

FAQs

Contents

General	1
New Buildings	10
Existing Buildings	13
Interiors	16
Communities	17
Products, Materials & Contractors	19
Others	22

General

WHAT IS GREEN STAR?

Created by our friends at Green Building Council Australia (GBCA) and adapted for Aotearoa, Green Star is Australasia's largest voluntary and truly holistic sustainability rating system for buildings, fitouts and communities.

Green Star aims to transform the built environment by:

- reducing the impact of climate change
- enhancing our health & quality of life
- restoring and protecting our planet's biodiversity and ecosystems
- driving resilient outcomes for buildings, fitouts, and communities
- contributing to market transformation and a sustainable economy

WHY WAS GREEN STAR DEVELOPED?

Green Star was developed for the property industry in order to:

- Establish a common language;
- Set a standard of measurement for sustainable buildings;
- Promote integrated, whole-building design;
- Recognise environmental leadership;
- Identify building life-cycle impacts; and
- Raise awareness of sustainable building benefits.

WHY SHOULD I CERTIFY MY PROJECT?

Alignment with an organisational value and vision - Adopting "equivalence" is not a leadership position. Adopting 3rd party certification will allow a building owner to celebrate the building and show leadership. "Equivalence" will not.

Independent certification of the performance achieved - Certification is a robust way to determine the performance achieved. How will the developer or building owner actually know that the completed building is green without a 3rd party assessment?

A building developer may be spending money on innovative design, quality construction processes, without actually receiving the final authentic certification that recognises these efforts. It is not a good use of time and funds to miss the certification and recognition that would normally result from these efforts.

Buildings that work better - The main engineers and project management firms state that certification leads to a more integrated design and healthier buildings. Without certification often elements drop off through the project delivery.

Without certification, green design and technologies are often value engineered out so that the final building does not bear a resemblance to the values committed to at the beginning. Green star verification ensures they stay. since they are needed to meet certification.

Certifying makes green simple to understand - Most people and even many engineers find it hard to follow the jargon or to know if a building is green and sustainable. The Green Star rating solves this. 4 star is good, 5 star is NZ Leading and 6 star is World Leading.

Financial benefits - Certification provides assurance to potential tenants and purchasers as to the quality and efficiency that they can expect from the building. Certified buildings have been shown to retain their value longer, have lower vacancy rates, and command higher rents.

A building or community certified to Green Star has proven it meets best practice sustainable design and build benchmarks. With transparent, robust, and independent assessment we work to combat the risk of 'greenwashing' and distinguish those who are truly doing the mahi.

Taking up a voluntary Green Star certification demonstrates leadership, innovation, environmental stewardship and social responsibility.

Green Star continues to evolve in collaboration with the industry to ensure it incorporates new thinking, best practice, and meets the needs of the market.

There's a lot to consider when it comes to creating healthy and sustainable spaces. Green Star takes a holistic approach, considering not just direct environmental impacts like materials or water use, but broader transport, indoor environment quality, and management implications of a project.

If you are looking for more resources to make a case, they can be found through this link:

<https://www.nzgbc.org.nz/KNOWLEDGEHUB/research-and-reports>

HOW MANY GREEN STAR TOOLS ARE THERE AVAILABLE?

The four Green Star tools listed below are currently available to accommodate the needs of different types of projects at different stages.

- Green Star Design and As Built – for new buildings
- Green Star Interiors – for new fitouts
- Green Star Communities – for new precinct scale developments
- Green Star Performance- for existing buildings

For details, please visit the [Introduction webpage](#) for Green Star.

WHEN SHOULD I REGISTER A PROJECT?

Registration should occur as soon as you are aware the project is likely to commit to certification. Early registration ensures that the NZGBC can assign a dedicated Technical Coordinator to assist you through the certification process. It also helps to set up a clear target for project teams to pursue and hence lays a firm basis for a sustainable build. Projects are reminded that they must receive certification within 3 years of registering their project (this can include Design certification).

HOW DO I REGISTER FOR A GREEN STAR RATING?

Registration formalises the arrangement with the NZGBC for an assessment and certification to occur. Once registered, the NZGBC can support your project through the certification process and answer questions about the application of Green Star on your project, through an assigned NZGBC Technical Coordinator.

Registration is complete when the following has been done:

- [Eligibility, Registration & Submission Form](#) completed with project details and confirmation of the Certification Agreement has been submitted to greenstarnz@nzgbc.org.nz
- the Certification Fee has been paid

WHY AND HOW DO I FIND A GREEN STAR ACCREDITED PROFESSIONAL (GSAP) TO HELP ME WITH MY RATING?

Green Star Accredited Professionals (or GSAPs) have the skills to work on projects targeting Green Star and make high-quality submissions as part of the rating. They help ensure the entire assessment process is a smooth, cost-effective and rewarding experience for all involved. A project team that includes a GSAP from the very beginning receives one bonus point towards their Green Star score.

All Green Star Accredited Professionals can be found here:

https://www.nzgbc.org.nz/Person?Action=List&DataFilter_id=69&DFF_115=Green+Star+Accredited+Professional

Note that there are three different GSAP qualifications as listed below. Please make sure you choose the right person that can assist the type of your projects.

- Green Star Design and As Built - for new buildings

- Green Star Communities - for new precinct scale developments
- Green Star Performance- for existing buildings

If you would like to become a GSAP, please go to the [training page](#) for Green Star found here https://www.nzgbc.org.nz/Category?Action=View&Category_id=237.

WHAT ARE THE GREEN STAR CERTIFICATION FEES?

The Green Star Certification fee is dependant on a few variables, such as what tool is to be used, the project's contract value, or whether your organisation is an NZGBC member. A full rundown of the certification fees can be found here:

https://www.nzgbc.org.nz/Category?Action=View&Category_id=181As you will see it is a good idea for a developer of a Green Star project to become an NZGBC member. More details related to membership including membership fees and how to sign up to become a member can be found here... <https://www.nzgbc.org.nz/about-us-and-membership/member-benefits>

WHAT DOES THE GREEN STAR CERTIFICATION FEE INCLUDE?

The following items are included:

- The standard certification services from NZGBC including contracting of independent, third-party assessors.
- Access to a technical coordinator for your project.
- The certification certificate.
- License to use the certification trademark once certified, to promote your project.

The following items are NOT included in the certification fee:

- Project specific in depth technical assistance. This is usually done by the GSAP.
- Additional items which are required for a project to receive Green Star certification including energy modelling, daylight modelling and water efficient appliances and hardware as examples.

HOW CAN I KNOW WHICH PROJECTS ARE CERTIFIED?

Certified Green Star projects can be found through this link:

https://www.nzgbc.org.nz/Category?Action=View&Category_id=352

There are many more projects which have been registered but have not been certified yet.

HOW CAN I KNOW WHICH PROJECTS ARE REGISTERED?

This is normally announced through our member newsletters once we receive the building owner's consent to publicise it.

CAN I PROMOTE MY PROJECT IF IT IS REGISTERED FOR GREEN STAR, BUT NOT YET CERTIFIED?

Before achieving certification you can promote your Green Star registered project in writing, but cannot use the Green Star logo or Green Star certification trade mark.

The Green Star certification trade mark can only be used once the project is certified. An explanation on how Green Star certified projects can be promoted can be found here:

https://www.nzgbc.org.nz/Category?Action=View&Category_id=258

Acceptable ways to market that your project has been registered is using the following wording "This project is targeting a Green Star - Design & As Built v1.0 rating." Please note projects cannot state which star rating they are attempting to achieve in marketing material. This can only be stated once the project has actually been certified and receives the specific Green Star rating.

If a project is not registered with NZGBC for a Green Star rating it cannot make any statements referring to Green Star.

Any unauthorized use of NZGBC's trademarks may result in legal action.

HOW DOES GREEN STAR ALIGN OR COMPETE WITH OTHER TYPES OF CERTIFICATIONS?

NZGBC supports all green building initiatives that are positively pushing the market to embrace such initiatives. The Green Star rating tool has been adapted to the New Zealand market with a focus on local issues. It is holistic and only applies to commercial buildings (including offices, industrial buildings, hotels, schools and hospitals etc.), fitouts and communities whereas others may focus on one specific issue or on residential projects. The ranking structure also allows Green Star to provide steppingstones to enable market transformation and balancing aspiration with achievability. All of the third party certified green building rating tools play a positive role in the market to serve different purposes, rather than being in competition with each other. With all of that said NZGBC strongly discourages organisations spending additional time and resources to create another green building rating tool. The industry is familiar with and understands Green Star here in New Zealand.

The following is some guidance relating to specific rating tools:

- [NABERSNZ](#): NABERSNZ is a rating tool that focuses specifically on energy use in commercial office buildings. It is a rating tool that NZGBC administers for EECA. NABERSNZ is complementary to Green Star Performance in which NABERSNZ certification can be (and should be) used as the means of demonstrating compliance for the energy credit. The NABERSNZ Star rating level will align with a certain number of points within this credit. The energy credit within Green Star Performance represents 23 of the 100 points of the tool, so the other 77 points cover other operational aspects of buildings, such as management of stormwater systems, materials procurement etc.

NABERSNZ certification is the first step to undertake when a commercial office building wishes to target Green Star Performance.

It should be noted that NABERSNZ is not a tool designed for use during the construction phase of a project as a substitution for Green Star certification. Green Star at the construction phase ensures that the building has been designed for operational energy performance, and covers off other impacts of the construction phase, such as construction waste, water efficiency and materials selection.

- [Homestar](#): Homestar is designed to be an independent rating tool for assessing the health, efficiency, and sustainability of homes across Aotearoa.
- [CarboNZero](#): For those building owners already far along the journey, NZGBC has developed a pilot net zero carbon certification for existing buildings. This standard developed in partnership with Toitū Envirocare will enable you to measure your current carbon emissions more formally, manage your carbon footprint, offset any unavoidable emissions and market your success once you receive your carbon zero building certificate.

Homefit -

HOW IS CARBON RECOGNISED IN GREEN STAR?

Buildings and their construction account for as much as 20% of New Zealand's Carbon emissions. We're on a mission to change that. BC STOPPED HERE.

For **new buildings**, Green Star Design & As-Built looks at carbon from both operational energy use and embodied carbon in materials.

- **Carbon Emissions from Operational Energy Use:** The 'Greenhouse Gas Emissions' credit in Design & As-Built uses carbon as the metric. A percentage reduction in carbon emissions (when compared to a code-compliant benchmark building), correlates to a certain number of points awarded, with the maximum number of points awarded for 100% reduction (i.e. Net Zero Carbon).
- **Embodied Carbon Emissions:** The Embodied Carbon Emissions credit recognises projects reduction of upfront carbon emissions and long-term storage of carbon in construction materials as a method of temporarily removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. The assessment and reduction of both carbon and other environmental impacts are rewarded throughout the whole life of the building.
- **Comparative Life Cycle Assessment:** The Life Cycle Assessment credit recognises projects that reduce the carbon impact of their project through materials selection, among other environmental impacts. The prescriptive pathway also recognises embodied carbon reductions through specification of concrete with lower cement content (the most carbon intensive component of concrete) and careful design of structural steel systems to reduce the overall mass of steel used.
- **Innovation Challenges:** encouraging projects to target carbon zero (embodied/ operational) and carbon positive targets.

For **existing buildings**, CarboNZero certification can be achieved through Green Star Performance criteria to recognise existing buildings that operate to a carbon zero/ neutral standard.

DO I HAVE TO MAKE MY GREEN STAR RATING PUBLIC?

Although highly encouraged, projects are not required to make their ratings public.

WHAT IS NZGBC DOING TO LOBBY GOVERNMENT TO CHANGE THE BUILDING CODE?

It is well recognised that the New Zealand Building Code needs some improvement. In March 2017 NZGBC published a [policy document](#) advocating that Government:

- work with the sector to establish a national roadmap for better homes and buildings.
- lead with their own portfolio of homes and buildings.
- facilitate better buildings and homes through the levers they have, thereby facilitating improved quality at a time when density is increasing.

NZGBC was then invited to Wellington to present to ministers, where three challenges were laid down for Government:

- Improve the building code
- Lead by example by to certify Government's own buildings to Green Star, Homestar and NABERSNZ
- Mandate the requirement for energy labelling of commercial office buildings with NABERSNZ

NZGBC is currently involved with MBIE in a process of making the case to improve the building code. Given that the process to improve the Building Code and then to enforce these improvements will take years to implement, NZGBC is strongly advocating for the use of Homestar, Green Star and NABERSNZ in the meantime, to ensure that buildings constructed and operating during these years of transition are constructed to a better standard.

Even with a change in the Building Code, the changes are likely to be incremental and may not address all the issues currently covered within NZGBC's rating tools. With any changes to the Building Code in future, NZGBC will review how these may impact the criteria set within the rating tools.

NZGBC continues to strongly lobby Government to lead by example and require certification of their own buildings, which will likely be a catalyst for improvements across the sector.

DO YOU HAVE TRAINING FOR GREEN STAR?

Yes. We have all sorts of training that fit for different purposes. Training information can be found through this [link](#). Alternatively, please feel free to contact our education team for more training options education@nzgbc.org.nz .

HOW DO I LEARN MORE ABOUT THE REQUIREMENTS FOR A PARTICULAR CREDIT?

Submission Guidelines contain detailed information on credit requirements, documentation requirements, calculations, referenced standards and other resources.

If you are an NZGBC member looking for more details about a specific credit, please use your member login for NZGBC website to download the free Submission Guidelines.

If you are not an NZGBC member, please contact greenstarnz@nzgbc.org.nz to purchase the Submission Guidelines at \$600+gst per copy (electronic copy only).

DO YOU HAVE GREEN STAR CASE STUDIES?

Yes, we do. They can be found through [this link](#).

New Buildings

WHICH TOOL SHOULD I USE TO RATE A NEW BUILDING?

The most commonly used Green Star rating, Design and As Built helps guide the sustainable design and construction of any new commercial build or major refurbishment from schools and offices, to industrial facilities, shopping centres, hospitals and public buildings.

IS GREEN STAR DESIGN & AS BUILT JUST FOR OFFICES? WHAT ABOUT MIXED-USE BUILDINGS?

Design and As Built helps guide the sustainable design and construction of any new commercial build or major refurbishment from schools and offices to industrial facilities, shopping centres, hospitals and public buildings.

Please contact the NZGBC if you are considering rating a mixed-use building so that we can guide you in the right direction depending on the specifics of your project.

IS MY PROJECT ELIGIBLE FOR A GREEN STAR RATING?

All buildings aiming to achieve a Green Star NZ -Design & As Built rating are subject to a number of [eligibility criteria](#).

CAN I CERTIFY PART OF A BUILDING?

Yes, sections or fitouts of a building can be rated using the Interiors tool. Please refer to the [Interiors section](#) for more information.

CAN I CERTIFY MULTIPLE BUILDINGS AT THE SAME TIME, FOR EXAMPLE SERVED BY SHARED SYSTEMS SUCH AS A DISTRICT HEATING SYSTEM?

Yes, there are two different approaches that can be used for certifying multiple buildings under differing circumstances. These are:

Multiple Building Single Rating - this refers to the process of certifying multiple buildings under one single certification. More information can be found on the GBCA website:

<https://new.gbca.org.au/rate/rating-system/multi-building-single-rating-mbsr/>

Volume Certification - a customised service to certify a group of projects that share similar features. Please refer to the following link for more information:

https://www.gbca.org.au/uploads/189/36285/Green%20Star%20Volume%20Certification%20-%20Process_150715%20Release%20v1.0.pdf?_ga=2.36062950.718671672.1621553271-1877801878.1613945919

CAN I GET A 1 STAR, 2 STAR OR 3 STAR RATING FOR NEW BUILDINGS?

A new building may achieve the points associated with a 1, 2 or 3 star rating but cannot be certified under this star rating. To be certified a building must achieve at least a 4 star rating or 'New Zealand Best Practice'.

HOW LONG DOES MY GREEN STAR DESIGN & AS BUILT CERTIFICATION LAST FOR?

The following timing requirements are applicable to all registered projects:

- As Built certified ratings must be achieved within 24 months of practical completion.
- As Built certified ratings do not expire.
- Design Review certified ratings must be achieved prior to practical completion.
- Design Review certified ratings will expire when either of the following occurs:
 - The project achieves an As Built certified rating, or;
 - The project reaches 24 months post practical completion.

I'M DOING SOMETHING SUSTAINABLE WITH MY BUILDING THAT'S NOT RECOGNISED IN THE SUBMISSION GUIDELINES, CAN I GET RECOGNISED FOR MY INITIATIVE?

Yes. They can be potentially recognised under the Innovation category of Green Star. NZGBC offers a preliminary review for each innovative idea. This process gives surety and guidance to help your project in seeking innovation points. Up to a maximum of ten innovation submissions can be targeted across all three innovation criteria.

WHY ARE THERE ASSESSMENTS AT BOTH THE DESIGN STAGE AND AFTER PRACTICAL COMPLETION?

Green Star - Design & As Built gives project teams the option to undertake a voluntary assessment of the project's design before practical completion. This can provide project teams with a valuable opportunity to seek feedback from the Certified Assessor(s) and to ensure the project is on track to achieve the Green Star rating. To maximise the value of this feedback it is strongly recommended that the assessment is conducted with enough time to influence the project's final design.

All projects must submit for a compulsory Certified rating as well, which needs to be achieved within 24 months post practical completion. Once achieved, this rating will allow project teams to market their building as being Green Star Certified and to access all the marketing benefits that come with this.

WHAT IS THE DEADLINE TO REGISTER A NEW BUILDING UNDER THE DESIGN & AS BUILT v1.0 TOOL?

Green Star – Design & As Built v1.1 was launched in April 2022. The NZGBC will allow for a grace period of approximately 6 months from the launch date of v1.1 for projects to register under the Design & As Built v1.0 tool. Design & As Built v1.0 will retire in October 2022, and this may be subject to change based on the Launch of v1.1.

WHEN WILL THE EMBODIED CARBON CALCULATOR AND GUIDANCE FOR V1.1 BE RELEASED?

The Embodied Carbon Calculator will be available on our technical resources webpage in September 2022. However, the release date may be subject to change.

Existing Buildings

IS MY PROJECT ELIGIBLE FOR A GREEN STAR PERFORMANCE RATING?

All buildings aiming to achieve a Green Star Performance rating are subject to a number of eligibility criteria. They can be found in the registration form through [this link](#).

DO YOU ONLY CERTIFY NEW BUILDINGS? WHICH TOOL SHOULD I USE TO RATE AN EXISTING BUILDING?

No. We now have Green Star Performance that can be targeted for existing buildings to show your building's leadership. There is also NABERSNZ which rates the energy performance of existing offices and the new carboNZero tool which certifies buildings that minimise carbon emissions through Green Star Performance or NABERSNZ and then offset all remaining emissions.

CAN I CERTIFY PART OF A BUILDING?

No, the whole building must be certified for existing building projects.

CAN I CERTIFY MULTIPLE BUILDINGS AT THE SAME TIME?

The Green Star Performance rating tool has been developed with the knowledge that many buildings are operated as part of a broader campus or portfolio. A customised volume certification has been developed for groups of buildings that exist in a portfolio or are managed centrally on a campus. Please refer to the following link for more information:

https://www.gbca.org.au/uploads/189/36285/Green%20Star%20Volume%20Certification%20-%20Process_150715%20Release%20v1.0.pdf?_ga=2.36062950.718671672.1621553271-1877801878.1613945919

IS GREEN STAR PERFORMANCE JUST FOR OFFICES? WHAT ABOUT MIXED-USE BUILDINGS?

Like the Design and As Built tool, Green Star – Performance is inclusive, by rating buildings beyond just commercial office buildings, including schools, shopping centres, public buildings, industrial buildings and hospitals.

CAN I GET A 1 STAR, 2 STAR OR 3 STAR RATING FOR EXISTING BUILDINGS?

Green Star Performance certifies buildings at all levels. This allows building owners and facilities management teams to set building specific benchmarks from which they can improve over time.

HOW LONG DOES MY GREEN STAR PERFORMANCE CERTIFICATION LAST FOR?

Three years. Check submission guidelines for Green Star Performance for more detail on timelines regarding measuring and certification.

WHAT IS PERFORMANCE PERIOD? CAN A PERFORMANCE PERIOD END AFTER THE DATE OF SUBMISSION?

The performance period is 12 consecutive months from which data will be drawn for the purposes of the project's Green Star - Performance rating tool assessment. A performance period may not end in the future, relative to the project submission date for assessment.

DOES THE NABERSNZ RATED PERIOD NEED TO ALIGN WITH THE PERFORMANCE PERIOD IN GREEN STAR - PERFORMANCE?

Yes, as closely as possible.

Projects that are pursuing any NABERSNZ pathway in Green Star - Performance must align the rated period of the NABERSNZ rating with the performance period of the Green Star - Performance rating as closely as possible, within three months either side of the performance period.

For example, if the performance period is 01/01/2018 - 31/12/2018 for Green Star - Performance, the 12 month NABERSNZ rated period must fall within 01/10/17 to 31/03/19.

The NABERSNZ Certificate and report must be provided as part of the submission.

CAN MULTIPLE POLICIES BE USED TO DEMONSTRATE A CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY POLICY?

Yes. It is acceptable for projects to demonstrate compliance with the Corporate Responsibility criterion through a combination of policies.

Each nominated policy must be publicly available and be adopted at an executive or board level.

In order to demonstrate that a set of nominated policies are collectively equivalent to a Corporate Responsibility Policy, project applicants need to provide extracts from the nominated documents to demonstrate how the seven core subjects, detailed in ISO 26000, are addressed. These core subjects are outlined on page 90 of the *Green Star - Communities v1.1* Submission Guidelines.

Interiors

IS MY PROJECT ELIGIBLE FOR A GREEN STAR INTERIORS RATING?

Green Star Interiors eligibility criteria can be found through [this link](#). All projects aiming to achieve a rating are subject to these eligibility criteria.

IS GREEN STAR INTERIORS JUST FOR OFFICES? WHAT ABOUT OTHER TYPES OF FITOUTS?

Like Green Star Design and As Built, Green Star Interiors is inclusive, by rating interiors fitouts beyond just commercial offices, including schools, stores, warehouses, and hospitals etc.

IS GREEN STAR INTERIORS JUST FOR NEW FITOUTS?

Yes. Only new fitouts can be certified under Green Star -Interiors.

CAN I CERTIFY MULTIPLE FITOUTS AT THE SAME TIME?

Yes, volume certification can be used for certifying multiple fitouts managed under one portfolio. It is a customised service to certify a group of projects that share similar features. Please refer to the following link for more information:

https://www.gbca.org.au/uploads/189/36285/Green%20Star%20Volume%20Certification%20-%20Process%20150715%20Release%20v1.0.pdf?_ga=2.36062950.718671672.1621553271-1877801878.1613945919

CAN I GET A 1 STAR, 2 STAR OR 3 STAR RATING FOR NEW FITOUTS?

A new fitout may achieve the points associated with a 1, 2 or 3 star rating but cannot be certified under this star rating. To be certified a fitout must achieve at least a 4 star rating or 'New Zealand Best Practice'.

HOW LONG DOES MY GREEN STAR INTERIORS CERTIFICATION LAST FOR?

The following timing requirements are applicable to all registered projects:

- As Built certified ratings must be achieved within 24 months of practical completion.
- As Built certified ratings will not expire until the end of fitouts' life spans.
- Design Review certified ratings must be achieved prior to practical completion.
- Design Review certified ratings will expire when either of the following occurs:
 - The project achieves an As Built certified rating, or;
 - The project reaches 24 months post practical completion.

I'M DOING SOMETHING SUSTAINABLE WITH MY FITOUTS THAT'S NOT RECOGNISED IN THE SUBMISSION GUIDELINES, CAN I GET RECOGNISED FOR MY INITIATIVE?

Yes. They can be potentially recognised under the Innovation category of Green Star. NZGBC offers a preliminary review for each innovative idea. This process gives surety and guidance to help your project in seeking innovation points. Up to a maximum of ten innovation submissions can be targeted across all three innovation criteria.

WHAT IS THE DEADLINE TO REGISTER A NEW FIT-OUT UNDER THE INTERIORS v1.0 TOOL?

Green Star - Interiors v1.1 will be launched in March 2022. The NZGBC will allow for a grace period of approximately 6 months from the launch date of v1.1 for projects to register under the Interiors v1.0 tool. Interiors v1.0 will retire in September 2022, and this may be subject to change based on the Launch of v1.1

Communities

WHAT IS GREEN STAR COMMUNITIES? CAN I GET A RATING UNDER GREEN STAR COMMUNITIES FOR A BUILDING?

No, you can not get a Green Star Communities rating for a building. Green Star - Communities is a rating tool that evaluates the sustainability attributes of the planning,

design, and construction of large scale development projects, at a precinct, neighbourhood, and/or community scale.

IS MY PROJECT ELIGIBLE FOR A GREEN STAR COMMUNITIES RATING?

There are four eligibility criteria for Green Star Communities, To be eligible for an assessment under the Green Star- Communities rating tool, the project must meet all of these criteria. More details about communities' eligibility criteria can be found through [this link](#).

CAN I CERTIFY MULTIPLE COMMUNITIES AT THE SAME TIME?

Yes, volume certification can be used for certifying multiple communities managed under one portfolio. It is a customised service to certify a group of projects that share similar features. Please refer to the following link for more information:

https://www.gbca.org.au/uploads/189/36285/Green%20Star%20Volume%20Certification%20-%20Process%20150715%20Release%20v1.0.pdf?_ga=2.36062950.718671672.1621553271-1877801878.1613945919

CAN I GET A 1 STAR, 2 STAR OR 3 STAR RATING FOR MY COMMUNITY PROJECT?

A community may achieve the points associated with a 1, 2 or 3 star rating but cannot be certified under this star rating. To be certified a community must achieve at least a 4 star rating or 'New Zealand Best Practice'.

CAN I GET A RATING FOR A PROJECT THAT WILL BE STAGED IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS?

Yes. Green Star Communities has been developed with an ability to rate staged projects through a combination of initial certification and recertification. More details with regards to the certification timing can be found through [this link](#).

I'M DOING SOMETHING SUSTAINABLE WITH MY BUILDING THAT'S NOT RECOGNISED IN THE SUBMISSION GUIDELINES, CAN I GET RECOGNISED FOR MY INITIATIVE?

Yes. They can be potentially recognised under the Innovation category of Green Star. NZGBC offers a preliminary review for each innovative idea. This process gives surety and guidance to help your project in seeking innovation points. Up to a maximum of ten innovation submissions can be targeted across all three innovation criteria.

CAN MULTIPLE POLICIES BE USED TO DEMONSTRATE A CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY POLICY?

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Each nominated policy must be publicly available and be adopted at an executive or board level.

In order to demonstrate that a set of nominated policies are collectively equivalent to a Corporate Responsibility Policy, project applicants need to provide extracts from the nominated documents to demonstrate how the seven core subjects, detailed in ISO 26000, are addressed. These core subjects are outlined on page 90 of the *Green Star - Communities v1.1* Submission Guidelines.

Products, Materials & Contractors

DOES NZGBC CERTIFY PRODUCTS & MATERIALS?

The New Zealand Green Building Council (NZGBC) does not test, review or certify products or materials. Instead, third party certification bodies are relied upon for testing and environmental assessments of products and materials which are being claimed within some Materials category credits. Different product and materials certification schemes are given different weightings within the Green Star rating tools, dependent upon how comprehensive the certification criteria is, how independent the certification is, whether it is product specific, and whether it requires that certain performance benchmarks are met.

DO I NEED TO PROVIDE EVIDENCE OF TESTING AND TESTING METHODS IF I HAVE A CERTIFIED PRODUCT OR MATERIAL?

No. Evidence of testing and testing methods are not required for the 'Indoor Pollutants' Product Certification pathway, if you have product certificates that are from NZGBC Recognised Product Certification Schemes and standards nominated on the NZGBC website: https://www.nzgbc.org.nz/Category?Action=View&Category_id=35

WHERE CAN I FIND OUT MORE ABOUT PRODUCTS & MATERIALS?

The NZGBC events and education team run a regular Products & Materials webinar series that focuses on a different topic each time.

Be sure to check them out:

https://www.nzgbc.org.nz/DataFilter?Action=View&DataFilter_id=265

DO WE HAVE TO BE A MEMBER WITH NZGBC IN ORDER TO GET OUR PRODUCTS AND MATERIALS RECOGNISED BY THE SUITE OF TOOLS MANAGED BY THE NZGBC?

No, you do not need to be an NZGBC member for getting the recognition of your products and materials. Green Star only focuses on products and material's sustainability attributes. Membership benefits can be found through this [link](#).

CAN I CLAIM A PRODUCT IN MORE THAN ONE MATERIALS CREDIT?

Yes, in most cases. Projects may use the same materials for the 'Life Cycle Assessment', 'Responsible Building Materials' and 'Sustainable Products' credits.

The products or materials which are being used to claim points for the 'Sustainable Products' credit must have an additional Transparency or Sustainability Initiative in addition to meeting the requirements of the other credits.

Please refer to Guidance under the 'Sustainable Products' credit in the Submission Guidelines of the relevant rating tool for further information. At present the Green Star - Design & As Built Submission Guidelines indicate that this option is available for 'Life

Cycle Impacts' criteria, and it is clarified that products used in the 'Life Cycle Assessment' criterion may also be targeted in 'Sustainable Products' provided the conditions outlined above are met.

HOW DO I DEMONSTRATE COMPLIANCE WITH AUDITING REQUIREMENTS OF THE BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES FOR PVCS?

For the auditing requirements of the Best Practice Guidelines for PVC, an appropriate method of compliance can be a simple statement that a limited assurance review according to ASAE 3100 Compliance Engagements has been completed.

IS " FSC MIX" CERTIFICATION RECOGNISED FOR RESPONSIBLE SOURCING OF TIMBER?

Yes, the full cost (100%) of the 'FSC Mix' certified product may be used to demonstrate compliance. The product must be certified by the Forest Stewardship Council.

I AM A MANUFACTURER, SUPPLIER, ENGINEER, ARCHITECT, OR CONSULTANT AND HAVE BEEN ASKED TO PROVIDE GREEN STAR DOCUMENTATION. WHAT DOCUMENTATION DO I NEED TO PROVIDE?

This information can be found in the Compliance Requirements sections within the relevant Submission Guidelines.

Alternatively, you may wish to contact the Green Star Accredited Professional involved in the project for specific requirements for the project.

Please be aware that there are a number of Green Star rating tools. Each Green Star rating tool requires specific documentation related to that tool. Please find out which rating tool the project is being assessed for, in order to determine what documentation is required.

I AM A CONTRACTOR. WHAT SHOULD I KNOW ABOUT GREEN STAR?

We have recorded the webinar of Green Star for Contractors. This can be accessed through this [link](#) . Should you want to learn more about Green Star, we have all sorts of

training that fit for different purposes. Training information can be found through this [link](#). Alternatively, please feel free to contact our education team for more training options education@nzgbc.org.nz.

Note that in-depth training for contractors will be coming soon.

Others

NZGBC welcomes feedback, even negative feedback! Industry engagement is critical to the evolution and improvement of the Green Star suite of tools. Where issues or challenges are identified within Green Star, we encourage people to get involved and help us improve! NZGBC relies on a network of expertise to make continuous improvements to our tools.

You are warmly encouraged to contact us for assistance at any time. We would prefer to know about an issue that is being faced and help to resolve it and be proactive about providing clear guidance, rather than have project teams toil away unaided and uncertain. Sometimes questions do need to be formalised as 'Technical Questions' which helps us to understand the question completely. It also enables us to provide a clear response or clarification that is, more often than not, useful to all project teams. If you are unsure about a question and whether it needs to be formalised, please do not hesitate to contact us at greenstarnz@nzgbc.org.nz.