

Higg Facility Environmental Module (FEM) Training Protocol

Version 1.0, April 2022

Document #: FEMTP2022041.0

Authorization: Sustainable Apparel Coalition

Acknowledgments

This document is prepared by the Training Program Manager, Sumerra for the Sustainable Apparel Coalition (SAC).

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	Introduction.....	3
1.1	Background	3
1.2	Purpose	4
1.3	Definitions.....	5
1.4	Roles and Responsibilities	5
2	Trainer Bodies.....	7
2.1	Applicability.....	7
2.2	Trainer Status Maintenance (TSM)	7
3	Higg FEM Training Details	8
3.1	Facilitation of Higg FEM Trainings.....	8
3.2	Registration of Higg FEM Trainings & Public Training List.....	8
3.3	Training Feedback.....	9
3.4	Higg FEM Training Certificates.....	9
3.5	Training Duration	10
3.6	Required Number of Higg FEM Trainers	10
3.7	Higg.org Trainer Demo Account.....	11
3.8	Promotion/Marketing of Higg FEM Trainings.....	11
4	Higg FEM Training Details	12
4.1	Training Scope	12
4.2	Use of Approved Training Materials (In Person or Online Training).....	12
4.3	Higg FEM Training Quality Assurance	13
5	Related Documents	13
6	Document Change Log	13

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

1.1.1 General

1.1.1.1 The Sustainable Apparel Coalition (SAC) is the apparel, footwear and home textile industry's foremost alliance for sustainable production. It was born from a dynamic and unconventional meeting of the minds when in 2009, Walmart, America's biggest retailer and Patagonia, one of the world's most progressive brands, came together with a radical mission: Collect peers and competitors from across the apparel, footwear and textile sector and together, develop a universal approach to measuring sustainability performance.

1.1.1.2 Today the Coalition has more than 250 members and represents more than 40% of the global apparel supply chain. Its focus remains the same: develop a standardized supply chain measurement tool for all industry participants to understand the environmental and social and labor impacts of making and selling their products and services. By measuring sustainability performance, the industry can address inefficiencies, resolve damaging practices, and achieve the environmental and social transparency that consumers are starting to demand. By joining forces in a Coalition, members can address the urgent, systemic challenges that are impossible to change alone.

1.1.2 Higg Index

1.1.2.1 Developed by the Sustainable Apparel Coalition, the Higg Index is a suite of tools that enables brands, retailers, and facilities of all sizes — at every stage in their sustainability journey — to accurately measure and score a company or product's sustainability performance. The Higg Index delivers a holistic overview that empowers businesses to make meaningful improvements that protect the well-being of factory workers, local communities, and the environment.

1.1.2.2 For those just starting to implement sustainable practices, The Higg Index guides their important first steps, helping to distinguish strengths and weaknesses in the supply chain. For those already deeply engaged, it has more advanced potential, such as benchmarking sustainability performance against other SAC members, identifying macro risks and performing targeted research and analytics.

1.1.2.3 With the Higg Index, SAC aims to accomplish the following goals:

1.1.2.3.1 Provide a consistent measurement framework for companies to evaluate and communicate their social and environmental impacts.

1.1.2.3.2 Identify strategic opportunities to implement changes that drive meaningful sustainability improvements.

- 1.1.2.3.3 Prioritize a safe and healthy work environment to improve the well-being and treatment of workers across the value chain.
- 1.1.2.3.4 Measure the impacts of products, operations, and value chain activities to identify and implement improvements that preserve the natural world.
- 1.1.2.3.5 Eliminate the need for do-it-yourself approaches, allowing companies to quickly and easily share data with value chain partners and optimize resources to reduce associated waste and costs.
- 1.1.2.3.6 Enable public sustainability claims so that consumers can make more informed choices about the products they purchase.
- 1.1.2.3.7 Identify shared opportunities for improvement across the value chain related to protecting human rights and reducing environmental impacts.

1.1.3 Higg Facility Environmental (Higg FEM) Overview

- 1.1.3.1 *The Higg Facility Environmental Module (Higg FEM) informs manufacturers, brands, and retailers about the environmental performance of their individual facilities, empowering them to scale sustainability improvements.*
- 1.1.3.2 *The Higg FEM provides facilities with a clear picture of their environmental impacts. It helps them identify and prioritize opportunities for performance improvements.*

1.2 PURPOSE

- 1.2.1 The objective of the Higg FEM Training Program is to ensure that information provided to trainees is credible, consistent and effectively increases knowledge and understanding of the Higg FEM Program and sustainability in the industry.
- 1.2.2 The purpose of the Higg FEM Training Protocol is to communicate the objectives, scope, process and interpretive guidance for the Higg FEM Training program. This includes:
 - 1.2.2.1 *Ensure that appropriate information is provided to Trainer Bodies and Trainers responsible for providing Higg FEM trainings*
 - 1.2.2.2 *Ensuring that appropriate information is provided to facilities or other stakeholders that utilize this program*
 - 1.2.2.3 *Providing a consistent training program*
- 1.2.3 Individuals and groups to whom this Protocol applies includes:
 - 1.2.3.1 *SAC Staff*
 - 1.2.3.2 *SAC Training Program Manager (TPM)*
 - 1.2.3.3 *Trainer Bodies & Trainers*
 - 1.2.3.4 *Facilities or other stakeholders utilizing the Higg FEM Training Program.*

1.3 DEFINITIONS

- 1.3.1 **“Co-trainer”** the individual(s) that present during Higg FEM Trainings whose primary purpose are to provide training support (e.g. support training logistics or activities)
- 1.3.2 **“Higg.org”** means the website through which users can access the Higg Index.
- 1.3.3 **“Higg Index”** means the questions, methodology, know-how, scoring metric, algorithms, ideas, and inventions, related to the suite of sustainability assessment tools, including: the Higg Facility Environmental Module (the “Higg FEM”); the Higg Facility Social and Labor Module (the “FSLM”) (but excluding content related thereto); the Higg Brand & Retailer Module; the Higg Materials Sustainability Index (the “MSI”); the Higg Product Module (the “PM”); and the Higg Design and Development Module (the “DDM”), and any future modules or tools incorporated by SAC, including data requisite to the methodology of the foregoing, and all new versions of any of the foregoing, provided that the foregoing will constitute the “Higg Index” only after approved by SAC.
- 1.3.4 **“Higg FEM Training”** - Training that provides education and capacity building to learners on the requirements, use, and technical environmental sustainability content of the Higg FEM.
- 1.3.5 **“SAC Approved Training Material”** – Training Materials approved by the SAC for use in the Higg FEM Training Program. There are two types of SAC Training Materials:
 - 1.3.5.1 **“SAC Materials”** – *Training materials that provide an overview of the Higg FEM Program in general (e.g. purpose and structure of the Higg FEM)*
 - 1.3.5.2 **“SAC Support Materials”** – *Training material that provide training on specific aspects of the Higg FEM such as Energy/GHG, Wastewater, Air Emissions, etc.*
- 1.3.6 **“Trainer Body (TB)”** – A company that is qualified and approved to perform the Verification process in accordance with the defined procedures and protocols.
- 1.3.7 **“Trainer”** - The individual(s) delivering the Higg FEM Training.
- 1.3.8 **“Training Program Manager (TPM)”** – This is the oversight organization for the training program. The role of an oversight organization is to provide quality assurance to the verification process. This may include, but is not limited to, vetting and management of service providers (e.g. Trainer Bodies), application of quality assurance procedures, risk assessment, and general project management.
- 1.3.9 **Use of ‘shall’ or ‘should’** - The word ‘shall’ indicates a requirement and the word ‘should’ indicates a recommendation.

1.4 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1.4.1 Roles and responsibilities are summarized in the table below:

Table 1 Roles & Responsibilities

Who	Roles and Responsibilities
TPM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following TPM policies defined in SAC-TPM Agreements • Managing the Trainer Body Application Process • Vetting TB Applicants • Determining Eligibility of Trainer Bodies and Trainers • Conducting Quality Assurance • Providing required information and data to the SAC • Responding to program queries through the SAC/TPM Support desk
Trainer Body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Engaging in Higg FEM Training procedures and processes ○ Ensuring competent Trainers are used for Higg FEM Trainings ○ Ensuring Trainers act ethically and honestly ○ Providing necessary oversight and support to Trainers ○ Ensuring necessary quality controls are in place to training consistency and quality • Trainer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Delivering of Higg FEM Training ○ Ensuring training meets the required objectives ○ Ensures training protocols are followed • Higg FEM Training Manager <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Overall responsibility for the delivery and quality of the Higg FEM Trainings. ○ Point of contact with SAC/TPM to answer queries or to discuss issues for all activities globally. ○ Responsible for ensuring that Trainers are up to date with training program requirements and updates from the SAC and TPM
SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programmatic oversight including strategy, capacity, quality, and financial sustainability • Managing the TPM • Serving as the ultimate decision-maker on issues escalated by the TPM
Trainee(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completing training feedback survey at the end of training

2 TRAINER BODIES

2.1 APPLICABILITY

- 2.1.1 Only SAC approved Trainer Bodies shall be permitted to offer Higg FEM Training.
- 2.1.2 Only SAC approved Trainers, associated with an approved Trainer Bodies shall be permitted to deliver Higg FEM Training.
- 2.1.3 A list of approved Trainer Bodies shall be maintained by the TPM and approval is maintained here: <https://howtohigg.org/higg-fem-verification-program/list-of-approved-fem-trainers/>.
- 2.1.4 Trainer Bodies and Trainers shall adhere to the Trainer Body Code of Professional Conduct, which can be found [here](#).
- 2.1.5 Failure to adhere to the Trainer Body Code of Professional Conduct or requirements of this Protocol may results in loss of Trainer Body/Trainer status per the terms of the Trainer Body Agreement.

2.2 TRAINER STATUS MAINTENANCE (TSM)

- 2.2.1 Once an individual is approved as a Trainer, they shall be required to maintain their status annually.
- 2.2.2 Status maintenance is demonstrated by completion of recognized professional development activities defined in the TSM procedures that can be found on the Higg FEM Training Information page here: <https://howtohigg.org/higg-fem-verification-program/#section7>
- 2.2.3 Annually, each Trainer shall submit a TSM Worksheet for review and approval by the TPM. TSM worksheets are available on and submitted through the STEP platform.
 - 2.2.3.1 *Trainers shall have a 30-day grace period after the one-year anniversary of approval (giving them 12 to 13 months of total approval period).*
- 2.2.4 Candidates whose Trainer status has expired, must follow the process below to reactivate their status:
 - 2.2.4.1 *Submit a written request to TPM*
 - 2.2.4.2 *Complete of any required Higg FEM related training (i.e. If training has been revised or updated)*
 - 2.2.4.3 *Submittal of TSM Worksheet covering the prior 12 months immediately preceding the reactivation request*
 - 2.2.4.4 *TSM may be subject to automatic audit/verification of TSM-related material*

- 2.2.4.5 *Must pay a \$200 re-activation fee plus the TSM fee*
- 2.2.4.6 *Cases where a Trainer's status has expired for more than 6 months will be reviewed by the TPM to determine the suitable path and requirements for status reactivation*

3 HIGG FEM TRAINING DETAILS

3.1 FACILITATION OF HIGG FEM TRAININGS

- 3.1.1 The provision of Higg FEM Training services and the facilitation of trainings shall be coordinated directly between the organization requesting the training and the Higg FEM TB.
 - 3.1.1.1 *The SAC or the Training Program Manager (TPM) shall not be involved in the pricing, negotiation, or scheduling process of Higg FEM Trainings. Contracts for Higg FEM Training services are entered into by the Trainer Body and individual or organization requesting the training.*
- 3.1.2 If a training event needs to be cancelled, TBs shall adhere to their organization's standard cancellation policy.
 - 3.1.2.1 *This policy shall be clearly communicated to attendees prior to scheduling trainings.*

3.2 REGISTRATION OF HIGG FEM TRAININGS & PUBLIC TRAINING LIST

- 3.2.1 Higg FEM Trainer Bodies or Trainers shall register all Higg FEM trainings provided by Higg FEM Trainers. Training must be registered here:
https://fs26.formsite.com/Sumerra/SACTrainingReg/form_login.html
- 3.2.2 The TPM shall publish a list of training events with permission of the TB/Trainer.
 - 3.2.2.1 *The purpose of this list is to allow other facilities/groups to view and inquire about public Higg FEM trainings in their region.*
 - 3.2.2.2 *TB/Trainers shall indicate on the training registration form whether they wish to add a training to the public list.*
 - 3.2.2.3 *Trainers shall not be required make training information publicly available and registered trainings shall not be published without permission.*
- 3.2.3 The Public Training List of open Higg FEM Trainings can be found here:
<https://www.sumerra.com/programs/sac/sac-fem-training-program/available-training/>
- 3.2.4 A unique reference number shall be created by the TPM for each registered training. Trainers shall keep track of this number and provide it to attendees along with a feedback survey link noted below.

- 3.2.5 Failure to properly register trainings may result in loss of Higg FEM Trainer Body/Trainer designations as per the terms of the Trainer Body Agreement.

3.3 TRAINING FEEDBACK

3.3.1 Trainer Feedback

- 3.3.1.1 *After registering a training, the Lead Trainer contact shall receive an email with a link to a Post Training Form.*

- 3.3.1.2 *The Lead Trainer shall complete the Post Training form (using the provided link) once the training has been conducted.*

- 3.3.1.2.1 On the Post Training Form, the Lead Trainer shall provide one trainee contact in the form to provide overall feedback on the training event.

3.3.2 Attendee Feedback

- 3.3.2.1 *Higg FEM Trainers shall provide training attendees opportunities for anonymous feedback that is linked to their training*

- 3.3.2.2 *Upon completing the training registration, the trainer contact shall receive a unique training registration number.*

- 3.3.2.3 *Trainers shall provide their training registration number and the following link to an anonymous survey to all training attendees.*
<https://fs26.formsite.com/Sumerra/SACPostTrainingSurvey/index.html>

- 3.3.2.3.1 The above shall be provided for both in-person and online training.

- 3.3.2.4 *Failure to provide opportunities for attendees to provide anonymous feedback directly to the TPM/SAC may result in loss of Higg FEM Trainer Body/Trainer designations as per the TB Agreement.*

3.4 HIGG FEM TRAINING CERTIFICATES

- 3.4.1 Official Higg FEM Training Certificates shall be available for order from the SAC.

- 3.4.2 TBs shall not issue their own company-branded certificates for Higg FEM Training courses.

- 3.4.3 Trainers shall order official certificates for trainees (facilities and individuals) using the Post Training Form. The cost of each certificate type is listed below:

- 3.4.3.1 *Individual Certificate (includes attendees' name): USD 25 per certificate*

- 3.4.3.2 *Company Certificate (includes companies' name): USD 500 per certificate*

- 3.4.4 If TBs or Trainers want to offer certificates or they are requested by attendees, the fees shall be communicated to the attendees and added to the cost of training.

- 3.4.5 Trainers shall only allow certificates for those who have fully attended the training session(s) and completed all required coursework and activities as determined by the Trainer.
- 3.4.6 When ordering certificates, the Trainer shall provide the following information for each trainee: Given Name, Surname, and email address. A template is provided in the Post Training Form
 - 3.4.6.1 *Certificates shall be emailed directly to the trainee.*

3.5 TRAINING DURATION

- 3.5.1 The duration of Higg FEM trainings shall depend on the depth and coverage of the agreed upon training scope between the TB and the organization or individual requesting the training.
- 3.5.2 There shall be no limit to the minimum or maximum duration of a Higg FEM Training.
- 3.5.3 The minimum duration of Higg FEM Trainings eligible for a certificate shall be four (4) hours. This applies to both in-person and online training.
- 3.5.4 Individual “standalone” training sessions that are less than 4 hours shall be permitted.
 - 3.5.4.1 *Trainees shall not be eligible for a training certificate for trainings of less than 4 hours.*
- 3.5.5 It shall be permitted for Higg FEM Trainings to be broken down into shorter training sessions (e.g. two 2-hour sessions)
 - 3.5.5.1 *This type of training shall be eligible for a training certificate if the following conditions are met:*
 - 3.5.5.2 *The full training course is a minimum of 4 hours.*
 - 3.5.5.3 *The training course is packaged as a single training course with a single registration and learners have access to all sessions that make up the full training course.*
 - 3.5.5.4 *If a certificate is to be provided, attendee shall attend all the training sessions that are a part of the full training course.*

3.6 REQUIRED NUMBER OF HIGG FEM TRAINERS

- 3.6.1 In-person trainings shall require a minimum of one (1) Higg FEM Trainer for up to 20 attendees.
- 3.6.2 Training groups of over 20 attendees shall require a minimum of one (1) co-trainer to be present.
 - 3.6.2.1 *Co-trainers are required to be Higg FEM Trainers.*

- 3.6.3 Co-trainers for in-person trainings may provide logistical support only and must not lead any training material delivery or activities unless they are an approved Higg FEM trainer.
- 3.6.4 Trainers shall maintain a group size that allows for sufficient interaction with individual trainees.
- 3.6.5 Online trainings of any size shall require a minimum of one (1) Higg FEM Trainer and do not require a co-trainer
 - 3.6.5.1 *TBs and Trainers shall ensure an appropriate level of support is provided for online trainings to facilitate interaction between trainers and trainees (e.g. support for interactive chat boxes and Q&A).*
- 3.6.6 There is no limit on the maximum number of attendees for Higg FEM Trainings.

3.7 HIGG.ORG TRAINER DEMO ACCOUNT

- 3.7.1 Higg FEM Trainers shall have live access to a demo Higg FEM on the Higg.org platform during Higg FEM trainings to ensure platform use can be effectively demonstrated.
- 3.7.2 TBs/Trainers shall follow the instructions provided in the Higg FEM Trainer Learning Plan on STEP to set-up a Demo account.

3.8 PROMOTION/MARKETING OF HIGG FEM TRAININGS

- 3.8.1 Higg FEM TBs and Trainers may promote/market their training events provided that all promotional and marketing materials align with the requirements and guidance set forth in the terms of the Trainer Body Agreement, Trainer Body Logo Use Guidelines, and other relevant SAC guidance and expectations including the use of copyright materials or images.
 - 3.8.1.1 *Violation of this rule may lead to revocation of Trainer Body status and other repercussions related to copyright infringement*
- 3.8.2 Promotional seminars or marketing/sales presentations shall not be considered Higg FEM training.
 - 3.8.2.1 *The SAC does not place any restrictions on who can provide marketing information on Higg FEM Verifier or Trainer Body services. However, these events must not provide instruction, guidance or education on the use or technical content of the Higg FEM. Additionally, Higg FEM Approved Training Materials must not be used, in full or in part, for promotional seminar or marketing presentations.*
 - 3.8.2.2 *Trainer Bodies should consult with the TPM if there is any question regarding the classification of a training.*

4 HIGG FEM TRAINING DETAILS

4.1 TRAINING SCOPE

- 4.1.1 A Higg FEM training is training that provides education and capacity building to learners on the requirements, use, and technical environmental sustainability content of the Higg FEM.
- 4.1.2 Higg FEM Trainings shall be provided in-person, online, or as eLearning.
 - 4.1.2.1 *Detailed requirements and guidance for the development of Higg FEM eLearning course are provided in the Higg FEM Training Protocol - Provision of eLearning.*
- 4.1.3 The scope of Higg FEM Trainings can be adjusted based on the target audience and/or training requestor's needs. In general, the scope of Higg FEM Trainings will cover one, or both of categories below:
 - 4.1.3.1 **Higg FEM Introduction:** *Focused on introducing the Higg FEM intent, structure, sections/questions, levels, scoring, cadence, etc.*
 - 4.1.3.1.1 Introductory courses provided by TBs shall use the SAC Approved Training Materials provided to Trainers and align with the most recent Higg FEM related content on howtohigg.org [available here](#).
 - 4.1.3.2 **Topic or Section-Specific:** *Focused on provided education and capacity building on specific Higg FEM subject matter. This can include a single Higg FEM section/topic or cover multiple Higg FEM sections/topics.*
 - 4.1.3.2.1 Topic or Section-Specific Higg FEM Training shall only be permitted to be delivered as in-person or online training (e.g. webinar). Provision of section-specific eLearning is not permitted.

4.2 USE OF APPROVED TRAINING MATERIALS (IN PERSON OR ONLINE TRAINING)

- 4.2.1 SAC Approved Training Materials shall be used in accordance with the licensing and terms set forth in the Sustainable Apparel Coalition – Agreement of SAC Trainer Body (TB Agreement).
- 4.2.2 There are two types of approved training materials that are made available to Trainers as follows:
 - 4.2.2.1 *SAC Materials; and*
 - 4.2.2.2 *SAC Support Materials*
- 4.2.3 All Higg FEM Trainings must cover the relevant content included in the SAC Approved Training Materials as determined by the training scope.

- 4.2.4 SAC Materials (i.e., the file titled SAC-FEM3.0- Introduction Base Material) shall not be modified and must be used as is for Higg FEM Introductory training.
- 4.2.5 SAC Support Materials can be adapted by Trainers to add supplementary information and/or remix the information to best suit the training scope and audience.
- 4.2.6 Trainers may translate the SAC Approved Training Materials into local language(s).
- 4.2.6.1 *The translation shall be contextually equal to the original text. All terms of the TB Agreement including those regarding copyright and attribution must still be complied with.*
- 4.2.7 Trainer Bodies and Trainers should consult with the TPM if there are any questions regarding the proper use of SAC Approved Training Materials.

4.3 Higg FEM TRAINING QUALITY ASSURANCE

- 4.3.1 The SAC reserves the right to conduct quality assessments (QA) of Higg FEM training provided under the Higg FEM TB/Trainer designation.
- 4.3.2 All Higg FEM Trainings are subject to announced and unannounced visits by SAC representatives including the TPM.
- 4.3.3 At the discretion of the SAC, TBs may be subject to management systems assessments that review the internal policies and procedures TBs have in place to ensure the quality of Higg FEM Trainings.
- 4.3.4 TBs and Trainers shall provide access to relevant information (e.g. training schedules, policies and procedures or other documentation) for the purposes of conducting these QA activities upon reasonable request from the SAC or TPM.

5 RELATED DOCUMENTS

[Higg FEM Trainer Body/Trainer Professional Code of Conduct](#)

[Higg FEM Training Protocol - Provision of eLearning](#)

[Higg FEM Trainer Status Maintenance Protocol](#)

6 DOCUMENT CHANGE LOG

Date	Section	Summary of Changes
April 13, 2022	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated document format Replaces SAC Higg FEM Training Protocol – July 2020
	Section 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added information on Higg FEM eLearning delivery