



United Nations Global Compact

JOINING POLICY

BACKGROUND

The UN Global Compact is a voluntary initiative that seeks to mobilize companies and other stakeholders from around the world to align their strategies and operations with universal principles on human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption, and take actions that advance societal goals. With a diverse base of businesses and non-business organizations, the UN Global Compact engages stakeholders at all levels of their sustainability journey to create a movement of transformative change.

Companies that join the UN Global Compact are committing to:

- Operate responsibly by embedding the Ten Principles of the UN Global Compact into strategies and operations;
- Take bold, innovative action to achieve UN initiatives such as the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement;
- Share their commitments and progress publicly through an annual Communication on Progress; and
- Advance the case for responsible business practices through advocacy and engagement with peers, partners, employees, clients, consumers and the public at large.

While the UN Global Compact does not have mandate to be a compliance or monitoring body, the initiative provides a platform for continuous improvement, public accountability, learning, and dialogue.

ELIGIBILITY FOR ADMISSION

The UN Global Compact is an inclusive initiative open to companies committed to implementing the Ten Principles of the UN Global Compact, and communicating on progress. To ensure the UN Global Compact policies and practices safeguard the integrity and reputation of the United Nations and the values it upholds, the initiative maintains a few exceptions that restrict participation. Applicants that meet the following exclusionary criteria cannot join the UN Global Compact:

- Subject to a [UN sanction](#);
- Listed on the [UN Ineligible Vendors List](#) for ethical reasons;
- Derive revenue the production, sale and/or transfer of antipersonnel landmines or cluster bombs;

- Derive revenue from the production and/or manufacturing of tobacco¹.

Any subsidiary, irrespective of their parent company's participation, can apply individually to become a Participant or Signatory. Alternatively, subsidiaries may choose to participate through their parent company's commitment, which applies to all subsidiaries and country offices. If a parent company meets any of the exclusionary criteria, it will not be admitted to the UN Global Compact. Subsidiaries and affiliated companies can apply individually should they not meet any of the product-based exclusionary criteria. However this exception does not apply if the subsidiary or affiliate is part of a corporate group that derives more than 5% of its revenue from the production of tobacco products. To learn more, see the [UN Global Compact's Subsidiary Policy](#).

As of 1 January 2018, we began revising our criteria to accept applications from micros (e.g. companies and organizations with fewer than ten direct employees) and accepted companies that were existing members of a Local Network. Starting in January 2020, the UN Global Compact will accept all businesses and organizations that fulfill the criteria for participation, regardless of the number of employees. All participating companies and organizations are still required to have at least one direct employee and active operations.

PROCESS FOR JOINING THE UN GLOBAL COMPACT

All applicants are required to submit a Letter of Commitment to the UN Secretary-General from their highest level executive (or equivalent), committing to implement the Ten Principles of the UN Global Compact, take action in support of UN goals, and annually report on progress. In addition, all applicants are required to provide proof of legal registration status.

Business applicants are required to select a preferred engagement tier; either Participant or Signatory. The engagement tier defines the level of access to and support from the UN Global Compact, as well as defines the opportunity for engagement at the global and/or local level. The engagement tier and the company's annual revenue determine the required annual contribution. To learn more about the tiered engagement model, please [click here](#).

The UN Global Compact Office undertakes a review of the application and all applicants are checked against global databases to ensure the company does not meet any of the exclusionary criteria. Global Compact Local Networks are consulted for additional input and further information may be requested from the applicant. If, during the review process, the UN Global Compact Office identifies allegations or findings that the applicant is egregiously or systematically abusing the Ten Principles and the violations are deemed to undermine the integrity and reputation of the initiative, or if any of the information is determined inaccurate, unclear, or incomplete, the UN Global Compact reserves the right to reject the application.

Revised January 2020

¹ Revenue derived from tobacco was added as an exclusionary criterion on 12 September 2017 to align with the majority of the UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes, which recognize that tobacco products are in direct conflict with the right to public health, and already exclude partnerships with this sector.