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# **GRI Sector Standards Project for Textiles and Apparel**

## **Textiles and Apparel Working Group terms of reference**

March 2023

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# 1 Terms of Reference

2 These Terms of Reference outline the mandate of the Working Group for the GRI Sector Standards  
3 Project for Textiles and Apparel (Textiles and Apparel Working Group), including its selection and  
4 appointment, primary objectives, and time commitments.

## 5 Background

6 The Global Sustainability Standards Board (GSSB), GRI's independent standard-setting body, has  
7 identified the textiles and apparel sector as a priority sector for developing a GRI Sector Standard .

8 The objective of sustainability reporting using the GRI Standards is to provide transparency on how an  
9 organization contributes or aims to contribute to sustainable development. The GRI Standards enable  
10 an organization to publicly disclose its most significant impacts on the economy, environment, and  
11 people, including impacts on human rights, and how the organization manages these impacts.

12 Sector Standards provide information for organizations in a given sector about their likely material  
13 topics. Sector Standards also contains a list of disclosures for organizations in the sector to report  
14 information about their impacts in relation to each likely material topic. They are designed to enhance  
15 the global comparability and quality of information within a sector, thereby enabling greater  
16 transparency and accountability of organizations, and informed decision-making by stakeholders.

17 The primary objective of GRI Sector Standards Project for Textiles and Apparel is to develop a Sector  
18 Standard that improves the sustainability reporting of textiles, footwear and apparel organizations,  
19 making reporting more complete and consistent across the sector. It will be carried out following the  
20 [GSSB Due Process Protocol](#).

21 See the [project proposal](#) for more information.

## 22 Mandate of the Textiles and Apparel Working Group

23 Sector Standards are developed using multi-stakeholder expertise, authoritative intergovernmental  
24 instruments, and other relevant evidence. The Textiles and Apparel Working Group will contribute  
25 their expertise to the development of a Sector Standard for textiles and apparel. The overall work of  
26 the Working Group should support sustainability reporting as promoted by the GRI Sustainability  
27 Reporting Standards (GRI Standards).

## 28 Scope of work

29 The Textiles and Apparel Working Group will be responsible for developing a Sector Standard for the  
30 textiles and apparel sector, for the consideration of the GSSB. Within the context of the GRI Sector  
31 Program, the textiles and apparel sector is defined as described in the [project proposal](#).

32 The Textiles and Apparel Working Group will be tasked with providing recommendations on:

- 33 • the context of the textiles and apparel sector in relation to sustainable development, including  
34 relevant Sustainable Development Goals and international instruments and agreements;
- 35 • the likely material topics for organizations in textile production, apparel and footwear  
36 manufacturing and apparel and footwear retail, based on the sector's significant impacts on  
37 the environment, economy and people, including human rights;
- 38 • the description of these impacts and authoritative references that evidence these impacts.
- 39 • the disclosures from GRI Topic Standards that are relevant for organizations from the textiles  
40 and apparel sector to report on each likely material topic;
- 41 • additional reporting that is recommended for disclosure by organizations in the textiles and  
42 apparel sector. Additional sector reporting is only included when the Topic Standards do not  
43 provide disclosures that sufficiently reflect the impacts associated with the sector.

44  
45 The Textiles and Apparel Working Group may also provide recommendations on:  
46

- 47
- the scope, relevant sector classification identifiers (key), and name of the Sector Standard;
  - 48 • considerations that may be relevant to Sector Standards for related sectors; and
  - 49 • revisions or updates to other GRI Standards.

50 Impacts identified within this project for which no GRI Standard exists will be assessed and prioritized  
51 by the GSSB for future GRI Standards development.

## 52 Responsibilities of other entities

53 The Standards Division is responsible for:

- 54 • overall project management and ensuring compliance with the GSSB Due Process Protocol;
- 55 • facilitating, providing logistical support and preparing materials for Working Group meetings;
- 56 • maintaining an online collaboration platform for the Working Group;
- 57 • engaging with the GSSB and other GRI Governance bodies;
- 58 • engaging other experts and interested parties in a peer review and on an as needed basis;
- 59 • coordinating public exposure of the draft Sector Standard, including collecting and  
60 summarizing feedback for consideration by the Working Group;
- 61 • undertaking research to support the development of the Sector Standard; and
- 62 • drafting the content of the Sector Standard.

63 The Standards Division will draft the Sector Standard and other relevant deliverables in accordance  
64 with the recommendations of the Working Group. The Standards division will use the Sector Standard  
65 template and apply the appropriate house rules for terminology, style, and presentation. The Working  
66 Group will not be responsible for editing the stylistic and grammatical presentation of deliverables.  
67 Such edits will be undertaken by the Standards Division to ensure consistency with existing GRI  
68 documents.

69 The GSSB will approve the draft Sector Standard for public exposure and the final content of a Sector  
70 Standard through a formal voting process. The GSSB will review the drafted contents and may ask  
71 the Textiles and Apparel Working Group to conduct further research and/or develop the draft  
72 recommendations further. Working group members should be committed to support the revision of  
73 draft contents in addition to the development of these contents. Further information on the role and  
74 authority of the GSSB can be found in the [GSSB Due Process Protocol](#).

## 75 Additional considerations

76 The development of the Sector Standard is to be carried out within the existing structure and template  
77 of the GRI Standards, including preserving the hierarchy, coherence and implementation approach of  
78 the GRI Standards. The content of Sector Standards must be in line with the 'in accordance' model  
79 outlined in [GRI: Foundation 2021](#).

80 The Textiles and Apparel Working Group should aim to develop topic descriptions that are clear,  
81 consistent, and focused on impacts from a sustainable development perspective. Content should also  
82 seek to be in line with key authoritative inter-governmental instruments (such as instruments of the  
83 United Nations, the International Labour Organization, and the OECD) and consider the content of  
84 other business and human rights reporting frameworks, such as the UN Guiding Principles Reporting  
85 Framework.

86 The discussions of the Working Group are confidential but any recommendations made by the  
87 Working Group to the GSSB will be publicly available in accordance with the [GSSB Due Process  
88 Protocol](#).

89 GRI will hold the copyright of any deliverables associated with the project.

## 90 Composition of the Textiles and Apparel Working 91 Group

92 It is anticipated that the Working Group will have up to 15 members. The Working Group will aim to  
93 have at least one person drawn from each of the constituencies on which the membership of the

94 GSSB is based: business enterprises, investment institutions, labor, civil society, and mediating  
95 institutions.

96 In addition, geographical, gender and cultural diversity will be considered. There can only be one  
97 representative per organization in the Working Group.

98 **Table 1: Descriptions of constituencies represented on the Working Group**

<b>Business enterprise</b>	a) An enterprise (other than a mediating or investment institution) that has been established in order to generate a profit for the benefit of its investors or owners; or b) An organization representing the collective interests of those falling into category 'a'.
<b>Investment institution</b>	An enterprise that is primarily concerned with the direct or indirect, long-term investment of funds in business – including, but not limited to, asset owners, asset managers, development banks, exchanges, ratings agencies and market information brokers.
<b>Labor</b>	An organization established independently of employers and governments to represent the interests of workers.
<b>Civil society</b>	An organization established in order to promote or secure a public good relating to sustainability (environmental, social and governance) and that does not fall into any of the categories defined above.
<b>Mediating institution</b>	An individual or organization that provides goods and/or services associated with the reporting process and derives benefit from doing so.

99 A GSSB sponsor(s) may join Working Group meetings.

## 100 Selection criteria

101 In accordance with the [GSSB Due Process Protocol](#), members of the Working Group are appointed  
102 by the GSSB. The principal criterion for selecting the Working Group is relevant knowledge and  
103 experience of a broad range of sustainable development issues for the Textiles and Apparel sectors.

104 Members must be able to ability to participate in Working Group meetings held in English and provide  
105 written English feedback when requested.

106 In addition, the following criteria will be considered:

- 107 • relevant knowledge of sustainability reporting for the sector;
- 108 • familiarity with the needs of users of sustainability reports;
- 109 • related experience with multi-stakeholder initiatives;
- 110 • understanding of and willingness to work in a consensus-based, multi-stakeholder working  
111 group.

## 112 Working Group commitments

113 Working Group members are expected to:

- 114 • act in an individual capacity, exclusively in the public interest, and according to due process  
115 as defined in the GSSB Due Process Protocol;
- 116 • review the materials provided by the Standards Division in advance of Working Group  
117 meetings, in order to be able to actively participate;
- 118 • provide timely feedback on documents or other materials distributed by the Standards  
119 Division;
- 120 • work in the manner that aims at achieving consensus.

121 The development of the Sector Standard for textiles and apparel is expected to take up to 20 months  
122 following the appointment of the Working Group. See the timeline included in Appendix 1.

123 Working Group members commit to attending approximately 25 hours of meetings and reviewing the  
124 draft Sector Standard a minimum of three times during that period. Working Group members also  
125 commit to plan sufficient time to prepare for meetings, review other materials and engage in  
126 supplementary content creation methods. It is estimated that this may result in up to 50 hours of time  
127 commitment across the project (excluding any necessary travel time).

128 Meetings and other engagement methods will vary depending on the needs of the Working Group and  
129 the project. Commonly used methods include full group meetings in-person and virtually, sub-group  
130 workshops, and use of digital content creation platforms. The use of these methods will also take into  
131 account any travel restrictions or risk factors related to Covid-19.

132 Virtual meetings are normally held between 1.00-2:30 pm Central European Time (CET), so that  
133 members in most time zones can join. This will be adjusted based on the final geographical  
134 representation of the Working Group.

135 In the event of an in-person meeting, Working Group members will be asked to attend a two-day  
136 meeting in Amsterdam (excluding travel time).

137 Specific dates for virtual and in-person meetings will be defined based on the availability of working  
138 group members within the time frames indicated below. This timeline is subject to change due to, for  
139 example, members' availability, project scope changes, and internal resourcing availability.

140 See appendix 1 for the proposed meeting schedule and an itemized time commitment.

141 Working Group members volunteer their time. There is no fee or compensation associated with  
142 participation in the Working Group. Upon request, Working Group members will be eligible for travel  
143 and accommodation reimbursement for in-person meetings, in accordance with GRI policies.

## 144 **Ensuring confidentiality**

145 Working Group meetings are held under the Chatham House Rule: 'When a meeting, or part thereof,  
146 is held under the Chatham House Rule, participants are free to use the information received, but  
147 neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor that of any other participant, may be  
148 revealed.'

149 Meeting materials are confidential; they can be shared with colleagues for input, but not with outside  
150 parties without prior permission from the GRI Standards Division.

## 151 **Public communications protocol**

152 Public communication on issues related to the activities of the Working Group and the development of  
153 the GRI Standards is the responsibility of the GSSB. Working Group members may publicly express  
154 their personal opinions and views but may not speak on behalf of the Working Group, GSSB or GRI.

155 The names and bios of members will be published on the GRI website. Members are welcome to  
156 publicize their participation in, and the activities of the Working Group, in channels such as press  
157 releases or on social media. Members are asked to work with the Standards Division or GRI's  
158 communication team to coordinate any such activity ahead of time.

159 Working Group members are advised to use the following when referring to their participation in this  
160 process:

161 "[name of member] has been appointed by the Global Sustainability Standards Board (GSSB), GRI's  
162 independent standard setting body, to serve on a Working Group to produce a Standard for the  
163 textiles and apparel sector."

## 164 **How to apply**

165 Once the open call is launched, all interested experts will be able to nominate themselves to be part of  
166 the Textiles and Apparel Working Group, by submitting their CV and the application form to  
167 [textiles-apparel@GlobalReporting.org](mailto:textiles-apparel@GlobalReporting.org).

168 These links are also available in the [project website](#).

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# Appendix 1. Proposed project timeline

Phase	~Duration (months)	Month 1	Holiday period	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Month 6	Month 7	Month 8	Month 9	Month 10	Month 11	Month 12	Holiday period	Month 13	Month 14	Month 15	Month 16	Month 17	Month 18	Month 19	Month 20	Month 21	Month 22	Month 23	Holiday period	Month 24	Month 25	Month 26	Month 27	
		Nov/22	Dec/22	Jan/23	Feb/23	Mar/23	Apr/23	May/23	Jun/23	Jul/23	Aug/23	Sep/23	Oct/23	Nov/23	Dec/23	Jan/24	Feb/24	Mar/24	Apr/24	May/24	Jun/24	Jul/24	Aug/24	Sep/24	Oct/24	Nov/24	Dec/24	Jan/25	Feb/25	Mar/25	Apr/25	
Project commencement	1	█																														
Open call & recruitment of PWG	3			█	█	█																										
GSSB approval of Working Group membership	-								◆																							
Content development by Working Group	9										*	*	*		*	*																
GSSB approval of exposure draft	1																			◆												
Public comment period	3																															
Analysis of public comments and revision of draft	6																								*		*					
GSSB approval of final standard	1																															◆

170



171 **Appendix 2. Meeting schedule**

172 The following table outlines the minimum number of meetings expected to occur throughout the  
173 course of the project. Engagement as a Working Group is currently predicted to be completely virtual  
174 as it is anticipated that international travel and in-person meetings may still be challenging. If this  
175 changes, an in-person meeting may be planned and replace some virtual engagements. In this case,  
176 the Working Group will be provided with sufficient notice and scheduling will be subject to member  
177 availability.

178

Meeting	Time commitment	Approximate date
<b>Working Group meeting 1</b>	2-hour virtual meeting + 2 hours review of preparatory materials	August/September 2023
<b>Working Group meeting 2</b>	2-hour virtual meeting + 2 hours review of preparatory materials	October 2023
<b>Sub-group meetings</b>	1.5-hour virtual sub-group meeting	October/November 2023
<b>Working Group meeting 3</b>	4-hour virtual meeting + 2 hours review of preparatory materials	November 2023
<b>Working Group meeting 4</b>	2-hour virtual meeting + 2 hours review of preparatory materials	January 2024
<b>Working Group meeting 5</b>	2-hour virtual meeting + 2 hours review of preparatory materials	February/March 2024
<b>Working Group meeting 6</b>	2-hour virtual meeting + 2 hours review of preparatory materials	November 2024
<b>Working Group meeting 7</b>	2-hour virtual meeting + 2 hours review of preparatory materials	January 2025

179 In addition to the meetings listed above, it is expected that the Working Group will participate in a  
180 survey following Working Group meeting 1, review the draft Sector Standard in-full three times, twice  
181 prior to the public exposure and once following, and participate in stakeholder engagement activities  
182 during the public exposure period and to support the launch of the Standard as relevant.