

Consultancy - Terms of Reference

Scaling Fairtrade Gold in the Electronics Sector

Overview

The Fairtrade Foundation and Fairphone invite Expressions of Interest (EoI) for a consultancy project to draft a scalable model to increase the uptake and sourcing of Fairtrade gold in the Electronics sector.

[Fairtrade Foundation](#) is part of the international Fairtrade system: a global movement for change that works directly with businesses, consumers and campaigners to make trade deliver for farmers and workers. It represents the world's largest and most recognised fair trade system. [Fairphone](#) is a social enterprise that is building a movement for fairer electronics. It works to make a positive impact across the value chain in mining, design, manufacturing and life cycle, while expanding the market for products that put ethical values first.

Background

Gold is critical to the creation of electronics, as a corrosive-resistant conductor that is faster than copper and stronger than silver. It is mainly used in logic boards, circuit boards and the camera. Associated with funding the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo and the surrounding countries, gold (and tin, tantalum and tungsten, also mined in DRC and key to electronics) has come under increasing scrutiny and technology companies in particular have been subject to consumer pressure, civil society action, and changes in legislation to ensure more transparent supply chains. Fairtrade has the ability to offer certified gold through refiners as an option to technology companies that are seeking solutions for responsible mining.

Fairphone was the first and – to date – the only electronics company to have integrated Fairtrade certified gold into its smartphone. Fairphone and the Fairtrade Foundation are now looking to continue their partnership through an exploration of a scalable route to market for Fairtrade gold within the electronics sector.

We are seeking a consultant to help develop an understanding of the complex relationships between certification, monitoring and audit control systems within global gold supply chains in the electronics and technology sector, and to explore how companies can satisfy certification standards within this landscape. The consultant will need to identify the challenges and blockers for certification systems in the sector and present solutions to these challenges. Specific attention should be given to developing solutions to the challenge of transparency and verification in territories where auditing of supply chain activity may be limited or restricted (specifically in China).

We would like to commission a detailed, action-based project which explores options to integrate Fairtrade gold within the Electronics sector. This should detail solutions, clear recommendations and propose a model that would enable the scalable integration of Fairtrade gold in the electronics sector. The model should be sufficiently defined to enable Fairtrade to develop operational and sourcing guidelines. It is intended that this model will be incrementally improved through feedback and consultation with the Fairtrade system and with key stakeholders.

Project expectations

The consultant will build upon the extensive knowledge and learnings of Fairphone, based on its experience with the Fairtrade gold integration model in its Fairphone 2 and Fairphone 3 supply chain. Furthermore, the consultant will ensure the proposal also builds upon [Fairtrade Standard for Gold and Associated Precious Metals, Trader Standard](#) and certification framework. The consultant will therefore engage closely with relevant Fairtrade Foundation and Fairtrade system staff. Furthermore, in order to develop guidelines that are credible and workable, the consultant should engage with relevant stakeholders (to be mapped and identified by Fairtrade and Fairphone) in the supply chain; upstream, midstream and end-user brands. Fairphone and Fairtrade Foundation could facilitate introductions, if needed. The consultant will share a list of stakeholders they meet with and their contact information (subject to data protection protocols).

Objectives

The consultant will work to answer the below questions and achieve the following deliverables. This research will be collaborative and Fairtrade and Fairphone should be consulted regularly to provide input into methodology, development of draft models. There should also be regular check-in points during the project.

Research Questions and Activities:

What is the potential of responsible gold in the electronics sector?

- Determine specific segment (i.e. electronics is very broad) for further focus of the research (e.g. end-user brands with higher margins)
- Trend analysis on gold use in electronics; including the Gold technical specifications and key gold products used in the electronics.
- Support the creation of a business plan for the Fairtrade Foundation and relevant international Fairtrade organisations, including sector mapping to show opportunity and scale.
- Assess the attractiveness and define the business case for the potential users to integrate responsible gold along the supply chain.

How can Fairtrade gold be scaled in the electronics and technology sector, taking in consideration supply and demand?

- Scoping benefits of applicable sourcing models, including desktop research, discussions with relevant sector stakeholders, as determined by Fairtrade Foundation and Fairphone.
- Assess feasibility and applicability of the different models to Fairtrade gold integration in the Electronics supply chain (containing gold)
- Evaluate each model (pros/cons) and present a best possible solution
- Creation of sourcing guidelines. This handbook and sourcing guidelines will be based on a new model that has had relevant sign off. This will include the clear wording of the Fairtrade gold claim and any use of Fairtrade mark

Deliverables

We expect the above activities to generate the following outputs:

- A documented report that supports the business case for certified gold in the electronics sector, including sector mapping and trends. This will be used for internal discussions at Fairtrade during the project
- Defined business case for end users and electronics brands as well as opportunities and barriers to engage for suppliers up- & midstream.
- A detailed analysis of the feasibility of different sourcing models, including a matrix or other tool, that clearly defines the pros/cons for each model in relation to gold.
 - This analysis will include pinch points where the models complement or conflict with existing Fairtrade system processes
- Recommend a well-rounded model that could support scalable integration of Fairtrade gold in the electronics sector, taking into account the attractiveness and opportunities for Fairtrade as well for the users (e.g. considering the Fairtrade gold claim and any use of Fairtrade mark) ready for sign-off by Fairtrade management

Note: upon approval of the recommended model by the Fairtrade leadership, Fairtrade will use the recommended model to finalize a detailed handbook/standard and sourcing guidelines

Budget and Timeline

We have a maximum funding amount of €24,000 for this work, include all applicable taxes.

Expressions of Interest should outline how this budget will be used to achieve the objectives, including an estimation of the duration needed to complete this work.

Submissions of Expression of Interest – December 2021

Selection & Appointment – January 2022

This work is to be completed by (latest): 15 March, 2022

Application Process

Expressions of Interest should identify the research approach and methodology, and provide a realistic timeline with key milestones. The timeline should allow for sufficient time for input and feedback with Fairphone and Fairtrade Foundation.

Interested parties should submit a proposal to mahsa.yeganeh@fairtrade.org.uk with the subject “Scaling Fairtrade Gold in the Electronics Sector” no later than **December 24, 2021**. The proposal should include:

- The consultants/organizations expertise/experience (CVs)
- Detailed methodological approach
- Financial proposal (include legal taxes and all expenses associated with the consultancy)
- Work plan and schedule
- References of similar works

Selection Criteria

- Expressions of interest/ proposals are invited from suitably qualified and experienced consultants with capacity to undertake the above activity. Specifically, we are looking for a consultant who can demonstrate the following:
- Experience with responsible supply chain certifications systems
- Knowledge and experience of different sourcing, integration and traceability models, particularly in sectors/commodities without physical segregation
- Knowledge of supply chain management and economics, including in different geographies, specifically in manufacturing in China
- A qualification (postgraduate or professional) in economics, responsible sourcing, or other relevant area or equivalent by experience.
- Expertise in electronics/gold sector (desired)
- Experience of working on international development / sustainability issues in the private sector (desired)

Read more

- [Blog Fairphone integration of Fairtrade Gold for Fairphone 2](#)
- [Blog Fairphone integration of Fairtrade Gold for Fairphone 3](#)

Additional Note: This project supports the work under the Responsible Peruvian Gold Programme of Fairtrade, Valcambi, FairCapital and Fairphone funded by the European Partnership for Responsible Minerals ([EPRM](#)). The RPG programme will support artisanal and small-scale gold miners in South Peru to formalise their activities and further adopt responsible practices, enabling them to operate more safely, safeguard the environment and improve their productivity. Read more: [Press release](#).