



# Employer Excellence Programme

## FAQs





# FAQs for Employer Excellence Programme 2022

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 crisis 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](mailto:customersupport@failteireland.ie)

## 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 and make tourism an exciting and rewarding place to work.

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 newly 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
- A tailor-made action plan for your business which will focus on areas the business is performing well in in terms of employee engagement, and areas where the business should focus on for future development
- The opportunity to be recognised and officially certified under the Employer Excellence Programme
- The opportunity to leverage associated campaigns and PR as part of the programme
- 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 20 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 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](mailto: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](mailto:customersupport@failteireland.ie)

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

To explore how you may take part in the programme, email: [employerexcellence@failteireland.ie](mailto: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](mailto:employerexcellence@failteireland.ie)

### Q7) What is the Fundamentals of People Management?

This newly-developed 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.



## 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 computer, 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) Who should complete the People Management Learning Programme?

- **Tourism & hospitality employees newly operating as team leaders, supervisors or line managers with responsibility for supporting team members** regarding training, development and day to day performance management;
- **Existing team leaders and managers** seeking to refresh and further enhance their people management, personal leadership and communication skills.

For optimal impact of this learning, not only to individual participants but to the wider business, **all team leaders, supervisors and line managers in the business are required to engage with the course.**

## Q10) What is the structure of the Learning Programme?

### Programme structure & recommended engagement

- **Three modules**, with 3-4 sections per module, a total of **10 learning units**;
- Total direct learning time of approximately **6 hours**, recommended **to be taken over 3-6 weeks**;
- Learning format supports **bite-size engagement** - using a mix of video, supporting reading, quizzes & assessments;
- **60 supporting downloadable resources** provided to guide implementation of learning directly back to the workplace
- **Online self-directed format** allows learner to set their own pace of engagement, and allows for minimal disruption to day-to-day job requirements;
- Additional time should be assigned to learners to support **active implementation of learning** content, tools and techniques in their daily work
- Senior managers are encouraged to support participants by checking-in regularly to **reflect on learning**, and to identify **possibilities for organisational change regarding staff development & performance management, supporting career pathways, and improving staff recognition and retention and employer brand.**

## Q11) What will the modules look like?

### Module Breakdown

#### Module 1: Effective Communications for Employee Engagement (three sections)

Module 1 focuses on the initial stages of working with an employee, including effective induction and probationary practices, as well as addressing ways to optimise the effectiveness of day-to-day internal communications across the business to support the development of high performing teams.

Supporting resources include:

- Sample induction training plans and records
- Probationary review templates
- Weekly and daily team meeting templates

#### Module 2: Personal Leadership - Coaching & Management Styles in Building of Effective Teams (three sections)

Module 2 focusing on the participants personal leadership with others. It investigates different leadership styles and encourages learners to identify and improve their own personal leadership to suit different situations and staff learning needs, while also learning to apply coaching techniques in their day-to-day work. It also addresses ways to motivate and inspire team members, as well as how to create a culture of engagement with the wider community, supporting your Employer brand.

Supporting resources include:

- Motivational techniques;
- Time management tools;
- Self-assessment tool regarding leadership style

### **Module 3: Managing Performance Day-to-Day (four sections)**

Module 3 supports participants to consider their day-to-day performance management approach and how to build effective strategies and resources in managing not only individual employees but managing team deliver optimal performance. It looks at the processes involved in goal setting and employee appraisals, as well as how to give effective feedback and manage difficult conversations with staff. It also addresses the importance of recognising and rewarding team members.

Supporting resources include:

- Goal setting templates;
- Appraisal meeting templates;
- Employee recognition guidance materials.

### **Q11) How long will the People Management training take?**

Total direct learning time of approximately **6 hours**.

### **Q12) Do I need to register all my People Managers for the Fundamentals of People Management Training on the Fáilte Ireland Trade Portal?**

Yes, the lead contact of the business (i.e the person who is registering for the programme on behalf of the Business) will be required to add each people manager to the trade portal, they will then be given individual access to the Fundamentals of People Management Training.

### **Q13) What if my team has already completed People Management Training?**

While it is recommended that People Managers still refresh their knowledge by completing this People Management Training also, if this is not possible Fáilte Ireland may accept recognised and certified people management training completed since 2017. Any such training should have focussed on areas such as:

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

### **Q14) How many of my team members are required to complete the employee survey?**

To establish robust results in the survey, surveys must have a minimum confidence level of 95%. The number of responses needed will vary with the size of the business taking part. This level is based on the number of responses received out of the total number of employees, which will vary with the size of the business taking part



### Q15) How long will it take to receive and complete my Staff Survey

Your business will engage directly with our independent Employee Engagement supplier 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 - please visit: <https://www.greatplacetowork.ie/faq/>

### Q16) Where do the results of my employee survey go?

The results of your employees survey will remain confidential to your business and the independent Employee Engagement supplier. 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..

### Q17) What will my action plan look like?

Each action plan is tailor made for each business who participates in the Employer Excellence Programme. The action plan will be developed 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.

### Q18) 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.

## Indicative Cost Range Per Business



#### Small (20-49 employees)

Year	Cost range to Business
1	€500
2	€1,200-€1,700
3	€2,000-€2,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>€3,700-€4,700</b>

#### Medium (50-99 employees)

Year	Cost range to Business
1	€750
2	€2,200-€2,700
3	€3,400-€3,900
<b>Total</b>	<b>€6,350-€7,350</b>

#### Large (100+ employees)

Year	Cost range to Business
1	€1,000
2	€3,000-€3,500
3	€4,500-€5,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>€8,500-€9,500</b>

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

### Q19) What percentage do I need to achieve the Employer Excellence mark?

This will be determined by the output of the survey and will be benchmarked independently by an employee engagement expert.

### **Q20) What if my business has less than 20 staff?**

Fáilte Ireland are developing a separate programme targeted at businesses who have less than 20 staff and this will be launched in Q1 2023. Contact [employerexcellence@failteireland.ie](mailto:employerexcellence@failteireland.ie) if you would like further details as they emerge.

### **Q21) 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.

### **Q22) 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

### **Q23) 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](#).

### **Q24) 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 Scheme:
- Accommodation providers not included on Fáilte Ireland's National Quality Assurance Framework are ineligible to apply under this Programme.
- Campus Accommodation and Student Accommodation: On the basis that this accommodation is not primarily available for tourist use, this accommodation category is ineligible. The exception is Accommodation which can evidence a demonstrable tourist experience as outlined in Criteria 1.
- 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.



## Q25) 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](http://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' tab to complete the required terms and conditions question, then click 'Save changes'

2. Enter the total **number of managers** you wish to nominate for the Fundamentals of People Management programme in the 'Quantity' box

*NB - It is imperative that at this stage you enter the exact number of managers you will be nominating for the programme. We would suggest having all this information (first name, last name, and email address), number and details of staff prepared prior to commencing the registration.*

3. Once the number of managers are entered in the '**Quantity**' box please click on the '**Tick**' symbol

4. Click 'Enter Attendees names'

5. You will then be taken to a new window, where you will have the same number of options to add staff as the quantity box. Please note that at this stage, they will all be defaulted to your name

6. From the down arrow next to the name in the attendee box you will be able to select contact details from persons already held on our records. If the name of your colleague, you wish to nominate is here you can then select them

7. If the person you wish to add is not listed click '**New contact**' from the drop-down menu.

8. Enter the persons, first name, last name, individual contact email, (Please do not use emails such as info@, reservations@, housekeeping@, but use the person's individual email)

9. Once the name, email and telephone number is entered, click '**Add**'

10. Progress through this either selecting or adding managers as required

11. At the bottom of the page then click '**Save changes**'

12. You will then be taken back to the Registration page, click '**Register now**' to complete the registration for the Employer Excellence Programme

Should the form not be available please contact [customersupport@failteireland.ie](mailto: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.*



1

Business signs up via the  
Fáilte Ireland Trade Portal

2

Business registers  
managers for the  
Fundamentals of People  
Management Training

3

People Managers are  
directed to complete their  
training via Fáilte Ireland  
LMS

4

Business is then passed  
over to Great Place to  
Work to manage  
employee survey

5

Business gets access to  
staff survey from Great  
Place to Work

6

Business receives a  
tailored report and score  
coming out of survey,  
highlighting what works well  
and areas for development

7

Once businesses get  
their score, they get  
appropriate FI EE  
Programme mark

8

PR campaign

9

Fáilte Ireland creates  
supports for businesses  
to drive their action plan

### **Q26) 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)

### **Q27) 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 30th of November 2022 in order to be considered for recognition and award in Q1 2023. Businesses registering after this date may still complete the Training and Employee Survey, and considered for awards in subsequent year.

### **Q28) 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.

### **Q29) Can my business join the programme in year 2?**

Businesses are welcome to sign up to the Fáilte Ireland Employer Excellence Programme in 2023. 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.

### **Q30) I do not meet all the criteria for the Employer excellence Programme**

If you do not meet all criteria, please email [employere excellence@failteireland.ie](mailto:employere excellence@failteireland.ie).

### **Q31) 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 award. You will be certified as part of the programme for one year only, however, you are welcome and encouraged to remain in the programme each year to demonstrate your commitment to becoming an Excellent Employer.

### **Q32) 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.

### **Q33) 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. It is envisaged that this will be Q1 2023.

### **Q34) I am already part of the IHF Quality Employer Programme - can I also avail of this programme**

Yes, this programme runs separately to the IHF QEP. More information on the IHF Quality Employer Programme can be found here: [info@ihf.ie](mailto:info@ihf.ie)



### Q35) 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 will allow 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 throughout the duration of the programme. 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 a dedicated awards PR marketing communications campaign. This will drive 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.

### Q36) I do not meet the criteria for the programme - what other supports do Fáilte Ireland offer for tourism businesses looking to hire staff?

**Note : As indicated in Q2 above,** 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,

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 \(failteireland.ie\)](#)

The labour market has never been so competitive. Businesses across the country are finding it hard to recruit and retain the staff they need to operate successfully in the months ahead. The resources in the sections below are designed to support tourism and hospitality businesses in their recruitment efforts, so they can stand out and attract the talent they need.

These resources provide practical information on how to effectively manage the changes required in the current recruitment process marketplace, to attract and win the best talent. This includes information on communicating with potential employees - pre- and post-interview stage, as well as information on legal requirements and best practice for hiring and successful onboarding to support retention

[Recruitment](#) | [HR](#) | [Business Supports](#) | [Business Support Hub](#) | [Fáilte Ireland \(failteireland.ie\)](#)