



## NISEP Vendor Requirements (2024-25)

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## 1. Glossary

**Customer** – An individual or company that agrees to the implementation of an energy efficiency improvement measure on their premises as part of the NISEP scheme.

**Power NI – Power NI Energy Limited t/a Power NI**, The Primary Bidder administering the following commercial NISEP schemes LED lighting; Intelligent Heating Controls; Variable Speed Technology, Voltage Optimisation, Boiler Replacement, Heat Pumps, Heat Recovery, Infrared Heating, Air Leak Detection, Steam/ Heated Dryer, Turbo Blower, LED Curing (Print industry), Solar PV & Solar Thermal.

**EST-** The Programme Administrator appointed by The Utility Regulator to oversee the NISEP schemes.

**UR- The Utility Regulator.** The Utility Regulator is responsible for regulating the electricity, gas, water and sewerage industries in Northern Ireland, promoting the short- and long-term interests of consumers.

**Vendor-** Any supplier/installer participating in a project where NISEP funding applies.

**Public Service Obligation** – A Public Service Obligation (PSO) is a levy which is charged at a flat rate on all units of electricity demand and therefore paid by all electricity customers. The PSO levy is composed of a number of different components one of which is a charge for the NISEP.

## 2. Disclaimer

This document is a reference for vendors who plan to carry out commercial energy saving works where the customer is supported by Power NI under NISEP (Northern Ireland Sustainable Energy Programme).

Power NI accepts no liability whether for breach of contract, negligence, health and safety violations or otherwise, in respect of any dispute or cause of action arising out of, or in relation to, any product, equipment, work, system or installation supplied or carried out by the installer under the scheme. The Vendor is entirely responsible for all such matters.

## 3. Background

NISEP has been running since 2010. A sum of money is collected from all electricity users yearly (£7,941,946) through a Public Service Obligation (PSO) and it is used to provide funding for energy efficiency and renewable energy schemes. As a primary bidder, Power NI bids annually to administer funding for NISEP schemes.

## 4. Introduction

Meeting the quality assurance process outlined in this document is a requirement of all Vendors working on a project where their customer is availing of the NISEP grant. Failure to meet these minimum requirements may result in projects being rejected and grant funding being withdrawn from the customer.

This document is based on the **Plan – Do – Check – Act** Deming cycle which is used extensively throughout the energy management standard ISO 50001. This can be adapted to the process of carrying out a NISEP grant funded energy efficiency project as follows:

**Plan:** Carry out an Energy Audit at the customer's premises to determine the existing energy consumption of the chosen building and or equipment. Decide what energy efficiency measures are most suitable and complete audit tab on Power NI NISEP application. Measures must be CE marked. The audit must accurately detail the area being upgraded, description of existing product, the running hours, quantities, existing consumption, proposed products, proposed consumption and proposed product unit cost. Installation costs must not be incorporated on the application as the NISEP grant does not apply to installation. Provide this to your customer. The customer will then submit their application to Power NI for NISEP grant approval.

**Do:** Once the customer gives the go ahead, carry out said energy efficiency project(s), meanwhile documenting and recording any changes to the original project which

could change the original audit submitted to Power NI. Report any deviations from the initial plan to your customer immediately and update the energy audit tab of the application as required. Your customer will need to resubmit the revised application to Power NI for approval.

**Check:** Once the project is completed check that there are no issues with the installation. You must provide a Commissioning Certificate to the customer. Before issuing an invoice to your customer please check that it contains: invoice number, date, site address including postcode, descriptions, unit costs and quantities. Invoices should not be issued prior to your customer receiving grant approval in the form of their Grant Offer Letter.

**Act:** Take corrective action to resolve any discrepancies from the check process.

## 5. Requirements

To work on NISEP grant funded projects, a Vendor must meet the requirements discussed below. Failure to comply with the terms and conditions of this document may result in the measures as outlined in Section 7 up to and including the immediate removal of a Vendor from any participation in Power NI's NISEP schemes.

### 5.1 Qualification Requirements

A Vendor:

- Must hold a valid Company Registration Number and Tax Clearance Certificate.
- Must have Public, Products and Employers Liability insurance cover with minimum £5m and Professional Indemnity to an appropriate value for your business.
- Must be suitably qualified to carry out any installation work.
- Must be MCS Accredited or have ISO 9001,14001 and 45001.
- Must be NICEIC registered.
- Must be a member of a Chartered Trading Standards Institute such as RECC or HIES.
- Will be liable for any damage sustained by a property as a direct result of the energy efficiency upgrade.

All Vendors are required to provide a competent workforce to carry out energy efficiency works. This includes all works supported by the scheme including, but not limited to, electrical, gas, plumbing, working at heights and the operation and storage of machinery.

This requires that vendors and sub-contractors are equipped with all the relevant training and certification to carry out each element of works. Evidence of installer

qualification/certification must be provided to your customer (who in turn will send this to Power NI).

## ***5.2. Product Requirements***

All products used must be fit for purpose, improve the energy efficiency of the building and have no detrimental impact on the safety and quality of the building, equipment, installer or operators. Adherence to applicable regulation and standards must be followed. Prior to the installation of any measure the property must be assessed to ensure that it is suitable for the measure proposed and that the recommended measure is likely to achieve the desired effect. Products must be MCS certified and panels should come with a minimum 10 year warranty and invertors 5 year warranty.

## ***5.3 Health & Safety Requirements***

It is the sole responsibility of the Vendor to ensure that they comply with all relevant Health and Safety Legislation, Regulation, and appropriate Guidelines and that their staff are appropriately trained to operate to these standards. In addition to the above it is required that any Vendors performing works which are supported by the Scheme:

- Has a current written Health and Safety Statement available for inspection if required.
- Carries out a Risk Assessment prior to beginning work.
- Follows safe working practices for employees, customers and the public at all times in accordance with current Health and Safety Legislation and relevant Health & Safety Authority guidelines.
- Uses the appropriate equipment safely and properly in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.

## **6. Quality Assurance**

### ***6.1 Energy Audit***

- All calculations must be completed using independent software such as PV Sol or PVG to verify output for Solar PV install. This must be shown on the application – the application will be provided to your customer by Power NI.
- All grants must be approved by Power NI and a Grant Offer Letter issued to the customer before they can place any orders, and no invoices should pre-date the

Grant Offer Letter. An order must be placed by the customer within 3 months of Grant Offer Letter issue and the work must be completed by 1<sup>st</sup> March 2025.

- Power NI expect optimal sizing of Solar PV systems to ensure generation is sufficiently utilized.
- If G99/NI is applicable, then applications will not be reviewed until G99/NI has been approved by NIE Networks.
- Evidence of G98 application must be submitted with the handover pack.
- Please run through the detail on the application with your customer to ensure they understand the calculations and are happy that the detail is correct.
- If relevant, please check with the customer regarding confirmed running hours – these need to be as accurate as possible.
- Please ensure that area descriptions are as accurate as possible to allow Power NI to identify the area easily at site visit.
- Please use HH data or bills over the period of 1 year to accurately calculate energy use.

## 6.2 Invoices

- The Vendor must provide a detailed invoice to the customer. These must be written in a clear language and include all applicable VAT rates.
- All invoices must be submitted with an invoice number, date, customer name, customer site address (this must be the address where the work has been carried out and must include the postcode).
- Invoices must detail the product descriptions, quantities and unit costs. These should match the detail provided on the energy audit. Any project changes need to be notified to Power NI and approved before the invoice is issued.
- No Invoices should be generated from quotes without amending date and title.
- No pro-forma invoices to be submitted.
- **Invoices MUST NOT be generated or paid prior to the customer receiving a Grant Offer Letter from Power NI.**

## 6.3 Audits

Power NI will continuously conduct quality and performance checks on all work supported by the NISEP Scheme and site visits to check completed projects will be carried out regularly throughout the grant year by a Quality Inspector. Vendors should make themselves available if required.

When a Vendor is audited by Power NI, the audit will be carried out by a member of the Energy Services team (or its nominated subcontractors) and will take place in the Vendors office. Vendors should be able to demonstrate that they are compliant with the guidelines and requirements set out by Power NI including proof that the Vendor meets the legal requirements and standards required to carry out energy efficiency measures.

## **7. Vendor non-compliance**

In the event that Power NI is not satisfied with the standard of work undertaken by a Vendor they may be subject to Power NI's compliance procedures. Refusal of grant projects may occur where Power NI has sufficient evidence of repeated or serious failures to deliver quality work or provide customer satisfaction, and where little or no attempt has been made to rectify these failures by the vendor or sub-contractors working on their behalf.

A primary element of this is the Penalty Point Systems. Power NI is also entitled to share information concerning the removal of a Vendor from its scheme with EST (Energy Saving Trust). Power NI will also inform the customer that the Vendor cannot be used for their NISEP project.

### ***7.1 Penalty System***

Power NI's penalty system follows a yellow to red classification system. In this case Yellow is considered the least serious type of non-compliance issue, Orange is a significant issue and Red is the most critical failure to comply with Power NI's NISEP requirements referenced throughout this document.

In the event that a Vendor receives a Yellow warning this will be recorded and the Vendor will be sent an email informing them of the issue and asked to rectify it as soon as possible.

If an Orange warning is issued this will be recorded and will result in an email and a phone call from a member of the Power NI Energy Services Team to discuss the issue and the Vendor will be asked to rectify the issue immediately.

Finally, in the event that a Red warning is issued this will be recorded and the Vendor will be sent a letter by registered post informing them of the reason this warning was issued and they may be required to meet the Energy Services Team to discuss the problem. A potential outcome of this meeting may be that the Vendor is removed from the scheme and customers will not be able to avail of NISEP funding should this Vendor be used to carry out the work.





Some examples of different types of Yellow, Orange and Red warnings are listed below but this list is subject to change and alterations / additions to this list will be made at Power NI's discretion.

### **7.1.1. Yellow**

- Not including customer name on invoice
- Not including date on invoice
- Not including site address with postcode on the invoice.
- Not including breakdown on invoice showing description, quantity and unit costs for each product.

### **7.1.2. Orange**

- Vendors offering grants to customers before Power NI has given its approval for the project or made an offer towards the project.
- Invoice dated prior to go ahead from the customer.
- Project not completed as per application.
- Invoice not matching installation.
- Invoice not matching application.
- Not notifying customer of changes to the type or quantity of fitting.

### **7.1.3. Red**

- Using Power NI's and the NISEP brand without written approval.
- Contractor / Vendor claiming to be Power NI representative.
- Installing different specification or quantity of fittings than have been approved in the NISEP grant application and approved by the client and invoiced.
- Not following H&S guidelines.

## **7.2 Termination**

When a member of the Power NI Energy Services team comes across persistent or serious failures to comply with the NISEP requirements, an email will be sent informing the Vendor of the issue and of the penalties that have been given. Three yellow, two orange or 1 red penalty may exclude the Vendor from carrying out future projects where the customer wishes to avail of NISEP funding.

## 8. Appendix

### NISEP Grant Process

#### Stage 1

Power NI issue customer with application, T&Cs and **Vendor Requirements document** (this should be passed on to vendor).

#### Stage 2

**Customer has a survey carried out by installer.**

#### Stage 3

Customer submits completed application to Power NI ([energysaving@powerni.co.uk](mailto:energysaving@powerni.co.uk)). This should include: **PV calculations summary, verified calcs, Product MCS Cert, Product Spec sheet showing warranty, electricity data for previous 12 months including HH data where available, before photos, G99/NI (if applicable), Building Control application, Installer Liability & Professional Indemnity Insurance, Installer H&S Policy, Installer MCS Cert no. and Installer Trading Standards membership.** Customer also submits signed T&Cs via AdobeSign. Applications will not be considered until signed T&Cs have been received.

#### Stage 4

Power NI assesses and confirms if the project will qualify for a 20% grant (towards the cost of the fittings & installation) Please note that funding will not be provided where an order has been placed before approval and issue of Grant Offer Letter.

#### Stage 5

A **Grant Offer Letter** will then be issued via AdobeSign and this is valid for 3 months, (or until 1<sup>st</sup> March 2025, whichever is sooner), within which time an order must be placed. **Vendors should not generate invoices or begin work until their customer has received this. If no order has been placed within 3 months the offer may be withdrawn.**

#### Stage 6

An email will be sent by Power NI to the customer with a pdf of the grant offer letter and signed T&Cs for reference.

#### Stage 7

Customer submits **handover** pack including MCS Certificate and G98 application if applicable.

#### Stage 8

Customer submits installer **invoice** to Power NI within 30 days from date of invoice (but no later than 1st March 2025). Invoices must be dated no earlier than the date of the grant approval letter. This must match the application and show measure descriptions, quantities and unit costs. Invoices must specify the address where the work was carried out and include the postcode. Invoices which do not match the latest grant application may not be accepted and the grant offer may no longer be valid.

#### Stage 9

**Customer submits proof of payment.** This can be a highlighted bank statement, or a screenshot of the transaction. **Receipt of payment emailed from the installer** must also be provided. Total payment must match the total on the invoice submitted. If this does not match, please provide additional invoices for justification. No cash payments will be accepted.

#### Stage 10

Customer sends '**after photos**' showing installed PV panels, Inverter and Export Manager (both showing make, model & serial no).

#### Stage 11

Customer sends **Building Control sign off.**

#### Stage 12

Power NI issue **claim form** to customer and also **satisfaction survey.**

**Stage 13**

Power NI issue a **bank form** to the customer via AdobeSign and this should be completed and signed by 2 different people in the company.

**Stage 14**

Customer completes claim form, bank form and online satisfaction survey.

**Stage 15**

**Grant payment** made to customer by BACS transfer.

**Stage 16**

At any stage a project may be subject to a **site audit** by Power NI or a representative. If selected for site audit, then payment may not be processed until the site visit has been completed.