

# RJC Standard-Setting Procedure

January 2024 – V2.0

**Official Language:** The official language of this document is English, all/any translations of this document in accordance with the RJC translation policy dated...should revert to the original English version for clarification.

**Version Control:** The most recent version of this document will always be available on the RJC website, please refer to the RJC website to ensure that you have the latest version.

**Feedback:** RJC welcomes comments & feedback from all stakeholders on the standards-setting procedure, this can be submitted at any time to: [consultations@responsiblejewellery.com](mailto:consultations@responsiblejewellery.com)

**Complaints:** The RJC will make all efforts to resolve any issue or grievance regarding the standard-setting document in an impartial and documented manner. If you wish to register a complaint about the standard-setting procedure, please refer to the complaints mechanism on the [RJC website](#).

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## Overview

This document outlines the RJC’s Standards-Setting procedure in accordance with ISEAL Standard Setting Code requirements (V6 – 2014). The standard-setting procedure, including this document will be reviewed at the start of every revision of any RJC standard and is applicable to both planned substantive and, as necessary, non-substantive reviews of RJC standards. At a minimum the standard-setting procedure will be reviewed every 5 years in accordance with the ISEAL Standard Setting Code (V6 – 2014).

The purpose of the standard setting procedure is to demonstrate the RJC’s commitment to:

- Be open and transparent in its standards development process
- Encourage input from a wide range of interested and affected parties
- Treat input from interested and affected parties with integrity and respect, and
- Report publicly on submissions received, including how comments have been

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addressed in subsequent drafting.

### ISEAL Code of Good Practice

The RJC will follow a number of steps to determine the scope and stakeholder engagement plan for new standards and/or revisions prepared with the RJC Standards Committee for public comment, including:

1. Conduct identification of stakeholders, which includes interested sectors, key stakeholders within those interested sectors, based on the proposed scope of the standard and its social, environmental and economic outcomes, and make efforts to ensure that groups that are not adequately represented, are included within the consultation.
2. Before the start of a standard review process, the RJC management team must review and update (as necessary) the Terms of Reference (ToR) which will include requirements of ISEAL Standard-Setting Code (V6) clause 5.1 – Review/update the Terms of Reference and including the following element; scope of standard and intended geographic application; justification of the need of the standard; most important issues within the scope of the standard; clear social, environmental and economic outcomes and how these are linked to RJC's Theory of Change; risks in implementing the standard and how these will be mitigated. This document will require Standards Committee approval.
3. Create a summary ToR and share publicly with identified stakeholders and place it on RJC website.
4. Determine a timeline of the standard setting process.

### Consultation on the Standard

The RJC aims to ensure open and transparent consultations on the development of its standards. The RJC will hold a combination of webinars, teleconferences, direct consultations and provide online surveys to engage with stakeholders. All consultations will seek to obtain a balance of interests in the subject matter and geographic scope. Steps taken during public consultations include:

1. Open a public comment period for a minimum of 60 days open to all stakeholders – notification is sent directly to all identified stakeholders asking for comments and recommendations on proposed changes. The consultation is also communicated on all public RJC channels including mailers, RJC website and social media channels.
2. Facilitate dialogue on input received with the Standards Committee.
3. Publish summary of comments received on the RJC website.
4. Share draft of the new Standard developed with RJC Standards Committee.
5. Open a second public comment period for a minimum of 30 days sending the draft of the new Standard to all identified stakeholders.
6. Facilitate dialogue on input received with RJC Standards Committee.
7. Publish summary of comments received on the RJC website.
8. Share draft of standards developed with RJC Standards Committee.
9. (If required) conduct a third public comment period of 30 days – sending a revised draft of the Standard Committee. The RJC will monitor the participation of

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stakeholders throughout the standard development process aimed at achieving a balanced and effective participation. If subject matters are identified that need additional consultation, this qualifies as a possible reason to trigger a third public consultation. (If a third public consultation is not required, proceed to point 13).

10. Facilitate dialogue on input received with RJC Standards Committee.
11. Publish summary of comments received.
12. Share final draft of standards and associated guidance developed with RJC Standards Committee.
13. Recommendation by the RJC Standards Committee whether to approve the new standards/revisions, based on the results of the consultations.
14. Recommendation by the RJC Executive Committee based on the above recommendations.
15. Decision whether to approve the standard taken by the RJC Board is based upon the following of the above procedure.

### Transition Period and Publication

The transition period between the outgoing and new standard will be clearly indicated in the relevant standards documentation. All new documents will clearly state the status of the document, official language, version and contact information of RJC to address any queries.

All new standards documents will be free to download and available in the RJC's official language, English, on the RJC's website. Any translations will be issued as and when required and should always refer to the English version on points of clarification and interpretation.

### Standards Development Decision Making Process

The RJC aims to operate in conformance with the ISEAL Code of Good Practice for Setting Social and Environmental Standards. The decision for the RJC to adopt a new or revised RJC standard will pass through the following steps:

- Consensus-based decision-making, as outlined in this handbook;
- In the event that a consensus cannot be reached, and a vote is taken, there will be a balance of industry and non-industry participants voting;
- Public consultation processes as defined in each standards development programme in accordance with the ISEAL Code of Good Practice;
- Recommendation by the Standards Committee to the Executive Committee that it should seek adoption of the new or revised standard by the Board based upon an assessment as to whether the correct procedure was followed;
- If, after review by the Executive Committee, the Executive Committee does not agree to seek adoption of the new or revised standard by the Board, the standard will revert to the Standards Committee for further revisions; and
- The Board will have the sole discretion as to whether to adopt a new or revised standard.

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## Standards Committee – Composition

The decisions on setting the RJC standards, are made by the RJC Standards Committee. The Standards Committee has 28 seats, which are split between 14 industry members, and 14 non-industry members with specific expertise in the issue areas covered under the RJC standards. Relevant interested parties that could become non-industry members include:

- non-governmental organisations;
- standards-setting organisations with harmonisation interest;
- academic and research institutions;
- auditors; and
- other stakeholders that may be relevant to the Standards Committee work programme such as international institutions, national governments, technical experts, etc.

Non-Industry members are recommended by the Management Team in consultation with the current Standards Committee who regularly map expertise needs for coverage of priority subjects over a three-year period and for balance of interested parties, and to suggest potential candidates for appointment or reappointment. The timing for appointing new non-industry members shall be the same as for industry members. Both industry and non-industry Committee members shall have the same length of term. The Management Team will recommend non-industry members to be put to the Board for appointment. Any conflict of interest by Committee members must be clearly and openly disclosed.

Non-industry members are appointed in their personal capacity and not as representatives of any organisation.

As per the RJC Governance Handbook, industry representatives are appointed by the Board following an election process. There are two industry representatives for each of the 7 fora comprising the RJC membership categories.

## Standards Committee – Role of Co-Chairs

The Committee Co-Chairs are Committee members, with one from non-industry and one from industry. Co-chairs shall represent the views of both industry and non-industry members and communicate any areas of disagreement.

It is also the role of the Co-chairs to represent the committee (it's deliberations, questions, feedback, recommendations, etc) to the Exco and Board when required.

## Standards Committee – Decision-Making regarding Standards

Standard-setting decisions are made with the objective of achieving consensus. Consensus is defined as general agreement characterised by the absence of sustained opposition to substantial issues by any Committee member; it is not necessarily unanimity. Consensus should be the result of a process seeking to take into account the views of interested parties and reconcile any conflicting arguments (ISO/IEC Guide 2:2004).

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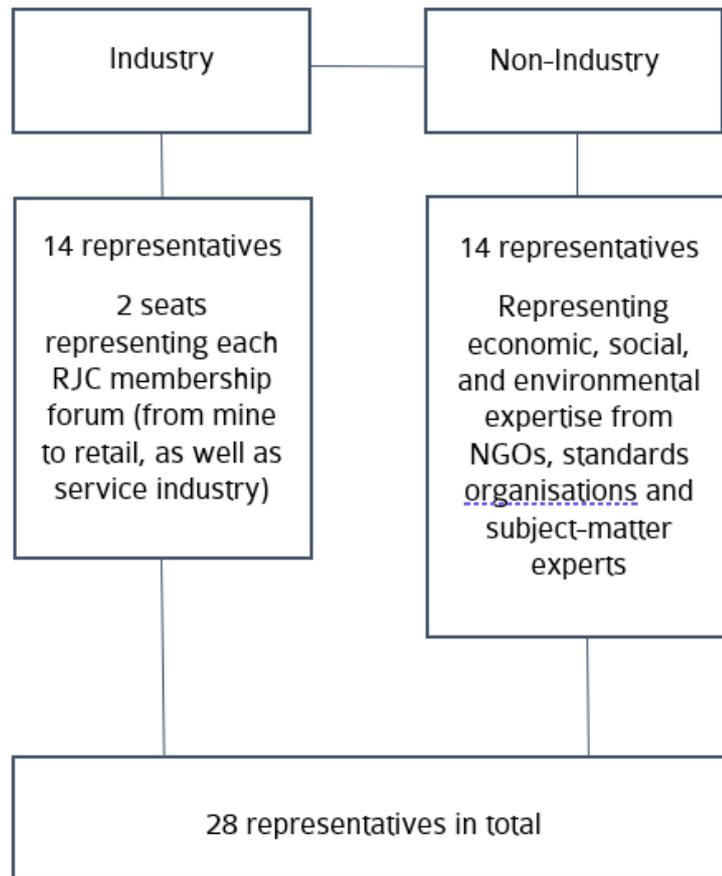
To work towards consensus on significant decisions, Committee Chairs will ensure that all participants in meetings are invited to express their views. Sufficient time to discuss and debate decisions of significance should be allocated. Additional time and/or information may be requested by Committee members to help facilitate a consensus outcome. In the event that a consensus cannot be reached, and a vote is taken, there will be a balance of industry and non-industry participants voting. In the event of a tie, industry Co-chairs are able to exercise their right to vote.

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## Standards Committee Structure



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Standards Committee Subject Matter Expertise Representation (December 2022):

<b>Industry Committee Members</b> <i>Representing economic, social, and environmental expertise related to 7 RJC member fora.</i>		<b>Non-Industry Committee Members</b> <i>Representing economic, social, and environmental expertise from NGOs, related standards organisations and subject-matter experts.</i>	
Producer	1 participant	Human Rights/labour rights	1 expert
Precious metals Trader, Refiner and/or Hedger	2 participants	Environmental impact & Biodiversity	1 expert
Diamonds, coloured gemstones trader, cutter and/or polisher	1 participant	Auditing	1 expert
Jewellery and watch manufacturer and/or wholesaler	2 participants	KC//AML/Legal	1 expert In the process of recruiting
Jewellery and watch retailer	2 participants	Responsible sourcing, supply chains and due diligence	Other standards organisation
Service Industries	2 participants	Coloured Gemstones	1 expert
Trade Association	2 participants	Consumer group	1 expert
		Indigenous & labour rights, mining standards	In the process of recruiting
		Artisanal Scale Mining	In the process of recruiting

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## Document Retention:

The following documents are kept for 10 years:

• Standard Setting Procedure
• Stakeholders attending consultation events
• Stakeholders invited to comment during public consultation periods.
• Comments received during public consultation period and summary of how comments were actioned.
• Drafts and final versions of RJC Standards

All documents are stored electronically via cloud storage. All stored documents are encrypted, and password protected to ensure security.

### Public Comments on Standard-Setting Procedure:

The RJC welcomes comments on its standard-setting procedures by email ([consultation@responsiblejewellery.com](mailto:consultation@responsiblejewellery.com)) at any time. Comments will be logged and will be incorporated into the next available review process. Reviews of RJC standards will take place at least every five years, or as required.

## Version History

This document is V 2.0 – January 2024

For the most up to date standard setting document, please refer to the RJC website: <https://www.responsiblejewellery.com/standards-development/>

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