Energy & Water Efficiency Scheme for **Voluntary Organisations**

THE ENERGY & WATER AGENCY

Scheme to Sustain Energy and Water Efficiency within Voluntary Organisations

Scheme Rules

Version – June 2025

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1. Introduction

In order to assist voluntary organisations in reducing their energy and water consumption and to address the national sustainability targets, the Energy and Water Agency is administering the following nationally funded scheme, established through Government Notice no. 468 published on 3rd May 2022. The aim of the scheme is to promote investment by voluntary organisations towards the implementation of approved and relevant interventions upon or within their premises leading to improved energy efficiency and water conservation.

2. Overview

Step 1 – Thorough reading of and familiarisation with all the sections of these Rules, applicable for the fifth call under the Scheme, and the conditions attached to this Scheme by whomever signs an application on behalf of any Applicant is presumed. In submitting an application, said signatory shall be required to confirm that these Rules have been read, understood and accepted in their entirety.

Step 2 – The Applicant shall seek the necessary technical support in order to provide the required information at application stage and ensure the eligibility criteria are met.

Step 3 – It is recommended that applicants assess the energy and water demand of their organisation to propose interventions within areas that will yield the most savings.

Step 4 –The Applicant shall submit the Application provided online on the Energy and Water Agency website[1] (www.energywateragency.gov.mt), accessible also through the MCVS VO Funding Portal. No applications submitted in any other format will be accepted. Applicant Voluntary Organisations shall be enrolled and fully compliant with the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations on signing of the Grant Agreement.

All the required supporting documentation shall be submitted together with same application. An automatically generated order will be provided with the application submission confirmation. It is to be noted that application submission and the associated confirmation of receipt do not constitute an approved application and Beneficiaries can only be confirmed following verification of contents and assessment of each application.

Step 5 – Applications will be assessed against these Rules, and any requirements established in the Application Form. Only minor clarifications on the information submitted will be allowed, as deemed necessary by the Agency. Applications with missing or incorrect supporting documentation will be rejected. It is the responsibility of the Applicant to ensure that all the information required by these Rules and by the relative application form is submitted at application stage, that it is correct and that it is sufficiently comprehensive so as to allow assessment of compliance with these Rules and the Scheme's criteria.

[1] To note that the online application portal is managed by a third party as authorized by the Agency.

If the scheme criteria are met and the application is compliant with all requirements, the applicant shall, subject to availability of funds be invited to sign a Grant Agreement. Details of Beneficiaries may be published on the Agency's website. The Agency or persons authorised by the Agency may carry out site visits to confirm the information presented at application stage prior to the signing of a Grant Agreement.

In case of non-compliance or non-eligibility or unavailability of funds, a letter of rejection will be sent to applicants stating the reason for rejection. Rejected applicants may request a review of their application in line with the provisions of Section 11 of these Rules.

Step 6 – Funds will be disbursed to Beneficiaries as per their Grant Agreement and in line with Section 8 of these Rules.

Step 7 – Beneficiaries are to abide by these Rules together with any conditions laid down in the Grant Agreement and shall complete the implementation and commissioning of the funded interventions within the stipulated timeframes.

Step 8 – Following implementation of the interventions for which funding is granted, Beneficiaries are to submit the required claim forms via email for the final outstanding amount of the Grant to be disbursed. The Agency, or persons authorised by the Agency, will review the documentation submitted and carry out a site visit to confirm that the funded interventions have been implemented in line with the Grant Agreement. The disbursement of the outstanding Grant amount will then be carried out. Should an event of default as described in Section 16 occur, the Agency shall withhold or suspend payments requested by the Beneficiary and/or may request full re-imbursement of any amount already disbursed.

3. Interpretation

In this Scheme, unless the context otherwise requires:

'Agency' and 'EWA' means the Energy and Water Agency;

'Applicant' means an eligible Voluntary Organisation which submits an application to receive funding in terms of this Scheme;

'Application' means an application for participation made in such a manner as required by the Agency and in terms of these Rules;

'Beneficiary' means an eligible Applicant which has been awarded a Grant after successfully submitting an Application for funding under this Scheme and signing a Grant Agreement with the Agency to this effect.

'Call' means the publication of a Government Notice, inviting eligible Voluntary Organisations to submit an application for funding under this Scheme, which Notice shall establish the Effective Date and the version of the rules applicable.

'Effective date' means any date upon which applications shall be accepted as stated in the relative Notice in the Government Gazette;

'Grant' means the sum or sums of money to be provided to Beneficiaries in accordance with this Scheme and a duly signed Grant Agreement;

'Grant Agreement' means an agreement duly signed between successful applicants and the Agency, confirming the allocation of a Grant to carry out interventions applied for, in line with this Scheme;

'Malta' means the Maltese Islands;

'Perit' refers to an architect and civil engineer which has been granted a warrant and is acknowledged by the National Competent Authority in Malta, enabling the Perit to practice their profession in Malta;

'Premises' means the immovable property in or upon which the interventions for which funding is sought under this Scheme are to be carried out, which immovable properly shall be used by the Applicant for the fulfilment of the purposes for which the VO was set up and shall furthermore be property which is either:

a) Owned by the Applicant; or

b) Government owned property held by the Applicant under a title of lease or emphyteusis from the government; or

c) Held by the Applicant under a title of lease or emphyteusis, or any other legal arrangement subject to an outstanding term of at least ten (10) years following the submission of the application. In the case of any other legal arrangement, it is required to provide a declaration of the owner of the premises to this effect;

'Scheme' means the scheme regulated by the Applicable Rules and established by the relative Notice published in the Government Gazette no. 468 of 2022, whereby Voluntary Organisations may apply to be awarded funds to carry out energy efficiency and water conservation interventions, that are kept functional in the Premises used by the Applicant;

'Voluntary Organisation' means a voluntary organisation as defined in Article 3 of the Voluntary Organisations Act (Cap. 492) and which is enrolled in terms of the same Act;

'Warranted engineer' refers to an engineer which has been granted a warrant under article 4 of the Engineering Profession Act (Cap.321);

4. Scheme Description

The main objective of this Scheme is to support voluntary organisations in reducing their overall energy and water consumption through an increase in energy efficiency, and/or reduction in water use, and/or augmentation of water supply. The assistance is intended to facilitate investment in solutions that contribute directly and tangibly towards these objectives.

Eligible interventions under this Call shall satisfy the following criteria:

Category	Criteria Code/ Description	Eligible Interventions
Water Efficiency and Supply Augmentation	**W1** Water Flow Reduction	Interventions that aim at adjusting the flow or amount of water used in existing sanitary installations such as sinks, handwash basins, showers and toilets. Eligible interventions shall be: - adjustment of flow in existing faucets by installing aerators, and/or pressure reducing valves; - changing existing faucets to sensor activated, timed faucets, or two-step mixers; - installation of dual flush toilets (where not already present), new flush valves, or installation of new float valves or waterless technologies.
	W2 Reservoir Restoration	Eligible interventions shall be: - cleaning and repairs to existing wells; - cleaning and repairs to existing water reservoirs.
	W3 Secondary Network	Installation of secondary distribution network for the use of harvested rainwater. Installations can be carried out to make use of existing harvested rainwater in wells/reservoirs or add rainwater harvesting from an identified catchment area. Eligible interventions shall be: - installation of pumps; - installation of controllers; - installation of pipe networks; - installation of water storage tanks (above ground storage for new catchment areas or in addition to the existing rainwater reservoir or well); - installation of other materials needed to support this distribution network.
Energy Efficiency	**E1** Water Heating	Improving water heating systems, the new model shall be of similar capacity/power unless it is proved that the existing equipment is underperforming due to capacity/power/size. Eligible interventions shall be: - replacement of electric water heaters with solar water heaters or air to water heat pumps; - replacement of gas water heaters with solar water heaters or air to water heat pumps.
	E2 Equipment Efficiency	Eligible interventions shall be: - scrapping inefficient appliances (including old AC units) and replacement with new models. New models must provide increased water and energy efficiency; - upgrading motors/pumps with variable speed drives.
	E3 Lighting Efficiency	Replacing or modifying existing lighting fixtures to increase energy efficiency. Eligible interventions shall be: - replacing existing luminaires/bulbs to LED;

		- adding or replacing other passive systems such as presence and/or daylight sensors; - installation of dimming systems.
	E4 **Battery Storage**	Installation of a battery storage system to be connected to a PV system. Eligible interventions shall be: - installation of battery storage equipment; - installation of interface modules between standard inverters and battery storage; - changing standard inverters to hybrid inverters where the standard inverter has not been purchased with the support of funding from the Agency; The installation of a PV system, including its supporting structure, inverter and connection are not eligible under this measure. The battery storage rating should be in accordance with the PV system it will be connected to.

Applicants may propose any number of interventions under a maximum of 2 criteria per category in their application. (Only 2 out of criteria W1, W2, W3 can be chosen, along with 2 criteria from E1, E2, E3 and E4)

It is the responsibility of the Applicant to ensure that any proposed interventions for the use of rainwater are in accordance with any applicable and relevant legislation, as well as Health and Safety Regulations and Guidelines.

It is the responsibility of the Applicant to ensure that any proposed interventions on external lighting systems are in accordance with any applicable and relevant legislation, as well as ERA Regulations and Guidelines.

Projects which fall under the following categories are not considered eligible under this Scheme:

1. Installation of photovoltaic panels.
2. Consumables.
3. Maintenance work (excluding criterion W2).
4. Improvements in equipment or systems which could have a direct impact on competition.

5. Beneficiaries

This Scheme is open only to Voluntary Organisations for use on their Premises provided that the ARMS account with respect to the electricity and water service is in the Voluntary Organisation's name or other non-profit organisations linked to the Voluntary Organisation.

In order to be eligible for funding under this Scheme, the Applicant shall satisfy the required criteria, by which it is understood that the Applicant shall:

i. carry out proposed interventions within Premises as defined in section 3 of these Rules.

ii. allow relevant organisations involved in the implementation and control of this Scheme including EWA, EWA representatives and Auditors to inspect, given reasonable notice, the interventions carried out upon or within the Applicant's Premises;

iii. accept that the Applicant's data may appear on public documents or be published on the EWA website;

iv. not have obtained any tax rebate, deduction including deductions of input tax credit from the output tax in terms of the Value Added Tax Act (Cap 406), or other tax refund however so described, with regards to interventions carried out under this scheme, and shall not do so if awarded a Grant under this Scheme;

v. not have received any form of public funding for the cost of the proposed interventions applied for under this Scheme;

vi. be a Voluntary Organisation enrolled and compliant with the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations on signing of the Grant Agreement.

Applicants that have benefitted from a grant as a result of a successful application in any previous Call under this Scheme, as established by Government Notice no. 468 published on 3rd May 2022, as may be amended from time to time, are eligible to apply for funding in this Call .

First priority for funding under this Call shall be given to those Voluntary Organisations which have either never benefitted, or which have benefitted only once from any previous Call under this Scheme. While applicants which have already benefitted twice under separate previous Calls of this Scheme may apply under this Call, in the case of such VOs such applications will be given secondary prioritisation and will be re-ranked on the basis of the order in which such applications are received. The Voluntary Organisations which have benefitted twice under previous calls under this Scheme will be informed of their new ranking via email following closure of the Call.

Should an Applicant submit more than one Application within the Effective Date of any Call, the first application submitted shall be deemed to be automatically withdrawn and its standing in the ranking list shall be lost. Such applications shall not be assessed or evaluated. Any subsequent Application submitted shall be ranked in line with its time of submission and shall not be granted the ranking of the Applicant's previous submission. Applicant is to collate and submit one application if the interventions proposed are to be carried out within distinct premises belonging to the Voluntary Organisation, provided that each distinct premises is as defined in section 3 of these rules.

Applicable rules are subject to change. It is the responsibility of the Applicant to ensure they are in line with the latest version of these Rules. The version of the Rules applicable to each Call under the Scheme shall be established in the Government Notice launching the Call. All communication related to this Scheme shall be via email, through the contact email address/es provided by the Applicant in the online application form. It shall be the responsibility of the Applicant to monitor said email address/es where communication related to this Scheme will be sent and to respond in a timely manner to any communication from the Energy and Water Agency.

6. Details of Assistance

The assistance shall be in the form of a grant.

7. Eligible Costs

This Scheme may support investments in tangible assets and services procured as part of an intervention carried out by an eligible Applicant to achieve a higher level of energy efficiency, water savings or water supply augmentation as per criteria defined in section 4 of these Rules. Costs incurred by the Applicant prior to the signing of a Grant Agreement or costs incurred in the submission of the Application and the associated documentation under this Scheme shall not be eligible.

The minimum eligible cost shall be Euro 750 incl. VAT and the maximum eligible cost as described in section 4 of these Rules shall be capped at Euro 30,000 incl. VAT. The grant amount shall cover 90% of the eligible cost up to Euro 27,000 (incl. VAT).
Beneficiaries shall co-fund the investment in the interventions by financing 10% of the eligible costs.

8. Disbursement of Grant

The total Grant amount shall not exceed the amount established in the Grant Agreement, independent of actual expenditure. Disbursement of the Grant shall be made to the Applicant's bank account as provided at application stage. The disbursement of the Grant shall be divided into the following stages:

Stage	% of Allocated Grant
Pre-Financing	60
Final Claim	40

Pre-Financing Stage – 60% of the allocated Grant amount, as per Grant Agreement, will be disbursed within 10 weeks of signing of the Grant Agreement.

Final Claim Stage – Outstanding 40% of the allocated Grant amount, as per Grant Agreement, will be disbursed upon completion and verification of the interventions carried out as per Grant Agreement.

9. Application Procedure

An acknowledgment will be issued for the receipt of Applications as per procedure mentioned in section 2 of these Rules. The Application shall be assessed, by the Agency and a letter communicating the outcome thereof shall be sent to the applicant accordingly. A valid Application shall include the Application Form correctly filled in and supporting documentation as per below.

List of supporting documentation:

1. Photocopy of ID card / Passport of the Applicant representative;

2. A utility bill, issued in the name of the Voluntary Organisation for the consumption of electricity and water at the Premises where the interventions are to be carried out. The date of issue of the utility bill shall be within the twelve (12) months prior to the date of application submission. If the account is not in the Voluntary Organisation's name, but registered under another non-profit organisation, a declaration by the account holder is to be provided in addition to the required copy of the bill, confirming that the costs incurred in the account are burdened by the Applicant, despite it being in the account holder's name. The Applicant may also submit a statement signed by a Water Services Corporation or ARMS Ltd official confirming that an account exists, but a bill cannot be issued and providing details of the account holder, consumer scheme and service address;

3. Copy of quotations containing seller and buyer details. Quotations submitted must be clearly linked to the proposed interventions as described in the application form and must have clearly segregated prices, description of product, and date of issue;

4. Technical Report, filled in by a Warranted Engineer or Perit with details of the interventions proposed, present energy and water consumption information and the expected usage patterns after the implementation of the proposed interventions. Where the interventions proposed aim to augment water supply, an estimate of the harvesting potential shall be provided. The submitted application shall clearly state what equipment is being removed (where applicable), what equipment is being installed and justification for changes in size/capacity of proposed new equipment if applicable. The template to be used for the technical report with required details can be downloaded from the EWA website.

5. Declaration for use of premises by the owner, when this is being used by the Voluntary Organisation under any other legal arrangement as per interpretation of Premises in Section 3 above.

Each Application will be assessed by the Agency for completeness and compliance. Verification that Applicant is validly enrolled as a Voluntary Organisation shall be carried out at the time of application. If the scheme criteria are met and the Application, or a part thereof, is successful, the Applicant will receive a Notification Letter to this effect.

Following the issuing of the Notification Letter the Applicant will be contacted to sign a Grant Agreement with the Agency. Grant Agreements shall be valid for six (6) months. Only at this stage may the Beneficiary purchase and install any products required for the approved interventions. Grant disbursement as per details given above will also commence after the Grant Agreement is signed, within the timeframes mentioned above. Any cost incurred prior to the signing of the Grant Agreement is not eligible.

The Agency shall reject any Applications or parts thereof:

i. where the Application is submitted with missing or incorrect supporting documentation;
ii. where it deems that the quotations provided contain inflated prices;
iii. where it deems that the proposed intervention is not in line with the objectives of the scheme as indicated in Section 4 of these rules. If more than one intervention is being proposed in the Application, each proposed intervention will be assessed individually and the Agency may reject only parts of the application as deemed appropriate;
iv. where the supporting documentation submitted is not filled in;
v. where clarifications requested are not provided within the timeframe indicated by the Agency.

Applicants which receive a Rejection Letter may choose to have their Application reviewed in line with the mechanism described in Section 11, provided that the review mechanism shall only be available to those Applicants whose applications were not rejected as a result of unavailability of funds.

Following completion of the funded interventions, the Beneficiary shall submit claim forms and supporting documentation as required by the Grant Agreement. The Agency will assess the claim submitted against the initial application and Grant Agreement. Where necessary, the Agency shall at its own expense carry out a site visit. If the assessment is satisfactory and all the required documentation has been submitted, disbursement of the final amount of the grant will be processed. Following payment, the Beneficiary shall be required to participate in any financial audits that may be carried out at the Agency's expense for a period of two (2) years from the conclusion of the Grant Agreement. If the approved interventions are not completed and/or the required claim forms are not submitted within the Grant Agreement deadlines and in line with the Grant Agreement, the Agency reserves the right to withhold or suspend payment requested by the Applicant and/or require the Applicant to repay any funds disbursed.

10. Duration of the Scheme

Applications for any Call under this Scheme may be validly received during the Effective Date of the Call. **Such applications will be acknowledged, processed and ranked on a first come first served basis, subject to availability of funds.**

This Scheme and any Call thereunder may be renewed, modified or terminated early, including for reasons of oversubscription, by means of a Notice in the Government Gazette as deemed necessary by the Agency.

11. Review Process

In case of rejection of the Application submitted or of parts thereof, a Rejection Letter will be sent to the non-compliant applicant, indicating the reason for rejection. A request for review of the rejected application, or parts thereof, may be made through a formal submission containing the following:

1. Name of the Voluntary Organisation submitting the request;
2. Reference number of Rejection Letter sent by the Energy and Water Agency that is being objected to;

3. Description of the proposed intervention that has been rejected as per application or parts thereof;
4. Statement by the Voluntary Organisation explaining the reason for objecting to the decision given.

The request for review is to be sent via email (scheme.vo@gov.mt) within 10 calendar days from the date of when notification with the Rejection Letter is sent. Requests for review not received within this deadline will not be considered.

Requests for review submitted by rejected applicants will be assessed by a Review Board specifically appointed by the Minister to hear objections from decisions made under this Scheme. The decisions taken by the Review Board will then be communicated to the rejected applicants as per procedures established by same Review Board.

12. Obligations of the Beneficiary

The Beneficiary shall at all times comply with all applicable legislation, these Rules, any relevant Notice in the Government Gazette and the clauses of the Grant Agreement to be entered into after the issue of the Notification letter.

13. Amendments to the Scheme

The Agency shall have the right to make any amendments to this Scheme by means of a Notice published in the Government Gazette containing such amendments.

14. Liability

The Agency or any other national authorities cannot and do not guarantee or underwrite the performance of any technology or intervention carried out under this Scheme.

15. Data Protection

The Energy and Water Agency shall be the Data Controller for the Personal Data collected and processed in the course of the submission of any Application and the administration of this Scheme. Any queries related thereto may be addressed to the Agency's Data Protection Officer at: dpo.ewa@gov.mt.

16. Events of Default

The events described hereunder constitute events of default and should any such event occur, this may lead to the withdrawal of any Grant offer or, where a Grant offer has been made and accepted, to the termination of any Grant Agreement governing such Grant and to the recovery of funds disbursed under such Agreement.

An event of default shall be deemed to occur where:

a) a material breach of the Grant Agreement or of these Rules is committed, or the executed interventions materially depart from the description of the interventions as submitted in the Application;

b) the cost of the interventions is found to have been misrepresented;

c) information required under the Grant Agreement or requested by the Agency in line with the provisions of the Grant Agreement is not submitted;

d) false or fraudulent information is found to have been provided to the Agency in the application process, or at any other time when submission of information is required under the Grant Agreement, or is requested by the Managing Authority in line with the provisions of the Grant Agreement;

e) the Grant is found to be unlawful funding;

f) a Beneficiary is adjudged bankrupt, or is in the process of dissolution, or is undergoing a process of administration, has entered into an arrangement with creditors, has suspended its activities, or is subject to legal proceedings relative to any of the aforementioned matters, or is undergoing an analogous procedure in terms of its governing statute;

g) a Beneficiary has had any of its assets subjected to a garnishee order or warrant of seizure issued on the request of any third party and/or has been formally notified of any claims or circumstances which could give rise to such a garnishee order or warrant of seizure to be issued with respect to the Beneficiary's assets;

h) a judgment which is *res judicata* has found any individual having the Beneficiary's legal or juridical representation guilty of fraud, of misappropriation, of corruption, of involvement in any criminal activity of whatever nature or of a breach of professional obligations;

i) a Beneficiary fails to implement the funded interventions.