BCI 2020 Council Elections

Application package

Background

Every two years, the Better Cotton Initiative holds a General Assembly, which is open to all BCI members and is the supreme authority of the Association. One of its most important duties is to elect its representatives for the Council to whom it delegates operational activities and strategic decision making.

The BCI Council is composed of three representatives each from the four voting member categories: Producer Organisations; Suppliers and Manufacturers; Civil Society; and Retailers and Brands. Two of the three seats in each category are elected by the members, and one seat is co-opted by the sitting Council. There are also three seats available for Independent members nominated by the Council. (BCI Statutes art. 9.1.2) This allows admission of members with the key capabilities needed to strengthen the work of the Council and ensure diversity.

Term of office for council members: four-year mandate, renewable once.

2020 Council Elections

The 2020 General Assembly will be held virtually on 9 June, and the Council Election voting will be held electronically over two weeks, starting on 9 June.

In 2020 one seat in each member category is open for election.

* Producer Organisations
* Suppliers and Manufacturers
* Retailers and Brands
* Civil Society

In addition to these seats the Council will co-opt two seats (Producer Organisations and Civil Society). For full details on the status of the current council please see Appendix 1.

Candidature

If you would like to nominate your organisation to stand for election, please use the application form appended to this document.

Before proceeding to complete the form, please read this document carefully. It describes the role, responsibilities and commitments of a BCI Council Member. This is a demanding role, and it is important to note that all BCI Council proceedings are carried out in the **English language**.

All applications received from all member categories will be considered by the Nominations Committee in their selection process for co-opting available seats.

BCI is committed to equality of opportunity and encourages applications from all qualified candidates regardless of sex, age, disability, gender identity, religion, or ethnicity.

To submit your candidacy for a Council seat, please email a completed application form to membership@bettercotton.org, no later than **30 April 2020**.

Nominations Committee

All Application Forms will be reviewed by the Council’s Nominations Committee to ensure that each of the candidates meets the competency requirements set out above. The Nominations Committee will also be responsible for recommending candidates for the Council co-opted seats, although the final decision will be made by the BCI Council.

The Nominations Committee is made up of one Council Member from each member category.

Current members are:

* Civil Society: Isabelle Roger (Solidaridad)
* Retailers & Brands: Harsha Vardhan (H&M)
* Suppliers & Manufacturers: Pathik Patel (Basil Commodities)
* Producer Organisations: Hamish McIntyre (Cotton Australia)

None of these committee members is a candidate for election to the Council in 2020.

If you would like to discuss the requirements or competencies before proposing your candidature, please contact eren.ozalay@bettercotton.org who will answer your question or put you in contact with a Council Member from your member category.

Important dates\*

**30 April 2020** Application deadline for candidates

**7 May 2020\*** Candidates announced to all members

**9 June 2020** Virtual General Assembly

**24 June 2020\*** Council Election closes

**July 2020**\* New Council announced to all members, incl. co-opted seats

**22 September 2020** First Council Call after election

\*These dates are preliminary and subject to change. They are intended to indicate the overall timeline of the election process.

BCI Council

Roles and responsibilities of Council members

The Council, alongside the General Assembly, is the main representative decision-making organ in the governance of the Better Cotton Initiative (referred to here as ‘the Association’).

The Council is a strategic and future-focused body. It shapes the strategic priorities of the organisation and ensures that the Association has a clear strategic direction and adequate policies and resources to successfully fulfil its mission.

The collective responsibilities of the Council include:

* Decision-making on behalf of the General Assembly;
* Decision-making on overall strategy and overseeing its development and implementation;
* Approving the annual budget and audit report of the Association;
* Approving any significant modifications to the definition of Better Cotton;
* Approving the membership fee structure and membership process;
* Modifying the By-Laws of the Council if necessary;
* Electing the Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer and Secretary of the Association from amongst its members.
* Establishing any organ, committee or operational group considered necessary for the pursuit of Association’s mission.

Each Council Member is expected to:

* Make every effort to attend all Council and committee meetings.
* Stay informed about the organisation's vision, mission, policies, services and workstreams.
* Review agendas and supporting materials prior to Council and committee meetings.
* Serve on committees or working groups and offer to take on special assignments when possible.
* Assist with expanding revenue sources for BCI.
* Keep up-to-date on developments relevant to BCI.
* Abide by strict conflict-of-interest and confidentiality policies.
* Refrain from making special requests of the staff.
* Assist Council in carrying out its fiduciary responsibilities, such as reviewing the organisation's annual financial statements.

Conduct

The Council commits itself and its members to ethical, business-like, and lawful conduct, including proper use of authority and appropriate decorum when acting as Council Members.

In 2019, the BCI secretariat presented its proposed Gender Strategy. The Council endorsed a rollout in 2020. BCI is committed to systematically addressing gender balance in its relationships and engagement with the broader sustainable cotton community.

According to the Council By-Laws every Council Member is expected to declare any potential conflict of interest.

Time commitment

Council members commit to represent the best interest of the Association and to uphold the mission of the Better Cotton Initiative during their four-year mandate. Time commitments include but are not limited to

Meetings

* 2 meetings in person of 2 to 3 days per year
* 4 - 5 Council conference calls per year
* Potentially up to 4 committee calls per year per committee

In-person meetings are usually hosted by rotation by Council member organisations or the Secretariat. Meetings can take place in any country which will deem some inter-continental travel necessary.

Member Interaction

Throughout the year, Council members interact with their membership category, to share recent Council decisions and collect feedback for future Council discussions. A Yammer online BCI Caucus Forum is available for each caucus..

Secretariat support

Council members support the Secretariat in representing BCI at external fora, with donors and in member recruitment activities.

Council involvement will vary according to the current needs of the Association but, on average, requires about 15-20 person-days per year.

Competencies for Council representatives

The BCI Council has defined a set of competencies that target the ideal skills, experience and expertise needed to build a strong Council. A strong Council is able to deliver on its responsibilities and challenge the BCI Secretariat to improve on the quality of its delivery.

The following competencies are required for all Council representatives:

* Working knowledge of English (all meetings and communication will be in English)
* Strong external voice
* Board or similar experience
* Financial, technical or legal expertise
* Advanced communications experience with diverse stakeholders
* Experience with social, labour and/or environmental issues
* Experience of developing strategy and strategic alliances.

In addition to the above, the specific competencies for each different Council category can be summarised as follows:

Civil Society

* Breadth and depth of experience in driving change from having created, led or served on the governing body of a not-for-profit civil society organisation.
* Strategic development and implementation expertise
* Strong and unique perspective of social or environmental sustainability in cotton production, independent of commercial or government interests.
* Evidence of effective leadership of organisations dedicated to social or environmental sustainability.

Retailers & Brands

* Senior business leadership role n the home and apparel, or travel and leisure sectors
* Cross-departmental experience with all levels of business, including Profit & Loss responsibilities
* Strategic development and implementation expertise
* Experience from procurement and raw material sourcing functions
* Experience with consumer-facing sustainability marketing campaigns or labelling.

Suppliers & Manufacturers

* Senior leader of tier 1, tier 2 and beyond, or vertically integrated supplier
* Strong expertise in business operations and social / labour issues
* Strategic development and implementation expertise
* Experience relevant to building Better Cotton uptake in the supply chain

Producer Organisations

* Proven track record in implementing the Better Cotton standard
* Strategic development and implementation expertise
* Leadership in collaborative, member-based organisations
* Social and environmental sustainability experience

Candidate - BCI Council Election 2020

Application form

*To be completed in English*

Organisation name:

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Membership category:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Producer Organisation |  |
| Civil Society |  |
| Suppliers and Manufacturers |  |
| Retailers & Brands |  |

Member of BCI since (mm/yyyy)

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Organisation description:

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Mission statement:

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Key activities:

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Representatives of the organisation on the Council (should your organisation be elected):

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Full Name | Position |
| 1 |  |  |
| 2 |  |  |

Should our organisation be elected, our 1st representative is interested in being an office bearer. Please choose from the following options (you can choose several):

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Chair |  |
| Vice-chair |  |
| Treasure |  |
| Secretary |  |

What has your organisation achieved in relation to BCI since it joined it? (150 words max.)

|  |
| --- |
|  |

What is your motivation for being on the BCI Council? (150 words max.)

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Please send to membership@bettercotton.org no later than **30 April 2020**.

Appendix 1 Council Composition

Current Council membership:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Caucus** | **Member** | **Representative** | **First Elected** | **End of Mandate** |
| **Retailers & Brands** | H&M | Harsha Vardhan | 2018 | 2022 |
| Levi Strauss & Co \* | ~~Liz O’Neill~~ | 2018 | 2022 |
| Marks and Spencer | Phil Townsend | 2016 | 2020 |
| **Suppliers and Manufacturers** | OLAM | Sandeep Hota | 2012 | 2020 |
| Basil Commodities | Pathik Patel | 2018 | 2022 |
| Huafu \* | Lynn Chen | 2018 | 2022 |
| **Civil Society** | Ambuja Cement Foundation | Chandrakant Kumbhani | 2016 | 2020 |
| Solidaridad | Isabelle Roger | 2018 | 2022 |
| PRDIS | Sarvareddy Venku Reddy | 2016 | 2020 |
| **Producer Organisations** | Farmers Associates of Pakistan \* | Bilal Israel Khan | 2010 | 2020 |
| Supima | Marc Lewkowitz | 2016 | 2020 |
| Cotton Australia  | Hamish McIntyre | 2014 | 2022 |
| **Independent** |   | Amit Shah\* | 2018 | 2022 |
|   | Joost Oorthuizen |   |   |

\* Co-opted Council members

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|   | Eligible for re-election |
|   | Not eligible for re-election |

In co-opting Council members, the Council will aim to ensure a balanced representation and the appropriate expertise to deliver the work of the Council for the upcoming strategic period. Once the co-opting decision has been made, the Council will make a formal statement to BCI Members about the appointments.

Council Calendar 2020/2021 Q1

