

Expression of Interest: Register of Carbon Consultants 2022

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Expression of Interest

1 Introduction

Business in the Community Ireland (BITCI) is a movement for sustainable change in business. In a dynamic and changing environment, sustainable businesses are successful businesses.

Our purpose is to inspire and enable businesses to bring about a sustainable, low carbon economy and a more inclusive society where everyone thrives. We act as trusted advisers in sustainability and corporate social responsibility. We provide access to best practice and support businesses with practical management and monitoring systems. By facilitating forums for reflection and action, we ensure that businesses anticipate and are ready to meet the current, pressing challenges of climate change, the pipeline of talent, and the issues of social inclusion, diversity, and accountability.

Led by CEO Tomás Sercovich, Business in the Community Ireland has one of the strongest board of directors in the country and our Patron is President Michael D. Higgins.

BITCI is supporting Ireland's business sector in the transition to a low carbon economy with the Low Carbon Pledge – the 1st dedicated pledge generated by Irish businesses to set industry standards on sustainability and reduce carbon usage. The Low Carbon Pledge, now in its fourth year, is led by the Low Carbon Sub-group of the BITCI Leaders' Group on Sustainability chaired by Mark Foley CEO Eirgrid and Denis O'Sullivan Chief Operations Officer Gas Networks Ireland. The Pledge is included in the All of Government Climate Action Plan.

A key commitment to the Pledge requires signatories to calculate their scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions and set a science-based target before December 31st, 2024. For global and well-resourced companies this requirement is easily fulfilled but as we see more indigenous and SMEs signing up to the Pledge this has created a demand for carbon accountancy services. BITCI recognises the challenge in calculating an organisation's entire carbon emissions and setting emission reduction/net zero plans through this expression of interest to form a panel or register of Carbon Advisory & Project Support Services from independent contractors.

2 Background

BITCI members come from a diverse range of sectors all with varying resources and experience as it relates to climate change and carbon emission reporting. In recent months we have seen several small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and indigenous members joining our network due to their role as a supplier and the requirement of their customers to capture scope 3 emissions. Our members, those that have signed up to the Low Carbon Pledge, are eager to commence the journey to science-based targets and take urgent climate action but often do not possess the skills/knowledge or resources internally to fulfil this task. Signposting to current carbon consultants has been the solution up until now by BITCI. We now wish to establish a formal register of consultants for our members. With increasing demand, the availability of consultants in this field has been reduced and many of our members have reported that they are unable to attain services in line with their timelines.

In signing up to the Low Carbon Pledge signatories commit to fulfilling the following:

- Record their entire Carbon Footprint, both direct (Scope 1 & 2) and indirect (Scope 3) carbon emissions.
- Reduce carbon emissions that they are directly responsible for (Scope 1 & 2), as well as play their part in reducing emissions across their supply chain (Scope 3).
- Report publicly their individual progress, as well as collectively through the annual BITCI Low Carbon Pledge Report.
- Regularly review their carbon reduction targets (science-based targets) to align to the latest Climate Science.

Recently, BITCI has experienced a surge in demand for more hands-on and technical support as it relates to carbon accounting and setting science-based targets.

During a 6-week period in 2022, we had three peer circle requests (small scale meetings to discuss member issues relating to carbon) on carbon accounting and scope three emissions. With the publication of new standards and guidance for each sector there is an increased demand from our members to address a range of technical and highly specific questions. Feedback from members indicates that there is a gap in this area and therefore an opportunity for BITCI to convene a register of local consultants has opened.

3 Proposed Solution

BITCI will create a register of accessible and credible carbon consultants that can support our members meet the key requirements of our Low Carbon Pledge. This expression of interest process and final register will also act as a first step in due diligence for our members who are interested in contracting carbon consultancy services.

The intent is that BITCI establishes a register of carbon consultants for our members and help ensure companies have the appropriate project specifications to meet the needs of the Low Carbon Pledge.

This registered consultants will have the opportunity to assist in calculating carbon emission data and setting of science-based targets, operating within the timeline of the current Pledge which runs to 2024 and the future pledge from 2025 onwards.

BITCI is a leadership forum, bringing together CEOs and C-suite to develop novel initiatives to transform business and we are a network of practitioners, promoting peer learning and partnership building. Within the Low Carbon Pledge BITCI's role is to oversee the strategic direction and operations of the Pledge, provide knowledge sessions, facilitate learning sessions, and manage the annual survey, report, and event.

At a high level we provide guidance on carbon accounting, SBTi (Science Based Targets Initiative), disclosure and training. We do not calculate an individual member's carbon footprint or submit targets to SBTi.

We envisage that the register of carbon consultancy services will provide but are not limited to the following elements:

- Scope 1, 2 and 3 Carbon calculations
- Data analysis & verification for the setting of science-based targets (SBTi)
- Carbon accountancy training
- Support & advice for the process of setting science-based targets
- Support & advice in formalising a Climate Action Plan/net-zero roadmap to achieve science-based targets
- Support & advice on establishing relevant climate action KPIs
- Support & advice on annual climate-related disclosures and progress tracking for meeting science-based targets, CDP, TCFD, CSRD
- Support & advice on carbon calculating software/platforms
- Support & advice on climate change risk assessments
- Support & advice on climate change adaptation and mitigation

4 Pricing Information

BITCI plans to put in place a register of consultants for the elements above. The service demand is contingency on the member company needs and is as an additional service to their participation in the Low Carbon Pledge.

There will be no monetary value or budget from BITCI for inclusion in this register, and any resulting contract will be 100% paid for directly by the availing member company. BITCI is establishing this register to help our member companies like many state panels/registers.

Upon request from a member BITCI will provide them with the register of consultants and the member company engages in procurement of the consultant they wish to work with, and we will advise on the scope of the consulting work. The final contract is exclusively between the company and selected consultant.

5 Schedule of Convening Register

The current expression of interest will run in three phases. These phases will be conducted in such a manner to maintain the highest ethical standards in procurement matters i.e., to minimise the risk of fraud, to ensure the correct goods or services are purchased, in terms of the correct quality and specification

- a. To achieve best value for money
- b. To reduce the paperwork so that the process is fast enough to meet programme needs
- c. To act fairly towards suppliers
- d. To promote equality, diversity, and sustainability throughout procurement matters.

Phase 1: Request for expression of interest (EOI) will open mid-October 2022 for a 28-day period.

During this time the EOI document will be added to the BITCI website until November 15th, 2022, for the submission of proposals. Please email your expression of interest proposals to agillen@bitc.ie by COB November 15th, 2022. Please include EOI Carbon Consultants in the subject line of your email.

Phase 2: BITCI will review all EOIs received. During this period, BITCI will seek additional information, and clarification and where applicable meet with potential registries. Following this phase, BITCI will select a register of consultants to sit on the final panel.

Phase 3: The panel or register will convene from January 2023 until December 2025.

All applicants must provide evidence through case studies, testimonials, reports etc. to demonstrate that they have successfully provided all the above services in the past and have the capacity to do so in the future. Confirmation of the number of full-time equivalents in this field alongside years of experience will also be required.

The following weighting system will be utilised during the evaluation process:

- Technical expertise & Sustainability Consultants credentials (30%)
- Capacity to deliver: References that they have experience in successfully delivering the advisory and project support services required (30%)
- Finance- Reviewed and compared to BITCI's Sustainable procurement policy (see Appendix 1), alongside rate structures, and a daily rate (20%)
- Local-A weighting for consultancy services with office locations in the Republic of Ireland (20%)

6 Conclusion

In summary, BITCI is seeking to form a register of consultants for the provision of subject matter expertise in the field of carbon accounting consultancy.

Contact details are as follows for any additional information required:

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