REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

The Cradle to Cradle Products Innovation Institute (C2CPII) is an international non-profit organization dedicated to powering innovation for the circular economy through products that have a positive impact on people and the planet. Through the Cradle to Cradle Certified™ Products Program, C2CPII sets the world’s most advanced, science-based standard for transforming the safety, health, circularity and sustainability of products across major industry sectors. Unlike most product certifications, which focus on a singular measure of sustainability, Cradle to Cradle Certified™ is a holistic solution for assessing, optimizing and verifying all aspects of product design and manufacturing by evaluating products across five categories: Material Health, Product Circularity, Renewable Energy & Climate, Water Stewardship and Social Fairness.

C2CPII evaluates products for certification in partnership with a global network of independent Assessment Bodies. On behalf of C2CPII, Cradle to Cradle Certified Assessment Bodies provide guidance to companies working to achieve product certification and assess products to determine conformance with Cradle to Cradle Certified Product Standard requirements.

C2CPII is seeking organizations to join the Cradle to Cradle Certified Assessment Body network and invites companies worldwide to submit qualifications in support of becoming a:

1. Cradle to Cradle Certified Assessment Body, and/or
2. Cradle to Cradle Certified Material Health Assessment Body

This Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process is applicable to organizations wishing to become one or both of the Assessment Body types listed above, and is intended to identify organizations meeting the required qualifications. Candidate organizations must demonstrate an ability to execute their services as a Cradle to Cradle Certified Assessment Body in alignment with C2CPII’s guiding principles of quality and scientific rigor, and incentivize change to drive innovation, transform markets, and create a lasting positive impact via application of the Cradle to Cradle Certified framework.
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Summary of Services Required

At all points in the certification process, Cradle to Cradle Certified Assessment Bodies work on behalf of and in partnership with C2CPII to fulfill the role of third-party verifier of products applying for Cradle to Cradle certification.

Organizations may apply to become one or both of the Assessment Body types listed below:

1. Cradle to Cradle Certified Assessment Body
2. Cradle to Cradle Certified Material Health Assessment Body

Cradle to Cradle Certified Assessment Body Services

Cradle to Cradle Certified Assessment Bodies provide the following services for companies intending to achieve product certification:

- Administrative and technical guidance to support certification application and recertification based on extensive knowledge of the Cradle to Cradle Certified standard requirements and methodologies, Cradle to Cradle principles, and C2CPII policies and procedures
- Collection of information necessary to determine an applicant product’s compliance with Cradle to Cradle Certified standard requirements, including information from material suppliers
- Assessment of applicant products and manufacturing processes, as well as applicant company policies and procedures, to determine conformance with Cradle to Cradle Certified Product Standard requirements, in accordance with C2CPII policies and the principles of ISO/IEC 17065 and ISO/IEC 17021-1. *(Note: Assignment of Cradle to Cradle Certified Material Health ratings to chemicals and materials in applicant products must be conducted by authorized Cradle to Cradle Certified Material Health Assessment Bodies; see below for more information)*
- Manufacturing facility site visit(s) to verify product conformance with Cradle to Cradle Certified Product Standard requirements in accordance with C2CPII policies and procedures
- Submission of a summary of the product assessment and any other information necessary to determine standard compliance to C2CPII for audit and certification issuance

Cradle to Cradle Certified Assessment Bodies may or may not also be authorized to provide Cradle to Cradle Certified material health assessment services. Cradle to Cradle Certified Assessment Bodies which are not authorized to provide material health assessment services
must partner with one or more Cradle to Cradle Certified Material Health Assessment Bodies to provide these services for their clients. While C2CPII will facilitate introductions between entities, partnership development will be at the cost and discretion of Cradle to Cradle Certified Assessment Bodies.

**Cradle to Cradle Certified Material Health Assessment Body Services**

On behalf of C2CPII, Cradle to Cradle Certified Material Health Assessment Bodies provide the following services for companies intending to achieve product certification:

- Engage with certification applicant companies and their material suppliers (or work in partnership with a Cradle to Cradle Certified Assessment Body) to collect product and material formulation information
- Assign Cradle to Cradle Certified Material Health ratings to chemicals and materials in certification applicant products following the [Cradle to Cradle Certified Material Health methodologies](https://www.cradelenet.org/certification/cradle-to-cradle-certified-material-health/)

A company authorized to provide Cradle to Cradle Certified Material Health Assessment Body services may or may not also be a Cradle to Cradle Certified Assessment Body. Cradle to Cradle Certified Material Health Assessment Bodies must partner with Cradle to Cradle Certified Assessment Bodies to provide their material health assessment services (unless they are also a Cradle to Cradle Certified Assessment Body). While C2CPII will facilitate introductions between entities, partnership development will be at the cost and discretion of Cradle to Cradle Certified Assessment Bodies.

The C2CPII website contains additional information on:
- the [Cradle to Cradle Certified Products Program](https://www.cradelenet.org/products/)
- the certification process, and
- the current [Cradle to Cradle Certified Assessment Body network](https://www.cradelenet.org/certification/cradle-to-cradle-certified-assessment-bodies/).
Eligibility Criteria

Organization – Quality Assurance Requirements

Organizations applying to become a Cradle to Cradle Certified Assessment Body or Cradle to Cradle Certified Material Health Assessment Body must:

- Be a legal entity, or a defined part of a legal entity, such that the legal entity can be held legally responsible for all its assessment activities.
- Be established as a legally registered organization for a minimum of three years with adequate mechanisms for addressing financial and liability issues.
- Enter into legally enforceable agreements with clients engaging in Cradle to Cradle Certified assessment services.
- Have appropriate general liability and errors and omissions insurance to cover a minimum of US$1 million per occurrence (US$3 million in the aggregate). This insurance must cover third-party liability associated with conducting assessments and site visits of product manufacturing facilities by staff members or contractors engaged in product assessments.
- Have policies and procedures in place for ensuring (a) impartiality and non-discriminatory conditions when conducting assessments; (b) confidentiality and the security of confidential information; (c) quality, accuracy, and consistent application of assessment services; and, (d) best practice project management.
- Maintain a document management system and corresponding policies or work instructions to reliably organize, store, and access assessment information while ensuring the confidentiality and the security of confidential information.
- Have a reputation for high quality and performance that can be verified externally.
- Have a client relationship management system in place and established mechanisms to grow and develop the organization’s client base.
Organization – Technical Competency Requirements

Organizations applying to become a Cradle to Cradle Certified Assessment Body must:

- Maintain a minimum of three qualified employees that are responsible for performing assessments for the Cradle to Cradle Certified Products Program and ensuring the quality, validity, and completeness of assessments.
  - At least three of these employees must have experience working with product manufacturers and material suppliers to collect and evaluate chemical ingredient information.
  - At least one of these employees must have expertise in conducting manufacturing facility site visits to verify conformance to sustainability standards and be responsible for conducting Cradle to Cradle Certified site visits.
  - These employees must have combined demonstrated experience and expertise in evaluating products and manufacturing processes for conformance with requirements in all of the Cradle to Cradle categories: Material Health, Product Circularity, Renewable Energy & Climate, Water Stewardship, and Social Fairness.
  - All employees performing Cradle to Cradle Certified assessments and conducting manufacturing facility site visits must attend an in-person, C2CPII assessor training prior to initiating any assessment work or site visits.
  - Have a commitment to and mechanism in place for staying up-to-date with scientific/technical advancements and best practices related to performing assessments to determine compliance with the Cradle to Cradle Certified standard requirements.

Organizations applying to become a Cradle to Cradle Certified Material Health Assessment Body must:

- Maintain a minimum of three qualified employees that are responsible for performing chemical hazard and risk assessments for the Cradle to Cradle Certified Products Program and ensuring the quality, validity, and completeness of assessments.
  - At least three of these employees must have experience working with product manufacturers and material suppliers to collect and evaluate chemical formulation information.
  - All employees performing Cradle to Cradle Certified assessments and conducting manufacturing facility site visits must attend an in-person, C2CPII assessor training prior to initiating any assessment work or site visits.
Have routine access to relevant scientific journals and other data sources needed to inform chemical hazard and exposure assessments.

Have a commitment to and mechanism in place for staying up-to-date with scientific advancements and best practices related to performing chemical hazard and risk assessments.

Employee – Technical Competency Requirements

Employees conducting assessments on behalf of a Cradle to Cradle Certified Assessment Body must have:

- A relevant academic qualification
  - A degree from an accredited college or university equivalent to a Bachelor of Science or Bachelor of Arts in physical, biological, or environmental sciences, engineering, or other relevant quantitative field, or
  - An advanced degree from an accredited college or university in physical, biological, or environmental sciences, engineering, or other quantitative field relevant to conducting assessments in one or more of the main Cradle to Cradle Certified focus areas (Material Health, Product Circularity, Water Stewardship, Renewable Energy & Climate, and Social Fairness), or any other field deemed relevant.

- At least five years of relevant professional experience, or three years of relevant professional experience with an advanced degree

- Experience in project management and/or certification auditing or assessment, and experience or training in working with confidential business information.

- Employees conducting manufacturing facility site visits must have at least five years of relevant professional experience in product manufacturing processes or have successfully completed a relevant manufacturing facility auditor training course. (Note: For facilities in high-risk locations, manufacturing facility site visits to verify compliance with Cradle to Cradle Certified Social Fairness requirements must be conducted by a qualified third-party social auditor without a conflict of interest in the form of any other paid services being delivered to the applicant. Where necessary, third-party Social Fairness audit functions may be outsourced to a qualified party.)
Employees conducting assessments on behalf of a Cradle to Cradle Certified Material Health Assessment Body must have:

- An advanced degree from an accredited college or university in chemistry, toxicology, biology, environmental science, chemical engineering, or a field relevant to conducting material health assessments, as determined by C2CPII.

- At least three years of relevant professional experience performing chemical hazard and exposure assessments and/or chemical alternatives assessments. Experience in conducting assessments of exposure to chemicals in materials and products is required.

- At least two years of relevant experience to demonstrate an understanding of applicable chemical legislation and regulations.

- The ability to access and manage human and environmental toxicological data and other information for conducting chemical assessments.
Qualifications Review and Authorization Process

Evaluation Criteria

Qualifications submitted by the deadline will be evaluated using the following criteria:

- Overall organizational and employee qualifications
- Organizational and employee expertise relevant to performing product assessments in support of Cradle to Cradle certification
- Rigor of organizational quality assurance and project management processes
- Ability to drive and support increased adoption of Cradle to Cradle certification
- Regional coverage and representation: Qualifications from companies in North America and Asia are specifically encouraged

Initial Authorization Process

If selected as an Assessment Body candidate, the following will be required prior to authorization to perform Cradle to Cradle Certified assessment services:

- An audit to verify organizational conformance to the Assessment Body eligibility requirements and resolution of any non-conformances identified (C2CPII auditor travel fees may apply)
- A signed C2CPII Assessment Body agreement
- All staff working on C2C assessments successfully complete an in person assessor training and pass a knowledge test (training fees apply)
- For Cradle to Cradle Certified Material Health Assessment Bodies, successful completion of three provisional material health assessments (i.e. assignment of Cradle to Cradle Certified Material Health ratings to chemicals and materials in three products applying for certification following the Cradle to Cradle Certified Material Health methodologies)

Once the authorization process is completed, the organization will be listed on the C2CPII website as a Cradle to Cradle Certified Assessment Body and will receive a Cradle to Cradle Certified Assessment Body badge for use in marketing of its services.
Maintaining Cradle to Cradle Certified Assessment Body Status

The following will be required in order to continue performing Cradle to Cradle Certified assessment services:

- Compliance with C2CPII policies and required performance levels outlined in the *Assessment Body Accreditation Policy* and *Assessment Manual for Assessment Bodies*

- Payment of annual Assessment Body fee

- An audit of organizational conformance to C2CPII policies and an audit of product assessments to ensure conformance with Cradle to Cradle Certified requirements and methodologies, conducted at a maximum once per year by C2CPII staff (travel costs for C2CPII auditor(s) will apply)

- Attendance and participation at the annual C2CPII assessor meeting

- Participation in C2CPII assessor calls (4-6 per year)

- Participation in quarterly market development calls with C2CPII staff

- Reporting of certification assessment projections and pipeline, as requested by C2CPII staff

- Successful completion of assessor trainings and knowledge tests, as required for standard updates (fees may apply)
Qualifications Submission Instructions

Submission Location and Fee

All required information for this RFQ must be submitted to C2CPII via the Cradle to Cradle Certified™ Assessment Body Qualifications Form by 31 July 2020. The submissions will remain valid for 120 days after the date of submission.

A non-refundable fee of USD 590 / EUR 550 per organization is due at the time of qualifications submission and is payable by credit card or invoice. The fee is non-refundable regardless of eligibility or final selection.

Qualification Submission Format

All qualifications submissions must include a description of organizational and employee qualifications.

1. Organizational qualifications description – Please provide an overview of organizational capabilities and qualifications with reference to the eligibility criteria (maximum five pages), including the following:
   a. The services your organization provides and distinct expertise,
   b. Relevant ‘in-house’ experience versus the relevant experience of any contractors that may be used,
   c. Established internal quality assurance policies and procedures, including any third-party accreditations held,
   d. Value your organization would bring as a Cradle to Cradle Certified Assessment Body

2. Employee qualifications descriptions – Please provide a resume or curriculum vitae for each employee and contractor that meets the employee eligibility criteria and will work on or conduct Cradle to Cradle Certified assessments. Degrees obtained, relevant experience, and professional certifications and dates of expiration, if applicable, must be included.
Timeline and Questions

All organizations that submit qualifications by 31 July 2020 will be notified of their selection status by 15 September 2020.

The time frame for the evaluation of submissions, selection of assessment body candidates, and authorization of any new Cradle to Cradle Certified Assessment Bodies and/or Cradle to Cradle Certified Material Health Assessment Bodies will be at the sole discretion of C2CPII.

Please direct any questions related to this RFQ to Marisa Guber, Partnerships Manager, marisa@c2ccertified.org.