CSR ACCREDITATION
Show that you care




# **Guidance for** CSR Accreditation for Sole Traders & Micro Business

**Independent validation** for sustainable business

# Guidance for Accreditation
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CSR ACCREDITATION

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# PART 1 - An **Introduction** to CSR & CSR-A

# Corporate Social Responsibility **as a Strategic Tool**

**CSR Accreditation (CSR-A) have established a new standard and framework for social responsibility that allows organisations to define, measure and report relevant activity.**

This framework will ultimately deliver a CSR accreditation, data for ESG reporting, identify relevant activity corresponding to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, increase stakeholder engagement and provide powerful brand reputation benefits. The framework is designed around the CSR Four Pillars of Environment, Workplace, Community and Philanthropy.

The CSR accreditation application process allows for private, third and public sector organisations of every size to record, develop and deliver impact and purpose. Ultimately CSR accreditation shapes policy that can be developed to support an ongoing social responsibility strategy which should be integrated into every business strategy.

CSR accreditation provides independent recognition of an organisation's socially responsible activities. It is a powerful way to communicate these positive actions to all audiences and stakeholders. Customers and clients want to trust organisations that they engage with. Employees want to work for values-driven employers and investors want to know that an organisation is addressing it's social and ethical responsibilities.

It is clear that organisations who understand their social responsibilities and explore ways in which to integrate them into strategy will reap the rewards of enhanced competitive positions. Ultimately these strategies will benefit all stakeholders and wider society.



**Richard Collins**

Managing Director CSR-A

# 1.0 An **Introduction** to CSR & CSR-A

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**Please familiarise yourself with all four sections of this document. It contains vital information for the composition of your CSR accreditation application!**

The guidance contains essential information to help you through the process of application and provides vital activity lists, categorised by the Four Pillars on the types of activity that are required for successful applications. CSR-A applies a 'blank canvas' approach to applications and you are encouraged to include all and any information on CSR activity that is outside of the experience described here. We are very interested in any unique or innovative activity so please make sure you include it in the 'Further Information' section provided at the end of the online application form.

# 1.1 What is Corporate Social Responsibility **Accreditation**?

**Good CSR policies drive positive corporate change. Supported by well defined objectives and measurable targets, the efforts you make toward your CSR accreditation application will provide the foundations for ongoing policy for integration into business strategy, ensuring a sustainable and ethical organisation.**

Organisations and their stakeholders, are now aware of the essential nature and intrinsic benefits of socially responsible behaviour.

An organisation's activity in relation to the society in which it operates and its impact on the environment have become a critical part of the measurement of overall performance and ultimately affects whether it can continue to operate effectively. Organisations are now subject to greater scrutiny by their various stakeholder groups and by society at large.

The ultimate aim is to achieve a positive impact on society as a whole while maximising the creation of shared value for all stakeholders.

CSR accreditation examines all the impacts an organisation has on the environment, society and stakeholders, providing the information you require to mitigate risk and plan for future sustainability and growth.

**A CSR accreditation should be used to:**

- Deliver the information required for ESG (Environmental Social Governance) reporting for tendering and investment.
- Identify any United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) which you may wish to support.
- Write a social value policy.
- Reduce negative impact across all Four Pillars
- Produce a social impact report.
- Enrich, enable and engage employees, shareholders and stakeholders.

A report by Social Enterprise UK has revealed that **one third of councils in England** now routinely consider social value and Corporate Social Responsibility in their procurement and commissioning briefs.
**Thornton & Lowe**

# 1.2 **Why Achieve** CSR Accreditation

**Effective CSR policy has many advantages that apply to all organisations, regardless of size, purpose or sector.**

In addressing social responsibility issues an organisation should first understand two vital relationships.

1. **Between the organisation, the environment and society.** All operational decisions, activities and processes impact on society and the environment.
2. **Between the organisation and its stakeholders.** An organisation should be aware of all its stakeholders ie. those whose interests are directly affected by the decisions, activities and processes of the organisation.

Positive corporate social responsibility policy improves an organisation's public image, reputation and relationship with consumers. It also improves its relationship with its employees and its wider range of stakeholders.

## It's all about impacts.

Good impacts improve:

- Consumer loyalty
- End user loyalty
- Staff loyalty
- Referrals and brand visibility

Customers want to trust organisations they engage with. Employees want to work for values-driven employers and investors want to know that an organisation is addressing its ethical responsibilities.

It is amazing what we are already doing that we don't talk about. Most of us will have already implemented positive action in one or more of the CSR Four Pillars.

Achieving CSR accreditation is a visible testimony of excellence in social responsibility policy and practice. The accreditation enables you to better integrate social, environmental, ethical, human rights and consumer concerns into your business operations and strategy and provides you with a real competitive advantage.

## Organisational governance & CSR accreditation

Organisational governance is the most crucial factor in enabling an organisation to take responsibility for its impacts. In today's climate of immediate social media reaction and heightened public awareness, it is vital that organisations avoid green/blue washing and demonstrate that they are doing what they say they are going to do.

The CSR accreditation enables your organisation to focus and structure your CSR activities in a way that supports other mechanisms you may be required to engage, such as ESG reporting, Ecovardis and various other client bespoke tools.

# 1.3 Application & Accreditation **Overview**

**CSR accreditation is the assessment of an organisation's CSR activity and requires that an organisation and its senior management is committed to maintaining acceptable standards during the two year period of accreditation. Ideally senior management will drive, build and develop on good practice over the three year period and achieve re-accreditation at the end of the cycle.**

The process of achieving CSR accreditation begins with your own assessment of every aspect of your organisation's operations and activities in regard to social responsibility.

CSR accreditation is available to any private, public or third sector organisation which can demonstrate a measurable 12 month period of CSR activity. Any organisation may apply for accreditation, regardless of legal structure, whether it is an incorporated business, a sole trader/micro, partnership, public or third sector.

Organisations may apply for accreditation in its entirety, as a particular site or branch of a larger entity or a division within an organisation.

## Accreditation under the scheme for such organisations is conditional upon:

A comprehensive report of the policies, structures and actions regarding responsible business practice that the applicant has in place and has undertaken. All organisations submit an application structured around our Four Pillars of CSR (Section 2), with help from our Guidance Notes (Section 4.3) and the online application form provided.

An organisation must demonstrate where possible that claims are genuine with the providence of supporting documentation uploaded with the application. Supporting documentation must be submitted in the requested formats (See Section 3.12).

## Application outcomes

The independent assessment panel will scrutinise the application and supporting documentation against the Guidance Notes (Section 4.3). Three members of the independent assessment panel will score the application. The scores from all three are calculated and the results inform CSR-A whether to award gold, silver or bronze accreditation or provide gap analysis.

All successful applications will receive a Gold, Silver or Bronze accreditation. Any applicants that are unsuccessful will receive a gap analysis report and a chance to re-apply for a nominal fee within a three month period.

Achieving CSR accreditation recognises and endorses your organisation's actions in regard of CSR practices. The application document provides base data that can be built on to monitor and report your CSR activities and can be used as content for a social impact report.

# 1.3.1 Application **Process**

1. Complete the simple registration form on our website for free.
2. Create your application account online.
3. Familiarise yourself with this guidance document. There's no need to read it all!
4. Collate all the relevant information you can find from individuals and departments within your organisation. We want to hear what you have been doing. This could include everything from on-site energy saving initiatives to sponsoring a local football team, programs, events, initiatives and projects in which you and your colleagues have been involved. Its amazing what we are already doing that we don't talk about!
5. Collect certifications, statistics and results. Collate supporting documentation into up-loadable formats. Collect, examine and analyse data. Calculate savings both financial and in resources. Include relevant memberships and accreditations.
6. Format your findings into our Four Pillars of CSR on our online application form.
7. Once you have completed your online application and collated and uploaded all your supporting documentation and click Submit.
8. Let our independent assessment panel do the rest.
9. You will be informed of the results via email. Results may be accompanied by gap analysis and an invitation to re-apply within a three month period for just an admin fee, if you failed to achieve the standard for accreditation.
10. Receive your CSR accreditation mark and promotional pack, all the benefits of membership and competitive advantage that accreditation provides.

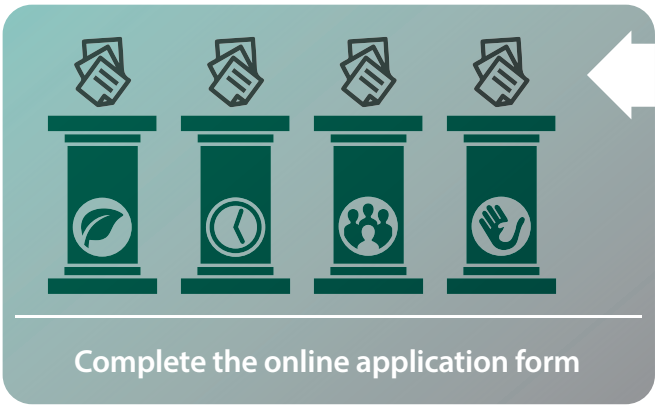
# 1.3.2 Application **Illustrated**



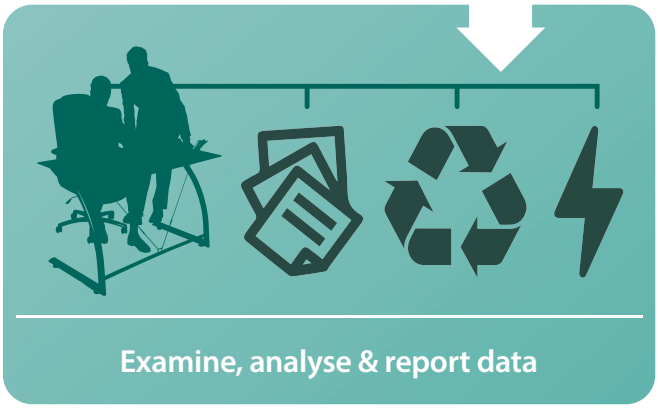
Register & download resources



Talk to colleagues & collate information



Complete the online application form



Examine, analyse & report data



Upload supporting documentation & submit



Our assessment panel will do the rest!

# 1.3.3 Accreditation **Process**

**The independent assessment panel will review your application document and supporting documentation. All applications are assessed by 2 panel members. The panel are guided by the Independent Assessment Guidance Notes (Section 3.1) to score an application.**

The assessment panel is totally independent of CSR-A. They are selected because of their appropriate knowledge, their professional backgrounds and relevant experience.

The application process is not a 'tick box' exercise. You do not need to show activity in every one of the Four Pillars to submit a successful application. Invariably organisations differ greatly in the strength of activity in each pillar.

The activity lists found in Section 2 "The Four Pillars of CSR' are intended as suggestions to stimulate thinking and elicit information. The independent assessment panel are keen to hear about any original process or thinking by organisations and are encouraged to score bonus points for this type of activity. This differentiates CSR-A from other measurement tools.

The independent assessment panel meets monthly to assess applications.

## Scoring applications

1. Applications scoring 80+% of full marks will be awarded Gold status.
2. Applications scoring 65-79% of full marks will be awarded Silver status
3. Applications scoring 50-64% of full marks will be awarded Bronze status

Any applicants that are unsuccessful will receive a gap analysis report on their application and a chance to re-apply within three months incurring only a nominal administration fee.

The CSR accreditation cycle lasts for three

years. Organisations must re-apply for assessment at the end of this three year cycle. The application fee for Accredited members is discounted by 10%.

# 1.3.4 Accreditation **Illustrated**



Applications distributed to assessment panel



Three panellists review each application



Panel empowered to reward merit



Panel informed by guidance notes (3.1)



Results returned to CSR-A for distribution



CSR-A award accreditation mark & pack

# 1.4 The Benefits of **Accreditation**

### Better brand recognition:

Improve your brand reputation to all of your audiences through delivering responsible practices throughout your organisation, the communities in which you exist and your supply chain.

### Positive brand reputation:

Building a reputation as a responsible organisation will lead to competitive advantage.

### Customer/client engagement:

CSR accreditation will help you engage with your customers in new ways. The message is about something 'good', so is an easier way to talk to your customers. Organisations often favour suppliers who have responsible policies, as this will reflect on how their customers see them. Some customers don't just prefer to deal with responsible companies – they insist on it.

### Employee engagement:

Employees want to feel proud of the organisation they work for and are less likely to look for a job elsewhere. Accreditation shows an emotional investment that enriches the quality of our lives by delivering social value and purpose. It reduces absenteeism and improves productivity.

### Become an employer of choice

CSR activities will help forge a stronger bond between employee and employer, activity will boost morale and will help both employees and employers feel more connected with each other and the world around them. An organisation that delivers social value is aligning their values to those of the next generation.

### Investment:

Investors are more likely to be attracted to and continue to support organisations that demonstrate a commitment to the environment, to stakeholders and to the communities in which they exist. Accreditation informs ESG Reporting and other measurement tools.

### Environment:

Show how your organisation is minimising negative environmental impact, conserving resources, saving energy and reducing waste.

### Tendering trends:

A robust approach to social responsibility will give you an advantage in the tender process. It is now common place to be scored on your Social Responsibility performance when tendering for both public and private projects.

### PR and marketing:

CSR accreditation provides the perfect opportunity to share positive stories online and through traditional media.

# 1.4.1 Benefits **Illustrated**



# 1.5 The Benefits of **Membership**

**Every organisation that submits a successful CSR accreditation application becomes a CSR-A Member and will benefit from:**

- Two years CSR accreditation.
- A CSR accreditation mark pack and tool-kit.
- An accreditation certificate.
- Automatic entry to the International CSR Excellence Awards
- Inclusion in our CSR Accredited members directory on the CSR-A website.
- A tree planted in applicants name.
- CSR-A will donate 5% of profits to charity. Charities will be rotated and reflect each of the Four Pillars
- An Annual CSR Health Check – A free, one hour telephone consultation.
- Re-accreditation consultation call 6 months prior to your accreditation renewal at the end of the three year cycle.
- Members newsletter and exclusive offers.
- Dedicated members area on the CSR-A website providing exclusive content.
- Exclusive members discounts for training, webinars and events.
- 10% discount is applied to your CSR accreditation renewal application fee.

Green Earth Appeal
GreenEarthAppeal.org

## We will plant a tree for every successful CSR accreditation

The Green Earth Appeal is a Not-For-Profit Social Enterprise, changing lives of some of the planet's poorest communities through tree planting, in partnership with the United Nations Environment Program and with the assistance of organisations like yours.

**www.greenearthappeal.org**

CSR
THE INTERNATIONAL CSR EXCELLENCE AWARDS
for companies that have a heart

## Entry into The International CSR Excellence Awards

All successful CSR accreditation applicants will be automatically entered into the International CSR Excellence Awards.

**www.csrawards.co.uk**

# 1.6 The CSR-A **Mark of Excellence**

**Achieving CSR accreditation is a visible testimony of your commitment and impacts. The accreditation shows you have integrated CSR initiatives throughout your operations and provides you with real competitive advantage.**

Upon successful accreditation we supply you with a CSR-A pack containing your mark for display across all your brand touch-points such as social media, website, advertising, printed materials, and vehicles. The accreditation application also provides content for a social impact report.

Your accreditation mark should be displayed across all your branded and customer facing communications and your efforts should be communicated up and down your supply chain encouraging others to follow your example.









# 1.7 **Fees** for Application

For our full list of accreditation application fees and product packages please **click here**

# 1.8 The **2 Year** Accreditation Cycle

## Accreditation is valid for 2 years

Achieving CSR accreditation is a visible testimony of your excellence in Social Responsibility.

The accreditation shows you have integrated Social Responsibility initiatives throughout your operations and provides you with real competitive advantage.

Upon successful accreditation we will supply you with an accreditation Pack and Logo Tool-kit for display across all your brand touch-points.

Every successful CSR accreditation benefits from:

- Two years CSR accreditation
- A CSR accreditation logo pack and guidelines
- An accreditation certificate
- A tree planted in your name
- Automatic entry to the International CSR Excellence Awards
- Inclusion in our CSR accredited members directory
- 5% of every application fee will go to our nominated charity
- An annual CSR health check – One hour free consultation
- CSR accreditation consultation call 6 months before your accreditation renewal
- Members newsletters
- Exclusive members discounts for training, webinars and events
- 10% discount on your CSR accreditation renewal application fee

## Re-accreditation

Your CSR accreditation expires after 2 years. The date of expiry can be found in your accreditation guide which is supplied with your pack. You will receive a re-accreditation notification 6 months prior to your re-accreditation date as part of our membership package. This should provide ample time to prepare your application which is subject to a 10% discounted application fee.

## Lapsed accreditations

If you do not apply for re-accreditation within one month of the expiry date, your accreditation is deemed to have expired and you are required to remove your accreditation mark from all live and ongoing promotional brand materials.



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# PART 2 - The **Four Pillars** of CSR

# 2.0 The **Four Pillars** of CSR

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# 2.0 The **Four Pillars** Overview

**The Four Pillars are designed to add structure to a wide range of socially responsible activities that an organisation can engage in. This structure allows activities to be identified, categorised and measured.**

Use the CSR-A Four Pillars structure in conjunction with the Independent Assessment Panel Guidance Notes & Criteria to help you when composing your application. You may identify practices that are not shown on the Four Pillars activity lists. Please include anything you consider relevant. We are interested in any and all activity which demonstrates benefit to the environment, your workforce and the local and wider community. Carry out a gap analysis to identify areas that need addressing. Along with reporting on what you are already doing, the Independent Assessment Panel are interested in plans for future activity.



## Environment Pillar

Focuses on eco-issues such as the mitigation of climate change, energy conservation, waste and re-cycling and carbon footprint.



## Community Pillar

Focuses on how organisations provide support for communities. Community involvement engages staff in a meaningful way.



## Workplace Pillar

Focuses on policy and activity that improves working conditions and addresses work life balance for employees and their families. It also encompasses ethical products and services and customer/client care issues.



## Philanthropy Pillar

Support for charities through volunteering, donation, sponsorship or other means. The Community and Philanthropy Pillars have some overlap. It is left up to the applicant organisation to decide which Pillar is relevant.

# 2.1 **Environment** Pillar

The decisions and activities of organisations invariably have an impact on the environment no matter where they are located. These impacts may be associated with the organisation's use of resources, the activities of the organisation, the generation of pollution and wastes, and the impacts of the organisation's activities on natural habitats. To reduce environmental impacts, organisations should adopt an integrated approach that takes into consideration the direct and indirect economic, social, health and environmental implications of their decisions and activities.

# 2.1.0 **Environmental** Activities List - Overview

## Environmental - Energy

- Low energy heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems.
- Renewable energy and green technologies.
- LED Lighting or low energy lights.
- Low energy heating, waste heat recovery or combined heat and power systems.
- Low flow plumbing, touch free taps, grey water and rainwater harvesting.
- Long service life ventilation and air conditioning units and energy recovery solutions.
- Recycling, responsible disposal and up-cycling of office equipment.
- Low carbon buildings, steel fabrication and modular construction.
- Behavioural measures and good housekeeping practices.
- Employee engagement in energy efficiency.
- Energy saving awareness campaigns in the workplace.
- Climate change mitigation and adaptation policy.

## Environmental - Natural Resources

- Do you have a water saving policy?
- Water efficient toilets, kitchens - aerators, dual flush toilets, water meters.
- Reduced dependence on fossil fuels.
- Greenhouse gas reduction - building insulation, more efficient appliances and boilers
- Behavioural measures - switching off lights and appliances, turning down thermostats.
- Improved biodiversity - promoting the diversity of habitats and species at premises and/or in the wider community.
- Sustainable resource use - recycled paper, refillable printer cartridges, fair trade suppliers.

## Environmental - Travel

- Does your organisation have a travel policy in place?
- Minimising business travel - through use of technology and/or best practice.
- Teleconferencing and digital meeting platforms.
- Low carbon driving incentives such as hybrid and electric vehicles.
- Promoting hybrid, electric and low carbon vehicles available through fleet and/or staff company car scheme.
- Sustainable motoring infrastructure - installing charge points for electric vehicles.
- The Government's Cycle to Work Scheme - government tax exemption initiative introduced in the Finance Act 1999.
- Car sharing schemes.
- Commuting plans - remote working and flexible hours, commuters clubs.
- Work from home days.
- Clean air initiatives - waste and recycling consolidation, streamlining deliveries.

## Environmental - Supply Chain Management

- Does you have a sustainable supply chain policy?
- Do you monitor your supplier chain - motivate suppliers, work collaboratively?
- Reduce product miles - source local suppliers, streamline supplier activity.
- Monitor baseline performance with suppliers.
- Develop collaborative training and capacity building programmes.

## Environmental - Waste

- Do you have a waste management policy?
- Do you recycle paper and card?
- Do you recycle, repair, reuse office equipment - furniture, computers etc.?
- Do you source alternative materials to plastics?
- Do you have a zero waste to landfill policy?
- Food waste reduction - anaerobic digestion.
- Hazardous waste management - including but not limited to: Aerosols Adhesives Industrial Solvents Waste Electrical and Electronic equipment (WEEE) Fluorescent tubes Batteries Laboratory and Bulk Chemicals Acids Washings Rags, wipes, contaminated packaging Pharmaceuticals Paint Oil Asbestos Sanitary Waste.
- Prevention of pollution - discharges to water, waste management, use and disposal of toxic and hazardous chemicals, other identifiable forms of pollution.

## 2.1.1 Energy

### Does your organisation have an environmental policy? Do you implement and monitor energy saving initiatives?

All traditional energy sources have negative effects. But they differ enormously in their negative aspects. Fossil fuels are the dirtiest and most immediately dangerous to the environment. Nuclear energy sources are cleaner but carry the potential for disaster and have the inherent problem of hazardous waste disposal.

Sustainable energy is power which is able to be replenished within a human lifetime and so cause no long-term damage to the environment. Sustainable energy includes all renewable energy sources, such as hydroelectricity, biomass, geothermal, wind, wave, tidal and solar energies.

- Consider energy consumption in buildings - monitoring and low energy heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems.
- Renewable energy and green technologies - where possible, incorporated into business practice, functions and premises.
- Lighting - such as LED and low energy lights.
- Heating - low energy, waste heat recovery or combined heat and power systems.
- Hot water usage - low flow plumbing, touch free taps, grey water and rainwater harvesting.
- Ventilation and air conditioning - long service life units and energy recovery.
- Office equipment - recycling, responsible disposal and up-cycling.
- Building Fabric - steel fabrication and modular construction.
- Low carbon buildings.
- Good housekeeping and people solutions.
- Employee engagement in energy efficiency.
- Energy saving awareness campaigns in the workplace.
- Climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- Carbon foot-printing: Does your organisation measure its carbon footprint? What statistics, KPIs and reductions have you made?
- Please show statistical data where available.

## 2.1.2 Natural Resources

### Does your organisation have a policy for conserving natural resources?

Natural resources are materials from the Earth that are used to support life and meet people's needs. They include oil, coal, natural gas, metals, stone and sand and are naturally occurring on our planet. Other natural resources are air, sunlight, soil and water. Animals, birds, fish and plants can also be classified natural resources.

Natural resources are classified as potential, actual, reserve, or stock resources based on their stage of development. Natural resources are either renewable or non-renewable depending on whether or not they replenish naturally.

- Water efficient toilets, kitchens - aerators, dual flush toilets, installing water meters.
- Reduce dependence on oil and gas.
- Greenhouse gas reduction - building insulation, more efficient appliances and boilers, behavioural measures - switching off lights and appliances, turning down thermostats.
- Improved biodiversity - promoting the diversity of habitats and species within premises and in the wider community.
- Sustainable resource use - recycled paper, refillable printer cartridges, fair trade suppliers.

## 2.1.3 Travel

### Does your organisation have a sustainable travel policy in place?

In this case travel refers to commuting to and from the place of work and any requirements such as travelling to and from meetings away from the place of work.

- Minimising business travel - through use of technology and/or best practice.
- Teleconferencing - Facetime, Skype and other digital meeting platforms.
- Low carbon driving incentives - hybrid and electric vehicles.
- Promoting hybrid, electric and low carbon vehicles available through fleet and/or staff company car scheme.
- Sustainable motoring infrastructure - installing charge points for electric vehicles.
- The Government's Cycle to Work Scheme - government tax exemption initiative introduced in the Finance Act 1999.
- Car sharing schemes.
- Commuting plans - remote working and flexible hours, commuter's clubs.
- Work from home days.
- Clean air initiatives - waste and recycling consolidation, streamlining deliveries.

## 2.1.4 Supply Chain Management

### Does your organisation operate a sustainable supply chain policy?

A supply chain is defined as the entire process of making and selling commercial goods, including every stage from the supply of materials and the manufacture of the goods through to their distribution and sale. Successfully managing supply chains is essential to any company hoping to compete.

- Map your supplier chain - motivate suppliers, work collaboratively.
- Reduce product miles - source local suppliers, streamline supplier activity.
- Monitor baseline performance with suppliers.
- Develop training and capacity building programmes.

## 2.1.5 Waste

### Does your organisation have a waste management policy?

Waste management is the activities and actions required to manage waste from its inception to its disposal. This includes the collection, transport, treatment and disposal of waste, together with monitoring and regulation of the waste management process.

There are four major categories of waste: municipal solid waste, industrial waste, agricultural waste and hazardous waste.

Waste management reduces the effect of waste on the environment, health, and so on. It can also help reuse or recycle resources, such as; paper, cans, glass, and so on. There are various type of waste management that include the disposal of solid, liquid, gaseous, or hazardous substances

As citizens of a society we have a responsibility to manage our waste sustainably. We can do this following the five R's of waste management: reduce, reuse, recycle, recover and residual management.

- Recycle paper and card.
- Recycle, repair, reuse office equipment - furniture, computers etc..
- Plastics - source alternative materials, repair, reuse, recycle.
- Have a zero waste to landfill policy.
- Have reducing, reusing, recycling policies.
- Food waste reduction - anaerobic digestion.
- Hazardous waste management - including but not limited to: Aerosols Adhesives Industrial Solvents Waste Electrical and Electronic equipment (WEEE) Fluorescent tubes Batteries Laboratory and Bulk Chemicals Acids Washings Rags, wipes, contaminated packaging Pharmaceuticals Paint Oil Asbestos Sanitary Waste.
- Prevention of pollution - discharges to water, waste management, use and disposal of toxic and hazardous chemicals, other identifiable forms of pollution.

# 2.2 **Workplace** Pillar



The relationship between a company and its employees has a big impact on the relationship between a company and its customers. Organisations should embrace workplace responsibility as an essential part of any business model. Employee values are rapidly changing and organisations must follow suit and match this strive for worth and sustainability. Embracing policy that nurtures and protects staff contributes to greater business success. Organisations should explore incorporating a holistic view of their strategies and reap the many benefits that this provides.

# 2.2.0 **Workplace** Activities List - Overview

## Workplace - Training

- Training - is all essential and developmental training provided?
- Apprenticeships - do you have an apprenticeship scheme, could you implement one?
- Leadership training, learning and development.
- Education - training schemes, employee advancement, skills training.
- Promotion prospects - promotions within existing staff, training, loyalty to staff.
- Work experience schemes - facilities and placements for pupils and students.
- Skills development - keeping staff trained in current techniques, technology and process.

## Workplace - Labour practice

- Internal promotion of workers.
- Flexible working opportunities.
- Disciplinary and grievance procedures.
- The transfer and relocation of workers following termination of employment.
- Training and skills development.
- Health, safety and industrial hygiene.
- Fair wages and other forms of compensation.
- Working time and rest periods.
- Holiday allowance and pay.
- Fair disciplinary and dismissal practices.
- Provision of canteens.
- Access to medical services.

## Workplace - Ethical Practice

- Responsible products and services.
- Corporate Citizenship - recognizing rights, responsibilities and aspirations.
- Social impact reporting - recording your CSR activities for the benefit of your organisation, your stakeholders, and the wider community.
- Employee communication on CSR - promoting good practice.
- Ethical investment - support companies that benefit the community and avoid those whose products and services or business practices are not good CSR.
- Fair Trade - actively supporting producers, awareness raising and in campaigning for changes in the rules and practice of conventional international trade.
- Sustainable procurement - examination and implementation positive of supply chain.

## Workplace - Governance

- Socially responsible decision-making and implementation.
- Investment - of corporate time/effort/funding.
- Employee benefits - profit sharing schemes, group insurance (health, dental, life etc), disability income protection, retirement benefits, childcare, training, sick leave.
- Health and well-being - education, activities, counselling.
- Allowing observance of national or religious traditions and customs.
- CSR initiatives - for communities/customers/employees/environment.

## Workplace - Policy

- Occupational health and safety.
- Diversity and Inclusion.
- Equal opportunities.
- Health support - education, activities, counselling.
- Staff well-being - mental and physical health support.
- Family commitment - childcare subsidies or provision, parental leave, carer facilities, maternity and paternity agreements.
- Flexible working.
- Volunteering time or days.
- Healthcare benefits such as gym memberships etc.
- Customer Care - policy, processes and exceptional activities.
- Customer or consumer relationships - policy, processes and exceptional activities.
- Any other facilities that can help workers achieve a proper work-life balance.

# 2.3 **Community** Pillar

It is widely accepted today that organisations have a relationship with the communities in which they operate. This relationship should be based on community involvement which in turn, contributes to community development. Healthy and prosperous communities ultimately, strengthen the civil society upon which we all rely to live our most fulfilling lives.

An organisation's community involvement should arise out of recognition that every organisation is a stakeholder in the community, sharing common interests.

An organisation's contribution to community development will help to promote higher levels of well being in the community. Such development leads to the improvement in the quality of life of a population.

Community development is not a linear process. It is a long-term process in which different and conflicting interests will be present. Historical and cultural characteristics make each community unique and influence the possibilities of its future.

Organisations can also contribute through social investments in wealth and income creation through local economic development initiatives, expanding education and skills development programmes, promoting and preserving culture and the arts and providing or promoting community health services.

Community development may include institutional strengthening of the community, through involvement with groups and collective forums, cultural, social and environmental programmes and local networks involving multiple institutions.

Community involvement is an organisation's proactive outreach to the community. It is aimed at preventing and solving problems, fostering partnerships with local organisations and stakeholders and aspiring to be a good 'corporate citizen'.

# 2.3.0 **Community** Activities List - Overview

## Community - Engagement

- Do you provide volunteering, sponsorship, financial giving, partnerships etc?
- Can engagement be expanded?
- What level commitment to do you have?
- How long have you been involved?
- What kind of support does your organisation offer?
- Do you provide volunteering, sponsorship, financial giving, partnerships etc?
- Do the projects you support provide Impact reporting on your involvement?
- Can you provide evidence of support through supporting literature, press releases etc.

## Community - Local Issues

- Do you support local projects?
- Do you prioritise local issues?
- Have local communities or areas benefited?
- Does your organisation support a local community project, community hub, playgrounds, libraries, social enterprise schemes, social housing, community farms, litter schemes, landscape and green spaces, community recycling initiatives, local arts groups, support to schools and colleges, support to local sporting activities.
- What kind of support does your organisation offer?
- Do you provide volunteering, sponsorship, financial giving, partnerships etc?
- Do the projects you support provide Impact reporting on your involvement?
- Can you provide evidence of support through supporting literature, press releases etc.

## Community - Wealth Creation

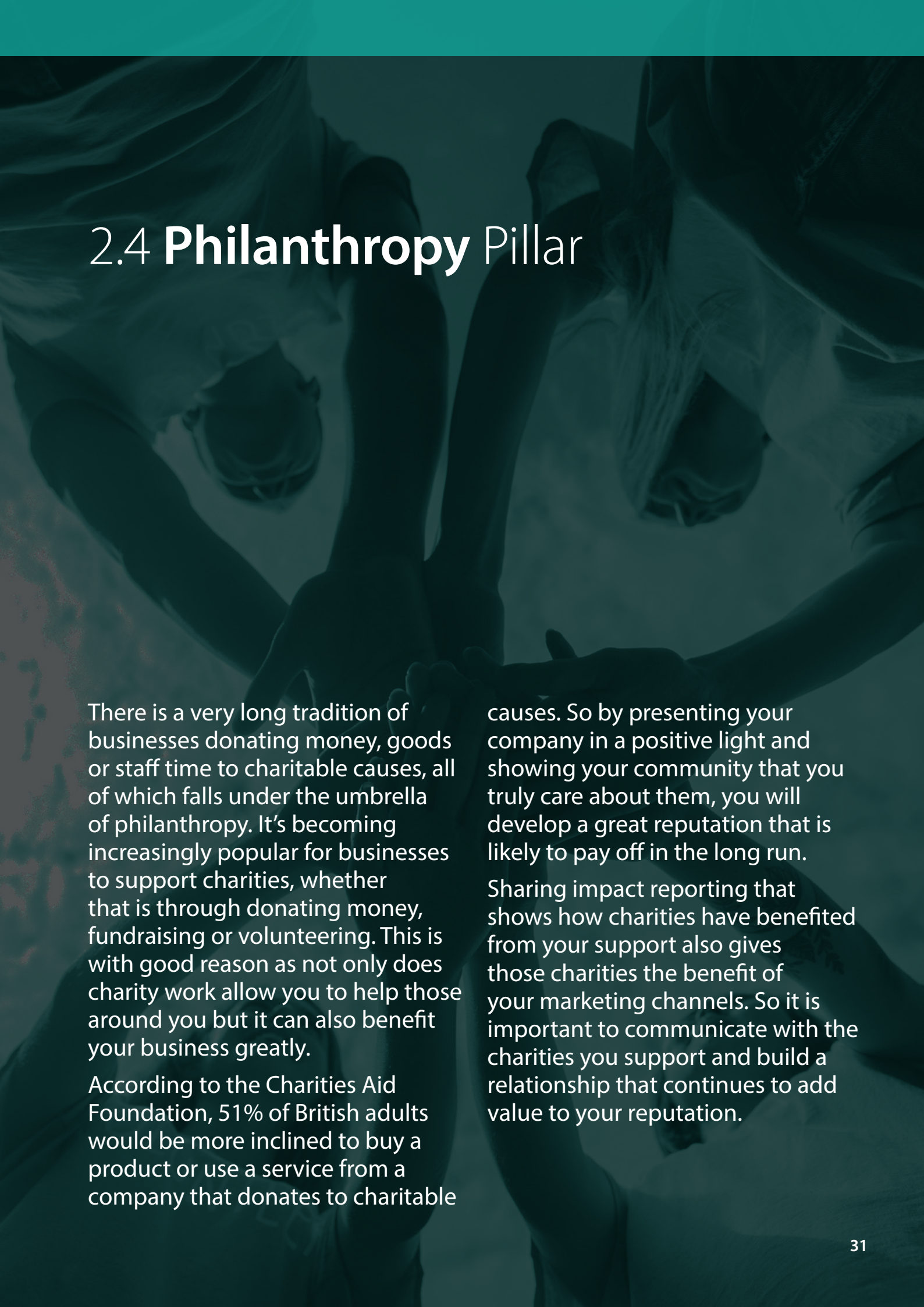
- Do you contribute to the local economy through trade and jobs?
- Do you provide, sponsorship, pro bono or financial giving?
- Can financial or pro bono contributions be expanded?
- Can you provide evidence of support through supporting literature, press releases etc.

## Community - Projects & Groups

- Are you involved with Community Building - Projects that intentionally bring people together to simply get to know one another.
- Are you involved with Community Education? - Projects that provide instructional services or curricula, or serve to educate the public about a social issue (in a non-partisan way).
- Are you involved with Community Organising - Projects that bring people together with the goal of solving a community issue?
- Are you involved with Deliberative Dialogue - Projects that intentionally bring people together to build understanding across differences?
- Are you involved with Direct Service - Projects that provide a service or product to an individual, group, or the community as a whole?
- Are you involved with Economic Development - Projects that work on developing the regional economy in a sustainable way?
- Are you involved with Engaged Research - Research that directly benefits the community by clarifying the causes of a community challenge, mapping a community's assets, or contributing to solutions to current challenges?
- Are you involved with Institutional Engagement - Educational or health resources intentionally offered without undue barriers to the community?
- Are you involved with any specific community projects and groups?
- What level commitment to do you have?
- How long have you been involved?
- What kind of support does your organisation offer?
- Do you provide volunteering, sponsorship, financial giving, partnerships etc?
- Do the projects you support provide Impact reporting on your involvement?
- Can you provide evidence of support through supporting literature, press releases etc.?

## Community - Education

- Are you engaged with any education providers in your area?
- Do you provide work experience placements, apprenticeships or recruit directly from local schools or colleges? Can engagement be expanded?
- What level commitment to do you have?
- How long have you been involved?
- What kind of support does your organisation offer?



# 2.4 **Philanthropy** Pillar

There is a very long tradition of businesses donating money, goods or staff time to charitable causes, all of which falls under the umbrella of philanthropy. It's becoming increasingly popular for businesses to support charities, whether that is through donating money, fundraising or volunteering. This is with good reason as not only does charity work allow you to help those around you but it can also benefit your business greatly.

According to the Charities Aid Foundation, 51% of British adults would be more inclined to buy a product or use a service from a company that donates to charitable causes. So by presenting your company in a positive light and showing your community that you truly care about them, you will develop a great reputation that is likely to pay off in the long run.

Sharing impact reporting that shows how charities have benefited from your support also gives those charities the benefit of your marketing channels. So it is important to communicate with the charities you support and build a relationship that continues to add value to your reputation.

# 2.4.0 **Philanthropy** Activities List - Overview

## Philanthropy - Charitable Involvement

- Do you provide support for any local, national or international charities? How long have you been involved? How have the charities benefited? Do the charities you support provide impact reporting?
- Does your organisation have a policy for charities?
- Do your staff choose to get involved with the charities that you support?
- Do the projects you support provide Impact reporting on your involvement?
- Do you communicate your support to your staff, customers and the wider public audience?
- Do you promote your support in your literature, website and via your social media channels?
- What level of commitment to do you have?
- How long have you been involved?

## Philanthropy - Volunteering

- Do you provide and/or facilitate volunteering support for any local, national or international charities?
- How long have you been involved?
- How have the charities benefited?
- What level of commitment to do you have?
- Do your staff choose to get involved with the charities that you support?

## Philanthropy - Pro Bono

- Do you provide and/or facilitate Pro Bono support for any local, national or international charities?
- How long have you been involved?
- How have the charities benefited?
- What level of commitment to do you have?
- Do your staff choose to get involved with the charities that you support?

## Philanthropy - Fund-raising

- Do you provide and/or facilitate any charitable giving, fund raising or sponsorship support for any Local, national or international charities?
- How long have you been involved?
- How much has been raised?
- What level of commitment to do you have?
- Do your staff choose to get involved with the charities that you support?

## Philanthropy - Financial Gifts/Gifts In Kind

- Do you provide and/or facilitate financial or other types of gifts for any local, national or international charities?
- How much/what has been gifted?
- How have the charities benefited?
- Do your staff choose to get involved with the charities that you support?

# 2.5 United Nations **Sustainable Development Goals**

## What are the UN - SDG's?

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are the world's best plan to build a better world for people and our planet by 2030. Adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, the SDGs are a call for action by all countries - poor, rich and middle-income - to promote prosperity while protecting the environment. They recognise that ending poverty must go hand-in-hand with strategies that build economic growth and address a range of social needs including education, health, equality and job opportunities, while tackling climate change and working to preserve our ocean and forests.

The United Nations system plays a critical role in supporting member states' implementation of inter-governmentally agreed sustainable development objectives. System-wide coherence at global, regional, sub-regional and country levels is crucial for the UN system to deliver on its mandates effectively.

## Stakeholders

Major Groups and other Stakeholders (MGoS) were integral to the development and adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Since its adoption, MGoS have been actively working towards its implementation, through projects, initiatives, advocacy, knowledge-sharing, and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda. MGoS often work in partnership with other sectors, including governments. Stakeholder groups are as follows;

- Business & Industry
- Children & Youth
- Farmers
- Indigenous Peoples
- Local Authorities
- Non-Governmental Organisations
- Scientific & Technological Community
- Women
- Workers & Trade Unions
- Persons With Disabilities
- Volunteers
- Ageing
- Education And Academia

## Partnerships

The achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals will require all hands on deck. It will require different sectors and actors working together in an integrated manner by pooling financial resources, knowledge and expertise. In our new development era with 17 intertwined Sustainable Development Goals and 169 associated targets as a blue-print for achieving the sustainable Future We Want, cross sectoral and innovative multi-stakeholder partnerships will play a crucial role for getting us to where we need by the year 2030.

**For more please visit**
https://sdgs.un.org/goals

## 2.5.1 UN - SDG and the Four Pillars

The SDG Icons correspond with the CSR-A Four Pillars in the following way.

### Environmental




### Workplace




### Community




### Philanthropic



## 2.5.2 UN - SDG Logo and 17 Icons

The United Nations has commissioned seventeen (17) icons and the SDG logo, including the colour wheel, to graphically promote awareness of the Sustainable Development Goals adopted by the Member States of the United Nations.

### Use by non UN entities

Use of the SDG logo [Version 2 without the UN emblem] and 17 icons by non-UN entities. Entities outside the UN System, including Governments, intergovernmental organisations, not-for-profit organisations, and private sector entities, may use the SDG logo and 17 SDG icons in accordance with the requirements outlined below and provided that each entity submits the required documentation.

The SDG logo and 17 SDG icons may be used for both informational (primarily illustrative) and fundraising purposes.

### Fundraising purposes

Fundraising uses of the SDG logo [Version 2 without the UN emblem], including the colour wheel, as well as the 17 icons, are those that are: Intended to raise resources to cover costs of activities in support of the SDGs. With respect to fundraising uses, the SDG logo must be used in its entirety. Alternatively, the colour wheel from the SDG logo may be used alone without the SDG language.

The SDG logo or the colour wheel cannot be used alone but must be displayed side-by-side with the logo of the entity. The logo of the entity must be given pre-eminence vis-à-vis the SDG logo or the colour wheel. The United Nations emblem cannot be used by the entity.

### 17 icons

The 17 SDG icons may be used together or as individual icons. Each icon must be used in its entirety, including with the text describing the related SDG. The SDG icon(s) cannot be used alone but must be displayed side-by-side with the logo of the entity. The logo of the entity must be given pre-eminence vis-à-vis the icon or icons.

### Use of the SDG colour wheel

The SDG colour wheel may be used by UN entities and non-UN entities. UN and non-UN entities wishing to integrate the SDG colour wheel into a separate logo design and must provide the following information for advance written permission by the United Nations Department of Global Communications: A short statement of identity (nature of the entity and its objectives); And. An explanation of how and where the SDG colour wheel will be used, including the names of countries/territories where the SDG colour wheel will be used, and duration of its use.



CSR ACCREDITATION
Show that you care

# PART 3 - **Application** Guidance & Tips

# 3.0 **Application** Guidance & Tips

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# 3.1 **Independent Assessment** Guidance Notes & Criteria

## IMPORTANT

Please **make sure** that you have familiarised yourself with the **Independent Assessment Guidance Notes & Criteria** on the following page.

The **Independent Assessment Panel** refer to these guidance notes when assessing your application.

# INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT GUIDANCE NOTES AND CRITERIA

Please note before beginning your application, the Independent Accreditation Assessment Panel are asked to consider the following:

- **Headline CSR Initiative and Benefits**
  Does your application identify clear CSR initiatives and report the benefits directly resulting from activity, policy/strategy, process and/or other action implemented by your organisation?
- **Environmental Benefits**
  Does your application clearly identify areas to improve environmental impact including energy efficiency, wastes minimisation, recycling etc.
- **Social Benefit**
  Does your application clearly identify value to the community, has your local or wider community benefited?
- **Employee/Workplace Benefits**
  Does your application clearly identify any benefits to your employees? Have staff been engaged, included, trained or otherwise benefited?
- **Supply Chain and End User Benefits**
  Do you provide responsible product information and services? Do you provide products or services that have CSR benefits? Do you support, monitor, educate or otherwise include your supply chain?
- **Charitable Benefits**
  Does your application clearly identify charitable giving, financially or through services, pro bono and/or volunteering?
- **Financial Benefits**
  Does your application clearly identify any cost reductions or savings realised, such as reduced operating costs, electricity, water, travel costs etc.
- **Stakeholder and Employee Commitment.**
  Have staff/stakeholders demonstrated their commitment to CSR initiatives undertaken?
- **Evidence of Measurable impacts/Benefits.**
  Have you provided evidence to support your application where possible? Including statistics, certifications and policy documentation etc.
- **Degree of Originality/Innovation.**
  Have you developed any new or novel solutions to problems or issues?
- **Future Expansion (of your CSR initiatives and commitments).**
  How do you intend to develop and build on current initiatives?
- **Replicability**
  Can other organisations adopt your policies and strategies to their own benefit? Do you encourage others in your sector or supply chain to adopt your policies and strategies?

As a minimum requirement, we expect all applicants to follow statutory requirements and to meet all relevant national and international legislation.

# 3.2 **Beginning** Your Accreditation application

## Conduct a CSR review

The process of achieving a CSR accreditation is fundamentally your own assessment of every aspect of your organisation's socially responsible activities. All applicants submit an application based on the Four Pillars and are scored by three members of our Independent Assessment Panel using the Assessment Guidance Notes & Criteria.

The best way to begin your application is by conducting a comprehensive review of all the activities, actions, policies, structures and support for causes and community your organisation has undertaken and/or has in place. All activity which can be regarded as responsible business practice or that has benefited the environment or the local or wider community is relevant to your application.

The CSR accreditation application process is an online form that can be accessed via a link in your initial registration response email, via a link from this document in section 3.12 or through our website. When you wish to make a start on your application you must create an account. Please see section 3.12 of this document for a full step by step guide to completing your CSR accreditation application.

# 3.3 **Top Tips** for Sole Traders and Micro Business

**Applying for CSR accreditation for a Sole Trader or micro business is achieved through practical and simple action.**

Sole traders and micro-businesses often feel that their actions or contributions are only small and do not count, but this is not the case. Sole traders and micro business make up a huge part of the overall business landscape and can make an enormous difference collectively through direct action. They can also have an important influence on their supply chains.

Sole traders and micro-businesses can offer socially responsible solutions to their clients and also buy goods and services with social responsibility in mind.

It is estimated that pulling together information for your accreditation application will take 1-2 days. Collate supporting documentation under the Four Pillars of Environment, Workplace, Community and Philanthropy.

It is accepted by the independent assessment panel that supporting documentation under some Pillars will be stronger than others. As a sole trader or micro business you may not need to have the same policies and procedures as a larger organisation or the same influence, presence and purchasing power. You will not be scored down as a result.

# 3.4 **Top Tips** for Environment

Use the Environment activity lists shown in Part 2 - The Four Pillars to help you identity what you are doing with regard to the Environment and its five sub categories.

You do not need to show activity in all the sub categories. Some areas may not be applicable to your organisation, the situation or circumstances in which you operate.

You may provide live links which the assessment panel can access but please ensure these links are functioning and remain live at least for the assessment period (12 weeks post the relevant assessment date).

# 3.5 **Top Tips** for Workplace

Use the Workplace activity lists shown in Part 2 - The Four Pillars to help you identity what you are doing with regard to your Workplace and its five sub categories.

You may provide live links which the assessment panel can access but please ensure these links are functioning and remain live at least for the assessment period (12 weeks post the relevant assessment date).

If you make efforts to go above and beyond legislation let us know the details. Do you provide more generous maternity pay, annual leave allowance and external verification such as IIP Investors In People, Disability Confident, UNSDGs etc.

# 3.6 **Top Tips** for Community

Use the Community activity lists shown in Part 2 - The Four Pillars to help you identity what you are doing with regard to Community and its five sub categories.

You do not need to show activity in all the sub categories. Some areas may not be applicable to your organisation, the situation or circumstances in which you operate.

You will find that there is some overlap with activities in the Community and Philanthropy Pillars. Activity in your community can often take on a philanthropic nature and vice versa, philanthropic activity will often have a positive effect in your community.

You may provide live links which the assessment panel can access but please ensure these links are functioning and remain live at least for the assessment period (12 weeks post the relevant assessment date).

**When recording your community activity, provide detail such as:**

- Data of your organisation's inputs – what did you do when and where?
- Information related to the impacts of your activities – testimonials, photographs of events and achievements.

# 3.7 **Top Tips** for Philanthropy

Use the Philanthropy activity lists shown in Part 2 - The Four Pillars to help you identity what you are doing with regard to Philanthropy and its five sub categories.

You will find that there is some overlap with activities in the Community and Philanthropy Pillars. Activity in your community can often take on a philanthropic nature and vice versa, philanthropic activity will often have a positive effect in your community.

You may provide live links which the assessment panel can access but please ensure these links are functioning and remain live at least for the assessment period (12 weeks post the relevant assessment date).

### When recording your philanthropic activity, provide detail such as:

- Data on your organisation's outputs – how successful were your inputs, include information totalling your activities and their respective values; in time spent, pro bono materials/services provided and financial donations or sponsorships.
- Information related to the impact of your activities – testimonials, photographs of achievements – both from the causes you support and your own employees.

# 3.8 Composing Your **Application** & Supporting Documentation

The CSR accreditation application portal for sole traders and micro business is an online form that can be accessed via a link in your initial registration response email, via a link from this document in section 3.12 or through our website. When you wish to make a start on your application you must create an account. Please see section 3.12 of this document for a full step by step guide to completing your CSR accreditation application.

You can build your application over multiple sessions. The application process is designed to be approached as a 'blank canvas' exercise, in which you should include any information you feel relevant.

There are subsections with questions under the Environment pillar to prompt your thinking but these are not designed to be limiting in any way.

The following 3 pilars of Workplace, Community and Philanthropy, each have a single input field for you to collate all your information.

The application should be succinct and summarise key points. You may bullet point where appropriate and refer to more detail in the supporting documentation.

Some information will be relevant under more than one pillar particularly in the Community and Philanthropy sections - cross reference wherever applicable.

Reference existing internal and external reports, audit findings, newsletters and web material wherever possible.

Collate supporting documentation for each pillar into a single file such as a Word document, PDF or ZIP and save them with corresponding file names so that your final submission has four uploads (Environment, Workplace etc).

Consultation and review of a draft application can be arranged on request and for a fee - see https://csr-accreditation.co.uk/csr-accreditation-applications-fees/ for latest products and fees.

# 3.9 Completing the **Online** Application Form

The CSR accreditation application process requires that you create an application account on our online system. This can be done using the link in the welcome email you received when you first registered for accreditation, through our website or using the link at the bottom of this page.

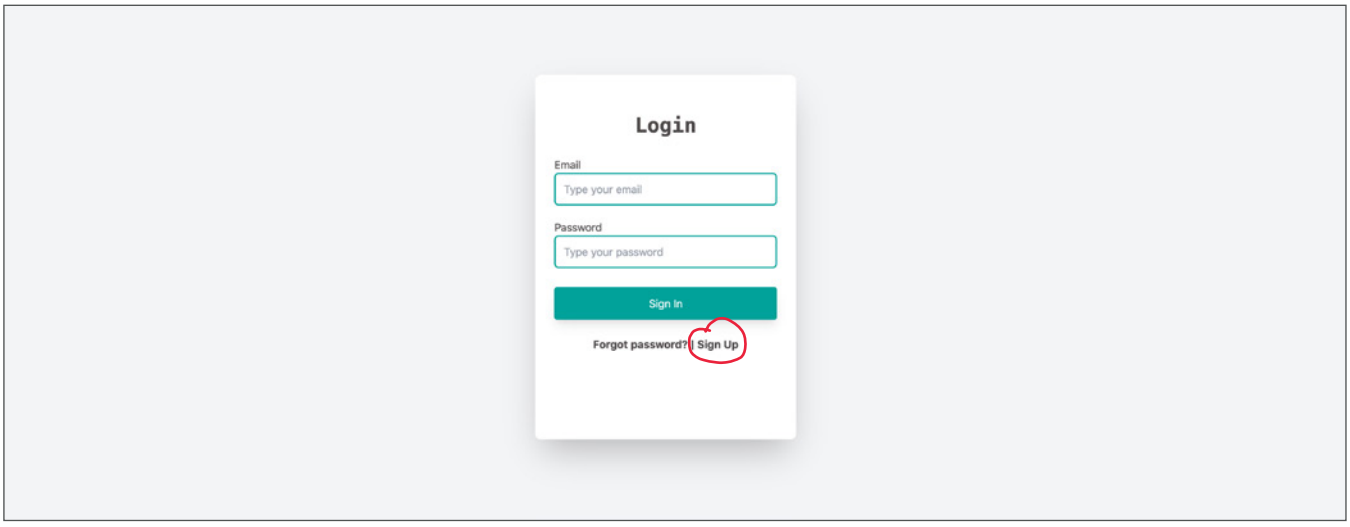
The online application form will save your progress and can be completed over multiple sessions as you gather information and collate supporting documentation. The application form can be completed in any order you choose and you can return to sections to edit, amend or update information as required, prior to submission.

The online application form allows for a single login per applicant organisation, so if there are multiple colleagues contributing to your application, the login details must be shared for them to access the form.

Please make sure that you have fully completed your application before submitting as we are unable to accept amendments or additions after online submission.

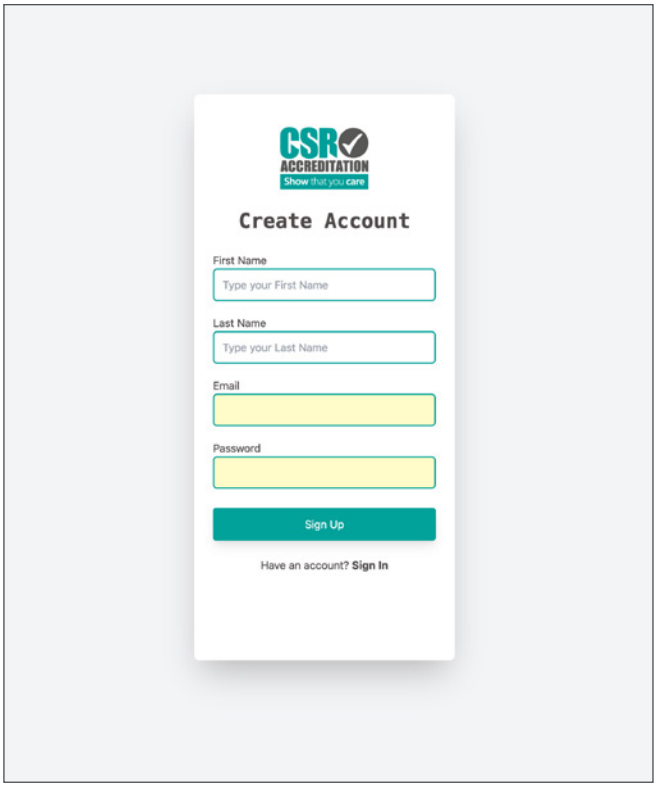
## Creating your online application form account

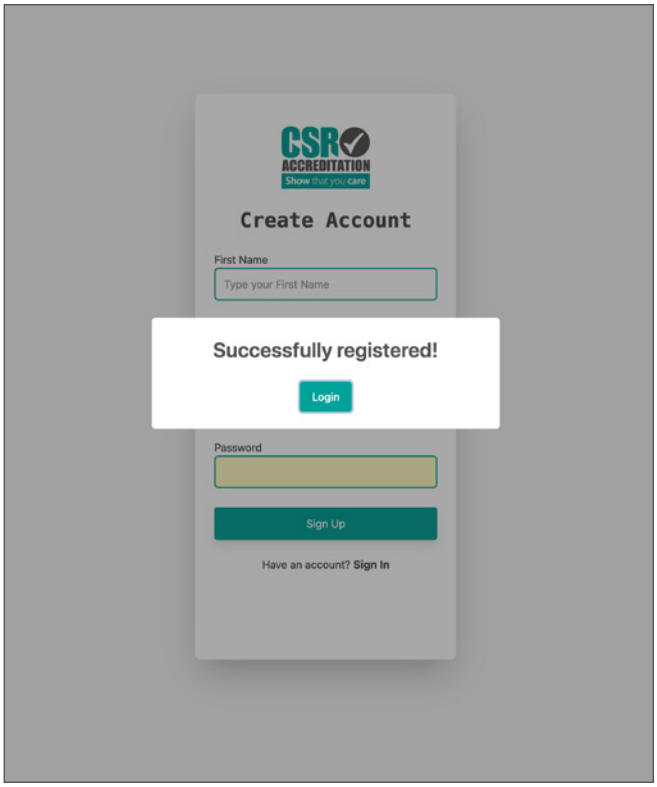
Using the link provided, visit the CSR-A online application form. If you have not previously created an account you must click the 'Sign Up' option in the bottom right corner of the box.




**Click Here for the Online Application Form**

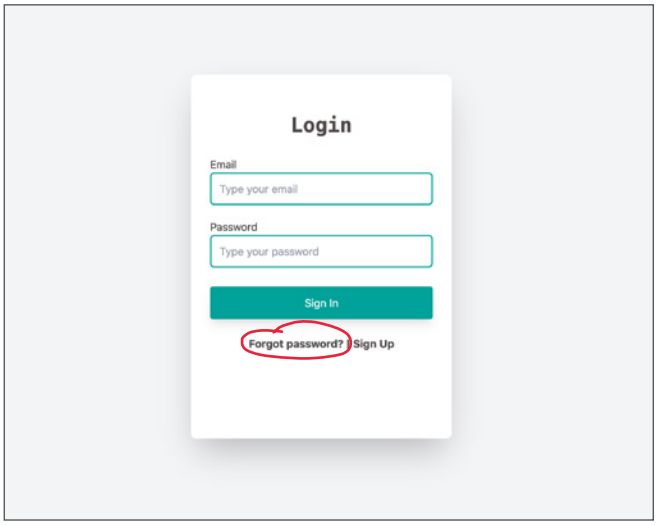
Clicking the 'Sign Up' link will take you to the Create Account panel'. Please enter your details here and then click the 'Sign Up' button. Once you have created your account the system will prompt you to login. You will also receive a confirmation of account email.




Clicking the login button will return you to the initial login panel. Input your details and click 'sign in'. Please keep your login details safe so that you can revisit the form to complete your application.

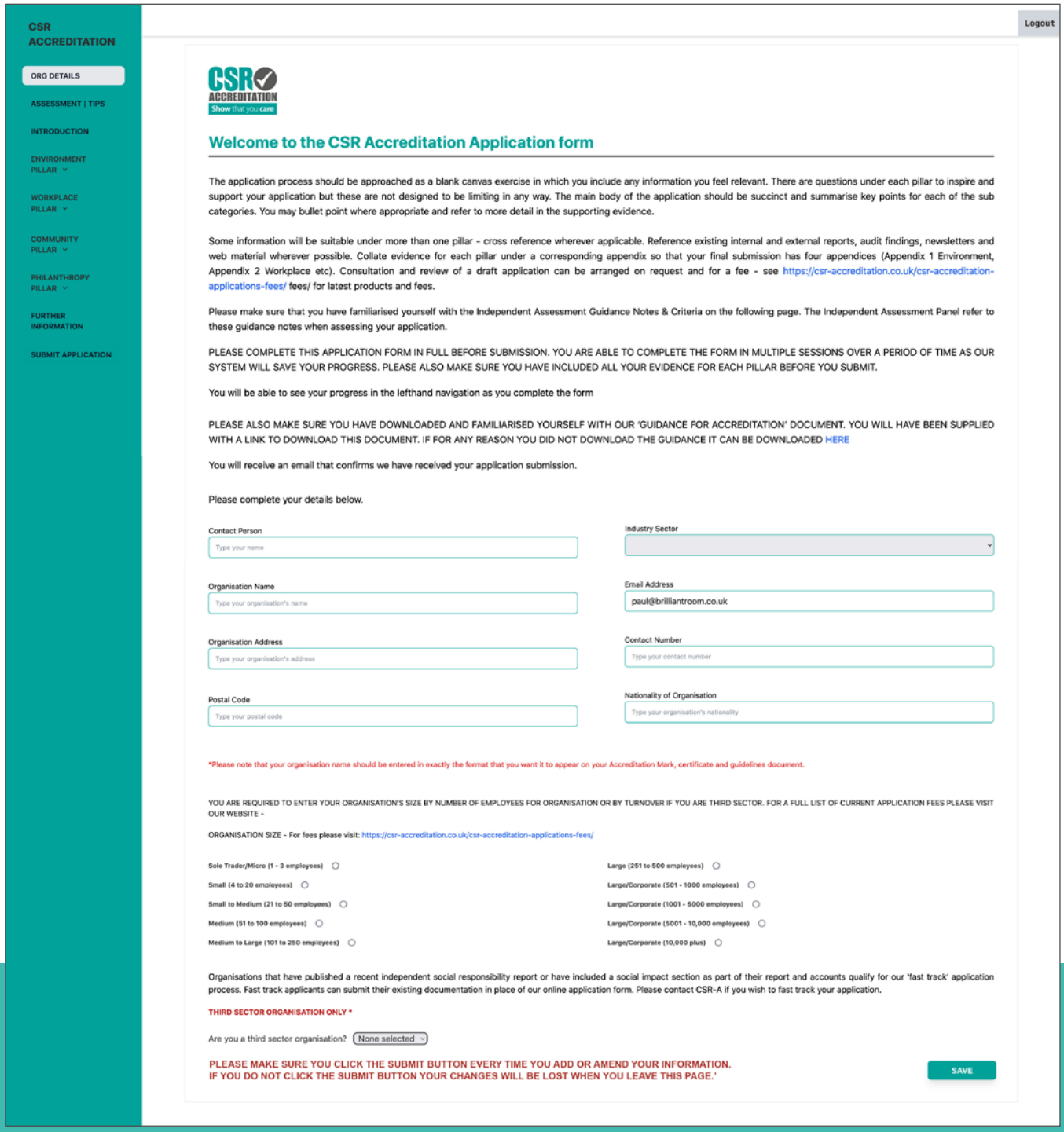
If at any time you forget your password, simply click the 'Forgot Password' link and reset it using the account recovery process. Please remember that it is only possible to register a single email address as the application account user, so the recipient of that address will be the only person able to recover accounts.



## Your organisation's details

Once logged in the application form is displayed with navigation in the side bar. The form can be completed in any order, over as many sessions as you like and will save your progress as you go. The application requires that you submit your organisation's details in full before submission. This is essential for processing and ensures all applications are collated correctly by our system.

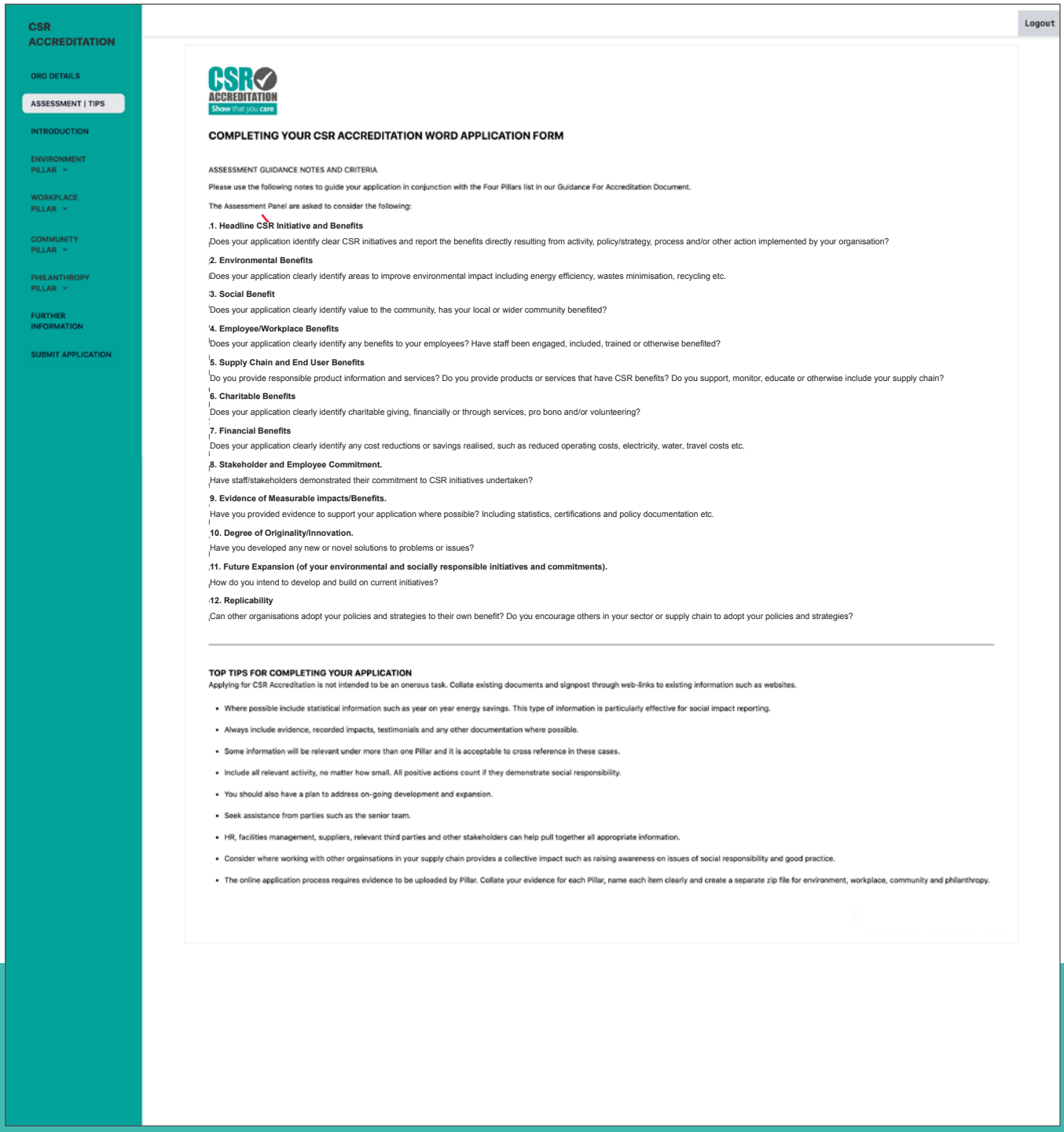
Please be aware that the way you input your organisation's name will be the way the name is displayed on your certification and accreditation mark.



## Assessment guidance & tips

This is another chance to familiarise yourself with the assessment guidance notes which our assessors use to scrutinise your application. You should refer to this as you compose your application to keep your information as relevant as possible. Also included are some top level tips on who and what to include if possible.

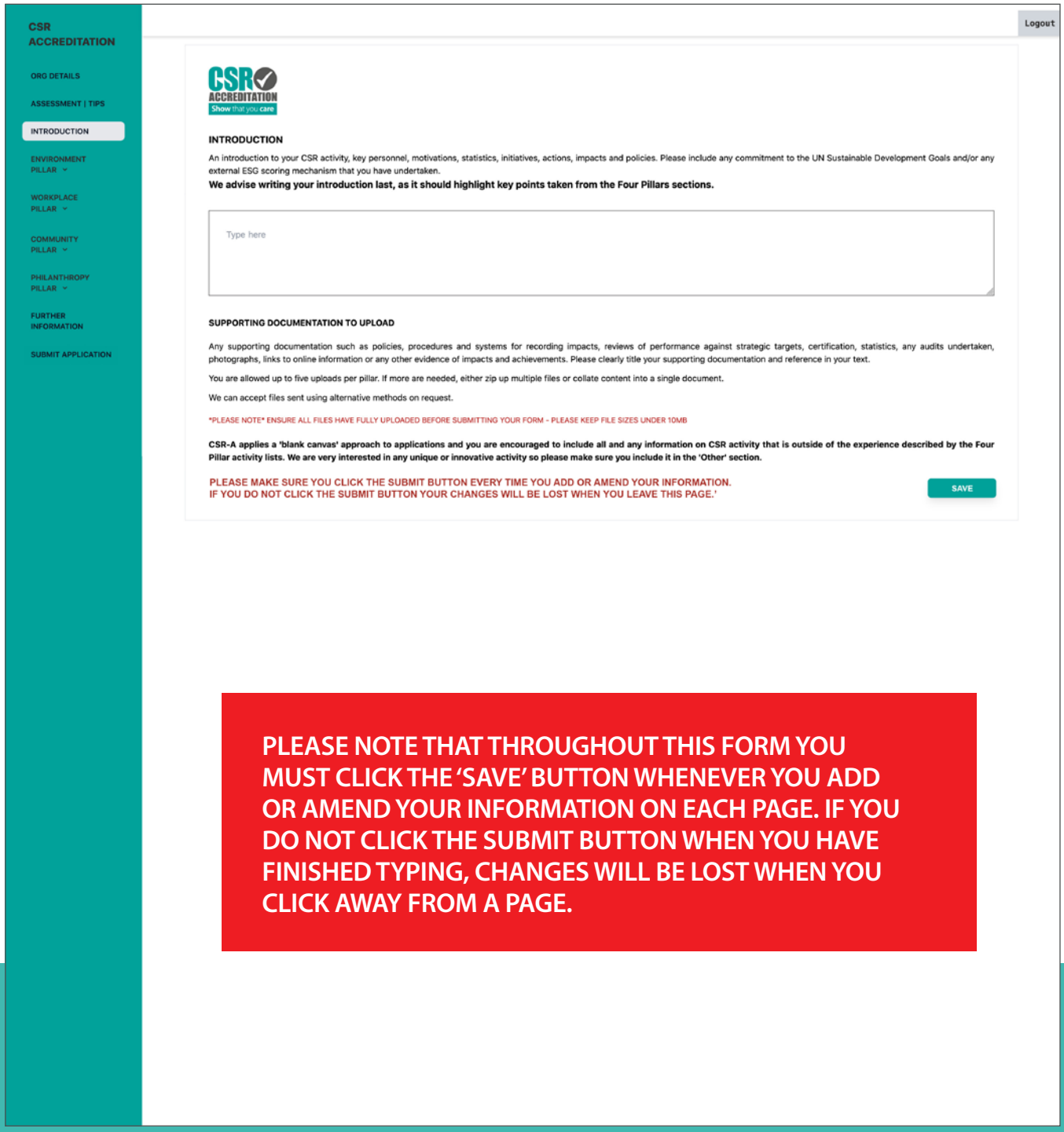
A more in depth set of tips are included in this section of this guidance document (sections 3.2 - 3.11). There are also tools located in section 4 to assist you in a self audit of your organisation's current sustainability commitments, prior to composition of your application.



## Your application introduction

An introduction to your CSR activity, key personnel, motivations, statistics, initiatives, actions, impacts and policies. **We advise writing your introduction last, as it should highlight key points taken from the Four Pillars sections.** Please include any commitment to the UN Sustainable Development Goals and/or any external ESG scoring mechanism that you have undertaken.

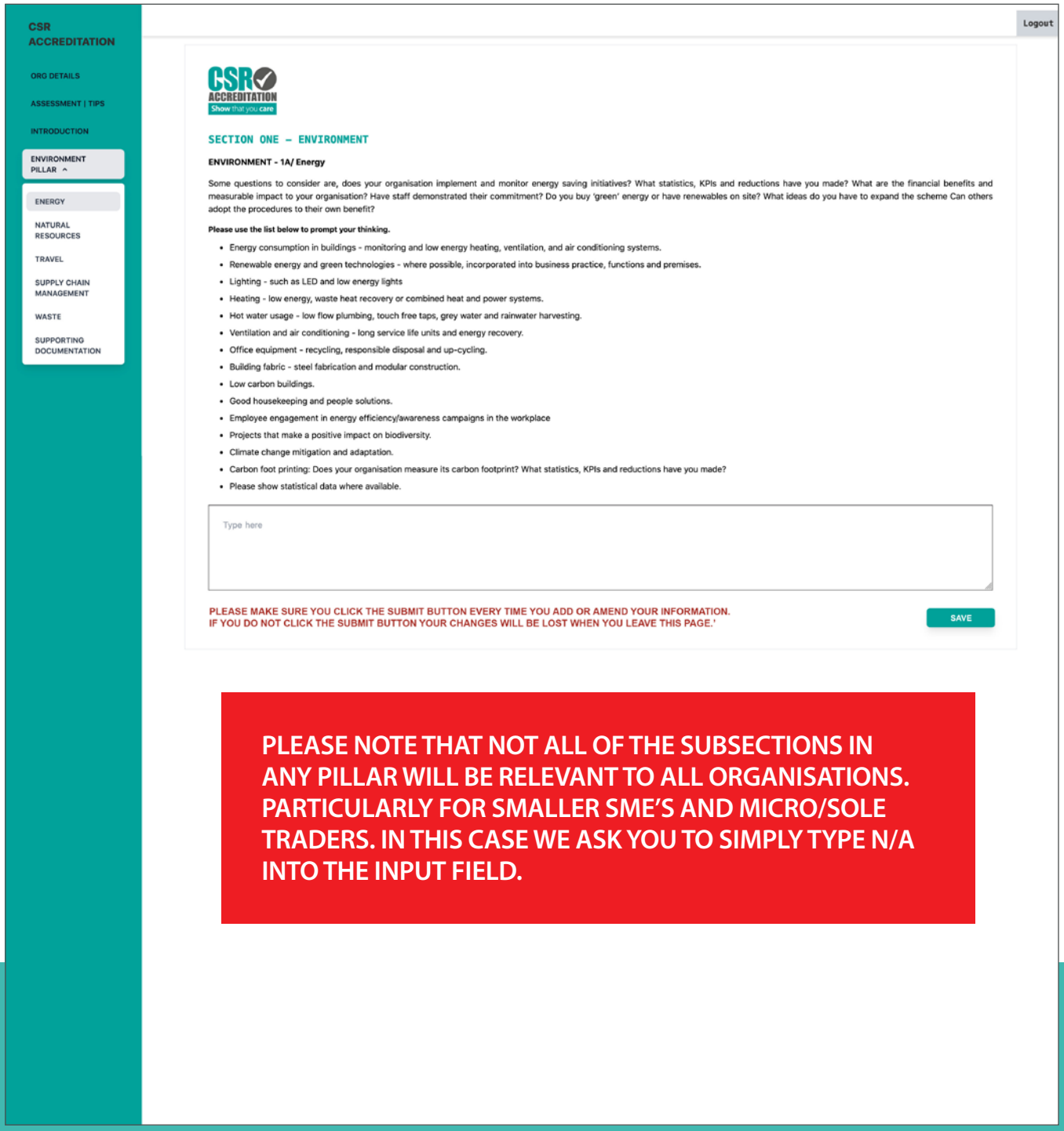
Please keep your introduction concise. We recommend no more than 500 words.




**PLEASE NOTE THAT THROUGHOUT THIS FORM YOU MUST CLICK THE 'SAVE' BUTTON WHENEVER YOU ADD OR AMEND YOUR INFORMATION ON EACH PAGE. IF YOU DO NOT CLICK THE SUBMIT BUTTON WHEN YOU HAVE FINISHED TYPING, CHANGES WILL BE LOST WHEN YOU CLICK AWAY FROM A PAGE.**

## The Four Pillars sections & subsections

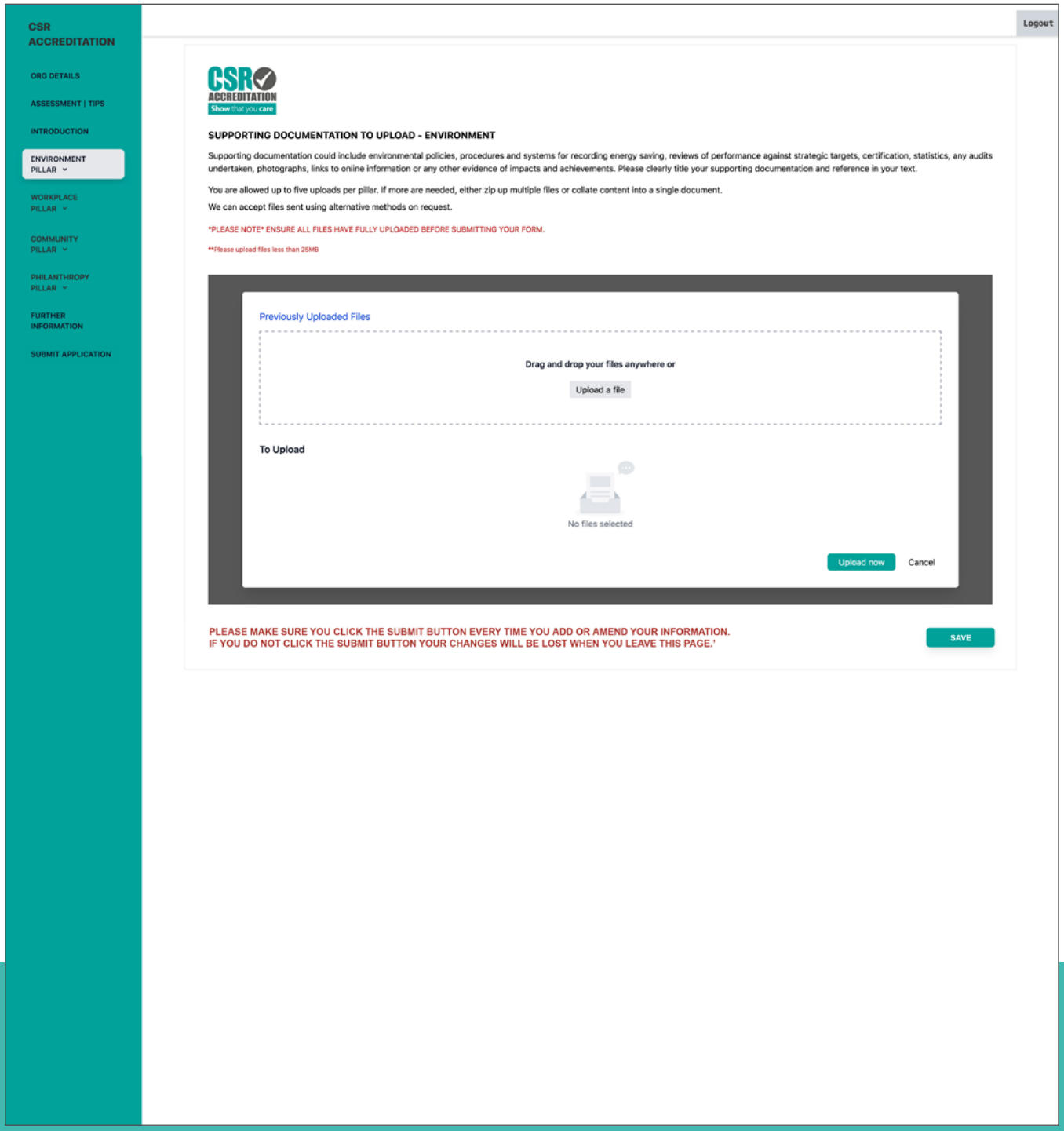
The body of the application form is divided into the Four Pillars of environment, workplace, community and philanthropy. Each pillar is further subdivided into five subsections, plus an upload facility for supporting documentation. Each of the five subsections has a paragraph and bullet points to guide you in the type of information we require. Please remember the content is not prescriptive and we are interested in any and all information in a subsection. If you have undertaken action or policy that you do not feel is relevant to these, there is space to include it in the 'Further Information' section at the end of this form. **Each of the four pillar sections is structured in the same way.**




**PLEASE NOTE THAT NOT ALL OF THE SUBSECTIONS IN ANY PILLAR WILL BE RELEVANT TO ALL ORGANISATIONS. PARTICULARLY FOR SMALLER SME'S AND MICRO/SOLE TRADERS. IN THIS CASE WE ASK YOU TO SIMPLY TYPE N/A INTO THE INPUT FIELD.**

## Uploading supporting documentation for each of the Four Pillars

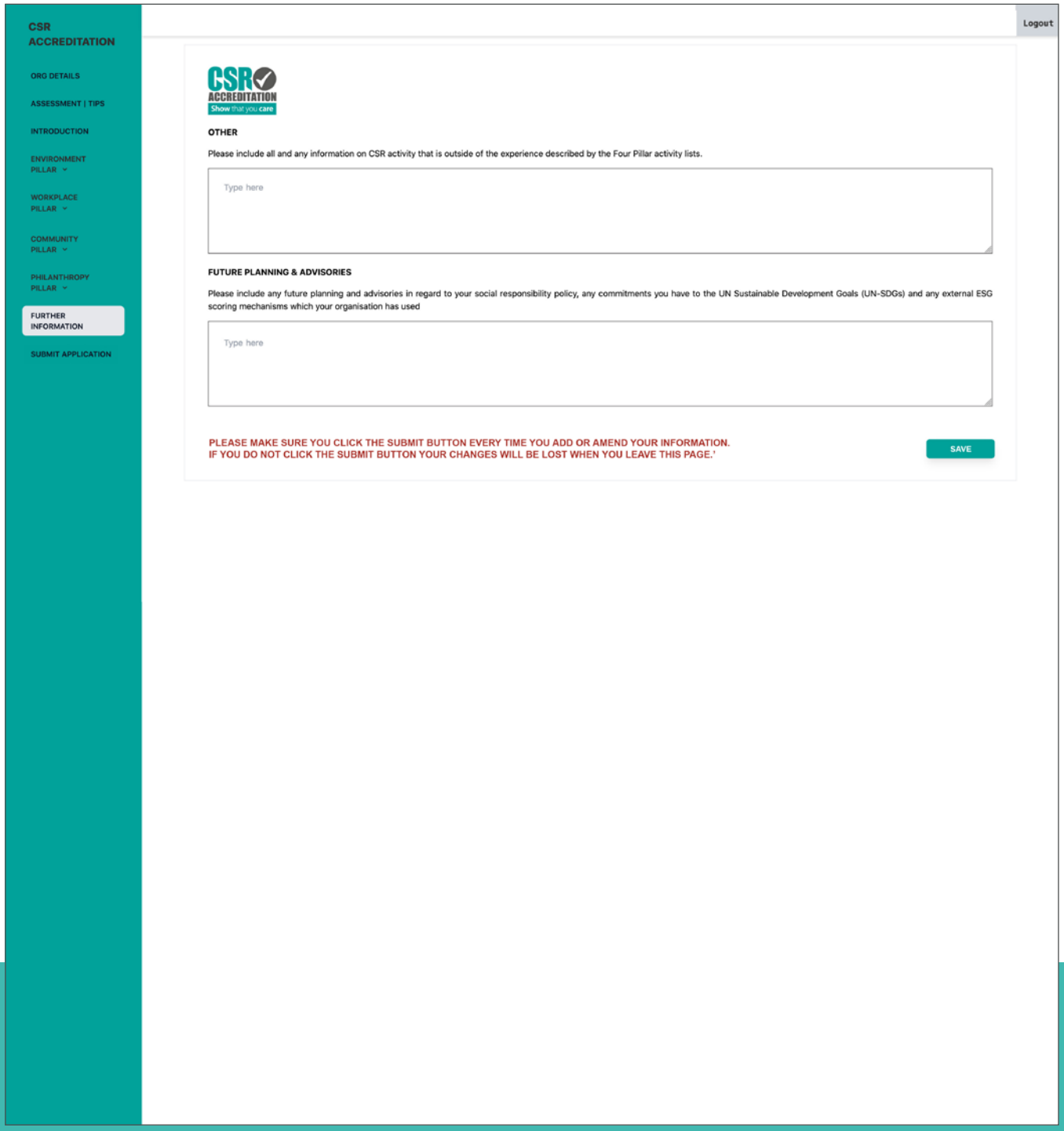
At the end of each of the four pillar lists of subsections is a supporting documentation upload page. We recommend collating all your supporting documentation for each pillar into a single file such as a Word document, PDF or a ZIP file and naming that file for the relevant pillar. We also recommend keeping your uploads as small as possible in file size terms. (Under 10mb per pillar if possible.)



## Any further information

As noted earlier you may include any information that you feel is in addition to our Four Pillars. Also included on this page is a section where you may outline your future plans and include any commitments you have made to other sustainability programmes.

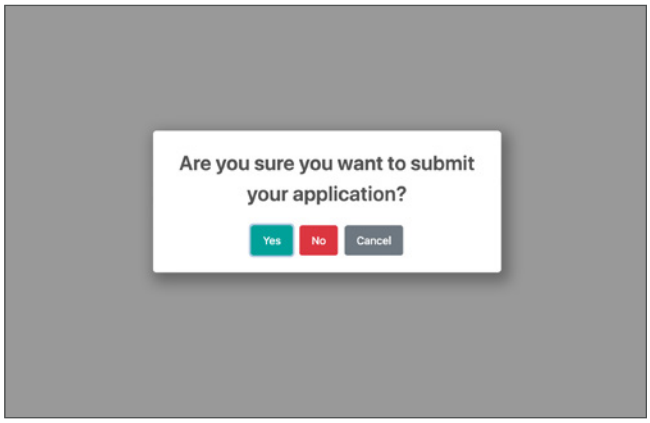
The self auditing process required for CSR accreditation application often highlights areas where an organisation may easily improve its social responsibility credentials. These improvements can often be achieved in a relatively short time frame. We are keen to hear how you plan to expand your commitments.

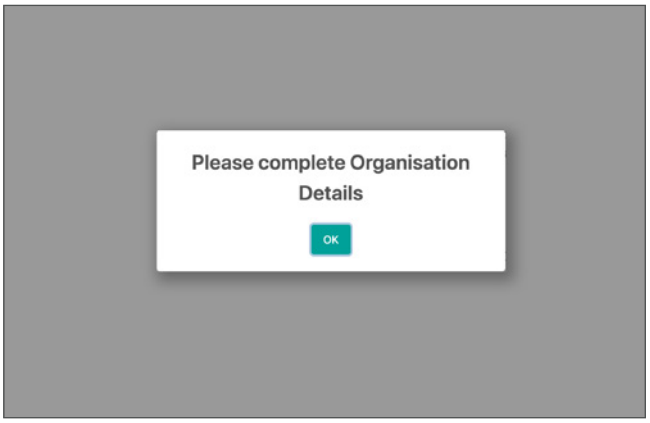


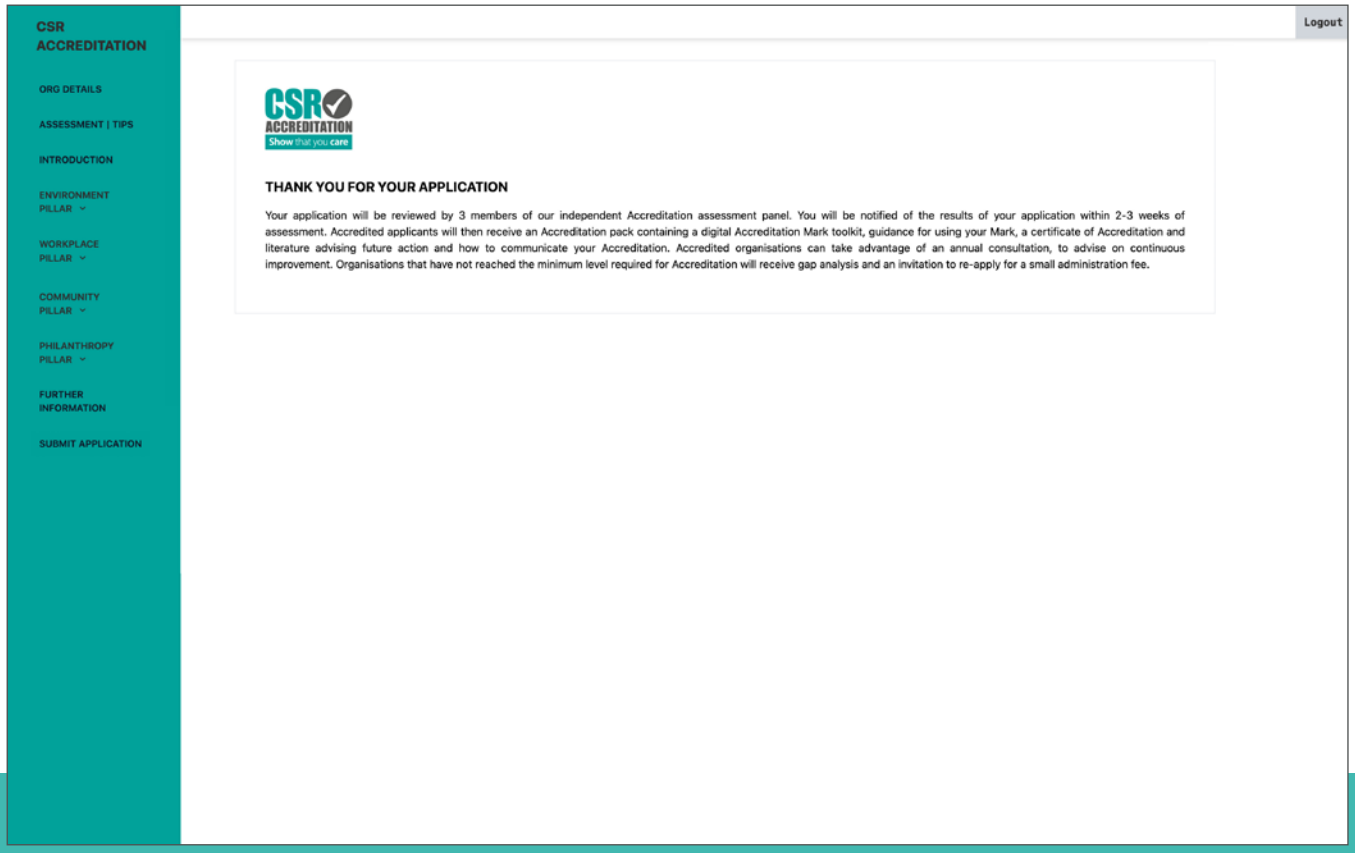
## Submitting your application

Please ensure that your application is complete before you click 'Submit Application' as we are unable to accept additions or amendments post application submission. When you click the 'Submit Application' button, you will be required to confirm you wish to proceed to ensure you do not accidentally submit an incomplete application. If you have not completed all the mandatory fields in the 'Organisation Details' section you will also be prompted to do so here.

Once you have submitted your completed form you will receive an email confirming receipt of your application and supporting documentation and advising you of the next steps.



## What happens next?

Post application submission, your document is transferred to our assessment platform where it is made available for scrutiny and scoring by three members of our expert, independent assessment panel.

The maximum time period for the scoring process is 8 weeks but it is often much shorter. (This timing depends on when in any given month, your application is submitted.)

You will be notified by email of the results of your application, which will include your score as a percentage, your level of accreditation (gold, silver, bronze), a brief description of what your accreditation pack will contain and an outline of some of our membership benefits.

A separate email will be sent to you with an attached invoice for your accreditation fee. **Please note that our payment terms are 15 days from invoice date. Failure to pay the application fee within the 15 day period may result in your accreditation being withdrawn**.

For applicants that have failed to reach a sufficient score for accreditation, we provide a short gap analysis and the chance to re-apply within the next three months for a small administration fee.

For those that wish to explore the results of a successful application in more depth we also provide a consultation gap analysis service. Your consultant will provide summary feedback from our independent assessors. This feedback is supplemented by expert analysis of your accreditation application.

Successful applicants will receive their bespoke accreditation pack via email within seven days of the result notification.

The accreditation pack contains your certification in multiple formats, your unique accreditation mark in multiple formats, a guide to using your accreditation mark which includes your unique accreditation number, and various documentation describing how to best take advantage of our membership benefits and services.

Your organisation is also registered on our membership list so you receive unique promotions and services limited to members.

Accreditation membership lasts for three years. You will be contacted well in advance of this expiry date. We offer members a selection of discounted services and a discounted re-accreditation fee to encourage them to re-accredit and build on the excellent achievements already made.



CSR ACCREDITATION
Show that you care

# PART 4 - **Further** Information

# 4.0 **Further** Information

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# 4.1 Further **Considerations**

## 4.1.1 Due diligence

Due diligence in the context of CSR accreditation is a comprehensive, proactive process to identify the actual and potential social, environmental and economic positive impacts of an organisation's decisions, operations and activities.

Due diligence also entails influencing the behaviour of others, showing supporting documentation, collation of relevant supporting documentation and information from colleagues and concise and accurate reporting.

## 4.1.2 Communication of your CSR policy and accreditation

Most practices related to CSR will involve some form of communication. Communication is critical to many different functions in social responsibility including:

- Showing how the organisation is meeting its commitments on social responsibility and responding to the interests of stakeholders and expectations of society in general.
- Providing information about the impacts of the organisation's activities, products and services, including details of how the impacts change over time.

CSR accreditation exists to enhance an organisation's reputation for socially responsible action, openness, integrity and accountability, to strengthen stakeholder trust in the organisation.

## 4.1.3 Reviewing and improving actions and practices related to CSR accreditation

Effective CSR performance depends in part on commitment, careful oversight, evaluation and review of the activities undertaken, progress made, achievement of identified objectives, resources used.

Ongoing monitoring or observation of activities related to social responsibility is primarily aimed at making sure that activities are proceeding as intended, identifying any crisis or out-of-the-ordinary occurrence, and making modifications to the way things are done.

Performance reviews at appropriate intervals, may be used to determine progress, help keep programmes well focused, identify areas in need of change and contribute to improved performance.

Stakeholders can play an important role in reviewing an organisation's performance on CSR.

In addition to reviewing existing activities, an organisation should also keep abreast of changing conditions or expectations, legal or regulatory developments affecting social responsibility and new opportunities for enhancing its efforts on social responsibility.

# 4.2 Conditions

## 4.2.1 Eligibility for accreditation

The CSR accreditation scheme is available to any private, public or third sector organisation which can demonstrate a measurable 12 month period of CSR activity.

Any organisation may apply for CSR accreditation, no matter how such organisation is legally structured, whether it be an incorporated business, a sole trader, partnership, public or third sector organisation.

The applicant may apply for CSR accreditation under the scheme in respect of its entire organisation, a particular site within the organisation or a specific division of the organisation.

## 4.2.2 Accreditation process

CSR accreditation is based on an assessment of an organisation's full range of CSR activity and will require evidence that the management is capable of maintaining acceptable standards during the period of accreditation.

**Accreditation under the scheme for such organisations is conditional upon:**

1. A successful audit of the policies and structures regarding responsible business practice that the applicant has in place.
2. Meeting the required compliance level.
3. The applicant paying the specified CSR accreditation application fee.

All organisations will undergo a first level of scrutiny at the application review stage and then the accreditation panel assesses the organisation against the Guidance Notes. The full report is then considered by the accreditation panel which decides to award, defer or refuse accreditation.

## 4.2.3 Accreditation cycle

Accreditation by the CSR-A scheme is valid for three years. Accredited organisations are notified six months before the end of the accreditation period so that an inspection can be arranged and the renewed report presented to the accreditation panel for consideration of re-accreditation before the period ends.

## 4.2.4 Assessment process

A full assessment is arranged following successful completion of the online application process. An independent assessment panel with appropriate experience for the organisation being inspected will come together every 10 weeks to assess applications. The independent assessment panel will be comprised of industry experts representing private, public and third sector. The inspection will reflect the breadth and size of the organisation's CSR activity.

The CSR accreditation process assesses best in class corporate social responsibility and examines leadership, policies, practices, performance, and impact in areas such as:

- Employee Engagement
- Customer Service
- Innovation
- Supply Chain Management
- Environmental Practices
- Community and Charity Engagement
- CSR Communications

Your application will be reviewed by our independent CSR assessment panel.

Your organisation will receive an overall score. Applications must score above 50% for bronze, 65% for silver and 80% for gold. The assessment guidance notes (3.1) provide a guide as to what the assessment panel is expecting from applicants.

Once the assessment has taken place, the independent assessment panel will confirm if your company has or has not satisfied the criteria to achieve the CSR accreditation.

Applicants for CSR accreditation guarantee that all information given is complete, true and accurate to the best of their knowledge.

## 4.2.5 Accreditation statements and marks

Organisations which have been awarded CSR accreditation may use the CSR accreditation mark and statements in their promotional materials, subject to certain conditions. (See CSR accreditation guidelines supplied upon successful CSR accreditation).

# 4.3 **Definition** of Terms

**For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.**

### Accountability

State of being answerable for decisions and activities to the organisation's governing bodies, legal authorities and, more broadly, its stakeholders.

### Accreditation

Is the process in which certification of competency, authority, or credibility is presented.

### Corporate Governance

Corporate governance is the system of rules, practices and processes by which a firm is directed and controlled. Corporate governance essentially involves balancing the interests of a company's many stakeholders, such as shareholders, management, customers, suppliers, financiers, government and the community.

### Consumer

Individual member of the general public purchasing or using property, products or services for private purposes.

### Corporate Social Responsibility

Responsibility of an organisation for the impacts of its decisions and activities on society and the environment through transparent and ethical behaviour that contributes to sustainable development, including health and the welfare of society; takes into account the expectations of stakeholders, is in compliance with applicable law and consistent with international norms of behaviour and is integrated throughout the organisation.

### Customer

Organisation or individual member of the general public purchasing property, products or services for commercial, private or public purposes.

### Due diligence

Comprehensive, proactive process to identify the actual and potential negative social, environmental and economic impacts of an organisation's decisions and activities over the entire life cycle of a project or organisational activity, with the aim of avoiding and mitigating negative impacts.

### Employee

Individual in a relationship recognised as an "employment relationship" in national law or practice.

### Environment

Natural surroundings in which an organisation operates, including air, water, land, natural resources, flora, fauna, people, outer space and their interrelationships.

### Ethical behaviour

Behaviour that is in accordance with accepted principles of right or good conduct in the context of a particular situation and is consistent with international norms of behaviour.

### Ethical management

Refers to corporate management that not only fulfils economic goals and legal responsibilities, but also meets the ethical expectations imposed by social norms in conducting business.

### Gap analysis

Is a method of assessing the differences in performance between a business' information systems or software applications to determine whether business requirements are being met and, if not, what steps should be taken to ensure they are met successfully.

### Gender equality

Equitable treatment for women and men.

### Impact of an organisation

Positive or negative change to society, economy or the environment wholly or partially resulting from an organisation's past and present decisions and activities.

### Initiative for social responsibility

Programme or activity expressly devoted to meeting a particular aim related to social.

### Organisation

Entity or group of people and facilities with an arrangement of responsibilities, authorities and relationships and identifiable objectives.

### Organisational governance

The international standard on social responsibility, ISO 26000, defines organizational governance as "A system by which an organisation makes and implements decisions in pursuit of its objectives."

### Principle

Fundamental basis for decision making or behaviour.

### Product

Article or substance that is offered for sale or is part of a service delivered by an organisation.

### Service

Actions of an organisation.

### SME

Small and Medium Enterprises.

### Social Projects

Social action projects are carried out by individuals or groups of people working together for the good of others and not for profit.

### Stakeholder

Individual or group that has an interest in any decision or activity of an organisation.

### Stakeholder engagement

Activity undertaken to create opportunities for dialogue between an organisation and one or more of its stakeholders.

### Supply chain

Sequence of activities or parties that provides products or services to the organisation. The purpose of this International Standard supply chain is used as defined above.

### Sustainable development

Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

### Third sector organisation

Includes voluntary and community organisations (both registered charities and other organisations such as associations, self-help groups and community groups), social enterprises, mutuals and co-operatives. Third sector organisations (TSOs) generally are independent of government.

### Transparency

Openness about decisions and activities that affect society, the economy and the environment and willingness to communicate these in a clear, accurate, timely, honest and complete manner.

### Value chain

Entire sequence of activities or parties that provide or receive value in the form of products or services.

Demonstrate your commitment now
**and become a CSR Leader**

Call **01494 444494** or visit **www.csr-accreditation.com** to find out more about CSR eduction, accreditation and communication

**Find out now where you are on your CSR journey** with our online Interactive Roadmap **https://csrroadmap.herokuapp.com/**

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