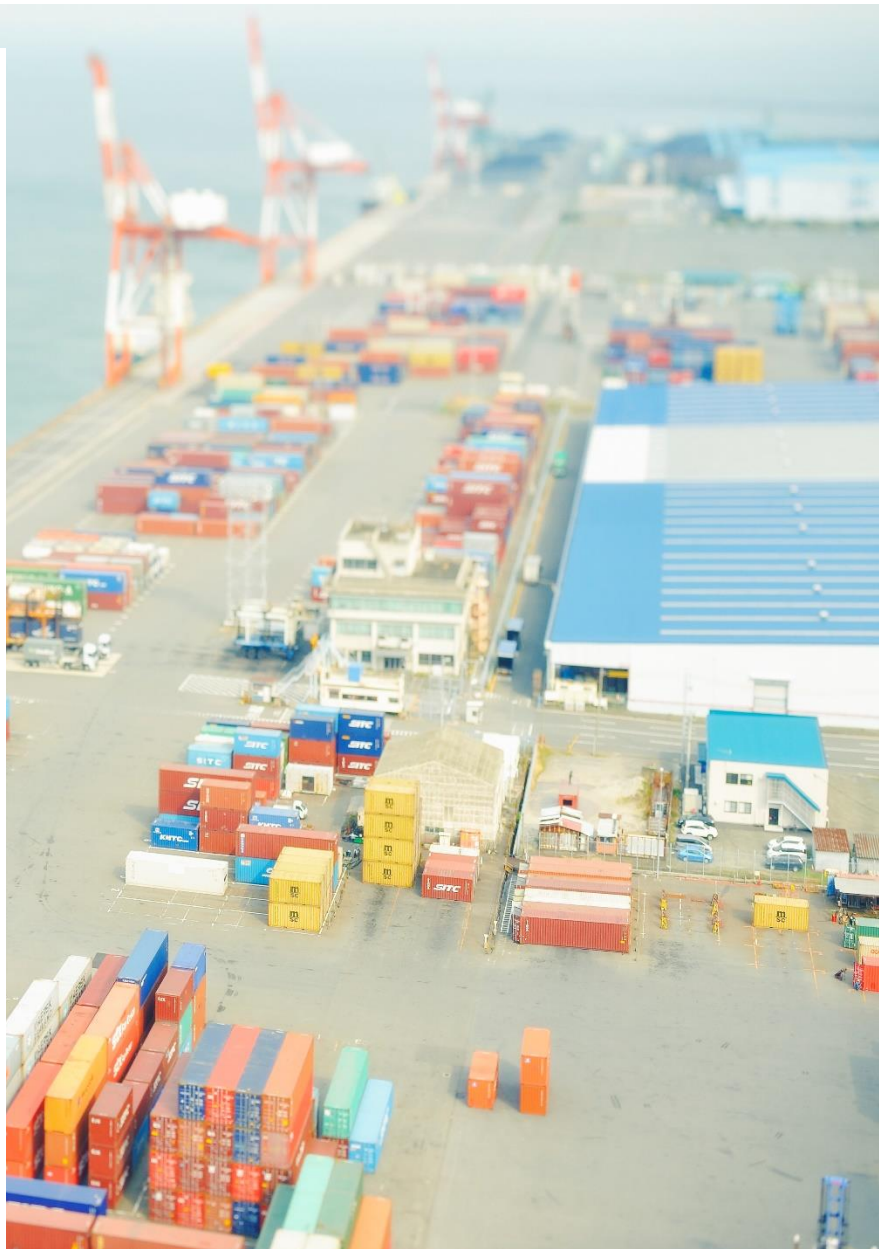


Participation in International Fairs SME Refund Scheme



GUIDELINES

September 2023



**ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
BOARD** MAURITIUS

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1 WHAT IS THE SCHEME ABOUT?

The Participation in International Fairs SME Refund Scheme has been set up by Government provide a grant to finance the participation of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in international fairs. The objective is to assist SMEs to expand their businesses through participation in export promotion activities.

2 WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR REFUND?

- Small and Medium Enterprises from the Republic of Mauritius that is, entities registered with the Corporate and Business Registration Department (CBRD) and with an annual turnover of less than Rs 100 million.
- SMEs operating in the sectors, which includes but is not limited to -
 - Agriculture;
 - Creative Industries;
 - Freeport operators;
 - Freeport developers (effective from 1st July 2022);
 - Healthcare Services;
 - ICT;
 - Knowledge Services;
 - Life Sciences; and
 - Manufacturing.

3 WHAT TYPE OF EVENT IS ELIGIBLE UNDER THE REFUND?

- SMEs participating as exhibitors in international fairs outside Mauritius whether on its own or led by an institution.
 - Please note that such export promotion activities must be organised by bona fide organisations/ companies and directly related to the business of the SME. A detailed profile of the event should be submitted to the EDB to enable application and claim procedures on the SME Refund portal.

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- Economic Development Board (EDB) or SME Mauritius led technology fairs for SMEs in the manufacturing and agri-business sectors.
 - SMEs participating in fairs, under a Mauritian pavilion.
 - SMEs participation in buyer-seller meets.
 - Notwithstanding the above -
 - Freeport operators shall be eligible to apply for refund only where they are promoting local products having a minimum value addition of 35%
 - Freeport Developers shall be eligible to apply for refund only with regards to international events organised by EDB related to Freeport and Logistics only.

4 WHO ARE NOT ELIGIBLE FOR REFUND?

- SMEs engaged in activities in the financial sector, global business, real estate, job contractors and professionals are not eligible for refund.
- Associations, Cooperatives and Federations participating in an international fair are not entitled to refund under this scheme.
- SMEs that have been subsidized by any other institution, local or international, in respect of participation in an international fair will not be eligible.
- Any SME, whose shareholder is a legal entity (company, business, société) and where the legal entity generates an annual turnover exceeding Rs 100 million, will not be eligible for the refund.
- In the case of “sister” SMEs, that is, companies having same shareholder(s) and/or director(s) and dealing in more or less similar line of business or activities, participating in the same fair, only one company will be eligible for refund. One “sister” SME can represent the other during the international fair or if the other company so wishes, it can participate in the international fair at its own cost.

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- SMEs participating as a delegate in an international fair.
 - SMEs participating in an event being held in Mauritius except for those from Rodrigues.

5 WHAT IS THE REFUND AMOUNT?

- An SME can benefit from a maximum of Rs 250,000 per financial year.
- SMEs may claim refund on multiple occasions, provided that the refund ceiling of Rs 250,000 per SME is not exceeded. The remaining balance of the present year is not carried forward to next financial year.
- An SME may claim refund for one representative only. The representative shall either be a Director or a senior employee of the company.

6 WHAT ITEMS ARE REFUNDED?

Only the following items are refunded:

➤ Cost of Stand/Participation Fee

- Rental of bare stand
- Registration fee, where applicable

➤ Travelling expenses

- Based on an economy class air ticket between Mauritius and the host country/city for one representative only.
- Most economically viable, most direct route applies.
- Travel costs by train/coach will be refunded only where no flight is available to the host city.

➤ Accommodation

- Refund of accommodation will be limited to one day prior, during and one day after the event.

7 WHAT ITEMS ARE NOT COVERED BY THIS SCHEME?

- Items such as marketing materials, design of booth, advertising, freight expenses on extra luggage, visa costs, inland transport in the host city, inter-city/country transport are not covered under this scheme.

Please note that any expenses borne by a third party will not be refunded.

8 HOW TO APPLY FOR THE REFUND?

8.1 STEP 1: CREATION OF USER PROFILE

- The SME should first enroll with the EDB on the following link:
<https://smefairs.powerappsportals.com/fairshome/>
- See the [SME Refund Portal User Manual 2022](#) for more details.

8.2 STEP 2: SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION

- SMEs should fill in the application form and submit supporting documents at least one month before the start of the fair that they plan to attend.
- Supporting documents, as applicable, should be submitted together with the application form are as follows:
 - a. Financial statements (signed by the directors) indicating the turnover and profitability of the company for the past 3 years.
 - b. For startup organizations, that is, companies less than one year in operation, the business plan including financial forecast should be submitted.
 - c. Copy of passport of the person in whose name refund will be claimed.
 - d. Relevant certificates, licenses, or permits where applicable:
 - Freeport operators and developers should have a valid Freeport Certificate issued by the Economic Development Board.
 - Tertiary Education Institutions should be duly registered by the Higher Education Commission or the Mauritius Qualifications Authority.

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- Healthcare and life sciences companies should be duly registered under the Private Health Care Institutions Act 1989 or any relevant legislation.

Please note that applications received after the start of the event will not be considered.

8.3 STEP 2.1: EVALUATION BY PROJECT EVALUATION AND MONITORING COMMITTEE

- Upon submission of the application, the applicant will be notified by email.
- The applicants will be further contacted if application is incomplete. (An application is complete if all fields in the application form have been duly filled in and supporting documents required as per checklist have been attached).
- Once a complete application has been submitted, it shall be assessed by the Project Evaluation and Monitoring Committee (PEMC).
- The date of receipt of the complete application shall be the effective date of application.
- The EDB shall, to the extent possible, within 2 weeks from the effective date of application, inform the applicant of the decision of the PEMC.
- Please note that the PEMC will determine an application on its individual merits and according to the provision of this guidelines.

8.4 **STEP 3: SUBMISSION OF CLAIM**

- SMEs, having had prior approval for refund, should submit the claim form and corresponding proof of expenses within 10 days after return from the international fair, except as authorised by the EDB.
- All claims should be submitted online through the following link:
<https://smefairs.powerappsportals.com/fairclaims/>
- See the [SME Refund Portal User Manual 2022](#) for more details.
- The following documents should be submitted together with the claim form:
 - a. Refund of Cost of Stand/Participation Fee**
 - Contract with fair/event organizer
 - Invoice
 - Payment receipt
 - Proof of payment by credit card or bank transfer
 - b. Refund of airfare**
 - E-ticket
 - Invoice
 - Payment receipt
 - Proof of payment by credit card or bank transfer
 - Proof of boarding pass
 - c. Refund of accommodation cost**
 - Booking confirmation
 - Detailed receipt with information on room rates per night
 - Proof of payment by credit card or bank transfer

Please note that the name of the representative mentioned in application form should be similar to the name in travel itinerary and accommodation receipt.

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- Once the complete set of proof of expenses has been provided, the EDB will process the claim and notify the applicant within a minimum delay of 2 weeks.
 - Refund for expenses claimed will not be considered if the SME fails to submit appropriate receipts and proof of payments.
 - The EDB reserves the right to determine whether expenditures incurred will be regarded as refundable items. Expenses borne by any third party will not be refunded.
 - The approved refund will be transferred to the bank account details submitted by the SME.

9. WHAT HAPPENS IF REFUND IS NOT CLAIMED?

- Refund will not be processed if the SME fails to submit the claim and appropriate proof of payments within 10 days of participation in the fair, except as approved by the EDB.
- No refund shall be made if the SME fails to participate in the event for which favourable consideration has been granted.

10. WHAT ARE THE CONDITIONS TO BENEFIT FROM THIS SCHEME?

- It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the complete application is submitted to the EDB within the established deadlines. Failure to comply with the application deadline as outlined under 8.2, might delay the process and might lead to notification on the Committee's decision after participation in the fair at the participant's own risk.
- SMEs should submit a comprehensive report of the outcome of previous participations. Failure to submit such report may lead to disqualification to benefit from this scheme.
- The EDB reserves at all times the absolute right to determine whether the applicant's eligibility, the nature of the export promotion activity, the relevance of the international fair and refund amount is acceptable under the scheme.
- The EDB reserves at all times the right to request applicants to submit additional documentary proof or any other clarifications.

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- The PEMC may turn down an application if the SMEs do not show any tangible benefits deriving from participation in fairs.
 - The PEMC may also limit the number of times an SME benefits from the scheme especially if no tangible benefits can be seen.
 - Applications will not be considered for SMEs that have been subsidized by any other institution, local or international, in respect of participation in the said international fair.
 - The PEMC reserves at all times the absolute right to review its decision and adjust the entitlement of refund, if the SME has provided false, incorrect, and misleading information at the time of application or after.
 - The EDB also reserves the right to determine whether the expenditures incurred will be regarded as refundable items. Expenses borne by any third parties will not be refunded. The committee will request for invoice and proof of payments at all times.
 - Refund will be made on expenses incurred by the local SME only. Any payments made on behalf of the SME by another local or international party will not be refunded.
 - In the event that there is an overpayment due to error in calculation or assessment, applicants will be required to refund the amount overpaid.

By submitting an application, an SME registered with the EDB agrees with the provisions of this guideline.

Contact Us

SME REFUND SCHEME

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