



Employer Excellence Programme Guidelines





Tourism Eligibility Criteria

- Employer Excellence Programme

Applicants should read the eligibility criteria set out below to ensure they meet them and qualify for the Programme before applying, as acceptance into the Programme and its supports and benefits is conditional on compliance with these.

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.

A Qualifying Applicant must meet the following criteria:

- 1 Must have a demonstrable tourist experience, targeting domestic and/or international visitors (for example, but not limited to, one or more of the following: the ability to provide services through proactively targeting specific needs of 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 and Meet in Ireland.)
- 2 Current Employee numbers of over 20 at the time of application and survey (please note that part-time, full-time and seasonal staff are acceptable to this total figure).
- 3 Must be established and registered for tax, and tax cleared in the Republic of Ireland
- 4 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
- 5 If the applicant is an accommodation provider, they must be Registered or Approved under Fáilte Ireland's National Quality Assurance Framework (NQAF) as at April 2023

(a) 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)
- Holiday Camps

(b) 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)
- Fáilte Ireland's Welcome Standard*
- Welcome Standard Approved Marinas
- Welcome Standard Approved Accommodation

All applicants must be included on the Fáilte Ireland Register of Statutory Accommodation or the Fáilte Ireland Non-Statutory Approved Accommodation Listing (<https://www.failteireland.ie/Supports/Get-quality-assured.aspx>). For the purposes of these Guidelines, hereafter both documents together will be referred to as the "NQAF Listings".

- 6 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

Ineligible 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
- Businesses that are not specifically targeted toward serving the Tourism Market in the Republic of Ireland.

Guidelines and Business Commitments

Below outlines the guidelines for application to the Employer Excellence Programme as well as an overview of the commitment required by each business for successful participation in the Programme.

Guidelines:

- 1 In order to register, 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.
- 2 For those that already have a Trade Portal account, the application form can also be found under [Enterprise Supports – Live Training](#).
- 3 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 of 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. Through the Fáilte Ireland Trade Portal, applicants may be asked to provide details such as their current employee numbers.
- 4 Applicants will also be asked to confirm their acceptance of a number of Business Commitments to the Programme, relating to the provision of adequate staffing, time dedicated both toward learning as well as towards ongoing implementation, and financial resources to complete the Programme. It is advised that full engagement with the Programme will require two days per month by the business for the duration of the programme. This is based on each people manager taking a half day per week for training and to manage employee engagement, action plan and implementation, gathering of data and reporting. These business commitments are detailed below.



- 5 Successful Applicants will have access to an online employee survey conducted by Fáilte Ireland's appointed Employee Engagement Experts. Following completion of the employee survey, businesses will be supported in developing their own bespoke action plan, based on the results from the employee survey. The resulting Action Plan will outline development areas for the employer to focus on to enhance and improve their people practices. This plan will be completely confidential to businesses and will identify the specific workstreams through which they will progress on their journey toward employer excellence. The entire Programme will also be supported by Fáilte Ireland through a suite of additional supports for businesses as follows:
 - Build Industry Capabilities** – support to build on their employer brand to realise the full potential of their Employer Excellence journey. This capability will be provided through a suite of online learning tools, webinars, workshops and video content.
 - Boost Operational Efficiencies** – support in utilising talent to drive operational efficiencies through a suite of online learning tools, training, toolkits, and webinars.
 Depending on business / organisational needs, applicants may be able to avail of further supports in the Employer Excellence Programme. They will be advised of any further opportunities that may be made available as they progress through the programme.
- 6 Applicants must be able to demonstrate their commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion across all areas of their business including, but not limited to, the following areas:
 - Employees
 - Customers
 - Marketing
 - Procurement
- 7 While all tourism businesses may apply to participate in the Excellent Employer Programme, to avail of Fáilte Ireland's contribution toward the completion of the Employer Excellence Programme businesses must meet the minimum criteria outlined above.
- 8 Fáilte Ireland may recognise other independent Employee Engagement Schemes. Fáilte Ireland is currently assessing if it can recognise such schemes in line with the standards of the Employer Excellence Programme. Businesses already engaged in other Employee Engagement Schemes will be managed on a case-by-case basis, and may contact Fáilte Ireland at: employerexcellence@failteireland.ie for further information.
- 9 The certification and mark for Employer Excellence is time banded and will be valid for the year indicated on the mark only.

Business Commitments:

- 1 Applicants will be required to commit to a three-year time investment into the Programme
- 2 Applicants will be required to commit to a financial investment into the Programme

Indicative Cost Range Per Business



Small (20-49 employees)		Medium (50-99 employees)		Large (100+ employees)	
Year	Cost range to business	Year	Cost range to business	Year	Cost range to business
1	€500	1	€750	1	€1,000
2	€1,200-€1,700	2	€2,200-€2,700	2	€3,000-€3,500
3	€2,000-€2,500	3	€3,400-€3,900	3	€4,500-€5,000
Total	€3,500-€4,800	Total	€6,000-€7,400	Total	€8,000-€9,500

Exact costs will depend on the overall participation level for the programme, but businesses will not pay any more than the maximum amounts indicated here.

- 3 Applicants will be required to commit to having their line managers, people managers and supervisors undertaking The Fundamentals of People & Performance Management or similar in the last five years – if not the Fáilte Ireland training, other training acceptable should cover topics such as:

- a) Induction and On-boarding
- b) Effective Team Communication
- c) Leadership and Coaching
- d) Building High Performing Teams
- e) Managing Performance

The Fáilte Ireland online Learning Programme comprises 3 modules, with an expected total learning time of 5 hours 45 mins – 6 hours, which can be undertaken in units of time that best suit the participant, so each can work to their own schedule.

Module 1: Effective Communications for Employee Engagement (three sections) and will take just under 2 hours to complete (105 Mins).

Module 2: Personal Leadership – Coaching & Management Styles in Building of Effective Teams (three sections) and will also take just under 2 hours to complete (105 mins).

Module 3: Managing Performance Day-to-Day (four sections) and will take just over 2 hours to complete (135 mins).

To maximise the benefit of the learnings from each module, it is recommended that they are completed separately, allowing time between each module to commence implementation of learning into the workplace practices.

- 4 Applicants will be asked for their employees to commit to completing an Employee Engagement Survey annually over the 3 years of the Programme
- 5 Applicants will be asked to commit to actioning development areas identified in the survey
- 6 Applicants will be asked to commit to participating in Fáilte Ireland's Business Survey which will take place annually. This allows Fáilte Ireland to gather accurate and robust data relating to employee numbers and other key indicators for the Applicant's business / organisation, to support our on-going development of the Tourism sector. By participating in this Employer Excellence Programme, the Applicant is agreeing, if approved for participation, to provide employer performance and engagement data to Fáilte Ireland for a period of up to 10 years from the acceptance onto the programme and that the applicant will work with Fáilte Ireland to ensure this data is reported in a timely manner. All data collected will be anonymised to comply with GDPR rules.

It may also be used to support interventions identified as part of an audit of participating businesses' employer brand, and could deliver outcomes such as:

- Enabling employers to enhance their employer brand
- Showcasing people in their workplace and celebrate their achievements
- Promoting tourism as a career
- Recovering from the impact of COVID-19 and to grow employee numbers in a sustainable manner.

PLEASE NOTE: Fáilte Ireland will not collect payment for this programme, Payment and debt collection will be fully handled by Great Place to Work. For Great Place to Work Terms and Conditions, please visit: <http://www.greatplacetowork.ie/master-services>

If you need any technical assistance, please contact Customer Service on 0818 888800 or email customersupport@failteireland.ie

If you have any specific queries in relation to the Fáilte Ireland Employer Excellence Programme itself, please email: employerexcellence@failteireland.ie