

Free SEAI-funded energy audits for Irish SMEs

A practical walkthrough of SEAI's Support Scheme for Energy Audits (SSEA) worth €2,000

What it is, who can apply, and how to get one.

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Introduction

Energy costs for Irish SMEs have changed sharply since 2021. Wholesale electricity prices, network charges, capacity payments and standing charges have all moved upward. Many business owners now make energy decisions that simply did not matter five years ago, including choices about tariffs, maximum import capacity, on-site generation, and which loads to keep, replace or switch off.

Energy efficiency is the one cost lever that does not depend on the wholesale market. The kWh you do not use is the kWh you do not pay for, now or in any future tariff. The challenge is knowing which actions are worth the time and money on your specific site.

The Support Scheme for Energy Audits (SSEA) is SEAI's response. It provides a €2,000 voucher towards the cost of a professional energy audit. For eligible businesses, the voucher is paid directly to the auditor.

When Exemplar is selected as auditor, this covers the audit fee.

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What an SSEA audit covers

- A 12–24 month review of your electricity, gas, oil and any other fuel bills.
- A site visit by a SEAI-registered energy auditor, such as Exemplar.
- A SEAI-format report with your energy breakdown, a prioritised action list, costs, paybacks and applicable grants.
- A walkthrough of the findings. The report is yours to keep and to use when seeking grants or board approval.

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Who can apply

The SSEA is open to most non-domestic businesses in Ireland. Exemplar has delivered audits across hospitality, retail, manufacturing, churches, community centres, schools, sports clubs, nursing homes, healthcare and agriculture.

What does it cost you?

The €2,000 SSEA voucher is paid by SEAI directly to the auditor. Where Exemplar is selected as auditor, this covers the audit fee. We will confirm that with you before you apply.

Eligibility at a glance

- ✓ Your business is a registered SME (under 250 employees and either turnover ≤ €50m or balance sheet ≤ €43m).
- ✓ The site is non-domestic and located in the Republic of Ireland.
- ✓ You are responsible for paying the energy bills at the site.
- ✓ One voucher per Applicant/Company, subject to SEAI eligibility.
- ✓ No previous SSEA-funded audit for the Applicant/Company.
- ✓ Your annual energy spend at the site is at least €10,000, excluding transport energy.

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Exemplar’s SSEA portfolio to date

Below are real numbers drawn from the SSEA audits Exemplar has delivered for Irish SMEs across the last few years. In our reviewed sample, recommended measures identified potential savings equivalent to around 30% of annual site energy use, through specific, prioritised measures with payback periods to match.

50+

SSEA Completed

7.7 GWh

Annual Energy Audited *

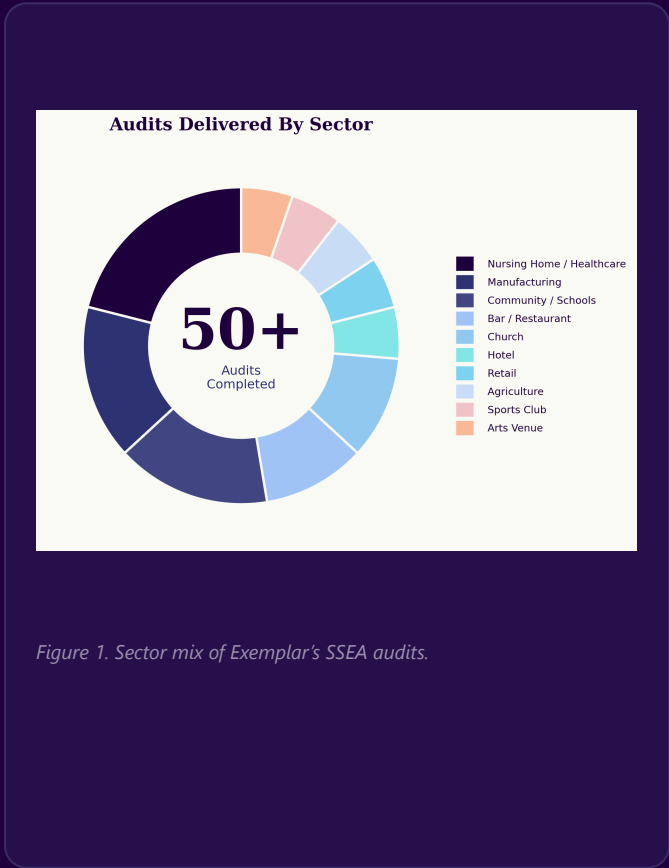
1,276 t

CO₂e Baseline Per Year *

~30%

Average Energy Savings Per Audit

* From the audits in our reviewed sample. Portfolio totals grow with every audit completed.



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Common findings by sector

SECTOR	TYPICAL OPPORTUNITIES
Pubs / Restaurants	Refrigeration upgrades, variable-speed beer cooling, redundant gas disconnect, outdoor-heater swap, PIR controls.
Retail / Showrooms	AHU and VRF heat pumps, occupancy controls, rooftop solar PV with SEAI grant. LED retrofit usually already done.
Manufacturing	Building Management Systems, heat pump for process or comfort heat, compressor controls, waste-heat recovery.
Hotels / Nursing Homes	Hot-water heat pumps, room-level controls, kitchen ventilation, LED in back-of-house.
Churches / Community	Pew or infrared heating, vestibule auto-doors, targeted fabric upgrades.
Agriculture	BMS, dual-fuel consolidation, chiller upgrades, dry-storage solar.

How to apply

The application is made on the SEAI portal and takes around fifteen minutes. SEAI normally issues the voucher within five working days. The walkthrough below shows each step.

Before you start, check the criteria. Your business must be a non-obligated entity, tax compliant and registered in the Republic of Ireland.

For SMEs, that means under 250 employees and either turnover of €50m or less, or a balance sheet of €43m or less. The site must have annual energy spend of at least €10,000, excluding transport energy, and only one SSEA voucher is allowed per Applicant/Company.

If you are unsure, just contact Exemplar.

Step 1. Sign up for the SEAI portal, if you have not already

Before you can apply for an SSEA voucher, your business needs a registered SEAI online account. If you already have one, from a previous grant application or any other SEAI scheme, skip to Step 2. Otherwise, register at seai.ie → My Account → Register a Business. The signup form will ask you to confirm that your business meets the SME definition, under 250 employees and either turnover of €50 million or less, or balance sheet total of €43 million or less. If your business is larger than this, the SSEA is not available to you.

BEFORE YOU APPLY

You should have the following to hand before you start the registration:

- Business / trading name, as registered.
- CRO number, your Companies Registration Office number for limited companies and partnerships.
- Tax Reference Number (TRN), your business tax reference from Revenue.
- Tax Clearance Access Number (TCAN), an 8-character code from Revenue confirming your tax-clearance status. Get this through ROS (Revenue Online Service) under 'My Services → Manage Tax Clearance'.
- MPRN, your 11-digit electricity Meter Point Reference Number, usually found at the top right of your electricity bill.
- GPRN, your gas Point Reference Number, if the site has a gas connection.
- Eircode for the audit site.
- Business address and contact details, including registered office, billing contact, phone and email.

Once your business account is active you can proceed to apply for the SSEA voucher. The screens that follow show each step.

Step 2. Sign in and open the SSEA tab

Log into your SEAI account at seai.ie. From the Application Dashboard, select ‘Non-Domestic’ from the dropdown, then choose the ‘SSEA’ tab on the left. Click the blue ‘Create new Application’ button on the right of the page to begin.

Application Dashboard

Applications

Non-Domestic

SSEA

NDMS

Business Energy Upgrades

Application Ref#

MPRN

Location Name

Updated On

Status

Grant Amount

Search

Export to Excel

Create New Application

There are no records to display.

Step 3. Enter the location details

On the application form, fill in the location of the site to be audited. You will need the site’s MPRN, an 11-digit number usually found at the top right of your electricity bill. Click ‘Validate MPRN’. This auto-fills the address. Add any missing fields, including City/Town, County and Eircode.

Please provide the following details

Mandatory fields are denoted with a *

This section allows you to apply for an energy audit voucher. The details below should be provided only for the location (eg site, office, facility, etc) where the audit will be carried out

Location Details

Location Name *

MPRN *

Validate MPRN

* Your MPRN is an 11 digit number on top right of your electricity bill

Address Line 1 *

Address Line 2

City/Town

County *

Eircode *

* Lookup: Eircode Finder

Step 4. Add the site contact and energy spend

Name the person on-site who will host the audit visit. They will give the auditor access on the day and provide utility bills. Select your annual energy spend band from the dropdown. Your annual energy spend at the site must be at least €10,000, excluding transport energy, to be eligible for an SSEA.

Location Contact

The Location Contact is the person who will be contacted by the Energy Auditor to arrange and prepare for the site visit. The Location Contact will need to provide data on energy usage (ing from utility bills) and provide the Energy Auditor with access to the site. On the day of the site visit they will need to accompany the auditor around the site and provide access to appropriate areas, or nominate someone who can do so. The Location Contact can be the same person as the person listed in Section A.

First Name *

Last Name *

Email *

Mobile Phone *

Provide a telephone number

Energy Details

Energy Spend *

Select

Auditor Details

Please select the Auditor and Auditing Company you plan to use for this application/site.
Please refer to SEAI's Energy Auditor List available [Here](#)

Auditing Company *

Auditor *

Step 5. Select Exemplar as your auditor

Under 'Auditor Details', click the search icon next to 'Auditing Company'. Type 'Exemplar' in the search box, then select 'Exemplar Energy Solutions Ltd' from the results. Pick a named auditor from our team. Without this step, the voucher cannot reach us.

Lookup records

Choose one record and click Select to continue

	Company/Trading Name	Contact Person	Primary Phone	Email	County	Account Status
☐	Exemplar Energy Solutions Ltd	Marcus Fitzsimons		Marcus@exemplarenergy.ie	Co. Cork	Active

Select

Cancel

Remove value

Step 6. Submit

Complete the declaration and submit. SEAI normally issues your voucher, reference EA00XXXX, by email within five working days. Forward the email to info@exemplarenergy.ie, or simply let us know and we will take it from there.

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After the audit

The audit gives you a written, prioritised list of actions. What you do with it is your decision. If you want help implementing the findings, at Exemplar we can:

- Identify the right grant for each measure, including Non-Domestic Microgen for solar PV, BEUS for fabric and heat pumps, Communities for organisations meeting the eligibility, and Accelerated Capital Allowance for qualifying equipment, and complete the applications.
- Brief specialist contractors, run quotations and check bids against the audit assumptions.
- Verify, after installation, that each measure is delivering the predicted savings.
- Review tariffs and supplier contracts so the savings are not given back at the next renewal.

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Looking ahead

Energy is now a senior management and board-level cost for many Irish SMEs. The wholesale market and regulatory charges will keep moving. Efficiency is the one lever that compounds in your favour. The SSEA audit is a low-risk way to understand what to do first, what it may cost, and what is likely to pay back.

CONTACT

Talk to us

This paper is designed to help you. At Exemplar we recognise that it is still a little complicated. If you are not sure whether your business qualifies, just send us a short email or give us a call. We will tell you in plain English whether SSEA is a fit for your business.

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