

SSRH supports explained

Renewable heating: Providing a sustainable future

Ireland has a legally-binding target of net-zero GHG emissions by 2050. Energy efficiency and renewable technologies have become priorities in EU policy and legislation, and the decarbonisation of heat is a key part of the government’s plans to achieve our targets. Here Paula Lynch (right), SEAI’S Programme Manager, Business Supports – SSRH, explains the support options that are available to specifying consultant and contractors when considering projects.



- Qualified designers who are competent to carry out works;
- That recipients of payments meet tax clearance requirements.

Options for decarbonising heating systems

Energy efficiency measures – reducing energy consumption in our buildings and systems; providing better control of systems, upgrading building fabric etc;
Switching to renewable heating – Renewable heating systems which utilise energy from sustainable sources have emerged as a key component in the transition to a low-carbon future;

Electrification of heat – Heat pumps are a proven technology, highly-efficient and with the potential to decarbonise heat for dwellings, businesses and even large industrial processes;

- *Biomass* – Renewable energy source, generated from burning wood, plants and other organic matter;
- *Biomethane* – (also referred to as “renewable natural gas”) is the purified version of biogas, produced from the breakdown of organic matter.

Renewable heating will contribute significantly to Ireland creating a sustainable path forward, offering a whole multitude of benefits that extend beyond reducing our dependence on fossil fuels, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and contributing to climate goals. By investing in renewable heating technologies, individuals and businesses can contribute to a cleaner, more resilient energy system that benefits everybody by providing environmental,

economic and social benefits for a more sustainable future.

SEAI Support Scheme for renewable heat
The Support Scheme for Renewable Heat (SSRH) delivered by the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) has been created to incentivise the use of renewable energy for heat generation.

Key features

- It is designed to support businesses, industries, public sector organisations and all non-domestic sectors in transitioning from fossil fuels to renewable heat sources, thereby reducing carbon emissions and contributing to Ireland’s renewable energy targets;
- Grant support is available in two options – investment aid for heat pumps, and an operational tariff (per unit of usable heat output) for bioenergy systems;
- Eligible uses include space heating, hot water and process heat;
- Interested parties must undergo an application and approval process with SEAI. Applicants must be able to demonstrate the following:
 - Conversion from fossil fuels;
 - Eligible heat use (space heating or process);
 - Compliance with eco-design standards;
 - Heating system design according to building regulations and other relevant regulations;

Capital grant support

A grant is available to support investment in renewable heating systems that use the following technologies:

- air source heat pumps;
- ground source heat pumps;
- water source heat pumps.

This grant provides funding of up to 40% of eligible costs of the renewable heating systems to successful applicants. The support rate (% grant) is linked to the design efficiency of the heat pump heating system as measured by the Seasonal Coefficient of Performance (SCOP) for buildings, or the Coefficient of Performance (COP) for industry, up to a maximum of 40%. See Table A (see page 22).

Grant aid is also available for approved energy efficiency support measures up to a maximum of 30%. These measures must be related to the efficiency of the heat pump system, e.g. heat recovery, ventilation, building fabric upgrades, etc.

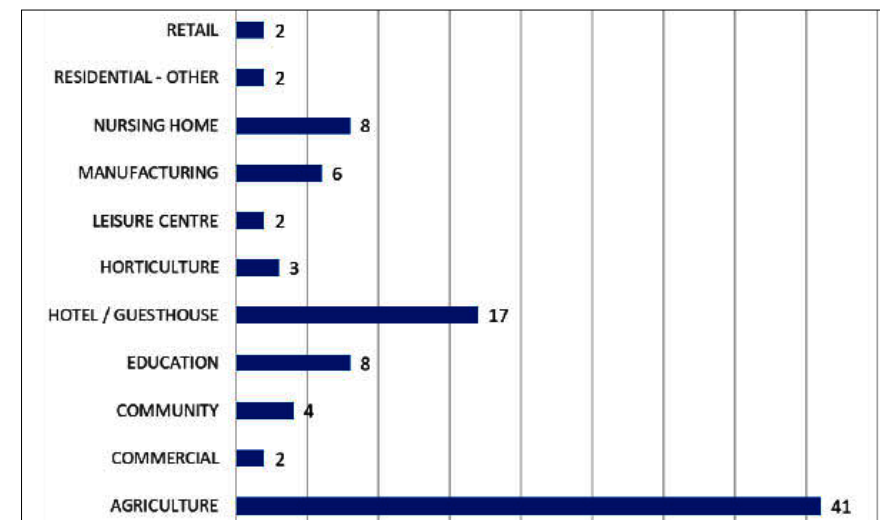
To date, successful applications include offices, central plant for an apartment complex, community centres and college buildings. Within the manufacturing industry, successful applicants include pharmaceutical, distillery and dairy processes, all of which are large energy users implementing heat pump technology to displace fossil fuel consumption. The summary of investment

SCOP (buildings), COP (industry)	Maximum grant rate (percentage)		
	“Low temperature”, Including space/water heating in buildings. <95°C.	Medium temperature industry. 95-120°C	High temperature industry. >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

Table A – Maximun grant rate percentage.

Tier	Lower Limit (MWh/yr)	Upper Limit (MWh/yr)	Biomass Heating Systems Tariff (c/kWh)	Anaerobic Digestion Heating Systems (c/kWh)
1	0	300	5.66	2.95
2	300	1,000	3.02	2.95
3	1,000	2,400	0.5	0.5
4	2,400	10,000	0.5	0.00
5	10,000	50,000	0.37	0.00
6	50,000	N/A	0.00	0.00

Table B – Set tariffs for technologies supported.



Number of active applications per industry.

aid grant applications per industry is as follows – Commercial: 25%; Community: 17%; District heating: 8%; Education: 8%; Horticultural: 8%; Manufacturing: 34%.

Operational support (tariffs)

The scheme provides operational support for biomass boilers and anaerobic digestion systems.

Technologies are supported through quarterly payments (for a 15-year period), based on prescribed tariffs. Payments are to cover the difference in operating costs

between renewable heating systems and fossil fuel systems.

Table B shows the set tariffs for the technologies supported.

Each successful applicant will be set an annual “heat cap” in MWh which will be based either on the existing fossil fuel usage for building/system or, in the case of new builds, industry KPIs. The heat cap will set the amount of support that the scheme participant will receive in respect of each unit of heat energy used for an

eligible purpose. The tariff level applicable to a particular project will be fixed for the period of support.

For example, if an applicant is set a heat cap of 500MWh annually, they are within Tariff Tier 2.

For the first 300MWh of metered heat usage that year, they will receive 5.66c/kWh. For the remaining 200MWh this will be 3.02c/kWh. This equates to a maximum annual monetary value of €23,020.

Participants will be required to install approved meters and submit readings on a quarterly basis.

Payments will then be made based on the amount of metred heat generated by the renewable system, provided the applicant continues to satisfy eligibility criteria and ongoing obligations which will be monitored and verified by SEAI.

To date, successful applications include a wide range of industries with the top three being agri (poultry, pigs and mushroom growing), hotels and guesthouses, and schools.

Operational aid applications per industry type were as follows – Agriculture: 43%; Commercial: 2%; Community: 4%; Education: 9%; Hotel/guest house: 18%; Horticulture: 3%; Leisure centre: 2%; Manufacturing: 6%; Nursing homes: 9%; Residential/ other: 2%; Retail: 2%.

Accessing supports

If you have a renewable heating project you wish to discuss with SEAI, contact ssrh@seai.ie and refer to specific guidance documents at <https://www.seai.ie/grants/business-grants/support-scheme-renewable-heat/>

SEAI also has a number of other supports available for businesses (SMEs up to large industry) who want to cut down on energy costs and meet energy saving targets. If not sure where to start, see <https://www.seai.ie/grants/business-grants/> for the available options and contact SEAI. ■

