



SCIENCE  
BASED  
TARGETS

DRIVING AMBITIOUS CORPORATE CLIMATE ACTION

# REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Consultancy support for facilitating interoperability of the Buildings Criteria and conducting research on potential new metrics in line with SBTi Corporate Net-Zero Standard V2.0

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## ABOUT SBTi

The Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi) is a corporate climate action organization that enables companies and financial institutions worldwide to play their part in combating the climate crisis.

We develop standards, tools and guidance which allow companies to set greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reductions targets in line with what is needed to keep global heating below catastrophic levels and reach net-zero by 2050 at latest.

The SBTi is incorporated as a UK charity, with a subsidiary SBTi Services Limited, which hosts our target validation services. Partner organizations who facilitated SBTi's growth and development are CDP, the United Nations Global Compact, the We Mean Business Coalition, the World Resources Institute (WRI), and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF).

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# 1. OVERVIEW

The buildings sector is a high-impact area critical to achieving a net-zero economy as buildings are responsible for more than one-third of global emissions and the sector is deeply interconnected with other critical sectors, such as energy, steel, cement and finance ([GlobalABC](#)). With floor area projected to increase by 15% by 2030 - over 80% of this growth expected in developing economies ([IEA 2023](#)) - the sector's commitment to science-based targets is essential for reaching net-zero by 2050.

The SBTi has observed strong engagement from the buildings sector, with nearly 500 companies in the sector with validated targets or commitments to set science-based targets. In the year since release, 23 companies have set targets through the SBTi Buildings Sector Science-Based Target-Setting Criteria, a robust framework for building owners, developers, property managers, and financial institutions to set ambitious 1.5°C-aligned targets for in-use operational and upfront embodied emissions in new buildings and addresses key GHG accounting challenges.

The Buildings Interoperability and Performance Frameworks project aims to support and advance the Buildings Criteria under the SBTi Corporate Net-Zero Standard V2.0. This project will have two focuses. First, the project aims to address interoperability between the Buildings Criteria and the SBTi Corporate Net-Zero Standard v2.0 in order to facilitate target-setting across the buildings value chain. This will include mapping the user journey for various stakeholders and identifying areas for additional support through resource development. Second, the project will conduct targeted research on the buildings sector performance frameworks: the use of commodity-specific environmental attribute certificates (commodity EACs), defining effective non-emissions targets for the building sector, and the decarbonization ambitions of building-level certification schemes. This will include creating a landscape analysis for the application of performance frameworks under the SBTi Corporate Net-Zero Standard V2.0 and could be used to accompany and support 1.5°C aligned emission reduction targets as part of a potential future standard revision. The project ultimately aims to understand potential challenges and opportunities relevant for the buildings sector under SBTi Corporate Net-Zero Standard V2.0.

This is an informative project, meaning that any recommendations developed as part of the project are descriptive and cannot be used to assess compliance with SBTi Standards or the SBTi Buildings Sector Science-Based Target-Setting Criteria (that is, until such time as any recommendations are implemented in SBTi's normative resources).

The scope of the Buildings Interoperability and Performance Frameworks project encompasses the following key activities:

1. Interoperability
  - a. Conduct user-focused analysis of interoperability between the Buildings Criteria and the SBTi Corporate Net-Zero Standard V2.0, identifying alignment challenges and enabling conditions for target-setting. This will include mapping engagement and use case testing for a variety of types of stakeholders and companies across the buildings value chain.
  - b. Support the SBTi in the development of supporting resources to facilitate target-setting for users across the buildings value chain, based upon the results of the interoperability analysis. This may include, but is not limited to,

adapting legacy criteria to be interoperable with the SBTi Corporate Net-Zero Standard V2.0, a crosswalk analysis between the Buildings Criteria and the SBTi Corporate Net-Zero Standard V2.0, and/or user guides for target-setting under new SBTi guidance and/or updated Buildings target-setting resources.

## 2. Performance Frameworks

- a. Identify and analyze commodity EACs, non-emissions metrics, and building-level certification schemes, with an emphasis on understanding their potential use and alignment with 1.5°C decarbonization pathways and the SBTi framework. This will include an exploration of the broader landscape of available metrics and benchmarks, highlighting gaps and opportunities for the buildings sector.
- b. Develop actionable insights to support the practical application of metrics and benchmarks for the buildings sector, offering strategic recommendations and supplementary guidance aligned with the SBTi's system of standards, particularly the SBTi Corporate Net-Zero Standard V2.0. This will include examining how these metrics and benchmarks can support decarbonization efforts in the building sector and could be considered for future standard revisions of the SBTi Buildings Criteria.

Key technical deliverables of the project are:

- Interoperability Brief: This brief will compile findings from the evaluation of interoperability between the Buildings Criteria and the SBTi Corporate Net-Zero Standard V2.0, including results of a mapping exercise. Specifically, this brief will:
  - Provide an assessment of interoperability challenges and enabling conditions for target-setting. This will focus on recommendations for supporting users in target-setting journeys and on recommendations/initial drafts to SBTi for how the Buildings Criteria can be revised (without substantive changes to criteria) to become interoperable with CNZS v2
- Updated Buildings Target-Setting Resources: The external partner will support the SBTi in updating and developing guidance for target-setting users in the buildings sector based upon the SBTi Corporate Net-Zero V2.0 and the findings of the interoperability brief. These updates are aimed at addressing interoperability concerns for the Buildings Criteria and may include adapting legacy criteria to align with the SBTi Corporate Net-Zero Standard V2.0.
- Synthesis Report on Performance Frameworks: This substantive report will focus on findings from the landscape analysis of performance frameworks (commodity EACs, non-emissions metrics, and asset-level certificate schemes), which may be considered in the future as a basis for external publications. This report will:
  - Assess the compatibility of performance frameworks with the 1.5°C trajectory and the SBTi framework. In particular, this will focus on understanding feasibility for using quality EACs, possible net-zero aligned non-emission benchmarks, and the emissions ambition of asset-level certificate schemes (including for embodied carbon), as relevant for the buildings sector and under the SBTi Corporate Net-Zero Standard V2.0. The relevance across all user types of SBTi's building criteria and other types of companies in the buildings value chain will be prioritized in the assessment.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See Figure 2 of [SBTi Buildings Sector Explanatory Document](#).

The exact details of the deliverables will be decided upon in discussion with the selected technical partner and will be subject to latest updates to the SBTi Corporate Net-Zero Standard V2.0 and other guidance published by the SBTi at time of project commencement.

The project is expected to commence in Q1 2026 and conclude in Q3 2026. The timeline and details of the project are further subject to latest updates on progress and publication of the SBTi Corporate Net-Zero Standard V2.0. The total budget allocated for the project is \$ 200,000 USD. The scope of this work is part of the active grant *Science Based Targets for Built Environment and Investors - Phase II* co-funded by the Laudes Foundation and SBTi core funding.

## 2. PROPOSED WORK

The SBTi is seeking to hire a technical partner that can provide support to the project team in conducting research, reporting on findings, and supporting the Project Manager with project management. The SBTi will always have the ultimate authority over the content of the documents. The SBTi will oversee, handle, and maintain control of all stakeholder feedback. The technical partner will only act in an advisory role and support capacity assisting with research, analysis, and drafting.

The project comprises the following broad phases and activities. Expected support to be provided by the vendor is described below for each phase. Details of these phases and the specific activities will be discussed and agreed upon with the selected partner during the kick-off call.

### Phase 1: Research and Drafting

- Review the SBTi Corporate Net-Zero Standard V2.0, relevant SBTi resources for the sector such as the Buildings Criteria, and other sector-specific resources, the Financial Institutions Net-Zero Standard, as available at time of project initiation. As the SBTi Corporate Net-Zero Standard is undergoing a major revision, the project team is expected to review any new releases of SBTi Standards and supporting resources, and adapt accordingly.
- Create mapping exercise for how stakeholders across the buildings value chain (e.g., building owners, developers, financial institutions) will engage with the SBTi Corporate Net-Zero Standard V2.0 and access relevant sector-specific guidance, tools, and criteria. This will include use case testing to explore users' target-setting journeys, focusing on cases relevant for interoperability. This exercise will align with parallel SBTi projects focused on revising all legacy sector guidances.
- Conduct desktop research on reports, guidance, and literature on buildings sector performance frameworks, including, but not limited to, the following topics:
  - Commodity EACs
    - Landscape analysis of commodity EACs, currently in-use and in development, globally and within specific regions, including North America, South America, Europe, Oceania, Asia, and Africa.

- In particular, a core focus should be on cement, steel, and timber products for the building parts and structures most relevant to embodied emissions of buildings.
  - Evaluation of use of EACs in the sector in emissions reductions and indirect mitigation, with a focus on credibility and integrity of those measures.
  - Analysis of the treatment of commodity EACs by building-level certificate schemes.
- Non-emission decarbonization metrics
  - Identification of appropriate non-emissions benchmarks and metrics for the buildings sector. A primary focus will be on reducing operational emissions, including energy efficiency improvements, and low-carbon embodied emissions practices.
  - Feasibility and applicability of the tracking and reporting of non-emissions metrics for buildings sector companies.
  - Alignment of non-emissions metrics with net-zero benchmarks. This will include identifying potential net-zero benchmarks, as feasible.
- Building-level certificate schemes
  - Landscape analysis of building-level certificate schemes' alignment with 1.5°C aligned decarbonization pathways, including those defined by the SBTi and CRREM, currently in-use and in development, globally and within specific regions.
  - Opportunities for demonstrating alignment with science-based targets using building-level certificate schemes.
- Compile initial results across research activities for a draft brief on interoperability and draft synthesis report on performance frameworks (commodity EACs, non-emission metrics, building-level certificate schemes) for the buildings sector as relevant under the SBTi Corporate Net-Zero Standard V2.0.
- Incorporate internal feedback from the SBTi on initial results for first drafts of interoperability brief and performance frameworks synthesis report.

#### **Deliverables of Phase 1:**

- First draft of interoperability brief, with results of mapping exercise for buildings sector users.
- First draft of the synthesis report on findings for buildings sector performance frameworks (commodity EACs, non-emission metrics, building-level certificate schemes) under the SBTi Corporate Net-Zero Standard V2.0. This will include analysis of options for performance frameworks.

#### **Phase 2: Expert Input on the Performance Frameworks**

- The methods and process to gather expert input from relevant subject matter experts to be agreed upon between the technical partner and the SBTi. This can take the form of focus groups, surveys, interviews or other suitable ways as agreed with the SBTi team. The SBTi, with support from the technical partner, would lead the process.

- Together with the SBTi project team, define selection criteria to gather expert input from relevant subject matter experts to be invited to participate in the research, making sure the selection of interviewees provides a balanced view across geographical regions and stakeholder groups.
- The technical partner will assist in analyzing feedback based on the data provided by the SBTi, ensuring personal and identifying information is removed to prevent bias.
- Synthesize expert input outcomes, identifying opportunities for possible inclusion in the report draft.

#### **Deliverables of Phase 2:**

- Expert review draft of report on buildings sector performance frameworks under the SBTi Corporate Net-Zero Standard V2.0. This will include a list of potential considerations for the SBTi, which may include—but is not limited to—considerations relevant for supplementary guidance and future standard revision under the SBTi Corporate Net-Zero Standard V2.0.

### **Phase 3: Final Refinement and Delivery**

- Incorporate all outstanding feedback into a final draft report, including feedback provided by the SBTi after receiving the expert review draft.
- Utilizing the findings from the final report, support the SBTi with the development of resources for buildings sector users on target-setting under the SBTi Corporate Net-Zero Standard V2.0. These resources will include—but are not limited to—supporting guidance for buildings sector user journeys under the SBTi Corporate Net-Zero Standard V2.0 and interoperability. The parameters of these resources will be agreed upon between the external partner and the SBTi based on the findings of the report and the final version of the SBTi Corporate Net-Zero Standard V2.0.

#### **Deliverables of Phase 3:**

- Final brief on findings on interoperability for the buildings sector under the SBTi Corporate Net-Zero Standard V2.0.
- Final synthesis report on findings on performance frameworks for the buildings sector under the SBTi Corporate Net-Zero Standard V2.0.
- Suite of resources for buildings sector users developed in conjunction with the SBTi, including possible revisions to external documentation, guidance, and criteria.

### **Project management throughout the project execution**

- Provide agile and efficient project management support to the project team as required. Regular meetings with the SBTi project team.
- Support in the production of materials for meetings with external stakeholders and assistance with facilitating the workshops as needed.
- Support the delivery of external expert subject matters and revisions as appropriate.



**Deliverables:**

- Minutes, presentations, and supporting material for meetings with the SBTi project team and internal and external experts.
- The SBTi will provide oversight and final content approval on external workshops, interviews, and any external communications and will coordinate interactions with external experts.
- Frequent reporting of hours expended to support budget oversight.

The SBTi retains final decision-making authority on all content, and the review and approval process will be conducted in accordance with the SBTi's internal procedures.

### 3. OUTPUTS AND TIMELINE

Consultancy work should be completed and made available based on the following timelines.

Output	Proposed Timeline
<b>First draft of findings:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Interoperability brief</li><li>• Performance frameworks synthesis report</li></ul>	By end of March 2026
<b>External review draft:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Performance frameworks synthesis report</li></ul>	By end of June 2026
<b>Final drafts:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Interoperability brief</li><li>• Buildings sector target-setting resources</li><li>• Performance frameworks synthesis report</li></ul>	By end of August 2026
Presentations, minutes, supporting material	Throughout the project

### 4. QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

The SBTi will consider all qualified candidates, including but not limited to independent contractors, academic institutions, and consultancy firms. The contractor delivering this work should be able to demonstrate the following experience and qualifications:

- Demonstrable in-depth understanding of corporate target-setting principles, SBTi methods, and GHG emissions accounting standards.
- Previous, demonstrable experience working with the buildings sector
- Demonstrable credentials in working with decarbonization pathways.
- Demonstrable experience in conducting interoperability, benchmarking, and/or voluntary 3rd party certification scheme analysis.
- Experience with multi-stakeholders processes, including private sector companies, industry associations, and academic or research institutions.

- Excellent project management skills, with proven ability to manage complex projects involving multiple stakeholders, ensuring timely delivery of high-quality outputs.
- Excellent analytical drafting skills, to analyze technical data and develop clear, concise, and actionable recommendations.
- Desirable: the consulting company to have a validated science-based target.

## 5. RECRUITMENT PROCESS

### Timeline

This request for proposals (RFP) will follow this timeline:

- Deadline for submitting questions: October 10, 2025
- Deadline for proposal submission: October 17, 2025
- Evaluation and interview period: December 2025 - January 2026
- Expected contract award: January 2026

### Clarification Questions

All clarification questions should be directed to [buildings@sciencebasedtargets.org](mailto:buildings@sciencebasedtargets.org). Please add reference to the RFP to the subject line of your email.

### Submission Requirements

Applicants must submit their proposals in electronic format (PDF preferred) by the specified deadline to [buildings@sciencebasedtargets.org](mailto:buildings@sciencebasedtargets.org) with the subject line "Proposal– Buildings Interoperability and Performance Frameworks September 2025". Late submissions may not be considered.

### Proposal Structure

Applicants are required to structure their proposals in the following specified format:

- 1. Cover letter**  
A brief cover letter introducing the applicant's organization, summarizing their understanding of the project requirements, and highlighting their key qualifications and experience relevant to the project.
- 2. Executive summary**  
A concise summary of the proposal, including an overview of proposed approach, scope of work addressing the deliverables, and any unique value propositions.
- 3. Company/organization profile**  
Detailed information about the applicant's organization, including its history, core competencies, areas of expertise, and relevant experience in project management.
- 4. Project team**  
A description of the proposed project management team, including resumes of key team members, their roles and responsibilities, and any relevant certifications or qualifications.
- 5. Methodology and approach**  
A detailed description of the proposed methodology and approach for managing the project, including project planning, scheduling, risk and conflict of interest management, communication and engagement strategies, and quality assurance processes.

## **6. Budget and cost breakdown**

A comprehensive breakdown of the proposed budget, including all costs associated with providing project services, such as personnel, materials, travel, and any other expenses including tax details.

## **7. References**

Contact information for at least three references from previous clients who can provide feedback on the applicant's performance and capabilities in working on the project.

## **8. Appendices**

Any additional documents or materials relevant to the proposal, such as case studies, project experience samples, or organizational charts.

Proposals should be clear, well-organized, and directly address the requirements outlined in this RFP. Failure to adhere to the specified format may result in the rejection of the proposal.

## **Conflict of Interest**

To assess any actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest, the proposal must include both the [Declaration of Conflict Form for External Entities](#) and the [Declaration of Conflict Form for External Individuals](#) as part of the submission.

## **Evaluation**

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Relevance and quality of previous work
- Demonstrated understanding of the project requirements
- Qualifications and experience of the team
- Budget and cost-effectiveness
- Conflict of interest management

## **Selection Process**

The selection process will involve the initial screening of proposals, followed by scoring and ranking by an Internal Review and Selection Committee. Shortlisted candidates may be invited for interviews or presentations to further evaluate their proposals. The final selection will be based on the overall quality and suitability of the proposals submitted.

# **6. INVOICING SCHEDULE**

The proposed invoicing schedule is as follows:

- Tranche 1: 20% within 30 days from contract sign-off date
- Tranche 2: 30% after completion of the first draft
- Tranche 3: 50% after the submission of the final deliverables

## 7. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The selected candidate will be required to enter into a project contract with The SBTi. The contract will include standard terms and conditions related to intellectual property rights, confidentiality, termination, liability, and dispute resolution.

This RFP does not constitute a commitment to award a contract. The SBTi reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received or choose to discontinue this RFP. Individualized feedback will not be provided to unsuccessful RFP applicants.

[Annex 1. Declaration of Conflict of Interest Form for External Entities](#)

[Annex 2. Declaration of Conflict of Interest Form for External Individuals](#)