

### AIM OF CREDIT

To encourage and recognise pioneering initiatives in sustainable design, processes or advocacy.

### CREDIT CRITERIA

Up to two points can be awarded for an innovation initiative where:

- The initiative is a technology or process that is considered innovative in Australia or in the world;
- or
- The project substantially contributes to the broader market transformation towards sustainable development in Australia, or in the world.

Points for this credit are allocated as follows:

- One point is awarded when either of the above is true for the Australian market; and
- Two points are awarded when either of the above is true for the global market.

No individual initiative can achieve more than two points in this credit. Qualifying initiatives may achieve additional points in other innovation credits, up to a maximum of ten points within the Innovation Category.

### COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS

Up to ten initiatives can be submitted for the available ten points in this category. Green Building Council Australia (GBCA) will not review more than ten initiatives per project. Projects will be assessed against the innovation guidance current at the time of their registration. Project teams can submit a credit interpretation request to receive advice on whether an initiative can be considered innovative or not under this credit.

#### Claiming innovation

A project team can show that an initiative is innovative in Australia or the world, by demonstrating that the initiative is not commonly used in the state where the project is located, or not commonly used within Australia's building industry.

Alternatively, it can be shown that the initiative is not only being used in the building as a one-off solution, but that the initiative has led to market transformation (for example, via regulatory changes), or to increased adoption of the solution.

Initiatives are more likely to be rewarded when they address a real issue or concern, or when the scale of their impact can be demonstrated if taken up by the building industry. Innovation is more likely to be awarded when the broader impact (beyond the simple installation of a specific technology) can be shown. Initiatives are unlikely to be rewarded for marginal improvements.

The innovation submission must be a concise report that clearly articulates the nature and magnitude of the benefit achieved by the proposed initiative(s). The report must distinctly justify (and whenever relevant quantify,) the environmental or advocacy benefits of the initiative. Submissions that are purely qualitative, or unsupported by documented data, will not be awarded innovation points.

The metric used to demonstrate environmental benefit should, wherever possible, be the same metric as the ones used in the Green Star credit. For example, if the building significantly reduced potable water consumption, the metric used would be in 'L/person/day'. The project can then demonstrate that the benefits from the initiative would be equivalent to the savings of at least one point in Wat-1 'Potable Water'.

The following list outlines examples of initiatives that are deemed to be innovative by the GBCA at the time of publication. Projects that demonstrate the inclusion of these initiatives will be considered for an innovation point

We are more likely to award projects that:

- Increase the knowledge and capacity of the building industry, for example, by adapting a 'soft landings' approach (for information on how to implement a 'Soft Landings' approach, please see <https://www.bsria.co.uk/services/design/soft-landings/free-guidance/>), or by increasing the knowledge of sustainable building practices in regional areas, by engaging multiple Green Star Accredited Professionals (GSAPs).
- Change the regulatory environment (at a government or utility level) relating to alternative energy systems or water reuse. Please note: an attempt to change the regulatory environment will not be awarded. Only a clear, well-documented actual change will be recognised.
- Employ strategies that achieve Green Star outcomes through passive systems – for example, in the use of passive water treatment systems (using vegetation to treat water passively) to achieve at least one point in the potable water calculator, or for projects that achieve more than 15 points through passive design or without energy generation in the Greenhouse Gas Emissions credit.
- Use technologies or strategies, which, if adapted broadly, would lead to a significant reduction of impacts in the built environment. If this is the case, it must be shown why and how the initiative would lead to this change, and how it will be promoted to encourage change.

The following list covers technologies or strategies which are not automatically considered innovative, and which, by themselves, are unlikely to achieve points.

- Underfloor ventilation or displacement ventilation, and the use of ceiling (or any other) fans or task air systems. To achieve points, the project team would need to show how a technology differs from a comparable system, and how it provides superior comfort or ventilation. Merely showing an equivalent result will not be considered innovative.
- The combination of elements in a facade (blinds, shading devices, or 'active facades') will not be automatically awarded innovation points for glare control or energy reduction. For active facades, the project team must demonstrate environmental benefits above and beyond normal daylight glare-reduction. Quantifying a reduction in thermal gains in a way that has already been recognised in Ene-1 'Greenhouse Gas Emissions' is also insufficient.
- Equipment, systems and fixtures that feature slight improvements in efficiency or efficacies, are not considered automatically innovative. For example:
  - LED lights, solid state light sources, or lighting controls are unlikely to achieve innovation points if they simply reduce energy use. The additional benefits of those efficiencies are likely already considered in the credits addressing greenhouse gas emissions.

- Marginally more efficient chillers, air handling units or heat recovery systems will not automatically be awarded innovation points. The additional benefits of those efficiencies are likely already considered in the credits addressing greenhouse gas emissions.
- Marginally more efficient taps, showers, or toilets will not automatically be awarded innovation points. The additional benefits of those efficiencies are likely already considered in the credits addressing potable water use in fixtures.
- Wind turbines, solar panels, cogeneration, tri-generation, regenerative lift braking, low-energy lifts, building management and control systems, river or lake heat rejection, biodiesel procurement, solar hot water, gas-boosted hot water, instant hot water systems, thermal storage, fuel cells, night purging, thermal labyrinths, active facades, removal of building features (such as cooling towers), mixed use ventilation or natural ventilation, rainwater tanks, active greywater systems, active blackwater tanks, sewer mining systems, aquifer use, and the use of reticulated recycled water. In these instances, the project team must justify why these systems are innovative compared to those used elsewhere and how the benefits of these systems are not already rewarded in the existing Green Star credits. The project team must also demonstrate that their impact actively leads to market transformation. Simply installing them as part of a project is not sufficient.
- Skylights, light tubes or atriums designed to bring daylight into a space are not generally considered innovative. Instead, these methods are more likely to be awarded in the daylight credit.
- Buses or other methods of mass transport that circulate between a project and its closest public transport option are not considered an innovative strategy. This can, however, be considered an appropriate method for achieving points in the commuting mass transport credit.
- White noise-generating equipment is not considered innovative.
- The use of any operational policy to address VOC or formaldehyde levels in a space is not considered innovative.
- Greenhouse gas emissions offsets of any kind, including carbon credits, are not considered innovative.
- Operational measures to reduce fire system water consumption is not considered innovative.

#### Innovation in *Green Star - Design* and *Green Star - As Built* Ratings

A number of projects claim an innovation at the time of a *Green Star - Design* submission, and expect to achieve it during a *Green Star - As Built* submission. In general, an innovation point given during the *Green Star - Design* submission will be awarded at the *Green Star - As Built* assessment. However, this is not always the case, as the project must demonstrate that the innovation at the *As Built* stage has been installed, and is working appropriately.

#### DOCUMENTATION - DESIGN AND AS BUILT RATING

Short report

Evidence of innovation viability

**Short report** prepared by a suitable professional that describes how the Credit Criteria have been met

by:

- Including a detailed description of each proposed innovation initiative;
- Articulating the nature and magnitude of the environmental benefit achieved by the proposed initiative(s);and
- Referencing evidence and calculations, wherever appropriate, that supports all claims.

**Evidence of innovation viability:**

- Including any evidence necessary to demonstrate that the initiative is innovative as defined in this credit;
- Evidence may be in the form of as-built drawings, extract(s) from the Commissioning Report that demonstrate that the initiative operates as intended by the design, extracts from a peer-reviewed publication or other research acknowledgement;  
and
- Where the initiative has qualified for an AusIndustry R&D Tax Concession, evidence of this should be provided as confirmation.