

# European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF)

## Sustainable Fisheries Scheme - Guidelines for Applicants



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland



Arna chomhchistiú ag  
an Aontas Eorpach

Co-Funded by the  
European Union



# Introduction

These Guidelines for Applicants for the Sustainable Fisheries Scheme provide guidance on the application process and assessment criteria.

Applicants should also read the following documents which can be found on the scheme page of [www.bim.ie](http://www.bim.ie):

The Scheme Description which lays out the background to the scheme, who can apply, what is funded, and the amounts granted.

## Eligible Beneficiaries

Owners of non-SSCF fishing vessels:

- Which must be registered on the Irish Register of Fishing Boats at the time of grant application,
- Who must have been actively fishing in the two calendar years preceding the year of submission of the application:
  - For vessels less than 10m length overall (LOA) this will be validated by ensuring sales notes to the value of at least €1,000 have been registered with the SFPA in each of the two preceding calendar years.
  - For vessels of 10m LOA or greater, this will be validated by ensuring log books registered with the SFPA show at least 60 days at sea across the two preceding years.
  - Please note that it is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the correct data is registered with the SFPA at the time of their application. If, **on the first check**, the SFPA data cannot confirm the required level of fishing activity, the application will be rejected.

## Project Call 2025

This competitive call for applications will be open from 13th of November until 5pm on 30th December 2025.

The call is competitive, meaning that all eligible applications will be scored and ranked and, in the case that the scheme is oversubscribed, funding will be allocated based on ranking.

## Pre Project Site Visit

Most applications will be subject to a physical site visit in advance of any offer being made. This is an information gathering site visit, to assess the pre-project state and to better

understand the impact the project can have. During this site visit the applicant will need to show the current setup on the vessel and the location(s) of the proposed project. **No expenditure can be incurred, nor can any work commence on the project, until you receive an email after this site visit.**

- In the application form you will be asked to provide a date range that suits you for this pre-project site visit and BIM will do its best to accommodate you within this date range. The pre-project site visit must be completed by 30<sup>th</sup> January 2026. If you are not available before this date, your application will be closed.
- If, during the site visit it is found that work has already commenced, your application will be deemed ineligible and will be closed.
- If, at claim stage, you submit invoices or proof of payment for expenditure which are dated before the date of the email confirming the site visit has been completed, these invoices will not be eligible for payment.
- **Once you receive the email confirming the site visit is complete, you are free to commence work/incur expenditure related to the project, but this is entirely at the applicant's risk. An evaluation of the application has not yet been made, so the application may be closed, or an offer of grant aid might not be made, or might be for an amount less than that applied for.**

Eligibility checks and evaluation will be carried out as applications are received but offers will not be made until after the call closes and all applications have been assessed. BIM reserves the right to close **any applications which have not passed all eligibility checks, including the pre-project site visit, by 30<sup>th</sup> January 2026.** This is in the interest of fairness to all applicants since delaying the process for one applicant would delay it for all.

## Eligible and Ineligible Costs

The current list of items which are eligible and ineligible under the scheme is available on the scheme page on [www.bim.ie](http://www.bim.ie)

## Amounts Grant Aided & Grant Aid Caps

Beneficiary Type	Aid Intensity Rate	Expenditure Type
Vessel Owners (Non-SSCF)	50%	All

- The grant aid cap per vessel over the lifetime of the scheme is €250,000.
- The grant aid cap per vessel under the current call is €125,000.

## Submission Deadline

This competitive call for applications will be open from **13th of November** until **5pm** on **30th December 2025**.

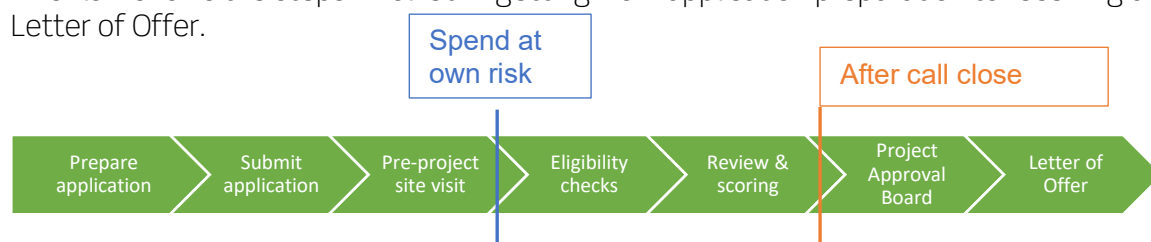
All applications are to be made through BIM's grants management system.

## Claim Deadline

The Letter of Offer will detail the date the claim is to be submitted.

# Application and Approval Process

This flow shows the steps involved in getting from application preparation to receiving a Letter of Offer.



- The applicant prepares and submits their application in BIM's grants management system.
- BIM carries out a pre-project site visit, after which an email is issued confirming that the project can commence and expenditure can be incurred at the applicant's own risk.
- BIM carries out a series of eligibility checks to ensure that all required information has been provided and shows compliance with scheme rules.
- A series of evaluation reviews are then carried out, and a BIM panel meets to score the application.
- All eligible applications which meet the minimum score are presented to a Project Approvals Board. Applications are appraised having regard to the objectives of the scheme and the quality of the proposal.
- If the Project Approvals Board approves the application for funding, a Letter of Offer will be issued.

## When will you hear from us

### General guidance

Please read in conjunction with the details provided in relation to the Project call and Pre Project Site Visit

- When you submit your application, you will receive an automated email acknowledging receipt. If you do not receive this email, it is because the application has not been successfully submitted. Please check your spam folder in case the acknowledgement of receipt has been directed there. Please note that an acknowledgement of receipt email is not a confirmation of grant aid. At this point the application is being processed only. Your application will be assigned a unique reference number, and you will be notified of this in the acknowledgement email. The unique reference number should be used in any subsequent correspondence or enquiry with BIM.
- BIM carries out a pre-project site visit, after which an email is issued confirming that the project can commence, and expenditure can be incurred at the applicant's own risk. Any expenditure incurred before the date of the email sent to confirm the pre-project site visit is complete is ineligible
- Some applicants may have their form returned if it is incorrect/incomplete:
- If information is found to be missing, or if further clarifications are required, the application will be returned to the applicant, and a short and fixed deadline will be provided by which the application must be resubmitted. Failure to meet this deadline



or resubmitting the application without providing all the information requested, will result in the application being closed.

- If our checks show that the application is not eligible for the scheme, or if we could not validate your eligibility based on the information provided, your application will be rejected, and the reason provided.
- Following evaluation, BIM will inform you of the decision.
- Applicants approved for funding will receive a Letter of Offer.
- Those applications which have not been approved for funding will be notified, explaining the reason for not approving the project for funding.

You will need the following documentation to complete this form:

- Joint Vessel Owner Authorisation Form
- Supplier quotes for all expenditure items
- Evidence of matched funding clearly indicating how you plan to finance this project
- Vessel Licence to complete Vessel details on application form

## Standard Eligibility Checks

BIM will check the evidence provided by the applicant to ensure that all eligibility criteria set out are met, and that all required documentation has been provided.

## Evaluation

Each application which passes eligibility goes through a technical review, and is scored against the following evaluation criteria. It is recommended you take the time to understand this so that you can provide sufficient details in your answers. Applications which score 60 points or more, are presented to the Projects Approval Board.

Evaluation guidance	If....	...then score in the range:
Direct impact against scheme objective	The applicant has demonstrated that this investment will have a <b>significant</b> impact against the scheme objectives they are targeting, and (when relevant) a significant reduction in energy consumption or CO2 output.	20-25
	The applicant has demonstrated that this investment will have an <b>incremental</b> impact against the scheme objectives they are targeting, and (when relevant) an incremental reduction in energy consumption and/or CO2 output	15-19
	The applicant has demonstrated that this investment will have a <b>limited or weak</b> impact against the scheme objective(s) they are targeting, and (when relevant) a limited or no reduction in energy consumption or CO2 output	0-14
Impact on business	The applicant has demonstrated that this investment will involve a <b>significant</b> step change in how they operate	20-25
	The applicant has demonstrated that this investment will involve an <b>incremental</b> change in how they operate	15-19
	The applicant has <b>failed</b> to demonstrate how this investment will change their business	0-14
Joined up project	The applicant has presented a <b>cohesive and comprehensive investment</b> , targeted on achieving a specific outcome	20-25
	The applicant has presented <b>elements of a cohesive investment</b> , with some focus on the outcome, but there is room for more impact	15-19
	The applicant has presented a <b>list of unrelated items</b> with no clear focus	0-14
Ambition	The applicant has demonstrated <b>significant</b> ambition in the scale of their investment vis-à-vis their current operation, and the impact they expect it to have	20-25
	The applicant has demonstrated <b>some</b> ambition in the scale of their investment vis-à-vis their current operation, and the impact they expect it to have	15-19
	The application has displayed <b>little</b> ambition in the scale of their investment and the impact they expect it to have	0-14

## Grant Approval and Offer

Per BIM's standard policy and procedures, noting that offers must issue based on the date and time applications were received.

## Appeals

Per BIM's standard policy and procedures

## Further Information/Clarifications

Requests for further information/clarifications should be addressed, by **email**, to the contact details below. Where appropriate, responses to requests for further information/clarifications will be made available to all interested parties via [grantshelpdesk@bim.ie](mailto:grantshelpdesk@bim.ie)

CONTACT DETAILS
Bord Iascaigh Mhara Dún Laoghaire Co. Dublin Email: <a href="mailto:grantshelpdesk@bim.ie">grantshelpdesk@bim.ie</a>