

Process for Achieving ISCA Certification

Below is a guide of steps to follow to achieve ISCA certification.

Registration

- Registration of Interest (RoI)

The first step is to register interest of gaining certification with ISCA. A completed RoI form will be submitted by the project team to ISCA – this formally notifies intent along with details about the project but is not binding in any way. The ISCA Case Manager will contact the registrant and will be the main contact to discuss next steps.

- IS Rating Agreement

ISCA will issue a draft IS Rating Agreement setting out terms and conditions. This Agreement needs to be approved by ISCA as well as the Registrant, and the certification process can formally commence. Invoices will begin to be issued from this point.

- Project Detail Form

The Project Detail Form will be issued along with the above to be completed by the project team, used to populate the Rating Profile on the IS Ratings Directory.

Assessment

The IS Scorecard is then used by the project team to complete a self-assessment evaluating the sustainability performance of the project and to determine their initial rating. This can result in a checklist of initiatives/further steps to improve overall performance.

- IS Management Plan

The Case Manager will provide a template Management Plan to facilitate implementation of the various IS ratings. This describes objectives, outlines the approach to applying the IS rating scheme and describes a suitable program of delivery for complex projects. It also reviews ISCA's role around support requirements for the process and assigns responsibilities.

The Plan includes communication activities and marketing opportunities such as promotion or commitment and achievements, and facilitates internal buy-in.

Kick off Workshop

A kick off workshop will be held after initial formalities are signed off. The Project Lead and Case Manager work with the project management team to review the entire certification process. Representatives from each part of the team attend to ensure ownership of the project from each aspect.

The ISCA Case Manager will confirm the delivery, scope and responsibilities, as well as the drivers of pursuing certification. Key risks and opportunities are identified, along with relevant actions.

Verifier Appointment

A Verifier will be nominated by ISCA to be endorsed by the Project Lead and to ensure no conflicts of interest. Once appointed, the Verifier will remain with the project for the entirety of the process. The Verifier reviews both the weightings assessment and the Base Case proposal, as well as the self-assessment submission.

Weightings Assessment (IS Scorecard)

This part of the process identifies the most important sustainability issues for the project and adjusts the value of the targeted credits to focus the IS rating scheme to specify the most relevant areas. This may be conducted by a stakeholder workshop, the project team, or by the Project Lead. Having stakeholder representatives is recommended.

- Preparation

The Project Input Worksheet is completed by the project team in the IS Scorecard to gather a range of information about the project to determine how the weightings assessment will be undertaken.

- Assessment

The weighting sheet is completed, and if not already assessed, materiality scores are calculated for each topic, as well as the significance to the project. Relevant documentation must be maintained and submitted as evidence to justify the materiality scores. The generated materiality scores are used to adjust the credit weightings from default and normalises. These need to be reviewed and changes proposed and verified.

- Verification

The resulting weightings are verified to ensure they are fair and appropriate by the ISCA Case Manager, followed by the Verifier. Further information must be supplied if requested, and an updated submission may be required.

Base Case Proposal

A business as usual base case must be prepared by the project team to be compared during the assessment of several credits. This base case will be reviewed by the Case Manager followed by the Verifier.

Technical Clarifications (TC) and Credit Interpretation Requests (CIR)

Clarifications on technical aspects of the IS rating scheme can be requested at any time and should be submitted as the issues arise to allow time for feedback to be produced.

- Technical Clarifications

To clarify interpretation of credits, the team lead should submit a request, along with sufficient supporting evidence for ISCA to produce an adequate ruling.

- Credit Interpretation Requests

This can be used by the team lead to propose a potential (equivalent) alternative method of achieving a credit.

- ISCA Support

Technical Support is provided as required through monthly meetings, responses to technical responses, and phone and email support, as well as IS rating process management with the team lead.

Assessment Submission

When the project has reached the end of the assessment stage (whether Design or As-built), the finalised self-assessment, along with the scorecard, completed credit summary forms and all required evidence is submitted by the project team to ISCA. A Credit Summary Form is completed by the project team per credit, allowing the opportunity to include additional information and add context.

- Evidence Documents

The project team must supply all required evidence electronically to ISCA in relation to each relevant credit.

- Verification

The Case Manager reviews the submission to ensure it conforms to all of the requirements before the Verifier begins the assessment.

- Round 1

The Verifier then reviews the submission and agrees to the level and score achieved, as well as providing recommendations of what else would be required to meet the original self-assessed score. The outcome of this will be shared with the Case Manager and the project team lead. The team then confirms whether they accept this score or wish to revise and resubmit.

- Round 2

Any amendments need to be resubmitted along with additional evidence and revised credit summary forms – these cannot be aiming for higher credit levels than the initial application. The Verifier will reassess, and outcome provided.

The project team lead will need to confirm these results or disclose if they intend to dispute. This will need to be resolved, and the team will need to confirm that the project has no actual or pending fines, penalties or other.

Certification

A recommendation for the achieved score and rating level is provided by the Verifier to the Technical Steering Committee. Subject to meeting the requirements, ISCA will announce the level of achievement.

- Certificate Award

The certified rating is awarded and celebrated.

Key Messages

ISCA will work the project leaders to agree on a range of sustainability messages to be promoted and shared both by ISCA and the project managers, along with project highlights and outstanding performances.

- Case Studies

A set of case studies will be developed by the Case Manager and project team lead to promote the achievement, including key points such as business case highlights and initiatives that have been implemented.

- Feedback

ISCA will make a formal request for feedback following certification, including whether objectives were achieved, appropriate levels of support and feedback on the IS rating scheme, among others.

Design to As-Built

As the Design rating is an interim rating and will be superseded by the As-built rating at the end of the project. The Design aspects will not need to be reviewed again during the As-built assessment, unless the design has been updated during the construction phase.