



C2C CERTIFIED™ “HOW-TO” GUIDE

Further Resources

# Project Plan



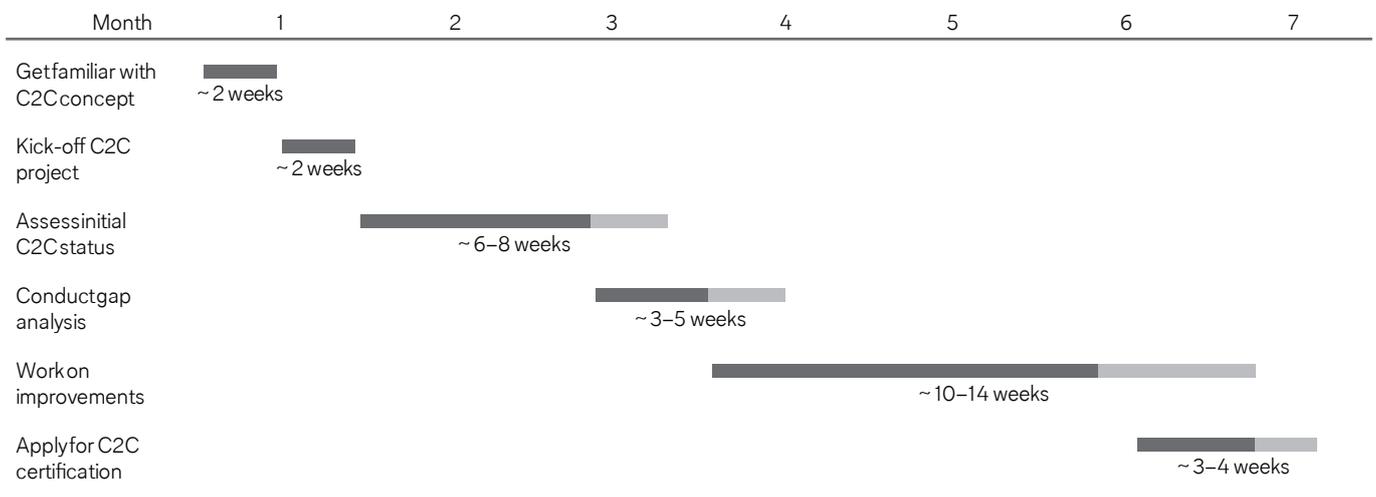
# PROJECT PLAN

## OVERVIEW

This chapter provides a sample project plan for getting a garment C2C Certified under the Cradle to Cradle (C2C) Certified™ Products Program<sup>1</sup>. The plan consists of several key steps:

- Step 0: Get familiar with the C2C Certified concepts
- Step 1: Introduce C2C Certified and launch the project
- Step 2: Assess the initial C2C Certified status
- Step 3: Conduct a gap analysis
- Step 4: Work on improvements
- Step 5: Apply for C2C Certified

The process should take approximately seven months, but may take longer in the case of major improvement plans. Here is an indicative timeline:



## STEP 0: GET FAMILIAR WITH THE C2C CERTIFIED CONCEPTS

Before beginning the process of getting a product C2C Certified, key personnel should familiarise themselves with the Program’s concepts. Only by thoroughly understanding the five criteria categories – Material Health, Material Reutilisation, Water Stewardship, Renewable Energy and Carbon Management, and Social Fairness – will they be able to plan and conduct the project efficiently.

To that end, companies should take the following steps:

- Appoint an internal project lead
- Identify and engage all relevant stakeholders (see the Best Practice box below)
- Reach out to an Accredited Assessor (see the relevant textbox below)
- Liaise with potential brand partners and select a brand
- Develop the project timeline and decide on the launch date
- Organise a launch workshop involving all stakeholders

<sup>1</sup> Cradle to Cradle Certified™ is a certification mark licensed by the Cradle to Cradle Products Innovation Institute

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## **BEST PRACTICE: GETTING ALL RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS ENGAGED**

Steering such a project requires considerable organisation. It is helpful to have experts and stakeholders on board for the different aspects of the C2C certification process. Ideally, the following stakeholders will be represented in the project team:

### **Project lead**

A factory appointee who directs the project, coordinates the other stakeholders, and drives progress

### **Brand contact**

A representative from the contracted brand who can authorise the product design & development

### **Designer/developer**

An employee of the manufacturer who has experience in developing products and is able to suggest alternative specifications that would meet the requirements for C2C Certified

### **Materials/Chemicals expert**

A factory employee and key point of contact who is familiar with all the materials and ingredients used in the production process

### **Reutilisation expert**

An appointee who can lead the strategy for reutilising materials (in view of the re-collection requirement, the expert would ideally be an employee of the brand)

### **Energy expert**

A factory employee or consultant familiar with product-specific energy sources and consumption

### **Water expert**

A factory employee or consultant familiar with the water-treatment processes

### **Social Fairness expert**

Usually a member of the manufacturer's Human Resources team who deals with activities involving corporate social responsibility or with related certification/accreditations (e.g. SA 8000)

### **Accredited Assessor**

A project manager from an assessment body, who will conduct and facilitate the C2C Certified assessment and is familiar with all the details of the certification

## **BEST PRACTICE: SUPPORT IN THE ASSESSMENT AND CERTIFICATION PROCESS**

### **Finding an Accredited Assessor**

A number of agencies and institutes are qualified and equipped to help companies get their products C2C Certified.

### **What does an assessor offer?**

An Accredited Assessor supports the company through the entire process – from explaining the Program's concepts in the initial project phase, to identifying potential obstacles, to evaluating materials, to helping with the final formalities of securing the certification.

Selected Accredited Assessors include:

- SGS, <http://www.sgsgroup.us.com/en/Sustainability.aspx>
- MBDC, <http://www.mbdc.com>
- EPEA, <http://www.epea.com>
- ARCHE Consulting, <http://www.arche-consulting.be/en/>

A more comprehensive list can be found [here](#).

## **STEP 1: INTRODUCE C2C CERTIFIED AND LAUNCH THE PROJECT**

Once this general orientation has taken place, the individual stakeholders delve into their specific areas and start collecting data to facilitate the subsequent steps. To keep the project on track, set timelines for this data collection and provide resources for additional support.

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## **BEST PRACTICE: EXAMPLE OF A LAUNCH WORKSHOP**

The following sessions can be facilitated by the Accredited Assessor using this “How-To” Guide, videos and other sources from <http://www.fashionforgood.com/>:

### **Session 1: General introduction to the C2C Certified Products Program (2–3 hours)**

Explain the C2C Certified Products Program and familiarise the stakeholders with the overall concepts and benefits

### **Session 2: Certification process (2 hours)**

Review the certification process and the logic of the achievement levels of the C2C Certified Products Program

### **Session 3: Material Health (1 hour)**

Review the Material Health criteria at a high level

### **Session 4: Material Reutilisation (1 hour)**

Review the Material Reutilisation criteria at a high level

### **Session 5: Renewable Energy and Carbon Management (1 hour)**

Review the Renewable Energy and Carbon Management criteria at a high level

### **Session 6: Water Stewardship (1 hour)**

Explain the Water Stewardship criteria at a high level

### **Session 7: Social Fairness (1 hour)**

Explain the Social Fairness criteria at a high level

### **Session 8: Project Plan & Business Case (2 hours)**

Explain the Project Plan and discuss the sample Business Case at a high level

Once this general orientation has taken place, the individual stakeholders delve into their specific areas and start collecting data to facilitate the subsequent steps. To keep the project on track, set timelines for this data collection and provide resources for additional support.

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## STEP 2: ASSESS THE INITIAL C2C CERTIFIED STATUS

The purpose of this step is to establish the product’s initial C2C Certified achievement level along the five criteria. The following matrix illustrates a hypothetical outcome:

| C2CCriteria                                                                                                     | BASIC | BRONZE | SILVER | GOLD | PLATINUM |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|--------|--------|------|----------|
|  <b>Material Health</b>        | ✓     | ✓      | ✓      | ✗    | ✗        |
|  <b>Material Reutilization</b> | ✓     | ✓      | ✓      | ✗    | ✗        |
|  <b>Renewable Energy</b>       | ✓     | ✓      | ✓      | ✗    | ✗        |
|  <b>Water Stewardship</b>      | ✓     | ✓      | ✓      | ✓    | ✓        |
|  <b>Social Fairness</b>        | ✓     | ✓      | ✓      | ✓    | ✗        |
| <b>Overall</b>                                                                                                  |       |        | ✓      |      |          |

To create this initial assessment the Accredited Assessor must have access to the requisite data, which is provided by the other stakeholders. For example, the water expert on the project team would need to show the assessor the factory’s water-treatment system, identify the sources of the water, explain the treatment processes and provide relevant bills and any test reports. This step combines on-site activities (e.g. assessing the water facilities) and remote activities (e.g. emailing the Bill of Materials (BoM)).

This step could take up to six weeks or even more, especially if the relevant data is not readily accessible. The most time-consuming part of this step will be gathering information on materials from the supply chain since it often requires executing non-disclosure agreements (NDAs) between Tier 2 suppliers and the Accredited Assessor.

## STEP 3: CONDUCT A GAP ANALYSIS

The purpose of this step is to outline what improvements need to be implemented to achieve the desired level of C2C Certified achievement – a decision that should be based on discussions between manufacturer representatives, brand representatives and the Accredited Assessor. These discussions will consider various trade-offs between the product’s features, cost and launch date. A higher certification level might require new design features, extra spending or more prolonged research.

The gap analysis helps the stakeholders to reach agreement not just on the overall certification level to aim for, but also on the improvements needed to achieve it and on an action plan for implementing improvements. The sample improvement plan below lists the specific actions that would be needed to upgrade from SILVER level to GOLD level.

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| C2C Criteria                                                                                                    | Current Status |      | Actions Required to achieve GOLD                                                                                     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                 | SILVER         | GOLD |                                                                                                                      |
|  <b>Material Health</b>        | ✓              | ✗    | Assess all materials to ensure the product has no more properties classified as "highly problematic" (ABC-X ratings) |
|  <b>Material Reutilization</b> | ✓              | ✗    | Increase recyclable or compostable content of product and complete a "nutrient management" strategy                  |
|  <b>Renewable Energy</b>       | ✓              | ✗    | Purchase additional RECs and Carbon Offsets to meet target criteria                                                  |
|  <b>Water Stewardship</b>      | ✓              | ✓    |                                                                                                                      |
|  <b>Social Fairness</b>        | ✓              | ✓    |                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Overall</b>                                                                                                  | ✓              | ✗    |                                                                                                                      |

## STEP 4: WORK ON IMPROVEMENTS

The purpose of this step is to implement the defined improvement plan in order to achieve the targeted level of C2C Certified. Ingredients might need to be replaced or eliminated, and that might involve an iterative process with the Accredited Assessor and the brand representative. The Assessor's expertise would help in suggesting alternative ingredients, and the brand representative might urge changes to some of the product features; e.g. a new colour palette if the current dyes need to be replaced.

During this improvement phase, this "How-To" Guide should be very helpful. It provides specific information for the different C2C Certified criteria categories. Further details can be found in the C2C Certified Product Standard [here](#).

## STEP 5: APPLY FOR C2C CERTIFIED

The purpose of this step is to finalise the application and submit it to the Cradle to Cradle Products Innovation Institute. Once all the requirements for all the criteria at the desired level have been fulfilled, the assessor assembles the assessment report and documentation, completes the application and submits it to the C2C Products Innovation Institute.

The project team's initial work is now over. The Institute will review the application and its accompanying documents, and – if all is correct – grants the certification. That process will take three to five weeks, depending on the complexity of the products and the completeness of the application.

## **SHOWCASE: C2C CERTIFIED PROJECT OF COTTON BLOSSOM AND PRATIBHA SYNTEX**

The two apparel manufacturers Cotton Blossom and Pratibha Syntex agreed to a joint pilot project with Fashion for Good during the summer of 2016.

### **Steps 1 & 2: Introduce C2C Certified and launch the project; assess the initial C2C Certified status**

- During the initial factory visits at Cotton Blossom and Pratibha Syntex in August 2016, MBDC, an Accredited Assessor, explained the certification system to all relevant stakeholders. During these visits, the initial assessments were launched in order to understand the production processes and begin the collection of data.
- Thereafter, the assessment processes were conducted remotely through shared data on aspects of production and other topics relevant for C2C Certified.
- The initial assessment revealed that the factories were already able to produce the two intended products at C2C Certified SILVER level.

### **Step 3: Conduct a gap analysis**

- The leadership team of the project decided that the target level for both products should be GOLD – both for commercial reasons and because it was a realistic target.
- The gap analysis, completed in September 2016, identified the improvements that the products would need in order to rise from SILVER to GOLD certification.

### **Step 4: Work on improvements**

- The improvement phase was duly launched to implement the changes needed for achieving GOLD level. In particular, the factory teams engaged in finding suitable substitutes for a few of the ingredients. The work also involved developing new dyeing recipes and a new colour palette, as well as testing the quality of the optimised products.
- A second round of factory visits by the project team and the Assessor took place in October 2016 to review the improvements and identify the gaps that still remained.
- The fashion retailer involved in the project then reviewed and approved the improvements, in order to finalise the style and place the orders; e.g. selecting the colours from the colour palette, and designing a care-instructions label.

### **Step 5: Apply for C2C certification**

- In February 2017, once the product specifications and the (BoM) were finalised and all other documents completed, the application was submitted to the C2C Products Innovation Institute. The C2C Certified GOLD certification was granted three weeks later.
- The processing of the application was relatively quick, thanks in part to the conscientious involvement of the Accredited Assessor during the whole process. Not all certifications proceed so smoothly, so companies should plan for a buffer when submitting an application.