

Certification Officer

Starting Date: As soon as possible
Contract type: Full-time and open-ended
Salary: 30,100 GBP
Location: London, United Kingdom
Application closing date: 28th February 2024

About the Job

Are you organised and hard-working? Do you enjoy working on a variety of tasks along with a committed and passionate team? Are you interested in sustainability and eager to make a difference?

Better Cotton, the world's largest cotton sustainability programme, is growing and we are looking for a Certification officer to join our team in London. We support more sustainable farming practices and farm livelihoods for nearly 3 million farmers in the Better Cotton network in 23 countries around the world. Almost a quarter of the world's cotton is now grown under the Better Cotton Standard.

Better Cotton's certification teams oversee the auditing of farmers against our field-level sustainability standard (the Principles & Criteria), as well as the auditing of supply chain companies against our Chain of Custody standard. This is essential to maintain a strong and credible sustainability programme, and to ensure that buyers of Better Cotton have good confidence in the cotton they source. Over the next year, we will further improve our farm and supply chain programmes to become a third-party certification scheme, which requires developing new systems and processes.

The Challenge

Looking ahead to 2030, we are targeting reducing GHG emissions from cotton production by half, big cuts in synthetic pesticide use, improve soil health across our network, improve farm income and support women's empowerment among farmers and farm workers.

As Certification Officer, you play a key role in helping Better Cotton to update current assurance and audit-related procedures, and develop new procedures and systems needed under a third-party certification model. This will be a busy and challenging role with plenty of opportunities to work on diverse tasks and projects.

Your role and responsibilities

We are seeking a motivated Certification Officer to join our team. In this role, you will be responsible for the following workstreams:

For the assurance/certification procedures you will:

- Support in drafting, revising and updating procedures related to Better Cotton's certification systems and the requirements for external auditors and certification bodies.

- Work across both producer (farm level) assurance and supply chain teams to build consistency in process and procedures.
- Review new and existing procedures against key requirements, such as in ISO standards and ISEAL codes of practice.
- Complete benchmarking or research projects against other standard systems to identify gaps and inform future changes for Better Cotton.

For data management and analysis you will:

- Help to establish and maintain systems for up-to-date information on certification bodies, auditors, and assessments carried out under the Better Cotton certification model. This will include
 - a. Maintaining up to date information in existing Salesforce and other systems for certification body details
 - b. Analysing data on auditor and certification body performance and using this data to support improved performance

For relationship management with external auditors and certification bodies, you will:

- Support the development and implementation of processes to manage relationships and monitor performance of certification bodies. This will include setting up and attending regular meetings, ensuring feedback is documented, and managing systems to organise monitoring feedback and track corrective actions

For project support for new IT system development, you will:

- Provide essential project and administrative support for a major new initiative to develop a shared audit management system for farm and supply chain assessments and certification. This will be a complex and fast-moving project.
- help with organising meetings, capturing notes, tracking comments and changes on system specifications, and testing/ providing feedback on key components of system development.

For communication and overall team and project management support, you will:

- Help to draft and review communication materials around certification processes and systems, including for the Better Cotton website and for communication to internal staff and external stakeholders.
- Support with general organisation of the certification team(s), including setting up meetings, drafting agendas, taking notes and following up on actions.

The successful candidate will work closely with other functions including Membership/ Claims, Standards & Assurance, and Communications. The candidate may support on other key project areas as interest and capacity allow

We are looking for someone who has

the following skills, knowledge, and experience:

Essential

- University degree, or equivalent higher education qualification, in a relevant field
- Demonstrated interest in sustainability and international development
- At least 2 years' working experience with at least 1 years in a relevant field
- Experience and willingness in carrying out administrative tasks to support achieving team objectives
- Excellent organisation and capacity to handle a set of different priorities several projects running in parallel
- Proven ability to collaborate effectively across different teams and cultures, strong relationship building skills and service-oriented attitude
- Good communication skills with the ability to communicate clearly and concisely, as well as the ability to assimilate and process information for wide-ranging audiences.
- Proven ability to work autonomously with a high level of personal effectiveness and ability to adapt to changing priorities
- Aptitude to appraise arguments critically and logically, organise ideas in a clear and concise manner, and draw conclusions and formulate arguments in way that is effective, concise, precise and specific
- Excellent computer and IT skills, including: Word; PowerPoint; Excel, Outlook
- Fluent in English– ability to communicate clearly and concisely

Desirable

- Academic background in rural/agricultural development and sustainability
- Advanced numerical skills and experience in analysing large data sets
- Experience with Sharepoint, PowerBI (Microsoft Suite), and/or Salesforce
- Experience in a not-for profit organisation
- Experience with standards systems and assurance, auditing or certification
- Experience with quality management systems
- Competency in languages most relevant to BCI countries, such as Hindi, Urdu, Mandarin, French, Portuguese and Turkish

What we offer

- Competitive salary
- Hybrid working
- The opportunity to work from anywhere in the world for up to one month per year
- Flexible working, with core hours from 10 am to 4 pm local time
- Continuous learning and development
- Pension scheme
- 25 days paid annual leave, plus 8-9 Bank Holidays and a discretionary further 3 days off over Christmas
- Enhanced parental benefits

- A warm, positive working environment where everyone is valued
- The opportunity to make your mark and make a difference.

Working arrangements

The position is full-time (40 hours per week) and will be based in London. Better Cotton offers flexible working, with core hours being 10 am – 4 pm. The position may include some travel.

Apply now

Send us your CV (2 pages maximum) and a brief cover letter (1-page maximum) by or before **28.02.2024** [via this link](#).

In your cover letter, please include an explanation of why your experience is specifically relevant to this role at Better Cotton. We want to see your personal style – what makes you tick and why you think your next opportunity is here with us.

Our hiring process

Initial Screening:

If you are selected, you will be contacted for an initial screening, which may involve a brief phone interview or video call. The purpose is to learn more about you, confirm basic qualifications, and discuss the role and organisation.

Interviews:

If you are confirmed after the initial screening, you will be invited for interviews. The interview process at Better Cotton may include one or more rounds of interviews with various stakeholders, such as the hiring manager, team members, and potentially senior management.

Assessment and Testing:

Depending on the role, you might be required to complete assessments, technical tests, or skills evaluations to gauge your competency and suitability for the position.

Reference Checks:

Once you progress further in the process, reference checks are conducted to validate your work history, skills, and qualifications, and for some roles, your education and criminal history.

Offer stage:

After completing interviews, assessments, and reference checks, the hiring team evaluates your performance and fit for the role. If you are selected and your references are relevant and satisfactory, you will receive a formal job offer letter outlining the terms of employment, compensation, benefits, and any other relevant details.

About Better Cotton

Better Cotton is the world's largest cotton sustainability programme. Our 200+ colleagues of 37+ nationalities are united by a shared passion and commitment to achieving the Better Cotton mission: to help cotton communities survive and thrive, while protecting and restoring the environment. Through our network of field-level partners a quarter of the world's cotton is now grown under the Better Cotton Standard. We have united the industry's stakeholders behind our efforts, from ginners and spinners to brand owners, civil society organisations and governments. Everyone who cares about cotton and its sustainable future can now be part of something better.

About our Values

The post holder will be expected to operate in line with our workplace values which are:

- **Trustworthy** (including honest, transparent, credible)
- As having **Integrity** (including responsible, authentic)
- **Positive** (including problem-solving, pragmatic)
- **Engaging** (including adaptable, inclusive, holistic)
- **Daring** (including courageous, innovative, game-changing)

Being you @ Better Cotton

Better Cotton is committed to creating a diverse environment and is proud to be an equal opportunity employer with a strong commitment to good practice and transparency in the management of natural, human, and financial resources.

We have a zero-tolerance approach to any attitudes or behaviours that put children or adults at risk of harm. Safeguarding incidents are acts of serious misconduct and are grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including, dismissal and referral to relevant authorities for criminal prosecution. Therefore, all offers of employment are subject to satisfactory references and appropriate screening checks.