

SEI API/PPA Accreditation Scheme

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Introduction

To support the development of a quality based sustainable energy industry, the Sustainable Energy Industries Association of the Pacific Islands (SEI API) and Pacific Power Association initiated a certification/accreditation scheme for individuals and organisations (business entities) over the years, however to further expand and bring in more impact to the industry, revamping and revitalising the current program became essential. Also, to avoid the complexities involved with certification/accreditation terminologies, the then SEI API/PPA certification/accreditation scheme is being renamed as SEI API/PPA accreditation scheme.

Through this scheme, the individuals shall be accredited as: i) designers; ii) installers and/or maintainers; iii) energy efficiency auditors; and iv) inspectors (of system installations). The organisation (or business entity), employing accredited individuals, shall be accredited as the supplier of products, systems and services.

If there are Individuals who operate as sole traders within the industry, then they must apply to be both an accredited individual and an accredited organisation. For instance, a sole trader who retails and also installs RE equipment or provides services of an energy efficiency auditor, then he/she needs to be accredited as a designer/installer/energy auditor as well as his/her organisation to be an accredited under this scheme.

The Accreditation program has two levels of accreditation: Provisional and Full.

To gain Provisional Accreditation an individual shall successfully complete a training course which has been recognised or specified by SEI API/PPA. As the accreditation program is an industry-based program, SEI API/PPA needs to confirm/verify that the individual is actually incorporating the learnings from the training into their work. Therefore, both levels of membership, i.e. (i) the individuals and (ii) the organisations, shall initially receive 'Provisional' accreditation after successfully completing the training or based on relevant proven experience (for individuals). 'Full Accreditation' would be provided after they submit evidence that they incorporate training received in their work (individuals) or fulfill the requirements laid out in this program.

For example, (i) A 'designer' for a PV stand-alone system would provide a case study which would include a copy of the original system design including energy assessment, size of array (in kW), battery bank capacity (Ah or Wh) voltage, and the controller specifications, etc. (ii) An 'installer' for a PV standalone system would provide a case study including the circuit diagram specifying cable sizes, cable distance, fuse and circuit breaker ratings and photos showing the actual installation.

The scheme will operate for relevant technologies and for the various applications of those technologies, e.g. PV is a technology but it has different applications such as off-grid, grid connect and solar water pumping. Individuals and companies shall obtain accreditation for the particular areas in which they work.

Technologies that have been identified in the revised scheme include:

- Grid Connected PV Systems
- Stand-Alone PV Power systems
 - Level 1 - Solar Home Systems
 - Level 2 - Stand-alone systems with/without Inverters
 - Level 3 - PV/ Diesel Hybrid Power systems
- Green Residential Buildings
 - Energy efficiency and Energy Audits
- Mini/Micro PV Grids¹

This document contains the:

- Eligibility rules for applying as an accredited Individual
- Eligibility rules for applying as an accredited organisation/business
- SEI API Approved Courses
- Rules for the SEI API/PPA Accreditation Scheme
- Renewal Procedures.
- Codes of Ethics
- SEI API/PPA Industry Best Practice Guidelines
- Fee Schedule

¹ The accreditation on Mini-grid/Micro grid (Design and Install) shall be granted to an individual who has been accredited in design and installation of grid connected PV system, design and installation of stand-alone PV systems and design and installation of PV/ Diesel Hybrid Power systems. Additionally, the individual shall possess relevant proven experience on electrical transmission/distribution systems and relevant power system modelling softwares and he/she can then make an application for accreditation in writing to the SEI API secretariat.

SEI API/PPA Application Eligibility Rules: Accredited Individual

Provisional Accreditation

An individual shall apply to be provisionally accredited in a particular discipline and technology after the completion of an approved course (see: *Approved Courses Section*). This is an industry-based accreditation program, so an individual is provisionally accredited until they provide evidence that they are applying what they have learned as part of the training requirements to their respective work activities.

There shall be two categories of applicants for provisional accreditation:

- i) Candidates undertaking SEI API recognised training courses
- ii) Candidates with proven relevant experience (10 years plus) and relevant qualifications practising in the industry

For candidates undertaking SEI API recognised courses as in (i) above, the applicant has to submit the following:

- Signed and completed 'Provisional Accreditation - Individual' application form.
- Signed 'code of ethics' form
- Evidence of successful completion of the approved course/s.
- An application fee (see Fee Schedule)

A final decision on the outcome shall be made by the SEI API Secretariat.

For candidates with proven experience and relevant qualifications as in (ii) above, the applicant has to submit the following:

- Signed and completed 'Provisional Accreditation - Individual' application form.
- Signed 'code of ethics' form
- An accompanying cover letter requesting for provisional accreditation including all credentials and relevant supporting documents and references. This should state the specific roles, projects, duration, association with companies/organisations/donors and any recent specialised training attended (if any). Additionally, one has to provide two professional referees that will be contacted for verification.
- An application fee of (see Fee Schedule)

A final decision on this shall be made by the SEI API Executive Committee upon compilation of an Assessment Report by the Secretariat.

Full Accreditation

A provisionally accredited person can apply to SEI API/PPA for 'Full Accreditation' by submitting one case study as a proof of competence in the particular discipline and technology. Case study pro-forma sheets will be provided for the different accreditation classifications.

An upgrade to Full Accreditation Application must include –

- Signed and completed 'Full Accreditation - Individual' application form
- Signed 'code of ethics' form
- One case study aligned to the Case study pro-forma
- Names of two professional referees and their email contacts for verification
- An application fee (see Fee Schedule)

SEI API/PPA Application Eligibility Rules: Accredited Organisation

Provisional Accreditation

An organisation can apply to be provisionally accredited in a particular discipline and technology if:

1. The organisation has the relevant provisionally accredited individuals either as a member of their staff or under sub-contract and this would allow the organisation to offer products and services in the respective technology. For example: (i) an organisation providing grid connected PV systems will have a provisionally accredited designer and a provisionally accredited installer/maintainer on grid connected PV system; (ii) an organisation offering energy efficiency services might need an individual who is an accredited energy efficiency auditor.
2. The organisation meets all the in-country rules for operating a business. This could include being a registered company in any SEI API/PPA member countries, having the appropriate insurances and appropriate licenses.
3. The organisation is financially sound (e.g. not bankrupt or in liquidation).

The applicant organisation submits an application that includes:

- Signed and completed 'Provisional Accreditation - Organisation' application form.
- Provides evidence that the organisation meets all the legal requirements of the country of operation such as company registration, business license and other relevant compliance.
- Signed 'code of ethics' form
- The names of the provisionally accredited individuals and proof that they are either on staff or sub-contracted to the organisation.
- An application fee (See Fee Schedule)

Full Accreditation

A provisionally accredited organisation can apply to SEI API/PPA for 'Full Accreditation' for a particular discipline and technology by submitting evidence that their provisionally accredited individuals are now fully accredited in the respective technology and application.

An Upgrade to Full Accreditation Application must include –

- Signed and completed 'Full Accreditation - Organisation' application form.
- The name(s) and registration number(s) of the fully accredited individuals.
- Provides evidence that the organisation meets all the legal requirements of the country of operation such as company registration, business license and other

- relevant compliance.
- Signed 'code of ethics' form.
 - An application fee (See Fee Schedule)

SEI API Approved Courses

The approved courses are those conducted by training institutes which train and assess against the accredited competencies applicable to the region. From 2018-2020, SEI API/PPA through the SEIDP Project funded by the World Bank have facilitated development and accreditation of 19 training competency (unit) standards on Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency. It is envisioned that more competency standards will be developed and accredited as the demand for newer technologies increase and they are widely deployed in the Pacific. For any technology on which the competency standard does not exist, SEI API will assess and direct the individuals to the recognised Training courses/avenues on which accreditation is desired.

Inspectors of RE Systems shall be accredited through a specialised training course facilitated by SEI API Training provider or similar as per the need.

Preferably the training organisation offering the courses should be accredited by a third party. The training institute should either be an institute accredited under their countries requirements or accredited by an international body such as the Institute for Sustainable Power.

As the accreditation scheme gains momentum, more courses will be identified and listed within the SEI API/PPA (and other stakeholders') websites. Currently, the approved courses are listed on the website (www.seiapi.com). Currently, the courses that are accredited are the CEC (Australian) accreditation courses offered by SEI API's Training Provider, Global Sustainable Energy Solutions Pty Ltd (GSES) (www.gses.com.au) and the Grid Connect course offered by the Micronesia Community College.

It is advised that the SEI API Secretariat may be contacted to liaise on suitability of other courses that may be available internationally and may not be listed specifically here.

Every application for accreditation under the available streams will be processed on a case-by-case basis. All approved courses shall be mapped with the accredited competency standards under the Pacific Board of Educational Quality at EQAP.

The competency (unit) standards accredited by the Pacific Board of Educational Quality at EQAP that align with the current technologies under which accreditation exists include:

Grid Connected PV Systems

- Designer of Grid Connected PV Systems
- Installer of Grid Connected PV Systems

Stand-Alone PV Power systems

➤ *Level 1 - Solar Home Systems*

- Designer of Off Grid PV Power Systems – DC Load SHS
- Installer of Off Grid PV Power Systems – DC Load SHS

➤ *Level 2 - Stand-alone systems with/without Inverters*

- Designer of Off Grid PV Power Systems – Stand-alone Solar Systems
- Installer of Off Grid PV Power Systems – Stand-alone Solar Systems

➤ *Level 3 - PV/ Diesel Hybrid Power systems*

- Designer of Off Grid PV Power Systems – Hybrid Power Systems
- Installer of Off Grid PV Power Systems – Hybrid Power Systems

Energy efficiency and Energy Audits

- Implement Energy Efficiency in Residential and Small Commercial Applications

Rules: Accreditation and Certification Schemes

Individuals

1. The Provisional accreditation for individuals shall be valid for one (1) year only from the date of first accreditation and it shall follow an application for 'Full accreditation' within the last 3 months before expiry (see Full Accreditation). In circumstances where the individual fails to pursue 'Full Accreditation' within the first year due to valid reasons, the individual shall request for an extension upon submitting a cover letter of request including the justification and by paying an extension fee of FJD 100 within one year after expiry. This extension shall be granted for a period of 6 months only. Two extensions of 6 months will be permitted after which the candidate's provisional accreditation shall be deemed null and void. Also, for those individuals not pursuing 'Full Accreditation' within one year after expiry will have the provisional accreditation be deemed null and void. The individual will have to undertake a refresher course recognised by SEI API to be re-granted provisional accreditation.
2. 'Full Accreditation' for individuals is valid for three (3) years and maybe renewed for a further three (3) years by application for 'Renewal of Full Accreditation' within the last 6 months before expiry. The renewal fee shall be FJD 100 for every three years. The renewal shall be done using 'Renewal of Full Accreditation - Individual' form. Failure to renew within one year after expiry may result in the candidate's full accreditation be deemed null and void. In this case the individual will have to undertake a refresher course recognised by SEI API to be re-granted full accreditation.
3. The individual must abide by all technical guidelines (PPA/SEI API Technical Guidelines on RE/EE) and standards that apply to their particular discipline and technology. Failure to follow these guidelines could result in the accreditation being suspended or revoked.
4. The individual must abide by the code of ethics at all times.

Organisations

1. The Provisional Accreditation for organisations shall be valid for one year only from the date of first provisional accreditation and it shall follow an application for 'Full accreditation' within the last 3 months before expiry. In circumstances where the organisation fails to pursue 'Full Accreditation' within the first year after expiry due to valid reasons, the individual shall request for an extension upon submitting a cover letter of request including the justification and by paying an extension fee of FJD 200. This extension shall be granted for a period of 6 months

only. Two extensions of 6 months will be permitted after which the organisation's provisional accreditation shall be deemed null and void. For those companies not pursuing Full accreditation/extension after one year of expiry will have the provisional accreditation be deemed null and void. The company will have to make a new application to be re-granted provisional accreditation.

2. The Full Accreditation for organisations shall be valid for three (3) years only from the date of first Full Accreditation and it shall follow an application for 'Renewal of Full Accreditation - Organisation' within the last 6 months before expiry. The renewal fee shall be FJD 400 for every three years. The renewal shall be done using 'Renewal of Full Accreditation - Organisation' form. In circumstances where the organisation fails to renew within the set timeline, the individual shall be liable for a penalty of FJD200. Failure to renew within one year after expiry would have the organisation's full accreditation be deemed null and void. The company will have to make a new application to be re-granted full accreditation.
3. If at any time the organisation does not have, either as a staff member or sub-contractor, the relevant accredited individual for their particular technology and application then the organisation must notify SEI API/PPA immediately and the accreditation will be suspended until the company recruits appropriately qualified individuals.
4. The organisation must abide by SEI API/PPA's industry best practice guidelines. Failure to follow these guidelines could result in the accreditation being suspended or revoked.
5. The organisation must abide by the code of ethics at all times.

Renewal: Procedures

Individuals

A fully certified individual will submit a renewal application which includes:

- Signed and completed 'Renewal of Full Accreditation – Individual' application form.
- Signed 'code of ethics' form.
- One case study aligned to the Case study pro-forma
- Statement/list on what professional development activities have been undertaken.
- Names of two professional referees and their email contacts for verification
- The application fee (see schedule)

Organisations

The fully accredited organisation submits a renewal application that includes:

- Signed and completed 'Renewal of Full Accreditation - Organisation' application form
- Provides evidence that the organisation meets all the legal requirements of the country of operation such as company registration, business license and other relevant compliance.
- Signed 'code of ethics' form.
- The name/s and registration number/s of the accredited individuals and proof that they are either on staff or sub-contracted to the organisation.
- The application fee (see schedule)

Code of Ethics

All individuals holding SEI API/PPA accreditation of any form:

- shall solicit work, advertise and promote their services and products with dignity and truth, avoiding any potentially misleading statements or omissions;
- shall apply my skill and knowledge in the interest of their clients or employers for whom they act as faithful agents or trustees;
- shall regard as confidential any information concerning the business and technical affairs of my clients or employers;
- shall inform my clients or employers if circumstances arise, in which their judgment or the independence of their service may be compromised by reason of business connections, personal relationships, interests or affiliations;
- shall deal honestly and truthfully with clients, employers and government agencies in all matters pertaining to payments, discounts, rebates and grants and the conditions applying to them;
- shall design and/or install all systems in accordance with the SEI API/PPA technical guidelines on RE/EE and any relevant standards that are applicable in the country the system is being designed/installed.
- shall continue my professional development throughout my careers; and
- shall not bring the sustainable energy industry into disrepute.

SEI API/PPA Industry Best Practice Guidelines

The SEI API/PPA Industry Best Practice Guidelines detail the actions, activities and procedures that an accredited organisation and/or an accredited individual should apply to act as a quality organisation/individual and to provide customers with quality service.

These include:

- a) When a person or company enquires about potential services to be provided, the organisation shall respond in a professional manner and as quickly as practically possible.
- b) If a site visit is undertaken, the organisation's staff or their accredited installer should undertake a thorough site visit as per the relevant training they have undertaken.
- c) When providing a quotation to a potential customer, the organisation should provide (as a minimum) the following information: -
 - Full specifications of the system equipment being offered including quantity, make (manufacturer) and model number, or if it is offering services, a detailed outline of the services to be provided will be given.
 - If a system is being supplied, the relevant warranty information relating to each of the items of equipment.
 - If it is a grid connect PV system, an estimate of the yearly energy output of the system. This should be based on the available solar irradiation for the tilt angle and orientation of the array. If the array will be shaded at any time, the effect of the shadows must be taken into account when determining the yearly energy output.
 - If it is a stand-alone system, the expected output (daily or yearly) of the system and how it meets the electrical energy requirements of the customer.
 - If it is a solar lantern or similar type of product, the promotional literature should provide an honest and correct estimate of the expected performance.
 - If it is a biomass system, the expected output of the system stating the amount of fuel resource required.
 - If it is an energy audit quotation, then general information on the amount of potential energy savings should be included together with the potential yearly costs savings and financial returns.
 - Firm quotations which include all equipment and installation charges.
 - Any conditions that may affect the decision-making process by the potential customer.
- d) When a potential customer agrees to purchase a system or services from the organisation, the organisation should have a simple contract for either the supply, installation and commissioning of the system or the provision of the required services as agreed. If possible, the contract should be signed by the customer before proceeding. The organisation should also sign the contract and each party (organisation and customer) keeps a copy of the contract.

Note: This clause should mainly apply to complete systems or services such as energy auditing. The use of this contract would not necessarily be appropriate for every purchase e.g. small solar lantern.

- e) When designing a system, the accredited organisation shall use an accredited designer for the technology and its application. The accredited designer shall follow the relevant guidelines and standards for that application.
- f) When installing a system, the accredited organisation shall use an accredited installer for that technology and application. The accredited installer shall follow the relevant guidelines and appropriate standards for that installation.
- g) If carrying out an energy audit, the accredited organisation shall use an accredited auditor. The accredited auditor shall follow the appropriate guidelines and standards if available.
- h) For system installation, the accredited organisation should provide the customer with a minimum of 1 year's warranty on the installation workmanship of the system and this would be in addition to the warranties offered by the manufacturers on the equipment supplied.
- i) An accredited organisation should provide support to the customer when a product fails under warranty. This support will include liaising with the manufacturer or equipment agent on behalf of the client.
- j) An accredited organisation should keep, as a minimum, the documentation relating to the system installed as specified in the relevant technical guidelines.
- k) If a customer complains to an accredited organisation that the system has failed:
 - i. If the failure occurs within the 12 months' installation workmanship warranty period, the accredited organisation:
 - Should respond to the complaint in a timely manner.
 - If remote monitoring is available, this should be analysed to attempt to determine the fault. If the fault cannot be determined remotely then the response should involve arranging for a technically competent (preferably accredited installer/maintainer) visiting the system to determine the fault and then rectify the fault as soon as possible.
 - If it is a fault arising from the installation workmanship, it is the accredited organisation's responsibility to rectify the problem.
 - If it is an equipment fault, the accredited organisation should liaise with the equipment manufacturer to fix the product as soon as possible.
 - ii. If the failure is after the 12 month's installation warranty period:
 - An accredited organisation should still provide back-up service to the customer and should respond to the complaint in a timely manner.
 - This response should initially involve attempting to determine the fault remotely and then, if required, to organise a visit to

the system to determine the fault and then to rectify the fault as soon as possible. A reasonable price should be quoted to the customer for the call-out, that is the price should be reflective of the price quoted for other work and not be higher than standard pricing because the customer has a problem with their system and needs help.

- If it a fault in the installation's workmanship, the accredited organisation should provide the customer with a quotation for repairs.
 - If it is a fault in the equipment, the accredited organisation should liaise with the equipment manufacturer to fix the product as soon as possible. The cost in providing the repairs will be quoted to the customer. If the equipment is still under warranty, the cost should just be for the time spent travelling to/from site and onsite while undertaking the replacement (or repairs) of equipment unless this will be paid by the manufacturer.
- l) If a customer complains to an accredited organisation that they believe the system is not performing as stated in the quotation, the accredited organisation should request from the customer the evidence as to why they have come to this conclusion. If it appears that it is really not performing as anticipated, then the accredited organisation should investigate why in a prompt and professional manner.
 - m) The accredited organisation should attempt to resolve all complaints in a professional manner and directly with the customer to avoid the complaint being formerly lodged to SEI API/PPA.
 - n) An accredited organisation or accredited individual should not criticise the work of another accredited organisation or accredited individual directly to a customer. If the accredited organisation or accredited individual believes the other accredited organisation or accredited individual has provided a poor system or service, then a formal complaint should be lodged to SEI API/PPA.
 - o) If the complaint is formerly lodged to SEI API/PPA, the accredited organisation or accredited individual should abide by the complaint's procedures.
 - p) If a technical system audit (also called inspection) is undertaken of the work of an accredited organisation or accredited individual, the accredited organisation or accredited individual should respond to any reasonable request by the auditor (inspector) to fulfil his or her duties.
 - q) The accredited organisation should incorporate or undertake implementation of quality management procedures in the daily operation of the business. This does not require the organisation to be ISO9001 accredited however they should have documented procedures for undertaking their work operations (e.g. providing quotes, organising system installations, providing invoices, preparing documentation etc.), so that there is consistency in how they

provide service to the customers.

Fee Schedule

Accreditation Type	Fees	Term/Validity (Years)
Provisional Accreditation – Individual (Type i – Training Courses)	FJD 50	1
Provisional Accreditation – Individual (Type ii – Proven Experience)	FJD 200	1
Provisional Accreditation - Organisation	FJD 400	1
Full Accreditation - Individual	FJD 100	3
Full Accreditation – Organisation	FJD 400	3
Renewal - Individual	FJD 100	3
Renewal – Organisation	FJD 400	3