

EXEED: Excellence in Energy Efficient Design GRANT SCHEME GUIDELINES 2024

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|----------------|-------------|---|
| V1.0 | 28/01/2022 | First published |
| V2.0 | 04/01/2023 | Updated to reflect 2023 grant timelines |
| V2.1 | 11/01/2023 | Additional information regarding multiple grant applications included in Section 6.1 |
| V3.0 | 03/03/2023 | Updates to reflect scheme changes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in maximum support from €1m to €3m • Replacement of shadow price value for money test with simplified methodology • Increased emissions valuation of electrification projects |
| V3.1 | 03/01/2024 | Updated to reflect 2024 grant timelines. Minor grammatical errors corrected, broken links fixed, and minor information updates included. |
| V3.2 | 30/08/2024 | Updated to reflect changes to GBER (General Block Exemptions Regulation) and alignment with other SEAI schemes |

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1 High-level scheme overview

The Excellence in Energy Efficient Design (EXEED) grant scheme has two key aims:

1. to help support businesses and other organisations in adopting the EXEED Certified standardised approach to energy efficient design; and
2. to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, supporting the achievement of national climate change goals.

Grant funding of up to €3 million per project is available to support organisations with the additional costs of following the EXEED Certified approach in the design and implementation of an asset. Projects with a completion date of up to 1 October 2025 can be supported.

The EXEED Certified approach is applicable to organisations that are making an investment in an asset in any of the below scenarios:

1. Greenfield design – completely new design of an asset.
2. Brownfield design – new build or re-purpose of an existing asset.

Two stages of grant support are available:

- Stage 1 is for pre-investment professional services, supporting up to 50% of the additional costs incurred in following the EXEED process.
- Stage 2 is for up to 30% of the eligible costs and the additional professional services associated with implementation of the EXEED approach.

An additional 10% or 20% is available at each stage for medium or small-sized companies respectively. (See [Section 4](#) for more details.)

SEAI encourages early applications for Stage 1 and Stage 2. Figure 1 below gives an indication of typical lead times between submitting a Stage 1 grant application and commencing construction works on site. Note that any studies or works (as applicable) which are carried out prior to a Letter of Offer being issued by SEAI will not be grant-supported. It is not necessary to request or receive Stage 1 support in order to progress to Stage 2; however, the [EXEED studies](#) (completed in accordance with the EXEED standard) are a requirement for any Stage 2 application.

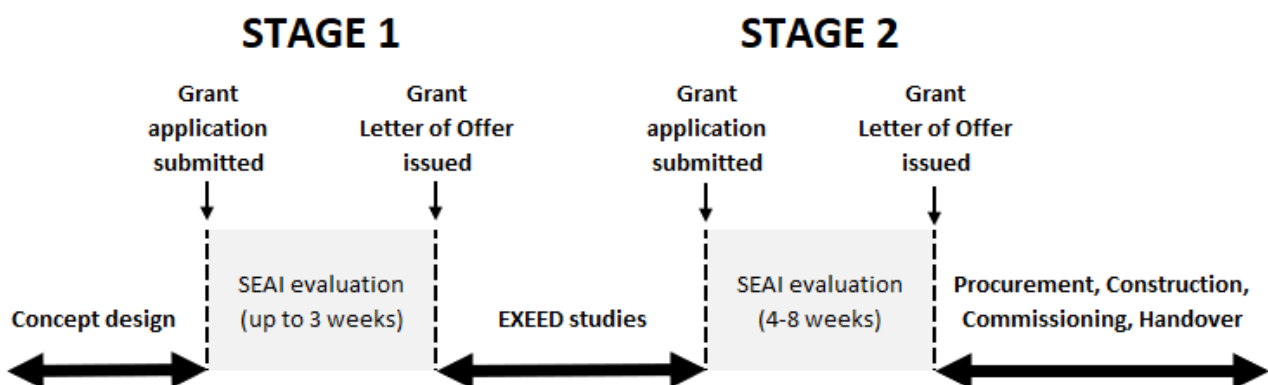


Figure 1 Typical lead-in times for grant offers at Stage 1 and Stage 2

1.1 Strategic context

The greatest opportunity to reduce lifecycle energy and carbon is at the early design stages of new investments. Up to 95% of the lifecycle cost is already committed at the end of the design process. The short time-bound period of design provides the greatest energy saving potential with the most attractive return on investment, see Figure 2 below. Through EXEED Certified, a standardised approach to energy efficient design is incorporated into an investment project, helping an organisation maximise on the opportunity to improve

energy performance and gain associated benefits, such as reduced operational costs, improved competitiveness, and the potential reputational boost from their demonstrated commitment to sustainability.

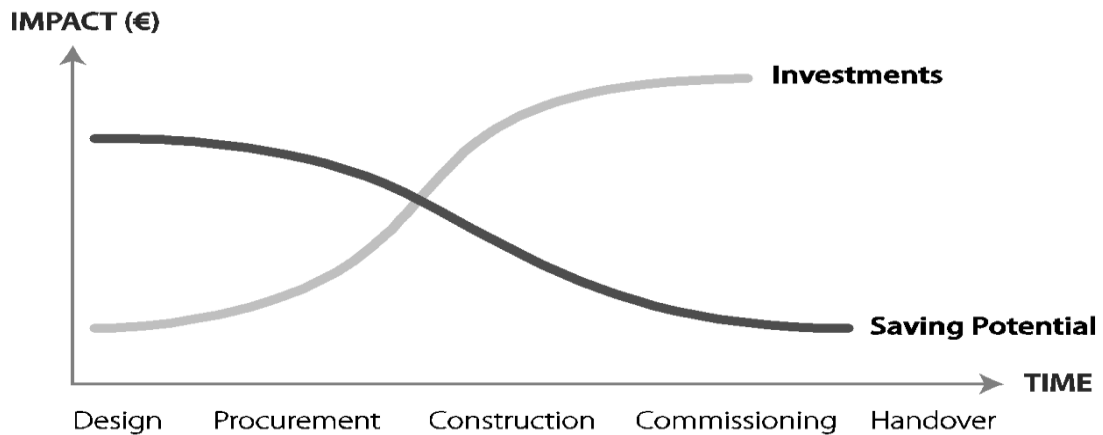


Figure 2 Relationship between capital investment and saving potential during the life of an asset.

1.2 EXEED certification

Based on I.S.399: 2014 *Energy efficient design management*, EXEED Certified is an asset certification programme, which incentivises organisations to address lifecycle energy consumption and related carbon emissions at the design stage of new and modified assets. Its effectiveness comes from ensuring:

- projects benefit from expertise in energy efficient design at the asset design stage to:
 - identify an asset's significant energy uses (SEUs),
 - systematically [challenge and analyse](#) those SEUs to identify the most effective energy improvement opportunities available, including ways to design out energy consumption, and
 - consider options for measuring and managing energy use post-implementation.
- investment decisions take into account the energy costs of the asset in operation; and
- consideration of energy efficiency at all stages of the project, including planning, design, procurement, construction, commissioning, and handover.

EXEED Certified offers three distinctions of certification¹:

- *EXEED Designed* certifies the asset as designed, constructed, commissioned and operational, and handed over to the owner/operator.
- *EXEED Verified* certifies the asset against measured and verified energy performance with quantified avoided energy consumption substantiated.
- *EXEED Managed* certifies the asset at full operational conditions. It incorporates the requirements of energy management and continual improvement of energy performance.

The EXEED Certified process entails a number of stages, specific key outputs, and clearly defined roles and responsibilities (see Table 1 below).

Note: Following the release of the new revision of the I.S.399:2021 standard in December 2021, SEAI are now reviewing alignment opportunities with the EXEED Standard and the new I.S.399 standard.

¹ Further information about the EXEED standard is available at: <https://www.seai.ie/business-and-public-sector/standards/exeed-certified-program/>

Table 1 Overview of the EXEED process

| Certification | Step | Key outputs |
|----------------|------|--|
| EXEED Designed | 1 | Planning Project Organisation Structure EED Owner and EED Expert appointed Project Execution Plan |
| | 2 | Design for Energy Performance Energy Balance Study of the baseline design Energy Savings Register Measurement & Verification Plan |
| | 3 | Design for Energy Management Energy Measurement Plan Updated Energy Saving Register |
| | 4 | Project Summary Project Summary Report (post-completion) |
| EXEED Verified | 5 | Measure and Verify Measurement & Verification Report Updated Energy Saving Register |
| EXEED Managed | 6 | Energy Management Asset within the scope and boundary of ISO 50001 Energy Management System Conduct Energy Review using Stage 2 documents |

While the Applicant’s top management retain responsibility for a project’s achievement of its energy efficient design objectives, the organisation will need to appoint an independent [Energy Efficient Design Expert](#) to lead on the development of a series of [EXEED studies](#) at the pre-investment stage and provide advice on the project implementation and certification journey. Details of energy auditors with experience in energy efficient design are available on SEAI’s Register of Energy Auditors². There is no requirement to appoint an Energy Efficient Design Expert included on this register.³

Grant-supported projects must commit to adopting the EXEED process and to progressing to formal certification of the asset to any of the three EXEED Certified distinctions. A portion of the Stage 2 grant funding (the lower of €30,000 or 10% of the grant amount) will be held on a retainer until the asset achieves certification and the energy savings are measured and verified. (See [Section 10](#) for more details.)

The retainer will be released upon achievement of either:

1. *EXEED Verified certification or EXEED Managed certification*
If an obligated party⁴ is supporting the same project in exchange for energy credits, it will not be necessary for them to submit a separate application under the Energy Efficiency Obligation Scheme ([EEOS](#)).
or
2. *EXEED Designed certification AND the approval of energy credits under [EEOS](#) for the same project*
This will require a separate EEOS application and Measurement and Verification (M&V) report by an obligated party.

² The EAS Register is available at the link below. Note that there is a column on the list which identifies Energy Efficient Design Experts (EEDs). Any EEDs who are interested in becoming included on the register will need to meet the criteria for energy auditors and – to be included as an EED – will need to complete the SEAI’s Energy Efficient Design Training course. <https://www.seai.ie/business-and-public-sector/energy-auditing/>. Contact EXEED@seai.ie for details of the next scheduled courses.

³ Note that SEAI does not provide grant support to large organisations for undertaking an energy audit to comply with Article 8 of the Energy Efficiency Directive, as this is a legal requirement.

⁴ Details of obligated parties are available at: <https://www.seai.ie/business-and-public-sector/business-grants-and-supports/energy-efficiency-obligation-scheme/obligated-parties/>

2 Who can apply?

The EXEED grant scheme is open to businesses and other organisations including public bodies.

There are a number of eligibility criteria for the EXEED grant scheme at Stage 1 and Stage 2. These criteria are designed to ensure grant funding is only made available to projects that:

- are committed to achieving EXEED certification.
- will be completed within the programme timelines.
- represent good value for money for the taxpayer.
- are within State aid rules.
- contribute to Ireland’s national climate policy goals, including the aims to phase out fossil fuels and to achieve net zero emissions by 2050.

Further details of each of these high-level eligibility criteria are set out in this section. The eligibility assessment process for Stage 1 and Stage 2 applications is described in Section 7: Grant evaluation process. Stage 1 applications which meet the eligibility criteria will be offered grant support. Stage 2 applications which meet the eligibility criteria will proceed to the evaluation process. A minimum evaluation score of 65 is required for applications to receive grant support.

*Table 2 Examples of eligible and ineligible projects**

| Examples of eligible projects | Examples of ineligible projects |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design of new commercial office building • Design of extension to existing manufacturing facility, including re-purpose of warehouse and optimisation of utilities • Design of new data centre • Major energy upgrade of any existing commercial, industrial, or public sector buildings/facilities, e.g., shopping centre, hotel, hospital, sports arena • Major multi-year phased energy upgrade of manufacturing facility • Major renovation and re-purposing of existing commercial or public sector buildings/facilities, e.g., new office building • Design of new manufacturing facility or production area, e.g., manufacturing area, cleanroom • Re-design for re-purpose of an existing manufacturing facility or commercial property • New design of bespoke manufacturing process or product line | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential projects • Projects requiring a one-off grant for one specific pre-determined opportunity, not consistent with the EXEED Certified process. • Commercial units embedded within building structures where energy supplies are not clearly segregated, identified, and measured. • Renewable energy options designed primarily for power export to the grid. • Repair of existing energy systems, fallen into dilapidation due to poor or no maintenance • Commissioning a CHP unit or anaerobic digestion unit which was already installed but not in use. • Projects with very short payback periods that would not require grant assistance to justify economically. • Projects with very long payback periods that would not justify economic investment purely on energy saving terms. • Assets which will use fossil fuels other than for permitted exceptions. • Projects seeking grant support for opportunities which do not represent progress towards net zero emissions. |

* This is a non-exhaustive list of examples, for illustration purposes only.

2.1 Commitment to EXEED certification

The EXEED grant scheme provides support to organisations which are working towards EXEED certification of an asset. Applicants must demonstrate that they are committed to achieving EXEED certification of their asset.

In addition, as part of the EXEED evaluation process, applications which are identified as not following the EXEED Certified process will be rejected. These include:

- Applications at Stage 1 and Stage 2 for assets which do not meet the EXEED Certified asset qualifications; and/or
- Stage 2 applications where the [EXEED studies](#) have not been completed in accordance with the standard.

It is not necessary for applicants to apply for or receive Stage 1 grant support in order to submit a Stage 2 application. Applicants may choose to complete the [EXEED studies](#) without grant support.

2.2 Compatibility with EXEED grant scheme timelines

Applications at Stage 1 or Stage 2 must relate to activities which will be completed within the grant scheme timelines set out in [Section 3.1](#). This is to allow grant scheme capital budget to be allocated and paid within an agreed timeframe.

2.3 Value for money

It is important that taxpayer money is used efficiently. A number of value factors will be considered as part of the determination of whether the project is eligible for support:

- Sufficient clarity, detail, and justification of proposed expenditure for SEAI assessment
- Sufficient energy saving potential (i.e., annual final energy consumption of at least 100,000 kWh)
- Appropriate return on investment (i.e., simple payback period is over 2 years and under 20 years) (Stage 2 only)

These factors help SEAI determine whether the applications will deliver reductions in energy and/or carbon emissions which are additional to what would have happened without the grant.

Projects which pass the initial eligibility checks will be subject to more specific value for money checks at the evaluation stage.

2.4 State aid compliance

The EXEED grant scheme has been notified under Regulation ((EU) No 2013/1315 of 23 June 2023)⁵ (General Block Exemption Regulation (GBER)). EXEED grant support is subject to the State aid rules.

EXEED funding will only be provided where an incentive effect is demonstrated by the beneficiary and where the grant application is submitted, and letter of offer issued before work on the EXEED project or activity starts.

EXEED grant scheme applicants must demonstrate that the grant support requested will result in one or more of the following:

- a material increase in the scope of the project due to the aid.
- a material increase in the total amount spent by the beneficiary on the project due to the aid.

⁵Available at:

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:02014R0651-20210801&qid=1672937359614&from=EN>

- a material increase in the speed of completion of the project concerned.

Some scenarios for consideration when determining whether an incentive effect exists:

- A. The savings from implementation of the project are such that initial investment costs are recouped within a short period of time i.e., the investment is good on its own merit without the need for grant funding. The Applicant should look at this payback in terms of their own internal Return on Investment strategy for capital projects.
- B. Current equipment is in such condition as would allow the business to continue without investment i.e., the project is primarily concerned with energy efficiency measures above and beyond current business practice.
- C. The opposite is true where equipment is reaching end of useful life and investment would be required anyway. In this case the incentive is to encourage implementation of more energy efficient measures, as opposed to replacing like with like.

The start of work on the project means the earlier of either the start of construction works relating to the investment or the first legally binding commitment to order services or equipment or any other commitment that makes the investment irreversible.

Projects are not eligible for maximum EXEED grant support in cases where other sources of public funding are being applied to the same energy-related opportunities. However, in these cases, depending on the level of other public funding being availed of, EXEED grant support can be provided that will bring the total State aid up to the maximum levels set out in [section 4.1](#).

EXEED Stage 2 grant funding will not be provided to support applicants with achieving compliance with legal requirements such as building regulations or other Union standards.

State aid funding⁶ may not be provided to:

- certain aid granted in the sector of processing and marketing of agricultural products; and/or
- a firm in difficulty as defined by Article 2(18) of the Block Exemption Regulation.

2.5 National climate policy goals

Ireland has adopted ambitious climate policy goals for the period 2021-2030 and onwards to 2050, including:

- a 7% year-on-year reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from 2021-2030 (which equates to a 51% reduction over the decade); and
- to achieve net zero emissions by 2050.

EXEED Stage 2 grant funding will support those projects which will help make progress towards these ambitious national goals. In practice this means that opportunities which improve an asset's energy performance, through energy efficiency enhancements and the provision of renewable technologies, will need to be on a path towards achieving net zero emissions by 2050. Fossil fuel supports will be ineligible in most cases, and energy efficiency improvements will need to be long-term solutions, meeting or exceeding current building regulations.

Projects with limited scope that focus on isolated pre-determined retrofit changes that are not consistent with the EXEED Certified process are not eligible for grant support. Proposed opportunities which would require future replacement to become more efficient will not be eligible for support.

By following the EXEED Certified methodology for energy efficient design of an asset, organisations can help ensure their new and modified assets are future proof in terms of energy performance. This process requires organisations to challenge their design in relation to each significant energy use, at each layer of the energy

⁶ Full details of GBER are available at:

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:02014R0651-20210801&qid=1672937359614&from=EN>

Venn diagram⁷, beginning with the energy service and including process, equipment, control, operations and maintenance, and management.

Capital grant support will not be available where this process has not been followed.

For example, regarding lighting upgrades in an existing asset, only those opportunities which entail a full system re-design will be eligible for grant support; the replacement of lamps only is not eligible. For further guidance on what a lighting re-design involves please see section 2.1 of the [SEAI Energy Efficient LED Lighting Guide](#). Redesigning a lighting system aims to improve the lighting configuration within a building and is considered as a blank canvas approach to lighting. Redesigning not only replaces lamps with more efficient ones but offers the possibility of reducing the number of fittings needed while enhancing the overall lighting levels. In addition to tackling energy efficiency, lighting redesign can address the suitability of light levels, glare, uniformity and lighting specifications.

In general, lighting redesign involves the:

- Assessment and calculation of lighting requirements.
- Considered selection of the right luminaires and lighting controls to achieve the required levels during the time that they are needed; and
- Relocating, removing or adding luminaires to ensure that light is provided for, and positioned towards, the required areas.

2.5.1 Fossil fuels

As part of Ireland’s commitment to climate action and achieving net zero emissions by 2050, and in compliance with State Aid rules, installation of energy equipment fired by fossil fuels, including natural gas, are not eligible for support via EXEED.

Equipment downstream of existing energy equipment fired by fossil fuels, including natural gas, which improves energy efficiency or environmental performance, may be eligible for support via EXEED

2.5.2 Building standards and eligible support

Applications are ineligible for EXEED grant support towards the costs of achieving compliance with building regulations. Further clarification is set out in Table 3 below.

Table 3 Grant support eligibility in relation to building standards

| Asset type | Project type | Eligibility details |
|-------------------|--|--|
| New build | New build | Project is not eligible for grant support towards achieving compliance with building regulations. However, opportunities which improve upon building regulations may be eligible for support. The eligible costs and energy and carbon savings associated with that support are those which are above and beyond achieving compliance with building regulations. |
| Existing building | Major renovation ⁸ | |
| | Material alteration | |
| | Discretionary change (where none of the above applies) | Project will only be eligible for grant support for those opportunities which at least meet Part L of the 2021 building regulations (where applicable). The eligible costs and energy and carbon savings associated with that support are typically the difference between the existing and improved asset. |

⁷ The energy Venn diagram is available in I.S.399: 2021 Energy Efficient Design Management

⁸ The meaning from the building regulations applies here, i.e., “the renovation of a building where more than 25% of the surface of the building envelope undergoes renovation”.

2.5.3 Renewable Technologies support

Renewable technologies are eligible for EXEED capital grant support as part of a project which is undertaken in accordance with the EXEED Certified approach. The principle of energy efficiency first should be followed. Renewables opportunities are unlikely to receive support if energy efficiency is not already satisfactory or being improved as part of the same project.

3 Grant Scheme Timelines

3.1 Application dates

The programme is open for applications **up until 5pm on the 31/12/2024**.

The EXEED Certified Grant Scheme was approved for a three-year cycle following its re-launch in January 2021. This cycle finishes at the end of 2023, and following a review process the state-aid support has been extended for an additional 12 months.

- **The EXEED Certified Grant Scheme Programme will continue to remain open for applications from January 1st up until 5pm on the 31st of December 2024.**
- The EXEED programme can support projects submitted in 2024 with a **completion date up to 1st October 2025**.

Note that the 1 October 2025 completion date is not a scheme default. Project completion dates will be set based on the needs of each application. Shorter, smaller-scale projects will typically have a project implementation period of 6-9 months following letter of offer.

3.2 Evaluation timelines

Depending on project size and complexity, typical lead times for SEAI evaluation of EXEED grant applications, from the date of submission (including all required supporting documentation), are expected to be within the ranges below:

- Stage 1 applications: up to 3 weeks
- Stage 2 applications: 4-8 weeks (longer for projects with a grant request above €1,000,000)

Only complete applications, including all required supporting documentation, will be accepted, and processed by SEAI. Applications which are incomplete will be returned to the Applicant. Poor quality applications with inadequate, contradictory, or missing information will be rejected at the beginning of the evaluation process. These steps are designed to improve turnaround times for all applicants. Where an application is returned to an applicant, the Applicant may resubmit it with the additional information required; in which case the timelines indicated above will apply from the date the updated application is received.

SEAI encourages early applications for Stage 1 and Stage 2. Figure 3 below gives an indication of lead times between submitting a Stage 1 grant application and commencing work on site. Any studies or works which are carried out prior to the relevant Letter of Offer being issued by SEAI will not be grant-supported.

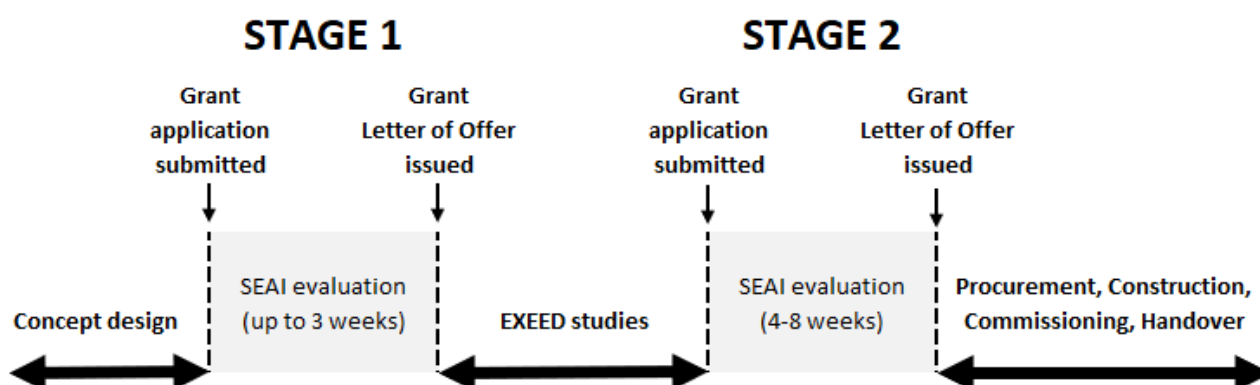


Figure 3 Typical lead-in times for grant offers at Stage 1 and Stage 2

It is not necessary to request or receive Stage 1 support in order to progress to Stage 2; however, the [EXEED studies](#) are a requirement for any Stage 2 application.

4 Grant funding available

4.1 Level of grant funding

The EXEED grant scheme will support the additional external professional services and additional capital required to implement and certify the EXEED asset. Support of up to €3,000,000 is available per project (including all support at Stage 1 and Stage 2).

The maximum grant intensity levels which may be offered are set out in Table 4 below. SEAI may at its own discretion offer lower levels of funding than the maximum grant intensities available. The level of support offered will be determined based on project description, SME status, the incentive effect that the grant creates for the beneficiary, and a value for money assessment. Further details are set out in Section 7 *Grant amount calculation*.

Table 4 – Maximum grant intensity levels, by grant scheme stage and by company size

| Expenditure Type | Maximum grant intensity level | | |
|---|-------------------------------|----------------|---------------|
| | Large company | Medium company | Small company |
| Pre-investment professional services | 50% | 60% | 70% |
| Investment Professional services <i>(Associated with implementation - included in stage 2 application if applicable)</i> | 30% | 40% | 50% |
| Incremental capital costs for energy performance measures <i>(Included in stage 2 application)</i> | 30% | 40% | 50% |

4.1.1 SME Definition

SEAI will strictly apply Annex 1 of the General Block Exemption Regulations⁹ as qualifying criteria for an SME:

- An SME is defined as an entity employing fewer than 250 persons and which has an annual turnover not exceeding €50M, and/or an annual balance sheet total not exceeding €43M.
- Within the SME category, a small enterprise employs fewer than 50 employees, and which has an annual turnover and/or balance sheet not exceeding €10M.

These definitions are summarised in Table 5 below.

Table 5 SME status in numbers

| SME Status | Headcount: Annual work unit (AWU) | Annual Turnover* | Annual balance sheet total* |
|------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|
| Large | ≥250 | >€50M | >€43M |

⁹ Available at:

<https://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/42921/attachments/1/translations/en/renditions/native> This document defines SME, including consideration of enterprise types.

| | | | |
|--------|----------|--------------|--------------|
| Medium | 50 – 249 | >€10M - €50M | >€10M - €43M |
| Small | <50 | ≤€10M | ≤€10M |

*SME status is determined based on meeting the levels shown for headcount AND EITHER annual turnover OR annual balance sheet total.

It is important to select the correct business size in your EXEED grant application, considering whether your organisation is an autonomous enterprise, partner enterprise or linked enterprise. Linked enterprises are those that form a group through the direct or indirect control of the majority of voting rights of an enterprise by another or through the ability to exercise a dominant influence on an enterprise.

Supporting evidence is required in support of small- and medium-sized status. Applicants which do not provide suitable supporting evidence will be recorded as a large organisation for the purposes of determining grant intensity level.

4.2 Additional supports

In addition to the financial supports available to EXEED Certified projects, participation in the EXEED grant scheme provides access to other SEAI supports and benefits, as follows:

- Independent review of [EXEED studies](#) following Stage 1, including feedback where any weaknesses are identified.
- [EXEED Mentors](#) available to provide advice in relation to the EXEED Certified process and attaining certification.
- SEAI audit / site inspection following completion of the project at Stage 2¹⁰.

SEAI develops case studies of selected successful projects, including text-based and video case studies, both of which will be available on our website and may be used as part of scheme promotion.

4.3 Energy Efficiency Obligation Scheme (EEOS)

EXEED applicants may also receive support towards their project from obligated parties under [EEOS](#). Such supports may be financial or practical in nature.

If the EXEED project attains EXEED Verified certification, energy credits will be counted towards the obligated party's target without the need for a separate EEOS application. If the EXEED project attains EXEED Designed certification only, the obligated party will need to submit a separate EEOS application, including a measurement and verification report for the project. This will enable them to count the energy credits from the project towards their target.

4.4 Support Scheme for Renewable Heat (SSRH)

It is a pre-requisite of the Support Scheme for Renewable Heat (SSRH)¹¹ that the asset adheres to verified energy efficiency criteria. Organisations which are considering applying for grant or feed-in tariff support under the SSRH may apply for grant support to follow the EXEED Certified process in order to meet the energy efficiency criteria, ahead of a subsequent SSRH application.

¹⁰ The Applicant is responsible for quality assurance on their project. SEAI undertakes an audit and/or site inspection of the project as part of our grant payment approval process. In performing any audit or site inspection, SEAI does not give any guarantee, assurance, or other warranty in respect of the quality, efficiency and/or benefit of any work, equipment, materials, product, service, or installation supported under the EXEED grant scheme.

¹¹ Further details are available on our website: <https://www.seai.ie/business-and-public-sector/business-grants-and-supports/support-scheme-renewable-heat/>

It is not possible for the same opportunity to benefit from supports under both the EXEED grant scheme and SSRH. For example, a biomass boiler opportunity may be eligible for grant support under EXEED or a feed-in tariff under SSRH, but the organisation will need to decide which programme to apply under.

4.5 Energy Services Companies (ESCo) & Energy Performance Contracting (EPC)

SEAI have now developed and published an EXEED ESCo contract template to support ESCo arrangements under the EXEED Certified Grant scheme, while ensuring SEAI's obligations under State Aid are managed appropriately.

The template along, with an explanatory note, can be downloaded from the SEAI website within the documents section of the EXEED Certified grant page.

4.6 Non-Domestic Microgen Grant

[Non-Domestic Microgen Scheme | Business Grants and Supports | SEAI](#) provides financial assistance to help businesses and other sectors to install solar PV panels to generate electricity on site. Grant funding is available for systems up to a maximum of 1000kWp. It is not possible for the same opportunity to benefit from supports under both the EXEED grant scheme and NDMG.

Eligible & Ineligible expenditure

This section sets out details of eligible and ineligible costs at Stage 1 and Stage 2.

The EXEED grant amount is calculated as a percentage of the *eligible* project expenditure. At a high-level, eligible costs include those which are:

- approved following evaluation and technical assessment process,
- directly associated with the implementation of the EXEED Certified project, excluding any counterfactual costs (if applicable)
- incurred and paid between the date of the grant Letter of Offer and the project end date stated on the letter; and

4.7 Stage 1: pre-investment professional services

Stage 1 eligible costs are primarily for the professional fees associated with undertaking the [EXEED studies](#).

Table 6 Overview of Stage 1 eligible costs

| Expenditure category | Guidance / Eligibility comments | Scope of work examples | Ineligible costs related to eligible categories |
|--|---|---|---|
| EED Expert | Must only relate to additional responsibilities of EED Expert during the EXEED process at pre-investment stage (i.e., before decision has been made on opportunities to be implemented) | Development of: Project Execution Plan , Energy Balance Study , Challenge & Analyse , Energy Saving Register , Energy Variables Review, Energy Performance Deterioration Review and Energy Measurement Plan | Costs associated with grant management activities (e.g., submitting an application, gathering the payment documentation, making the payment claim, project management etc.) |
| Technical feasibility studies | Must only relate to additional studies required during the EXEED process at pre-investment stage (i.e., before decision has been made on opportunities to be implemented). Must relate to activities not done by EED Expert | | Costs relating to activities not undertaken at the pre-investment stage Costs relating to pre-investment activities not related to the EXEED Certified process |
| Benchmarking studies | | | |
| Specialist consultancy for Challenge and Analyse process | | | |
| Additional concept engineering design activities | Must only relate to additional design activities associated with determining the feasibility of implementing energy saving opportunities | | |
| Energy modelling | Must only relate to additional modelling activities to assist with Energy Balance Study and/or calculation of estimated energy savings. Design simulation, SBEM, BER assessment etc. | | |

4.8 Stage 2: Investment professional services

At Stage 2, there may be further professional services provided as part of the project implementation, which are additional due to the EXEED Certified process.

Table 7 Overview of Stage 2 eligible costs (investment professional services)

| Expenditure category | Guidance / Eligibility comments | Scope of work examples | Ineligible costs related to eligible categories |
|--|---|--|--|
| EED Expert | Must only relate to additional responsibilities of EED Expert relating to the EXEED process at investment stage (i.e., after decision has been made on opportunities to be implemented); and/or additional activities to comply with IS399/EXEED certification requirements | Opportunities for implementation and related Measurement and Verification arrangements are incorporated into design, construction and commissioning plans, commissioning services, measurement & verification, | Costs associated with grant management activities (ex: submitting an application, gathering the payment documentation, making the payment claim, etc.) |
| Additional specialist commissioning & performance services | Additional specialist services relating to implementation of EXEED opportunities: commissioning, performance testing, BER assessment, quality related validation. | | Preliminaries, site preparation, fire & safety |
| Measurement & Verification (not EED Expert) | Must only relate to additional Measurement & Verification related activities for energy saving opportunities selected for implementation through the EXEED process. CMVP specialist | | |
| Additional detailed engineering design activities | Must only relate to additional design activities associated with the final design of the energy saving opportunities selected for implementation. | | |
| Project management/ coordination | Must only relate to the additional costs associated with implementing EXEED. | | |
| Other | | | Cleaning, repair and/or maintenance costs |

4.9 Stage 2: capital investment

Stage 2 capital grant funding is only available for opportunities which have been identified as a result of following the EXEED Certified process. The eligible costs will be the costs incurred to implement an energy efficiency investment following the EXEED process. In some cases, a counterfactual cost will be deducted from the total investment costs to determine eligible costs.

Table 8 Overview of Stage 2 eligible costs (capital investment)

| Expenditure category | Guidance / Eligibility comments | Scope of work examples | Ineligible costs related to eligible categories |
|--|---|--|---|
| Uniquely identifiable energy performance improvement opportunities undertaken solely for the purpose of improving energy performance | <p>The full costs of this opportunity type are eligible.</p> <p>This only applies to opportunities where there is no requirement to make an investment, for example building regulations do not apply, the investment is not to replace an existing piece of equipment that is at or nearing end of life.</p> | <p>Discretionary investment to install insulation in an existing asset</p> <p>Discretionary investment to undertake a lighting redesign in an existing asset</p> | Any costs not directly related to this opportunity |
| Capital investment which presents significant additional commercial advantages in addition to energy performance benefits | <p>Eligible costs are those incurred above and beyond the counterfactual.</p> <p>Details of the counterfactual should be included in the EXEED application.</p> | <p>Investment in a new piece of equipment which is more energy efficient than an existing one and which will significantly increase output or facilitate production of new products.</p> <p>Reconfigured building design to improve energy performance but which increases building size and offers additional non-energy related benefits</p> | A counterfactual will be needed to deduct the cost of a similar investment which achieves the same commercial advantages without the additional energy performance benefits |
| All other capital investment related to energy performance | Eligible costs are total investment costs minus counterfactual costs (if applicable). | Building a new asset, such as building or manufacturing process. | Costs associated with achieving compliance with legal requirements |

4.10 Ineligible expenditure

The list below sets out examples of ineligible expenditure. Applicants should ensure that these costs are not requested as part of their EXEED grant application and payment request. Where such costs are identified by SEAI within an application, this may cause a delay to the evaluation of the application and further information may be required to support the evaluation process. Any ineligible costs will be removed from the assessment of eligible costs.

- *Unrelated costs*: any costs not directly related to:
 - improving the energy performance of the asset
 - following the EXEED Certified process
- *Internal staff costs*: Internal staff costs are not eligible for payment.
- *Excess costs*: SEAI will look for evidence that a competitive procurement process has been followed. If the supporting quotation(s) provided at application stage are lower than the amount requested in the Application Form (per opportunity), the grant amount will be capped at the amount stated in the quotation. Note: where prices are found to be unreasonable at the application stage, SEAI will be entitled to require the Applicant to re-submit the pricing for the works in line with market value. Costs above those stated in the Application Form are ineligible. Overspend against one measure approved for grant funding may not be offset against underspend for another measure.
- *Pre-project costs*: Any costs relating to works undertaken before the letter of offer, including:
 - orders placed before the letter of offer
 - works undertaken before the letter of offer
 - works where the commissioning certificates are dated before the letter of offer
 - payments made before the letter of offer
- *Crossover*: Where grant funding is/was provided for same opportunities under the EXEED Grant Scheme or other SEAI programme.
- *National Standards*: The cost of bringing a facility or building up to national standards required by legislation 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*: Expenditure that has not been clearly outlined in the Application Form will be considered ineligible for payment.
- *Unfinished works*: Expenditure related to unfinished work is not eligible. Where the project completion date is expected to be delayed beyond the date shown in the letter or offer, the Applicant will need to submit an extension request in advance, proposing a new completion date and providing supporting justification for the date change.
- *Changes from application stage*: Project specification changes will require a scope change approval and should also be recorded in the [Energy Saving Register](#).
- *Expenses*: Expenses, e.g., travel costs, accommodation costs, are not eligible for grant support.
- *Spare parts*: The cost of spares will not be supported e.g., spare lamps
- *Second-hand equipment*: Second-hand equipment is not eligible for grant support.

If you are unsure which aspects of your application are eligible for payment, please contact the EXEED team at exeed@seai.ie.

4.11 Public bodies: Triple E Register

It is a legal requirement that public sector investments in energy efficient technologies are directed towards the listings on the Triple E Register¹². Costs associated with non-Triple E lighting, for example, are only eligible where the Applicant can demonstrate that either the minimum Triple E criteria are met or where there is no Triple-E option available for the specific lighting need.

5 Applicant actions

This section provides details of the applicant journey in the EXEED grant scheme. It sets out all actions that an applicant will need to take throughout this process, at both Stage 1 and Stage 2, as summarised in Figure 4 below.

The Applicant is the person (from the organisation to be EXEED certified) who is leading on the EXEED project. It is typically the [EED Owner](#) for the project. The Applicant is responsible for all activities set out in this section.

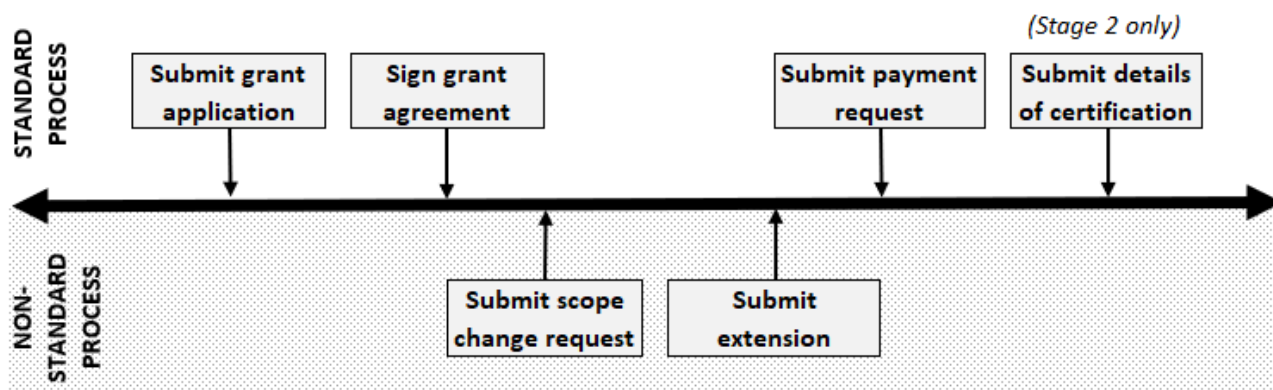


Figure 4 EXEED applicant actions

Note that the standard process entails only the actions above the line; actions below the line are only required in the event of project changes by the Applicant after the grant agreement.

5.1 Application process

The EXEED application form¹² is available on our website. It must be completed by the Lead Applicant from the organisation that is seeking grant support. An instruction manual¹³ is available on our website, which applicants can use in conjunction with completing the form or may use for the purposes of troubleshooting.

The Application Form cannot be submitted until all required supporting documentation is attached. If incomplete or poor-quality applications are received, they will be either rejected or reverted to draft stage so that the Applicant can fully complete them and resubmit. Only complete applications will be evaluated.

The Application Form collects detailed information about the proposed works to help ensure an efficient evaluation process, timely outcome for the Applicant and to support an efficient audit / inspection and payment process following project completion. An overview of the information needed to complete the form is set out in Table 10 below.

Multiple grant applications

Please note that organizations may only receive stage 1 grant funding **once per asset** unless a project is too large for the Stage 1 activities to be completed in full by 1 October 2025 (i.e. the Stage 1 activities would take longer than the scheme budget timelines permit). Any large projects requiring multiple stage 1 applications are at the discretion of SEAI approval.

¹² The Application Form is available at: <https://www.seai.ie/business-and-public-sector/business-grants-and-supports/exeed-certified-grant/grant-application-form/>

¹³ Available at: [EXEED Application Form Instructions.pdf \(seai.ie\)](#)

Organisations may submit multiple stage 2 grant applications where there is an incentive needed to complete a multi-phase implementation or in scenarios where the implementation of a group of energy saving opportunities would take longer than the scheme budget timelines (i.e. they would extend beyond 1 October of the following year)

Table 9 Overview of Stage 1 and Stage 2 grant application details

| STAGE 1 GRANT APPLICATION | | | | |
|----------------------------------|---|---|--|--|
| Contact details | | | Project costs | |
| Business information | | | Project details | |
| EXEED asset description | | | Applicant declaration | |
| ✓ | Stage 1 application checklist: supporting documentation required | | | |
| | a | Declaration of solvency* | e | Latest audited accounts ¹⁴ |
| | b | Declaration of finance* | f | Photos/drawings/maps of EXEED asset |
| | c | VAT letter from Revenue (if applicable) | g | Multiple buildings form* (if applicable) |
| | d | Declaration of SME qualification* (if applicable) | | |
| STAGE 2 GRANT APPLICATION | | | | |
| Contact details | | | Certification timelines | |
| Business information | | | EXEED project development – project progress | |
| EXEED asset description | | | Project costs | |
| State aid / funding information | | | Permissions/ Permits/ Licences etc | |
| Major renovation | | | Applicant declaration | |
| ✓ | Stage 2 application checklist: supporting documentation required | | | |
| | a | Declaration of solvency* | k | Energy Balance Study* |
| | b | Declaration of finance* | l | Energy Saving Register* |
| | c | VAT letter from Revenue (if applicable) | m | Challenge and Analyse* |
| | d | Declaration of incentive effect* | n | Evidence of energy saving calculations |
| | e | Declaration of SME qualification* (if applicable) | o | Measurement and Verification Plan (if available) |
| | f | Latest audited accounts ¹⁵ | p | Quotations |
| | g | Photos/drawings/maps of EXEED asset | q | Planning permission (if applicable) |
| | h | Multiple buildings spreadsheet* (if applicable) | r | EPA licence (if applicable) |
| | i | EXEED technical workbook* | s | Waste licence (if applicable) |
| | j | Project Execution Plan* | t | BCAR (if applicable) |

* Denotes that a template is available

¹⁴ Organisations which are not subject to a financial audit requirement should supply their latest unaudited accounts.

¹⁵ If this was already provided at Stage 1, it is not necessary to submit again at Stage 2, unless a more recent set of audited accounts are available. Organisations which are not subject to a financial audit requirement should supply their latest unaudited accounts.

5.2 Grant agreement

Applications which are successful at the evaluation stage will result in a Letter of Offer being issued to the Applicant. Applicants must sign the Letter of Offer and return a copy to SEAI within 14 days of issue. Upon receipt by SEAI of the signed copy of the Letter of Offer, the grant agreement will take effect.

As an alternative to returning the hard copy of the signed Letter of Offer to SEAI by post, it is acceptable to send a scanned copy of the signed Letter of Offer by email. In this case, it is important that the scanned copy includes the letter in full and Schedule A.

Schedule A of the EXEED grant agreement sets out the window in which works must take place. All activities relating to the eligible costs must happen between the date of the Letter of Offer and the Project Completion Date. This includes placing orders, undertaking works, receiving invoices, and making payments. Note that the Project Completion Date is determined based on details provided in the application form.

A project summary spreadsheet will be provided to the Applicant alongside the Letter of Offer.

- For Stage 1 projects, this gives a breakdown of the eligible costs and grant amount.
- For Stage 2, this sets out details of the opportunities which have been accepted (the agreed scope of works) and the eligible costs and grant amount. It also includes a project-specific template for the Inspection Spreadsheet.

5.3 Payment request

In order to make the grant payment(s) to the Applicant, SEAI will need to be satisfied that the agreed scope of works has been completed and all payments made within the grant agreement window.

For Stage 1 payments, the Applicant must submit the [EXEED studies](#) for their asset. It is a requirement of the EXEED grant support that beneficiaries are committed to achieving EXEED certification of their asset. SEAI will review these studies against the requirements of the EXEED Designed standard for assurance that the project is progressing in accordance with the standard. This review is intended to help applicants ensure their capital investment project will achieve the benefits from following the energy efficient design process.

- If the findings from the review of the EXEED studies are satisfactory, the grant payment will be made.
- If the studies have major issues which would prevent the asset from achieving EXEED Designed certification, feedback will be provided to the Applicant, and they will have an opportunity to arrange for the documents to be updated. The grant payment will be made following receipt of an updated version of the relevant documentation in which the issues identified are addressed.

At Stage 2, interim payments are possible in cases where one or more of the agreed opportunities has been installed and paid for.

For Stage 2 payments, the Applicant must submit evidence that the works have been completed. Where applicable, SEAI will contact the Applicant to arrange a site inspection of the completed works. The grant payment will be made following a successful audit / inspection. If issues are identified during the site inspection, the Applicant will have an opportunity to address the issues, and payment will be made when SEAI is satisfied that all issues are resolved.

Stage 2 grant payments will be subject to a 10% retainer (or €30,000 for grant values above €300,000) until EXEED certification is achieved and the energy savings have been verified.

5.4 Evidence of EXEED certification

Following completion of the project, the asset will need to achieve certification to one of the three EXEED Certified distinctions.

- The grant retainer will be released if the asset achieves certification to EXEED Verified or EXEED Managed.

- If the asset becomes certified to EXEED Designed, the Applicant will also need to provide evidence that the project energy savings have undergone measurement and verification. This can be achieved if the project is counted towards the [EEOS](#) target for one of the obligated parties.

5.5 Scope change request

The grant offer is subject to the agreed scope of works being completed within the grant agreement window.

Where the Applicant subsequently makes a change to the project in terms of:

- number and type(s) of opportunity being implemented (i.e., reducing the scope); and/or
- technical specification,

this represents a change from the grant agreement and may not be approved or may affect the grant offer.

In order to proceed with the EXEED grant process, it is necessary that all such changes are identified to SEAI in advance in a scope change request¹⁶. SEAI will review the proposed change, considering the impact for both the specific opportunity/opportunities directly affected and all other opportunities in the project in terms of:

- impact on energy savings and CO₂ savings
- value for money
- payback period
- EXEED Certified eligibility

The scope change request outcomes depend on the nature of the change(s):

- If the scope change results in diminished impact or value for money, which would have altered the original evaluation outcome at application stage, the grant may not be payable for the project, or a lower grant percentage may apply.
- If the scope change results in a significant reduction in payback period for the project, so that it is under the eligibility threshold for grant support (i.e., 2 years or shorter), then the grant may not be payable for the project.
- Where the scope change does not alter the project metrics significantly, the scope change may be approved. At the inspections stage and grant payment stage, the updated project scope will be the basis of audit / inspection and payment.

Note that, even where a scope change is approved, if the costs of the project increase relative to application, the grant amount will be capped at the original grant amount set in the Letter of Offer; it will not increase.

In the event that changes to the project scope are identified by SEAI at the payment request stage (i.e., following project completion), SEAI will send the Scope Change Request Form to the Applicant for completion. The scope change outcomes will apply as above. If the scope change is not approved (for any of the reasons set out above), the grant offer will be revoked. If the scope change is approved, the project will proceed to the audit / inspection process. Applicants are advised of the importance of getting any potential scope changes approved in advance to avoid the risk that changes may invalidate the grant offer.

5.6 Extension request

The grant offer is subject to the agreed scope of works being completed within the grant agreement window.

Where there is a change to the project schedule which will mean the agreed scope of works will not be completed by the Project Completion Date set in the grant agreement, the Applicant must submit an extension request¹⁷.

There is no guarantee that the request will be approved. In making the decision, SEAI will consider the justification provided for the change, the level of confidence that the proposed date is realistic and budget availability.

¹⁶ In the event of a scope change, Applicants should contact SEAI for a Scope Change Request Form that is specific to their project.

¹⁷ In the event of project delays, Applicants should contact SEAI for an Extension Request form.

Further information is set out in Section [9.2](#).

6 Grant Evaluation process

This section sets out details of the eligibility criteria and evaluation criteria which are considered as part of the evaluation process for Stage 1 and Stage 2 applications.¹⁸ Potential applicants are advised to consider whether their proposals satisfy these criteria in advance of applying. Applicants should ensure that their applications contain sufficient detail in relation to these criteria to support the evaluation process.

6.1 Stage 1 evaluation guidance

The Stage 1 evaluation process is comprised of five eligibility criteria which are outlined in Table 11 below. The five eligibility criteria must all be accepted by SEAI in order to progress to grant offer.

Table 10 Overview of Stage 1 eligibility criteria

| # | Stage 1 Eligibility Criteria |
|---------|--|
| ELC 1.1 | EXEED Asset definition |
| ELC 1.2 | EXEED process is understood and integrated |
| ELC 1.3 | Schedule of overall project |
| ELC 1.4 | Clarity, detail, and appropriateness of proposed Stage 1 professional fees |
| ELC 1.5 | Energy saving potential |

This section provides guidance to applicants in relation to the information required to meet each of the Stage 1 eligibility criteria.

ELC 1.1 EXEED Asset definition

SEAI review the EXEED Asset definition to ensure only projects eligible for EXEED certification are supported.

EXEED Assets may include new, modified, or renovated facilities, buildings, systems, and processes. The designed/re-engineered asset must operate and be located in the Republic of Ireland.

EXEED Certified is only applicable to assets with the following characteristics:

1. A physical boundary that fully incorporates the system(s) providing its purpose.
2. An energy balance accounting for and including all energy sources, energy use and energy demand.
3. Encompassing energy services (i.e., desired outcomes that necessitate the consumption of energy) that are Identified with application of the Energy Venn Diagram.

For the purposes of the EXEED grant scheme, EXEED Assets will not be eligible if the boundary is drawn to deliberately focus on only one energy use or one piece of energy using equipment which is not reflective of the wider asset or project scope.

The EXEED Asset must be defined and documented in the EED [Project Execution Plan](#). The description of current design state/[baseline design](#) of EXEED asset must provide SEAI with sufficient clarity and detail on the starting point for EXEED process integration. It must be clear if the EXEED project is part of a wider renovation project or if there has already been energy efficiency work carried out within the selected asset boundary.

¹⁸ Note that this section relates to technical evaluation only. The application will also need to pass standard legal and financial checks, such as evidence of SME status (if applicable) in order to progress to grant offer.

The Applicant is required to attach maps, drawings, or sketches to support their application and definition of the EXEED Asset boundary to assist SEAI with evaluating its eligibility.

ELC 1.2 EXEED process is understood and integrated

This is to ensure that only applications with evidence of commitment to the EXEED Certified process are supported.

The deliverables of the professional services activities outlined in the Application Form must be consistent with the pre-implementation requirements of the EXEED standard. Lack of detail in the application on what exactly the professional service activity entails will result in the application not passing evaluation or the application will be recommended excluding the item(s) that are not clear.

The EXEED project organisation structure, roles & responsibilities outlined in the Application Form are consistent with requirements of the EXEED standard. Lack of detail on who will be fulfilling the EXEED roles will result in the application not passing evaluation.

The distinction of EXEED certification selected by the Applicant will be reviewed alongside the reason provided. If there is a mismatch between the selection made and the reason provided, this will indicate a lack of understanding of the EXEED certification distinctions.

ELC 1.3 Schedule of overall project

The information included in the Application Form must give SEAI enough detail to provide assurance that the pre-investment professional services activities outlined in the application are possible within the grant scheme timelines set out in [Section 3.1](#). Lack of detail on the expected schedule/timelines will result in the application not passing this criterion.

Applicants are encouraged to also provide expected timelines for the implementation of any energy saving opportunities identified during the process. However, this criterion will be assessed solely on the timelines for the pre-investment studies.

ELC 1.4 Clarity, detail, and appropriateness of proposed Stage 1 professional fees

The scope of works description in the funding request table must provide enough detail to give SEAI assurance that the requested support is for eligible pre-investment study activities. This description must also provide enough detail to confirm exactly who and what the grant request is supporting.

The professional services costs included must be appropriate to the size and scale of the asset and project. Large professional services grant requests for relatively small-scale projects or assets must be justified in the application form.

Any professional services activities that are not deemed additional EXEED driven activities and would appear to have happened regardless of grant will not be accepted and excluded from any grant recommendation.

ELC 1.5 Energy saving potential

Only EXEED Assets that have an annual final energy consumption of at least 100,000 kWh will be accepted.

6.2 Stage 2 evaluation guidance: eligibility criteria

The stage 2 evaluation process is comprised of both eligibility criteria and evaluation criteria. The nine eligibility criteria must all be accepted by SEAI in order to progress to the evaluation criteria.

Table 11 Overview of Stage 2 eligibility criteria

| # | Stage 2 Eligibility Criteria |
|----------|---|
| ELC 2.1 | EXEED Asset definition |
| ELC 2.2 | EXEED process is being followed |
| ELC 2.3 | Implementation schedule of grant-supported opportunities |
| ELC 2.4 | Quality, transparency, and justification of proposed expenditure |
| ELC 2.5 | Return on Investment appraisal (i.e., simple payback) |
| ELC 2.6 | Energy saving potential |
| ELC 2.7 | Grant Incentive Effect |
| ELC 2.8 | Quality/transparency of the energy saving calculation methodology |
| ELC 2.9 | Asset fossil fuel status |
| ELC 2.10 | Building energy performance uplift |

This section sets out the information required to meet each of the Stage 2 eligibility criteria. Applications which do not meet the minimum requirement for any of these criteria (ELC 2.1 to ELC 2.10) will not be eligible for EXEED grant support.

ELC 2.1 EXEED Asset definition

See guidance for [ELC1.1](#) in section 7.1. This is checked at both Stage 1 and Stage 2 in case of any unexpected changes in the asset definition between stages and also to allow for those projects which do not seek grant support at Stage 1.

ELC 2.2 EXEED process is being followed

Projects which are following the EXEED Certified process are required to undertake the following:

- [Project Execution Plan](#)
- [Energy Balance Study](#) of the [baseline design](#)
- [Challenge and Analyse](#)
- [Energy Savings Register](#)

The criteria for each of the above are set out in the EXEED Designed standard¹⁹.

Where these are not submitted as part of a Stage 2 application, or not found to be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the standard, the application will be rejected. There must also be evidence of understanding of and commitment to EXEED certification.

ELC 2.3 Implementation schedule is within the EXEED grant scheme window

The information included in the Application Form must give SEAI enough detail to provide assurance that the capital investment activities outlined in the application are possible within the grant scheme timelines set out in [Section 3.1](#).

Lack of detail on the expected schedule/timelines of the EXEED project implementation will result in the application not passing this criterion.

ELC 2.4 Quality, transparency, and justification of proposed expenditure

There must be sufficient information for SEAI to determine the eligible costs, in compliance with our responsibilities to deliver good value for money and to comply with State aid regulations.

- Quotes provided must be sufficiently detailed to identify eligible incremental expenditure associated with EXEED expenditure.
- Quotes must be on headed paper from the proposed supplier.
- The expenditure related to the EXEED energy saving opportunities must be clearly outlined and transparent as inability to provide this detail may result in items excluded from accepted costs.
- Counterfactual quotes must be provided where applicable.

ELC 2.5 Return on Investment appraisal (i.e., Simple payback without grant)

Applications must have a simple payback without grant of over 2 years and under 20 years. This is part of the scheme value for money assessment.

In projects with a payback period of up to 2 years, it is expected that the investment can be justified without grant support and that any grant funding provided would not result in additional energy and/or CO₂ savings.

In projects with a payback period of 20 years or longer, energy savings are unlikely to be the main driver for the investment and in some cases the lifetime of the works would be shorter than the payback period.

The payback period will be calculated as follows:

$$\frac{\text{Eligible expenditure}}{(\text{Annual energy savings}) \times (\text{Energy unit cost})}$$

Figure 5 Standard formula for calculating payback period (non-ETS sites)

¹⁹ Available on our website at: <https://www.seai.ie/publications/EXEED-Certified-Design-Disinction-Requirements-2017.pdf>

| |
|--|
| $\text{Eligible expenditure} = [(\text{Annual energy savings}) \times (\text{Energy unit cost})] + [(\text{Annual tCO}_2 \text{ savings}) \times (\text{Cost of emissions allowances})]$ |
|--|

Figure 6 Formula for calculating payback period (ETS sites only)

where:

Eligible expenditure is calculated by SEAI and may differ from the Applicant’s calculations. See sections 5.2 and 5.3 for details of Stage 2 eligible expenditure. The eligible cost figure will be reduced to take account of any opportunities which are not being taken forward or any costs which are not directly related to an EXEED opportunity. Where appropriate, VAT costs may be treated as eligible on the basis that the Applicant does not have VAT recovery for these costs.

Annual energy savings are evaluated by SEAI in terms of final energy and may differ from the Applicant’s calculations. Where appropriate, they will be revised to take account of any opportunities which are not being taken forward.

Energy unit cost is based on the unit price paid by the Applicant for electricity and/or thermal energy, as applicable. If energy savings relate to both fuel types, the electricity savings are multiplied by the electricity unit cost and the thermal savings are multiplied by the thermal unit cost.

Annual tCO₂ savings are evaluated by SEAI, applying the relevant emission factor(s)²⁰ to the annual energy savings. This part of the calculation only applies to sites which are under the EU Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS).

Cost of emissions allowances is the cost of purchasing an emissions allowance under the Emissions Trading Scheme. As a proxy, the shadow price of carbon for the ETS sector set in the Public Spending Code²¹ may be used. This part of the calculation only applies to sites which are under the ETS.

ELC 2.6 Energy saving potential

Only assets with annual final energy consumption of at least 100,000 kWh are eligible for EXEED grant support. This is part of the value for money assessment; assets with lower energy usage typically have higher costs per unit of energy or CO₂ saved.²²

ELC 2.7 Grant Incentive Effect

The Applicant must submit a grant incentive effect statement.

The application must include sufficient detail to assure SEAI that all activities/costs included in grant request are additional and would not have happened without grant support.

The Applicant needs to satisfy SEAI that the grant amount requested meets at least one of the following criteria:

²⁰ These are available on the SEAI website at: <https://www.seai.ie/data-and-insights/seai-statistics/conversion-factors/>

²¹ Valuing Greenhouse Gas Emissions in the Public Spending Code, available at: <https://assets.gov.ie/19749/77936e6f1cb144d68c1553c3f9ddb197.pdf>

²² Alternative SEAI programmes that may be of interest include SEAI Communities grant scheme <https://www.seai.ie/grants/community-grants/>, [Obligated Parties | EEOS | Energy In Business | SEAI](#) and [Support Scheme for Renewable Heat | Business Grants | SEAI](#).

- Increasing scope of project
- Increasing speed of completion
- Increasing total amount invested in the project by the beneficiary

The project will not be eligible for support with achieving compliance with legal requirements, such as building regulations.

ELC 2.8 Quality/transparency of the energy saving calculation methodology

The supporting information submitted showing the methodology of calculating the estimated energy savings must be clear and, in a format, / structure that allows SEAI to evaluate the accuracy of the savings figures submitted.

The Applicant must provide details of any assumptions made during the calculation of energy savings.

If using energy modelling software to estimate energy savings and/or identify energy saving opportunities, the Applicant must provide details of inputs/outputs included in the model so accuracy can be evaluated.

An external evaluator may confirm accuracy or reasonableness of savings as part of their evaluation.

ELC 2.9 Asset fossil fuel status

Installation of energy equipment fired by fossil fuels, including natural gas, are not eligible for support via EXEED.

Equipment downstream of existing energy equipment fired by fossil fuels, including natural gas, which improves energy efficiency or environmental performance, may be eligible for support via EXEED

ELC 2.10 Building energy performance uplift

Projects seeking support for renovation of existing buildings will need to provide evidence that the proposed investment will result in a building energy performance uplift of at least:

- 20% compared to the situation prior to the investment, or
- 10% compared to the situation prior to the investment in the case of renovation measures concerning the installation or replacement of just one type of building element

The initial primary energy demand and the estimated improvement shall be established by reference to an Energy Performance Certificate.

Aid may also be granted for the improvement of the energy efficiency of the heating or cooling equipment inside the building.

6.3 Stage 2 evaluation guidance: evaluation criteria

There are five evaluation criteria at Stage 2, each of which will receive a score depending on the information provided. An overall score of at least 65 is required in order to receive grant support.

Table 12 Overview of Stage 2 evaluation criteria

| # | EXEED Project Impact (50 marks) | Max score |
|---------|------------------------------------|-----------|
| EVC 2.1 | EXEED project energy saving impact | 15 marks |
| EVC 2.2 | CO ₂ reduction impact | 15 marks |
| EVC 2.3 | Value-for-Money assessment | 20 marks |

| # | EXEED Process Implementation (50 marks) | Max score |
|---------|---|-----------|
| EVC 2.4 | Depth of challenge and innovation demonstrated | 30 marks |
| EVC 2.5 | Quality of EXEED studies , as per EXEED Designed requirements | 20 marks |

This section sets out the information required to achieve a satisfactory score in the Stage 2 evaluation criteria.

EXEED Project Impact

The scores for this section are determined with reference to the scoring matrix at Table 14, below.

EVC 2.1 EXEED project energy saving impact

The annual final energy savings expected to be achieved by the project, as determined by SEAI, will be assigned a score in accordance with Table 14.

EVC 2.2 CO₂ reduction impact

The annual carbon emissions reduction expected to be achieved by the project, as determined by SEAI, will be assigned a score in accordance with Table 14.

Note: During the evaluation process, Electricity-related tCO₂ savings will be calculated using an electricity emissions factor of 200 g/kWh for both electrical energy efficiency, and electrification projects.

EVC 2.3 Value-for-Money assessment

Once the eligible costs have been determined, the value for money assessment will be conducted, as follows:

- Refer to the payback period determined at eligibility check [ELC 2.5](#).
- Calculate the cost/tCO₂ savings (annual): divide the agreed eligible costs by the annual tCO₂ savings expected from the project (as determined by SEAI).
- Apply the scores in the scoring matrix at Table 14 for each of these tests.
- Sum the two scores together to get the total value for money score.

Table 13 Scoring matrix for EXEED Project Impact assessment

| EVC2.1 Energy saving impact | | EVC2.2 Carbon reduction impact | | EVC2.3 Value for money | | | |
|-----------------------------|-------|-----------------------------------|-------|---|-------|--|-------|
| | | | | Payback period | | Cost / tCO ₂ saved | |
| Annual final energy savings | | Annual tCO ₂ reduction | | Eligible costs / cost savings (i.e., ELC 2.5) | | Eligible costs / tCO ₂ reduced (annual) | |
| kWh | Score | tCO ₂ | Score | € | Score | € | Score |
| ≥1,000,000 | 15 | ≥1,000 | 15 | >2 & ≤4 | 6 | ≤750 | 10 |
| ≥800,000 & <1,000,000 | 14 | ≥800 & <1,000 | 14 | >4 & ≤12 | 10 | >750 & ≤1,500 | 9 |
| ≥600,000 & <800,000 | 13 | ≥600 & <800 | 13 | >12 & ≤15 | 6 | >1,500 & ≤2,250 | 8 |
| ≥400,000 & <600,000 | 12 | ≥400 & <600 | 12 | >15 & <20 | 4 | >2,250 & ≤3,000 | 7 |
| ≥200,000 & <400,000 | 11 | ≥200 & <400 | 11 | | | >3,000 & ≤3,750 | 6 |
| ≥100,000 & <200,000 | 10 | ≥100 & <200 | 10 | | | >3,750 & ≤4,500 | 5 |
| ≥80,000 & <100,000 | 9 | ≥80 & <100 | 9 | | | >4,500 & ≤5,250 | 4 |
| ≥60,000 & <80,000 | 8 | ≥60 & <80 | 8 | | | >5,250 & ≤6,000 | 3 |
| ≥50,000 & <60,000 | 7 | ≥50 & <60 | 7 | | | >6,000 & ≤6,750 | 2 |
| ≥40,000 & <50,000 | 6 | ≥40 & <50 | 6 | | | >6,750 & ≤7,500 | 1 |
| ≥30,000 & <40,000 | 5 | ≥30 & <40 | 5 | | | >7,500 | 0 |
| ≥20,000 & <30,000 | 4 | ≥20 & <30 | 4 | | | | |
| ≥15,000 & <20,000 | 3 | ≥15 & <20 | 3 | | | | |
| ≥10,000 & <15,000 | 2 | ≥10 & <15 | 2 | | | | |
| <10,000 | 0 | <10 | 0 | | | | |

EXEED Process Implementation

This section of the EXEED evaluation process assesses the evidence provided by the Applicant of their implementation of the requirements of the EXEED Designed standard to date and their commitment to the EXEED approach to energy efficient design.

The scoring guide, at Table 15 below, will be used to apply a score to each application in relation to the two criteria in this section. Applications not meeting the minimum shown will fail the eligibility checks.

EVC 2.4 Depth of challenge and innovation (C&A) demonstrated

The Applicant must clearly demonstrate in their documentation that they have addressed the [challenge and analyse](#) clause of the EXEED standard.

It is a requirement of the EXEED Designed standard that the significant energy uses shall be challenged against each layer of the energy Venn diagram and that the viability of energy performance opportunities shall be analysed. This is central to the EXEED Certified process for improving the energy performance of new and upgraded assets.

The Applicant must provide details of how they have applied the energy Venn diagram during the challenge and analysis phase of the EXEED process.

SEAI will consider the extent to which the opportunities in the Application Form have been challenged and analysed. The deeper and more innovative the [challenge and analyse](#) process is, the higher the marks awarded will be.

Opportunities which are not linked to the [challenge and analyse](#) process will not be eligible for grant support.

EVC2.5 Quality of EXEED studies, as per EXEED Designed requirements

The Applicant must satisfy SEAI that they have addressed the requirements of the EXEED Designed standard in relation to the key studies:

- [Project Execution Plan](#)
- [Energy Balance Study](#)
- [Energy Saving Register](#).

In addition to these, submission of the M&V Plan as part of the Stage 2 application is encouraged and, if available, will be considered as part of this criterion. Submission of a good quality M&V Plan will typically be an indication of strong commitment to the EXEED Certified process.

The marks awarded will be determined by the quality of the documents provided, including ease of navigation and how well the specific requirements have been met and recorded.

Table 14 EXEED Process Implementation scoring guide

| EVC2.4 Depth of challenge and innovation demonstrated | Max score 30 | | EVC2.5 Quality of EXEED studies, as per EXEED Designed requirements | Max score 20 | |
|---|--------------|----|--|--------------|----|
| | From | To | | From | To |
| Outstanding implementation of C&A process; a model for how it should be carried out. All significant energy uses have been comprehensively challenged, the proposed energy saving opportunities are the direct output of this process. The opportunities proposed are innovative and at or exceeding current best practice. | 28 | 30 | Outstanding implementation of all EXEED studies in accordance with the requirements and the spirit of the standard. Clear evidence of strong commitment to the EXEED Certified process and recognition of the value it offers. | 19 | 20 |
| Excellent implementation of C&A process. All significant energy uses have been comprehensively challenged, the proposed energy saving opportunities are the direct output of this process. The opportunities proposed are closely aligned to national policy goals. | 24 | 27 | Excellent implementation of all EXEED studies in accordance with the requirements of the standard. Clear evidence of strong commitment to the EXEED Certified process. | 16 | 18 |
| Very good implementation of the C&A process. All significant energy uses have been subject to a robust challenge, the proposed energy saving opportunities are the direct output of this process. | 20 | 23 | Very good implementation of all EXEED studies in accordance with the requirements of the standard. Clear evidence of commitment to the EXEED Certified process. | 13 | 15 |
| Generally good implementation of the C&A process, though some areas could have been stronger. All significant energy uses have been through the challenge process and there is a link to each of the proposed energy saving opportunities. There is insufficient clarity on why these particular opportunities are proposed as opposed to others. | 15 | 19 | Good implementation of most aspects of the EXEED studies , though some areas could be improved. Some evidence of commitment to the EXEED Certified process. | 10 | 12 |
| Evidence that the C&A has been undertaken for all significant energy uses but limited clarity on what the process consisted of, whether it was sufficiently robust and/or why the particular opportunities are proposed as opposed to others. | 12 | 14 | The EXEED studies have been produced and may pass a certification audit, but there is significant potential to improve to better reflect the requirements of the standard. Some evidence of commitment to the EXEED Certified process. | 8 | 9 |

6.4 External evaluation / Technical opinion

Depending on the nature, scale and complexity of energy saving opportunities identified and the grant assistance requested, some projects will be subject to an external technical evaluation. The purpose of this is to provide additional assurance to SEAI on the grant incentive effect and the robustness/quality of calculations completed.

All projects with a stage 2 capital grant request of at least €100,000 will be subject to an external technical assessment, which will include a site inspection.

6.5 Unsuccessful applications

Where the evaluation at Stage 1 or Stage 2 is unsuccessful or does not meet the minimum score, the EXEED team will issue feedback to the Applicant to explain which eligibility criteria have not been met and/or setting out the evaluation score and its breakdown, as applicable.

In order to improve turnaround times for all applicants and ensure scheme administrative costs are efficient for the taxpayer, SEAI need to ensure repeat unsuccessful applications are minimised. Following the feedback issued by SEAI, the applicant must accompany any future grant application with a summary of how the previous feedback has been addressed.

Where applicants have not addressed the feedback in any subsequent application, SEAI reserve the right to:

- Implement performance improvement requirements for the lead applicant, EED Owner, EED Expert or any other relevant stakeholders.
- Reject, without evaluation, further applications related to the lead applicant company and/or EXEED asset.

There are a number of supports available to prospective applicants to help them prepare an EXEED application, including training, EXEED mentor support, or a phone call to discuss feedback received. To avail of these supports, contact us (EXEED@seai.ie) and we will be happy to arrange. In addition, section 7 of these guidelines clearly sets out the eligibility criteria and the evaluation scoring methodology, and there is an [Application Form Instructions document](#) and an [EXEED Certification Guidance document](#) available on our website.

7 Stage 2 grant calculation

7.1 Grant calculation methodology

Following successful evaluation of an EXEED stage 2 application, the grant award is calculated using a three-step process shown below:

Table 15 EXEED stage 2 grant calculation steps

| # | Step | Details |
|---|------------------------------|--|
| 1 | Maximum grant aid applicable | Determines the maximum grant aid applied to project eligible costs. |
| 2 | Counterfactual costs | Determines eligible costs by subtracting counterfactual costs from total investment costs. |
| 3 | Value-for-Money | Ensures approved grant amount falls within accepted value for money threshold. |

7.2 Maximum grant aid

EXEED is notified under General Block Exemption Regulation Articles 36, 38, 38a, 41, 49. Maximum grant rates are set in accordance with these articles as per below table.

| Project Description | Maximum grant rate (percentage)* | Additional Requirements |
|--|----------------------------------|--|
| Energy efficiency measures related to renovation of existing buildings | Up to 30% | Minimum building energy performance uplift is required. |
| Energy efficiency measures related to new buildings | Up to 30% | A counterfactual scenario is used to determine eligible costs. |
| Energy efficiency measures related to process streams | Up to 30% | A counterfactual scenario is used to determine eligible costs. |
| Solar PV | Up to 20% | No additional requirements. |
| Heat pump (<i>and associated equipment</i>) | Up to 40% | Grant aid linked to heat pump SCOP and operating temperature. |

*Grant rates may be adjusted in exceptional circumstances in line with GBER requirements. This may include aid being limited to 15% where no counterfactual is provided, or 25% where only a single building upgrade measure is applied.

The grant support rate will be linked to the heat pump seasonal co-efficient of performance (see table below) for buildings or coefficient of performance for industry, calculated in accordance with European Standard EN 14825 (2016) where applicable, or equivalent. The SCOP/COP will be the design SCOP/COP for the system, considering the normal expected service requirements, and must be measurable in the transfer medium of the system.

Table 16 Heat pump maximum grant aid

| | Maximum grant rate (percentage) |
|--|---------------------------------|
| | |

| SCOP (buildings), COP (industry) | “Low temperature”. Including space/water heating in buildings. <95° C | Medium temperature industry. 95 - 120° C | High temperature. >120° C |
|----------------------------------|---|--|---------------------------|
| 1 | 0 | 10 | 20 |
| 1.5 | 10 | 20 | 25 |
| 2 | 20 | 25 | 30 |
| 2.5 | 25 | 30 | 35 |
| 3 | 30 | 35 | 40 |
| 3.5 | 35 | 40 | 40 |
| 4 | 40 | 40 | 40 |
| 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

If an applicant is installing Related Energy Efficiency Measures, SEAI will fund up to 30% of the cost of these measures. Such measures must reduce heat demand downstream of the heat pump or be required to ensure that the heat pump can be appropriately integrated into the building or facility for optimum efficient operation.

7.3 Counterfactual costs

It may be necessary to apply a counterfactual cost to determine the eligible costs for grant aid at Stage 2.

Counterfactual costs will be calculated based on counterfactual scenarios most applicable to project specifications, including those outlined in the table below.

| Counterfactual scenario* | Eligible costs |
|---|--|
| A less efficient investment is made in place of the EXEED project | The eligible costs are the cost of the planned EXEED project minus the cost of completing a less efficient investment option. |
| The existing equipment or installation is maintained in place of the EXEED project | The eligible costs are the costs of the planned EXEED project minus the Net Present Value of the cost of maintaining the existing equipment (including repairs, maintenance and modernization). |
| The proposed investment will be required later in accordance with regulations/ obligations. | If the counterfactual scenario consists of carrying out the same investment at a later point in time, the eligible costs shall consist of the difference between the costs of the investment for which State aid is granted and the Net Present Value of the costs of the later investment, discounted to the point in time when the aided investment would be undertaken; |
| There is no less efficient investment possible in place of the EXEED project | The eligible costs are the total investment costs of the EXEED project. |
| No counterfactual provided | Max grant aid intensity limited to 15% of eligible costs |

Additional documentation may be requested to support counterfactual analysis, including quotes and invoices as required.

7.4 Value-for-Money

A value for money check will be applied during evaluation of all projects to ensure cost effectiveness.

The value for money check will be completed as follow:

- For grant values of €500,000 or higher, the grant value will be capped at a maximum value of €850/tCO₂ (annual),
- For grant values of €50,000 to €500,000, the grant value will be capped at a maximum value of €1,000/tCO₂ (annual),
- For grant values of less than €50,000, no additional value for money test will be applied.

For applications with a grant amount request higher than €50,000, the grant amount will be capped at the higher of €50,000 or the value determined at step C.

The value for money check is subject to change in line with updated cost of carbon and government guidance.

7.5 Example grant calculation scenarios

Some example EXEED stage 2 grant scenarios are shown below:

| Scenario | Project details | Additional requirements* | Grant calculation** |
|---|---|---|-----------------------------------|
| Renovation of existing buildings (no heat pump installed) | Existing building undergoing upgrade of multiple building elements following EXEED stage 1 studies. Project does not involve installation of a heat pump. | Applicant provides evidence that investment will result in a minimum building energy performance uplift of 20%. | Up to 30% of total project costs. |
| Construction of new buildings | A new building design will be constructed following EXEED stage 1 studies. | Applicant provides counterfactual costs relating to the construction of a less energy efficient building design. These costs are deducted from total project costs to calculate eligible costs. | Up to 30% of eligible costs. |
| Upgrading existing manufacturing process | An existing manufacturing or process stream will be upgraded with new, more energy efficient equipment. Existing equipment has not yet reached end of lifetime. | Applicant provides counterfactual costs relating to the repair, maintenance, and modernisation costs of existing equipment over project lifetime. The NPV of these costs are deducted from total project costs to calculate eligible costs. | Up to 30% of eligible costs. |
| Implementation of a new manufacturing process | A new manufacturing or process stream will be implemented following an EXEED stage 1 project. | Applicant provides costs relating to completing a less energy efficient design for the proposed manufacturing process. | Up to 30% of eligible costs. |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|---|
| | | These costs are deducted from the total project costs to calculate eligible costs. | |
| Heat pump installation with supporting building energy efficiency measures | A heat pump will be installed with supporting building energy efficiency measures. | Applicant provides the COP calculation for the proposed heat pump. Grant aid is linked to COP value (as per SSRH). | Up to 40% of heat pump project costs. Up to 30% grant aid applied to other building energy efficiency upgrades. |
| Solar PV installation | Solar PV installed as part of wider building energy efficiency upgrades works. | None | Up to 20% of solar PV costs. |

*Grant aid of 15% may be awarded to projects which do not provide a counterfactual.

**Value for money check applies across all scenarios.

8 Audit and Inspections Process

8.1 Purpose/objective

SEAI will complete desktop audits and inspections to ensure the energy improvement works are carried out in accordance with the terms and conditions of the EXEED grant programme and the grant agreement.

SEAI may complete audits and inspections at any stage of the process.

The EXEED Applicant is responsible for quality assurance on their project.

A [webinar of the EXEED Grant Scheme Audit and Inspections process](#) is available on our [webpage](#).

8.2 Inspection supports

SEAI provides a range of supports to help applicants to complete projects successfully. These supports include:

1. Pre-Inspections
2. Technical Advice
3. Desktop Audits
4. Inspections
5. Interim Inspections
6. Re-inspections
7. Appeals

8.2.1 Pre-inspections

Pre-inspections may be carried out after application and in advance of the energy improvement works taking place. The principal purpose of the pre-inspection is to confirm conditions on site match application details and to inform SEAI's evaluation process.

8.2.2 Technical advice

Once a letter of offer is issued, technical advice and information on the audit and inspection processes is available by email²³ or through the non-domestic Inspector who will be allocated to the project. Once appointed by SEAI, the non-domestic Inspector will contact the Applicant.

NOTE: All organisations following the EXEED Certified process for energy efficient design are required to appoint an [energy efficient design expert](#) to the project. There are also [EXEED Mentors](#) available to provide advice with any aspect of the EXEED Certified process.

8.2.3 Desktop audits

A desktop audit entails the review of documentation, certification and photographic evidence provided by the Applicant to demonstrate that works are complete. Desktop audits assess the quality of the energy upgrade works submitted.

Desktop audits may also be selected in circumstances where it is not possible to complete a physical inspection e.g., during COVID-19. Desktop audits may be selected for example, to reduce the number of physical inspections, as a result of poor-quality inspection results where there are multiple properties in an application, and randomly.

All changes to the original scope should be notified and approved by SEAI in advance of desktop audit (see Section [6.5](#)).

In order to facilitate a desktop audit, the Applicant uploads their documentation to their SharePoint folder. It is the Applicant's responsibility to ensure all relevant documentation is complete and available for audit. For details of the documentation required for desktop audit, refer to the Design & Certification matrix for non-domestic measures²⁴.

SEAI's Inspector will review the documentation, which may include the following.

- Examine documents to ensure completeness and that they match the final specification
- Ensure documents are technically correct and in accordance with scheme terms & conditions/guidelines

²³ Contact us here for any inspections related queries: EXEED.Inspections@seai.ie

²⁴ Available at: https://www.seai.ie/business-and-public-sector/business-grants-and-supports/xeed-certified-grant/Design-Standards-Certification-for-Non-Domestic-Measures_2022.pdf

- Reference certificates with online databases, such as RGI registration
- Regulatory compliance checks
- Sense-check key metrics
- Analyse photographic evidence, ensuring it provides supporting evidence of completion

If further information is required or information is missing, the auditor will send a Request For Information (RFI) and detail the outstanding items.

Where works have not been installed in accordance with the relevant standards and Scheme terms and conditions, SEAI may decline payment of the grant. If works are not completed to the agreed scope, or sign-off documentation is not available or deficient, SEAI will identify remedial works, assign a site inspection, or reduce the grant payment.

Results of the audit will be emailed to the Applicant and where relevant, guidance will be provided on the appropriate Code of Practice and re-works arising from the audit. (See EXEED Desktop Audit Template sample²⁵.)

8.2.4 Inspection's process

Upon being notified the work is complete, SEAI will carry out inspections to verify compliance with the Grant Agreement.

Before site inspection, the Inspector assigned to the EXEED Project will contact the [EED Owner](#) or their representative to ensure the inspection process is understood.

8.2.4.1 Notification of Completion

Applicants should notify SEAI that they are ready for inspection when:

- physical EXEED grant-aided works have been completed (in accordance with the agreed scope of works); and
- documentation has been uploaded to the assigned Inspection folder²⁶.

8.2.4.2 Privacy Notice – COVID-19 Risk Assessment for Site Visits

The Applicant will complete their own Health and Safety COVID-19 risk assessments. The results of these risk assessments will be shared with SEAI and its agents prior to any site visit.

Prior to any site visits, SEAI or its agents will call the Applicant to assess the following in respect of COVID-19:

- Are they willing to have a site visit take place?
- Assess risk associated with the property/premises and occupants; and
- Assess if any occupant(s) have come in contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 within the last 14 days, are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, been advised by a doctor to self-isolate/ cocoon at this time, have the virus or if they have/ are awaiting results for Covid-19, if any occupant(s) returned to the Island of Ireland from a country not on the Government's green list of countries within the last 14 days.

²⁵ Available at: https://www.seai.ie/business-and-public-sector/business-grants-and-supports/exeed-certified-grant/Design-Standards-Certification-for-Non-Domestic-Measures_2022.pdf

²⁶ Refer to the Design & Certification Matrix for non-domestic measures at: https://www.seai.ie/business-and-public-sector/business-grants-and-supports/exeed-certified-grant/Design-Standards-Certification-for-Non-Domestic-Measures_2022.pdf

8.2.4.3 Scheduling

Once completion of the works is notified, the SEAI Inspector will review the final scope of the project together with relevant stage 2 submissions and the uploaded sign-off documentation.

The Inspector will then contact the Applicant or their representative, to arrange the inspection. Applicants must ensure SEAI can access sites for inspection within 5 calendar days of contact being made. It is not essential that the Applicant is present, but the person acting on behalf of the Applicant and meeting the SEAI inspector must:

- be familiar with the layout of the site.
- be familiar with details of the energy upgrade works.
- notify the Inspector of any site-specific potential hazards.
- have all necessary original documentation to hand e.g., commissioning reports, RECI certificates, grid connection licences, CE declarations and O&M manuals.

The Applicant or their representative may be asked to retrieve equipment which is difficult to access (e.g., light fittings), to verify compliance with quality and safety standards. If cavity insulation has been installed, the SEAI Inspector may drill walls and use a borescope to confirm insulation has been installed.

Applicants will generally be notified by SEAI prior to site inspections. However, in appropriate circumstances, SEAI reserves the right to carry out inspections without notice to the Applicant. Such circumstances may include, but are not limited to, where SEAI receives complaints indicating non-compliance with scheme rules, where access for inspection is delayed or refused and/or where there are material discrepancies in relation to documentation submitted by an Applicant.

If an inspection is not pre-arranged, the Inspector may arrive unannounced to the project location. In such cases, the Applicant or the operator is required to use reasonable effort to provide access to the Inspector.

8.2.4.4 Inspection

The scope of the Inspector's remit for inspections covers 1) documentation and 2) physical works.

1) Documentation

Sign-off documentation²⁷ will typically include testing and commissioning reports and final certification for all equipment installed. Examples of the documentation required are:

- Commissioning Certificate
- Product Datasheet
- RECI Certificate
- O&M Manual
- Declaration of Conformity

Commissioning and certification should be undertaken & provided by professional, registered, and qualified personnel. The organisation undertaking the commissioning should be clearly stated on the commissioning certificates, together with the name, signature, contact details of the person signing the certificate and the date of signing.

Where there is any doubt as to what an acceptable level of certification is, the [EED Owner](#) should contact their SEAI Inspector or email SEAI at EXEED.Inspections@seai.ie

2) Physical Works

With regards physical works the inspector is checking against 3 broad questions:

- Are works completed and installed to specification?
- Are the installed works operating under control?
- Are there any safety / environmental concerns?

8.2.4.5 Inspection Results

Inspection results will be issued in writing and typically emailed to the Applicant within 7 calendar days of the inspection.

Where works have been installed in accordance with the agreed scope, relevant standards and all relevant sign-off documentation is available, the inspection will be recorded as a "Pass" and the project will proceed to financial and payment checks.

Where works have not been installed in accordance with the agreed scope and relevant standards or sign-off documentation is not available or deficient, SEAI will either identify remedial works (re-works) to be done or if the works are not present, decline to pay the grant.

Re-works will be assigned different severity ratings. Severity ratings are classified as follows, with Severity 1 being the most severe.

| Severity Rating | Severity 1 | Severity 2 | Severity 3 |
|---------------------------|---|---|--------------------------------|
| Classification | Possible health and safety risk or highly non-compliant | Potential to compromise the effectiveness of the installation | Minor issue, not best practice |
| Rework Requirement | Re-work required | Re-work required | Re-work required |

²⁷ Sign-off documentation required at completion is set out in the Design and Certification matrix, available at: https://www.seai.ie/business-and-public-sector/business-grants-and-supports/exeed-certified-grant/Design-Standards-Certification-for-Non-Domestic-Measures_2022.pdf

8.2.4.6 Completion of re-works

If re-works are identified, evidence of their completion should be submitted by the Applicant to the Inspector, with the re-works declaration section on the Inspection Report duly signed.

The declaration is to be signed by either the Applicant or their representative and accepted by the Inspector before it will be sent for financial and payment checks. The re-works and the declaration must be completed within 2 weeks of the notification of inspections results, returning it to SEAI at EXEED.Inspections@seai.ie

8.2.5 Interim Inspections

Interim Inspections may be carried out when an applicant confirms a key milestone has been met or interim payments are agreed.

Interim inspections also occur where upgrade works may be difficult to access or inspect on completion of works (for example where works are at height or in confined spaces, such as floor insulation). It is the Applicant's responsibility to highlight this to SEAI well in advance of completion while access is still available on site.

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

A record of the status of the works will be maintained following interim inspections but no final status will be assigned (Pass / Re-works) until the project is notified by the Applicant as complete and any final audits or inspections have been undertaken.

The scheduling process is as outlined in Section 8.2.4.3 above.

8.2.6 Re-inspections

Where there are significant re-works, a re-inspection of remedial works may be undertaken.

8.2.7 Appeals

Inspection results can be appealed through the appeals process. A Re-works Appeals template form is required to be submitted²⁸. This form can be provided on request by EXEED@seai.ie.

The SEAI Customer Charter details the process for appeals.²⁹

Appeals must be received in writing no later than 14 calendar days from the date of issue of the desktop audit or inspection result. It is essential that any appeal is supported by appropriate supporting documentation such as sketches or photographs. Appeals must provide evidence to challenge the inspection findings and/or advise on mitigating factors that may have affected the outcome of the inspection. This will enable SEAI to assess your appeal promptly and respond in the earliest possible timeframe.

If you are making an appeal on behalf of another person, please also submit their written agreement for you to represent them.

²⁸ The Re-works Appeals template form is available on request. Please email EXEED@seai.ie

²⁹ Available on our website at: <https://www.seai.ie/customer-charter/>

9 Grant payments

General

A Grant offer can only become valid on the receipt of signed acceptance of the offer, which must be returned to SEAI within 14 days of issuance to the Grantee.

As per the letter of offer, the grant is only payable in respect of costs which are:

- (i) vouched, identifiable and verifiable
- (ii) supported by documentary evidence which shall be clear, specific, and contemporary.
- (iii) incurred and paid for by the Grantee after the Project Start Date and no later than the Project Completion Date
- (iv) up to and no more than the amounts stated in the grant agreement in respect of the categories below.
 - Professional Services (Stage 1)
 - Investment Professional Services (Stage 2)
 - Capital Expenditure (net of any counterfactual)
 - VAT

These broad categories above are comprised of individual measures (e.g., Lighting, HVAC, etc.) which are referenced from the final evaluation which forms the basis for the Grant offer.

Expenditure is limited to the total eligible costs for each opportunity recommended for support, as set out in the Letter of Offer, i.e., it is not permissible to overspend on one measure and off-set this with an underspend on another opportunity.

Example: Approved Capital Expenditure of €10,000 is awarded (€6,000 for measure 1 and €4,000 for measure 2). The actual costs incurred are €7,000 for measure 1 and €3,000 for measure 2. The eligible expenditure is therefore €9,000 (measure 1 capped at €6,000 and measure 2 €3,000).

Final Payment

Grant payment will be conditional upon satisfactory receipt by SEAI of the following documentation by Project Completion Date:

- 1) Updated EXEED documents (at Stage 1 only)
 - a. [Project Execution Plan](#)
 - b. [Energy Balance Study](#)
 - c. Evidence of the [Challenge & Analyse](#) process
 - d. Current revision of the [Energy Savings Register](#)
- 2) A completed Inspection Spreadsheet and supporting documentary evidence of works, submitted to SEAI by Project Completion Date (at Stage 2 only)
- 3) A completed Payment Request Form
- 4) A completed Grant Claim Workbook
- 5) Invoices for all itemised eligible costs. These must contain adequate description and detail of the eligible costs being claimed. The invoice should clearly show the incremental costs over and above any counterfactual amounts relevant to each measure.
- 6) Proof of payment in the form of the Grantee's bank statement, clearly showing the full invoice payment. Where the payment is for multiple invoices or is included in a larger EFT payment, a breakdown of these payments is required in order to allow verification of payment.
- 7) Valid Tax Clearance
- 8) Current VAT status confirmation from the Revenue Commissioners where Grantee is seeking to reclaim VAT on eligible costs

On receipt of the required reports and financial documentation within four weeks of the project completion date, and it being confirmed as satisfactory, together with final inspection sign-off, SEAI will transfer the grant payment electronically to the Grantee's bank account and issue an accompanying letter notifying payment to the Grantee.

Interim Payments

Grantees can claim for interim payments prior to project completion and final payment. Interim payments on a project will be capped at 50% of the completed measures prior to passing audit / inspection and completion of any reworks. The following should be noted in relation to making an interim claim:

- All documentation at points 3-8 above is required for an interim payment
- Works must be completed for any invoices submitted i.e., deposits and payments on account are not permitted
- The Grantee must provide written confirmation and photographic evidence of the completed measures
- Payments for partially completed measures are not permitted
- SEAI at their discretion may increase the 50% payment cap on interim payments under special circumstances

Payment revocation

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 project completion date
- Requests for payment have not been submitted within 4 weeks of the project completion date
- Works have not been completed to standard or re-works are outstanding
- Works have not been tested and commissioned
- Works have not been 'switched on'
- Work was commenced prior to letter of offer being issued
- Works have not passed audit / inspection or access has not been provided in order to carry out inspection
- Upgrade works completed do not match the proposal and specification submitted and approved by SEAI in accordance with the programme guidelines

Further guidance on Payment requests can be accessed through SEAI payment guides located on the SEAI website.

9.1 Grant appeals

The SEAI Customer Charter³⁰ sets out the process to follow in order to lodge an appeal or complaint in relation to SEAI programmes. The appeals process is available to scheme applicants who are not satisfied with the outcome of a decision made by SEAI, for example, in relation to a grant application or payment request.

³⁰ Available on our website, at: <https://www.seai.ie/customer-charter/>

9.2 Grant extensions

SEAI policy is that all projects should be completed within the original grant window and the completion date as per Letter of Offer should be strictly adhered to. In exceptional circumstances where events negatively impact the project timelines an extension may be granted. Extension requests must be made using the Extension Request Form³¹.

- the extension request must clearly outline the reasons why the project cannot be completed within the original timelines
- the request must be lodged at the earliest opportunity and prior to original completion date
- a new date for completion must be submitted
- the new completion date is final, and no further extensions can be sought

SEAI will consider the request but is under no obligation to grant an extension on a project.

³¹ In the event of project delays, Applicants should contact SEAI for an Extension Request Form.

10 Terms & 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 Programme 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 Grant Agreement. In the event of any such changes to the Terms and Conditions, SEAI will advise all applicants of the change by email, using the email provided by the Applicant in their application. It is the Applicant's responsibility to monitor emails received from SEAI at the email address provided in relation.
2. The Applicant's agreement with SEAI in the event of a Grant Offer being accepted will comprise the Letter of Offer from SEAI including an associated Project Summary spreadsheet, the Terms and Conditions of the Programme, the Application Guide (including its Appendices), and the rest of the Application Form. The Applicant having accepted the Grant Offer and communicated his/her acceptance of it 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 including the project summary
 - b. the Terms and Conditions of the Programme
 - c. the Application Guidelines
 - d. the Application Form
3. The project, in respect of which the grant application is made, must be, located in the **Republic of Ireland**.
4. Applicants must ensure that the application is submitted via the online platform provided. Applications submitted by e-mail or hard copy will not be accepted.
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 in 2022 confirming that VAT cannot be reclaimed on the particular project.
8. A requirement of this EXEED Grant Scheme is to commit to progressing to EXEED Certified status. The expected timeframe for achieving EXEED Certified should be included in the Stage-2 Form. **SEAI reserves the right to claim back grant payments in the future, where EXEED Certified is not subsequently pursued.**
9. The lower of either €30,000 or 10% of the grant amount will be held on a retainer until the asset achieves EXEED certification and verification of the project energy savings, through one of the following paths:
 - a. EXEED Verified achieved

- b. EXEED Managed achieved
- c. EXEED Designed achieved, plus energy credits from the project counted towards an obligated party's target, following SEAI approval of an [EEOS](#) application including measurement and verification.

The retainer will expire 18 months after the Project Completion Date. It is the responsibility of the Applicant to provide evidence that one of the above three paths has been achieved within that window. Where this is not achieved, SEAI will revoke the remaining grant amount.

The value of the retainer will be calculated at the point of grant payment, based on the eligible costs incurred, which may be lower than the grant amount offered.

10. The Grant Offer only becomes valid upon receipt by SEAI from the Applicant of the signed Grant Agreement which must be returned to SEAI within 14 days of date of issue.
11. The Applicant must ensure Grant approval is received before proceeding with any orders, purchases or commencing works. No payments will be made retrospectively for costs incurred prior to approval being granted. **Orders placed or invoices dated prior to grant approval will not be eligible for grant support.**
12. The 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. The itemised eligible costs and the total grant amount will not be permitted to escalate under any circumstances, once approved.
14. The Applicant must obtain all necessary consents and statutory approvals and have authority to implement the project.
15. The Applicant 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 State Aid and public procurement.
16. The timing of payment to approved applicants 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.
17. The Applicant must grant full access to SEAI and its agents to inspect and review the project within 5 business days of request for access, save 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).
18. **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 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 supported under the Programme.

19. In the event of any breach of these Terms and Conditions of the Programme or the other documents referred to in Clause 2 above by the Applicant 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 and the Applicant agrees to comply with any such demand within one month of the date of the letter from SEAI containing such demand.**
20. 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 Programme.
21. In relation to any complaints or appeals under the EXEED Grant programme, the Applicant shall follow the SEAI Complaints and Appeals Policy contained within the SEAI Customer Charter, published on the SEAI website, and amended from time to time.
22. Inspection results may be appealed in accordance with provisions in Section [8.2.7](#).
23. 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 an SEAI Inspector, or **any breach of these Terms and Conditions of the Programme** 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 19 shall also apply.
24. SEAI undertakes to use its best endeavours to hold confidential, any information provided by the Applicant subject to its obligations under law, including the Freedom of Information Act 2014 (as amended). 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.
25. 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.³²

³² The full EXEED Certified Privacy Notice is available at: <https://www.seai.ie/Privacy-Notice-EXEED-Certified.pdf>

26. The Applicant acknowledges that it is a Controller for the purposes of its activities under the Project and the grant scheme. The Applicant shall comply with its obligations as a Controller under all Applicable Data Protection Law.
27. SEAI is a Controller in its capacity as the administrator of the grant scheme.
28. In the performance of the Project and its activities under the grant scheme, the Applicant will share certain Personal Data with SEAI. Any Personal Data which the Applicant shares with SEAI will be treated by SEAI in accordance with the provisions of the Applicable Data Protection Law and its Privacy Statement.
29. An applicant is under no direct or indirect obligation to undertake and/or complete its project. Rather, it is up to an applicant whether or not it wishes to undertake and complete its project.
30. An applicant must notify SEAI immediately if it decides not to undertake and/or complete its project. If a successful applicant decides not to undertake and/or complete its project, SEAI will not pay it 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.
31. The Grantee (asset owner) shall, on certification to EXEED (of any level), publicly promote the certification through the display of an approved plaque (as specified by SEAI) at a prominent entrance point to the relevant site or facility.
32. Details of any organisation which receives €500,000 or more (cumulatively) in grant support will be published on the SEAI website, in accordance with state aid requirements.
33. All assets which receive EXEED Certified grant support will be added to an EXEED Asset Register, following achievement of EXEED certification for energy efficient design of their asset. This register is expected to be published on the SEAI website in 2024.

11 Glossary of Terms

Some of the terms below refer to the EXEED Designed standard.³³

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Baseline design | This is the reference “design” used for the purposes of undertaking the EBS. It is the design iteration in place when the EXEED process begins, which should be as early as possible in the design process. For the purposes of determining the eligible costs for EXEED grant support and associated energy and carbon emission savings, the baseline for new build and major renovation or change of use projects would ideally be compliant with building regulations. If that is not the case, a counterfactual will need to be applied to ensure that the grant amount requested is based on eligible costs. The M&V process will compare the energy use of the completed asset in operation with the baseline design |
| Challenge and Analyse | An EXEED process undertaken at the pre-investment stage in order to identify energy saving opportunities specific to the asset. See section 3.2 of the EXEED Designed standard for details of the requirements |
| EBS | Energy Balance Study. See section 3.1 of the EXEED Designed standard for details of the requirements |
| EED | Energy Efficient Design. The processes, guiding principles and control implemented in design projects for the purpose of reducing an asset’s lifecycle energy consumption |
| EED Expert | Energy Efficient Design Expert. Reports directly to the EED Owner and operates independently of the project design team. See 2.1.2 of the EXEED Designed standard for a full list of the tasks they have responsibility and authority for |
| EED Owner | Person (from the organisation to be EXEED certified) assigned responsibility for ensuring that the energy efficient design is implemented in the project; reports directly to top management. See 2.1.1 of the EXEED Designed standard for a full list of the tasks they have responsibility and authority for. Typically, also the lead applicant. |
| EEOS | Energy Efficiency Obligation Scheme ³⁴ |
| ESR | Energy Savings Register. See sections 3.2, 3.3, 4.2, 4.3 and 5.0 of the EXEED Designed standard for details of the requirements. |
| EXEED | Excellence in Energy Efficient Design. A standardised process for EED |
| EXEED Mentor | An independent expert in energy efficient design working on behalf of SEAI to provide advice to applicants about their EXEED journey towards certification. |
| EXEED studies | A package of studies undertaken at the pre-investment stage under the guidance of an independent EED Expert, including PEP, EBS, Challenge & Analyse and ESR |
| GBER | General Block Exemption Regulation. EU State aid regulation which EXEED grant scheme has been notified under |
| M&V | Measurement and Verification. Established protocols include IPMVP and ISO 50015 |
| PEP | Project Execution Plan |

³³ Available at: <https://www.seai.ie/publications/EXEED-Certified-Design-Disinction-Requirements-2017.pdf>

³⁴ More information available at: [Energy Efficiency Obligation Scheme \(EEOS\) | Business Grants | SEAI](#). Details of obligated parties available at: [Obligated Parties | EEOS | Energy In Business | SEAI](#)

³⁵ More information available at: [Support Scheme for Renewable Heat | Business Grants | SEAI](#)

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