



Standard Setting Procedures

Version 2.1
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The Standard Setting Procedures 2.1 replaces Textile Exchange Standard Setting and Revision Procedures (v1, 2014) and shall be followed by all Standards Development and Revisions that begin following the effective date (May 16, 2019).

English is the official language of the Standard Setting Procedures 2.1. In any case of inconsistency between versions, reference shall be made to the English version.

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Document Revision

These Procedures shall undergo a scheduled review at least every four years. This is subject to earlier revision and update if deemed necessary, such as in the case of major standard revisions by Textile Exchange. Any feedback or suggestions to this document are invited and welcome. You may email your comments to Integrity@TextileExchange.org for consideration in the next review. The next scheduled review will begin in 2023.

Any complaints about the process for standard development shall be addressed through the *Textile Exchange Standards Complaints Procedures* (TextileExchange.org/Integrity).

Revision History

Standard Setting Procedures 2.1, released May 2019.

Standard Setting Principles and Procedures, released December 14, 2016.

Standard Setting and Revision Procedures, released April 2014.

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Introduction

About the Standard Setting Procedures

The Textile Exchange *Standard Setting Procedures* is intended to guide the process of developing or revising Textile Exchange standards. The procedures are applicable for the development and revision of Textile Exchange standard(s). This document supersedes all previous *Standard Setting Procedures* versions and amendments. The objectives of these Procedures are:

- to ensure the standard development process is inclusive and transparent to affected stakeholders;
- to provide a robust review process that ensures the standards effectively meet their respective goals; and
- to ensure that the development and revision of Textile Exchange standards complies with international best practices for standard setting (e.g. *ISEAL Code of Good Practice for Setting Social and Environmental Standards*).

Standard setting does not cover the assurance system (e.g. certification, auditing) or monitoring and evaluation of the standard scheme. These areas are covered by other procedures that may be found at TextileExchange.org/Integrity.

Defined terms have been italicized and definitions may be found in Appendix A.

About Textile Exchange

Textile Exchange owns the *Content Claim Standard (CCS)*, the *Recycled Claim Standard (RCS)*, the *Global Recycled Standard (GRS)*, the *Organic Content Standard (OCS)*, the *Responsible Down Standard (RDS)*, and the *Responsible Wool Standard (RWS)*. These standards are designed to ensure chain of custody for preferred materials, and to provide labeling tools for final product claims.

Textile Exchange is a global non-profit that works closely with our members to drive industry transformation in preferred fibers, integrity and standards and responsible supply networks. We identify and share best practices regarding farming, materials, processing, traceability and product end-of-life in order to reduce the textile industry's impact on the world's water, soil and air, and the human population.

For any other comments or questions, please contact Integrity@TextileExchange.org.

Section A – Roles and Responsibilities

A1. Textile Exchange

- A1.1** Textile Exchange shall play the role of *secretariat* for all standard development and revisions or designate another party to do so.
- A1.2** The secretariat is responsible for ensuring that all standards are developed in accordance with this document.
- A1.3** During the course of the standard development process, the *public summary* shall be made available by the secretariat on Textile Exchange’s website. This shall include, but is not limited to:
 - 1. The overview of the work being done on the standard (notes, decisions, drafts, etc.)
 - 2. Relevant details about the standard
 - 3. The development process
 - 4. Contact information for Textile Exchange

A2. International Working Group (IWG)

- A2.1** The development of Textile Exchange standards shall be managed and released by the designated *international working group* (IWG). Following the release of the final standard, the IWG will be maintained until the time of the next revision and a new IWG is formed.
- A2.2** Participation in the IWG is on a voluntary basis.
- A2.3** The IWG is composed of the secretariat, *voting members*, and the *advisory group*.
- A2.4** IWG membership shall be open to all interested parties, and shall not be limited in number. Voting shall be representative across the following sectors:
 - 1. Brands/Retailers
 - 2. Supply Chain
 - 3. Material Producers (this category may not apply for all standards; this will be indicated in the *IWG charter*)
 - 4. Civil Society
 - 5. Professional Services (e.g. Certification Bodies, standard setting organizations, consultants not acting on behalf of a client, etc.)

A3. Decision Making

- A3.1** The standard-setting process shall strive for *consensus* among all voting members of the IWG. Consensus shall be considered the absence of expressions of dissent.
- A3.2** In the event that consensus is not met:
1. The member(s) who disagree from the majority shall present alternative solutions for consideration.
 2. If a compromise cannot be reached within the group, input from the wider stakeholder group shall be invited; after consideration of this feedback, the voting members shall attempt to form a consensus, or move to a weighted vote, giving each sector an equal allocation of votes. A decision is considered to pass with a majority vote.
- A3.3** In all issues of consensus or voting, a quorum is required to be met, with at least 75% representation of all voting members within each sector.
- A3.4** As the entity ultimately responsible for the standards, Textile Exchange reserves the right to make the final decision with regards to standard development and revision, and will disclose any decisions that differ from the will of the IWG.

Section B – Development/Revision Process

B1. Initiating Development/Revision

- B1.1** Proposals to develop or review a new standard may be submitted by any *interested party* to Textile Exchange.
- B1.2** The final decision to develop a new standard shall be made by Textile Exchange.
- B1.3** In some cases, it may be necessary to conduct an urgent revision of a standard. The cases that trigger a *revision* include the following:
1. Standard criteria result in critical unintended consequences that compromise the goals or desired outcomes of the standard.
 2. Standard criteria that results in unintended or previously unknown burden on the users of the standard.
 3. The standard contains a mistake, incorrect guidance, or language that was unintended by the *IWG*. (These and other non-substantive changes do not require consulting the *IWG*.)
- B1.4** When these types of revisions are necessary, the *IWG* shall be reconvened and consulted for a final decision. This process shall not be considered a full revision of the standard, and therefore shall not affect the timing of the previously scheduled revision.
- B1.5** If the resulting decision is in conflict with the current *terms of reference*, then a 60-day *public draft consultation* shall take place. See Section B4.
- B1.6** In some cases, a small-scale revision may be used to add a regional or fiber-specific scope or application of the standard. The following criteria apply.
1. The full *IWG* shall approve an additional scope, and the writing of the new section may be run as a task force revision.
 2. Stakeholder mapping shall be conducted and may focus on interested parties affected by the new section.
 3. Public stakeholder draft consultation shall be followed.
- B1.7** Revisions shall begin with a *public stakeholder standard consultation*, see Definitions, Appendix A. This shall be at least a 30-day period. Previously received feedback should be entered into the *standard consultation log*.
1. This log shall include the sector and geography represented by the submission.
 2. Individuals and organizations that submit comments to the public standard consultation shall be considered a stakeholder and notified of changes or future revisions.

- B1.8** A review process shall consider the following sources of information in order to evaluate a standard's continued relevance, effectiveness, and whether external circumstances have changed to the point where change is required:
1. All comments from the public stakeholder standard consultation
 2. Information on the impact of the standard, as identified through Textile Exchange's monitoring and evaluation process
 3. New technology developments
 4. Changes in industry best practices
 5. New or changed legislation
- B1.9** The secretariat shall draft the initial terms of reference document to guide the process, subject to approval by the IWG. See the definition of terms of reference.
- B1.10** The secretariat may determine whether proposed changes do not align with the approved terms of reference and remove them from consideration. This shall be recorded in the *feedback summary*.

B2. Stakeholder Engagement

- B2.1** The secretariat shall conduct *stakeholder mapping* to develop an initial list of potential stakeholders and interested parties for outreach.
1. Clear stakeholder participation goals shall be set and communicated for each applicable stakeholder sector (Brand and Retailer, Supply Chain, Material Producers, Civil Society, and Professional Services). These participation goals shall ensure representation from affected geographic regions and market sectors of the given standard.
 2. Under-represented stakeholders, disadvantaged stakeholders shall be identified in the stakeholder mapping and targets shall be set to seek their participation through coordination with local organizations, supply chain visits, and/or pilot projects.
 - a. The secretariat shall identify parties who may be directly affected by the standard and those that are not adequately represented and proactively seek their contributions.
 - b. Key stakeholders and interested parties, including organizations that have developed related standards, shall be contacted about the standard and the ways that they can participate.
 3. For revisions, the list of previous stakeholders and interested parties may be used and updated to ensure broad stakeholder engagement.
- B2.2** The secretariat shall invite participation in the IWG, and keep record of all parties that indicate interest in the development or revision process. IWG members may self-select their participation (i.e. voting member, advisory group) in the IWG during the open invitation period.

- B2.3** The secretariat shall draft a *charter* that outlines the roles and responsibilities involved in participation with the standard development or revision. Voting members are required to sign the charter.
- B2.4** The secretariat shall publicize its intention to develop/revise the standard and invite expressions of interest in participation. See the definition of public summary.
- B2.5** Throughout the development of the standard:
1. Participation in standards consultation is open to all interested parties and that participation reflects a balance of among interested parties in the subject matter and in the geographic scope to which the standard applies.
 2. Constraints on disadvantaged groups to participate effectively in standards development and revision shall be addressed in the standards development process.
 3. Interested parties shall be provided with meaningful opportunities to contribute to the development or revision of a standard, through direct comments or during the stakeholder review process.
 4. Records of standard development or revision activities shall be regularly posted on the corresponding website while the standard is still in development, with an open invitation to send comments.

For revisions, the existing stakeholder mapping shall be reviewed, amended as needed, and approved by the IWG.

B3. Writing (or Revising) the Standard

- B3.1** The IWG shall be responsible for reviewing and revising the terms of reference, with final approval given through consensus.
- B3.2** The secretariat shall be responsible for writing the drafts of the standard.
- B3.3** When preparing the final draft of the standard, the IWG shall follow the decision-making process, Section A3.

Textile Exchange standards shall comply with the following:

- B3.4** The criteria within the standard shall be linked to desired outcomes that align with the objectives of the standard, as defined in the terms of reference.
- B3.5** The standard shall not seek to restrict trade in anyway, or give preference to one geographic region over another.
- B3.6** The standard shall include guidance for local applicability where necessary and helpful (e.g. varying farming methods around the world).

- B3.7** In setting the requirements for the standard, consideration shall be given to regulatory requirements, market needs, as well as scientific and technological developments.
- B3.8** Each requirement shall be clear, objective and verifiable, and clearly contribute to the achievement of the standard's objectives.
- B3.9** Standards shall be structured in consideration of monitoring and evaluation.
- B3.10** A standard shall be expressed in terms of a combination of process, management and performance criteria. To this end, the standard shall be outcome-based as much as possible, so as to avoid being prescriptive.
- B3.11** The standard shall not deliberately favor a particular technology or patented item.
- B3.12** Each standard shall have a User Manual to give further guidance for organizations seeking certification and Certification Procedures for certification bodies. These may be updated by Textile Exchange as often as deemed necessary without going through the revision process.
- B3.13** The standard shall attribute or cite all original intellectual sources of content.
- B3.14** The standard shall include the anticipated timing of the next revision, and how to submit feedback or complaints.

B4. Public Draft Consultation

- B4.1** The voting members shall approve the draft standard or the draft revised standard before releasing it for public draft consultation.
- B4.2** Upon completion of the standard draft (or draft of changes in the case of a revision), all standards shall undergo public draft consultation, which shall involve at least two rounds of stakeholder feedback (one public draft consultation is sufficient in the case of a revision). The launch of a public draft consultation shall be publicly announced.
- B4.3** The first round of public draft consultation shall include:
 - 1. A period of at least 60 days for submission of feedback.
 - 2. Standard draft made available for public view.
 - 3. Publicized process for submitting feedback.
 - 4. Invitations sent to all stakeholders identified during the stakeholder mapping.

For development of new standards, a second round of public draft consultation shall be carried out for a period of at least 30 days.

For revisions, a second round of public draft consultation shall be carried out if substantive, unresolved issues persist after the first round, and shall include the same steps as the first round, for a period of at least 30 days.

- B4.4** The secretariat shall collect and record all feedback submitted during the public draft consultation, with the geography and sector of the contributor noted.

Individuals and organizations that submit comments to the public draft consultation shall be considered a stakeholder and notified of changes or future revisions.

- B4.5** The secretariat shall consider all comments and input received during the public draft consultation under consideration. All feedback shall be reviewed by the IWG. Actions taken, or not, on each point of feedback shall be recorded by The secretariat.

1. The feedback from the Public Draft Consultation(s) is reviewed by the IWG before final approval of the standard, in accordance with A3. If after two rounds of Public Draft Consultation, there remains unresolved issues or insufficient feedback, the Secretariat shall use additional measures to directly engage with Stakeholders on those issues.

- B4.6** The final version of the standard shall be approved by the IWG voting members prior to release, following the decision-making guidelines outlined in Section A3.

- B4.7** The secretariat shall prepare a written synopsis (feedback summary) of how each point of feedback has been addressed. For revisions, the feedback summary shall include the comments received during the initial public standard consultation.

- B4.8** The feedback summary shall be made publicly available, and all parties that contributed comments shall be sent a copy.

- B4.9** Textile Exchange shall determine the ownership and governance of the final standard.

B5. Publishing the Standard

- B5.1** All current draft and final standards shall be publicly available for free download on the corresponding website.

The following documents shall be published upon release of a final standard:

1. Final Standard
2. Final Standard with implementation guidance (User Manual)

3. Feedback summary of all feedback collected, organized by topic, with explanations of how it was addressed.
4. Updated *Logo Use and Claims Guide*, if needed
5. Statement of all major changes to the standard and the effective date.

B5.2 The following shall be noted in the standard:

1. The official language of the standard shall be English and in the case of inconsistency between translated versions, the English version shall prevail.
2. Reference to the release date, effective date and version number (all new standards to be named version 1.0).
3. A disclaimer stating that Textile Exchange shall not be held liable for use of the standard.
4. A copyright statement.

B5.3 Hard copies and translations shall be provided upon request, dependent on resources.

B5.4 Textile Exchange shall keep details of all standards development and revision activities and records on file for a minimum of five years, and available to stakeholders upon request, including the following:

1. *Standard Setting Procedures*
2. IWG members
3. Draft versions of the standards
4. Public draft consultation feedback summaries

B5.5 Records of development activities on completed standards shall be made available upon request. These shall include, but are not limited to:

1. Terms of reference (see Definitions)
2. Public summary
3. Stakeholder mapping
4. Feedback summary

B5.6 Following a revision of an existing standard, the following shall also be made available:

1. Transition details for existing sites to the new version.
2. Summary of all substantive changes.
3. Detailed list of all changes, available upon request.

B5.7 Textile Exchange standards shall be reviewed at intervals of no more than five years. The date of the subsequent scheduled review shall be listed within the standard.

B5.8 There shall be a one-year transition period for certified organizations to transition to the revised version, starting from the release date of the revised standard. This date shall be known as that standard version's *compliance date*.

B5.9 On the compliance date:

1. Certification bodies shall begin auditing sites in accordance with the new standards version.
2. Certification body staff shall have been trained and shall be performing all certification activities in accordance with the new version, including unannounced audits. They may begin earlier than this date, but any non-conformities identified – and solely occurring because of changes in the new version – shall be deferred until the compliance date.

Appendix A – Definitions

Advisory Group

Non-voting members of the *IWG*, available for comment and direction into specific elements of the standard.

Consensus

General agreement, characterized by the absence of sustained opposition to substantial issues by any important part of the concerned interests.

Interested party

Any person or group concerned with or who may be directly affected by a standard.

IWG (International Working Group)

The group of stakeholders actively engaged in the development or revision of a standard. The *IWG* includes both *voting members* and *advisory group* members (non-voting).

IWG Charter

This document shall include a statement of purpose for the Standard, objectives, roles and responsibilities of the *IWG*, and agreement to comply with Chatham House Rules and anti-trust guidelines. All *voting members* shall sign the *IWG* charter.

Public Summary

A notice on a public-facing website that includes the following information:

- The overview of the work being done on the standard (notes, decisions, drafts, etc.);
- Relevant details about the standard;
- How to contribute or participate in the process;
- Draft terms of reference of the standard;
- Steps in the standard-setting process, including timelines and clearly identified opportunities for contributing;
- Decision-making procedures, including how decisions are made and who makes them. This shall be a reference to this document;
- Regular updates on the status of the standard development or revision activities; and
- Relevant Textile Exchange contact information

Terms of Reference

A document which includes a summary of key information to guide the process of standard development or revision:

- Justification of the need for the standard
- Existing standards addressing similar materials or issues
- Proposed scope, including geographic regions (This will always be global for Textile Exchange. Geographic regions of significance may be highlighted here.)
- Clear objectives for the standard
- An assessment of risks in implementing the standard, and how to mitigate for these:
- Identification of factors that could have a negative impact on the ability of the standard to achieve its objectives
- Unintended consequences that could arise from its implementation

- Possible corrective actions that could be taken to address these potential risks

Voting Members

Voting members of the *IWG*, responsible for setting the *terms of reference* for the standard, voting on key issues, and ensuring the standard is developed accordingly. Voting members shall be required to sign a *charter*.

Secretariat

The administrative role of the *IWG*, includes record keeping, stakeholder management, and other functions.

Public Stakeholder Standard Consultation

The consultation held prior to a revision of an existing standard, open to any *interested parties*; announced using a press release, etc. During the public stakeholder standard consultation, feedback is given on the current version of the standard.

Public Stakeholder Draft Consultation

The consultation held at the end of the development or revision process, open to any *interested parties*; announced using a press release, etc. During the public stakeholder draft consultation, feedback is given on the draft version of the standard. May be referred to as the *draft consultation*.