



Textile  
Exchange

# Textile Exchange Standards Standard Setting Procedures 4.0

ASR-102-V4.0-2024.07.25

©2024 Textile Exchange. This publication is protected by copyright. All rights are reserved. Written permission by Textile Exchange is required for reproduction in entirety or portion.

The *Standard Setting Procedures V4.0* replaces *Standard Setting Procedures V3.0* and is effective as of July 25, 2024. The mandatory implementation date for *Standard Setting Procedures V4.0* is July 25, 2024. **All standards development and revisions that begin after July 25, 2024 shall be conducted using *Standard Setting Procedures V4.0*.**

Cover photo credit Sofia Terçarolli

English is the official language of the *Standard Setting Procedures V4.0*. In any case of inconsistency between versions, reference shall be made to the English version.

## Disclaimer

Although reasonable care was taken in the preparation of this document, Textile Exchange and any other party involved in the creation of the document HEREBY STATE that the document is provided without warranty, either expressed or implied, of accuracy or fitness for purpose, AND HEREBY DISCLAIM any liability, direct or indirect, for damages or loss relating to the use of this document.

This is a voluntary procedures document and is not intended to replace the legal or regulatory requirements of any country.

## Copyright

This publication is protected by copyright. Information or material from this publication may be reproduced in unaltered form for personal, non-commercial use. All other rights are reserved. Information or material from this publication may be used for the purposes of private study, research, criticism, or review permitted under the Copyright Act 1976.

Any reproduction permitted in accordance with the Copyright Act 1976 shall acknowledge the *Standard Setting Procedures V4.0* as the source of any selected passage, extract, diagram, or other information.

## Document Revision

The *Standard Setting Procedures V4.0* will undergo a revision process at least every five years. The next revision is tentatively scheduled to begin in 2025, for completion in 2026. You may submit feedback to the standard at any time via <https://textileexchange.org/standards-feedback>. Points of clarification may be incorporated into supplementary and guidance documents prior to 2026. More substantive feedback or suggested changes will be collected and reviewed as part of the next revision of the document.

## Revision History

Standard Setting and Revision Procedures, released April 2014.  
Standard Setting Principles and Procedures, released December 14, 2016.  
Standard Setting Procedures 2.1, released May 2019.  
Standard Setting Procedures 3.0, released November 2021.  
Standard Setting Procedures 4.0, released July 2024.

# Contents

- Section A – Introduction ..... 4**
  - About the Standard Setting Procedures..... 4
  - About Textile Exchange ..... 4
- Section B – Roles and Responsibilities .....5**
  - B1. Textile Exchange..... 5
  - B2. Complaints and Appeals..... 6
  - B3. International Working Group (IWG)..... 6
  - B4. Stakeholders .....10
- Section C – Standards Design and Maintenance .....12**
  - C1. Standards Design ..... 12
  - C2. Standards Review and Revision ..... 13
- Appendix A – Definitions..... 15**



## Section A – Introduction

### About the Standard Setting Procedures

The Textile Exchange *ASR-102 Standard Setting 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 Codes of Good Practice*).

These procedures support the assurance system (e.g. certification, auditing) as well as monitoring and evaluation of the standard scheme since both ensure the effective implementation of the standard. All standards can be found at <http://textileexchange.org/Standards>.

Other Textile Exchange normative documents under development or revision, including but not limited to those relating to accreditation, certification, and claims, may follow this procedure or elements of it but are not required to. Key definitions are included in Appendix A – Definitions. Defined terms are shown in italics in the first usage in this document, and in some other uses for clarity. Refer to [\*TE-101 Terms and Definitions for Textile Exchange Standards and Related Documents\*](#) for definitions of additional terms used in these procedures.

### About Textile Exchange

Textile Exchange is a global non-profit driving positive impact on climate change across the fashion and textile industry. It guides a growing community of brands, manufacturers, and farmers towards more purposeful production from the very start of the supply chain.

Its goal is to help the industry to achieve a 45% reduction in the emissions that come from producing fibers and raw materials by 2030. To get there, it is keeping its focus holistic and interconnected, accelerating the adoption of practices that improve the state of our water, soil health, and biodiversity too.

For real change to happen, everyone needs a clear path to positive impact. That's why Textile Exchange believes that approachable, step-by-step instruction paired with collective action can change the system to make preferred materials and fibers an accessible default, mobilizing leaders through attainable strategies, proven solutions and a driven community.

**At Textile Exchange, materials matter.** To learn more, visit [TextileExchange.org](https://TextileExchange.org).

## Section B – Roles and Responsibilities

### B1. Textile Exchange

- B1.1** The Textile Exchange Governance Board is responsible for approval of substantive changes to Textile Exchange strategy, particularly in reference to any changes to the goals and scope of the standards.
- B1.2** The Textile Exchange review committee, having responsibility for the appointment of International Working Group (IWG) members for standard development/revision processes, shall be comprised of the following:
- B1.2.1** Textile Exchange Head of the Standards System;
  - B1.2.2** Textile Exchange CEO/COO;
  - B1.2.3** Textile Exchange CSO; and
  - B1.2.4** Textile Exchange Governance Board member.
- B1.3** Textile Exchange shall play the role of *secretariat* for all standard development and revisions or designate another party to do so.
- B1.4** The secretariat shall be responsible for the following:
- B1.4.1** Ensuring that all standards are developed in accordance with this document;
  - B1.4.2** Drafting the project plan for approval by the appointed IWG.
  - B1.4.3** Ensuring that all feedback is recorded and shared with the appointed IWG, including feedback deemed out of scope;
  - B1.4.4** Preparing issue papers to help inform the IWG of key topics, and drafts of the new/revised standard;
  - B1.4.5** Facilitation of meetings and public consultations; and
  - B1.4.6** Record-keeping for the development or revision process, including information shared with the appointed IWG and other stakeholders, decisions made, and how feedback was addressed.
- B1.5** During the development and revision process, the secretariat participation and contribution shall include staff members from various areas of knowledge and management of Textile Exchange standards, including assurance, quality and risk management, climate and nature impact, data and technology, material leads, and stakeholder engagement.

- B1.6** Textile Exchange shall be responsible for the following, with regard to the standard development/revision:
- B1.6.1** Selecting members for the IWG according to experience, subject matter expertise, and stakeholder representation for the corresponding processes;
  - B1.6.2** Keeping information about the standard development or revision process publicly available, including, at minimum, details on the scope of the revision, estimated timeline, and how to participate; and
  - B1.6.3** Keeping details and records of all standards development and revision activities for a minimum of five years, and available to stakeholders upon request, including the following:
    - a. Applicable *Standard Setting Procedures* at the time of the development or revision;
    - b. Stakeholder mapping, including the appointed IWG members;
    - c. Project plan and related public version of the project plan;
    - d. Draft versions of the standards; and
    - e. Feedback summary.

## B2. Complaints and Appeals

- B2.1** Stakeholders can lodge formal complaints or share feedback about Textile Exchange's standards activities via the [Textile Exchange Complaint Form](#).
- B2.2** Appeals are accepted as defined by the scope of appeals in *ASR-110 Complaints and Feedback Policy*. *ASR-110 Complaints and Feedback Policy* explains in detail how Textile Exchange receives, manages, and addresses both complaints and general feedback relating to Textile Exchange standards, standards logos, and scheme participants.

## B3. International Working Group (IWG)

- B3.1** The development of Textile Exchange standards shall be accompanied by an *International Working Group* (IWG) of individuals and representatives of companies/organizations appointed by the review committee who have agreed to volunteer their time.
- B3.2** IWG membership shall normally be comprised of the following number of stakeholder representatives:

| Type of Organization                 | Geographic Region <sup>1</sup> / Area of Expertise | # of Members for Standards with Environmental/Social requirements (e.g. Materials Matter Standard) | # of Members for Standards without Environmental/Social requirements (e.g. Content Claim Standard, Organic Content Standard) |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Brand/Retailer                       | EMEA                                               | 2                                                                                                  | 1                                                                                                                            |
|                                      | Americas                                           | 2                                                                                                  | 1                                                                                                                            |
|                                      | APAC                                               | 2                                                                                                  | 1                                                                                                                            |
| Civil Society                        | Climate                                            | 1                                                                                                  | -                                                                                                                            |
|                                      | Biodiversity                                       | 1                                                                                                  | -                                                                                                                            |
|                                      | Soil Health                                        | 1                                                                                                  | -                                                                                                                            |
|                                      | Water                                              | 1                                                                                                  | -                                                                                                                            |
|                                      | Animal Welfare                                     | 1                                                                                                  | -                                                                                                                            |
|                                      | Social                                             | 1                                                                                                  | -                                                                                                                            |
| Raw Material Producers/Farm          | EMEA                                               | 2                                                                                                  | -                                                                                                                            |
|                                      | Americas                                           | 2                                                                                                  | -                                                                                                                            |
|                                      | APAC                                               | 2                                                                                                  | -                                                                                                                            |
| Supply Chain + Professional Services | EMEA                                               | 1                                                                                                  | 1                                                                                                                            |
|                                      | Americas                                           | 1                                                                                                  | 1                                                                                                                            |
|                                      | APAC                                               | 1                                                                                                  | 1                                                                                                                            |

---

<sup>1</sup> Geographic Region designation as follows: EMEA = Europe, the Middle East and Africa; Americas = North and South America; APAC = Asia Pacific.

| Type of Organization | Geographic Region <sup>1</sup> / Area of Expertise | # of Members for Standards with Environmental/Social requirements (e.g. Materials Matter Standard) | # of Members for Standards without Environmental/Social requirements (e.g. Content Claim Standard, Organic Content Standard) |
|----------------------|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                      | Certification Body (CB) representatives            | 3                                                                                                  | 2                                                                                                                            |
| <b>TOTAL members</b> |                                                    | <b>24</b>                                                                                          | <b>8</b>                                                                                                                     |

**B3.3** The review committee may determine that a different composition of stakeholder representation and/or different number of members is necessary to ensure the most credible and effective outcome for a specific standard development or revision process. In this case, the decision shall be communicated and justified in the project plan.

**B3.4** In order to become an IWG member, the following conditions shall be met, as applicable to the representative:

**B3.4.1** The brand and/or brand/retailer shall be certified [or publicly committed to one or more Textile Exchange standards](#). Although retail operations are out of scope of Textile Exchange standards, the retailer should be active in other areas of work with Textile Exchange (e.g. member of a roundtable, Corporate Fiber and Material Benchmark participant, etc.).

**B3.4.2** For the civil society member, preference is given to stakeholders who contribute to expert advising for the Textile Exchange Climate and Nature strategy. And,

**B3.4.3** The raw material producer and/or supply chain member shall be certified to one or more Textile Exchange standards.

**B3.4.4** For a certification body member, qualifications include their assurance system experience such as the period of time auditing Textile Exchange standard(s), existing approval to multiple scopes of certification (e.g. CCS, RAF, etc.), and their certification portfolio (e.g. number of sites certified, scale of operations).

**B3.5** A public call for participation in the IWG for the standard development/revision process shall be sent to the Textile Exchange stakeholder database list and shall be published on the Textile Exchange website, indicating the process for consideration to be included in the IWG.

**B3.6** The secretariat shall collect and process all applications and prepare a summary for the review committee including its recommendations.



- B3.7** The review committee shall review the secretariat summary and make a final decision on the appointment of select IWG members based on their:
  - B3.7.1** Statement of interest to participate in the IWG;
  - B3.7.2** Resume/curriculum vitae (CV), highlighting work with preferred fibers and materials, supply chain experience, or impact area they have expertise in; and
  - B3.7.3** Accommodation(s) needed to participate in the IWG, where applicable.
- B3.8** Textile Exchange shall publish a list of all appointed IWG members on the Textile Exchange website.
- B3.9** IWG members shall sign a charter indicating their commitment to proactively contribute to the shared outcomes of the standard based on their subject matter expertise, industry experience, and knowledge of the Textile Exchange standard(s). At minimum the charter shall include:
  - B3.9.1** Goals and scope;
  - B3.9.2** Roles and responsibilities;
  - B3.9.3** Participation and attendance criteria;
  - B3.9.4** Communication and information provisions;
  - B3.9.5** Decision-making;
  - B3.9.6** Chatham House Rule; and
  - B3.9.7** Anti-trust guidelines.
- B3.10** IWG membership shall be limited to the expected duration of the standard development/revision process, up to a maximum of five years with a minimum commitment of three years.
- B3.11** Participation in the IWG by the appointed members shall be voluntary. In the event that any IWG member drops-out of the process, Textile Exchange will determine whether or not the member should be replaced, depending on the stage of the process, the level of participation and expertise of the remaining members, and related considerations.
- B3.12** Through the standard development/revision process, the IWG shall be responsible for approval of the following:

- B3.12.1** The project plan for the standard, including the intended scope, goals, objectives, desired outcomes, needs justification, and plans to address risks identified in meeting the goals of the standard;
  - B3.12.2** The standard draft made available for public consultation; and
  - B3.12.3** The final standard, including all criteria applicable to a certified site and/or product.
- B3.13** Decisions by the IWG may be made by *consensus* among members of the IWG.
- B3.14** In the event that consensus is not attempted/met in one of the three approvals outlined in B3.12, a majority vote shall be required within each stakeholder category as outlined in B3.2.
- B3.15** When a vote occurs, a quorum of at least 75% of each stakeholder category as outlined in B3.2 shall be required.
- B3.16** As the entity ultimately responsible for the standard, Textile Exchange reserves the right to make final decisions regarding standard content and shall publicly disclose any decisions, including reasoning, that differs from the quorum of the IWG.

## B4. Stakeholders

- B4.1** The secretariat shall conduct stakeholder mapping to identify potential stakeholders and *interested parties* for outreach activities, including:
- B4.1.1** Ensuring clear stakeholder participation goals are set and communicated for each stakeholder sector. Goals ensure representation from affected geographic regions and market sectors of the given standard. And
  - B4.1.2** Ensuring under-represented or disadvantaged stakeholders are identified in the stakeholder mapping with strategies to proactively seek their contribution, including the possibility for a stipend at the discretion of Textile Exchange.
- B4.2** The secretariat shall notify identified stakeholders of the development or revision and how they can participate in the development or revision.
- B4.3** The secretariat shall make records of standard development or revision activities publicly available while the standard is still in development, with an open invitation to participate.
- B4.4** Throughout the development or revision process, the secretariat shall actively seek feedback from the public at the following key stages of development:
- B4.4.1** At the onset of a major revision to seek input on needed changes in the current version of the standard;

- B4.4.2** Following development/revision of the standard content, via a public consultation on the standard draft which is held for at least 60 days; and
- B4.4.3** For a new standard, or if substantive, unresolved issues persist, via a second public consultation on the standard draft which is held for at least 30 days.
- B4.5** The secretariat shall conduct public consultations that include, at minimum, the following:
  - B4.5.1** A public announcement;
  - B4.5.2** Targeted outreach to stakeholders identified during the stakeholder mapping;
  - B4.5.3** A standard draft which is made publicly available;
  - B4.5.4** A feedback mechanism; and
  - B4.5.5** A feedback summary that includes key topics of feedback and how they were addressed, shared publicly and directly with all participants.

## Section C – Standards Design and Maintenance

### C1. Standards Design

- C1.1** Standards shall be written to enable monitoring and evaluation against the goals of the standard.
- C1.2** Standards design shall take into consideration pre-existing standards that cover similar areas including an analysis of overlapping scopes and potential opportunities to strengthen alignment or complementarity.
- C1.3** If operational international standards with similar desired outcomes are found to be in place with other organizations, these organizations shall be informed about the new standard development and invited to provide input.
- C1.4** Where the standard includes recognition of an external standard or system, this shall be based on determination of equivalence of sustainability performance and an assessment that the external standard/system is relevant and applicable to the contexts in which it is applied by Textile Exchange.
- C1.5** Conformity criteria within the standard shall:
  - C1.5.1** Be linked to the goals and desired outcomes identified in the approved project plan;
  - C1.5.2** Be clear, objective, and verifiable;
  - C1.5.3** Be informed by best available science related to achieving the desired outcomes identified in the project plan, as well as by regulatory and market considerations; and
  - C1.5.4** Not seek to restrict trade in anyway or give preference to one region, technology, or company over another.
- C1.6** At minimum, the standard shall be accompanied by:
  - C1.6.1** Guidance for local applicability where necessary or helpful (e.g. varying farming methods around the world);
  - C1.6.2** An accompanying User Manual to give further guidance for organizations seeking certification; and
  - C1.6.3** Certification Procedures to set guidelines for the responsible certification body.

- C1.7** Accompanying documents may be updated by Textile Exchange as often as deemed necessary without going through a formal revision process. The IWG may provide feedback on these and other supplemental documents, but they are not considered within decision-making scope of the IWG.
- C1.8** The following shall be noted in the standard:
- C1.8.1** The official language of the standard, which is English, and in the case of inconsistency between translated versions, the English version prevails;
  - C1.8.2** Anticipated timing of the next revision and how to submit feedback or complaints;
  - C1.8.3** Reference to the release date, effective date, and version number (a new standard will begin at version 1.0);
  - C1.8.4** A disclaimer stating that Textile Exchange will not be held liable for use of the standard; and
  - C1.8.5** A copyright statement.
- C1.9** The following documents shall be available on the Textile Exchange website:
- C1.9.1** Final Standard;
  - C1.9.2** Final Standard User Manual (where applicable);
  - C1.9.3** Final Standard Certification Procedures (where applicable);
  - C1.9.4** Feedback summary;
  - C1.9.5** Summary of key changes;
  - C1.9.6** Detailed list of all changes from previous versions, available upon request, if applicable;
  - C1.9.7** Current *Claims Policy*; and
  - C1.9.8** Transition policy.

## C2. Standards Review and Revision

- C2.1** A Textile Exchange standard shall undergo a review at least every five years from the standard's conformity date.
- C2.2** Review shall take into consideration stakeholder comments, feedback, and requests for clarification received regarding the current version of the standard (where applicable);



- C2.3** Review shall take into consideration analysis of relevant data and information gathered from the implementation of the current version or related standards (e.g. monitoring and evaluation activities, nonconformities, calibrations issued, external research and industry best practices, changes to relevant legislation, etc.)
- C2.4** If the review determines that a revision is necessary, Textile Exchange shall update the standard's objectives as necessary and proceed with the revision process in a timely manner. If the review determines that a revision is not necessary, Textile Exchange shall make a public announcement about the decision and its rationale and establish the date for the next review.
- C2.5** *Minor revisions* with non-substantive changes may be made and approved by Textile Exchange without constituting an IWG.
- C2.6** In addition to those scheduled, major revisions may also be initiated for the following reasons:
- C2.6.1** Standard criteria result in critical unintended consequences that compromise the goals or desired outcomes of the standard;
  - C2.6.2** New developments that change or affect the implementation, assurance process, or known impacts of the standard;
  - C2.6.3** Expanded goals or scope in Textile Exchange strategy; or
  - C2.6.4** At the discretion of Textile Exchange.
- C2.7** All major revisions shall include the following:
- C2.7.1** IWG approval of the project plan proposed for the revision;
  - C2.7.2** IWG approval of the public consultation standard draft(s);
  - C2.7.3** Public consultation of at least 60 days; and
  - C2.7.4** IWG approval of the final standard.
- C2.8** A one-year transition period shall be provided for each certified organization and certification body to transition to the revised version, starting from the publication date of the revised standard. This date that is at least 12-months after publication is known as the standard mandatory date by which conformance is required onwards.

## Appendix A – Definitions

Key definitions are included below. Defined terms are shown in italics in the first usage in this document, and in some other uses for clarity. Refer to [TE-101 Terms and Definitions for Textile Exchange Standards and Related Documents](#) for definitions of additional terms used in these procedures.

**Consensus:** General agreement, characterized by the absence of sustained opposition to substantial issues by any important stakeholder group, achieved by a prespecified deadline.

**Interested party:** Any person or group concerned with or who may be directly affected by a standard.

**International Working Group (IWG):** A balanced and diverse group of stakeholders, including those directly affected by implementation of the standard and/or those the standard seeks to positively impact, actively engaged in the development or revision of a standard. All IWG members are required to sign a charter indicating their commitment to the goals of the standard and the time needed to be engaged in the process.

**IWG Charter:** This document includes a statement of purpose for the standard, objectives, roles, and responsibilities of the IWG, and agreement to comply with Chatham House Rule and anti-trust guidelines. All IWG *members* are required to sign the IWG charter.

**Secretariat:** The administrative role of the IWG, which includes record keeping, stakeholder management, and other functions such as assurance management, and monitoring and evaluation.

**Minor Revision:** Changes to the standard that are non-substantive and do not require the full approvals by the IWG or public consultations. Non-substantive changes to a standard include, but are not limited to, improving or clarifying language without changing the intent, correcting typing or grammatical errors, and updating references to other documents where these have changed.

**Major Revision:** Changes to the standard that are substantive and require the full revision process as identified in Section C2. Substantive changes include changing the intent and objectives of the standard or the criteria within. Major revisions may be scheduled or initiated when necessary (see B2.3).

**Project Plan:** A document that articulates what the standard aims to achieve and why the standard development, or revision of the standard, is needed. It includes a summary of key information to guide the process of standard development or revision:

- Justification of the need for the new standard development or for a standard revision;
- Proposed scope, including geographic regions of significance;
- Clear goals and objectives for the standard, including intended sustainability outcomes;
- An assessment of risks in implementing the standard, and how to mitigate 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; and
- Possible corrective actions that could be taken to address these potential risks.

**Public Project Plan:** A condensed version of the full IWG-approved project plan. It articulates what the standard aims to achieve and why the standard is needed, including goals and objectives, scope, timeline, decision-making process, and ways to participate.

**Public Stakeholder Standard Draft Consultation:** The consultation on the standard draft 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 standard draft consultation, feedback is given on the draft version of the standard. May be referred to as the *draft consultation*.

**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.