

Environmental, Social and Governance Policy

April 2024




Introduction

SEAI is Ireland's national sustainable energy authority. We work with householders, businesses, communities, and the Government to create a cleaner energy future.

Our remit is directly aligned to sustainable energy and providing necessary supports and guidance with a broad national emissions reduction impact. As a public sector body, we are also required to reduce emissions relating to our own buildings and operations and we embrace such challenges.

SEAI's purpose is reflected in its mission and vision statements and we aim "to be at the heart of Ireland's energy revolution, driving the reduction and replacement of fossil fuel usage" and "be a leading authority driving Ireland's sustainable energy transformation for the benefit of society." This is central to the attainment of our Environmental, Social and Governance ("ESG") framework.

Our Values underpin who we are, what we do and how we work. We are a knowledge-led organisation. We are trusted collaborators, innovators, funders, and educators.



We are passionate	We are courageous	We are innovative	We are trusted	We are experts	We are collaborative
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We are enthusiastic about our role in working towards a sustainable energy society.• We channel our passion and commitment into the way we operate to ensure that we will deliver for all of Irish society.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We understand the scale of Ireland's energy challenge and accept our role in meeting this challenge.• We understand that every one of us has a part to play in delivering the energy changes that Ireland needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We know that existing technologies and processes alone will not allow us to realise a fully sustainable energy society.• We are continually learning, seeking new solutions, and constantly adapting to meet the demands of our fast-changing environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We appreciate the trust placed in us by citizens, communities, business and Government, without it we could not deliver on our objectives.• We respect this trust and seek to maintain it by operating transparently, working with integrity, holding ourselves accountable and functioning independently.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We recognise the importance technical expertise plays in achieving a sustainable energy future.• We seek to further enhance this expertise within SEAI through research, critical thinking, consultation, listening, analysis and delivery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We will not succeed by operating in isolation.• We actively look to work with all those in Irish society; listening to ideas, acknowledging concerns, incorporating feedback and looking to build strong relationships to support every individual, community and business in Ireland to be a part of the sustainable energy revolution.

Our Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Statement, encapsulates our values and our culture. It states that:

'Throughout SEAI, we believe in being welcoming, diverse and inclusive in our workplace, and in the services that we deliver, where we are respectful and value different experiences and perspectives. We are committed to achieving this for the benefit of all who work with SEAI and for all whom we support through our services'.

We have a suite of policies and procedures that support the core principles of the ESG policy. We have systems and processes in place to comply with our legal environmental, social and governance obligations. But we go beyond legal compliance and aim to meet the highest standards of corporate governance and at the heart of how we engage and deliver is our people, strategy and customer experience processes.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out principles of ESG and the respective roles and responsibilities for delivering upon those principles.

Scope

The ESG Policy applies to ESG activities, involving the SEAI Board and Board Committee members, SEAI management and employees and agency staff.

ESG Pillars

Environmental Pillar

The environmental pillar of our ESG Policy refers to our impact on climate change and the natural environment. This includes carbon emissions, energy consumption, waste management practices, water and transport and efforts towards ensuring sustainability.

Social Pillar

The social aspect of ESG focuses on our relationships with our stakeholders – our employees, our customers, our communities, and our suppliers. It encompasses employee welfare and diversity policies as well as community engagement initiatives.

Governance Pillar

Governance is about how SEAI is managed and controlled. It includes transparency, ethical decision-making processes, integrity, and good governance by design.

ESG Principles

Environmental

1. We are steadfastly committed to the goal of climate action, reduction of fossil fuel usage and overall carbon emissions reduction.
2. We provide leadership in energy research and carbon reduction strategies.
3. We have expertise in sustainable energy, low carbon technologies and energy efficiency and we focus on managerial, technological, and behavioural improvements to achieve climate action targets.
4. We are committed to incorporating exemplary sustainable energy management practices into our activities to deliver continuous improvements, as we journey towards delivering our 2030 targets and net zero by 2050 or earlier.
5. We are committed to minimising the impact of our carbon footprint, in respect of our own activities, and in areas broader than energy, such as waste reduction and resource usage. We encourage an appreciation of biodiversity in carbon reduction strategies.
6. We influence our supply chain to adopt good environmental practices, incorporating green public procurement principles in our procurement procedures.
7. We are committed to implementing an ISO50001 Energy Management System to reduce and continually improve energy performance and report on our environmental impacts.

Social

8. We foster equality, diversity, and inclusion in our workplace, offering a safe and respectful working environment.
9. We provide maximum possible access and choice in the delivery of services.
10. We listen to customers and suppliers and other stakeholders and work hard to address their concerns.
11. We support projects in communities, businesses and public sector that come within the scope of our purpose.
12. We actively aim, through our work, to convey informed opinions to communities, schools, and citizens, bringing education and sharing knowledge to people we engage with and those who interact with our services.
13. We consider the interests of all stakeholders and promote a Just Transition for citizens in the decarbonisation journey.
14. We implement systems and processes to comply with our public sector duties under the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act, 2014 to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and protect the human rights of public sector staff and service users.

Governance

15. We adhere to the principles and standards applicable to Irish public sector organisations ensuring transparency, accountability, and effective management including compliance with the Code of Practice for Governance of State Bodies, 2016.
16. We work ethically and conduct our business in a fair, open, and transparent manner with respect for privacy rights.
17. We are accountable to the Government and Oireachtas through its structures and systems for stewardship and delivery.
18. We work openly and collaboratively with Government Departments, who provide funding for our activities and closely monitor our performance.
19. We are governed by an independent board that provides appropriate challenge and continuous oversight in the areas of performance and conformance.
20. We value integrity and have processes and procedures to act on concerns raised by others.
21. We expect our partners to have good governance by design in the services they deliver to us and for us.

Responsibilities

Board responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Board of SEAI

- to set the tone, culture and values of the organisation such that ESG underpins everything we do;
- to develop the organisation's Corporate Strategy and embed ESG in the Strategic direction of the organisation;
- to set objectives and targets that embrace the three core pillars of ESG and monitor performance;
- to ensure that appropriate policies are in place to support continuous improvements across the strands of ESG.

Senior management responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the executive and senior management teams collectively and individually:

- to be knowledgeable about the contents of the ESG policies;
- to provide leadership, live SEAI values and promote and resource ESG activities;
- to oversee and embed appropriate strategies and operational procedures to ensure that ESG Principles are reflected in ways of working;
- to ensure that an appropriate tone and culture is disseminated throughout the organisation reflective of ESG ambitions and policies;
- to ensure that policies as they relate to activities within each pillar of ESG are aligned and balanced;
- to increase awareness of ESG Principles
- to identify risks to the delivery of ESG actions and mitigate against the occurrence and impact of such risks;
- to ensure staff are afforded opportunities to get involved in ESG activities.

Employee responsibilities

Every employee has a responsibility:

- to familiarise themselves with the content of the ESG policies;
- to adhere to ESG Principles and live SEAI values;
- to be inclusive and respectful and to act with integrity;
- to build trust and to trust;
- to respect, and work towards protecting the environment;
- to implement policies and procedures as they relate to their area of work and promote high standards in ESG actions;

Relevant documentation

- SEAI Statement of Strategy 2022-2025
- SEAI Sustainability Policy Statement (2022)
- SEAI Energy Policy (2023)
- SEAI Climate Action Roadmap (2023)
- SEAI Equality Diversity and Inclusion Strategy Statement and Action Plan 2023-2025
- SEAI People Strategy 2023-2025
- Climate Action Plan 2023
- Relevant HR Policies & Procedures
- Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies, 2016
- SEAI Code of Conduct
- SEAI Anti-bribery and corruption policy
- SEAI Protected Disclosure Policy
- SEAI Data Protection Policy
- SEAI Risk Management Framework

Review and monitoring

This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis for effectiveness in its implementation. This will be done in line with changes in law and other developments. Any modifications will be communicated to all employees, as soon as is reasonably practicable, in consultation with SEAI management.

Compiled By Marion O'Brien

Reviewed By ELT Members, Head of HR and Head of Governance

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Date of Next Review

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