Join the Solar Stewardship Initiative (SSI)

# Become A Member

The Solar Stewardship Initiative (SSI) works collaboratively with manufacturers, developers, installers and purchasers across the global solar value chain to foster responsible production, sourcing and stewardship of materials.

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# Why Join The SSI?

A unique solution tailored to solar

The SSI is the only global initiative specifically tailored to the solar industry, ensuring participants engage in targeted efforts to improve ESG performance and responsible production.

Comprehensive approach

The SSI takes a comprehensive approach to sustainability, encompassing Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) aspects as well as supply chain transparency.

Independent third-party verification

Compared to other schemes, which are mostly based on self-assessments or second-party audits, the SSI is based on independent third-party verification, ensuring credibility with non-industry stakeholders as well as a fairer and more accurate assessment.

Multi-stakeholder collaboration

The SSI involves collaboration among various stakeholders as well as civil society and academia. This multi- stakeholder approach is recognised internationally as a key indicator of the credibility of a scheme and is valued in upcoming legislation.

Supply chain transparency

The SSI places a strong emphasis on creating end-to-end supply chain transparency. As a newer concept, this criteria is yet to be widely adopted in other schemes, but is crucial to ensure ESG standards are upheld throughout the value chain (chain of custody).

Join us to develop the pioneering SSI Traceability Standard in 2024.

Leading industry expertise

The SSI was created by SolarPower Europe and Solar Energy UK, with the technical support of TDi Sustainability. Together, they provide unrivalled and multidimensional expertise in solar, ESG auditing, and product traceability, as well as EU legislation and political affairs, which ensures proactive alignment with EU legislation.

# SSI Membership Benefits

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Membership Benefits | PV Buyer | Manufacturer |
| Membership Claim | **✔️** | **✔️** |
| 3 Seats on the SSI Board | **✔️** | **✔️** |
| Access to SSI tools, guidelines and expert pool | **✔️** | **✔️** |
| SSI working groups access and influence on future standards | **✔️** | **✔️** |
| Access to SSI Digital Platform (when available) | **✔️** | **✔️** |
| Membership Fee discount (if member of founding associations) | **✔️** | **✔️** |
| Possible developer certification standard (depending on budgetraised) | **✔️** |  |
| Possible site certification claim |  | **✔️** |
| Additional manufacturer fee discount |  | **✔️** |

**How To Apply For SSI Membership**

SSI Membership Fees

Regular Fee:

 Large (yearly turnover more than €500M): €30,000

 Medium (yearly turnover between €500M and €50M): €20,000

 Small (yearly turnover less than €50M): €10,000

SolarPower Europe/Solar Energy UK/Global Solar Council Member:

 Large (yearly turnover more than €500M): €20,000

 Medium (yearly turnover between €500M and €50M): €10,000

 Small (yearly turnover less than €50M): €5,000

Discounts:

 Manufacturer Discount\*: -€4k

 Future additional discount for manufacturers which have certified a certain number of sites (to be defined in 2024)

*\*The Manufacturer discount accounts for the fact that these members have to pay for certification fees for each site that is certified (up to* -€*15k per site)*

**[SSI Governance](https://www.solarstewardshipinitiative.org/about-ssi/governance/)**

SSI Transitional Governance (2024):

The SSI Board, appointed for two years, is the primary decision-making body. The SSI Board is made up of four stakeholder categories, each with three seats and equal voting rights. **Half of these stakeholders represent industry (buyers and manufacturers) while the other half represent non-industry groups (civil society, institutional stakeholders and independent experts). This governance structure ensures equal representation between the industry and non-industry board members. Non-industry Board members are elected by the Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG) and bring diverse expertise and experience across human rights, ESG due diligence, sustainable finance, and civil society engagement. Industry Board members are elected by the corporate members of the SSI.**

The Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG), an integral part of SSI Governance, represent diverse perspectives from civil society, academia, independent experts, and other relevant non-industry stakeholders. SAG members advise the SSI Board on various aspects, ensuring a holistic approach to decision-making.

Various SSI working groups and committees facilitate targeted discussions and actions in line with our mission. The current Working Groups include the Procurement Working Group and the Traceability Working Groups. New groups can be added, based on the needs of SSI members.

**[The SSI ESG Standard](https://www.solarstewardshipinitiative.org/ssi-standards/esg-standard/)**

The SSI is pioneering a more responsible, transparent, and sustainable solar value chain. Amid the rapid growth of the solar sector, the SSI looks to maximize the positive impact of this growth, ensuring that the energy transition respects human rights, and is both just and inclusive.

The SSI ESG Standard uses key criteria to enhance supply chain sustainability, instilling confidence in solar manufacturing practices and setting the bar for ESG performance in the solar sector. The SSI takes a hands-on approach, actively working through independent Assessment Bodies (AB) to establish and verify information on current transparency levels and ESG performance at production sites along the solar value chain.

Key Requirements

ESG standards are designed to evaluate a company's performance in three key areas: environmental impact, social responsibility, and corporate governance.

SSI members from manufacturing sites must commit to completing an ESG assessment of two sites within 12 months by an SSI-approved AB. The SSI Assurance Process is implemented at a site level. A ‘site’ comprises several activities in the same geographic area and under the same management control.

Demonstrated commitment to ESG standards is particularly crucial for industries like solar PV, which is the fastest - growing energy technology in the world and offers a rapid solution to decarbonize and protect citizens and businesses from volatile energy prices.

Key principles of the SSI ESG Standard:

Governance and Business Ethics:

* Business Integrity
* Policy and Management
* Stakeholders and Communities
* Transparency
* Responsible Sourcing

Environment:

* Greenhouse Gas Emission Management
* Water Management
* Waste Management
* Pollution Management
* Biodiversity Management
* Circularity

Human and Labour Rights:

* Human Rights
* Labour Rights
* Occupational Health and Safety

**The SSI Supply Chain Traceability Standard**

The SSI Supply Chain Traceability Standard represents another crucial milestone in pursuing a transparent value chain for photovoltaic solar modules. The SSI ESG Standard can certify a ‘link’ – i.e. a production site – in the solar supply chain. The SSI Supply Chain Traceability Standard is the first step to show precisely where the materials used at each link come from and how they are traced. With the combination of the SSI ESG and SSI Supply Chain Traceability Standards, stakeholders along the solar value chain will be reassured that the silicon used in the solar modules was produced responsibly.

The Supply Chain Traceability certification is mandatory for SSI manufacturing members and complements certification against the SSI ESG Standard. It sets out requirements for maintaining a traceability system with a future goal to enable an ‘unbroken’ Chain of Custody (CoC) through the solar value chain. A CoC is a documented sequence of physical and legal possessions of material as it moves through a supply chain. The Standard defines a ‘segregated’ chain of custody model for specific silicon supply chain tiers and requires a traceability system able to demonstrate a chain of entities to supply the material. The material may have been produced at a number of separate SSI-certified sites; however, it cannot be mixed with other uncertified materials.

Key Requirements

Chain of Custody (CoC)

* **Segregated CoC Model**: Ensures that certified materials are not mixed with non-certified materials, maintaining the integrity of the supply chain.
* **Documentation:** Requires detailed records of the physical and legal possession of materials as they move through each stage of the supply chain.

Traceability System Requirements

* **System Implementation:** Manufacturers must establish systems capable of tracking materials from source to final product.
* **Data Management:** Accurate and accessible data must be maintained to verify the origin and movement of materials.

Integration with ESG Standards

* **Complementary Framework:** The Traceability Standard complements the SSI ESG Standard, providing a comprehensive approach to responsible solar manufacturing.
* **Holistic Assurance:** Together, these standards offer assurance on both the ethical sourcing of materials and the environmental, social, and governance practices of manufacturing sites.

**[SSI Assurance](https://www.solarstewardshipinitiative.org/our-code/assurance-process/)**

Members of the SSI commit to meeting the comprehensive requirements of the SSI Standards. **After a rigorous site-level assessment process to ensure the site meets all requirements of the Standard(s), the SSI Member becomes an SSI-certified Member and can make the associated certification claims[[1]](#footnote-2)**

The assessment is completed by an independent AB which is approved by the SSI. Qualified independent assessors associated with approved ABs will verify a site’s compliance. After the assessment completion, a summary of the assessment activities, methodology, and results are published.

Each site is re-assessed every three years. Detailed expectations and timelines are defined in the SSI Assurance Process.

The 8 Steps of the Assurance Process Cycle:

1. Your company meets SSI membership due diligence
2. Your company signs the SSI Principles, commits to assessment, and becomes a member
3. Your company completes a self-assessment against the SSI Standards within 3 months
4. The SSI or your company selects an Assessment Body (AB); the assessment plan and dates are agreed; and the SSI-approved AB conducts an onsite assessment
5. The SSI delivers a certification decision based on the performance & as recommended by AB
6. The SSI website publishes a summary report of your company’s assessment
7. Your company becomes an SSI-certified member and can make the associated certification claims
8. Your company undergoes continuous improvement and follow up surveillance
9. Re-assessment takes place every three years

# Apply For SSI Membership

Section 1: Member Contact Information

1. Name of applicant for SSI membership (enter the name of the organisation or name of each entity in a group of legal entities). The name written here will be the name that appears on the SSI website.
2. If different from above, add the full name of the legal entity and country of incorporation. In the case of a group of entities that fall within the scope of the above applicant, but that are not all subsidiaries of the one entity, list all the relevant legal entities and their country of incorporation.
3. Full address of applicant’s head office, including country:
4. Telephone number of head office, including country code:
5. Applicant’s website address:
6. VAT number for all EU and VAT-registered companies:
7. Primary contact to receive official SSI correspondence:
8. Privacy: by signing here you consent to provide your personal information to SSI for the purpose of receiving essential communication on SSI matters. Please see the SSI Privacy Policy ([www.solarstewardshipinitiative.org/privacy-policy/](https://www.solarstewardshipinitiative.org/privacy-policy/)) for more information.
9. Details of main company representative

Name: Position: Address: Work Telephone: Mobile/Cell: Email:

1. Finance contact to receive SSI invoices. Primary contact will also receive a copy of all SSI invoices.

Name: Position: Address: Work Telephone: Mobile/Cell: Email:

1. Different company name and/or address for invoices.

If you wish SSI to use a different company name and/or address for SSI invoices instead of the details provided above, please add the alternative details here.

Different company name: Different address for invoices:

1. Additional contact to receive general SSI correspondence Note: Please add here or attach a list.

Name: Position: Address: Work Telephone: Mobile/Cell: Email:

Section 2: Membership Type

1. Select the membership type best suited for your organisation:
	* Buyer
	* Manufacturer

1.a. If you are a manufacturer, please select your type of production

* + Modules
	+ Cells
	+ Wafers
	+ Ingots
	+ MGS – Metallurgical grade silicon
	+ Quartzite mining
1. Number of employees in applicant organisation.

3. Your estimated financial turnover for the previous year (please consider your group organization)

* + Large (yearly turnover > €500M)
	+ Medium (yearly turnover between €500M and €50M)
	+ Small (yearly turnover < €50M)

4. Is your organization a member of SolarPower Europe or Solar Energy UK?

* + Yes
	+ No

5. List *all* countries of operation for the applicant organisation.

6. Please describe your organisation, outlining how your organisation partakes in the solar value chain and your interest in joining the SSI. This description will be used in association with your organisation’s logo on the SSI website. [Max 300 words; SSI may edit any text provided.]

7. Please provide a statement from your organisation to describe why you have joined the SSI which can be used in press and newsletter correspondence by the SSI. Please include the name and title of the spokesperson that the statement should be attributed to.

8. How did you find out about SSI? Note: place an X in all relevant boxes:

* + Conference or industry event
	+ Industry or consumer press
	+ Social media
	+ Online search
	+ Word of mouth
	+ Other – please provide details

Section 3: Membership Commitment

BY SIGNING HERE YOU AGREE TO ADHERE TO THE SSI PRINCIPLES AND PAY THE SSI MEMBERSHIP FEE:

# (Membership will be confirmed once the SSI has done a due diligence evaluation and the Member has signed the SSI Principles, which will be sent via email once this initial form has been reviewed and accepted)

SIGNED FOR AND ON BEHALF OF THE APPLICANT ORGANISATION BY:

Name:

Position/ Title:

Organisation:

Signature:

Date:

Please submit to contact@solarstewardshipiniative.org along with a high res .png file of your organisation’s logo and latest financial statements.

*SSI is committed to ensuring the security and protection of the personal information that we process and to provide a compliant and consistent approach to data protection. If you have any questions related to our GDPR compliance please contact us.*

1. Certification does not guarantee that an entire company’s supply chain is free from human and labour rights abuses, environmental degradation or governance issues. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)