

BREEAM Innovation Applications FAQs

June 2013

1. My client would like to achieve an innovation credit. Are there different types of innovation credits available?

There are two types of innovation credits available in BREEAM New Construction 2011 and BREEAM International New Construction 2013;

- Those for meeting Exemplary Performance criteria defined within the relevant BREEAM Scheme Document
- Those for having a proposed innovation peer-reviewed and approved by BRE Global i.e Approved Innovation credits

Note: In the UK versions of BREEAM 2008 innovation credits were also available for the use of a BREEAM Accredited Professional.

Further details regarding the above can be found in the relevant scheme documents (available for download at www.breeam.org) and from the appointed BREEAM Assessor for your project.

2. Why are innovation credits awarded for the use of a BREEAM Accredited Professional (AP) in the UK versions of BREEAM 2008 but not in the BREEAM New Construction 2011 or BREEAM International New Construction 2013 versions?

BREEAM New Construction 2011 and BREEAM International New Construction 2013 include credits for the use of a BREEAM AP in Man 01 Sustainable Procurement instead of the Innovation section. This is because BRE Global now consider it to be best practice rather than innovative to involve a BREEAM AP on a project.

3. Why are Innovation Applications being piloted for BREEAM International New Construction 2013?

To date Innovation Applications have only been accepted for assessments within the UK. The inclusion of Approved Innovations in the BREEAM International New Construction 2013 scheme will be piloted for the first twelve months of the scheme's operation. The pilot period will allow BRE Global to test the practicalities, such as timescales, of processing applications internationally and therefore determine the feasibility of including Approved Innovations in the BREEAM International New Construction 2013 scheme.

4. Are all types of innovation credits available across all of the BREEAM versions and schemes?

At present innovation credits are not available in all BREEAM versions or schemes. The scheme document relevant to your project and stage of assessment should be referred to for confirmation regarding the applicability of innovation credits.

5. How can I apply for an Innovation credit?

An Innovation Application Form (downloaded from the BREEAM Assessors Extranet) must be completed and submitted by the appointed BREEAM Assessor for the project that is seeking the innovation credit. A copy of the form must then be submitted by the BREEAM Assessor to the customer services team at BRE Global.

6. Once I have submitted my application how long will it take before I find out if it has been successful?

The final decision will be communicated to the Assessor by email.

Applications for UK assessments: BRE Global aim to get an application decision to the Assessor within twenty working days from receipt of a completed application form.

Applications for non-UK assessments: A timescale for an application decision will be communicated to the Assessor once the application form has been received and processed. It is envisaged that a decision will be reached within eight weeks or less for the majority of applications.

7. What is the procedure for reviewing applications for Approved Innovation credits?

BREEAM Assessors should consult the Innovation Application Form Instructions found on the Assessor Extranet as this provides details on the procedure for reviewing applications. Clients or design teams wishing to know more about the process should consult with their appointed BREEAM Assessor in the first instance.

8. How much do BRE Global charge per Innovation Application?

Applications for UK assessments: A flat rate charge will be levied to cover the costs of administering and reviewing the application. Details of the charge are set out in the BREEAM Fee Sheet FS036 and are non-refundable.

Applications for non-UK assessments: During the pilot period an initial non-refundable administration fee will be levied on receipt of the application form. A fee proposal for the review of the application will then be issued by BRE Global. This will be provided as a quotation which will be tailored to each application. If the fee for the review is accepted by the applicant an invoice will be raised and the application processed. Details of the administration fee are set out in the BREEAM Fee Sheet FS036.

Please note: A separate individual application form is required for each proposed innovation credit sought. A fee is charged for each innovation credit application received.

BREEAM Innovation Applications FAQs

June 2013

9. Can an Approved Innovation credit be awarded at the interim design stage of assessment and certification as well as for the final, post construction assessment and certification?

An Approved Innovation credit can be awarded at both the interim and final assessment and certification stages.

The aim of the BRE Global innovation application process is to determine 'in principal' approval (or not) for the award of an innovation credit for the building. This is determined on the basis of whether the proposal is deemed innovative. To award a BREEAM credit for the innovation, evidence of its procurement/specification/installation must be provided to the project's appointed BREEAM Assessor and appropriately referenced within their certification report (as with compliance against any BREEAM criteria). This serves to demonstrate that the criteria defined within the application form have been met (or will be met if seeking the interim certificate). The BREEAM credit for the innovation will only be considered 'achieved' once the final BREEAM certificate has been issued.

10. Does BRE Global publish a list of Approved Innovations?

BRE Global publish a list of Approved Innovations for which they have received permission to do so from the applicant. The list can be found on the BREEAM Assessors Extranet and in the Resources section on the BREEAM website.

11. Is the list of Approved Innovations available to non-Assessors?

Yes, the list can be downloaded from the BREEAM website in the Resources section.

12. Why isn't there much detail provided about each of the innovation applications received on the published list?

The information that BRE Global hold on innovations must be managed in a way that is sensitive to the applicant's intellectual property and commercial rights. A list of Approved Innovations is available (via the Assessors Extranet or BREEAM website) but due to the potential sensitivity of the information the level of detail provided is restricted to what BRE Global is able to publish. If additional information on the listed Approved Innovations is required a request can be submitted to BRE Global via our Customer Services (BREEAM@bre.co.uk) and BRE Global shall endeavour to provide more detail where possible.

13. If I do not agree with the outcome of an Innovation Application can I appeal the decision?

Yes. Appeals against any decision must be made by the BREEAM Assessor in accordance with BRE Global's appeals procedures which are available on request. The decision made on any appeal is final.

14. Once an innovation has been approved for a particular technology/process for a BREEAM assessed building, can the innovation credit be awarded by the same or another BREEAM Assessor on other assessed projects procured by the same or a different client?

At present, a BREEAM credit for a successful innovation application is approved for a single use i.e. on the project to which it relates for the client who has commissioned the assessment and application. Therefore, previously approved innovations cannot be awarded by default on other assessed projects. However, if it can be demonstrated that the previously approved technology/process is still innovative, the potential exists to award an Innovation credit for subsequent re-use of the same or similar technology or process on other projects by the same or different clients.

This can only be done by robustly demonstrating that the original technology/process maintains innovation status. For example, benefits additional to or building on those outlined in the original application are shown. In all cases the Innovation application and approval process must be followed in order to robustly demonstrate and confirm additional or renewed innovation status.

BREEAM Assessor's should refer to the Innovation Application Form Instructions for further guidance in this respect

15. What happens if BRE Global receives two applications for the same innovation within a similar time frame, will the innovations use be recognised on a first come first served basis?

In the instance of similar Innovation Applications being submitted concurrently by independent projects, Assessors and design teams can expect BRE Global to make a reasonable judgement of whether the later submission can also be approved as innovative, with an initial presumption towards allowing recognition in both cases (assuming the application meets the relevant criteria and is approved).

16. Will successful Innovation applications be used to inform changes to BREEAM?

Each time schemes are updated BRE Global review approved innovations to see if it would be appropriate to account for or include them formally within the scheme's criteria, as either an exemplary credit or part of the standard assessment criteria.

BREEAM Innovation Applications FAQs

June 2013

17. If an application has been approved can the BREEAM Assessor organisation and/or client who submitted the application award the credit on other projects?

See response to Q14.

18. As a product manufacturer/supplier can I submit an application for my product(s) to be on the Approved Innovations list?

No, the BRE Global approvals process for BREEAM Innovation credits is not a product approval scheme. Judgement of and approval for the award of an innovation credit is based on the successful application of the technology/process on a BREEAM assessed and certified building.

Product manufacturers and suppliers who have a potential innovative technology, process or service are encouraged to engage with clients who procure their products/services and use BREEAM to explore the potential for collaborating on a joint application via the appointed BREEAM Assessor

19. How will I know if the application I'm submitting has previously been submitted and either approved or not approved?

BRE Global publishes summary details on all approved applications for which they have received permission to do so from the applicant. This list can be found on the BREEAM Assessors Extranet and the Resources section of the BREEAM website. If an Innovation has previously been approved but is not included on the published list, or a similar/identical application has previously been submitted and was unsuccessful then BRE Global will alert the applicant to this on receipt of their application. The applicant will be given the option of continuing with their submission or withdrawing it. Should the applicant choose to withdraw their application no fee will be charged for the submission.

20. If I email details of a potential application to BREEAM Customer Services, can you give me an indication of whether or not my innovation application will be successful?

No, it will not be possible for BREEAM Customer Services or BRE Global Technical Consultants to give an indication of the likelihood of the success of an application without going through the full application and peer-review process. You will need to submit your application through the formal route for peer-review in order to confirm approval/non approval.

Guidance on submitting innovation applications is available to BREEAM Assessors and can be found in the Innovation Application Form Instructions available on the BREEAM Assessors Extranet

21. Are there common reasons for an application failing?

An application may not be successful for a number of reasons. Examples include;

- a) The technology/process/method may already be established and in use in buildings and therefore not considered 'innovative'.
- b) The innovation may already be recognised, directly or indirectly, via existing BREEAM assessment issues (whether through the standard or exemplary assessment criteria).
- c) The technology/process/method may not offer a sustainability benefit for the building being assessed.
- d) The application form may not have been completed correctly and/or a robust enough case made for consideration in one or more key sections of the form. BREEAM Assessors should refer to the Innovation Application Form Instructions for guidance on completing an application successfully.
- e) A commitment to publicise the innovation to relevant stakeholders may not have been made within the application.
- f) If the Innovation Application process is seen solely as a method for boosting a building's BREEAM score and real innovation has not been robustly considered and demonstrated then it is likely that approval will not be gained.

22. If a process/technology/method has not been used or adopted nationally but examples can be found in other countries, would it still be considered to be 'innovative' by BRE Global?

In this situation there is potential to have such applications recognised as innovative, however given the application/use elsewhere the client/design team need to justify why the technology/process/method should be considered 'innovative' in the national context.

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