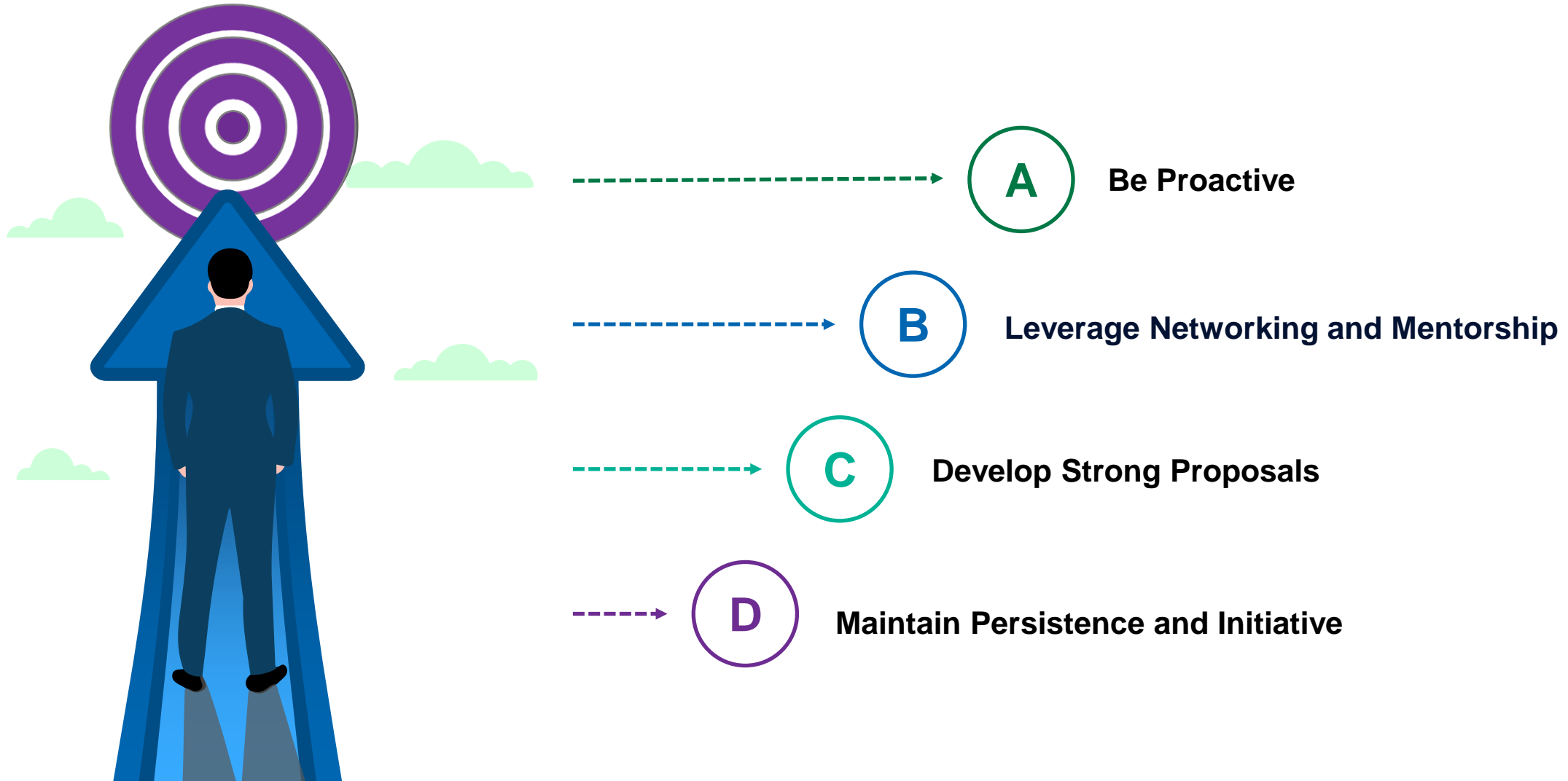
Personal Development and Confidence

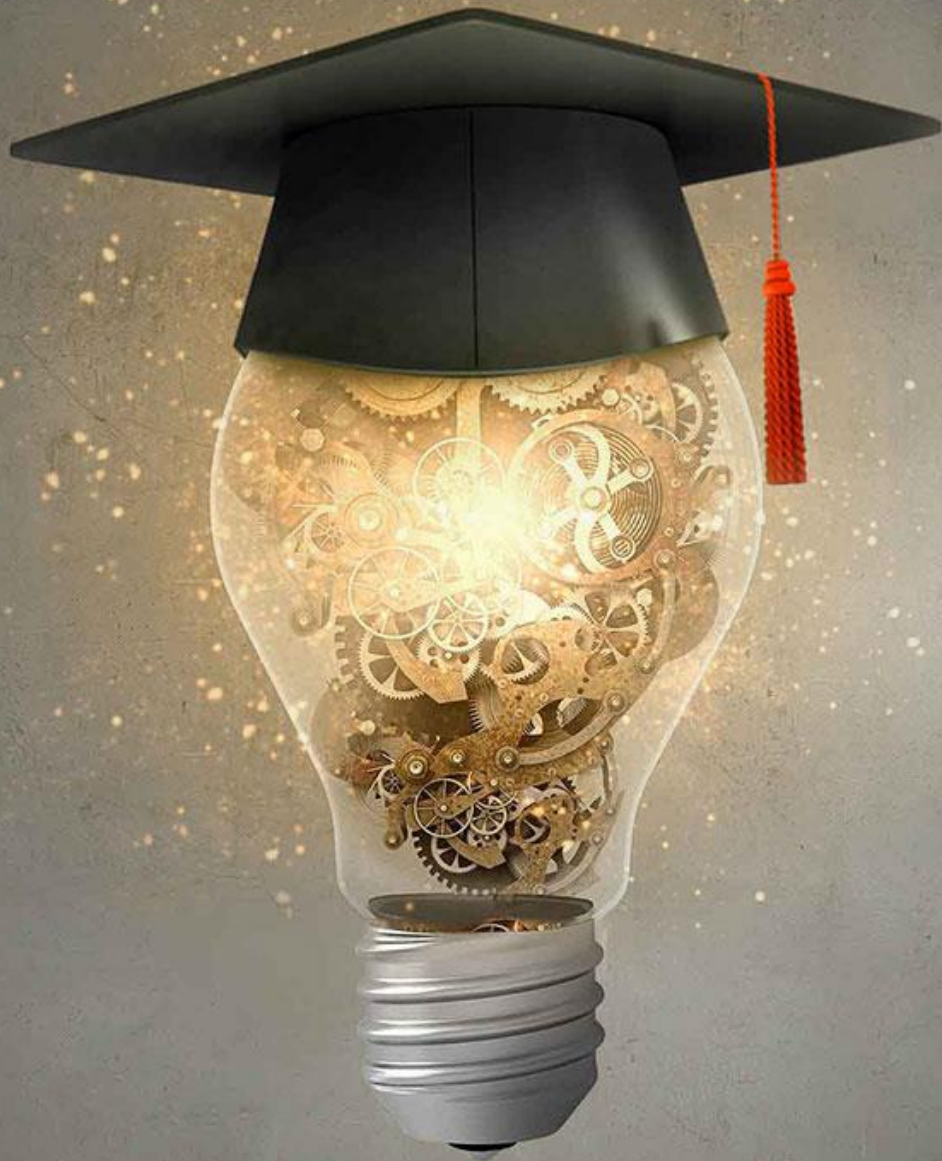


Foundation for Future Opportunities



Your Path to Success: Advice for Fellowship Applicants

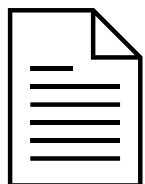




THANK YOU

The application form – what's needed?

Call Doc
Guidance



Application
Form



1

- Fellowship Suitability

2

- Excellence and Innovation

3

- Relevance and Impact

4

- Work Plan

5

- Budget

6

- Letters of support

Application Form – Section 6

Budget SEAI-Based Fellowships

6.1 SEAI-Based Fellowship (salary only)

Applicant salary & Justification

IUA Salary Level	
Total Staff Costs	
Overheads (25% of staff costs)	
Total requested cost (must not exceed €300k)	
Justification for the level of this position	

Applicants should outline relevant experience within the Application Form (Section 2).

Applicants should apply for the appropriate point on the IUA scales, commensurate with experience.

Please refer to <https://www.iua.ie/for-researchers/researcher-salary-scales-career-framework/>

Application Form – Section 6 Budget Academic Fellowships

6.2 Academic Fellowship

6.2.1 Budget

Summary of the total budget requested

Project Cost Categories	Project Cost (€)
Staff Costs	
Equipment	
Materials	
Travel	
Direct Project Costs	
Overheads (25% of staff costs)	
Total requested cost (must not exceed €300k)	

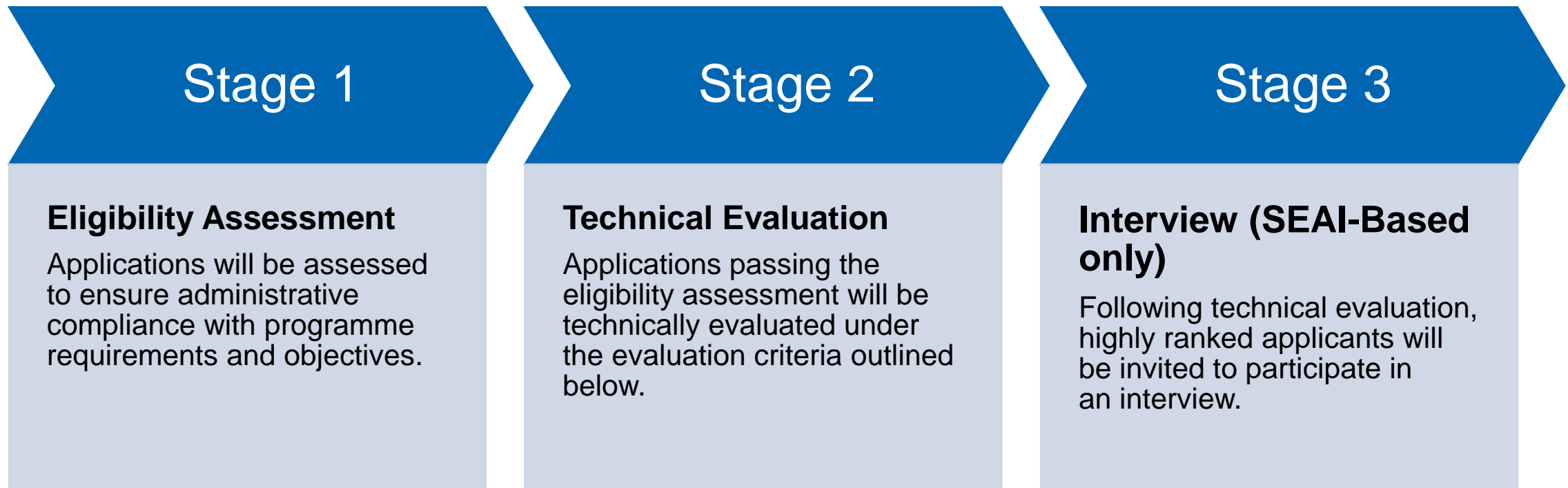
Applicants should outline relevant experience within the Application Form (Section 2).

Applicants should apply for the appropriate point on the IUA scales, commensurate with experience.

Please refer to <https://www.iua.ie/for-researchers/researcher-salary-scales-career-framework/>

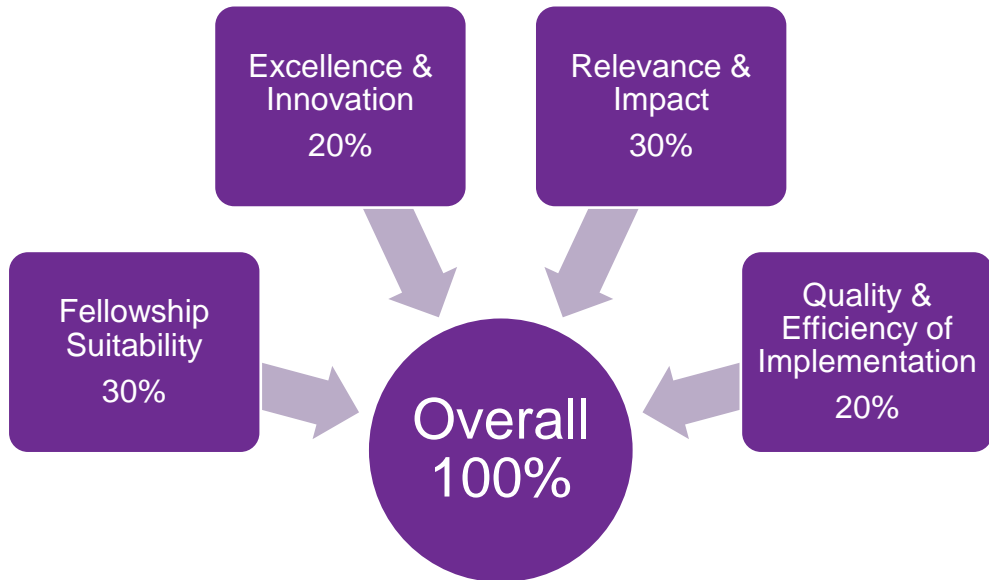
Please refer to the SEAI RDD Budget Policy when creating your budget.

Evaluation

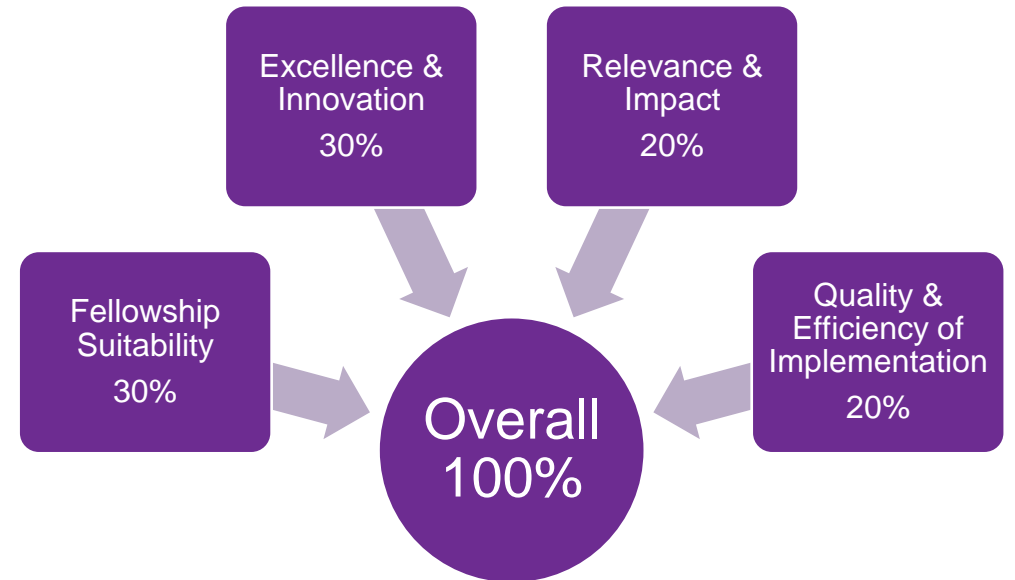


Evaluation Criteria

SEAI-Based



Academic



Evaluation Criteria continued

Fellowship Suitability

- Relevance of qualifications and experience
- Motivation to undertake fellowship
- Research excellence in career to date
- Scientific outputs appropriate to career stage
- Communications and public engagement
- Academic mentor expertise (Academic Fellowships)
- Overall suitability for proposed project

Excellence and Innovation

- Understanding the state of the art and the challenge to be addressed.
- Quality of the proposed approach
- Validity and reliability of the proposed approach
- Ambition related to state of the art in Ireland and beyond
- Relevance of the project objectives

Evaluation Criteria continued

Relevance and Impact

- Relevance to the needs of the Irish energy sector with particular reference to national policy such as it pertains to SEAI's remit
- Builds and/or maintains national capacity, capability and critical mass to carry out internationally leading research activities underpinning the energy sector
- Relevance of enterprise, scientific, policy and social impacts of project outputs

Quality and Efficiency of Implementation

- Coherence and effectiveness of the proposed fellowship project work plan
- Quality of project framework, clarity of deliverables and milestones with a credible breakdown of activities
- Strength of communication/dissemination and exploitation plans and approach to data management
- Effective mentoring and supervision arrangements (Academic Fellowships)
- Appropriate facilities and access to infrastructure and data (Academic Fellowships)

Louise O'Connor

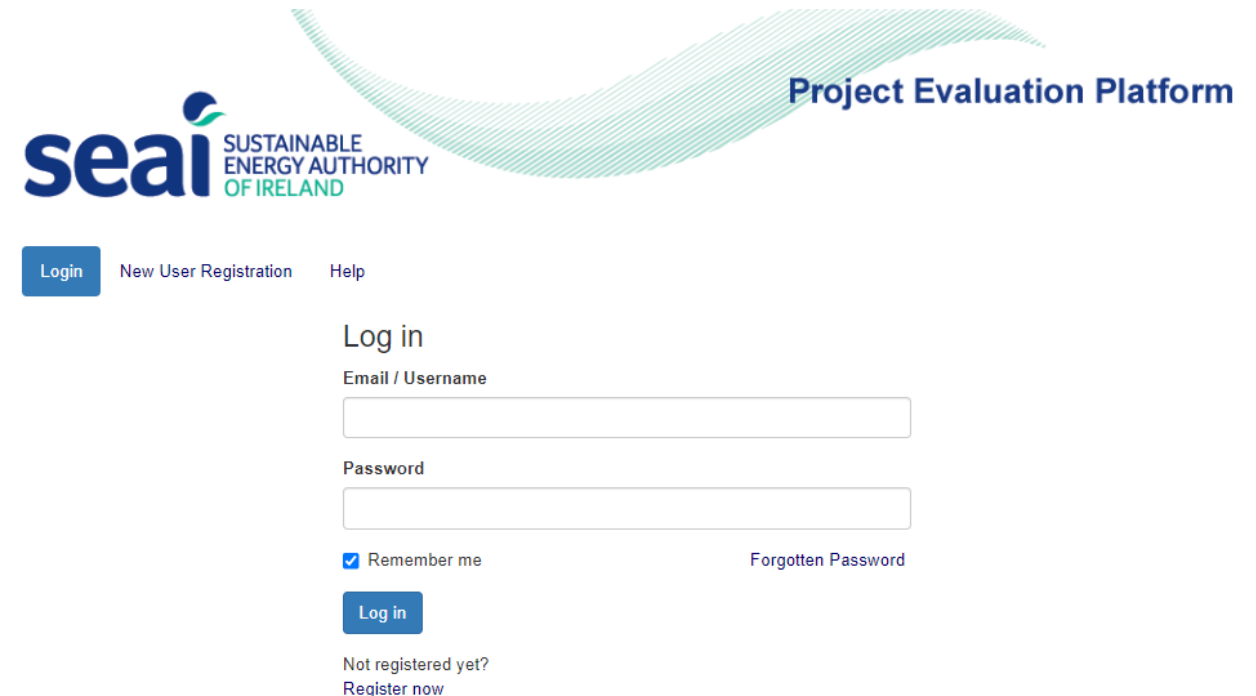
Programme Executive, SEAI

How to submit your application



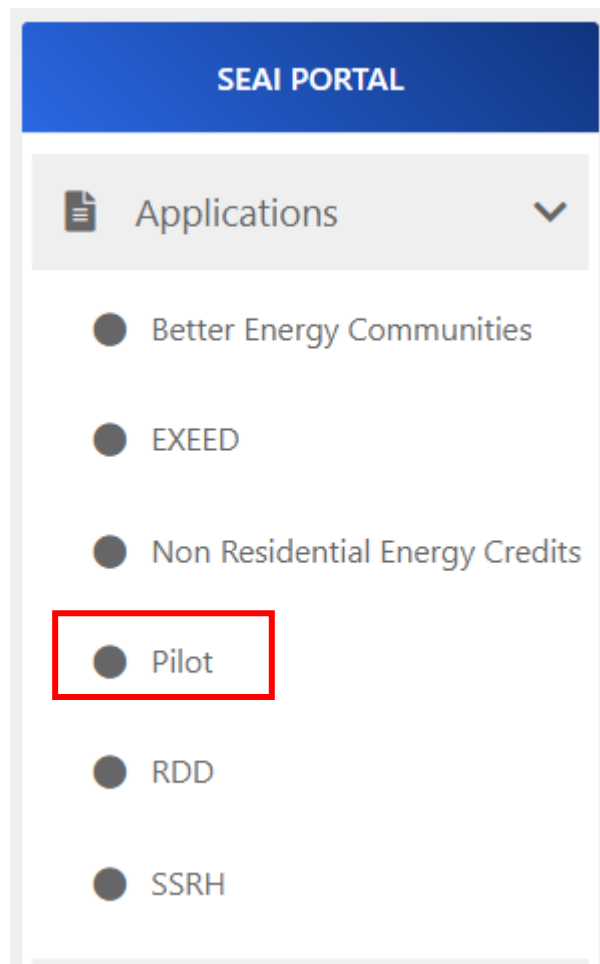
Submitting your application

- All applications should be submitted via SEAI's Project Evaluation Platform (PEP) <https://pepportal.seai.ie/> before the submission deadline
- Prepare your application submission offline. E.g. completed application form and supporting documentation.
- Register and login early to familiarise yourself with the portal.

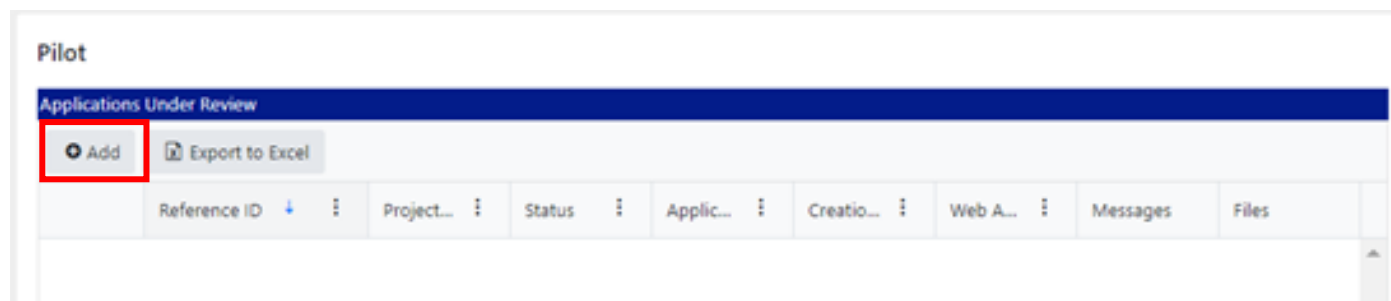


The screenshot shows the SEAI Project Evaluation Platform (PEP) login interface. At the top, the SEAI logo is on the left, and the text 'Project Evaluation Platform' is on the right, with a green wavy line graphic behind it. Below the logo, there are three links: 'Login' (highlighted with a blue background), 'New User Registration', and 'Help'. The main section is titled 'Log in' and contains two input fields: 'Email / Username' and 'Password'. Below the password field, there is a checked checkbox for 'Remember me' and a link for 'Forgotten Password'. A blue 'Log in' button is positioned below these options. At the bottom, there is a link for 'Not registered yet? Register now'.

Submitting your application



- Once you have registered and logged into the portal, Click Applications in the navigation side bar and select Pilot from the dropdown.
- To create an application select the add button highlighted below



Submitting your application

PEP Submission

- Section A – Applicant Details and project summary
- Under the "Project type" heading please select **RDD fellowship**
- Section B - Supporting Documentation. Please upload your complete Application Form, and all supporting documentation under the appropriate heading.
- **Warning:** Once you click submit you will NOT be able to edit your application.

A1. Applicant Details

Project Title *

Applicant Organisation Name *

Project Type *

Principal Business Activity *

Section B –

31. Supporting Documentation

Please note that where applications consists of more than one lead/Partner organisation, declarations/documentation files prior to uploading

Note: All Declarations must be for the total project costs. Total project costs are the project costs

Application Form *

Select files...

Allowed Extensions: .doc;.docx;.txt;.rtf;.pdf;.zip;.rar;.png;.jpg;.bmp;.jpeg;.xlsx;.xls;.xlsm

Academic Sponsor Letter of Support *

Select files...

Allowed Extensions: .doc;.docx;.txt;.rtf;.pdf;.zip;.rar;.png;.jpg;.bmp;.jpeg;.xlsx;.xls;.xlsm

Organisation Sponsor Letter of Support *

Select files...

Allowed Extensions: .doc;.docx;.txt;.rtf;.pdf;.zip;.rar;.png;.jpg;.bmp;.jpeg;.xlsx;.xls;.xlsm

Submitting your application

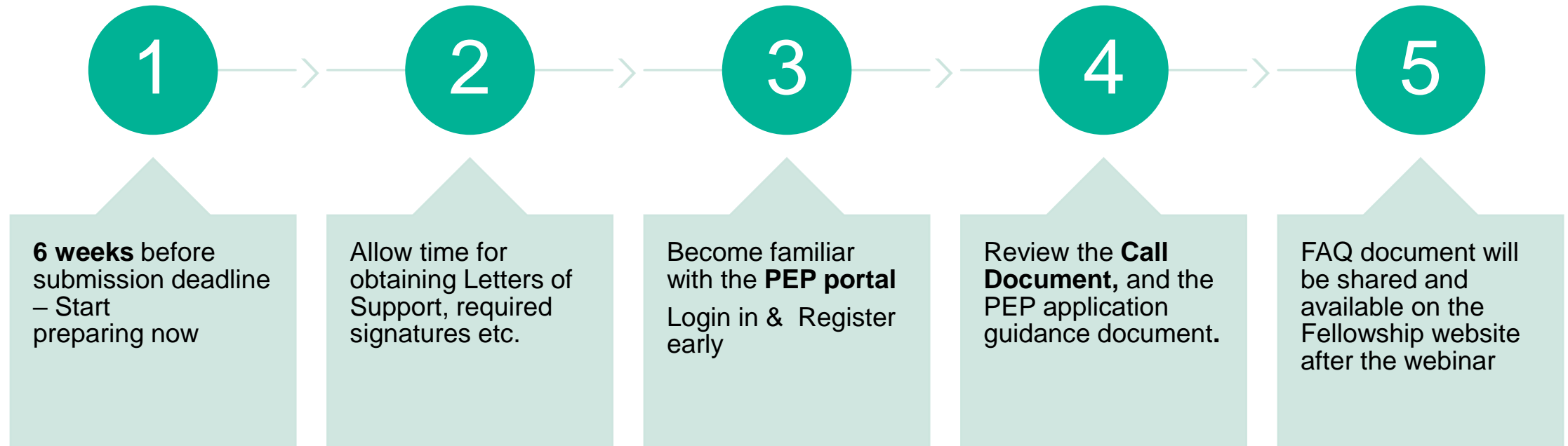
- Please refer to the PEP guidance document which will be available to download on our website.
- Only **fully complete** applications received **prior to the 12 noon application deadline** will be considered for evaluation.

Programme Documents

- [SEAI Energise Fellowship Programme 2025 Call Document](#)
- [SEAI Energise Fellowship Programme Application form 2025](#)
- [SEAI RDD Budget Policy](#)

<https://www.seai.ie/grants/research-funding/research-fellowship/>

Top tips



- Only fully complete applications received in advance of the 12 noon deadline, on **Wednesday the 14th of May** will progress to evaluation
- If you have a query, please contact energyresearch@seai.ie

Q&A Session





THANK YOU



SEAI National Energy Research, Development
& Demonstration Funding Programme

e: energyresearch@seai.ie

w: <https://www.seai.ie/grants/research-funding/research-fellowship/>
