



SILVER 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 Silver 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)**.

Contents

About the Sustainability Advantage Recognition Scheme.....	2
Guide for applicants	3
Silver application recognition criteria and examples of evidence	5
Recognition Data Template (sample form)	9

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.

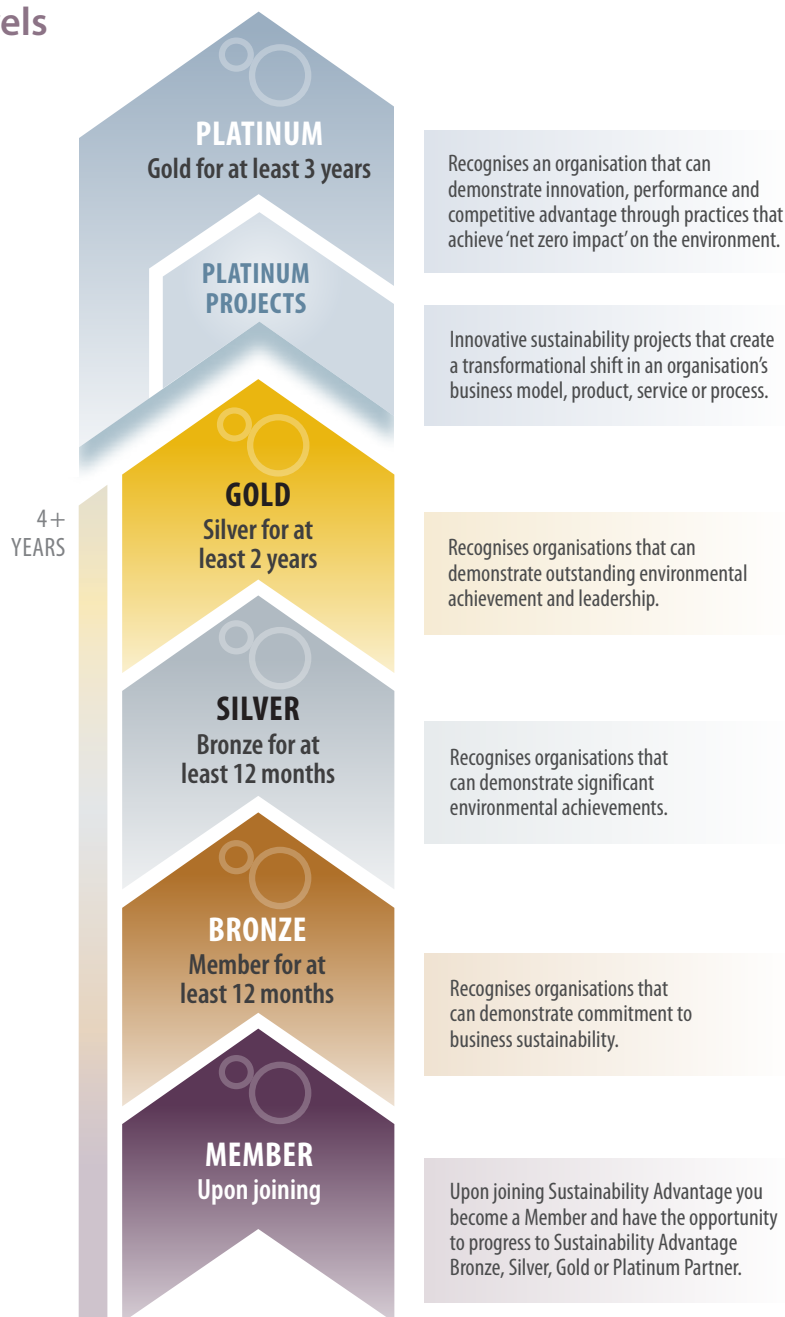
We believe that organisations committed to sustainability and achieving real improvements deserve to be recognised.

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 Silver 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 Silver 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.

Silver application recognition criteria and examples of evidence

You are asked to describe how your organisation meets each of the 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	
Silver Criteria	Examples of suitable evidence
S1.1 Bronze member of SA for 12 months.	S1.1 Date Bronze application was approved.
S1.2 SA Diagnostic has been repeated to identify gaps and measure progress (optional).	S1.2 Date the SA Diagnostic was repeated. Note that this is an optional criterion.
S1.3 Ongoing management commitment to participation in the SA program.	S1.3 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.
S1.4 Completion of at least three SA modules since joining the Program.	S1.4 Detail evidence of completion of three SA modules. You need to attach final reports and/or action plans that were developed as part of each module.
S1.5 Ongoing participation in networking or other SA or industry sustainability events since attaining Bronze membership.	S1.5 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).

Leadership, Commitment and Planning for Business Sustainability	
Silver Criteria	Examples of suitable evidence
S2.1 A position statement on sustainability exists for the business and has been signed off or reindorsed by the CEO, or equivalent, within the last two years.	S2.1 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 needs to be endorsed by the CEO, or if not, you need to provide information about the relevance of the endorsement (for example, a site manager for a policy that applies only to one site). The document should have been developed or reviewed within the last two years.
S2.2 The position statement is communicated to staff and external stakeholders.	S2.2 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, meeting agendas, minutes, notice boards, staff emails or messages from management.

Silver Criteria	Examples of suitable evidence
S3.1 A process or system exists which enables the collection of resource usage and waste data for the organisation and includes productivity measures.	S3.1 Provide a copy of the system used for collecting data – this might include a description and screen shots or a copy of a spreadsheet. The system should be capable of collecting some or all of the data listed in the Recognition Data Template.
S3.2 There is resource efficiency data for at least two years in addition and comparable to the baseline year.	S3.2 Complete the Recognition Data Template showing the year you have chosen as the baseline and the annual data summaries for the baseline year and two 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).
S3.3 Scope 1 and 2 greenhouse gas emissions for the organisation have been quantified and the scope defined.	S3.3 Attach a greenhouse gas inventory report or equivalent.
S3.4 Opportunities for benchmarking environmental performance within the industry have been investigated.	S3.4 If you have already commenced benchmarking, provide details here describing the process, peer group and the measures being benchmarked. To fulfil this criterion you do not need to have commenced benchmarking, you only need to demonstrate that you have investigated existing suitable schemes. Evidence for this could include communication with industry associations, peers or assessing the applicability of existing schemes to your business.
S4.1 Current sustainability goals, while still specific and measurable, are broader in coverage and/or more ambitious than those in the Bronze application. These goals are consistent with the organisation's position statement (refer S2.1).	S4.1 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 a sustainability specific plan or strategy.
S4.2 A process exists for reporting and evaluating progress towards goals and for reviewing and setting new goals to drive continuous improvement.	S4.2 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.
S5.1 There are strategies or actions in place for implementing sustainability measures in the organisation's key business areas, for example: human resources, operations, contracting, procurement, logistics, risk management, acquisitions.	S5.1 To fulfil this criterion you do not have to have implemented these strategies, you only have to show that you have identified, resourced and put a timeframe on future implementation. For those that are already implemented, show what strategies you have in place for review and improvement. Suitable evidence could include a copy of a sustainability strategy or action plan or relevant line items in a broader strategy document showing the strategies or actions that will be implemented to integrate sustainability into all of your organisation's key areas. Examples of strategies or actions include: investigating how to incorporate sustainability conditions into contract negotiations, a project by your human resources staff to review position descriptions to include sustainability, a training needs analysis to determine what training is required to enable staff to fulfil your sustainability goals. Your SA Diagnostic and Business Planning module will have identified areas requiring attention and may direct your approach.

Silver Criteria	Examples of suitable evidence
S5.2 There are strategies or actions in place to address each of the following: waste management, energy management, water management, resource use.	S5.2 As above, provide a relevant document showing the planned strategies or actions for addressing waste, energy, water and resource use. Examples of actions could include: planning and costing audits, staff education, equipment reviews, waste separation systems, technology feasibility investigations. Note that to fulfil this criterion you do not have to implement these strategies, you only have to show that you have identified, resourced and put a timeframe on future implementation. For those that are already implemented, show what strategies you have in place for review and improvement.
S5.3 Risks of climate change to the organisation have been investigated and there are strategies in place to adapt to or mitigate the risks.	S5.3 Demonstrate that you have assessed climate change risks and attach the strategy or action showing how you plan to mitigate and/or adapt, as relevant to your business.
S5.4 For each strategy or action referred to in S5.1, S5.2 and S5.3 there is a timeframe, allocated position responsible, budget allocation (where relevant), evaluation measures and reporting requirements.	S5.4 Your strategy documents or others such as performance agreements, budget line items or plans need to show how implementation will be managed to fulfil this criterion.
S5.5 The strategies/actions listed above are endorsed by senior management.	S5.5 Demonstrate by providing evidence of approval such as sign off sheet, authorisation, minutes of a meeting, email etc.

Internal and External Engagement	
Silver Criteria	Examples of suitable evidence
S6.1 Additional actions have been implemented to engage staff since Bronze application including opportunities for staff to have input into sustainability priorities.	S6.1 Describe how your organisation is engaging staff. Examples include: completion of the Staff Engagement module and submission of the plan and final report showing actions taken, establishment of a sustainability team, staff attitudes survey, development of a system for inviting staff-led sustainability initiatives or work practice improvements, training in sustainability, workshops enabling staff input into vision and goal setting, workshops communicating organisational vision, goals and policy on sustainability.
S6.2 Implementation of at least three staff engagement projects since Bronze application.	S6.2 Provide evidence of a project to engage staff such as: awareness raising events, volunteer programs, ride to work day.
S6.3 Engagement on sustainability with external stakeholders including the supply chain is underway.	S6.3 Describe how your organisation is engaging external stakeholders on sustainability. Stakeholders might include suppliers, contractors, customers, regulators, peak bodies, sector associations and other important stakeholders. You can include evidence of meetings, written communications, surveys or events.

Achievements	
Silver Criteria	Examples of suitable evidence
S7.1 There are quantifiable improvements in resource efficiencies for two years compared to the nominated baseline year in at least two key measures.	S7.1 Complete the Recognition Data Template demonstrating improvements in at least 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.
S7.2 Progress has been made towards the sustainability goals listed in the Bronze application and/or the current sustainability goals.	S7.2 Demonstrate your progress towards your current sustainability goals. You can also include progress on any strategies or actions listed in B5.1 and B5.2 of your Bronze application. The aim is to show what you have achieved.
S7.3 Quantitative or qualitative results showing internal or external engagement on sustainability since the Bronze application.	S7.3 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.

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: _____		

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