Ireland's trusted **energy advisor.**

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.

Prepared By



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Exemplar

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Introduction

Energy costs for Irish businesses 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 funds an independent expert to assess your site, review your bills and put a prioritised list of practical actions in front of you.

The €2,000 voucher is paid directly by SEAI to your chosen auditor. The only cost to your business is VAT, which VAT-registered businesses can reclaim.

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What an SSEA Audit Covers

- A 12 to 24 month review of your electricity, gas, oil and any other fuel bills.
- A site visit by a SEAI-registered energy auditor.
- 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

From 11 October 2026, the SSEA is open to all private and public sector organisations in Ireland that consume less than 10 TJ (2.8 GWh) of energy per year, regardless of size, turnover or floor area. Exemplar has delivered audits across hospitality, retail, manufacturing, churches, community centres, schools, sports clubs, nursing homes, healthcare and agriculture.

What It Costs You

Only the VAT. SEAI pays the €2,000 (ex. VAT) voucher directly to your auditor. You pay VAT at 23% (€460). VAT-registered businesses can reclaim this as input VAT on their next VAT return.

Eligibility at a Glance

- ☑ Your organisation is non-obligated: it consumes less than 10 TJ (2.8 GWh) of energy per year across heat, electricity and transport. SME status no longer applies.
- ☑ Your organisation is registered in the Republic of Ireland and tax compliant, and the premises is non-domestic.
- ☑ You are responsible for paying the energy bills at the site.
- ☑ One SSEA audit voucher per applicant/company.
- ☑ No SSEA-funded audit on this site in the last four years.
- ☑ 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+	7.7 GWh	1,276 t	~30%
SSEA Completed	Annual Energy Audited *	CO_2e Baseline Per Year *	Average Energy Savings Per Audit

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

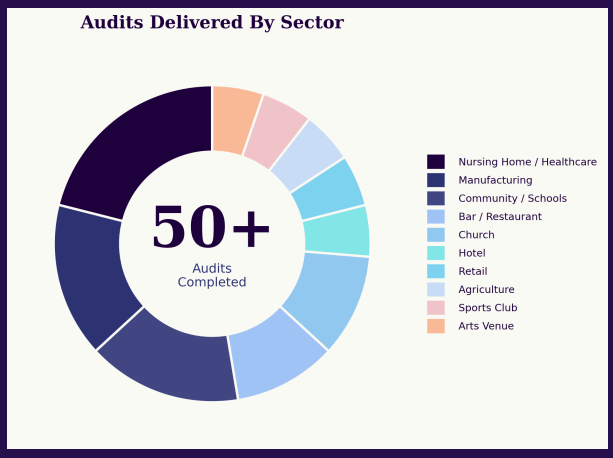


Figure 1. Sector Mix of Exemplar's SSEA Audits.

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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.

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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. From 11 October 2026, your organisation, private or public, must consume less than 10 TJ (2.8 GWh) of energy per year across heat, electricity and transport.

It must also be registered in the Republic of Ireland and tax compliant, spend at least €10,000 a year on energy at the audit site (excluding transport), and hold only one SSEA voucher per applicant/company. The premises must be non-domestic, you must pay the energy bills, and the site cannot have had an SSEA-funded audit in the last four years.

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.

All companies and public bodies, regardless of size, can create an SSEA application. Before submitting, you will be asked to declare that your organisation is non-obligated, meaning it consumes less than 10 TJ (2.8 GWh) of energy per year from all sources (heat, electricity and transport). If your consumption is above this, the SSEA is not available to you.

BEFORE YOU APPLY

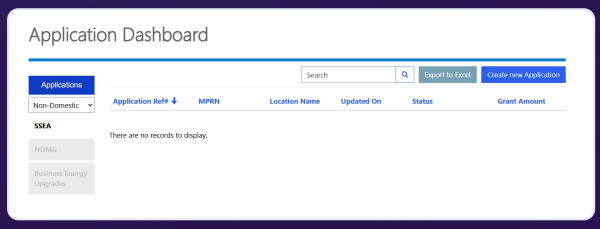
Have These to Hand Before You Start the Registration

- 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.

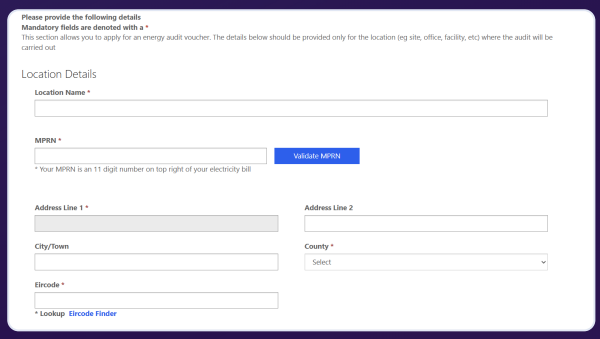
Step 2. Sign In and Open the SSEA Tab

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.



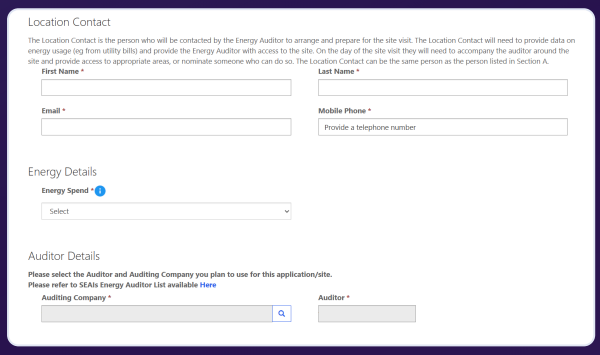
Step 3. Enter the Location Details

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.



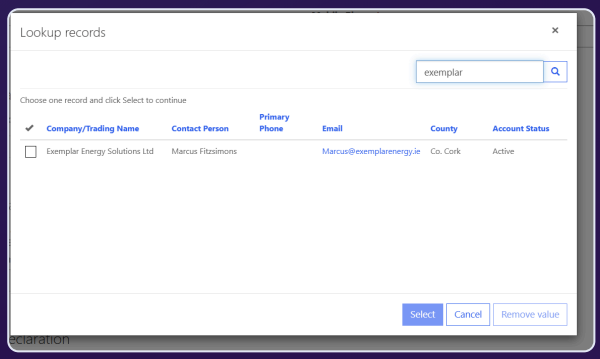
Step 4. Add the Site Contact and Energy Spend

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.



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.



Step 6. Submit

Complete the declaration, including confirmation that your organisation is non-obligated (consumes less than 10 TJ, or 2.8 GWh, of energy per year across heat, electricity and transport), 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, and if the SSEA is not a fit for your site, we will say so.
Under the scheme rules, we must verify your eligibility before any site visit takes place. Any audit that records more than 10 TJ of annual energy consumption will be deemed ineligible for SEAI support.

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