



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



GREEN ENTERPRISE

Innovation for a Circular Economy

**TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION AND
GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS**

2022

**Circular Economy Programme
Environmental Protection Agency Research Programme**

The EPA Green Enterprise Programme and the EPA Research Programme
are Government of Ireland initiatives
funded by the
Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications

This document provides a technical description and guidance for applicants for the call for proposals under the Environmental Protection Agency’s Green Enterprise: Innovation for a Circular Economy fund. Applicants should read the following carefully and consult the other documentation provided including Terms and Conditions for Grant Awards: Green Enterprise projects. For further information, please refer to the documents available on the EPA website (www.epa.ie).

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Circular Economy Programme (CEP)

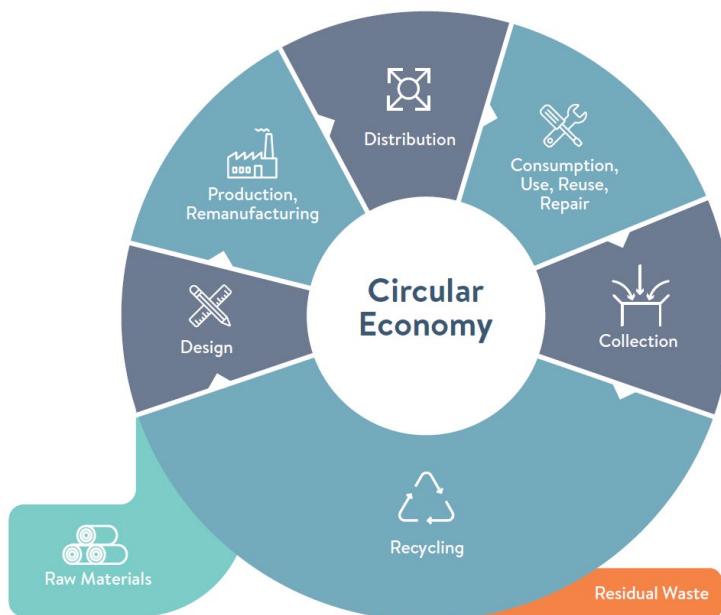
The [Circular Economy Programme](#) is a Government of Ireland initiative led by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

The Circular Economy Programme is the driving force for Ireland's move to a circular economy, where businesses, citizens and the public sector reduce resource use, prevent waste and achieve sustainable economic growth.

The Circular Economy Programme supports the whole of government Circular Economy Strategy and plays a central role in Ireland's circular transition. The Programme looks beyond waste management, to promote circularity as an economic model and to enhance coherence and alignment among national, regional and local activities. It provides for a competitive programme of circular economy supports through innovation grants, sponsorships and seed-funding. The Programme will also improve the national knowledge base and provide an evidence base to inform circular economy development in Ireland.

Green Enterprise: Innovation and Demonstration for a Circular Economy is an annual funding initiative under the Innovation and Demonstration pillar of the Circular Economy Programme. This innovation fund aims to develop innovative practical applications and solutions (in new/altered products, processes, services or solutions) that prevent waste and stimulate the circular economy in priority thematic areas. A circular economy contributes to a climate-neutral, resource-efficient economy and circular business models offer competitive opportunities for Irish businesses. Eco-design, stimulation of reuse and repair activities, the sharing economy, and finding uses for by-products are important aspects of a circular economy.

1.2 Circular Economy



A circular economy will deliver a competitive and resilient economy where Ireland is less reliant on the importation of raw material and moving to sustainable materials management. Recycling is crucial to the security of raw material supply especially those raw materials that are considered critical to the functioning and competitiveness of the economy. The circular economy clearly goes beyond resource efficiency and recycling and provides the framework to develop new business models aimed at increasing the value, use and life of materials, products and assets and designing out waste from production and consumption.

Commercial businesses (services, production industry), research organisations and social enterprises each play their part in moving Ireland to a circular economy.

The circular economy in sustainable production, business and consumption models incorporates the following features:

- Reduces input of raw materials into production processes and the presence of hazardous substances in materials and products.
- Eco-design and manufacture of products that are resource-efficient, durable, repairable, re-usable and upgradable.
- Reduces waste generation along the production, distribution and consumption phases of the economy.
- Encourages remanufacturing, refurbishment and repurposing of products.
- Maximises preparing for re-use, valorisation of residuals, industrial symbiosis and recycling.
- Maximises the recovery of EU list critical raw materials¹ and alleviates reliance on imports.
- Encourages re-use and repair of products / materials.
- Encourages new business models to optimise capacity utilisation and extend useful life of products and assets such as sharing / leasing platforms and take back services (product to service models).
- Encourages ICT tools to extend the life of products and assets.
- Ensures waste is valued and closes the loop.

EU Circular Economy policy (under the EU Green Deal and the Second Circular Economy Action Plan) and the UN Sustainable Development Goals represent the national challenges to which solutions are being sought from the market.

2.0 Green Enterprise: Innovation for a Circular Economy

2.1 Call for proposals

The type of projects to be funded shall incorporate at least one of the features of the circular economy described in section 2.2. Projects should be at least demonstration scale with a clear vision for full-scale implementation and/or for sharing findings across sector(s).

The following diagram summaries the EPA's objectives for the fund, the actions of the funded projects and the outcomes that will be supported in the delivery of the programme's goals.

¹ <https://www.crmalliance.eu/critical-raw-materials>

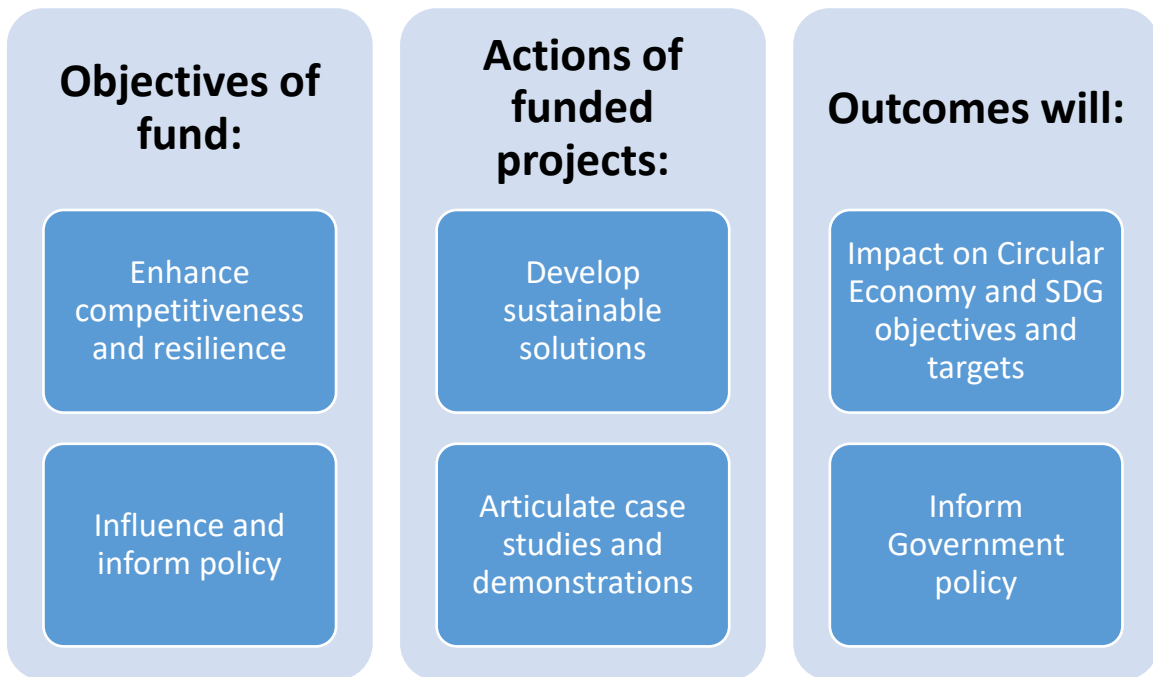
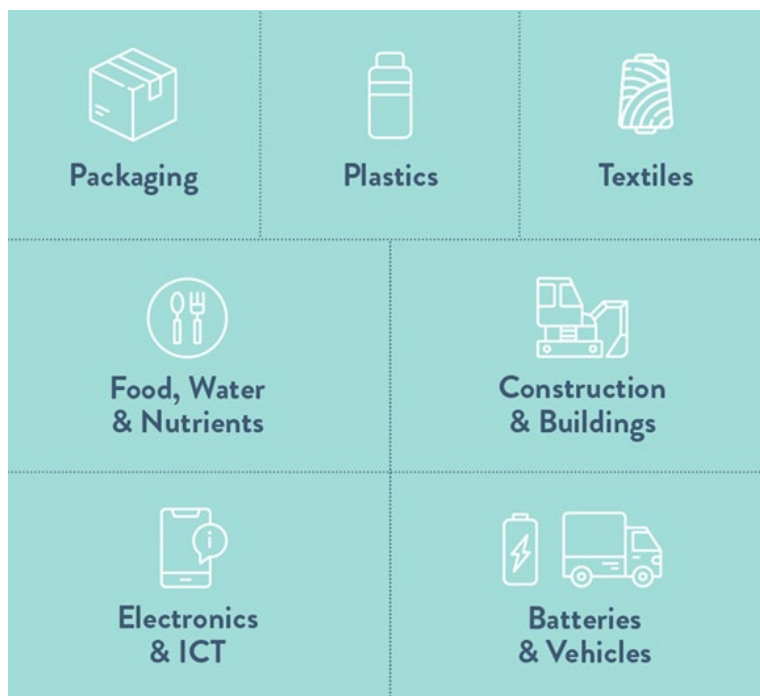


Figure 1: Summary of Circular Economy Innovation and Demonstration Fund

The Circular Economy Innovation and Demonstration Fund is €650,000 for the 2022 call. Grant aid is provided on a shared cost contribution basis, from 25 per cent up to 95 per cent of the total eligible costs incurred. Projects in the range €50k - €100k are sought. The maximum funding available is **€100,000** subject to compliance with State Aid *De Minimis* rules (see appendix 2).

2.2 Thematic areas

The thematic areas for this call relate to priority areas for the Circular Economy Programme which are aligned to the EU Green Deal priorities: Packaging, Plastics, Textiles, Construction & buildings, Food, water & nutrients; Electronics & ICT and Batteries & vehicles.



Packaging

Each EU member state is obliged to meet targets, set out in the EU Packaging and Waste Packaging Directive, for the recycling of waste packaging made from glass, plastic, paper and board, metals and wood. Recycling includes reprocessing materials so they can be used again.

The latest data show that 2019² is the third year in a row that Ireland generated over one million tonnes of packaging waste. While Ireland met all current targets for packaging waste in 2019, future recycling targets will be challenging for Ireland. Ireland's overall packaging recycling rate in 2019 was 62%, down from 64% in 2018. [as well as packaging recycling I think it would be good to include short text about potential for re-use of packaging and the SUP Directive requirements specific to plastic packaging]

Potential proposal areas:

- Supporting re-usable packaging models
- Sustainable and innovative packaging solutions that lead to reduction in packaging and waste prevention
- Redesign of packaging to replace non-recyclable packaging with recyclable packaging or replace virgin packaging with recyclable packaging.
- Redesign of packaging for ease of recycling at end-of-life.

Plastics

The EU is taking action to tackle plastic pollution and marine litter to accelerate the transition to a circular plastics economy, including the single-use plastics Directive, increased targets for plastic packaging, and a focus on the impacts of microplastics, and bio-based, biodegradable and compostable plastics.

Potential proposal areas:

- Redesign of products or packaging to replace non-recyclable plastic with recyclable plastic or replace virgin plastic with recyclable plastic.
- Redesign of plastic containing products for ease of recycling at end-of-life.
- Prevention of plastic waste during production processes.
- Elimination or reduction of hazardous chemicals from plastic products.
- Reuse/leasing business models for plastic products, reducing the need for plastic packaging and single use products.
- Elimination/capture of microplastics during production or waste management lifecycles.

Construction & buildings

Construction and Demolition (C&D) waste is the largest waste stream by volume in the EU. There are opportunities for innovation in the C&D sector to meet Circular Economy ambitions – design for reuse, preventing waste at all stages of construction & demolition, reducing hazardous materials in construction products, shifting C&D waste up the waste hierarchy from recovery operations (backfilling) into recycling/end-of-waste.

² <https://www.epa.ie/our-services/monitoring--assessment/waste/national-waste-statistics/packaging/>

The European Green Deal is Europe's growth strategy. At the heart of it is the goal of becoming the world's first climate-neutral continent by 2050. This will involve reducing the carbon footprint of all sectors, including construction & demolition. The EU Green Deal's industrial strategy recognises Europe also needs to address the sustainability of construction products and improve the energy efficiency and environmental performance of built assets. A more **sustainable built environment** will be essential for Europe's transition towards climate-neutrality.

Potential proposal areas:

- Information on the composition of material in existing buildings.
- Standardising secondary raw materials.
- Circular construction products (products that can be reused or with increased lifespan)
- Reduce absolute and per capita construction & demolition waste generation.
- Selective demolition to enable removal of hazardous materials and facilitate reuse and recycling.

Food, nutrients and water

Through preventing food waste, becoming more efficient in using what we have, and rescuing surplus food that cannot be prevented, Ireland can reduce the environmental impacts associated with food waste. The excess of nutrients in producing food (especially nitrogen and phosphorus) in the environment, stemming from excess use and the fact that not all nutrients used in agriculture are effectively absorbed by plants, is another major source of air, soil and water pollution and climate impacts.

Food waste can arise for many reasons at a number of different points in the food supply chain. For example, at the early stages of agricultural production, crops may be grown which are never harvested, or they may be harvested but wasted due to damage or fluctuations in demand. Retailers may throw away out of date or imperfect stock, and restaurants may throw away food left on plates by their customers. Businesses may not be aware of the amount of the food waste they produce and may not see that there is a problem that needs to be dealt with. Different businesses will have their own reasons for wasting food and have their own solutions for reducing it.

An example of food waste prevention would be implementing procedures or technology to identify the amounts and type of food being wasted within a business, or in the supply chain, with a view to reducing it.

Potential proposal areas:

- Promoting innovative waste prevention solutions across the food production and food processing sectors.
- Implementing technical and behavioural interventions to reduce food waste in commercial settings.
- Innovative solutions to gathering and sharing reliable and accurate food waste information to identify areas for improvement and to measure progress.

Electronics and ICT

The amount of waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE or e-waste) generated every year in the EU is increasing. WEEE includes a large range of devices such as computers, fridges and mobile phones at the end of their life. This type of waste contains a complex mixture of materials, some of which are hazardous. These can cause major environmental and health problems if the discarded devices are not managed properly. In addition, modern electronics contain rare and expensive resources (critical raw materials), which can be recycled if the waste is effectively managed.

Potential proposal areas

- Improving the collection, treatment and recycling of electrical and electronic equipment (EEE) at the end of their life
- New EEE products using more recycled and recyclable content
- Designing electrical products and their components for longevity
- Elimination or reduction of hazardous chemicals from EEE.

Batteries and Vehicles

EU and National legislation on waste batteries and accumulators and End of Life Vehicles (ELV) aim to promote the reuse and recycling of these waste streams by setting targets for the collection, treatment, recycling and disposal of waste and ensuring they are managed in an environmentally sound manner. Ireland must continue to improve the reuse and recycling of valuable material from ELVs and batteries as part of our transition to a circular economy.

Potential proposal areas

- Improving the collection, treatment and recycling of batteries and vehicles at the end of their life.

Textiles

European consumption of textiles has the fourth highest impact on the environment and climate change, after food, housing and mobility. It is the third highest sector for use of water and land use, and fifth for the use of primary raw materials and greenhouse gas emissions.

The average European throws away 11kg of textiles every year. Global textiles production almost doubled between 2000 and 2015, and the consumption of clothing and footwear is expected to increase by 63% by 2030. The need to address the production and consumption of textiles is now more urgent than ever before.

The 2020 Circular Economy Action Plan identify textiles as a key product value chain with an urgent need and a strong potential for the transition to sustainable and circular production, consumption and business models.

Potential proposal areas:

- New business models for re-use of textiles.
- Projects that lead to extending the life of textile products
- Eco-design reducing the presence of hazardous substances in textile products

2.3 Target audience

Green Enterprise is seeking innovative projects that will have a direct impact on business and industry operating environments and provide demonstration and evidence for circular economy in Ireland.

2.4 Compliance

Applicants are responsible for ensuring that their proposed projects meet legal obligations. As set out in the Green Enterprise Terms and Conditions, the Project Lead shall be responsible for the direction, management and pursuit by the project team of the project in all of its objectives and the efficient, proper and appropriate conduct of that project from a financial, technical, legal and ethical

perspective.

3.0 How to Apply

3.0 Registration and application

Applicants and Grant Authorisers must register to use the Smart Simple system at <https://epa.smartsimple.ie>. Applications must only be made using the EPA on-line Grant Application & Project Management Portal <https://epa.smartsimple.ie>. All applications must be created and submitted by the Lead Applicant.

EPA user guides and video tutorials are available on [EPA'S Grant Management and Application Portal \(SmartSimple\)](#).

Make the application for the call topic reference "Green Enterprise Innovation and Demonstration 2022".

Technical queries in relation to the call should be sent to: research@epa.ie. The deadline for technical queries is 12th July 2022.

Online applications are carried out in a two-step process:

1. **Submission of proposals** by applicants (before the call deadline 17:00 on **19th July 2022**) for authorisation by Managing Director (or equivalent authorised signatory) for companies;
2. **Authorisation of proposals** by Managing Director (or equivalent authorised signatory) for companies (before the **Organisation Approval Deadline: 17:00 on 26th July 2022**). Proposals **MUST** have Organisational Approval to be valid.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that any technical queries are submitted before the deadline, the proposals are submitted before the call deadline, and of the relevant grant authoriser to ensure that the proposals are approved before the organisation approval deadline.

Please note the following:

- Register on <https://epa.smartsimple.ie> as soon as possible as you may need to request to have your company/organisation validated.
- The grant authoriser for your company/organisation must also be a registered user.
- Respect the page/word limit and file format requirements.
- Missing data, wrong file format or excessive number of pages will prevent you from submitting your proposal.
- Save your changes by clicking on the *Save Draft* button.
- Only click on the *Submit* button when you have completed all your application and you are ready to submit your proposal for authorisation.
- Check that you have completed all fields and uploaded all the necessary documents (including budget spreadsheet) before submitting.
- Call deadlines are absolute and are enforced by the system automatically. Discussion **WILL NOT** be entered into in the case of late submissions, how-so ever caused. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that applications are made well in advance of the deadline. **The EPA's decision in this matter will be FINAL.**

Note on authorisation process:

Once submitted, your proposal must be authorised by the relevant person in your company/organisation (i.e. Managing Director, Financial Controller etc.). Authorisation **MUST** be done before the organisation approval deadline of 17:00 on **26th July**. **Applications which are received and not authorised by the relevant person by the organisation approval deadline will be deemed invalid.**

Who is the *Grant Authoriser*? (Authorised Signatory)

- Managing Directors or designated staff (this cannot be the Applicant)

The *Grant Authoriser* (Authorised Signatory) can:

- Authorise your submission – Your proposal is then accepted by EPA and sent for evaluation. No further action is required.
- Decline your submission – Your proposal will NOT be processed.
- Ask for revisions – You will be notified that your proposal requires revision. The revised proposal will then be subject again to review and authorisation by the Grant Authoriser.

Please refer to the applicant user guides and video tutorials on [EPA'S Grant Management and Application Portal \(SmartSimple\)](#) as they will provide you with important guidance on how to submit your proposal. A detailed step-by-step guide is also available on the EPA Grant Application Portal. Queries should be sent to: research@epa.ie.

3.2 Evaluation

Applications will be scored based on the following criteria:

Table 2 – Evaluation criteria

| Criteria | Marks |
|---|-------|
| Technical quality: objectives, approaches and work packages | 30% |
| Relevance to the call topic areas and to the principles of the Green Enterprise programme | 20% |
| Scalability for widespread implementation and/or transferability potential across sectors | 20% |
| Technical expertise and project management capability of the team | 20% |
| Costing and value for money | 10% |

To proceed to the second stage of the evaluation process, proposals must attain a minimum of 40% of the maximum score for each criterion.

3.3 Indicative timeframe

An indicative timeframe for this call is shown below.

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| 10 th June 2022 | Launch of 2022 call via EPA website, press release, social media etc. |
| 22 nd June, 2022 | Webinar for potential applicants. Register via cep@epa.ie |
| 17:00 on 12 th July 2022 | Deadline for technical queries |
| 17:00 on 19 th July 2022 | Deadline for submission of applications |
| 17:00 on 26 th July 2022 | Organisation approval deadline for authorisation by Managing Director (or equivalent authorised signatory) for companies |
| By mid September | Evaluation process complete |

| | |
|------------------|--|
| October/November | Applicants notified and grant negotiation process (technical and financial queries) begin for projects being recommended for funding |
| By December 2022 | Successful projects grants awarded |
| By January 2023 | Projects commenced |

All projects selected for funding should normally be completed within 12-18 months. Projects must be completed within 24 months.

3.4 Participant company/organisation and costs

The size of the participant company/organisation has a bearing on the grant aid percentages. Public Benefit Entities (PBEs) can receive up to 95% in grant aid, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) can receive up to 75% in grant aid whereas non-SMEs can only receive up to 50% in grant aid.³ The participant company/organisation must be located in the Republic of Ireland. The Agency's opinion as to the status of an applicant is final and no correspondence will be entered into following the organisation approval deadline regarding this issue.

In general funding is provided to reimburse participants for the cost of carrying out the project, subject to the funding limits outlined above. The level of funding will vary between 25% and 95% depending on the nature of the company/organisation undertaking the project (see Table 2) and the category of expenditure. Applicants must state the nature of their company/organisation and the level of grant aid sought in the budget details section of their application.

Table 3 – Applicable Cost Categories

| Cost categories | PBE | SME | Non-SME |
|--|-----|-----|---------|
| Staff costs (on an actual salary cost basis) | 95% | 75% | 50% |
| Consumables | 95% | 75% | 50% |
| External Assistance & Consultancy | 95% | 75% | 50% |
| Travel | 95% | 75% | 50% |
| Plant and Equipment | 25% | 25% | 25% |
| Indirect costs (Overheads) – calculated as 30% of modified costs | 95% | 75% | 50% |

3.5 Payment schedule

Following the approval and acceptance of the grant agreement, an advance payment of up to 50% of the total grant-aid will be made. All subsequent payments will be made on a reimbursement basis following the submission and certification of financial cost statements and approval of technical progress reports.

A sum of up to 15% of the EPA grant aid may be retained, in all cases, pending satisfactory completion of the project. A project will be deemed to be completed satisfactorily, following the certification of the final cost statement, the submission of suitable publicity material and the approval of the final technical report for the project.

³ See Appendix 1 for SME and PBE definitions.

3.6 Tax certificates and insurance

Successful applicants will be required **prior to grant award** to provide a valid in date tax clearance certificate in accordance with Department of Finance regulations.

Successful applicants will also be required to provide valid copies of Public and Employer's Liability insurance and where relevant Professional Indemnity insurance prior to awarding of grants.

3.7 Gender mainstreaming

In line with government policy, the principles of gender mainstreaming apply to Green Enterprise. To this end, participants will be required to report the ratio of males and females working on the project and to encourage females to take a lead role in projects where possible.

3.8 Freedom of Information (FOI)

Information supplied to the Environmental Protection Agency may be disclosed in response to a request under the Freedom of Information Act, 1997 and Freedom of Information (Amendment) Act, 2003. Should you wish that any of the information supplied by you in this application should not be disclosed because of its sensitivity, you should, when providing that information, identify the same and specify the reasons for its sensitivity. The Environmental Protection Agency will consult with applicants about this information before making a decision on any Freedom of Information request received.

3.9 Data protection

Personal information supplied to the EPA Research Programme will be stored in electronic and structured manual data formats e.g., hard copy folder or database, for use only in connection with this application and the administration of the EPA Research Programme and publication of results. The provisions of Data Protection Legislation shall be complied with by the EPA and the Grantees with respect to the processing of personal data.

Data Protection Legislation shall mean the Data Protection Acts 1988 to 2018 and Directive 95/46/EC, any other applicable law or regulation relating to the processing of personal data and privacy (including the E-Privacy Directive and the European Communities (Electronic Communications Networks and Services) (Privacy and Electronic Communications) Regulations 2011, as such legislation shall be amended, revised or replaced from time to time, including by operation of the EU General Data Protection Regulation (2016/679) (GDPR) (and laws implementing or supplementing the GDPR and/or the E-Privacy Regulations).

The provisions of the applicable Terms and Conditions with respect to data protection, and the terms of the EPA Privacy Policy, shall apply to the processing of personal data in connection with the EPA Research Programme.

3.10 Publicity requirements

Publicising the results and achievements of the projects supported by the Green Enterprise Programme is a key element of the programme. The purpose of this publicity is to encourage others to adopt practices. Successful company/organisations will be required to provide publicity information including photographs and technical data on the project, to participate in publicity events or possibly host site visits. A portion of the budget should be reserved for this purpose. It should be noted that even if the project is not as successful as originally anticipated, there is still a publicity requirement as the lessons learned should be shared with others interested in future similar projects. The level of information to be provided should include a good description of the project. Specific aspects of the project, identified as commercially sensitive, will be respected when producing publicity material.

The EPA started a series of Green Enterprise webinars in 2020, which provide a platform to showcase Green Enterprise projects. On conclusion of the project, the project team may be asked to present at a Green Enterprise webinar with the presentation recorded and uploaded to EPA's YouTube channel.

4.0 Reporting Requirements

Financial Reports (Cost Statements) and Technical Progress Reports should be submitted to the EPA during the lifetime of the project, via the EPA Grant Application & Project Management Portal (<https://epa.smartsimple.ie>), as per the schedule outlined in the table below.

| | <i>Technical Progress Reports</i> | <i>Financial Cost Statements</i> |
|--------------------------------|---|---|
| <i>Green Enterprise Awards</i> | <i>28th January & 28th July</i> | <i>28th January & 28th July</i> |

It is the responsibility of the principal investigator/programme manager to ensure that reports are submitted on time and that they are of a satisfactory standard that clearly details progress on the project. Any difficulties arising should also be reported as well as the actions planned to overcome these difficulties.

The information provided in these reports, may be used by the EPA, to report to the Department of Finance.

A Final Report of between 8 and 15 pages long, with appendices is required. The template is available on the Green Enterprise webpage. Applicants are also required to present at an EPA Green Enterprise dissemination webinar when projects are completed and may be requested to provide content for social media or other promotion of future calls. Projects will not be signed off until the final report is completed to the satisfaction of the EPA.

5.0 Grant Aid and Eligibility

Applicants should familiarise themselves with the project management and interim reporting requirements for Green Enterprise funded projects as detailed in the 2022 Guide for Grantees which can be found here: [Guidelines and Terms & Conditions \(epa.ie\)](#)

5.1 Grant amount

The percentage grant aid available to each grant awarded project is calculated based on the applicant company/organisation size. Section 3.4 describes the grant aid percentage applicable to staff, training, consumables, travel, external assistance, consultancy, promotion, publicity, equipment, and other costs categories for the project. The maximum funding available is **€100,000 per company/organisation** and this is subject to compliance with State Aid De Minimis Rules. All successful applicants will be required to provide written confirmation (in the format as per Appendix 2) that the rules in regard to De Minimis have been observed. The Declaration of De Minimis Aid should be SIGNED and submitted using the standard declaration via the EPA Grant Application & Project Management Portal (<https://epa.smartsimple.ie>).

5.2 Eligible & non-eligible costs

Financial reporting is on the basis of the total costs of the project, so grant aid will be provided based on the full eligible costs.

Eligible costs are the costs defined as **direct** or **indirect costs** as detailed below. They shall fulfil the following conditions:

- Be actual,
- Relate to expenditure on the Green Enterprise project,
- Be reasonable and wholly necessary for the Green Enterprise project,

- Be incurred and paid during the duration of the Green Enterprise project (as set out in the grant agreement),
- Be incurred solely to advance the research project or if any single item shall benefit both the research project and other work then such costs shall be eligible only in the proportion that such costs bear to the proportionate benefit derived from them by the research project,
- Be determined in accordance with the normal accounting principles, based on historic costs and the usual internal rules of the Grantee, provided that they are regarded as being acceptable by the EPA,
- Be recorded in the Grantees accounts and be separately identifiable and traceable,
- Exclude any profit (e.g. staff costs must be charged at actual salary rates and not charge-out rates),
- Where the company/organisation is VAT registered, costs should be shown at the VAT exclusive cost.

Non-eligible costs are in particular the following:

- any interest, or return on capital employed,
- provisions for possible future losses or charges (including social costs),
- interest owed, provisions for doubtful debts,
- resources made available to a Grantee free of charge,
- unnecessary or ill-considered expenses,
- marketing, sales and distribution costs for products & services,
- entertainment or hospitality expenses except such reasonable expenses accepted as wholly and exclusively necessary for carrying out the work under the Agreement,
- company/organisation bonuses and dividends.

5.3 Eligible cost categories

Grant aid under the Green Enterprise is aimed primarily at assisting staff costs associated with introducing or enhancing the Green Enterprise project. A contribution to equipment costs may be eligible but only where there is a clear and quantifiable cleaner greener production benefit arising from the use of the new equipment.

The following suggested cost categories are provided to assist applicants in preparing their Budget & Financial Reporting Forms. Applicants need only provide total staff costs for each individual staff member over the course of the project. Standard Financial reporting templates will be provided to successful applicants.

Staff costs - implementation, monitoring, reporting, training & publicity

Actual and verifiable staff costs can be charged for all employees working directly on the project. This includes time incurred on Implementation, Monitoring, Reporting (direct administration time specific to Green Enterprise), Staff Training and Staff Publicity.

Staff costs are grant aided at the appropriate percentage for the company/organisation as set out in Table 3. Timesheets are required for **staff dedicating less than 100%** of their working time to the Project. **Staff working exclusively on the project and spending 100% of their time need not provide a timesheet** however they must complete and sign a **“time declaration”** for each reporting period.

In all cases, the person-day costs are limited to the actual salary cost (charge-out rates are not eligible) including employers PRSI. This rate must be specified in the budget and must be verifiable (through appropriate payroll documentation).

In limited circumstances for qualifying SME owner-managers or self-employed individuals who are not remunerated through traditional salary methods the EPA may at its absolute discretion permit the use of an alternative mechanism based on flat rates of pay to recover the cost of their time input to the project. Participants who wish to be considered for the flat rate basis should submit their request in writing to the EPA as part of their application.

Where applicants are uncertain at the time of submitting an application as to the exact identity of personnel involved in the project then rates may be used for categories of staff, where staff are paid on specified salary grades or scales. These rates must be verifiable and where an application is successful, must be adjusted to the actual rate of pay for each individual at the time of submitting a claim for reimbursement of expenditure.

Monitoring progress and the achievement of objectives and targets of the project is an important aspect of Green Enterprise. A budget should therefore be allocated for any monitoring to be undertaken by the company/organisation. When this involves the employment of external assistance or the purchase of equipment, the appropriate eligibility rules will apply. Progress in achieving the project deliverables should be borne in mind at all times for these cost categories.

Staff training costs (i.e. time spent by internal staff on project related training) must clearly relate to the Green Enterprise project. Companies must detail the type of training to be undertaken, and the benefits to be gained from this. Internal training costs must be separated into the time costs of the trainee and the trainer and any related consumable costs.

Staff publicity costs (i.e. time incurred by internal staff) must clearly relate to the Green Enterprise project. Participants must detail the type of activities to be undertaken.

Consumables

Consumable or material costs must be separately identifiable and wholly necessary for the project.

Consumables usually relate to the purchase, fabrication, repair or use of any materials, goods or equipment and software which:

- Are not placed in the inventory or durable equipment of the participant
- Are not treated as capital expenditure in accordance with the accounting conventions and policies of the participant (i.e. Balance Sheet)
- Have a short life expectancy, certainly not greater than the duration of the project

All consumables and material costs related to the project are deemed to be eligible. **Off the shelf software and personal computing equipment (including laptops) costing less than €10,000 are considered to be consumable items and are fully reimbursable at the appropriate grant aid rate.**

Travel

It is not envisaged that there will be a significant travel element in any of the projects. Where it is incurred, it should be separately identifiable, limited to the actual cost and should be a specific requirement for the implementation of the Green Enterprise project. The EPA or their agents will organise workshops/meetings to provide guidance on participation, reporting and publicity requirements. Provision should be made for the cost of attending such events, however the EPA workshops/meetings are now generally online. Where mileage is being claimed the purpose of the journey, the number of miles and the rate should be clearly stated. These rates should not exceed the current civil service or other Revenue approved rates and should be in agreement with normal policies of the company/organisation.

The prior approval of the EPA is required for travel to any destination outside the EU. The request should be made via Smart Simple (<https://epa.smartsimple.ie>)

Promotion and publicity

Promotion and publicity of the project is an important aspect of Green Enterprise and will also provide marketing opportunities for all companies involved. A budget should be allocated for publicity events to be undertaken by the company/organisation.

This includes a budget for the production of a final report and a 2 page case study report at the end of the project. (EPA will bear the cost of printing and copy-editing). All publicity deliverables should be detailed in the application.

Training

Costs of external training may include the relevant course fees or trainer costs incurred by the participant.

Overheads

Indirect costs (overheads) are calculated at a rate of 30% of eligible modified costs. Modified costs are defined as all eligible costs excluding plant and equipment and external assistance.

Plant and equipment

Plant and equipment is considered to be an eligible cost, provided it is essential and purchased exclusively for the Green Enterprise project. The cost of plant and equipment should be included at the full VAT exclusive cost (where applicable). The grant aid for this category is a maximum of **25%** of the cost of the plant/equipment.

Please note that second-hand equipment is eligible for grant aid provided such equipment has not previously been the subject of any other sources of funding. Participants must be able to demonstrate that such equipment has not been funded from other sources. The use of second-hand equipment would be welcomed where possible, given this fund's focus on circular economy.

All purchases must comply with National and European Public Procurement Guidelines. Evidence of this compliance must be retained by the participant for audit purposes. For further information please see <https://www.etenders.gov.ie/>

Green Enterprise should not be viewed as a source of capital funding. A good balance is required between the cost categories. This factor will be taken into account during the evaluation of proposals.

External assistance

Technical expertise may be needed to implement the project and may be budgeted for under the heading of External Assistance. Fees should be stated in days at the appropriate daily rate (this rate should not exceed €800 per/day or exceed 35% of the total cost of the overall project). External Assistance can also include the cost of consultancy fees, provided that such fees are not excessive.

The purpose of the consultancy to be provided must be clearly stated and must be relevant to the project. It must also be external to the participant and not a continuous or periodic activity relating to the participant's usual operating costs. In addition there should be a clear transfer of knowledge into the participant company/organisation.

All such external assistance or consultancy arrangements, the costs of which are to be claimed as an eligible cost, must be awarded to the bid offering the best value for money (when comparing best price

to quality ratio), under conditions of transparency and equality. Any external assistance or consultancy arrangement must be offered to the best bid in compliance with National and European Public Procurement Guidelines.

Other costs

Other costs are amounts that are project specific and do not fit into any of the categories above. Costs under this heading must adhere to the general eligibility requirements of the Programme.

A detailed examination of project costs will be carried out on all successful applications. Any costs considered to be outside the eligibility rules will be removed from the budget during grant negotiation. These discussions are likely to take place Q4 2022 therefore relevant personnel must be available at this time to meet with EPA officers or their appointed agents.

APPENDIX 1: Definition of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

1. Small and medium-sized enterprises, hereinafter referred to as 'SMEs', are defined as enterprises which:

- have fewer than 250 employees, and have either,
 - an annual turnover not exceeding €50 million, or
 - an annual balance-sheet total not exceeding €43 million, and
 - conform to the criterion of independence as defined in paragraph 3.

2. Where it is necessary to distinguish between small and medium-sized enterprises, the 'small enterprise' is defined as an enterprise which:

- has fewer than 50 employees and has either,
 - an annual turnover not exceeding €10 million, or
 - an annual balance-sheet total not exceeding €10 million,
 - conforms to the criterion of independence as defined in paragraph 3.

3. Independent enterprises are those which are not owned as to 25 % or more of the capital or the voting rights by one enterprise, or jointly by several enterprises, falling outside the definitions of an SME or a small enterprise, whichever may apply. This threshold may be exceeded in the following cases:

- if the enterprise is held by public investment corporations, venture capital companies or institutional investors, provided no control is exercised either individually or jointly,
- if the capital is spread in such a way that it is not possible to determine by whom it is held and if the enterprise declares that it can legitimately presume that it is not owned as to 25 % or more by one enterprise, or jointly by several enterprises, falling outside the definitions of an SME or a small enterprise, whichever may apply.

4. In calculating the thresholds referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2, it is therefore necessary to cumulate the relevant figures for the beneficiary enterprise and for all the enterprises that it directly or indirectly controls through possession of 25 % or more of the capital or of the voting rights.

5. Where it is necessary to distinguish micro-enterprises from other SMEs, these are defined as enterprises having fewer than 10 employees, annual turnover not exceeding €2 million and/ or annual balance sheet total not exceeding €2 million.

6. Where, at the final balance-sheet date, an enterprise exceeds or falls below the employee thresholds or financial ceilings, this is to result in its acquiring or losing the status of 'SME', 'medium-sized enterprise', 'small enterprise' or 'micro-enterprise' only if the phenomenon is repeated over two consecutive financial years.

7. The number of persons employed corresponds to the number of annual working units (AWU), that is to say, the number of full-time workers employed during one year with part-time and seasonal workers being fractions of AWU. The reference year to be considered is that of the last approved accounting period.

8. The turnover and balance-sheet total thresholds are those of the last approved 12-month accounting period. In the case of newly established enterprises whose accounts have not yet been approved, the thresholds to apply shall be derived from a reliable estimate made in the course of the financial year.

Public Benefit Entities (PBE's)

The FRS 100 Application of Financial Reporting Requirements provides a definition for a Public Benefit Entity (PBE) as follows. It is an "entity whose primary objective is to provide goods and services for the

general public, community or social benefit and where any equity is provided with a view to supporting the entity's primary objectives rather than with a view to providing a financial return to equity providers, shareholders or members". The final decision if an applicant falls into this category falls entirely with the EPA and any adjudication made as to the status of an applicant will be final and non-appealable. If an application for funding is made by an organisation as a PBE but is subsequently deemed to be non-qualifying by the EPA, if it is placed in the shortlist, an offer may be made based on the lower funding levels of 75% or 50% as appropriate.

APPENDIX 2: Monitoring of De Minimis Aid

Article 3 (1) of the De Minimis Regulation (EC) No 1998 /2006 states that where a Member State grants De Minimis aid to an enterprise it shall inform the enterprise about the De Minimis character of the aid and obtain from the enterprise concerned full information about other De Minimis aid received during the previous three years. It is recommended that the Department/ Agency concerned should include the following text in their correspondence with applicants for De Minimis aid:

The aid being sought is provided under the European Commission Regulation on De Minimis Aid. Small amounts of State aid, up to €200,000 (as and from 1 January 2007) in any three-year period to any one enterprise, are regarded as too small to significantly affect trade or competition in the common market. Such amounts are regarded as falling outside the category of State aid that is banned by the EC Treaty and can be awarded without notification to or clearance by the European Commission. A Member State is required to have a mechanism to track such aid (called 'De Minimis aid') and to ensure that the combined amount of De Minimis aid payments from all sources to one enterprise in any three-year period respects the €200,000 ceiling. Please provide details of all other De Minimis aid which has been granted to your company/organisation within the past three years. It should be noted that a false declaration by a company/organisation resulting in the threshold of €200,000 being exceeded could later give rise to the aid being recovered with interest.

The applicant should sign and submit the following declaration as part of the application:

I wish to apply for [insert name of grant/aid sought] under the De Minimis Regulation (EC) No 1998 /2006.

I confirm that:

the company/organisation has been granted only the following De Minimis aid within the past three years (details to be supplied)

Signed for Company/organisation:

Date:

or...

no De Minimis aid has been granted to the company/organisation within the past three years

Signed for Company/organisation:

Date:

APPENDIX 3: Previous Green Enterprise Projects⁴

| Project Title | Lead Organisation | Description |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|
| <u>Symbiobeer</u> | Irish Manufacturing Research (IMR) | SymbioBeer is a project which aimed to promote innovative waste prevention solutions across the food production and food processing sectors. It investigated the re-use of bread production residues as a secondary raw material for beer production and the utilisation of by-products from beer production to create new bread products. |
| <u>Service models for bulky item reuse</u> | Community Resources Network Ireland | This project designed a service model to improve bulky item reuse in the public sector. The main output from this project is a 'How to guide for reuse in the public sector'. Outcomes of the project have extended beyond completion including engagement with key public procurement groups and informing the development of national policy and targets relating to reuse. |
| <u>Methods for expansion of paint reuse programme</u> | Rediscovery Centre | This project Investigated methods for the optimisation and expansion of the Rediscovery Centre's Rediscover Paint operations. Informed by a comprehensive literature review, the report draws on experiences of paint reuse in the UK. Changes were made to Rediscover Paint's operations which resulted in increased paint throughput, operational efficiency, reduced administration and improved work practice. The learnings from this exercise are being applied by the Rediscovery Centre to develop regional paint reuse through mentoring social enterprises in their Circular Economy Academy. |
| <u>Scoping the Irish fruit & vegetable supply chain for valuable biomass resources for upgrade</u> | CyberColloids | This project evaluated the potential to recover and use the biomass generated in fruit and vegetable supply chains to produce new food fibre ingredients. The project demonstrated that Ireland generates sufficient fruit and vegetable waste that could feed into one (or a few) central processing facilities to produce new food ingredients. |
| <u>Producing a composite from plastic bottles</u> | Irish Manufacturing Research | The PROBOT project is research that was undertaken by Irish Manufacturing Research (IMR) and Irish Composites Centre (IComp). The aim of this research was to investigate the potential uptake of a new composite created by IComp using Polyethylene Terephthalate (PET) to create a Self-Reinforced Polymer, as opposed to the Polypropylene Self Reinforced Polymers which are currently utilised on the market in various industries. |
| <u>Minimising fish waste in the supply chain</u> | Proiseail Clochan Teoranta (An Liath) | The primarily objective of this project was to reduce fish waste at Irish Fish Canneries. The project used Design of Experiments (DOE) to put a structure on its work. DOE changed the previous haphazard approach to |

| Project Title | Lead Organisation | Description |
|---------------|-------------------|--|
| | | improvements and helped the company to focus on the most important activities that could save waste. In order to quantify the overall benefits from the improvement projects, a Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) was carried out. |