



## **+Vantage Vinyl® Verification Standard**

**Version: 4.1**  
**February 2026**

**Vinyl Sustainability Council**  
1747 Pennsylvania Ave., NW  
Suite 825  
Washington, DC 20006

Chair: David Foell

## Contents

Contents .....	2
1. Mission.....	3
2. Background .....	3
3. Focus.....	3
4. GreenCircle Certified .....	4
5. General Verification Standard .....	4
6. Annual Maintenance .....	10
7. Guiding Principles .....	10
8. Revising or Amending the Standard.....	35
9. Appendix — Definitions .....	39
10. Appendix — Reference Documents .....	40
11. Appendix — Standard Revision Log .....	41
12. Appendix — Participation Agreement Form .....	42

## 1. Mission

+Vantage Vinyl® recognizes organizations in the vinyl value chain for their sustainability leadership through conformance to the Guiding Principles and voluntary commitment to exceeding regulatory compliance.

Companies that are +Vantage Vinyl verified make a commitment to:

- **Human Health** and ensuring that substances are dealt with in a transparent and safe manner during the manufacturing and use of PVC products.
- **Climate Responsibility** and addressing the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, including the impacts of products and materials and the energy used during production and operation.
- **Ecosystem Protection** and the preservation of biodiversity and the minimization of environmental degradation to the air, water, and soil.
- **Social Health and Equity** and ensuring fair labor practices of workers and the supply chain, as well as community well-being.
- **Circular Economy** and promoting the reuse, recycling, and incorporating sustainable materials management to improve end of life solutions through a lifecycle perspective.

## 2. Background

The Vinyl Sustainability Council (VSC) is a sustainability initiative of the Vinyl Institute. VSC provides educational programming, coordinates industry sustainability programs, and manages the +Vantage Vinyl Sustainability Standard.

The vinyl industry has made considerable advancements in sustainability over the last several decades. The +Vantage Vinyl Sustainability Standard was created in 2018 as a voluntary program to demonstrate and validate the sustainability performance of companies in conformance with the program's Guiding Principles. The Guiding Principles align with targeted priority areas that are identified through a materiality assessment. The materiality assessment and standard are updated every 5 years.

Participating companies may use the +Vantage Vinyl tagline “For a Sustainable Future”, and the trademark for marketing, communication, sustainability reporting, and business differentiation purposes. Participation in the +Vantage Vinyl program demonstrates an organization’s commitment to a sustainable future.

While +Vantage Vinyl is a corporate level initiative, performance and relevant documentation from individual facilities under the corporation can contribute to the fulfillment of the Guiding Principles. This process is outlined in Figure 2. GreenCircle Certified, LLC conducts verification via information submitted from the +Vantage Vinyl Guiding Principles Conformance Survey, completed by each participant. Re-verification to +Vantage Vinyl is required every three years with yearly submission of data for annual maintenance. The verification and re-verification timeline is depicted in Figure 1 below. Documentation requirements are integrated into the +Vantage Vinyl Guiding Principles Conformance Survey. Our Guiding Principles include adhering to antitrust laws and VSC antitrust guidelines.



Figure 1 – Verification and Maintenance Timeline

## 3. Focus

+Vantage Vinyl’s Guiding Principles set the direction and parameters for what companies strive to achieve over time and are organized within five pillars that serve as the guideposts for companies on their journey of continuous improvement. These five pillars of sustainability are Human Health, Climate Responsibility, Ecosystem Protection, Social Health and Equity, and Circular Economy. The Guiding Principles support improved industry performance across the three material impact categories of resource efficiency, emissions, and people & community.

Companies attempting +Vantage Vinyl verification are measured for conformance to the Guiding Principles and informed of their relative performance against their peers. The aggregate conformance of all +Vantage Vinyl verified companies is reported on an annual basis. In this way, the vinyl industry can measure and report on its progress in improving on the most important areas of sustainability performance.

## 4. GreenCircle Certified

GreenCircle Certified, LLC (GreenCircle) is a third-party company that specializes in the certification and verification of sustainability claims made by companies across many industries. GreenCircle has been selected by VSC to conduct the verification for companies interested in participating in the +Vantage Vinyl program. Applicants will submit all verification documents directly to GreenCircle for review, and GreenCircle will then conduct an analysis of the documents and their support of the applicant's conformance to the Guiding Principles. Following the completion of the verification process, GreenCircle will communicate with VSC and the participants regarding the outcome of the verification. It will be the responsibility of VSC to issue the +Vantage Vinyl mark usage guidelines to any successful applicant.

## 5. General Verification Standard

### 5.1 Eligibility Determination

Companies seeking verification to +Vantage Vinyl and use of the mark, must meet the eligibility requirements of this section, the +Vantage Vinyl Guiding Principles Conformance Survey discussed in Section 5.3, and participate in the verification process outlined in Section 5.4. +Vantage Vinyl is open to any company with a presence in the United States or Canada. A company has a presence in the United States or Canada if it owns or operates a physical location engaged in manufacturing, warehousing or sales. VSC may at any time revoke a company's right to use the +Vantage Vinyl mark should VSC determine, in its sole discretion, that the mark is not being used according to the mark usage guidelines. +Vantage Vinyl applicants must meet the following requirements:

1. Be a part of the United States or Canadian vinyl value chain. The applicant company can be a foreign entity but must have a presence in the United States or Canada. Specifically, the applicant must own or operate a facility located in the United States or Canada performing activities in one of the categories listed below. Documentation of eligibility includes the physical address of the facility, EIN number, tax ID, or other form of documentation that demonstrates the organization has operations in the United States or Canada.

Eligible operating categories include:

- Chlorine & Vinyl Chloride Monomer (VCM) producers
- Resin suppliers
- Raw material/additive suppliers
- Compounders/Formulators
- Converters/End-product manufacturers
- Recyclers
- Distributors

2. Sign the +Vantage Vinyl Participation Agreement with VSC (see Appendix).
3. Designate an employee with sustainability responsibilities to represent the company and be a primary contact for +Vantage Vinyl. This is not required to be the same person that represents the company in other VSC activities. GreenCircle will verify that a company representative has the authority to submit data on the behalf of the company. The contact must provide: information on the employee's title and responsibilities; a copy of a job description; or an organization chart.
4. Measure conformance to the +Vantage Vinyl Guiding Principles (see Guiding Principles). The Guiding Principles set the direction and parameters of +Vantage Vinyl as goals to be achieved over time. Every three years, applicant companies will complete the +Vantage Vinyl Guiding Principles Conformance Survey to ensure conformance with the Guiding Principles. Verification of such conformance will be completed based on the documentation review as described in the Guiding

Principles section below. Interim years require an annual maintenance survey. Applicants may reverify on a more frequent basis if desired to reflect improvements to company conformance with the Guiding Principles. The fee assessment and schedule are published annually prior to the +Vantage Vinyl Guiding Principles Conformance Survey.

## 5.2 Verification Overview

The +Vantage Vinyl program will measure and report on company and industry conformance with the Guiding Principles and progress in the five pillars on an annual basis.

+Vantage Vinyl is an initiative that allows qualifying organizations within the vinyl value chain to verify their vinyl manufacturing sustainability activities. Participants that produce multiple materials can only verify processes relating to the manufacturing or processing of vinyl to the +Vantage Vinyl initiative.

+Vantage Vinyl can accommodate different sizes and types of organization within the vinyl value chain, provided they meet the eligibility criteria. Verifications issued depend on the size and type of organization. For example, an organization seeking company-wide +Vantage Vinyl verification must verify all operations, facilities or processes that are within the vinyl value chain of that company. In that case, the +Vantage Vinyl verification certificate will apply company-wide. The Verification certificate for a company seeking +Vantage Vinyl verification only for production related to a specific business unit (e.g. pipe) will be limited to those operations or processes within that unit. In that case, the Verification certificate and Graphics Usage Guidelines would be strictly limited to the business unit. Before submitting an application to the program, we recommend that companies discuss the scope of their request with GreenCircle Certified.

The goal of +Vantage Vinyl is to recognize participants of the vinyl value chain for their commitment and leadership within the industry for satisfying environmental and sustainability goals, and voluntarily going beyond regulatory compliance to continuously improve the performance of the vinyl industry.

GreenCircle will work with all applicants to review current company activities to determine how they relate to the five pillars:

- Human Health
- Climate Responsibility
- Ecosystem Protection
- Social Health and Equity
- Circular Economy



## 5.3 Complete Survey

To be eligible for verification, applicants must complete and return the +Vantage Vinyl Guiding Principles Conformance Survey to GreenCircle within the time frame designated by the VSC. Upon completion of the +Vantage Vinyl Guiding Principles Conformance Survey, GreenCircle will contact the applicant for further information, conduct a detailed audit, and report their findings.

Verification is on a one-brand basis. Companies with multiple brands may pursue one of the multi-brand verification options listed below.

Multi-brand verification:

- Companies with multiple brands, but same operations, will be charged a logo usage fee and a +Vantage Vinyl

- Verification Certificate fee determined by VSC and GreenCircle.
- Companies with multiple brands but different operations will require a separate +Vantage Vinyl Guiding Principles Conformance Survey.

#### 5.4 Verification Process

The scope of the verification process will include review of:

- Applicant information:
  - Information pertaining to the applicant, including physical address, facility locations, specific information relating to the Guiding Principle to be verified, and more.
  - General information about the applicant as a legal entity (i.e., whether the applicant is part of a larger parent organization, whether the applicant sells their product to another company for private labeling, etc.).
- Technical documentation to be collected by GreenCircle:
  - Confirmation as to whether the applicant has a management system in place to ensure that appropriate steps will be taken based on data, process changes, etc.
  - Confirmation of the +Vantage Vinyl Guiding Principles Conformance Survey responses:
    - Specific documentation requirements (see Guiding Principles); and
    - Participation and cooperation with any additional data requests or document reviews from GreenCircle.
- Verification Documentation:
  - +Vantage Vinyl Participation Agreement
  - Graphic Usage & Style Guidelines for Participants in +Vantage Vinyl (Graphic Usage Guidelines); and
  - Confidentiality agreements, as requested.

#### 5.5 Verification Activities

The verification process will be carried out as agreed by all parties and as outlined in this document. The verification process will confirm the information provided and will verify conformance with the +Vantage Vinyl Guiding Principles utilizing the examples of acceptable documentation. Other forms of documentation may be submitted pending approval from GreenCircle if the documentation clearly demonstrates conformance to the targeted Guiding Principle.

GreenCircle will conduct verification of each applicant's +Vantage Vinyl Guiding Principles Conformance Survey and documentation, taking into consideration whether the documents refer to corporate wide operations or for the business, the relevant U.S./Canadian operations, and the existing programs or initiatives related to sustainability, compliance or conformance, and operations.

During the Guiding Principles verification process, GreenCircle will conduct a review call to gain an understanding of the applicant's operations and activities related to sustainability. If there are any questions regarding what documentation may be submitted, applicants should contact GreenCircle. During the verification process, GreenCircle will review documentation from the five pillars to determine conformance with the +Vantage Vinyl Guiding Principles.

Verification is achieved through response to all mandatory questions of the Guiding Principles. It should be noted that not all Guiding Principles are applicable to all segments of the supply chain. In addition, levels of achievement will be awarded for operating above the minimum requirements and demonstrating additional initiatives or continuous improvement in the Guiding Principles. An applicant may elect to provide documentation of an Advanced Practice or an Innovative Practice for a Guiding Principle in which the applicant can demonstrate sustainability practices above the minimum verification requirements identified in the Guiding Principle Fulfilment.

- **Guiding Principle Fulfilment** - provide the acceptable documentation to achieve minimum requirements.
- **Advanced Practices** - actions or processes that go beyond the basic requirements and demonstrate a higher level of commitment to sustainability. Advanced Practices focus on enhanced compliance and efficiency.

- **Innovative Practices** - actions or processes that involve pioneering new methods and approaches that significantly optimize efforts to drive industry efficiency and sustainability. Innovative Practices emphasize groundbreaking improvements and new methodologies.

Examples of Advanced Practices and Innovative Practices are provided in Section 7. The levels of achievement will be an additional recognition on the +Vantage Vinyl Verification Certificate based on the following criteria:

- **Verified** – Achieve all applicable mandatory Guiding Principles.
- **Silver** – Greater than 80% conformance to all applicable Guiding Principles and at least a combination of three advanced or innovative practices.
- **Gold** – 100% conformance to all applicable Guiding Principles, three advanced practices, and at least two innovative practices.

Figure 2 is a sample flow diagram showing the steps in the verification process.



Figure 2 – Verification Process Steps

### 5.6 Existing Sustainability Programs

It is the goal of +Vantage Vinyl to promote sustainability throughout all areas of the vinyl industry. It is understood that some applicants might already be participating in other sustainability initiatives or programs and would like to determine how their current initiatives can apply to the +Vantage Vinyl program.

+Vantage Vinyl recognizes many other sustainability standards and associations. If a +Vantage Vinyl applicant believes they can obtain credit for Guiding Principles from participating in another sustainability initiative, it should be discussed with GreenCircle during the verification process.

Proof of conformance with other applicable sustainability standards and certifications may be used to fulfill the Guiding Principles' conformance to the +Vantage Vinyl standard. Examples of these standards and certifications include

GreenCircle's Certified Environmental Facts Certification, GreenCircle's Sustainable Manufacturing Practices Certification, NSF 332 Resilient Flooring Certification, NSF 342 Sustainability Assessment for Wallcovering Products, NSF 347 Sustainability Assessment for Single Ply Roofing Membranes, NSF 140 Sustainability Assessment for Carpet, NSF Electrical Conduit Certification, and Cradle to Cradle Certification.

Environmental Management System (EMS) is a powerful tool to monitor conformance with environmental regulations and standards, minimize legal and operational risks, and reduce negative environmental impacts throughout the supply chain. The development and implementation of environmental management systems throughout the vinyl industry will promote the industry's contribution to sustainable development. The most widely used standard for EMS is ISO 14001. Another important certification is RC 14001, which combines Responsible Care and ISO 14001 into a single process. Both ISO 14001 and RC 14001 require renewal every three years.

### 5.7 Data Requirements

All data provided to GreenCircle must be current for the most recent calendar year, unless otherwise indicated in the Guiding Principles or approved by VSC. It will be the sole responsibility of the applicant pursuing verification to collect and deliver all required information to GreenCircle, unless otherwise agreed upon.

### 5.8 Data Protection and Confidentiality

Confidentiality is of the utmost importance. Any data or documentation submitted directly to GreenCircle shall remain confidential and will not be shared with VSC or any other outside entities without the written approval of the applicant. Applicants may elect to enter into a non-disclosure agreement with GreenCircle for additional documentation of the confidentiality throughout and after the process.

GreenCircle has system protections in place to protect data, including standardized practices to safeguard sensitive data and ensure all tools are functioning efficiently and correctly.

Any statistical data obtained from GreenCircle and used by VSC will be anonymized and reported at an aggregated level.

### 5.9 Timeline

The +Vantage Vinyl Guiding Principles Conformance Survey is administered on an annual basis, with the new conformance survey being released in April of each year. It is requested that applicants complete the +Vantage Vinyl Guiding Principles Conformance Survey within six weeks from receipt, except for submittal of greenhouse gas (GHG) data for resin applicants, which is due by mid-July. The GreenCircle review for verification will be completed within six weeks from receipt of the survey responses. A tentative schedule will be agreed upon by the applicant and GreenCircle for document submission and review. All documentation must be submitted to GreenCircle in a timely manner.

GHG data for the additives and resin applicants will be required to be submitted by July 15<sup>th</sup>. If a company completed the +Vantage Vinyl Guiding Principles Conformance Survey and received verification, but fails to submit the GHG data, the verification will be revoked.

Verification certificates will be dated June 1<sup>st</sup> of the year the applicant completed the +Vantage Vinyl Guiding Principles Conformance Survey and be valid for three years.

GreenCircle may not grant verification outside of this timeline. Verification must be completed on the above timeline to allow for timely annual communication of industry performance metrics.

### 5.10 Non-Conformance

During the verification process, conformance is evaluated in detail per the +Vantage Vinyl Verification Guiding Principles, example documentation, and conformance metrics. GreenCircle will review all documentation and evidence provided by the applicant. Based on that review, GreenCircle will make an evaluation of conformance and determine if an applicant is "conformant" or "nonconformant." GreenCircle's Quality Control team will verify the conformance during the review process and confirm the verification results. Evaluation is based on conformance to applicable Guiding Principles for each attribute,

where appropriate.

During the verification process, if GreenCircle determines that an applicant does not conform to the standards utilized by GreenCircle to complete the specified verification, the company will be notified. GreenCircle will provide a conformance summary to the applicant and conduct a conference call to discuss the non-conformities GreenCircle observed. The applicant will have up to four weeks to address the non-conformities and respond to GreenCircle for evaluation and final review of conformance. This process enables the applicant to address these non-conformities to obtain the +Vantage Vinyl verification mark.

#### 5.11 Verification Result Notification

Successful applicants and VSC will be notified of the verification results following GreenCircle's final review and receive the following deliverables:

- Summary of conformance to the +Vantage Vinyl Guiding Principles;
- Verification certificate; and
- Graphic Usage Guidelines.

Upon successful completion of the verification process, VSC will produce appropriate media releases to notify industry members and the public.

If an applicant does not adequately address all mandatory questions of the Guiding Principles for verification, GreenCircle will provide a summary of conformance to enable the applicant to identify areas for improvement, address these internally, and reapply and resubmit for the next verification cycle.

#### 5.12 Appeal

An applicant may appeal the verification results to GreenCircle within 14 business days from the date of receipt of the summary of conformance. The appeal to GreenCircle should include:

- The name and address of the appealing applicant;
- The applicant's reasoning as to why GreenCircle's evaluation of their conformance or non-conformance with the Guiding Principles should be revised.

Appeal requests will be acknowledged promptly and reviewed as expeditiously as possible by GreenCircle. If additional review of new data and documentation is required by GreenCircle, and was not previously provided or was provided outside of the non-conformance review period described in Section 5.10, additional fees may apply. VSC will be notified that an appeal is in process and the content of the appeal will not be shared.

#### 5.13 Suspension or Termination

GreenCircle reserves the right to suspend a +Vantage Vinyl verification if a participating company is found to have provided incorrect, false or misleading information related to the conformance to the Guiding Principles. GreenCircle will immediately issue a suspension and document the issue or inconsistency that has been observed and provide the company with the opportunity to respond. During this timeframe, the company must discontinue the use of the GreenCircle mark in any and all marketing materials. GreenCircle will notify VSC of the suspension so that VSC can confirm that the participating company has suspended the use of the +Vantage Vinyl trademark and tagline in any and all marketing materials, communication, and sustainability reporting. If corrective actions have been implemented, the suspension will be lifted and continued mark usage will be granted.

If corrective actions by the company have not been taken within 90 days, then VSC may terminate the company's verification and Participation Agreement in accordance with Paragraph 7.ii of the Participation Agreement. Upon termination of the Participation Agreement, a company will no longer be able to use the mark. The terminated company will be eligible to enter into a new Participation Agreement and complete a full +Vantage Vinyl Guiding Principles Conformance Survey during a future verification cycle in which documentation will be collected to confirm the corrective actions and all survey responses for conformance to the +Vantage Vinyl Guiding Principles. *Additional verification costs will be incurred by the company.*

#### 5.14 Mark Usage

VSC will provide a copy of the Graphic Usage Guidelines upon confirmation of verification. Verified +Vantage Vinyl participants may use the +Vantage Vinyl name and other marks as set out in the +Vantage Vinyl Participation Agreement and Graphic Usage Guidelines. Please review these documents for more detailed information on VSC's grant to +Vantage Vinyl participants of a royalty-free, non-exclusive, non-transferable license to use the marks. The +Vantage Vinyl mark is registered in the United States.

Failure to use the +Vantage Vinyl name and other marks in accordance with the Participation Agreement and Graphic Usage Guidelines will result in immediate revocation of a company's rights to use the name and marks and may result in a temporary suspension of its participation in +Vantage Vinyl.

GreenCircle marks are only authorized for use by the company or brand outlined in the certificate. Brands not explicitly verified by GreenCircle, such as subsidiaries and parent companies, are not permitted to use the GreenCircle mark.

## 6. Annual Maintenance

All +Vantage Vinyl verifications will be valid for three years. In addition to the initial verification, participants must undergo an annual maintenance check by the first and second anniversary of the initial verification, June 1st. The maintenance is a streamlined process that ensures no major changes have occurred to the company processes that deviate and invalidate the original verified conformance to the Guiding Principles. As part of the maintenance process, participants will complete a maintenance survey that collects annual data for production, energy usage, and GHG emissions. The maintenance survey includes written confirmation that conformance to the mandatory requirements have not changed. Participants wishing to maintain their verification beyond the third year will undergo the +Vantage Vinyl Guiding Principles Conformance Survey in the 4<sup>th</sup> year.

+Vantage Vinyl verification is premised on the assumption that no participant company processes will undergo any changes that invalidate the responses submitted with their initial application or that would require the issuance of a new verification certificate (major changes). Participants are required to notify GreenCircle of any major changes that occur.

## 7. Guiding Principles

VSC has established Guiding Principles, under each of the five pillars, that all +Vantage Vinyl applicants must follow in order to participate in the initiative. Every applicant must be able to show how they are instituting the Guiding Principle categories (Human Health, Climate Responsibility, Ecosystem Protection, Social Health and Equity, and Circular Economy) within their organization. The Guiding Principles set the direction and parameters of +Vantage Vinyl as goals to be achieved over time within the scope of the +Vantage Vinyl Standard. It is anticipated that some companies will have sustainability programs in place that will meet some of the Guiding Principles, while other companies may be beginning to develop a sustainability program. The Guiding Principles can be used by participants as a framework to enhance their existing sustainability programs. For companies just beginning their sustainability journey, the Guiding Principles can be used as a roadmap for the development of a comprehensive sustainability program.

To demonstrate that the Guiding Principle categories are being instituted, companies must provide documentation to verify commitment to the Guiding Principles and a signature from a company officer with the authority to review and approve the submission. The acceptable documentation examples should be used as a reference for possible forms of documentation to support the claim and are not the sole documentation that will be accepted.

### 7.1. Navigating the Guiding Principles

Each Guiding Principle is listed below in the tables in Section 7.2 through Section 7.6. Each Guiding Principle has the following details:

- The **"Mandatory"** section within each table indicates if this Guiding Principle is required for verification.
- The **"Intent"** section describes the objective of each Guiding Principle. This shows what is being achieved by fulfilling each Guiding Principle.
- The **"Market Segment Applicability"** section includes parts of the vinyl value chain that the Guiding Principle may be relevant to. It is recognized that not every Guiding Principle is relevant for each part of

the vinyl value chain so only the parts listed will be scored.

- The **“Business Unit Applicability”** section includes which sections of the business should be covered when addressing each Guiding Principle.
- The **“Guiding Principle Fulfillment - Acceptable Documentation”** section within each table provides examples of documentation that might be utilized throughout the verification process.
- The **“Examples of Advanced Practices”** section within each table indicates examples of Advanced Practices that might be submitted for progress towards the Silver or Gold levels of achievement.
- The **“Examples of Innovative Practice”** section within each table indicates examples of Innovative Practices that might be submitted for progress towards the Silver or Gold levels of achievement.

Some Guiding Principles are not applicable to specific parts of the vinyl value chain. Where those Guiding Principles are relevant, the applicability is mentioned. Even so, a company may have a unique position where the Guiding Principle is still not relevant for their business. Should this occur, the applicant is to select the “Not Applicable” option on the survey and provide a description during the verification process as to why the Guiding Principle is not applicable.

Certain documentation can be used to fulfill more than one Guiding Principle. Actual documentation requirements are tailored to each applicant and will be discussed in detail and agreed upon by the applicant and GreenCircle prior to the commencement of the verification process.

Additional documentation can be submitted to demonstrate operations above the minimum requirements which may include additional initiatives or continuous improvement in the Guiding Principles to be evaluated as levels of achievement.



## 7.2. Fulfillment of the Human Health Guiding Principles

Human Health and ensuring that substances are dealt with in a transparent and safe manner during the manufacturing and use of PVC products.

Guiding Principle	Mandatory	Value Chain Applicability					
		Resin	Additive	Compounder / Formulator	Converter/ End Product Mfg	Recycler	Raw Materials Distributor
7.2.1 - Use of environmental and safety management systems and operational advanced practices that minimize risk to employees	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
7.2.2 - Lead, hexavalent chromium, and cadmium as added ingredients in vinyl components are not used	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes
7.2.3 - Safely employ additives based on current data and scientific assessment methodologies	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes
7.2.4 - Provide open disclosure of additives in PVC products			Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes
7.2.5 - Manufacture safe and user-friendly products and consider potential effects throughout the product life cycle			Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
7.2.6 - Manufacture or Use VCM that Relies on the Use of Advanced Technologies		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes
7.2.7 - Sustainability Portfolio Analysis			Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

### 7.2.1. Use of Environmental and Safety Management Systems and Operational Advanced Practices that Minimize Risk to Employees.

**Mandatory**

**Intent:** Documented evidence of implementing best manufacturing practices.

**Market Segment Applicability:** Resin manufacturers, additive manufacturers, compounders/formulators, converters/end-product manufacturers, recyclers, and raw materials distributors.

**Business Unit Applicability:** This documentation should be focused on the vinyl sector of the business only.

#### Guiding Principle Fulfillment - Acceptable Documentation:

- Must use an environmental and safety management system at each facility. Documentation of

Environmental Health and Safety system, policies, and procedures includes:

- Proof of compliance with OSHA's regulations and standards, such as OSHA Voluntary Protection Program
- AND for Resin Manufacturers
  - Attestation from company official that company conforms with OSHA 1910.1017 which covers the exposure of workers to VCM

#### Examples of Advanced Practices:

- Adherence to ACC's Responsible Care® program; OR
- OSHA Voluntary Protection Program Star Level, Merit or Star Demonstration Level; OR
- Attestation of conformance with California Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal/OSHA) Permissible Exposure Limits (PELs); OR
- Attestation of conformance with National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) Recommended Exposure Limits (RELs); OR
- Attestation of conformance with ACGIH® Threshold Limit Values (TLVs®) and Biological Exposure Indices (BEIs®); OR
- 5-years of zero OSHA recordables; OR
- Proof of compliance with OSHA's regulations and standards of contractors within the fence line, such as providing annual incident reporting information; OR
- Other advanced practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

#### Examples of Innovative Practice:

- Other innovative practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

### 7.2.2. Lead, Hexavalent Chromium, and Cadmium as Added Ingredients in Vinyl Components are Not Used.

Mandatory

**Intent:** Improve production of PVC products.

**Market Segment Applicability:** additive manufacturers, compounders/formulators, converters/end-product manufacturers, and raw materials distributors.

**Business Unit Applicability:** This documentation should be focused on the vinyl sector of the business only.

#### Guiding Principle Fulfillment - Acceptable Documentation:

Documentation demonstrating that vinyl compounds are sourced from suppliers that have no measurable amounts of lead, hexavalent chromium, or cadmium in their product. Examples include:

- Attestation from a company official that these ingredients are avoided; OR
- Documentation showing reference of relevant standards and risk assessment, such as Safety Data Sheet; OR
- Bill of materials or other documentation that provides evidence that these materials are not utilized in vinyl materials or products

#### Examples of Advanced Practices:

- Avoid substances included within RoHS requirements and regulations; OR
- Other advanced practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

#### Examples of Innovative Practice:

- Other innovative practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

### 7.2.3. Safely Employ Additives Based on Current Data and Scientific Assessment Methodologies.

Mandatory

**Intent:** Safe manufacture and use of PVC products.

**Market Segment Applicability:** additive manufacturers, compounders/formulators, converters/end-product manufacturers, and raw materials distributors.

**Business Unit Applicability:** This documentation should be focused on the vinyl sector of the business only.

#### Guiding Principle Fulfillment - Acceptable Documentation:

- Internal procedures on the review of additives in new product development, including handling procedures (i.e. PPE); AND
- Attestation of compliance with relevant OSHA handling procedures; AND
- Attestation of compliance with relevant product standards, such as NSF, ASTM, and/or ISO standards; AND
- Safe use determination, exposure, or hazard assessments from suppliers

#### Examples of Advanced Practices:

- Action plan to review product formulations for ingredients with a preferred health and safety profile; OR
- Utilize additive substances that have undergone external safe use verification (i.e. MMRE); OR
- Other advanced practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

#### Examples of Innovative Practice:

- Other innovative practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

### 7.2.4. Provide Open Disclosure of Additives in PVC Products.

Not Mandatory

**Intent:** Disclose information on additives used in PVC products to stakeholders.

**Market Segment Applicability:** additive manufacturers, compounders/formulators, converters/end-product manufacturers, and raw materials distributors.

**Business Unit Applicability:** This documentation should be focused on the vinyl sector of the business only.

#### Guiding Principle Fulfillment - Acceptable Documentation:

- List or description of the non-confidential additives used in the PVC products by providing general information of all substances intentionally added (Note: Disclosure of exact amounts of each additive used is not required as this is proprietary, commercially sensitive information). Examples include:
  - Published and publicly available Safety Data Sheets; OR
  - Material Ingredient Reports such as Health Product Declarations, manufacturer's inventories, etc., that disclose to at least 1000ppm with no more than 25% of ingredients undisclosed

#### Examples of Advanced Practices:

- Leverage the VSC scoreWISE™ tool which must contain the disclosure of additives; OR
- Have Material Ingredient Reports that disclose to at least 1000ppm with no more than 25% of ingredients undisclosed, such as Health Product Declarations or Declare Labels, for products that represent 20% of PVC related sales; OR
- Other advanced practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

#### Examples of Innovative Practice:

- Digital product passports disclosing additives; OR
- Third-party verified Health Product Declarations or Declare Labels that disclose to 100ppm for products that represent 20% of PVC related sales; OR
- Additive disclosure, risk, and exposure potential reporting through completing the ASTM E3182-20 OESR; OR
- Other innovative practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

#### 7.2.5. Manufacture Safe and User-Friendly Products and Consider Potential Effects Throughout the Product Life Cycle.

Not Mandatory

**Intent:** Transparent policy for safer product manufacturing.

**Market Segment Applicability:** additive manufacturers, compounders/formulators, converters/end-product manufacturers, recyclers, and raw materials distributors.

**Business Unit Applicability:** This documentation should be focused on the vinyl sector of the business only.

#### Guiding Principle Fulfillment - Acceptable Documentation:

- Evidence demonstrating that products do not carry a GHS hazard classification; AND/OR
- NSF, ASTM, ISO 10377 (Consumer product safety), FDA or other equivalent standard certification for use of application
  - For example, pipe manufacturers can provide certification to NSF 14 and NSF 61 for pipe products

#### Examples of Advanced Practices:

- Leverage the VSC ScoreWISE™ tool to reduce human health (hazardous substances) across all life cycle stages for a product series; OR
- Other advanced practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

#### Examples of Innovative Practice:

- Provide evidence that the company has a process system for the identification of chemical hazards within the products or operations and procedures to reduce or replace the hazard (Company has to provide the framework behind chemical hazard evaluation; OR
- Other innovative practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

#### 7.2.6. Manufacture or Use VCM that Relies on the Use of Advanced Technologies.

Not Mandatory

**Intent:** Improve the production process of PVC products.

**Market Segment Applicability:** resin manufacturers, additive manufacturers, compounders/formulators, converters/end-product manufacturers, and raw materials distributors.

**Business Unit Applicability:** This documentation should be focused on the vinyl sector of the business only.

#### Guiding Principle Fulfillment - Acceptable Documentation:

Resin Producers:

- Attestation from a company official that mercury is not utilized in vinyl materials or products; AND
- Bill of materials or other documentation that provides evidence that mercury is not utilized in vinyl materials or products

Compounders, Converters, Formulators, End-Product Manufacturers:

- Attestation from a company official that vinyl resin is sourced from suppliers that have no measurable amounts of mercury in their product

**Examples of Advanced Practices:**

- Publicly available policies on the prohibition of mercury as a catalyst; OR
- Resin Manufacturers: Phase out plan for diaphragm technology and proof that asbestos is not used during production; OR
- Non-Resin manufacturers: Letter of attestation from suppliers proving that they do not use asbestos and are phasing out diaphragm technology; OR
- Other advanced practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

**Examples of Innovative Practice:**

- Resin manufacturers: Exclusively use membrane technology in VCM production; OR
- Non-resin manufactures: Letter of attestation from suppliers proving that they are exclusively using membrane technology; OR
- Other innovative practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

### 7.2.7. Sustainability Portfolio Analysis

**Not Mandatory**

**Intent:** Sustainably manufacture PVC products.

**Market Segment Applicability:** additive manufacturers, compounders/formulators, converters/end-product manufacturers, recyclers, and raw materials distributors.

**Business Unit Applicability:** This documentation should be focused on the vinyl sector of the business only.

**Guiding Principle Fulfillment - Acceptable Documentation:**

Submitted portfolio analysis should be relevant to a three-year timeframe from date of submission.

- Documentation demonstrating use of the VSC scoreWISE™ tool for products that represent 20% of PVC related sales; or provide evidence of an internal tool, equivalent to VSC scoreWISE™ tool, used for a multiple attribute sustainability analysis for products that represent 20% of PVC related sales

**Examples of Advanced Practices:**

- Documentation demonstrating use of the VSC scoreWISE™ tool for products that represent 50% of PVC related sales; or provide evidence of an internal tool, equivalent to VSC scoreWISE™ tool, used for a multiple attribute sustainability analysis for products that represent 50% of PVC related sales; OR
- Documentation demonstrating use of the VSC scoreWISE™ tool and a decrease in impact for products that represent 25% of PVC related sales; or provide evidence of an internal tool, equivalent to VSC scoreWISE™ tool, used for a multiple attribute sustainability analysis for products that represent 25% of PVC related sales and show a decrease in impact; OR
- Other advanced practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

**Examples of Innovative Practice:**

- Documentation demonstrating use of the VSC scoreWISE™ tool for products that represent 100% of PVC related sales; or provide evidence of an internal tool, equivalent to VSC scoreWISE™ tool, used for a multiple attribute sustainability analysis for products that represent 100% of PVC related sales; OR
- Documentation demonstrating use of the VSC scoreWISE™ tool and a decrease in impact for products that represent 50% of PVC related sales; or provide evidence of an internal tool, equivalent to VSC

scoreWISE™ tool, used for a multiple attribute sustainability analysis for products that represent 50% of PVC related sales and show a decrease in impact; OR

- Other innovative practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee



### 7.3. Fulfillment of the Climate Responsibility Guiding Principles

Climate Responsibility and addressing the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, including the impacts of products and materials and the energy used during production and operation.

Guiding Principle	Mandatory	Value Chain Applicability					
		Resin	Additive	Compounder / Formulator	Converter/End Product Mfg	Recycler	Raw Materials Distributor
7.3.1 - Provide company operational performance metrics in annual survey for use in industry reporting	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
7.3.2 - Demonstrate a commitment to improving the energy and greenhouse gas emission profile of PVC products		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

#### 7.3.1. Provide Company Operational Performance Metrics in Annual Survey for Use in Industry Reporting.

**Mandatory**

**Intent:** Collect data to measure progress against baseline.

**Market Segment Applicability:** resin manufacturers, additive manufacturers, compounders, converters, formulators, end-product manufacturers, raw materials distributors, and recyclers.

**Business Unit Applicability:** This documentation should be focused on the vinyl sector of the business.

If companies cannot provide vinyl-specific operational performance metrics, they can be provided as a percentage of overall United States operations, subject to acceptance by GreenCircle and the Verification Committee.

#### Guiding Principle Fulfillment - Acceptable Documentation:

- For each facility in the vinyl value chain, proof of completion of an annual survey requiring data related to energy or carbon, water, and waste. Data will be requested via facility for a complete calendar year (along with production) or via already benchmarked data based on a complete calendar year to production. All data submitted will be kept proprietary and confidential; AND
- Proof of completion of Vinyl Institute’s Annual Recycling Survey, if applicable

#### Examples of Advanced Practices:

- Publicly available reporting that includes Scope 1, 2, and 3, water, and waste data; OR
- Other advanced practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

#### Examples of Innovative Practice:

- Other innovative practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

### 7.3.2. Demonstrate a Commitment to Improving the Energy and Greenhouse Gas Emission Profile of PVC Products.

Not Mandatory

**Intent:** Reduce end-product embodied carbon.

**Market Segment Applicability:** resin manufacturers, additive manufacturers, compounders/formulators, converters/end-product manufacturers, recyclers, and raw materials distributors.

**Business Unit Applicability:** This documentation should be focused on the vinyl sector of the business only.

#### Guiding Principle Fulfillment - Acceptable Documentation:

- Documentation demonstrating assessment of the energy and GHG emissions profile of PVC products, such as life cycle assessment (or environmental product declarations, Product Carbon Footprint) of products that represent 20% of PVC related sales; AND
- Copy of an action plan with specific goals and timelines to reduce embodied carbon

#### Examples of Advanced Practices:

- Provide LCA optimization documentation showing reductions in embodied carbon; OR
- Other advanced practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

#### Examples of Innovative Practice:

- Provide evidence for achieving over 20% reduction in embodied carbon compared to a baseline product, with the baseline occurring within the past 10 years. This can include an evaluation of comparable life cycle assessments between product generations; OR
- Other innovative practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee



#### 7.4. Fulfillment of the Ecosystem Responsibility Guiding Principles

Ecosystem Protection and the preservation of biodiversity and the minimization of environmental degradation to the air, water, and soil.

Guiding Principle	Mandatory	Value Chain Applicability					
		Resin	Additive	Compounder / Formulator	Converter/End Product Mfg	Recycler	Raw Materials Distributor
7.4.1 - Reduce releases to the environment	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
7.4.2 - Use land and other natural resources prudently to protect biodiversity and ecosystems	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
7.4.3 - Implement water reuse and conservation practices to reduce the depletion of water resources and thereby support the availability of clean water	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
7.4.4 - Establish resource conservation and material efficiency when setting business strategy objectives and goals	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
7.4.5 - Support third-party water and sanitation conservation and development programs		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
7.4.6 - Employ responsible sourcing practices that encourage supplier reductions in environmental impacts and minimal use of natural resources with positive lifecycle implications		Yes		Yes	Yes		Yes

### 7.4.1. Reduce Releases to the Environment.

#### Mandatory

**Intent:** Reduce emissions to water, air, and soil.

**Market Segment Applicability:** resin manufacturers, additive suppliers, compounders/formulators, converters/end-product manufacturers, recyclers, and raw materials distributors.

**Business Unit Applicability:** This documentation should be focused on the vinyl sector of the business only. If one does not own operations but contracts manufacturing operations to other facilities, please provide the contract manufacturer's Scope 1 and 2 emissions as related to the relevant branded products within your portfolio.

#### Guiding Principle Fulfillment - Acceptable Documentation:

- Evidence of continuous emissions monitoring; AND
- Copy of an action plan demonstrating how the company will work to reduce Scope 1 and Scope 2 GHG emissions to the environment over time with defined goals and target dates; AND
- Attestation by company official that business is in compliance with the Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, Pollution Prevention Act reporting and corrective action has been taken if needed; AND
- Scope 1 and Scope 2 GHG emissions benchmarked per unit of production without showing emissions increases over the three-year cycle average, with the first three-year cycle average constituting the baseline. If there are GHG emissions that are not documented in a published report, benchmarked to production, then the emissions data and production data must include a description of the methodology documented in the template provided. In alignment with GHG protocol, there cannot be more than a 5% increase<sup>1</sup> between the baseline and the next three-year average.
  - Large Sized Company – companies with revenues greater than \$1 billion: In alignment with the timing of California SB253, provide Scope 3 emissions – in addition to scope 1 and 2 reporting for GHG emissions

To account for variations in company growth, growing companies may submit plans to reduce emissions below the baseline year over time with defined goals or the baseline may be modified to reflect current operations upon agreement with GreenCircle and the Verification Committee.

GreenCircle and the Verification Committee will determine if a company meets this exception. One example would be companies with recent acquisitions.

#### Examples of Advanced Practices:

- Proof of 3rd party certified scope 1, 2, and 3 GHG emissions; OR
- Small Sized Company – companies with revenues less than \$1 billion: In alignment with the timing of California SB253, provide Scope 3 emissions – in addition to Scope 1 and 2 reporting for GHG emissions; OR
- Attestation that the company has maintained a zero noncompliance with Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, Pollution Prevention Act; OR
- Operation Clean Sweep Blue; OR
- Other advanced practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

#### Examples of Innovative Practice:

- Showing continued reductions or elimination of releases to the environment; OR
- Provide evidence of advanced pollution prevention controls; OR
- Other innovative practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

<sup>1</sup> <https://ghgprotocol.org/sites/default/files/2023-03/ghg-uncertainty.pdf>

### 7.4.2. Use Land and Other Natural Resources Prudently to Protect Biodiversity and Ecosystems.

Mandatory

**Intent:** To prevent unintended product releases to the environment and to foster biodiversity within the ecosystem.

**Market Segment Applicability:** resin manufacturers, additive manufacturers, compounders/formulators, converters/end-product manufacturers, recyclers, and raw materials distributors.

**Business Unit Applicability:** Should be focused on the United States/Canadian operations of the business only.

#### Guiding Principle Fulfillment - Acceptable Documentation:

- Documentation showing policies eliminating releases, control systems, watershed protection, action plans for spills or storm water impacts, and/or policy to minimize pollutants. Examples include: Membership in Operation Clean Sweep and achievement of all program requirements

#### Examples of Advanced Practices:

- Provide records of any wildlife habitat, land preservation, watershed protection, or wetlands protected on company property; OR
- Provide an action plan or documentation, including goals and target dates, to protect or restore land and natural resources (sustainability report, etc.); OR
- Contracted transportation/logistics partners participation in Operation Clean Sweep Logistics; OR
- Other advanced practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

#### Examples of Innovative Practice:

- Provide evidence of company practices which foster biodiversity within the community; OR
- Provide evidence of redeveloping a brownfield site for new facility use within the last three years; OR
- Other innovative practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

### 7.4.3. Implement Water Reuse and Conservation Practices to Reduce the Depletion of Water Resources and Thereby Support the Availability of Clean Water.

Mandatory

**Intent:** Water conservation.

**Market Segment Applicability:** resin manufacturers, additive manufacturers, compounders/formulators, converters/end-product manufacturers, recyclers, and raw materials distributors.

**Business Unit Applicability:** This documentation should be focused on the vinyl sector of the business only.

If one does not own operations but contracts manufacturing operations to other facilities, the information is to be requested from the subcontractor and provided before the completion of the three-year verification cycle.

#### Guiding Principle Fulfillment - Acceptable Documentation:

- Documentation showing that on a per unit of production basis, water consumption has remained the same or decreased in a three-year cycle, with year one constituting the baseline; AND
- Develop an action plan detailing a pathway to reducing water use within facilities with measurable goals

#### Examples of Advanced Practices:

- Documentation showing continued efforts to implement water conservation technology (research reports, water reuse equipment trial reports, etc.); OR
- Documentation showing contributions (financial and in-kind) with a material impact on operations and funding security for third-party providers of outreach services in support of clean water and sanitation programs; OR
- Other advanced practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

#### Examples of Innovative Practice:

- Achieve progress towards water reductions and set measurable goals; OR
- Stakeholder outreach and promotion plans to create awareness of program development opportunities to suppliers, industry members, and the public that encourages additional contribution (financial and in-kind); OR
- Other innovative practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

#### 7.4.4. Establish Resource Conservation and Material Efficiency When Setting Business Strategy Objectives and Goals.

Mandatory

**Intent:** Integrate resource conservation and efficiency in business planning.

**Market Segment Applicability:** resin manufacturers, additive manufacturers, compounders/formulators, converters/end-product manufacturers, recyclers, and raw materials distributors.

**Business Unit Applicability:** This documentation should be focused on the vinyl sector of the business only.

#### Guiding Principle Fulfillment - Acceptable Documentation:

- Publicly available sustainability reports and other relevant documents listing long-term goals, with specific targets and deadlines, and how they represent resource conservation and material efficiency; OR
- Written statement from officers or senior management on sustainability on internal annual planning that drives behavior towards resource efficiency in company goal setting; OR
- Proof from ISO 14001 that includes Targets/Objectives section

#### Examples of Advanced Practices:

- Provide examples and evidence of business decisions based upon resource conservation and efficiency themes; OR
- Other advanced practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

#### Examples of Innovative Practice:

- Other innovative practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

#### 7.4.5. Support Watershed Management Practices

Not Mandatory

**Intent:** Protect watershed health.

**Market Segment Applicability:** resin manufacturers, additive manufacturers, compounders/formulators, converters/end-product manufacturers, recyclers, and raw materials distributors.

**Business Unit Applicability:** Should be focused on the United States/Canadian operations of the business only.

#### Guiding Principle Fulfillment - Acceptable Documentation:

- Ecological risk assessment, including exposure potential and potential effects, to develop clear watershed goals; AND
- Water source evaluation and reporting using the VSC Water Body Risk Assessment Tool or other equivalent tools; AND
- As applicable, evaluation of how impervious surfaces, vegetation maintenance, and erosion control impact on site water maintenance; AND
- Develop an action plan that clearly outlines how goals will be achieved and show alignment with expected timeline;

#### Examples of Advanced Practices:

- Other advanced practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

**Examples of Innovative Practice:**

- Multi-year watershed action plan with shown improvements and continuous monitoring; OR
- Other innovative practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

**7.4.6. Employ Responsible Sourcing Practices that Encourage Supplier Reductions in Environmental Impacts and Minimal Use of Natural Resources with Positive Lifecycle Implications.**

**Not Mandatory**

**Intent:** Responsible sourcing practices

**Market Segment Applicability:** resin manufacturers, additive manufacturers, compounders/formulators, converters/end-product manufacturers, and raw materials distributors.

**Business Unit Applicability:** Should be focused on the United States/Canadian operations of the business only.

**Guiding Principle Fulfillment - Acceptable Documentation:**

- Publicly available sustainability report or corporate social responsibility report containing a code of conduct for suppliers and a sustainable purchasing policy which considers transportation mode and distance; AND
- Operation plans to model sourcing practices after attributes of ISO 20400

**Examples of Advanced Practices:**

- Report of Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) and/or product carbon footprint for current sourcing practices and operations; OR
- Achieve ISO 20400 certification for Sustainable Procurement; OR
- Third-party assessment of procurement policy; OR
- Measure and minimize the environmental impact of transportation; OR
- Other advanced practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

**Examples of Innovative Practice:**

- Selecting (or de-selecting) primary suppliers based on reduced environmental impacts or supplier's initiatives with environmental impacts; OR
- Supplier participation in scope 3 reporting which allows a company to fulfil GHG Protocol requirements for scope 3 reporting; OR
- Collaboration with suppliers on product innovation and optimization through the use of tools such as scoreWISE or other equivalent tools; OR
- Other innovative practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee



### 7.5. Fulfillment of the Social Health and Equity Guiding Principles

Social Health and Equity and ensuring fair labor practices of workers and the supply chain, as well as community well-being.

Guiding Principle	Mandatory	Value Chain Applicability					
		Resin	Additive	Compounder / Formulator	Converter/ End Product Mfg	Recycler	Raw Materials Distributor
7.5.1 - Provide ready and easy-to-understand access to relevant information about the company's compensation, benefits, recognition and incentive opportunities that meet the changing needs of employees	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
7.5.2 - Create a welcoming and inclusive environment where everyone feels valued, respected, and has equal opportunity to contribute	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
7.5.3 - Subscribe to corporate governance policies that are opposed to discrimination, child labor, bribery and corruption, human trafficking, forced labor, or use of conflict minerals	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
7.5.4 - Treat suppliers, customers, and business partners fairly and ethically through honest and mutually beneficial dealings	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
7.5.5 - Promote open and fair competition throughout industry and in dealing with other business entities, regulators, and government officials. This includes compliance with competition and antitrust laws	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
7.5.6 - Establish sustainability as a criterion in identifying research and development and innovation projects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

7.5.7 - Work within the industry to find solutions, create pilot programs, identify opportunities, and implement them for sustainability-driven advances and innovation.	Yes						
7.5.8 - Communicate company sustainability initiatives	Yes						
7.5.9 - Contribute to charitable outreach in the communities in which we operate		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
7.5.10 - Engage external stakeholders in development of company sustainability programs		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
7.5.11 - Promote the benefits of the +Vantage Vinyl program		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

**7.5.1. Provide Ready and Easy-to-Understand Access to Relevant Information About the Company’s Compensation, Benefits, Recognition, and Incentive Opportunities that Help Meet the Changing Needs of Employees.**

**Mandatory**

**Intent:** Transparent communications with employees regarding employment and benefits.

**Market Segment Applicability:** resin manufacturers, additive manufacturers, compounders/formulators, converters/end-product manufacturers, recyclers, and raw materials distributors.

**Business Unit Applicability:** Should be focused on the United States/Canadian operations of the business only.

**Guiding Principle Fulfillment - Acceptable Documentation:**

- HR and employment policies; AND
- Company code of conduct; AND
- Established internal policies regarding compensation, benefits, recognition, and incentive opportunities

**Examples of Advanced Practices:**

- Total compensation package distributed to employees and measured on an a per employee basis, which must include salary, retirement benefits, paid time off, and healthcare benefits; OR
- Public posting of salary bands for open positions; OR
- Other advanced practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

**Examples of Innovative Practice:**

- Complete a third-party benchmarking for compensation, benefits, recognition, and incentive opportunities within a 5-year cycle; OR
- Other innovative practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

### 7.5.2. Create a welcoming and inclusive environment where everyone feels valued, respected, and has equal opportunity to contribute.

Mandatory

**Intent:** Create a welcoming and inclusive work environment.

**Market Segment Applicability:** resin manufacturers, additive manufacturers, compounders/formulators, converters/end-product manufacturers, recyclers, and raw materials distributors.

**Business Unit Applicability:** Documentation may be provided at an organization-wide or business-unit level.

#### Guiding Principle Fulfillment - Acceptable Documentation:

- Respondents must commit to providing ongoing data regarding statistics outlined in the VSC Guiding Principles Survey Data Collection Template provided by GreenCircle and submit a completed template every three years during the +Vantage Vinyl Guiding Principles Conformance Survey cycle; AND
- Documentation of governance and recruitment policies (i.e., employee handbook, publicly facing statement, or EEO policies)

#### Examples of Advanced Practices:

- Setting internal policies and goals around the promotion and development of a well-rounded workforce; OR
- Measure employee satisfaction annually; OR
- Other advanced practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

#### Examples of Innovative Practice:

- Achieving a third-party audit confirming values and dignity of all individuals are met, which includes surveying employees to understand how employees feel about leadership, communication, values, company culture, etc.; OR
- Other innovative practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

### 7.5.3. Subscribe to Corporate Governance Policies That Are Opposed to Discrimination, Child Labor, Bribery and Corruption, Human Trafficking, Forced Labor, or Use of Conflict Minerals.

Mandatory

**Intent:** No discrimination or exploitation of any population segment.

**Market Segment Applicability:** resin manufacturers, additive manufacturers, compounders/formulators, converters/end-product manufacturers, recyclers, and raw materials distributors.

**Business Unit Applicability:** Documentation may be provided at an organization-wide or business-unit level.

#### Guiding Principle Fulfillment - Acceptable Documentation: Must respond to both parts.

##### Part One (Internal):

- Attestation of commitment to the Guiding Principles set forth by VSC under the Social Diligence pillar with the goal of avoiding discrimination and exploitation of any population segment with the company. Publicly available documentation of governance policies relating to discrimination, child labor, bribery and corruption, human trafficking, and forced labor (i.e., employee handbook, corporate code of conduct or ethics policy, or a publicly facing statement)

##### Part Two (Supply Chain):

- Attestation of commitment to the Guiding Principles set forth by VSC under the Social Diligence pillar with the goal of avoiding discrimination and exploitation of any population segment within the supply chain; AND
- Attestation of compliance with local, state, and federal regulations regarding sourcing of materials or products from regional areas prone to discrimination, child labor, bribery and corruption, human trafficking, forced labor, or conflict minerals

#### Examples of Advanced Practices:

- Demonstrated and shown policies on supply chain sourcing (e.g. policies following ANSI or ISO standards); OR
- Conduct supply chain mapping of your supply chain to confirm primary materials; OR
- Other advanced practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

**Examples of Innovative Practice:**

- Conduct supply chain audit of your supply chain to confirm primary materials; OR
- Publication of the Slavery & Trafficking Risk Template: <https://www.socialresponsibilityalliance.org/strt/>; OR
- Other innovative practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

**7.5.4. Treat Suppliers, Customers, and Business Partners Fairly and Ethically Through Honest and Mutually Beneficial Dealings.**

**Mandatory**

**Intent:** Transparent and ethical business practices.

**Market Segment Applicability:** resin manufacturers, additive manufacturers, compounders/formulators, converters/end-product manufacturers, recyclers, and raw materials distributors.

**Business Unit Applicability:** This required data can be provided either at a Corporate-wide level or at a business-unit level.

**Guiding Principle Fulfillment - Acceptable Documentation:**

- Copy of a policy regarding fair and ethical business dealings in the value chain. This includes a company’s annual financial reports, corporate social governance, sustainability reports, and more. Examples include:
  - The company’s core values and standards statement; AND
  - The company’s policy statements and code of conduct regarding business dealings

**Examples of Advanced Practices:**

- Third-party audits of set policies; OR
- Other advanced practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

**Examples of Innovative Practice:**

- Third-party audits of supply chain; OR
- Other innovative practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

**7.5.5. Promote Open and Fair Competition Throughout Industry and in Dealing with Other Business Entities, Regulators, and Government Officials. This Includes Compliance with Competition and Antitrust Laws.**

**Mandatory**

**Intent:** Promote open and fair competition.

**Market Segment Applicability:** resin manufacturers, additive manufacturers, compounders/formulators, converters/end-product manufacturers, recyclers, and raw materials distributors.

**Business Unit Applicability:** This required data can be provided either at a Corporate-wide level or at a business-unit level.

**Guiding Principle Fulfillment - Acceptable Documentation:**

- Applicants must comply with competition and antitrust laws. Provide a copy of the company’s compliance program that is tailored to the company’s particular areas of risk, regularly reviewed and updated, endorsed by senior management, and consistently enforced, which includes:
  - Company’s policy statements and code of conduct regarding business dealings; AND
  - Reports of regular antitrust compliance audits

**Examples of Advanced Practices:**

- Other advanced practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

**Examples of Innovative Practice:**

- Other innovative practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

**7.5.6. Establish Sustainability as a Criterion in Identifying Research and Development and Innovation Projects.**

**Mandatory**

**Intent:** Include sustainability as a criterion when evaluating R&D projects or capital projects.

**Market Segment Applicability:** resin manufacturers, additive manufacturers, compounders/formulators, converters/end-product manufacturers, recyclers, and raw materials distributors.

**Business Unit Applicability:** This documentation should be focused on the vinyl sector of the business only.

**Guiding Principle Fulfillment - Acceptable Documentation:**

This Guiding Principle will be reviewed annually as a requirement for verification maintenance. This Guiding Principle is considered not applicable if there are no new product development or innovation projects during the year you are reporting. Provide the below to fulfill the minimum requirement:

- Documentation demonstrating use of sustainability tools on new product development or innovation projects, such as Stage-Gate® or ScoreWISE™, that integrates sustainable product innovation, design for the environment, etc.

**Examples of Advanced Practices:**

- Integration of sustainable product innovation or design for the environment aspects into the standard new product development or Stage-Gate® process; OR
- Third-party assessment tools, hotspot mapping or other improvement tools; OR
- Use of VSC's scoreWISE™ to produce at least one case study; OR
- Other advanced practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

**Examples of Innovative Practice:**

- Use of VSC's scoreWISE™ across all new product development projects; OR
- Other innovative practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

**7.5.7. Work Within the Industry to Find Solutions, Create Pilot Programs, Identify Opportunities, and Implement Them for Sustainability-Driven Advances and Innovation.**

**Mandatory**

**Intent:** Promote industry collaboration.

**Market Segment Applicability:** resin manufacturers, additive manufacturers, compounders/formulators, converters/end-product manufacturers, recyclers, and raw materials distributors.

**Business Unit Applicability:** This documentation should be focused on the vinyl sector of the business only.

**Guiding Principle Fulfillment - Acceptable Documentation:**

- Proof of attendance at one or more VSC meetings per year; OR
- Promotion efforts, or campaigns, or charitable giving of materials that promote the benefits of vinyl

#### Examples of Advanced Practices:

- Participate in a VSC-specified pilot programs (and/or fund the VI recycling initiatives/pilots); OR
- Other advanced practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

#### Examples of Innovative Practice:

- Other innovative practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

### 7.5.8. Communicate Company Sustainability Initiatives.

**Mandatory**

**Intent:** Transparency within sustainability initiatives.

**Market Segment Applicability:** resin manufacturers, additive manufacturers, compounders/formulators, converters/end-product manufacturers, recyclers, and raw materials distributors.

**Business Unit Applicability:** This documentation should be focused on the vinyl sector of the business only.

#### Guiding Principle Fulfillment - Acceptable Documentation:

- Published company sustainability reports that include key aspects of the sustainability program, goals with defined timelines, and alignment with UN Sustainable Development Goals; OR
- Sustainability statements on websites or company literature that include focus areas and company initiatives in sustainability, as long as it was published within the last three years

#### Examples of Advanced Practices:

- Publicly display GreenCircle Certified's +Vantage Vinyl scorecard on website; OR
- Other advanced practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

#### Examples of Innovative Practice:

- Other innovative practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

### 7.5.9. Contribute to Community Outreach Where Companies Operate.

**Not Mandatory**

**Intent:** Benefiting your community through outreach, education, and engagement.

**Market Segment Applicability:** resin manufacturers, additive manufacturers, compounders/formulators, converters/end-product manufacturers, recyclers, and raw materials distributors.

**Business Unit Applicability:** This documentation should include any initiatives in the United States or Canada, at either an organization-wide level or at a business-unit level.

#### Guiding Principle Fulfillment - Acceptable Documentation:

- Documentation of financial contributions, material donations, volunteer hours or technical assistance to community organizations (receipts of payments, letter of commitment, press release etc.)

#### Examples of Advanced Practices:

- Multi-year community outreach plan and philanthropic activities regarding education, outreach, or other community service activities; OR
- Other advanced practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

#### Examples of Innovative Practice:

- Demonstrated integration of community outreach into core business strategy, with measurable outcomes and stakeholder co-creation. This may include quantifiable impact metrics (% of revenue reinvested in community, number of beneficiaries, and long-term outcomes), or third-party verification of outreach outcomes (monitoring & evaluation); OR
- Other innovative practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

#### 7.5.10. Engage External Stakeholders in Development of Company Sustainability Programs.

Not Mandatory

**Intent:** Develop a feedback loop that considers external stakeholder input in company sustainability programs.

**Market Segment Applicability:** resin manufacturers, additive manufacturers, compounders/formulators, converters/end-product manufacturers, recyclers, and raw materials distributors.

**Business Unit Applicability:** This documentation should be focused on the vinyl sector of the business only.

#### Guiding Principle Fulfillment - Acceptable Documentation:

- Evidence of external participation in Community Advisory Panels, Chamber of Commerce activities, or other Trade Associations (other than the Vinyl Institute or VSC); AND
- Evidence of external participation with company-led presentations or open forum discussions related to sustainability

#### Examples of Advanced Practices:

- Evidence of stakeholder input into sustainability development; OR
- Third party materiality assessment; OR
- Other advanced practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

#### Examples of Innovative Practice:

- Third party double materiality assessment; OR
- Other innovative practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

#### 7.5.11. Promote Industry and Company's Vinyl Sustainability Work.

Not Mandatory

**Intent:** Promote the advancement of vinyl sustainability programming.

**Market Segment Applicability:** resin manufacturers, additive manufacturers, compounders/formulators, converters/end-product manufacturers, recyclers, and raw materials distributors.

**Business Unit Applicability:** This documentation should be focused on the vinyl sector of the business only. Not applicable for companies completing their first year of verification.

#### Guiding Principle Fulfillment - Acceptable Documentation:

- Documentation demonstrating support or contribution of relevant information to +Vantage Vinyl Industry Reporting to highlight the initiative developments, accomplishments, and progress towards the goals and targets established through the initiative; AND
- Presentations and reports prepared by the company communicating the benefits of +Vantage Vinyl verification

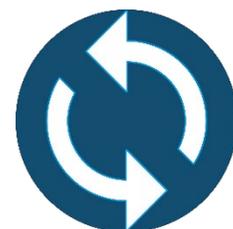
#### Examples of Advanced Practices:

- Promote the +Vantage Vinyl program by using the Mark in signatures, sales and procurement trainings, sustainability reports, and more; OR

- Integration of +Vantage Vinyl into the Procurement Team’s Supplier Engagement and Sustainability Requirements;  
OR
- Conduct sales training on +Vantage Vinyl; OR
- Other advanced practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

**Examples of Innovative Practice:**

- Participation in cooperative marketing program with VSC
- Other innovative practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee



## 7.6. Fulfillment of the Circular Economy Guiding Principles

Circular Economy and promoting the reuse, recycling, and incorporating sustainable materials management to improve end of life solutions through a lifecycle perspective.

Guiding Principle	Mandatory	Value Chain Applicability					
		Resin	Additive	Compounder / Formulator	Converter/ End Product Mfg	Recycler	Raw Materials Distributor
7.6.1 - Minimize waste	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes
7.6.2 - Reuse, recycling and recovery in accordance with sustainable materials management principles		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
7.6.3 - Responsibly recycle products that contain regulated additives				Yes	Yes	Yes	

### 7.6.1. Minimize Waste.

**Mandatory**

**Intent:** Reduce managed volumes that are landfilled. Reduce carbon footprint through recycled products.

**Market Segment Applicability:** resin manufacturers, additive manufacturers, compounders/formulators, converters/end-product manufacturers, and raw materials distributors.

**Business Unit Applicability:** Should focus on Vinyl Sector. If one does not own operations but contracts manufacturing operations to other facilities, the information is to be requested from the subcontractor and provided before the completion of the three-year verification cycle.

#### Pathway 1: Divert Materials from Landfill

##### Guiding Principle Fulfillment - Acceptable Documentation:

- Data on the facility's recycling (advanced and mechanical), reuse, and composting activities (data should be provided per unit of production (in mass)); AND
- Evidence of collaboration on sortation and recovery, logistics; OR
- Records documenting total reprocessed production scrap that is sold externally or re-incorporated back into the product; OR
- Documentation demonstrating participation in a VSC pilot program for recycling

#### Pathway 2: Reduce Overall Waste Generation

##### Guiding Principle Fulfillment - Acceptable Documentation:

Provide documentation of waste reduction from a facility. Acceptable documentation includes:

- Documentation showing continued efforts to implement waste reduction in facility operations (goals or documentation of source reduction activities, zero waste to landfill, research reports, equipment trial reports, etc.); OR
- Records showing how the manufacturing process has eliminated waste at the source or reduced scrap rates at the facility; OR
- Data on waste reduction and facility recycling (advanced and mechanical), reuse, and composting activities
  - Data should be provided per unit of production (in mass)

#### Examples of Advanced Practices:

- Conduct a waste audit; OR
- Third-party certification for diversion from landfill activities; OR
- Third-party certification for waste minimization; OR
- Collaboration on research for advanced recycling (mechanical, chemical, thermal) for vinyl markets that are at low recycling levels for both pre- and post-consumer uses; OR
- Divert 90% or more of materials in the waste stream from landfill; OR
- Provide evidence showing that less than 2% PVC scrap sent to landfill; OR
- Reduce overall waste volumes generated (benchmarked to production) by 50% at facilities over a three-year period; OR
- Provide evidence showing the integration of waste management practices to reduce and/or recycle hazardous waste (Hazardous waste should be defined by each facility based off of company's management practices and local requirements); OR
- Other advanced practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

#### Examples of Innovative Practice:

- Achieve Zero Waste to Landfill certification; OR
- Reduce overall waste volumes generated (benchmarked to production) by 80% at facilities over a three-year period; OR
- Other innovative practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

### 7.6.2. Reuse, Recycling and Recovery in Accordance with Sustainable Materials Management Principles.

Not Mandatory

**Intent:** Resource efficiency through reuse and recovery practices during production and incorporation of recycled content and recycling programs.

**Market Segment Applicability:** resin manufacturers, additive manufacturers, compounders/formulators, converters/end-product manufacturers, recyclers, and raw materials distributors.

**Business Unit Applicability:** This documentation should be focused on the vinyl sector of the business only.

#### Guiding Principle Fulfillment - Acceptable Documentation:

Determination of recycled material classification should align with the Federal Trade Commission's (FTC) Green Guides. Section 260.13 of the Green Guides provides further information.

- Documentation or monitoring that demonstrates maximized raw material conversion rates which can include recycling of off-spec materials; AND
- Documentation demonstrating reuse, recycling, and recovery efforts and coordination with suppliers and material management organizations (which can include take-back and recycling programs for end-of-life products, materials, or packaging); AND
- Publicly available information for consumers on how to and where to reuse, recycle or dispose of the product at end-of-life safely (example: link to Vinyl Institute's Recycling Directory on company website)

#### Examples of Advanced Practices:

- Implement a take-back program in either a product or market segment or with one retailer or distributor; OR
- Third-party certificates for recycled content incorporated into products; OR
- Show improvement regarding sustainable materials management activities based on an action plan over time with defined goals and target dates; OR
- Other advanced practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee
-

#### Examples of Innovative Practice:

- Report on the amount of post-consumer materials recovered and recycled through take-back programs; OR
- Incorporate recycled content into a portfolio of products; OR
- Other innovative practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

#### 7.6.3. Responsibly Recycle Products that Contain Regulated Additives.

Not Mandatory

**Intent:** Safe use and conversion of recycled materials into the company's own products.

**Market Segment Applicability:** compounders, converters, formulators, end-product manufacturers, raw materials distributors, and recyclers.

**Business Unit Applicability:** This documentation should be focused on the vinyl sector of the business only.

#### Guiding Principle Fulfillment - Acceptable Documentation:

- Attestation from company official that products containing recycled content do not contain regulated additives or contain regulated additives at concentrations below regulatory limits

#### Examples of Advanced Practices:

- Demonstrate regulated additives are used at low concentrations or do not result in end-user exposure; OR
- Provide testing data for any recycled material that is provided to another company; OR
- Other advanced practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

#### Examples of Innovative Practice:

- Other innovative practices can be considered. Success may be determined in the third-party verification process through the decisions of the Verification Committee

## 8. Revising or Amending the Standard

This section outlines the three types of process for revising the +Vantage Vinyl Verification Standard or Guiding Principles:

**Five-Year Standard Review Cycle:** Complete review of the full Standard and all Guiding Principles every five years. The VSC's Verification Committee will form a Subcommittee that will seek public input on the Standard, review past completed annual verification survey results, and reference additional materiality assessments and potential industry roadmaps. The Subcommittee will submit its recommended revisions for review by the Verification Committee. The Verification Committee, in turn, submits the review package and any proposed revisions to the Leadership Team for its approval. The five-year Standard review period will begin one year before the scheduled revision date. The new revision of the Standard will be utilized in the following calendar year's conformance survey, against the data and documentation of the issuance year for any applicants undergoing first time verification or full reverification.

**Significant Change to Guiding Principles or Standard:** A significant change to a Guiding Principle is one that results in a change of the intent of a Guiding Principle. A significant change to the Standard is one that results in a deletion, addition, or reorganization of a substantial nature that is not a minor change to the Standard. The Verification Committee will focus on the conditions that occurred and the need for a revision to the Standard or a Guiding Principle. The Verification Committee will seek public comment only on the proposed revision which is eligible for review and comment before the Leadership Team approves of any changes. This consensus-based process will also be utilized if conditions occur in which participant interest drives VSC to revise or add to the +Vantage Vinyl Guiding Principles, which serve as the goals of the +Vantage Vinyl program, in accordance with consensus-principles set out in Section 8.7. It is expected that the Guiding Principles will evolve over time as companies continue to develop and improve their sustainability programs and practices.

**Minor Change to Guiding Principle or Standard:** These changes involve either error corrections, non-substantive

reorganization, or clarifications that do not change the substance of a Guiding Principle or Standard. As such, public comments or feedback will not be sought. Rather, the Verification Committee will make recommendations to the Leadership Team for its approval.

### 8.1. Verification Committee

The Standard and Guiding Principles will be evaluated, at a minimum every five years, by a Verification Committee comprised of industry experts and other stakeholders. The work of the Verification Committee will be overseen and managed by a Committee Chair appointed by the VSC Leadership Team.

Membership on the Verification Committee will be determined by the need to have a balance in voting membership between all segments of the supply chain and equitable distribution across a broad number of companies.

Any stakeholder, as defined below in Section 8.4, may request to receive informational communications about the initiatives of the Verification Committee and notification of the public review period by submitting an email to: [info@vantagevinyl.com](mailto:info@vantagevinyl.com).

The VSC shall ensure that qualification and participation records are maintained for each Verification Committee member, including experience, training, qualifications, employer, and meeting attendance. The Verification Committee will follow the process outlined in the next sections when revising the Standard or the Guiding Principles. The VSC shall ensure that records of public review, comments, Verification Committee votes, and all related activity and decisions made by the Verification Committee are prepared and maintained.

The Verification Committee shall consist of two types of memberships:

**Voting Members** are encouraged to attend as many meetings as possible and are responsible for voting on revisions to the Standard or Guiding Principles and commenting on the draft Standard or Guiding Principles. Voting members are VSC Primary Stakeholder members in good standing.

**Informational Members** receive Verification Committee communications, may attend Committee meetings, and may submit comments on the draft Standard or Guiding Principles. Informational Members have no vote.

The Verification Committee will ensure that the Standard document and all other written procedures related to the verification process are up to date at all times.

The Verification Committee may create or assign a Subcommittee for the five-year standard review. Members of any such Subcommittee will be identified from subject matter experts or those stakeholders that have a material interest in the topic covered in the document where input has been requested. A VSC staff liaison will serve on the Subcommittee.

### 8.2. Public Input

The Verification Committee will provide an opportunity for public input for the five-year standard revision cycle. The Verification Committee will advise on the inputs received, acknowledging receipt of the inputs and how the inputs may be reviewed. The Verification Committee may assign the review of inputs to a Subcommittee if the topic covered is relevant to the stakeholders or subject matter experts within the Subcommittee.

At the initiation of the Committee Chair, a notification will be sent to stakeholders, as defined in Section 8.4, asking for public input to the Standard document. Public input will be accepted for a minimum of thirty (30) days. The Verification Committee will announce the date when the 30-day comment period ends, and input is due.

Public input on the Standard is not guaranteed a response beyond initial acknowledgement, but the Verification Committee, or designated Subcommittee, may respond if deemed appropriate. The response may be in the form of an answer to a question provided as input or may be an explanation of actions or inactions related to the input. If a response is provided to an input, the public is not provided with an option to object or appeal.

The Verification Committee will also seek public input on any significant change to the Standard or Guiding Principles. A significant change to a Guiding Principle or Standard is one that results in a change of the intent of a Guiding Principle or the addition of a new Guiding Principle. The Verification Committee will seek public comment only on the proposed revision which is eligible for review and comment in the consensus-based process before the Leadership Team approves of any changes.

### 8.3. Study

For the five-year standard review, the Subcommittee assigned by the Verification Committee will review the results of the public input, the most recently completed annual verification surveys, and feedback provided by the VSC members, and will assess the need for revisions to the Standard, the Guiding Principles, or conformance metrics. If the Subcommittee identifies the need for a significant change, the Subcommittee will draft proposed revisions to the Standard to be reviewed by the Verification Committee and the VSC Leadership Team. A significant change to a Guiding Principle is one that results in a change of the intent of a Guiding Principle or the addition of a new Guiding Principle.

The Guiding Principles, within the Standard, serve as the direction and parameters of +Vantage Vinyl as goals to be achieved over time.

Each Guiding Principle should include examples of documentation that may be submitted for the purpose of obtaining verification in accordance with Section 5 above. These examples should address submittals that demonstrate conformance with both minimum as well as additional requirements for tiered metrics.

The Verification Committee will review the results of the yearly surveys and assess the need for revisions to the Guiding Principles or conformance metrics. If the Verification Committee identifies the need for a minor or significant change, the Committee will draft proposed revisions to be reviewed by the VSC Leadership Team and proceed as necessary in the appropriate consensus process track.

### 8.4. Stakeholders

For the purposes of the Standard or Guiding Principles review process, stakeholders include but are not limited to entities with a direct and material interest in the vinyl industry, vinyl supply chain, and vinyl products including representatives from industry and related business trade associations, individual raw material, additive, and finished product suppliers, users and distributors, as well as end use product retailers.

### 8.5. Public Review

The Verification Committee will provide timely and adequate notification of a Standard or Guiding Principles revision or development activity. There will be an open and meaningful opportunity for public review and comment by all interested stakeholders. The Verification Committee will review and consider feedback from all stakeholders.

See Section 8.4 for a description of “stakeholders.” Parties that are directly and materially interested in and have been or will be affected by revisions to the Standard or Guiding Principles may submit a public comment to the Verification Committee. A public review comment should include:

- Name and address of requesting party;
- Statement of material interest in a Standard or Guiding Principle revision;
- Statement of impact by proposed revisions to the Standard or Guiding Principles;
- Description as to why the Verification Committee should consider its decision; and
- Suggested alternative to the proposed revisions.

The notice will set out the Verification Committee’s rationale for its proposed revision to the Standard or Guiding Principles, identify the stakeholders likely to be directly affected by the revision, and announce the date of which this 30-day comment period ends and comments are due.

### 8.6. Consideration

Following the close of the public review period, the Verification Committee will consider all written comments as it evaluates

recommendations for changes to the Standard or Guiding Principles. The VSC will ensure that a record of all comments are retained as well as the Verification Committee's responses.

### **8.7. Consensus**

The Verification Committee endeavors to operate as a consensus decision-making committee. Consensus is established when there is substantial agreement among those involved in the decision-making process. Consensus does not require unanimity or imply that a single participant company or a small group of participant companies have veto power over any decision or project. Consensus decision-making procedures provide an opportunity for dialogue, so participants can discuss the projected benefits and costs of a proposal and use the discussion to refine collective decision-making. In striving for consensus, participants shall make a concerted effort to promote the best interests of the industry, even if a decision is not optimal for an individual participant company.

Resolutions and other decisions of the Verification Committee shall be reached by consensus whenever possible. A consensus from the Verification Committee must be achieved to revise the Standard or a Guiding Principle or create a new Guiding Principle. These revisions will be approved by the Leadership Team by consensus before being published.

### **8.8. Appeal**

Appeals after the consensus decision on the revisions are not permitted.

### **8.9. Publish**

The Verification Committee will provide the new Standard and conformance metrics to the VSC Leadership Team for final publication. The VSC Leadership Team will ensure that the new Standard and conformance metrics are disseminated and included in the scoring of the next annual survey for the +Vantage Vinyl program.

Participants will be verified to the current Standard at the time of the first verification or next full verification cycle. The annual data submissions will be reviewed against the Standard in which the full verification conformance was achieved.

## 9. Appendix — Definitions

**Documentation:** Official information or evidence provided in writing in support of different verification steps. Relevant documentation may include, but is not limited to, reports, certifications, compliance testing results, and company statements.<sup>1</sup>

**Environmental Management System (EMS):** A framework that helps an organization achieve its environmental goals through consistent review, evaluation, and improvement of its environmental performance.<sup>2</sup>

**Foreign Entity:** Any branch, partnership, group or sub-group, association, estate, trust, corporation or division of a corporation, or organization organized under the laws of a foreign state if either its principal place of business is outside the United States, or its equity securities are primarily traded on one or more foreign exchanges.<sup>3</sup>

**Life Cycle Assessment (LCA):** A tool to evaluate the potential environmental impacts of a product, material, process, or activity throughout the full life cycle of the assessed subject, from materials acquisition to manufacturing, use, and final disposition.<sup>4</sup>

**Materiality Assessment:** The process of identifying an organization's most important issues, which involves contacting internal and external stakeholders to request their input. Materiality assessments can and should inform both reporting and strategy.<sup>5</sup>

**Scope 1 Emissions:** Direct greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions that occur from sources that are controlled or owned by an organization (e.g. – emissions from combustion from on-site fuels).<sup>6</sup>

**Scope 2 Emissions:** Indirect greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with the purchase of electricity, steam, heat, or cooling. These emissions physically occur at the facility where they are generated and are reported in an organization's inventory because they are the result of the organization's energy use.<sup>6</sup>

**Scope 3 Emissions:** Indirect greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions an organization is responsible for the goods and services purchased and sold. The majority of corporate emissions are from Scope 3 sources and include products and materials consumed, customer behaviors with products sold, transportation, commuting, and more.<sup>7</sup>

**Third-Party Verifier:** A qualified, independent, outside organization employed by a company to review and confirm information provided in order to ensure transparency, accuracy, and objectivity.<sup>8</sup>

**United States Vinyl Value Chain:** The system of organizations and operations involved in moving a vinyl product from suppliers to consumers in the United States (such as raw material providers, distributors, etc.). A foreign entity can be included in the United States vinyl value chain if part of their operation chain is within the United States.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup><https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/documentation>

<sup>2</sup><https://www.epa.gov/ems/learn-about-environmental-management-systems>

<sup>3</sup><https://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/31/800.212#>

<sup>4</sup><https://www.epa.gov/saferchoice/design-environment-life-cycle-assessments><sup>5</sup>  
<https://assets.kpmg.com/content/dam/kpmg/pdf/2014/10/materiality-assessment.pdf>

<sup>6</sup><https://www.epa.gov/climateleadership/scope-1-and-scope-2-inventory-guidance#:~:text=Scope%201%20emissions%20are%20direct,boilers%2C%20furnaces%2C%20vehicles>

<sup>7</sup><https://ghgprotocol.org/standards/scope-3-standard>

<sup>8</sup> See e.g., [https://cdn.cdp.net/cdp-production/cms/guidance\\_docs/pdfs/000/000/490/original/CDP-and-verification-partners-FAQ.pdf](https://cdn.cdp.net/cdp-production/cms/guidance_docs/pdfs/000/000/490/original/CDP-and-verification-partners-FAQ.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.vinylinfo.org/resources/us-vinyl-value-chain/>

## Appendix — Reference Documents

### **American National Standards Institute Essential Requirements 2022**

**ISO 17065** – Product Certification Bodies Accreditation Standard

**ISO 14025** – Environmental Labels and Declarations – Type III Environmental Declarations – Guiding Principles and Procedures

**ISO 26000** – Guidance on Social Responsibility

## 10. Appendix — Standard Revision Log

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Pilot	2020	2020 Verification (Pilot)
2.1	December 2021	2021 Verification
3.0	March 2023	2022 Verification
3.1	March 2024	2023 Verification
3.2	March 2025	2024 Verification – clarification for 6.2.1 and 6.3.11, updated value chain applicability table to show 6.2.7 and 6.2.9 are applicable to resin manufacturers
4.0	December 2025	5-Year Standard Update
4.1	February 2026	Non-Member Participation

## 11. Appendix — Participation Agreement Form

This is a sample of the document that must be signed and submitted before GreenCircle is able to review your survey responses and means of verification documentation. No verification certificate will be administered unless this has been received by VSC.

### +Vantage Vinyl™ Participation Agreement

This is an Agreement between the Vinyl Institute, Inc, (“VI”) on behalf of its self-funded council, the Vinyl Sustainability Council (“VSC”), and the Business Entity identified in the signature block to this Agreement (“Business Entity”) that is effective on the date in the signature block (“Effective Date”).

The VSC manages the +Vantage Vinyl™ initiative (“Initiative”) to advance the US vinyl industry’s contribution to sustainable development. The Business Entity desires to participate in +Vantage Vinyl and license the +Vantage Vinyl service mark(s) displayed in the Graphic Guidelines (“Marks”). VSC desires to grant the Business Entity a license to use the Marks and materials under certain terms.

Besides this Agreement, the foundational documents establishing the Initiative consist of: (1) the +Vantage Vinyl Verification Standard, including the +Vantage Vinyl Guiding Principles, and (2) the +Vantage Vinyl Graphic Guidelines. These documents may be updated and revised as the Initiative evolves.

The Guiding Principles set +Vantage Vinyl’s direction and parameters in the areas of Human Health, Climate Responsibility, Ecosystem Protection, Social Health and Equity, and Circular Economy within the scope of the Initiative. Business Entity’s progress towards the Guiding Principles will be assessed and verified by GreenCircle Certified, LLC, an independent third party verification service, retained by VI to conduct +Vantage Vinyl verification on behalf of VSC. All +Vantage Vinyl verifications will be valid for three years, subject to annual maintenance checks as set out in the +Vantage Vinyl Verification Standard.

In consideration of the foregoing and other good and valuable consideration, the receipt and sufficiency of which are acknowledged, the parties agree:

- 1. Business Entity.** For the purposes of this Agreement, “Business Entity” is the company, joint venture, subsidiary, division, or operational unit identified in the signature block of this Agreement with vinyl-related business operations in the United States or Canada. Larger companies have diverse operations that may be outside the scope of the Initiative, outside the United States and Canada, or that decline to participate. When eligible, entire companies are welcome to participate, but business or operating units within a company can elect to participate without extending obligations to the company’s other operations.
- 2. Applicant Criteria.** By participating in the Initiative, Business Entity represents that it:
  - i. operates in the United States or Canada, and
  - ii. is a resin supplier, raw material/additive supplier, material compounder, converter/formulator, end-product manufacturer, recycler, or distributor as those terms are defined below.
    - a. “Resin supplier” means any company that manufactures vinyl chloride polymers or copolymers in the U.S. or Canada;
    - b. “Raw material/additive supplier” means any company that manufactures chemicals used as precursors, raw materials, or additives to vinyl, any portion of which is sold or distributed in the U.S. or Canada. This category includes companies that manufacture vinyl-related chlorine, ethylene dichloride, or vinyl chloride monomer.
    - c. “Material compounder, converter/formulator” means any company that

manufactures or causes to be manufactured compounds, components, or finished products used in vinyl-based applications.

- d. "End-product manufacturer" means any company that manufactures products that include vinyl resin or compounded vinyl material in any market segment or industry.
- e. "Recycler" means any company that recycles, repurposes, or brokers either pre- or post-consumer vinyl related products.
- f. "Distributor" means any company that distributes vinyl resins, compounds, additives, precursors, raw materials, or adjuvants used in vinyl products in U.S. or Canada.

**3. Business Entity Commitments.** Business Entity agrees to:

- i. designate an employee with sustainability responsibilities as the +Vantage Vinyl Primary Point of Contact;
- ii. submit to GreenCircle Certified, LLC all information and documentation required to support verification in accordance with the +Vantage Vinyl Verification Standard; and
- iii. adhere to the +Vantage Vinyl Graphic Guidelines.

**4. Verified Performance.**

- i. The Business Entity will complete the +Vantage Vinyl Guiding Principles Conformance survey and submit any other information or documentation requested by GreenCircle Certified.
- ii. In the first year of this Agreement, GreenCircle will conduct a full verification of Business Entity's progress towards the goals set out in the Guiding Principles.
- iii. In the second and third years of this Agreement, GreenCircle will conduct an abbreviated annual maintenance check based on data collected in accordance with paragraph 4.i.
- iv. GreenCircle will notify both Business Entity and VSC of the outcome of the full verification and annual maintenance.

**5. Confidentiality.** All data and documentation submitted directly to GreenCircle shall remain confidential and will not be shared with VSC or any other outside entities without the written approval of Business Entity. Business Entity may elect to enter into a non-disclosure or other agreement with GreenCircle for additional confidentiality protection. In such instance, neither VSC nor VI will be parties to any agreement between GreenCircle and Business Entity, and neither VI nor VSC shall be responsible for the actions or omissions of either party. Business Entity agrees that that GreenCircle may disclose to VSC or VI any non-identifying, aggregated and statistical data that may be derived from the annual surveys and other information for purposes of statistical reporting industry- or Initiative-wide.

**6. Trademark License.** VI grants to Business Entity, during the Term, a royalty-free, non-exclusive, non-transferable, revocable license to use the Marks to indicate Business Entity's participation in the Initiative.

- i. Business Entity acknowledges that +Vantage Vinyl is a valuable asset that must be properly used and protected.
- ii. Business Entity shall only use the Marks in accordance with the Graphic Guidelines, a separate document that may be revised occasionally.
- iii. Business Entity agrees that VI is the sole and exclusive owner of the Marks, notwithstanding the rights granted. Business Entity will not assert any rights in, or challenge VI's ownership of the Marks.
- iv. VSC reserves the right to reasonably inspect and approve the reproduction and use of the Marks and the manner in which the Marks are reproduced or displayed. Upon request, Business Entity shall provide VSC with sample copies of all materials bearing the Marks, and Business Entity shall abide by the decision of VSC regarding approval of the use of the Marks. VI reserves the right, at any time, to revoke Business Entity's right to use the Marks when VSC determines, in its sole discretion, that the Marks are not being used in accordance with this Agreement.

- v. Business Entity will not construe, claim, or imply that its participation in +Vantage Vinyl constitutes approval, acceptance, or endorsement of anything other than Business Entity's commitment to the Initiative. Business Entity acknowledges that its participation constitutes no endorsement of the Business Entity's products, services, or industrial facilities by VSC, VI, or other participating companies.
- VI. VI PROVIDES THE MARKS WITHOUT ANY WARRANTIES, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING (WITHOUT LIMITATION) WARRANTIES OF ACCURACY, COMPLETENESS, RELIABILITY, FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE OR USE, OR NON-INFRINGEMENT. IN NO EVENT SHALL VI BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY DAMAGES WHATSOEVER, WHETHER DIRECT, INDIRECT, CONSEQUENTIAL, OR SPECIAL, IN CONTRACT, TORT OR OTHERWISE, ARISING OUT OF OR IN CONNECTION WITH BUSINESS ENTITY'S USE OF THE MARKS.

**7. Term and Termination.** Each +Vantage Vinyl verification cycle consists of one full verification year and two maintenance years. The initial term of this Agreement will commence on the Effective Date and the Agreement will terminate at the end of Business Entity's current cycle indicated below (the "Termination Date"), unless earlier terminated as set forth below or renewed upon mutual written agreement of the parties.

Termination Date is three (3) years from the Effective Date (one full verification year and two maintenance years)

Notwithstanding the Termination Date:

- i. Business Entity may terminate this Agreement at any time upon at least thirty (30) days prior Notice to VSC but must fulfill any financial commitments the Business Entity has made, except that Business Entity will in no event be liable for any financial commitments unrelated to Business Entity's use of VI's marks or its obligations under this Agreement.
- ii. VI on behalf of VSC may terminate this Agreement at any time upon prior Notice to Business Entity if it determines that Business Entity is no longer eligible to participate in the Initiative, that Business Entity violated the terms of this Agreement, or that Business Entity failed to comply with the Initiative's policies and practices.
  - 1 VSC will assess any deficiencies on a case by case basis and may, in its discretion, waive any requirements and allow Business Entity to continue its participation through alternative contributions.
  - 2 If, despite reasonable, good faith efforts, Business Entity fails to fulfill any requirements, VI on behalf of VSC may permit Business Entity to continue its participation in the Initiative for the following calendar year but Business Entity must discontinue all use of the Marks.
- iii. VI may terminate this Agreement upon at least 30 days prior Notice to Business Entity if VSC decides, in its sole discretion, to discontinue the Initiative.
- iv. Upon termination of this Agreement, all licenses and rights granted will terminate, and Business Entity must cease all use of the Marks in every form, manner and media. Paragraphs 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 shall survive termination of this Agreement.

**8. Dispute Resolution.** VI on behalf of VSC and Business Entity will use good faith as a general principle for resolving conflicts under the Initiative. Both VI and Business Entity will endeavor to resolve all matters informally to preserve maximum public confidence in +Vantage Vinyl. If informal channels do not produce a mutually agreeable resolution to a matter in dispute, either party to this Agreement shall notify the other in writing on the nature of the dispute, the specific corrective action sought, and their intent to terminate the Agreement upon 30 days prior Notice, either as a whole or in part, unless specific corrective actions sought are undertaken.

**9. Indemnification.** Business Entity will indemnify, hold harmless, and, if VI elects, defend VSC, VI, and their directors, officers, members, and employees from and against any and all third party claims, liabilities, judgments, demands, actions, damages, costs and expenses (including, without limitation, attorney’s fees) arising out of or relating to any breach by Business Entity of its obligations under this Agreement, with the exception of any claim arising out of or relating to Business Entity’s authorized use of the Marks.

**10. Notices.** All notices and other communications (“Notices”) required or pertaining to this Agreement shall be in writing and addressed to a party at its address in the signature block below, or to such other address as either party may elect by giving notice to the other party as directed in this section, provided, however, that communications regarding participation and implementation activities will be with the individual designated pursuant to Paragraph 3.i as the +Vantage Vinyl Primary Point of Contact responsible for sustainability activities of the participating Business Entity. All Notices shall be sent via nationally-recognized overnight courier with courier fees prepaid, and a courtesy copy may be sent via e-mail. Notices shall be deemed received two (2) business days following deposit.

**11. Governing Law.** This Agreement shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the District of Columbia<sup>2</sup>, without regard to conflicts of law principles. Any claim, controversy, or dispute arising out of this Agreement shall be heard in courts within the District of Columbia.

**12. Entire Agreement.** This Agreement, including any exhibits, constitutes the entire agreement of the parties regarding the subject, and supersedes any other agreements or understandings between the parties, whether oral or written.

- i. The Agreement may only be amended by mutual written agreement of the parties. Business Entity shall not assign or sublicense this Agreement or any of its rights or obligations under this Agreement to any third party without VI’s prior express consent.
- ii. A party’s waiver or failure to enforce any terms or conditions of this Agreement or a waiver of any breach shall not be construed as a continuing waiver of the same or other provisions.
- iii. If any term or condition of this Agreement is held illegal, unenforceable, or otherwise invalid by government promulgation or court decree, such holdings shall not affect the other provisions, which can be given effect without the invalid provision; provided that the parties shall promptly negotiate in good faith to amend the Agreement as necessary.

---

<sup>2</sup> The VI, as a trade association, has an obligation to all its members to manage its budget and potential costs efficiently, in any matter. As such, choice of law jurisdictions and arbitration location have been uniformly chosen as the District of Columbia because that is the location of the VI’s main office, where the VI is incorporated, and because the contracting terms were drawn up with District of Columbia law in mind.

In addition, a single choice of law and location for dispute resolution of the agreement is intended to be equitable to all Business Entities. If VI were to change for one Business Entity, fairness would necessitate similar treatment for all Business Entities. The result would be that as the Initiative grows, some Business Entities might seek governing laws and venues to resolve disputes across the country which could potentially increase participation costs.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, an authorized representative of each party has executed this Agreement. This Agreement may be executed in counterparts.

Vinyl Institute (on behalf of Vinyl Sustainability Council)

**Vinyl Institute (on behalf of Vinyl Sustainability Council)**

**Business Entity:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
[Name]

\_\_\_\_\_  
[Business Name]

\_\_\_\_\_  
[Signature]

\_\_\_\_\_  
[Signature]

1747 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Suite 825  
Washington, DC 20006

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address:

Effective Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4893-2486-9796, v. 2