

NATION
SWELL

THE GREEN SEAT GUIDE:

Strategies for effective
sustainability leadership

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Contributors to *The Green Seat Guide*

The Green Seat Guide is fundamentally a synthesis of the teachings and guidance shared by a diverse and accomplished group of sustainability executives. NationSwell is in gratitude to the following individuals for the gift of their time, expertise, and wisdom in the development of this report:

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Chapter 2

Organizing your team

With a strategy in hand, creating and deploying a well-rounded sustainability team is the sustainability executive's next most important task. Whether you've inherited a staff or need to build a team from scratch, you should be mindful of balancing your technical needs with your strategic needs. Your team will need to be rigorous, detail-oriented, and versatile, and you will need to build key cross-functional relationships beyond your direct reports.

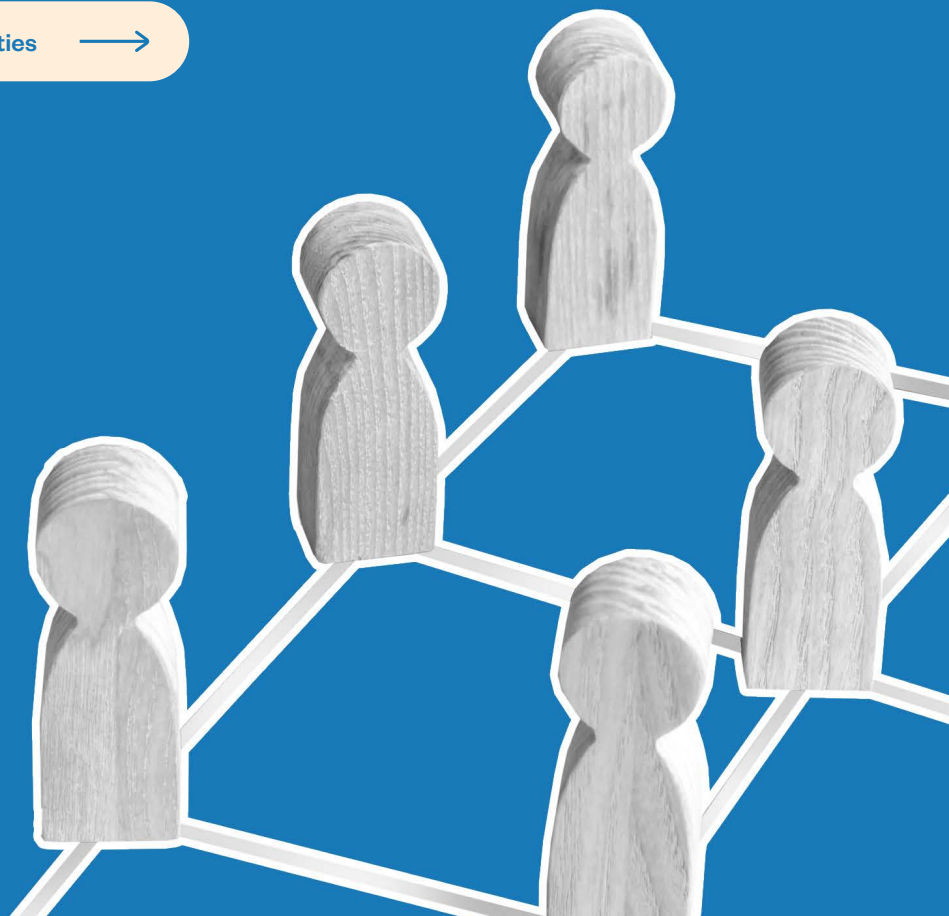
Chapter 2 of *The Green Seat Guide* provides guidance on building a successful sustainability team, drawing on the rich insights of those who have done so before.

[Section 1: Working with consultants](#) →

[Section 2: Designing your core team](#) →

[Section 3: Sourcing and screening the right talent](#) →

[Section 4: Leveraging existing internal capabilities](#) →



Working with consultants

Consultants are a valuable source of bandwidth and expertise in corporate sustainability, particularly before you have a core team. They can help you complete complex, technical analyses or gather data for your strategy. Consultants can also help you conceptualize and operationalize the core pillars of your strategy, based on inputs from a materiality assessment, stakeholder engagement, and market research.

With the right mixture of experience and subject matter expertise, consultants can quickly bring you credibility with other departments who may not be as familiar with you or sustainability. Beyond the early stages of developing your strategy, consultants provide subject matter expertise that is often more flexible than employed staff, freeing up team bandwidth and affording you a wider range of resourcing options as you proceed.

Common roles for sustainability consultants often center around technical processes and deliverables, such as:

Footprint analysis

Calculating your company's footprint is complex and time-consuming; the resources required for an accurate analysis are often beyond that of an internal team, especially at organizations with diverse operations. This analysis will go both very deep and very broad in order to capture the most accurate view of your company's impact, ranging from your supply chain to physical assets and beyond. Because of the importance of specific aspects like the supply chain, you will likely want to employ a full-time expert on your team, but a consultant can help you build a data set for that person to work with.

Materiality assessment

A materiality assessment requires diligent planning, many stakeholders, and often a few months of time to complete. They are designed to systematically identify and prioritize the sustainability issues that are most significant to your organization and its stakeholders; they should be completed early in your tenure, especially if your company has not done one in the recent past, and therefore often necessitate consultant assistance to complete in a timely fashion. Although some leaders are able to execute these assessments without outside help, you should consider your resources and the comfort of your stakeholders when deciding if an in-house or external approach is best for your organization.

Subject matter expertise

There are a wide variety of technical domains that you may require expert knowledge in depending on your industry and businesses needs – anything from water, energy, plastic, and beyond. Often, you will collaborate with other areas of the business on the strategies to address these areas, but those teams may not have the scientific or other relevant technical know-how required to view their areas through the lens of environmental impact. Consultants can provide this know-how as a supplement to your team's expertise, or on an interim basis.

Discover some of the top organizations in the sustainability consulting landscape with rankings from [Sustainability Magazine](#), [Clean Energy Wire](#), and [Consultancy](#).



TOOL B:

Preferred consulting and technology solutions



Designing your core team

While consultants can be useful and may be essential, you will still need your own team to meaningfully advance the work. The number of people you need will vary by company size and ambition but there are several guiding principles that sustainability executives shared for this report.

The central team needs to contain the parts that are absolutely 100% required to do the fundamental work that the sustainability strategy calls for.

LETITIA WEBSTER

Managing Director and Chief Sustainability Officer, Goldman Sachs Asset Management

Guiding principles

Keep your core team small

Over time, sustainability teams have grown – CSOs today have an average of 8 direct reports, up from 4 in 2011 ([Weinreb, 2023](#)). However, compared to the number of people throughout the organization that should account for sustainability in their work, your core team should remain relatively small so that you can further embed sustainability throughout the business and prevent siloing.

Build for scale and adaptability

You want building blocks in place that allow you to evolve and grow along with the organization as it matures its sustainability. This is especially crucial when considering that the field itself is constantly changing – new and more nuanced regulations arrive regularly, new technology or practices that help you meet your goals develop, and stakeholders learn things that change their perceptions of your work. Both the organization and the team need to be agile and adaptable to regulatory requirements, market dynamics, and stakeholder expectations.

You have to think of yourself as an executive of a startup – you need to have a clear vision, a strategy to execute it, and the ability to adapt to unforeseen challenges and opportunities. One day you may be putting on your legal and compliance hat, the next leading operations and supply chain conversations, and another shifting to a marketing and communications mindset. You have to think like the business and have the drive of an entrepreneur inside a larger organization, that's the mindset you have to have.

NATE HURST

former Chief Sustainability Officer at BlackRock, Wells Fargo, and HP

Align your staffing model with your strategy

Some organizations will be primarily focused on compliance, while others might be looking to make sustainability a key driver of business value and risk management.

Still others will be deeply invested in their water use or their sourcing and manufacturing processes. It's important to know what your specific organization and, consequently, your overarching strategy needs to focus on. From there, you will need to tailor your staffing strategies to these overarching needs, whether they are ideological or practical. A deep understanding of these needs will show you what roles your team will need to fill and what roles might be embedded throughout the organization rather than in your direct reporting line.

As you translate your strategy into a staffing model, consider:

- What elements of your strategy can or should be executed by existing personnel? Identify internal dependencies and collaborators.
- What elements of your strategy require specialized or technical expertise? Consider designing roles around that specialization.
- Are there elements of your strategy that require a more general or flexible skill set to execute (e.g., project management, stakeholder engagement)? Consider designing roles around those parameters.

At Colgate-Palmolive, we use a hub and spoke model for sustainability. Our core team sets the strategy, provides guidance and helps shape the roadmaps. We then count on cross-functional subject matter experts and the business units to execute and own the actual work toward our targets. The strategy is important because it has to be built in a way that makes sense for all those expanded teams to execute against.

ANN TRACY
Chief Sustainability Officer, Colgate-Palmolive

Roles and position archetypes to build from

Your staffing needs will vary by industry, geography, and resource availability, but there are several archetypes that sustainability executives report as becoming fundamental to the work.

FUNDAMENTAL ROLES

Compliance + reporting expert

Depending on your company needs, you will need technical experts in carbon accounting, reporting frameworks, disclosure requirements, and impact measurement. With more regulation coming from Europe and the U.S., you will need staff who understand varied jurisdictional reporting frameworks and requirements.

Supply chain expert

Regardless of industry, your sustainability team likely needs on-hand knowledge of procurement, supply chain operations, customer and vendor engagement, product development, and more. A supply chain expert brings a holistic understanding of these areas and will identify opportunities and strategies across the supply chain.

The particular needs of your supply chain strategy should guide you toward the right role profile; for example, if one of your big opportunities is responsible sourcing, your supply chain expert should be strong in that area and able to lead specialized initiatives.

I always have someone who does supplier diversity and understands sustainable procurement because Scope 3 is such a significant part of emissions. It's the bulk of everyone's emissions, so you want to have someone who has a really good supply chain background. There are those gems of people who study supply chain or have a strong supply chain background who have started to build their expertise in sustainability, and they are great people to have on your team if you can find them.

BRIDGETTE MCADOO

Chief Sustainability Officer, Genesys

Data analyst

Just like you need good data, you need at least one good data analyst. Information is the foundation of your sustainability strategy, and you should have someone on your team (or access to one elsewhere in the organization) to make sure your data is being collected well and used effectively.

Sustainability data is required for more than compliance reporting; it provides the basis for identifying opportunities, setting targets, tracking progress, and iterating continuously. An ideal employee will have the technical know-how to handle all your data and the strategic acumen to put it to work for you.

It is all about the data. We ingest data from all of our providers, our waste haulers, the bills literally that we get on a day in and day out basis...it's a tremendous exercise in data acquisition and data management and analytics, so I have a team that's focused on that.

KELLY WILLIAMS

Vice President, Environmental Sustainability, Cox Enterprises

Project manager

With the number of initiatives, collaborators, and vendors that a sustainability team interacts with on a daily basis, a project manager plays a critical role facilitating programs, ensuring effective coordination, aligning with business objectives, and more.

Even the most ambitious and enthusiastic organizations will need change management expertise as they embed sustainability throughout the business. A project manager is an ideal person to bring generalist change management skills, as they will be involved in so much of the day-to-day work that underlies larger shifts in organizational culture and behavior.

Technical experts

(water, waste, energy, etc.)

Your organization will invariably have many technical challenges to tackle in its sustainability journey – energy efficiency, waste management, water stewardship, and the like. Depending on your industry and organization, some of these areas will be far more important and intensive to address than others. For those areas especially, relevant technical expertise on your team will be essential.

An ideal technical expert will be deeply knowledgeable in their field but also able to tie the work back to the overall strategy clearly and effectively.

From a strategy perspective, someone needs to be able to fly at that 30 thousand foot level. You have to be able to communicate with the board and communicate with the senior executives across the business, You also need to be able to bungee deep. There is a delicate balance when somebody's not eating and breathing that every day – another sweet spot people need to master is how to provide enough context without overwhelming someone in technical acumen.

CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY LEADER

ADDITIONAL ROLES TO CONSIDER

While less common than the roles described above, the archetypes below are broadly relevant and come with strong endorsements from the sustainability executives who have brought them onto their team.

ESG Controller

Called the “hottest new job in sustainability” by [GreenBiz in March 2024](#), many companies are ramping up hiring an ESG Controller to meet increased legal disclosures coming from California, the SEC, Europe, and beyond. An ESG Controller is “a professional who oversees and manages the integration of ESG issues into an organization’s operations and financial reporting protocols” ([Reuters](#)).



TOOL H:

[ESG controller job descriptions](#)



Technology innovation specialist

At Cox Enterprises, like many other companies, technology is instrumental in achieving the organization’s sustainability goals. With business lines in automotive, communications, farms, and more, Cox’s portfolio requires a wide range of solutions to meet its collective sustainability commitments. For that reason, Cox employs a dedicated specialist to oversee climate technology experimentation and innovation, with the goal of scaling some of those solutions across the enterprise.

One of Cox’s flagship sustainability strategies is investing in [CleanTech](#), which builds “partnerships with companies that are significantly reducing waste and producing renewable resources for the low-carbon and circular economy.” Through this strategic area, Cox helps develop technologies and practices that benefit both its own controlled environment [agricultural business](#) and the sustainability sector as a whole.

Internal engagement specialist

Reformation uses a sustainability scorecard to keep its ~60 directors on track with sustainability goals. To manage those relationships, the CSO hired an internal engagement specialist, who meets with these directors on a biannual basis to set goals, discover new opportunities to collaborate, and help continue their knowledge and capacity-building.

It's been incredibly effective, and we have a very high level of engagement. It's been a really cool evolution and it's nice to think about not having to scale your sustainability function linearly with the company, but instead think about how can we be those champions of engagement instead, coming in with a very clear framework, clear commitments, which we can operationalize across the organization, and then put that back onto our leaders across the organization.

KATHLEEN TALBOT

Chief Sustainability Officer, Reformation



TOOL I:

Reformation's Director, Sustainability Engagement job description



Sourcing and screening the right talent

Given the rapidly evolving nature of the sustainability field, it can be challenging for sustainability leaders to know the specific hard and soft skills to look for in new team members, beyond those that are clearly called for by the particulars of a role. There are also far more green jobs available than there are skilled workers currently able to fill them – per the 2023 LinkedIn Global Green Skills report, the five-year annualized growth rate between 2018 and 2023 for green talent grew by 5.4% per year over that period, while the share of jobs requiring at least one green skill grew by 9.2%. ([LinkedIn, 2023](#)). With this disparity, employers need to not only be mindful of the roles they need to fill, but how they appeal to those with the skills required to deliver results.

Although there is no one-size-fits-all solution, there are key characteristics to prioritize when hiring sustainability employees.

Sustainability experience

Many professionals entering sustainability roles, including new CSOs, are new to the field but can still be effective. However, individuals with practical sustainability experience can make a huge difference to your team. Whether they've come from an sustainability degree program, NGO, or from another business, they will know many of the technical aspects of the work and be able to more quickly get up to speed with your strategy.

If you don't know what good looks like, it's very hard to build into it. A leader who has seen good is really important, even if they have to backtrack into building the fundamentals. They can come in with an understanding of how you move from A to B to C to D.

LETITIA WEBSTER

Managing Director and Chief Sustainability Officer, Goldman Sachs Asset Management

Diversity and inclusion

SUSTAINABILITY IS A FIELD WITH STARK CHALLENGES REGARDING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION:

- Women comprise 58% of all CSOs, up from 28% in 2011. Despite that positive trend line, other trends are lagging – 80% of all CSOs self-identify as white ([Weinreb, 2023](#)).
- More than 80% of survey respondents to GreenBiz's State of the Profession 2022 survey, which examines the entire sustainability industry, are white ([GreenBiz, 2022](#)).
- The broader green talent pool, made up of workers with at least one green skill or one green job experience, is 66% male. The green skills gender gap has grown 25% over the past 7 years, from 4.9 percentage points in 2016 to 6.1 percentage points today ([LinkedIn, 2023](#)).

AT THE SAME TIME, WE KNOW THAT DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION EFFORTS ARE INCREASINGLY VITAL TO WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SUCCESS:

- Diverse teams are key to innovation, decision-making, employee trust, and other elements that create successful organizations ([Great Place to Work, 2023](#)).
- When their employer cares about their overall wellbeing, employees report being 3X more likely to be engaged at work – and 69% less likely to actively search for a new job ([Gallup, 2023](#)).
- Companies with representation of women exceeding 30% are significantly more likely to financially outperform those with 30% or fewer; similarly, companies in the top quartile for ethnic diversity show an average 27% financial advantage over others ([McKinsey, 2023](#)).

To create effective, well-rounded teams and combat the inequities within the sustainability field, diversity and inclusion should be at the top of leaders' minds and embedded within hiring practices.

Transferable skills

There are many professional domains that parallel the needs of sustainability. For example, the analytical rigor and compliance required from the financial sector may translate well to hires for your ESG-specific compliance purposes. Before you hire, be sure to understand the skills you need so you can accurately assess someone's transferable skills. Per 2023 LinkedIn analysis, STEM skills were at the top of the transferable skills list, as many green jobs are grounded in math and science. Other top skills include digital skills, because of companies' use of technology in developing solutions to achieve their objectives, and public administration, as employers engage in more elaborate compliance and policy activities ([LinkedIn, 2023](#)).



There aren't enough humans with 20 plus years of work experience to be in sustainability and to run this next generation of sustainability in its entirety, so there's going to be some people like me who find themselves in sustainability after dedicating 15, almost 20 years to a totally separate discipline like finance. It's great for them to have the technical skills, but they need to kind of know what they don't know and be comfortable asking for help.

CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY LEADER



Soft skills

Clear, mindful communication: It's important that even the most technically skilled hires are able to translate their work to an audience who will not be as knowledgeable about the area. If you are successful at embedding sustainability throughout the organization and achieving buy-in, you and your team will be showcasing your work to the C-suite, board, and other employees often. Team members must be able to speak clearly to every level of understanding.

Rigor: Regardless of position, most sustainability professionals will be responsible for collecting and organizing significant amounts of data from many different sources. Everyone on your team should have strong attention to detail and offer rigor and organization.

You have to be so precise. You could be pulled in so many different directions on any given day, but that's where it's very critical to sit down and say, okay, here are our goals. This is how you need to focus, You've got to have someone in this role who's extremely organized. This person's got to be really rigorous and think in a real methodical way to map things out.

GINA TESLA

Vice President, ESG, Coupa

Urgency: Sustainability does not run on long life cycles – many organizations have goals for 2030 or sooner in response to the need to make rapid progress against climate change. Your team members should fully understand (and subsequently act) the urgency to meet the increasing demands on the sustainability field.

Curiosity: Sustainability is a vast field. Although you and your staff may have immense knowledge, everyone should be comfortable asking for help and admitting what they don't know.

I call it the proclivity to act with urgency: it's an urgent need that we complete work quickly to get our organization on the pathway to actually deliver this.

ERIN MEEZAN

Chief Sustainability Officer, JLL

I think it's okay to say, I don't know, 'I don't have the answers, but we're scanning, we are curious, we are looking around the world, we are talking to everybody.'

MOLLY FOGARTY

Head of Corporate Affairs and Sustainability, Nestlé North America

Pragmatism: Historically, corporate sustainability work has attracted those with a personal passion for the environment. That dedication can be helpful for bringing others into the fold and turning sustainability into a true movement. But while passion can be motivating, it's also important to screen for those who understand the limitations of business. Inevitably, some initiatives and ambitions will be curbed by the business's resources, bottom line, and strategy. It is essential for leaders to surround themselves with a team that can operate effectively within this context.



You need to understand fundamentally how the business makes money, because that will drive forward or stall every sustainability program. You also need to understand the company culture, mission, and values. So much of the durability of a sustainability program is tied to understanding how the company makes money.

KATHERINE NEEBE

Chief Sustainability Officer, Duke Energy



Where to find talent

In a field with many new roles and evolving skill sets, it can be challenging to find talent that can dive right into the work. Sustainability leaders should consider the following sources when building their teams:



Internal talent

There may be individuals with untapped interest in sustainability hiding within your organization, who bring the added benefit of knowing the organization's culture and strategy. Leaders may find it valuable to hire someone from a relevant internal department (finance, operations, strategy, procurement, etc.) who can quickly dive into applying sustainability to their familiar practices.

Why this is an important source of sustainability talent:

- Brings a knowledge of company operations and culture
- Can help speed along integrating sustainability within the company culture and building cross-functional relationships

Risks and flags associated with this talent source:

- Potential lack of specialized sustainability expertise
- May be too entrenched in existing company culture and practices, lacking fresh perspectives



I would also look internally because the first year is about navigating the culture and understanding the business. You want to have at least one person on your initial core team that really has relationships internally if you're joining the company fresh; someone who knows how to get things accomplished inside the enterprise.

NATE HURST

former Chief Sustainability Officer at BlackRock, Wells Fargo, and HP



Your peer network

Even new sustainability executives often have established peer networks, or access to new communities of like-minded leaders. These peer networks can be a very valuable way to find sustainability talent; other leaders can refer seasoned professionals who know what success looks like.

Why this is an important source of sustainability talent:

- Peer referrals can provide trusted insights into a candidate's skills, experience, and cultural fit
- Help you foster an environment in which team members are genuinely invested in each other's success

Risks and flags associated with this talent source:

- Potential for a limited or insular talent pool
- Candidates may lack diverse perspectives or experiences outside the network



Business schools and NGOs

There are many business degree programs and NGOs focused on sustainability; either environment will produce people with technical know-how that can be translated to your business.

Why this is an important source of sustainability talent:

- Access to candidates with specialized sustainability expertise and knowledge
- Opportunity to bring fresh perspectives and innovative ideas from outside the corporate world

Risks and flags associated with this talent source:

- Potential lack of direct corporate or industry experience
- Cultural differences between NGOs/academia and corporate environments



Professional recruiters

Search firms are often only necessary for executive level roles. Should you need very specific or high-level expertise, consider using a third party search firm. For mid- and lower-level staffing needs, search firms may not be resource efficient.

Why this is an important source of sustainability talent:

- Access to a wide talent pool and specialized expertise
- Efficiently identify and vet qualified candidates

Risks and flags associated with this talent source:

- Can be expensive, especially for non-executive roles
- Potential lack of deep understanding of your company's specific needs



The past few summers, we have had a student fellow from the Environmental Defense Fund – EDF does a good job of providing great talent across industries for the summer. I do think there are opportunities, especially if you're newer in this space, to work with the EDFs or the WWFs and bring young talent and teach them how to apply sustainability to business.

BRIDGETTE MCADOO

Chief Sustainability Officer, Genesys



As a growing field, there are a number of search firms dedicated specifically to ESG and sustainability. [Green Jobs Network](#) publishes a global list, including: [Climate People](#), [Waldron](#), and [Weinreb Group](#).

Leveraging existing internal capabilities

A successful sustainability strategy will involve all levels of the business – you will have a core team, but you will also need key touch points throughout the organization so that your strategy is fully embedded. You will need to engage cross-functionally with intention and purpose so that collaborators can see the important role they have in sustainability work.



Stakeholder engagement isn't about getting people to be on your team, it's about getting them to allow you to be on their team.

ERIN CRAIG

Chief Sustainability Officer, Customer Solutions and Innovation Lead, 3Degrees



Sustainability leaders can adopt two approaches to leveraging existing internal capabilities beyond their own core team:

1. Plug into specific functional areas for targeted needs

Some of your sustainability activities will, on the surface, look similar to activities that occur elsewhere in the organization: communications + marketing and compliance being two oft-cited examples.

Sustainability executives recommend thinking about two groupings of functions that may be most appropriate for collaboration rather than adding to your core sustainability team:

FUNCTIONS THAT ARE WELL-ESTABLISHED ELSEWHERE IN THE ORGANIZATION

Areas like policy and comms and marketing have established strategies, expertise, and relationships already in place. While sustainability specialists may seem appealing, it's important that roles are not duplicated elsewhere in the company in order to preserve the long-term integrity of the team, embed sustainability further throughout the organization, and use resources efficiently.

FUNCTIONS THAT BECOME BETTER CANDIDATES FOR COLLABORATION AND CENTRALIZATION AS THE ORGANIZATION'S ESG MATURITY AND SOPHISTICATION DEVELOPS

The need for these roles is highly dependent on your organization's existing maturity and context. For example, as legal and compliance teams become more familiar with ESG disclosure requirements, it may make sense for sustainability reporting to fall under their purview so that all activities are consolidated.

2. Create cross-functional teams to solve larger problems

While some needs can be met by targeted collaboration and resource sharing across teams, others require a broader arrangement of collaborators. For leaders looking to address more complex and embedded challenges, formal or ad hoc working groups may help drive toward a solution.

There are many different ways a sustainability leader could approach such a working group. Two strong examples are below:

Example 1: Standing sustainability council

Good for: Bringing together key internal stakeholders, champions, and accountable parties to identify challenges, propose solutions, and engage their spheres of influence in the organization.

A sustainability council should:



MEET REGULARLY

It can be difficult to carve out time for work that is often seen as “extra,” but council participants should commit to the associated activities. At minimum, quarterly check-ins can provide meaningful touchpoints for participants.



KEEP PEOPLE EXCITED

Participants have a lot on their plates with their regular activities, so the added work will need to be clear and purposeful to keep them engaged and motivated.



PUT BUSINESS NEEDS AT THE FOREFRONT

While subcommittees will not make sense for every company, it can be helpful to further divide sustainability council activities into subcategories that are especially relevant to the business.

Example 2: Ad hoc working groups

Good for: When there's a specific problem or opportunity to address, one which requires cross-functional inputs to solve most effectively and efficiently

JLL's ESG Data Center of Excellence

At JLL, CSO Erin Meezan helped create an ESG Data Center of Excellence (CoE). The goal of the CoE is to understand and improve ESG data quality throughout the organization. The CoE meets regularly to bring key functional areas together, including legal, ethics/compliance, health/safety, and members of JLL's consulting team.

The CoE is designed to approach its work in phases:



EDUCATION

The CoE seeks to develop a baseline understanding of where ESG data needs are headed, what the big trends are, and what goals JLL has for its future.



CURRENT STATE ASSESSMENT

The CoE conducts a thorough internal categorization and accounting of JLL's existing ESG data, including identifying where it currently resides.



DATA QUALITY ASSESSMENT

The CoE examines the data to see where there can be improvements. JLL used an outside firm to get a more unbiased read on the situation. Their goal is to learn what's in good shape and where they need to start collecting more robust data in order to advance their strategy.



ROADMAP TO THE FUTURE

The CoE considers all of its learnings to identify what is needed to get the results that JLL wants to see.



ALIGNMENT AND AGREEMENT

The CoE pursues alignment and agreement on its roadmap to ensure that all relevant stakeholders are on the same page.



DETERMINATION OF FUTURE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The CoE hardwires roles, responsibilities, and accountability mechanisms that will live within relevant departments. These may include departments beyond those represented in the CoE.

Part 3: Regulatory and legal context

Objective: Map out the regulatory and legal frameworks impacting the company's sustainability efforts.

- Regulatory inventory:** List of relevant local, national, and international environmental regulations and policies.
- Compliance status and risks:** Assessment of the organization's compliance with these regulations and identification of potential legal and regulatory risks.

Part 4: Societal and environmental trends

Objective: Identify broader societal and environmental trends that could impact the organization.

- Trend analysis:** Overview of global and local environmental trends, societal attitudes towards sustainability, and emerging issues.
- Impact assessment:** Evaluation of how these trends could affect the organization and its sustainability strategy.



TOOL B:

Preferred consulting and technology solutions

Report contributors have valuable insights to share about the consultants and vendors they use to make their sustainability strategies come to life. In the list below, you'll find recommendations from some of those leaders. This list may grow and evolve as additional chapters of *The Green Seat Guide* are published.

*more than one recommendation

<p>Carbon accounting and offsets:</p>	<p>BEF - nonprofit offset provider, with solutions for water, carbon, and energy</p> <p>Change Climate - an independent climate action label; recommended for carbon neutral certification and as a carbon accounting tool</p>
<p>Data management and other technology solutions:</p>	<p>Coupa - provides tools to support sustainable spend management (e.g. directing spend to diverse suppliers, mitigating ESG risk, supply chain efficiency)</p> <p>Watershed* - platform for audit-ready sustainability data, including a climate database for granular emissions measurement, software tools for sustainability reporting and supply chain engagement, and a Marketplace with carbon removal and clean power projects</p>
<p>Materiality assessments:</p>	<p>BSR* - sustainable business network and consultancy that enable business transformation to create long-term value for business and society</p> <p>EY - global management consulting firm that helps businesses create value for sustainability as well as helping sustainability create value for business</p> <p>Sustainerv - global management consulting firm that works with companies to integrate sustainability considerations into long-term strategies, everyday operations, and communications</p>
<p>Sustainability reports:</p>	<p>Curran & Conners - design firm specializing in corporate reports, digital experiences and branding services</p>
<p>General sustainability strategy and consulting:</p>	<p>3Degrees - certified B-Corp that helps organizations around the world achieve renewable energy and decarbonization goals</p> <p>Anthesis - organization that guides businesses toward decarbonized and more sustainable futures; recommended for circularity strategy and bespoke carbon accounting verification</p> <p>ClimateWorks - a global platform for philanthropy to innovate and accelerate climate solutions that scale; recommended for purchase of credible renewable energy credits and climate transition strategies</p> <p>Foresight Management - organization that does a wide variety of sustainability consulting, GHG data collection, management and reporting for buildings, products, and organizations</p> <p>South Pole - organization that develops and implements comprehensive emission reduction projects and strategies that turn climate action into long-term business opportunities for companies, governments and organizations around the world</p>



TOOL H:

ESG Controller job descriptions

Below are three anonymized ESG Controller job descriptions from across industries.

Example 1: Retail industry

Responsibilities:

- Lead ESG reporting strategy, ensuring alignment with industry standards and best practices
- Oversee and manage the integration of ESG reporting into operations and financial reporting protocols
- Design, implement, and monitor a risk-based internal control framework over the ESG data collection and reporting processes
- Develops ESG reporting policies and governance
- Performs risk assessments for the design of internal control and governance
- Collaborate with cross-functional teams to integrate and optimize processes, policies and operations for ESG reporting
- Clear communication across a variety of functional areas and leadership levels
- Stay abreast of regulatory developments and industry trends related to ESG reporting, ensuring compliance, leadership and coordination across the company
- Manage a small team in implementation and execution of ESG reporting strategy
- Work with Director, ESG to ensure strategic alignment across wide range of environmental, social and governance strategies, projects and initiatives

Required skills and competencies:

- Bachelor's degree in accounting, finance, sustainability, or related field
- Proven knowledge and experience in ESG reporting
- Strong understanding of financial reporting principles and practices, with experience in integrating ESG metrics into financial disclosures
- Excellent analytical and problem-solving skills, with the ability to interpret complex data, provide actionable insights and communicate insights effectively across wide range of stakeholders
- Demonstrated project management skills, including ability to lead cross-functional initiatives and drive process improvements

Example 2: Banking industry

Responsibilities:

- Responsible for production and governance of ESG regulatory reporting disclosures which will encompass the following activities:
- Work with ESG and local Controllers, Sustainability & ESG, Risk and other stakeholders to create and implement disclosure controls and procedures for ESG disclosures
- Ensure data sources used in reporting ESG disclosures are strategic and have appropriate ownership aligned to organization data governance model, develop business requirements and partner with technologies to develop reporting solutions
- Subject matter expert on ESG disclosures, keeping current on evolving disclosure trends in the industry, connecting with peer company network and advising and evaluating impact of emerging regulation
- Ensure that ESG disclosure requirements (including those expected from the SEC and international regulators) are properly vetted and implemented in a well-controlled process from an end-to-end perspective
- Lead development of ESG reporting guidelines, templates and processes
- Coordinating internal audits or other external reviews of the information within Citi's ESG disclosures
- Support senior leaders in the Businesses and Finance in their understanding of ESG disclosures and any related implications
- Assist the ESG Disclosure Committee and Audit Committee in their oversight responsibilities for ESG disclosures

Required skills and competencies:

- Bachelor's degree in Finance, Accounting, Business or related field. Masters and/or CPA preferred.
- 10+ years of relevant experience, within the financial services industry or Big 4 highly preferred
- Good command of spoken and written English
- Knowledgeable in ESG related disclosures and industry trends, and willing to develop expertise
- Knowledge of regulatory reporting
- In-depth knowledge of banking products / systems highly preferred
- Requires strong communication skills and comprehensive understanding of multiple areas within the finance function and how they interact in order to achieve the objectives of the function
- Demonstrated ability to manage competing priorities in a complex and dynamic environment
- Strong project management skills with experience in driving change at scale in global organizations
- Self-motivated with ability to make decisions in absence of detailed instructions
- Strong Microsoft Office skills

Example 3: Technology industry

Responsibilities:

- Responsible for compiling consistent, comparable, and reliable Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) disclosures required by governing bodies
- Serve as an advisor and liaison between Controllershship, Sustainability, Legal, Investor Relations and various other business functions to provide leadership and guidance to advance the Company's ESG strategy while delivering timely and accurate reporting
- Build, train, and manage a team to design and compile ESG disclosures
- Maintain broad understanding of ESG reporting landscape, working with Legal, including various reporting frameworks and standards and disclosure legislation, and potentially influence ESG reporting trends by engaging in external industry / peer company forums
- Develop and manage a clear project plan and organizational roadmap for new ESG reporting requirements, identify gaps and drive accountability; communicate status to all key stakeholders
- Lead ESG materiality assessment and scoping
- Establish standardized policies and procedures, developing a top-down approach, for ESG reporting to ensure consistency of information across various jurisdictions, such as at the subsidiary reporting level
- Design and implement controls throughout the ESG reporting process, working with the Financial Compliance Group on ESG control framework and governance
- Ensure audit-readiness of ESG data, including sufficient documentation of completeness and accuracy, collaborating with internal and external auditors
- Coordinate external reviews and assurance engagements of the ESG disclosures
- Design and implement a framework for evaluation of changes in information
- Prepare and present training to business partners, such as training the Sustainability group on control requirements and audit standards

Required skills and competencies:

- Bachelor's Degree in Business, Accounting/Finance, or related field AND 9+ years accounting or finance experience AND 4+ years experience managing direct reports OR Master's Degree in Business, Accounting/Finance, or related field AND 8+ years accounting or finance experience AND 3+ years managing direct reports.

Additional or preferred qualifications:

- Bachelor's Degree in Business, Accounting/Finance, or related field AND 12+ years of accounting or finance experience AND 5+ years experience managing direct reports
- OR Master's Degree in Business, Accounting/Finance, or related field AND 11+ years accounting or finance experience AND 4+ years experience managing direct reports.
- Professional accounting certification such as Certified Public Accountant (CPA) or equivalent.
- Experience working in a multinational environment under different reporting requirements
- Project management skills
- Proven ability to effectively manage and develop people and build a high performing team
- Ability to effectively identify and scope issues, apply the relevant knowledge base and make decisions with conviction and/or escalate as needed
- Business partnering and cross-group collaboration skills; ability to steward large groups of diverse stakeholders, gather different points of view, and create recommended approaches, influencing across multiple functions in a complex organization
- Experience with internal control and process design and implementation
- ESG reporting and metrics expertise and experience preferred
- Experience executing strategic processes and initiatives within a fast-paced, deadline-oriented, and complex environment
- Experience in software, technology industry a plus



TOOL I:

Reformation’s Director, Sustainability Engagement job description

Job Title: Director, Sustainability Engagement | **Reports To:** Chief Sustainability Officer

Main functions & responsibilities:

- Own end-to-end strategy for the Sustainability Scorecard process and sustainability-focused continuous improvement efforts.
- Deliver and continue to optimize sustainability-related internal training and communications
- Develop and maintain sustainability-related purchasing policies, practices, and reporting including environmentally preferred and diversity standards
- Drive energy efficiency and transportation management programs for direct facilities and suppliers aligned with the Climate Positive roadmap
- Own sustainable operations manuals, training, and capacity building for Facilities and Retail field teams
- Drive cross-functional internal engagement (like Transportation Taskforce, Green Stores) to ensure we can deliver on roadmaps / progress in each scoped area

Skill requirements:

- BA or Master’s ideally with focus in environmental studies/engineering, or sustainability
- Minimum 5 years working in sustainability or related field
- LEED GA or equivalent a plus
- Strong project management, organizational, and time management skills, along with ability to manage multiple tasks and follow through on deadlines/projects simultaneously
- Self-motivation and self-starter skills, proactive

Who you are:

- Data-driven, but also careful to avoid analysis paralysis; realize that purpose of work is to help make better decisions that have an impact
- Strong problem solver with excellent organizational skills and ability to multitask in a fast-paced environment
- An excellent communicator, and someone who can make the complex simple for the non-expert, and engage a diverse group of stakeholders
- A bridge builder - someone who is passionate about bringing sustainability solutions to mass market, and engaging everyone along the way

Thank you for engaging with this report.

NationSwell welcomes input on this research and invites you to reach out with questions, feedback, and suggestions for how we can further support your work.

Please feel free to email us at

Insights@nationswell.com.



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