



Employer Excellence Programme

FAQs





FAQs for Employer Excellence Programme 2024

Note: This is a living document, which means that as Frequently Asked Questions are received about the Programme, they will be added to this document, and it will evolve.

The Fáilte Ireland **Employer Excellence Programme** will support businesses to drive great employee engagement, and continuously build the appeal of their workplace.

It will spotlight excellent employers and help to reposition the tourism sector as a rewarding and attractive place to work.

As a member of the tourism industry, we know you may have a lot of questions about the Programme, how it works, and how it might help you navigate through the labour challenges our industry is facing and therefore affecting your business. This document is designed to help steer you through those questions.

If you do not find the answer to your question here, please contact our Customer Support Team:

customersupport@failteireland.ie

The Employer Excellence Programme is open for 2024 applications, sign up via the [Fáilte Ireland Trade Portal](#).

Q1) What is the Employer Excellence Programme?

Like many other sectors, tourism & hospitality is facing significant challenges in terms of staff shortages post-pandemic. The tourism recruitment market is moving fast and is very competitive, and it is an employee's market. The Fáilte Ireland Employer Excellence Programme will support businesses to drive great employee engagement. This is a three-year programme of focused Employee Engagement and Development, incorporating a comprehensive and bespoke People Management Training Programme, with a detailed Employee Survey. It will allow businesses to incorporate the voice of their employees into their People Management and Development and will support them to drive the appeal of their workplace.

It will provide a platform to showcase excellent employers and help to reposition the tourism sector as a rewarding and attractive place to work.

Through this programme you will be provided with a range of supports to help you. As part of the three-year commitment to the Employer Excellence Programme, you and your business will gain access to the following:

- [Fundamentals in People Management](#) training which has been designed especially for this programme, focusing on performance management, recruitment and induction best practice, as well as leadership and change management
- A dedicated Employee Engagement expert who will guide you through the process of driving positive engagement
- A confidential employee survey carried out by an independent employee engagement expert
- Access to insights for your business which will focus on areas the business does well in, in terms of employee engagement, and areas where the business should focus on for future development.
- The opportunity to be recognised and certified under the Employer Excellence Programme
- The opportunity to leverage associated campaigns and PR as part of the programme
- Access to Employer Excellence branding and collateral for use in your recruitment and employee engagement processes

Q2) Who can apply?

The Fáilte Ireland Employer Excellence Programme is open to all tourism and hospitality businesses. However, to be eligible for Fáilte Ireland's financial contribution towards the employee engagement element of the programme, businesses must meet the criteria below. It is important that all applicants check the definition and eligibility criteria before applying. Eligibility does not mean an entitlement to Fáilte Ireland's financial contribution, which is at the sole discretion of Fáilte Ireland.

To qualify for the full benefit and financial contribution for the programme, applicants must meet the criteria outlined below.

- Applicants must have a demonstrable tourist experience or product, targeting domestic and / or international visitors (for example, but not limited to, one or more of the following: the ability to provide services through multilingual channels, proactively targeting both the international and domestic markets, alignment with one of Fáilte Ireland's regional brands i.e. Dublin, Ireland's Ancient East, Ireland's Hidden Heartlands, Wild Atlantic Way.)
- Current employee numbers of over 5 staff (seasonal, full-time, and part-time staff are applicable to this total figure)
- Must be established and registered for tax, and tax cleared in the Republic of Ireland
- If the applicant is an Irish Based Inbound Agent, it must operate as a Republic of Ireland based inbound tour operator, DMC or PCO who package, sell, and market the Republic of Ireland's tourism product overseas.
- If the applicant is an accommodation provider, they must be Registered or Approved under Fáilte Ireland's National Quality Assurance Framework (NQAF)
- In order to be eligible, the following businesses must be registered with Fáilte Ireland as Statutory Accommodation Providers: Hotels, Guest houses, Holiday Hostels, Youth Hostels, Caravan & Camping Parks, Self-Catering (registered under a prescribed term) and Holiday Camps
- In order to be eligible, the following businesses must be approved by Fáilte Ireland as Non-Statutory Accommodation Providers: B&Bs, Historic Houses, Self-Catering (individual properties), Welcome Standard Approved Marinas and Welcome Standard Approved Campus Accommodation

Q3) What if my business is part of a group structure?

It is intended that locations will be managed and charged on an individual site / location basis, regardless of whether they are part of a group or not. So individual location rates will apply, which represent a 75% saving compared to market rate. For further details, please contact: employerexcellence@failteireland.ie

Q4) Who should I contact for general queries on the Programme?

Please direct all queries to the Fáilte Ireland Tourism Careers Team by emailing: customersupport@failteireland.ie

Q5) What if my business is already part of an Employee Engagement Programme?

Our ambition is to collectively rise the tide for positive people practices and create the best workplaces possible in our industry. The Employer Excellence Programme aims to achieve this by setting a high-quality standard of excellence in People Management Learning and Employee Engagement for the tourism sector. But to make the greatest strides, we are conscious we need to work together collectively as an industry, to really deliver impact in ensuring the best workplace possible for our people, and to continue to attract and retain the best talent. A framework is now being developed to establish these standards, which will allow others who meet them to be accredited, while also maintaining the high quality of the existing Employer Excellence Programme.

To find out more contact the team at: employerexcellence@failteireland.ie

Q6) I have some employee engagement best practices that I have already implemented in my business, who can I share these with?

Please share any relevant material or case studies to the Tourism Careers Team at: employerexcellence@failteireland.ie

The Fundamentals of People and Performance Management

Q7) What is the Fundamentals of People and Performance Management?

This programme has been created with best-in-class HR experts and is aimed at employees who are operating in people management and supervisory roles who have not yet received training in this area, or who would benefit from further or refresher training. It covers everything from the latest expertise and guidance on induction and effective leadership to performance management and developing high performing teams and includes a database of resources that will enable managers to bring the learnings into their day-to-day operation.

It is an online, self-paced programme, enabling learners to engage with the content in a manner that best suits them and their workplace, with an emphasis on real-time implementation of the learning as they progress through the course.

Note: 70% of people managers registered for this training must complete all three modules to be eligible for Employer Excellence Certification and Award in 2024

Q8) What do I need to complete the programme?

Senior management and business owners are encouraged to provide time and appropriate resources (e.g, a quiet space, a compute and reflective time and support) to their employees who are taking part in this online course, with a focus on active embedding of the learning with their teams.

Q9) What is the structure of the Fundamentals of People Management Learning Programme?

Full details about the programme including the module breakdown, the course duration as well as who the course is applicable to and therefore should be enrolled to take the training can be found [here](#).

Q10) What if my team have completed People Management Training?

While it is recommended that People Managers still refresh their knowledge by completing this training, if it is not possible, Fáilte Ireland may accept recognised and certified people management training completed since 2018. Any such training should focus on areas such as:

- Induction and On-boarding
- Effective Team Communication
- Leadership and Coaching
- Building High Performing Teams
- Managing Performance

Faillte Ireland is developing a framework that will enable us to open the Employer Excellence programme to businesses working with other employee engagement processes while ensuring consistent quality standards are met. For further details please contact us at: employere excellence@failteireland.ie



The Employee Engagement Survey

Q11) How many of my team members are required to complete the employee survey?

To establish robust results in the survey, your survey must have a minimum response rate. The number of responses required will vary on the size of your business. Your survey provider will advise you on the optimal response rate required for success.

Q12) How long will it take to receive and complete my Staff Survey

Your business will engage directly with your Employee Survey Provider on everything relating to your survey. They will agree a timeline with you to issue your survey to your employees.

This will generally remain open for a 2-week period for your employees to complete, but this may be adjusted if required depending on the needs of the business, and in agreement with the survey supplier. The survey itself takes between 10 and 15 minutes to complete and will be available in a range of languages. For further information on the Great Place to Work Survey (over 20 staff) - please visit: <https://www.greatplacetowork.ie/faq/>

For information on the Workbly Survey (for business between 5 and 19 staff) - please visit: <https://workbly.com/fi-faq/>

Regardless of your survey provider the process will take six weeks to complete.

Q13) Where do the results of my employee survey go?

The results of your employees' survey will remain confidential between your business and the survey provider. Fáilte Ireland will not see any individual survey results or scores, but instead will get a high-level sectoral report showing trends emerging across all survey results, in order to put in place supports to assist in addressing these.

Fáilte Ireland will also get the scores of businesses who reach the benchmark to receive recognition. Fáilte Ireland will not see any individual reports.

Q14) What will my Actionable Insights look like?

Each action plan is tailor-made for each business who participates in the Employer Excellence Programme. The action plan will be developed in collaboration with your survey provider based on the results from your employee survey. It will outline development areas for you to focus on to enhance and improve your people practices. This action plan will be entirely confidential to the business and will not be made available to Fáilte Ireland.

Q15) What is the closing date for completion of the Training and Employee Survey?

The closing date for completion of the Training and the Employee Survey is the 10th November 2023 in order to be considered for recognition and award in Q1 2024. Businesses registering after this date may still complete the Training and Employee Survey and will be considered for awards in subsequent year.



Q16) How much will the Programme cost?

The actual cost of the Programme to the businesses will vary between size and year of the 3 year programme. Fáilte Ireland will contribute to part of the costs to the business (other than to Public bodies or businesses), resulting in a cost saving to your business.

The costs for businesses wishing to participate in the Employer Excellence Programme are outlined below. No business will pay more than the max indicated below - specific rates will depend on participation levels.

Cost Range Per Business – over 20 staff



Small (20-49 employees)

Year	Cost range to Business
1	€600
2	€1,200
3	€2,000
Total	€3,800

Medium (50-99 employees)

Year	Cost range to Business
1	€850
2	€2,200
3	€3,400
Total	€6,450

Large (100+ employees)

Year	Cost range to Business
1	€1,100
2	€3,000
3	€4,500
Total	€8,600

These costs to businesses represent an approx. 75% saving on what the overall market rate would be for such a programme, including People Management Training and Business Survey. All costs are exclusive of VAT at 23%.

Cost Per Business – 5 – 19 staff



Year	Cost to Business
1	€750*
2	€750*
3	€750*

* All costs are exclusive of VAT at 23%.

Employer Excellence Certification

Q17) What percentage do I need to achieve the Employer Excellence mark?

This will be determined by the output of the survey as well as 70% completion of the Fundamentals of People Management. Survey results will be benchmarked independently by your survey provider.

The following is the breakdown of the Certification Ranking and Titles:

Survey Score	Ribbon Colour	Ranking
<55%	Green	Participating Employer
55-65%	Bronze	Commended Employer
65-75%	Silver	Excellent Employer
75%+	Gold	Outstanding Employer

Q18) What do I get in my certification activation pack?

Once you are certified as part of the Employer Excellence Programme you are eligible to receive the following:

Asset	Participating	Commended	Excellent	Outstanding
Digital EEP logo	X	X	X	X
Digital Certificate of Employer Excellence		X	X	X
Plaque for display in public areas		X	X	X
Digital Pack (EEP ribbon, email signature, logo, social media badge, guidelines and toolkit)		X	X	X
Eligible to be considered for Award at annual EEP awards				X
Opportunity to be featured as a case study				X

Q19) I am responsible for a Hotel Group; can I be certified under Employer Excellence?

Hotel Groups can survey their staff at Head or Central Office if they meet the essential criteria. The team must also complete the Fundamentals of People Management Training to be eligible for certification.

Q20) How long can my business hold the mark of Employer Excellence?

The certification and mark for Employer Excellence is time banded and will be valid for the year of certification. You will be certified as part of the programme for one year only, however, you are encouraged to remain in the programme each year to demonstrate your commitment to becoming an Excellent Employer.

Q21) Do I have to always display the Employer Excellence Mark?

Once you are a participant of the programme and awarded the mark, the mark should be displayed alongside any other marks as appropriate.

Q22) When will I get my Employer Excellence Mark?

The mark will be distributed to all businesses who complete their survey and training. Once scores have been awarded by Fáilte Ireland businesses will receive their badge.



Other Queries

Q23) My staff numbers fluctuate throughout the year can I still take part in the programme?

Fáilte Ireland understand that staff numbers will change throughout the year. We can work with you to execute the survey at a time of year that works for you.

Q24) Can Public Bodies Participate in this programme?

Public Bodies: Any business that is owned and operated by, or in direct funding from, the following public bodies are eligible to apply. However, as a public body, they cannot avail of the Fáilte Ireland contribution provided for the Employee survey, so the full cost of this will apply

- Office of Public Works
- National Parks and Wildlife Service
- Local Authorities/County Councils and their commercial subsidiaries
- National Museum
- Waterways Ireland
- Coillte

Q25) What are the business commitments for the Programme?

To be accepted onto the Programme, businesses are asked to make a number of commitments in terms of their involvement and engagement with it. The programme has been developed to be as seamless and effective as possible for the industry to maximise their time resource. Further information can be found in the programme [Guidelines](#).

Q26) Which businesses are deemed ineligible?

The following entities are deemed ineligible and therefore excluded from applying for this Programme:

Those that do not meet the eligibility criteria as defined above under Eligible Applicants. Applicants who meet one or more of the below criteria are ineligible to apply for the programme:

- Accommodation providers not included on Fáilte Ireland's National Quality Assurance Framework are ineligible to apply under this Programme.
- Property Marketing Companies / Groups / Organisations
- If the applicant is an Irish Based Inbound Agent, and does not operate in the Republic of Ireland as an Irish based inbound tour operator, DMC or PCO who package, sell, and market the Republic of Ireland's tourism product overseas

Decisions taken by Fáilte Ireland on eligibility are full and final and not open to appeal.

Q27) My business has less than five employees, why am I ineligible?

To protect both business owners and employees in terms of anonymity and confidentiality, the Fáilte Ireland Employer Excellence Programme Survey is open to businesses with 5 or more staff only. This may include part-time or seasonal employees. Any numbers less than this would compromise the robustness of the data from the employees, and therefore diminish the integrity of anonymised feedback overall. In some cases, when the sample size is very small, it may be possible to identify individual respondents based on their answers, raising privacy concerns. Small sample sizes tend to result in larger variability in the data. This means that even slight variations in responses can have a significant impact on the calculated statistics impacting the statistical integrity of the survey. This increased variability can make it challenging to identify true trends or patterns in the data.

Q28) How do I apply?

While the Programme is open to all tourism and hospitality businesses, to be eligible to apply for Fáilte Ireland's financial contribution towards the employee engagement element of the programme, businesses must meet the criteria outlined above in Q2.

- All applicants will be required to have a profile on Fáilte Ireland's 'Trade Portal' which is accessible on www.failteireland.ie. If you do not already have an account, you will be required to create one.
- For those that already have a Trade Portal account, the application form can also be found under: <https://tradeportal.failteireland.ie/upcoming-business-supports/>
- Once logged in to the trade portal the Employer Excellence Programme can be located by selecting the 'Enterprise Supports' tab followed by 'My Live Training Events'.

1. Click the **Answer Questions** box below to answer the compulsory questions & save the changes.
2. Click the tick icon below.
3. Click the **Register Now** button.

Should the form not be available please contact customersupport@failteireland.ie

- *Applicants should note that granting access to the application form does not confirm final eligibility on an applicant. Depending on the information provided in the application form, an applicant may still be deemed ineligible for participation in the programme later in the process.*

Once your application has been reviewed, our colleagues will be in touch with you shortly to confirm your participation and guide you through the next steps required so you can sign you and your team up to **LearnFi**, there you will be invited to complete the Fundamentals of People and Performance Management online learning.



Q29) What supporting evidence is required as part of my application?

Applicants may be required to provide the following supporting documentation prior to acceptance onto the programme:

- Evidence of targeting domestic and / or international visitors.
- Evidence of address (recent utility bill or similar)
- Tax Reference Number (TRN)

Q30) What are the consequences of my business not remaining in the programme after Year 1?

Should you wish to conclude the Employer Excellence Programme at any point of the three years, applicants must give a minimum notice of three months of termination. Businesses will also be required to pay 100% cost of participation and will be required to refund the Fáilte Ireland contribution which has been put in place.

Q31) Can my business join the programme in year 2?

Businesses are welcome to sign up to the Fáilte Ireland Employer Excellence Programme at any time. The fees outlined above in Q16 would apply

It is recommended businesses join the programme for the duration of the three-year programme. The Employer excellence Programme will give you the business, time to establish and implement change and be rewarded and recognised as an excellent employer.

Q32) I do not meet all the criteria for the Employer Excellence Programme

If you do not meet all criteria, please email employerexcellence@failteireland.ie.

Q33) Why should my business participate in the programme?

Currently the needs and expectations of prospective employees are evolving like never before, with ever changing requirements of Employers to meet and where possible exceed these expectations. The Employer Excellence Programme allows businesses to stay ahead of these changes and position them as top of mind amongst potential employees as a great employer. Businesses are encouraged to participate in the Employer Excellence Programme to reap the benefits offered. Businesses can save up to 75% of the market rate for the full programme in terms of the Fundamentals of People Management Training and Employee Engagement Survey and Actionable Insights. You also can upskill your team through the training which can be undertaken in a way that works for your team and will provide them with a repertoire of resources they can access at any time. The programme promises to increase the profile of your employer brand - enhancing the profile and recognition for the business as a strong employer brand because of significant investment into dedicated awards PR and marketing communications campaign, driving recognition and awareness of the programme, as well as those businesses who are leading the way in Employee Engagement. Research shows that strong employee engagement and focus on employee wellbeing increases productivity by 20%. This will in turn improve business performance and profits by 20%, again with businesses involved with employee engagement scoring 85% in excellent customer service and positive customer experience.

Q34) I do not meet the criteria for the programme - what other supports do Fáilte Ireland offer for tourism businesses looking to hire staff?

Fáilte Ireland's top priority is supporting Ireland's tourism and hospitality businesses to survive. We have created an extensive range of business supports to guide you through operating your business. These have been developed in consultation with industry experts to meet your recruitment, marketing and finance needs amongst other supports. More information on these supports can be found here: [Homepage](#) | [Business Supports](#) | [Business Support Hub](#) | [Fáilte Ireland \(failteireland.ie\)](#)