

Participation in International Fairs

SME Refund Scheme



GUIDELINES

July 2025



**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 to 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 IS 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.

Rodriguan companies, Trade & Business Associations, Cooperatives, and entrepreneurs registered with the CBRD

3 WHAT TYPE OF EVENT IS ELIGIBLE UNDER THE REFUND?

- An SME participating as an exhibitor in international fairs outside Mauritius whether on its own or led by an institution. The international fair 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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- An SME in the manufacturing and agri-business sector participating in the technology fair led by EDB or SME Mauritius.
 - An SME participating in a fair under a Mauritian pavilion.
 - An SME participating in buyer-seller meets.
 - Notwithstanding the above -
 - Freeport operators shall be eligible to apply for refund only where they are manufacturing 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.
 - Fairs hosted in or outside Mauritius and which are attended by Rodriguan companies, Trade and Business Associations, Cooperatives, and entrepreneurs registered with the CBRD.
 - Note: Applications for participation in tourism related fairs are not covered under this Scheme and should be submitted to the Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority.

4 WHO ARE NOT ELIGIBLE FOR REFUND ?

- An SME engaged in activities in the financial sector, global business, real estate, job contractors and professionals.
- Associations, Cooperatives and Federations, exclusively from Mauritius island, participating in an international fair.
- An SME that has been subsidized by any other institution, local or international, in respect of participation in an international fair.
- An SME, whose shareholder is a legal entity (company, business, société) and where the legal entity generates an annual turnover exceeding Rs 100 million.

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- In the case of “sister” SMEs, that is, companies having the same shareholder(s) and/or director(s) and dealing in more or less a similar line of business or activity, 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.
 - An SME participating as a delegate in an international fair.
 - An SME 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 refund of Rs 333,000 per financial year.
- An SME may claim refund for participation in a maximum of 2 international fairs, provided that the refund ceiling of Rs 333,000 per SME is not exceeded. The remaining balance of the present year is not carried forward to the next financial year.
- An SME may claim a refund for expenses incurred by one representative only. The representative should either be a Director or a senior employee of the SME.
- Note: The EDB reserves the right to determine the applicant’s eligibility, the nature and relevance of the event and the reasonableness of the refund claimed.

6 WHAT ITEMS ARE REFUNDED?

For Mauritian SMEs

➤ Cost of Stand/ Participation Fee

- Rental of standard booth
- Registration fee, where applicable

➤ Travelling expenses

- Based on an economy class air ticket between Mauritius and the host country/city for one representative only subject to the most economically viable route being chosen.

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- 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 except in case of a force majeure.

For Rodriguan participants

- Rodriguan companies, Trade & business Associations, Cooperatives, and entrepreneurs registered with the CBRD participating in fairs, including in Mauritius will be eligible for refund of the cost of stand, travel and accommodation, provided that prior to their participation in eligible fairs, the recommendations have been obtained from the respective Commissions (Women Affairs and others, Trade and Agriculture).

7 WHAT ITEMS ARE NOT COVERED BY THIS SCHEME?

For the avoidance of doubt, the following items are not covered:

- 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.
- Any expenses borne by a third party or on behalf of the participant.

8 HOW TO APPLY FOR THE REFUND?

8.1 STEP 1: CREATION OF USER PROFILE

- SMEs in eligible sector of activities should submit their interest on sme@edbmauritius.org.
- Once the participation is validated, the applicant is invited to submit its application on the SME Refund Portal on EDB's CRM portal.

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 on the CRM Portal.
- Supporting documents, as applicable, which should be submitted together with the application form:
 - a. Financial statements (signed by the directors) indicating the turnover and profitability of the SME for the past 3 years.
 - b. Business plan including financial forecast for startup organizations, that is, companies in operation for less than one year.
 - c. Copy of the passport of the person in whose name the 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.
 - 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 receipt of the application, the applicant will be notified by email.

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- The applicant may be further contacted if the 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 received, 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.
 - The PEMC will determine an application on its individual merits and according to the provision of these guidelines.

8.4 STEP 3: SUBMISSION OF CLAIM

- A participant, having obtained prior approval for refund, should submit the claim form and corresponding proof of expenses **within one month following participation in** the event, except as otherwise authorised by the EDB.
- All claims should be submitted online through the CRM Portal.
- The following documents should be submitted together with the claim form:
 - a. Refund of Cost of Stand/Participation Fee**
 - Contract with fair/event organizer
 - Exhibitors badge
 - Invoice
 - Payment receipt
 - Proof of payment by credit card or bank transfer
 - b. Refund of airfare**
 - E-ticket
 - Invoice
 - Payment receipt

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- 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.

- The EDB reserves the right at all times to request applicants to submit additional documentary proof or any other clarifications.
- Once the complete set of documents has been provided and information received, the EDB will process the claim and notify the applicant within a minimum of 2 weeks.
- Refund for expenses claimed will not be considered if the participant fails to submit appropriate receipts and proof of payments.
- No refund shall be made if the SME fails to participate in the event for which favourable consideration has been granted.
- The EDB reserves the right to determine whether expenditures incurred will be regarded as refundable items.
- The approved refund will be transferred to the bank account details submitted by the participant.

9. 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 PEMC's decision after participation in the fair at the participant's own risk.
- Participants should submit a comprehensive report of the outcome of previous participations while applying for the scheme. Failure to submit such report may lead to disqualification to benefit from this scheme.

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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.
 - The PEMC reserves at all times the absolute right to review its decision and adjust the refund entitlement, if the SME has provided false, incorrect, and misleading information at the time of application or after.
 - In the event that there is an overpayment due to error in calculation or assessment, applicants will be required to refund the overpaid amount.
 - Evaluation Criterion

The Company must demonstrate its Export Readiness and submit proof of the following:

- a) Have the Operational and Production Capacity to meet the Export Market.
- b) The Product meets International Standards and Regulations (quality, safety, labeling).
- c) The price and quality are competitive.
- d) Have sufficient working capital to finance the production and other export-related expenses.
- e) Whether the product of the company is adapted to the market, where the fair is being held.
- f) The company has a long-term Export Strategy
- g) Relevant marketing tools and
- h) Compliance with Mauritian Authorities.

Contact Us

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

SME REFUND SCHEME

Email: sme@edbmauritius.org

Telephone: +230 2033800

**Address: 7, Exchange Square, Wall Street,
Ebene, 72201, Republic of Mauritius**

Website: <https://www.edbmauritius.org/schemes?scheme=3>