



**ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
BOARD** MAURITIUS

**Participation in
International Fairs
SME Refund Scheme**

GUIDELINES

February 2019

Contents

1	What is the Scheme about?.....	2
2	Who are eligible for refund?	2
3	What type of events are eligible for refund?.....	2
4	Who are not eligible for refund?.....	3
5	What is the refund amount?.....	3
6	What items are refunded?.....	4
7	What items are not covered by this scheme?	4
8	How to apply for the refund?.....	5
8.1	Step 1: Submit the application at least one month before the start of the fair	5
8.2	Step 2: Evaluation by Project Evaluation and Monitoring Committee	6
8.3	Step 3: Submission of Claim	6
9	What happens if refund is not claimed?	7
10	What are the conditions to benefit from this scheme?.....	7

1 WHAT IS THE SCHEME ABOUT?

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

2 WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR REFUND?

- Small and Medium Enterprises that is companies, incorporated in Mauritius with the Corporate and Business Registration Department (CBRD), having an annual turnover of less than Rs 50 million.
- SMEs operating but not limited to the following sectors:
 - Agriculture;
 - Creative Industries;
 - Freeport and Logistics (Freeport operators with a minimum value addition of 35%);
 - Healthcare Services;
 - ICT;
 - Knowledge Services;
 - Life Sciences; and
 - Manufacturing.
- Cooperative societies provided that they are accompanied by a Government institution such as the Economic Development Board or the SME Mauritius.

3 WHAT TYPE OF EVENTS ARE ELIGIBLE FOR REFUND?

- SMEs participating as **exhibitors in international fairs outside Mauritius** whether on their own or led by an institution.
- 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.

Please note that such export promotion activities must be organized by bona fide organisations/ companies and directly related to the business of the SME.

4 WHO ARE NOT ELIGIBLE FOR REFUND?

- SMEs engaged in activities in the financial sector, global business, real estate, job contractors and professionals.
- Associations and Federations participating in an international fair.
- SMEs subsidized by any other local or international institution, in respect to the participation in an International fair.
- Any SME, whose shareholder is a legal entity (company, business, societe) and where the legal entity generates an annual turnover exceeding Rs50 million
- In the case of “sister” SMEs, that is, **companies having similar shareholder(s) and/or director(s) and dealing in more or less similar line of business or activities and participating in the same fair**, only one company will be eligible for refund. One “sister” SME can represent the other during the fair or if the other company so wishes, it can participate in the fair at its own cost.
- SMEs participating as a delegate in a fair.
- SMEs participating in an event being held in Mauritius.

5 WHAT IS THE REFUND AMOUNT?

- An SME can benefit from a maximum of Rs 200,000 per financial year.
- SMEs may claim refund on multiple occasions, provided that the refund ceiling of Rs 200,000 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:

a) Cost of Stand/Participation Fee

- Rental or bare stand
- Registration fee, where applicable

b) Travelling expenses

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

c) 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.

Any expenses borne by a third party will not be refunded.

8 HOW TO APPLY FOR THE REFUND?

8.1 STEP 1: SUBMIT THE APPLICATION AT LEAST ONE MONTH BEFORE THE START OF THE FAIR

- ***SMEs in the manufacturing and agri-business sectors***

The SME should first register with the EDB. Once the registration has been approved, the SME can submit its application.

Registration and application can be made online through the link:

<http://www.smegrantscheme.com/files/index.php>

- ***SMEs in the services sector***

The Application form can be downloaded from the link: http://www.edbmauritius.org/media/1927/sme_applicationformoct2017.pdf. and the form should be submitted either in hard copy or by email to sme@edbmauritius.org.

- SMEs applying for refund under the Scheme, should submit feedback on the outcome on any previous event(s) participated to which they were granted a refund. Failure to do so may result in non-consideration of application for refund.
- The following supporting documents, as applicable, should be submitted together with the Application form:
 - a. Audited financial statements indicating the turnover and profitability of the company for the past 3 years. In case audited financial statements are not available, signed financial statements by the directors should be provided.
 - 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 applicant.
 - d. Relevant certificates, licenses or permit where applicable.
 - **Freeport operators** should have a valid Freeport Certificate issued by the Economic Development Board.
 - **Tertiary Education Institutions** should be duly registered with the Tertiary Education Commission or the Mauritius Qualifications Authority.

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

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

8.2 STEP 2: EVALUATION BY PROJECT EVALUATION AND MONITORING COMMITTEE

- Once a complete application has been submitted, it shall be assessed by the Project Evaluation and Monitoring Committee (PEMC).
- 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. The date of receipt of the complete application shall be the effective date.
- The EDB shall within 2 weeks from the effective date 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.

8.3 STEP 3: SUBMISSION OF CLAIM

- Applicants having been informed that their application have been favourably considered should submit his claim for refund within 15 days after participating in the fair.

- ***SMEs in the manufacturing and agri-business sectors***

The claim should be submitted online:
<http://www.smegrantscheme.com/files/index.php>

- ***SMEs in the services sector***

The Claim form can be downloaded from the link:
http://www.edbmauritius.org/media/1928/sme_claimform-oct2017.pdf. It should be filled and submitted either in hard copy or by email to sme@edbmauritius.org.

- The following documents should be submitted together with the claim form:

- Refund of Cost of Stand/Participation Fee**

- Invoice
- Payment receipt
- Proof of payment by credit card or bank transfer

- Refund of airfare**

- E-ticket

- Invoice
- Payment receipt
- Proof of payment by credit card or bank transfer

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.

- Once the complete set of proof of expenses has been provided, the EDB will process the claim and notify the applicant within 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 of the company.

9 WHAT HAPPENS IF REFUND IS NOT CLAIMED?

Refund will not be effected if the SME fails to submit the claim and appropriate proof of payments within 6 months of participation in the fair.

No refund shall be made if the SME fails to participate in the event for which a 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 might delay the process and might lead to notification of the Committee's decision after participation in the fair.
- If there is any change in the information provided in the Application form or Claim Form after its submission, the applicant should promptly inform the EDB.

- 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 are acceptable under the scheme.
- The EDB reserves at all times the right to request applicants to submit additional documentary proof or any other clarifications.
- The PEMC may turn down an application if the SMEs does not show any tangible benefits deriving from participation in fairs.
- The PEMC may also limit the number of time a SME benefit 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 and international, in respect to the 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 wherever necessary.
- 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 refundable. The committee will request for invoice and proof of payments at all time.
- 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 overpayment due to error in calculation or assessment, applicants will be required to refund the amount overpaid.
- By submitting an application, an SME agrees with the provisions of this guidelines.