

Guide to IREE Certification

Certification

Congratulations on your decision to pursue Investor Ready Energy Efficiency™ (IREE) Certification for your project!

As a building owner, by choosing to pursue IREE certification you are demonstrating that your project has followed the Investor Confidence Project (ICP) Protocols and that it is an energy efficiency project that is investment-ready.

Investor Ready Energy Efficiency™ (IREE) certification is available from GBCI in all countries around the globe.

This eight-step guide will lead you through the process; if you need assistance at any time, please don't hesitate to contact us:

1. **TRAINING** (recommended)
Take the Investor Ready Energy Efficiency™ [Training](#).
2. **REGISTER**
[Register](#) your project and submit payment.
3. **SELECT ICP QUALITY ASSURANCE ASSESSOR**
Select and contract with an independent, approved Quality Assurance Assessor (QAA) who will assess your project for compliance with ICP protocols for IREE Certification. [Click here for a current list](#) of approved QAAs.
4. **DEVELOP PROJECT**
Develop an energy efficiency project according to the requirements in the ICP Protocols. The development team must include a project engineer with a minimum of five years of relevant experience who is a licensed Professional Engineer under a nationally recognized authority, Association of Energy Engineers (AEE) Certified Energy Manager (CEM), or holds an equivalent license. Relevant experience includes for example, building energy auditing, commissioning, energy simulation, and measurement and verification.
5. **APPLY**
Submit project documentation for review by the Quality Assurance Assessor.
6. **REVIEW**
Quality Assurance Assessor reviews documentation for compliance with ICP Protocols and provides feedback to team.
7. **GBCI QUALITY CONTROL and CERTIFICATION**
Your Quality Assurance Assessor provides the certification recommendation to GBCI by emailing icp@gbci.org; remember IREE registration and certification fees must be remitted to GBCI before the project is submitted to GBCI for final certification. Once the project passes final GBCI quality control, congratulations it is Investor Ready Energy Efficiency™ certified!

Stakeholders can now make investment decisions with increased confidence based on your project earning IREE certification.

8. POST CERTIFICATION AND PERFORMANCE REPORTING

After the project is certified and implemented, energy performance is measured and verified according to ICP protocols.

1. TRAINING (Optional but recommended)

The first step in certifying a project is to take the Investor Ready Energy Efficiency™ Training. The training will give you the information you need to develop an IREE project and determine if your project is ready for IREE certification. It is recommended that all team members involved in developing an IREE project complete the training but is not required the training be complete prior to registration.

[Sign up for training](#)

2. REGISTER

Registration is an important step in the process, and signifies your intent to pursue IREE certification. IREE Certification is available for future energy efficiency projects and recently installed energy efficiency projects. [Click Here for Registering your project.](#)

You'll register, submit payment and sign the certification services agreement (the project owner or project developer must do this last one) for your project. From here, you can assemble your project team and the documentation process begins!

ROLES

Here's a rundown of who's who:

Owner: The person (or entity) who has the authority to hold and control the real and personal property associated with your project, and accepts (or authorizes the acceptance of) the certification agreement. While there may be multiple owners for a particular project (if so, please submit a Confirmation of Primary Owner's Authority Form), we ask that you identify a single individual to administer the certification process. Big takeaway: the owner has ultimate control over the IREE certification application, meaning that Green Business Certification Inc. (GBCI: the organization responsible for administering IREE certification) will respond to the owner regarding the administration of the project over any other member of the project team. The owner accepts the certification results once the project has successfully completed all steps in the certification process.

Agent: The person (or entity) who is granted actual authority by the owner to register the project and accept the certification agreement. In some instances, the Agent and the Project Developer may be the same.

Project Developer/Development Team: This is the organization that employs the Project Engineer. Remember, the Project Developers must carry an appropriate minimum level of insurance per claim, for errors and omissions.

Project Engineer: The Project Engineer is responsible for developing a project based on sound engineering principles and accepted industry best practices as specified by the ICP Protocols and Project Development Specification. It is recommended that this person take the IREE Training. The Project Engineer must have at least five years of relevant experience and be a licensed Professional Engineer under a nationally recognized authority, AEE Certified Energy Manager (CEM), or hold an equivalent license (accepted on a case by case basis). Relevant experience includes for example, building energy auditing, commissioning, energy simulation, and measurement and verification.

3. SELECT ICP QUALITY ASSURANCE ASSESSOR

The next step is to select and contract with a GBCI approved Quality Assurance Assessor. The Quality Assurance Assessor will be your primary point of contact and will be completing an impartial, independent evaluation of your project to determine whether it meets the requirements of the ICP protocols. It is recommended that the Quality Assurance Assessor is involved early in the process during project development, so that issues can be identified and addressed as the project progresses, rather than at the end of the project development.

Remember: your Quality Assurance Assessor should not be viewed as a consultant on your project, and is prohibited from providing design and/or consulting services for your project.

[List of GBCI Approved ICP Quality Assurance Assessors and Contact Information](#)

4. DEVELOP PROJECT

Your team will develop your energy efficiency project and prepare documentation demonstrating adherence to the ICP protocols. ICP specifications and templates are available to guide project development.

The Project Development Specification describes accepted approaches, recommended best practices, and resources that project development teams should utilize in order to adhere to these industry standards and protocols and achieve IREE Certification.

[Other Project Development Resources, Templates and Tools.](#)

Technical questions? – The Quality Assurance Assessor is your primary point of contact for all technical questions throughout the certification process. The Quality Assurance Assessor can help answer your questions about IREE certification and clarify requirements in instances where you are unable to find an answer in published guidance, and/or your project has a unique or complex scenario for which you and your consultant require additional support. Please note that your Quality Assurance Assessor should not be viewed as a consultant on your project, and is prohibited from providing design and/or consulting services for your project.

Project Interpretation Ruling: Having difficulty fulfilling a protocol requirement? Have you thought of an alternative way to interpret a requirement? We've established an inquiry process so that you can gain clarification before you register your project or as you're working through your application.

A Project Interpretation ruling allows you to obtain technical guidance related to a particular facet of the protocol. GBCI will let you know if your interpretation of a particular requirement is consistent with published protocol requirements.

For all inquiries and ruling request, please email us at icp@gbci.org

5. APPLY

Now comes the fun part: collect and submit the required documentation to your QAA so that they may review your project. Make sure to perform a rigorous quality check (as outlined in the Project Development Specification) of your entire application before submitting for review.

- Documentation should be clearly identified and organized to facilitate the review process.
- File attachments are clearly and intuitively labeled.
- Only required documentation is submitted.
- Concise narratives are used to describe project-specific circumstances.

All finished? Submit your project to your Quality Assurance Assessor!

Please note that in order for us to start the review process you must have selected your Quality Assurance Assessor and paid your registration fees prior to submitting your project.

6. REVIEW

Your Quality Assurance Assessor will conduct a thorough technical review of the documentation submitted as part of your application. They will check your application for completeness and compliance with ICP protocols. The Quality Assurance Assessor will indicate which documentation is complete and approved and which elements are pending further information or not approved. Your team will provide additional information as requested by the Quality Assurance Assessor for the final phase of the review. They will review the additional information and if satisfied that the project meets the ICP protocol requirements, they will make a recommendation to GBCI for certification by emailing icp@gbci.org. The QAA must include their QA checklist, and the documentation from the project team along with their recommendation to GBCI.

The primary responsibilities of the Quality Assurance Assessor include:

- Ensuring that the project was developed in accordance with the most appropriate ICP Protocol as specified by the Project Development Specification.
- Validating that all necessary documentation is provided and complete.
- Checking that methodologies, assumptions, and results follow best practices and are reasonable based on the Quality Assurance Assessor's professional experience, available guidelines, or data-driven thresholds.
- Completing the QA Checklist which lists all of the required elements for ICP compliance. A signature provided by a GBCI Approved Quality Assurance Assessor verifies that the project is ICP compliant and satisfies the requirements of an ICP Investor Ready Energy Efficiency™ project.

Quality Assurance Assessor Timeline – The Quality Assurance Assessor is expected to provide an anticipated timeline to the project development team on the activities they will complete for the project. Reviews will only begin after the project team has provided all the required documentation to the Quality Assurance Assessor. Timelines will vary from project to project depending on Quality Assurance Assessor schedule, and the responsiveness of the project team to requests for information/documentation from their Quality Assurance Assessor. GBCI has provided the following timelines as general guidance on what to expect from your Quality Assurance Assessor.

| Activity | Party | Recommended Timeline |
|--|----------------------------|----------------------|
| Initial Review | Quality Assurance Assessor | 10 business days |
| Provide supplemental information (if needed) | Project Team | 20-25 business days |
| Final Review | Quality Assurance Assessor | 10 business days |
| Final Quality Control and Certification | GBCI | 5-10 business days |

Fees

So, how much will it cost to certify your project? IREE Certification provides an exceptional value for your money . View the current fee table with explanations below

| Protocol | Registration Fee | Certification Fee | Total Fee | Project size |
|----------------|------------------|-------------------|-----------|----------------------------|
| Targeted | \$100 | \$225 | \$325 | All |
| Standard | \$250 | \$500 | \$750 | \$75k-\$500K without model |
| Large/Standard | \$500 | \$1,250 | \$1750 | <\$1M with model |
| Large | \$750 | \$1,750 | \$2,500 | >\$1 Million with model |

- **Registration fee:** There is a flat registration fee calculated on a per-project basis that you'll pay up front at the time of registration. Rates are based on the fee schedule published at the time of registration. Registration fees must be paid within 30 calendar days, otherwise the registration may be cancelled.
- **Certification fee:** The certification fee is charged on a per-project basis and based on the project scope. Certification fees are due within 30 calendar days from when you submit your application for review. After all that work you did to submit your documentation, don't forget to send your payment! Also, please note that certification fees are based on the fees published at the time the project is submitted for review and cover preliminary and final reviews.
- **Payment terms:** Invoices must be paid within 30 calendar days. A one-time extension of an additional 30 calendar days is available – please contact GBCI. If invoices are not paid within the required timeframe, they will be cancelled, and in subsequent requests for services, the invoice amount will reflect the prevailing fee schedule at the time the new invoice is generated. Fees are non-transferrable.

7. CERTIFY

If you've achieved certification: congratulations from all of us at GBCI! You've made it to the finish line: the final step is to simply accept your IREE Certification in the online platform. Certification is achieved after the Quality Assurance Assessor certification recommendation passes quality control checks and is accepted by GBCI.

Once you've earned certification, it's likely that you'll want to tell the world. You should! IREE Certification benefits your business' bottom line and underscores your sustainability efforts. It's a cause for celebration. The IREE Certification logo may be used to represent the associated project's achievement. These logos may be included in collateral and other marketing materials, and on physical installations such as plaques, decals and banners.

You'll also receive a formal certificate of recognition, and may promote your certification in a number of ways that will be detailed in our public relations guidelines.

Our press team is here to support you in your marketing efforts. [Contact our press team](#) for assistance. You'll also have the option to order formal certificates of recognition.

How GBCI Utilizes your Project Data

We use your project data for the greater good: to educate and provide resources for project teams and others around the world, showcase your strategies, and share the size and power of IREE.

Registered and certified IREE projects are considered “public” projects by default and are included in the public project directory. A listing in this directory allows the general public and members of the media to look up your project listing and its related details.

Here's a full list of the data and project elements that may be listed in the public project directory:

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Project name | Projected energy savings |
| Project ID | Description of energy conservation measures |
| Physical address | Owner name |
| Date of registration | Project type |
| Date of certification | |

All public projects also benefit from publicity opportunities: we may utilize your project data to create case studies highlighting your project's features, reference your project on our website or to the media, or create other derivative works.

Information that may be used for articles, project profiles, other features:

- Service providers
- Project team members
- Promotional or other project photographs
- Project strategies for certification
- Quotations from team members

You may opt-out of the project directory and publicity opportunities as a “private project” at the time of registration: specific instructions on how to do so are available in the online platform. All private projects that earn certification will be prompted once more to transition to public status. You will need to re-confirm your “private” status at that time, if you wish to retain it.

Note that if a project chooses to remain private, it must not be marketed or represented to the general public as either a registered or certified IREE project. These projects aren't entitled to use or display any intellectual property, including the IREE Certification trademarks and logos. These projects may communicate their status as either a registered or certified IREE project to government entities for the limited purposes of complying with building and tax laws, and administrative proceedings related to land use entitlements.

Please carefully review of the [GBCI Trademark Policy and Branding Guidelines](#) for more information.

Important Considerations

Deadline for achieving certification

All projects must certify within five years of the registration date. If you have difficulty meeting this deadline, please reach out to GBCI at icp@gbci.org—we will work with you on a solution for your project.

Review Challenge

We've created the Review Challenge Policy to protect the integrity and fairness of the IREE certification process. We anticipate that resolution of technical issues or disputes related to the requirements of IREE can be accomplished through our traditional customer service channels. If, however, resolution of a technical issue is not satisfactorily achieved via GBCI's customer support channels, you may initiate a Review Challenge.

GBCI Review Challenge Policy: <http://www.gbci.org/gbci-review-challenge-policy>

Revocation of IREE Certification

In rare situations, IREE certification may be revoked. We've created the Certification Challenge Policy to ensure that all IREE project submittals and subsequent reviews by Quality Assurance Assessors are done so with integrity, accuracy and truthfulness. A certification challenge may be initiated by GBCI or any third party within 18 months of a project's certification. We recommend you retain all project documentation related to your certification for two years in case of a challenge.

GBCI Certification Challenge Policy: <https://www.usgbc.org/resources/gbci-certification-challenge-policy>

8. POST CERTIFICATION AND PERFORMANCE REPORTING

While the project may be certified at this stage in the project's life cycle, there are important tasks that still need to be accomplished as required by the ICP Protocols both during and after construction. These tasks vary by protocol, but include:

- Implementation of the Operational Performance Verification (OPV) plan, and development of an OPV report or statement
- Training of the facility personnel
- Updates to the Systems Manual and Operator's Manual (or creation of these manuals if they do not exist)
- Implementation of the ongoing management regime (periodic inspection, Building Automation System (BAS) review, periodic recommissioning, fault detection and diagnostics, etc.)
- Measurement and verification efforts

It is recommended that the QA process apply to all of these construction and post-construction elements as well. The Quality Assurance Assessor may be retained and included in all of these activities, providing the same level of compliance and technical review as is involved with the development of the Investment Package. The Quality Assurance Assessor will subsequently help ensure that these items are paid the proper attention by the development team.