



GOLD PARTNER INFORMATION PACK

Sustainability Advantage Recognition Scheme

This information pack introduces the Sustainability Advantage Recognition Scheme, outlines the process for applying for recognition, details the criteria against which applications are assessed and provides examples of the kinds of suitable information and evidence applicants need to supply to support their application.

A separate **application pack** to apply for Gold Partner status is available on our website.

Please also refer to the Sustainability Advantage website for general information on the **Recognition Scheme**, including the comprehensive **Pathways to Recognition** (comparison criteria for Bronze, Silver and Gold Partners) and **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**.

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About the Sustainability Advantage Recognition Scheme

The Sustainability Advantage Program is a business support service provided by the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH). The program helps organisations to improve their environmental performance, reduce costs and add value to their business.

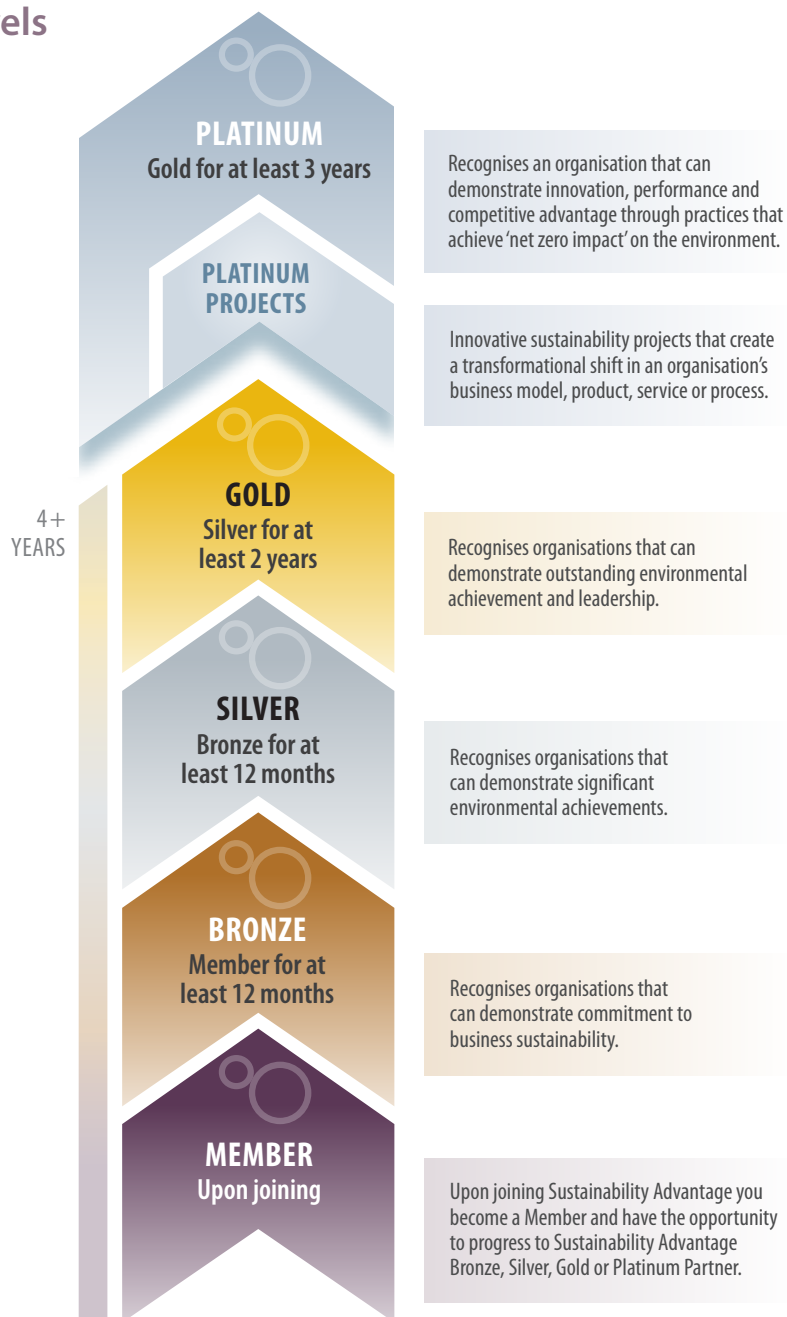
We believe that organisations committed to sustainability and achieving real improvements deserve to be recognised.

The Sustainability Advantage Recognition Scheme provides public acknowledgement of our members' achievements through the program.

After actively participating in Sustainability Advantage for at least one year and demonstrating achievements against each of the published sustainability criteria, members can progress through the recognition levels, starting with Bronze.

We believe that organisations committed to sustainability and achieving real improvements deserve to be recognised.

Recognition levels



Guide for applicants

Summary of recognition categories and criteria

To be recognised as a Sustainability Advantage Partner, your organisation must demonstrate its progress towards sustainable practice through:

- active participation
- leadership, commitment and planning
- internal and external engagement
- achievements.

The Gold criteria and examples of evidence are detailed in this information pack.

The examples of suitable information and documentary evidence described here will help you understand what the recognition review panel will be looking for in a Gold Partner application.

When you are preparing your own application be aware that your organisation will need to demonstrate how it meets each criterion as incomplete applications cannot be assessed.

Please note that OEH reserves the right to amend assessment criteria at any time.

How to apply

1. Read the information pack.
2. Read the criteria for the recognition level for which you are applying. The criteria clearly articulate how your application will be assessed.
3. Look at the examples of evidence for each criterion. They will give you a clear indication of the kind of supporting evidence your review panel will be expecting.
4. Complete your application using the relevant application pack. Make sure you include evidence that shows how you meet the criteria. You may need to provide one or more examples for each criterion (though some evidence might support more than one criterion). Please note that incomplete applications are not able to be assessed.
5. Send your completed application (including supporting documentation) by email or post to:

Office of Environment and Heritage
Sustainability Advantage Team
PO Box 644
Parramatta NSW 2150

Phone: (02) 8837 6000
Email: sustainbus@environment.nsw.gov.au

Look at the examples of evidence for each criterion. They will give you a clear indication of the kind of supporting evidence your review panel will be expecting.

Application assessment process

Once we have received your application, we will:

- send you an acknowledgement that we have received it
- convene a recognition review panel to assess your application. For Bronze and Silver levels, the recognition panel will comprise two OEH staff members. For Gold level, the recognition panel will comprise two OEH staff members and a business sustainability expert to independently verify the application
- notify you of the assessment outcome within six weeks.

Please note that the review panel may request additional information or evidence during assessment.

Successful Partners will be invited to:

1. attend the next Partner recognition event (additional information may be requested at this time)
2. participate in case studies and other promotional events
3. use their Partner status to raise awareness of their organisation's sustainability achievements (we will send you Promotion Guidelines for using Partner logos).

If your application is not successful, your project officer will notify you of what additional information or action is required for future success.

When to apply

You can apply at any time, provided you have been actively participating in the Sustainability Advantage Program for the minimum specified period.

Your project officer can provide guidance and assistance on the application process.

Maintaining recognition status

Bronze and Silver Partners maintain their Partner status as long as they are active members of the Sustainability Advantage Program.

Gold Partner recognition lasts three years, after which Gold Partners need to apply for reaccreditation. This will allow Gold Partners to demonstrate they are maintaining their commitment to the sustainability of their organisation and their industry. Gold Partners who choose not to reapply at their current level after three years will revert to Silver Partner status.

Scope of recognition

Bronze and Silver Partner applications can be submitted for the organisation's operations across NSW or for the achievements of individual business units, divisions or sites. You will need to specify in your recognition application the precise scope of the application.

Please note that recognition status will only apply to the unit/s, division/s or site/s specified in the application and is not transferable to other parts of your operations.

Gold Partner applications need to be for the organisation's entire operations across NSW.

Application pack

The application pack can be downloaded from the website at

www.environment.nsw.gov.au/sustainabilityadvantage/recognition.htm

Alternatively contact your Sustainability Advantage project officer.

Gold application recognition criteria and examples of evidence

You are asked to describe how your organisation meets each of the Sustainability Advantage (SA) Recognition Scheme criteria listed below. You will need to provide specific examples and evidence relating to each criterion.

Examples of suitable types of evidence are provided as a guide. They are suggestions only and other evidence that demonstrates how your organisation meets the criteria can be provided.

For some criteria it will be enough to describe what you are doing, for others you will need to demonstrate how you meet the criteria by attaching documents and for other criteria you may need a combination of both.

Participation in Sustainability Advantage Program	
Gold Criteria	Examples of suitable evidence
G1.1 Silver member of SA for two years.	G1.1 Date of receipt of Silver membership.
G1.2 SA Diagnostic has been repeated since the Silver application (or every three years if reapplying) to identify gaps and measure progress.	G1.2 Provide the date/s the diagnostic was repeated and list the attendees.
G1.3 Ongoing management commitment to participation in the SA program.	G1.3 You can demonstrate this by providing: list of position titles of attendees at module workshops, other SA events, emails or memos to senior managers from CEO requesting participation in the program, requests from senior managers for information on the progress of the program, senior management communications on sustainability to staff.
G1.4 Completion of at least four SA modules since joining the Program.	G1.4 Provide evidence of modules completed. You need to attach final reports and/or action plans that were developed as part of each module.
G1.5 Ongoing participation in networking or other SA or industry sustainability events since last application.	G1.5 Provide the event name, date and attendees for any SA or industry sustainability events you have attended, for example, master classes, cluster meetings, webinars. You can include networking events which your organisation instigated or organised (suitable evidence would include invitations, agenda, feedback etc).
G1.6 Completed a SA Silver to Gold workshop.	G1.6 Provide the date, location and name of your organisation's attendee/s.
G1.7 Participating in mentoring activities to share the organisation's experience with others.	G1.7 Provide details of your mentoring activities.

Leadership, Commitment and Planning for Business Sustainability	
Gold Criteria	Examples of suitable evidence
G2.1 A position statement on sustainability exists for the business and has been reviewed and reindorsed by the CEO, or equivalent, within the last two years.	G2.1 Attach a copy of the document/s which outline what sustainability means for your business. This could be a vision or mission statement, a sustainability policy or a section of a broader statement for the business. The document should have been developed or reviewed within the last two years.
G2.2 The position statement contributes significantly to representing the values and culture of the organisation and is communicated to staff and external stakeholders.	G2.2 To demonstrate meeting this criteria you can show how your goals, strategies and measures in place throughout the organisation are consistent with this position statement by providing extracts of relevant documents or a description. Describe how staff and external stakeholders (such as customers, suppliers, contractors) are made aware of your organisation's position on sustainability and provide evidence – for example, website, meeting agendas, minutes, notice boards, staff emails, messages from management or public presentations.
G3.1 A process or system exists which enables the collection of data for the organisation for all significant resource and waste streams including productivity measures.	G3.1 Provide a copy of the system used for collecting data – this might include a description and screen shots or a copy of a spreadsheet. Demonstrate the types of data the system is capable of collecting such energy (electricity, gas, fuels), water, material inputs/resources, waste to landfill, other waste streams, use of hazardous substances, transport (air, vehicle), as appropriate to your business.
G3.2 There is resource efficiency data for at least three years in addition and comparable to the baseline year.	G3.2 Complete the Recognition Data Template showing the year you have chosen as the baseline and the annual data summaries for the baseline year and three other years (usually consecutive, if not explain why). Customise the measures you will be using in the first column. (Refer to the Data Recognition Template).
G3.3 Scope 1 and 2 greenhouse gas emissions for the organisation have been quantified and verified by a third party. A system exists to regularly assess emissions. Material scope 3 emissions have been documented.	G3.3 Attach a greenhouse gas inventory report or equivalent and third party verification.
G3.4 The organisation participates in environmental benchmarking, or a similar process or tool, and has identified best practice in sustainability for the sector including an indication of how the organisation performs relative to comparable organisations.	G3.4 Provide details of a benchmarking process, peer group and the measures being benchmarked as well as your benchmarking results and current best practice.
G4.1 Current sustainability goals are broader and/or more ambitious than those in the last application. These goals are consistent with the organisation's position statement (refer G2.1).	G4.1 Provide a copy of your current sustainability goals and the goals submitted with your last application. Your sustainability goals might be part of a broader document or contained within in a sustainability specific plan or strategy.

Gold Criteria	Examples of suitable evidence
G4.2 A process is in place to set, evaluate and review sustainability goals to ensure continuous improvement.	G4.2 Provide a copy of documents (such as a strategy, plan or position description/performance agreement) which demonstrate the reporting requirements and the review and evaluation process.
G5.1 Sustainability is a normal part of doing business and measures are integrated into all business systems, for example: human resources, operations, contracting, procurement, logistics, risk management, acquisitions.	G5.1 Demonstrate how you have incorporated sustainability measures throughout your business. Examples of suitable evidence include any sustainability provisions in documents such as: position descriptions, performance agreements, training and development plans, procurement policies or procedures, contract conditions, supplier code of conduct, project assessment procedures or any other document which demonstrates how your sustainability approach has been integrated into organisational processes.
G5.2 The organisation has conducted detailed investigations, implemented projects and/or processes and continues to research innovative approaches in each of the following areas: waste management, energy management, water management, resource use.	G5.2 Demonstrate how you address waste, water, energy and resource management including evidence of research and innovation.
G5.3 Measures for assessing and addressing climate change risks to the organisation have been investigated and implemented and a system exists to regularly reassess these risks.	G5.3 Evidence can include relevant reports, adaptation or mitigation strategies as relevant to your business.
G5.4 Systems, processes and/or strategies for sustainability are regularly reported, reviewed and improved to ensure continuous improvement.	G5.4 Your strategy documents or others such as performance agreements, budget line items or plans need to show how implementation is managed to fulfil this criteria.

Internal and External Engagement

Gold Criteria	Examples of suitable evidence
G6.1 Internally, sustainability is seen as a normal part of doing business.	G6.1 Demonstrate through survey results, staff led sustainability initiatives or referring to the systems described in G5.1 showing how sustainability has been integrated into your business and that a culture exists to support your organisation's objectives.
G6.2 Regular staff engagement events occur and are instigated by both staff and management.	G6.2 Provide evidence demonstrating that staff engagement events occur regularly and indicate whether each event was instigated by staff, management, sustainability committee or other. Examples of events include: awareness raising, volunteer programs, ride to work day.
G6.3 Suppliers and contractors are aware of the organisation's sustainability objectives and comply with requirements.	G6.3 Describe how your organisation is engaging external stakeholders on sustainability. Stakeholders might include suppliers, contractors, customers, regulators and others. You can include evidence of meetings, written communications, surveys or events.

Gold Criteria	Examples of suitable evidence
G6.4 Customers are aware of the organisation's approach to sustainability.	G6.4 Survey results, website feedback, website information, case studies, promotional material and other evidence can be used to support this criteria.
G6.5 Sustainability performance is externally reported.	G6.5 Evidence includes public sustainability reports, sustainability sections within annual reports, Global Reporting Initiative compliant reports or other industry specified reports.
G6.6 Active promotion of sustainability to external stakeholders to help drive sustainability within the sector and/or community.	G6.6 Evidence could include records of events, presentations, conference papers, meeting minutes, chambers of commerce presentations, presentation at local and sector based networks.

Achievements	
Gold Criteria	Examples of suitable evidence
G7.1 There are quantifiable improvements in resource efficiencies across a range of measures since the last application.	G7.1 Complete the Recognition Data Template demonstrating improvements more than two aspects of resource efficiency. You may have achieved a gross reduction in resource use or waste or your savings might be evident on a per unit productivity measure basis. Follow the instructions in the template.
G7.2 Progress has been made towards the goals listed in the previous applications and/or current goals.	G7.2 Demonstrate your progress to the goals you listed in section 4.1 of your previous application and/or your current sustainability goals.
G7.3 Improvements in internal and external engagement on sustainability since the last application including evidence of an internal culture supportive of the organisation's sustainability goals.	G7.3 This can include the results of staff surveys indicating changes in attitude or customer or supplier surveys indicating their awareness of your sustainability objectives. You can describe how you are engaging staff or external stakeholders (meetings, events, newsletters) or any other evidence of your success in creating a culture and awareness supportive of your sustainability goals.
G7.4 Completion of an innovative project or process that is leading sustainability within the sector since your last application. (either adopted internally or in collaboration with other organisations provided this organisation is a key driver).	G7.4 Evidence would include project plans, scoping papers, grant applications, business plans, meeting minutes, emails, evaluation report and the products of the project.

Recognition Data Template

Provide a summary of your annual data to support your recognition application.

Please note the following:

- All data should be both quantity and cost based.
- You can choose the specific measures that best suit your business, using those below as a guide, provided you are addressing energy, water, waste and resource use.
- Productivity measures are not essential, however, if your organisation's usage has increased overall you can use productivity measures to demonstrate a decrease per unit of production.
- You need to provide data that covers all sites or parts of the organisation as described in the scope section of the application. If this is not possible you should provide a statement about the scope of this data as this is important for ensuring valid future comparisons.
- Add further columns as required.

Measure	Baseline year: 20____	20____	20____	Comments
	12 months to: _____	12 months to: _____	12 months to: _____	

Quantity				
Electricity (kWh)				
Water (kl)				
Petrol (litres)				
Diesel (litres)				
Natural gas (MJ)				
LPG gas (MJ)				
Waste to landfill (by weight or volume)				
Hazardous waste (by weight or volume)				
Waste diverted from landfill (by weight or volume)				
Other measures...				

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Cost				
Electricity (kWh)				
Water (kl)				
Petrol (litres)				
Diesel (litres)				
Natural gas (MJ)				
LPG gas (MJ)				
Waste to landfill (by weight or volume)				
Hazardous waste (by weight or volume)				
Waste diverted from landfill (by weight or volume)				
Other measures...				

Productivity measures				
Turnover (\$)				
Number of staff				
Service area (m ²)				
Units of production (unit)				
Electricity/productivity measure				
Water/productivity measure				
Petrol/productivity measure				
Diesel/productivity measure				
Natural gas/productivity measure				
LPG gas/productivity measure				
Waste to landfill/productivity measure				
Hazardous Waste/productivity measure				
Waste diverted from landfill/ productivity measure				

Further information

- Visit the Sustainability Advantage website www.environment.nsw.gov.au/sustainabilityadvantage/recognition.htm for up-to-date information on the Recognition Scheme, including:
 - Recognition Scheme Overview
 - Pathways to Recognition (comparison criteria for Bronze, Silver and Gold Partners)
 - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
- Contact the Sustainability Advantage team: sustainbus@environment.nsw.gov.au