

A photograph of a server room with a yellow callout box. The server racks are filled with equipment, and numerous cables are visible, some bundled together. The scene is lit with blue and red lights, creating a high-tech atmosphere. The callout box is a bright yellow trapezoid on the left side of the image, containing the text 'Research and development tax credits' in a black, sans-serif font.

Research and development tax credits

The EY logo, consisting of the letters 'EY' in a bold, white, sans-serif font. A yellow triangle is positioned above the 'Y'.

Building a better
working world

Overview

If a company is engaged in R&D activities, then these qualifying activities can be assessed for the purposes of the credit.

From our experience, many companies have failed to claim the credit, or missed the opportunity to claim the credit due to:

- ▶ Misplaced belief that the credit only applies to 'white coat' activities
- ▶ Over reliance on subcontractors
- ▶ Uncertainty of whether activities could qualify
- ▶ Lack of complete records
- ▶ Fear of Irish Revenue scrutiny

To be performing R&D as defined by the legislation (section 766 of the Taxes Consolidation Act 1997) means satisfying certain conditions.

Qualifying activities must be:

- ▶ Systematic, investigative or experimental in nature
- ▶ Conducted in a Revenue approved field of science or technology
- ▶ Involve basic research, applied research and/or experimental development
- ▶ Seek to achieve scientific or technological advancement
- ▶ Involve the resolution of scientific or technological uncertainty

What is R&D?

Technology:

- ☒ Design, construction, and testing of systems, devices or processes, such as new hardware or software components, digital interface and control systems.
- ☒ Integration of legacy and new systems, for example following corporate mergers or acquisitions, or adoption of an enterprise architecture.
- ☒ Data intensive activities, including, collection, storage and analysis, distribution and retrieval; defining or working with new or emerging data models and metadata standards, integration with third-party content.
- ☒ Modification to existing processes or systems to improve throughput or increase efficiencies; establishing capacity, performance, scalability, availability, security.
- ☒ Advances in network management and operational tools, development of wired and wireless technologies, designing mobile and interactive services, evolution of next generation network switching and control systems.
- ☒ Development of virtualisation techniques to deliver scalable, secure and reliable business applications over the internet.
- ☒ Implementation of grid computing concepts that maximise data centre utilisation, enabling demanding service level agreements to be met.
- ☒ Improvements to network infrastructure and application architectures to cope with peak-load activity.
- ☒ Delivering high-bandwidth internet services that are both device and location independent.

Manufacturing:

- ☒ Design, construction, testing and trialing of prototypes and/or pilot demonstration plants/processes resulting in higher production yields.
- ☒ Scaling investigative work from one off trials/pilot plants to full scale experimental trials on production processes.
- ☒ The design and development of new fabrication, construction, processing or material handling techniques to improve reliability, repeatability, increase production throughput, improve performance, improve strength or reduce weight, i.e., lean manufacturing including Six Sigma, Kaizen, etc.
- ☒ The design development and implementation of unique software and hardware to improve efficiency and reduce waste/reworks, i.e., the integration of automated or digital technology to remove manual tasks including product testing.
- ☒ The design and development of new or improved manufacturing techniques/processes in response to changes in health, safety and environmental legislation and increasingly challenging constraints.
- ☒ Investigative work identifying causes of product failure and development of solutions and improvements to correct unforeseen post release failures, i.e., root cause analysis.

Energy and natural resources:

- ☒ The investigation and development of novel technologies to improve energy production, distribution, storage and utilisation.
- ☒ The investigation, development and the introduction of novel materials/ designs to existing systems to significantly improve output, useful life or reduced costs.
- ☒ The novel design and development of networks and systems to monitor and communicate energy usage.
- ☒ Modification to existing processes or systems to improve throughput or increase efficiencies; establishing capacity, performance, scalability, availability, security.
- ☒ The design and development of new fabrication, construction and material handling techniques to improve performance and improve strength in the installation of energy generating equipment.
- ☒ Development of new or improved techniques or technologies in response to changes in health, safety and environmental legislation or regulatory requirements.
- ☒ The development of pilot and industrial scale Bio-fuel production facilities using a variety of feed materials.
- ☒ Investigative work and technical problem solving performed by engineers or technicians, that is, over and above routine troubleshooting.

Pharmaceutical and life science:

- ☒ Design, construction, testing and trialling of new prototypes and pilot plants.
- ☒ Development of new technologies to support improvements to existing processes that are designed to increase efficiencies or decrease costs.

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It’s not just about
people in white coats
working in labs; eligible
R&D can include
producing new, or
improving existing,
materials, products,
devices, processes,
systems or services.”

(Pharmaceutical and life science continued)

- ☒ Replacement of new or alternative materials, re-agents or excipients into existing processes as a result of change in supplier.
- ☒ Scaling up manufacturing and packaging trials or prototypes to full scale production batches.
- ☒ Development of new or improved analytical tools with better sensitivity/range/accuracy.
- ☒ Development of new or improved techniques or technologies in response to changes in health, safety and environmental legislation.
- ☒ Overall project planning activities of new launch products, from R&D Centre to first commercial batches.
- ☒ Development of new or improved processes for existing post-marketed products (some generic drug development).
- ☒ Projects that include long-term safety and Phase IV clinical studies that continue after the new drug is released to market may also be eligible.

Food and drink:

- ☒ Creating and developing new recipes/formulations to address emerging consumer preferences (such as reduced sodium, natural ingredients, sugar substitutes).
- ☒ Improving manufacturing technologies, processes, and procedures to increase yield, reduce waste and by products, improve safety, or comply with regulatory requirements or environmental legislation.
- ☒ Developing new packaging and packaging systems or redesigning existing packaging to reduce waste or improve shelf-life.
- ☒ The development and implementation of unique systems used in the tracking of food products/ingredients throughout the supply chain.

- ☒ Developing fully-cooked equivalents to par-cooked foods while still maintaining acceptable flavour profiles, product presentation and shelf-life.
- ☒ Waste or wastewater treatment technology development, or projects to decrease water consumption.
- ☒ Manufacturing experimental batches and pilot runs of new recipes and formulations for testing.

Financial services:

- ☒ Integration of legacy and new systems; integration of new platforms and products, including COTS and in-house developed software.
- ☒ Design of high concurrency architectures to deal with peak time activity; use of technology to maintain high service levels at maximum load.
- ☒ Improving scalability, performance and interoperability of systems, including COTS packages adapted to meet unique requirements.
- ☒ Building data warehouse and decision support systems; data intensive activities, including collection, storage and analysis, distribution and retrieval.
- ☒ Implementation of new or emerging financial products into new or existing applications and systems.
- ☒ Compliance with new regulatory controls.
- ☒ Financial modelling and simulation; development of algorithms, including the technical design and implementation of systems and processes to support efficient 'number crunching'.
- ☒ Modification to existing processes or systems to improve throughput or increase efficiencies, establishing capacity and improving performance, building scalability.

How can EY assist you making a claim?

Our R&D team has a proven track record of offering a uniquely integrated service to clients by combining the skills of engineers, scientists and qualified tax advisors.

- ▶ We are a dedicated and highly specialised team focusing on assisting clients maximise their R&D tax claims.
- ▶ A multi-disciplinary team made up of engineers, scientists, industry specialists and tax professionals.
- ▶ We secured the first Irish Revenue pre-approval for a client in the software sector, which encompassed a technical review by an industry expert engaged by Irish Revenue.
- ▶ Our tailored approach can include delivering feasibility studies and R&D workshops, providing full Revenue audit support, calculating R&D expenditure and drafting detailed technical reports, among other services.

Offer free feasibility study	Provide full Revenue audit support	Conduct mock R&D Revenue Audits	Calculate R&D expenditure
Develop optimal claims methodology	Conduct technical interviews	Prepare technical project reports	Deliver in-house training sessions

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Our team of engineers, scientists and industry experts can speak your language and draft your technical reports, allowing your R&D teams to focus on what they do best.



Ian Collins

Partner and Head of Innovation Incentives

How can EY assist you making a claim?

Our credentials

We have had a 100% success rate in Irish Revenue technical audits for clients who filed R&D tax credit claims.

We have a local specialised team that form part of a global network of industry specialists dedicated to R&D claims.

We liaise regularly with the Irish Revenue, Department of Finance, and Department of Jobs, Enterprise & Innovation on R&D tax credit matters including:

- ▶ Audit approach
- ▶ Application of Revenue guidelines

We have lobbied, and continue to lobby, for changes in law to improve the R&D tax credit regime such as:

- ▶ Increasing the rate for sub-contracting
- ▶ Reducing the administrative burden for small and medium sized enterprises making a R&D tax credit claim
- ▶ Seeking cash refunds for companies incurring tax losses

Qualifying spend: €37m+
R&D Tax Credit: €9.25m+

Client:
International leader in computers and mobile technology.

Project:
Assist with writing and documenting R&D projects
FY16 to date

Qualifying spend: €23.1m
R&D Tax Credit: €5.78m

Client:
Multinational medical devices and healthcare company.

Project:
Assist with writing and documenting R&D projects
FY16 to date

Qualifying spend: €168m
R&D Tax Credit: €42m

Client:
International leader in the technology and consulting industry.

Project:
Assist with writing and documenting R&D projects
FY15 to date

Qualifying spend: €59m
R&D Tax Credit: €14.75m

Client:
World leader in global financial services management.

Project:
Assist with writing and documenting R&D projects
FY08-20 to date

Find out more



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EY | Building a better working world

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Working across assurance, consulting, law, strategy, tax and transactions, EY teams ask better questions to find new answers for the complex issues facing our world today.

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