

Terms of Reference
External Collaborator for
Better Work Academy Business Model

Background

Better Work is a collaboration between the United Nations' International Labour Organization (ILO) and the International Finance Corporation (IFC), a member of the World Bank Group. It is a comprehensive program that brings together all levels of the garment industry to improve working conditions, uphold workers' labor rights, and enhance the competitiveness of apparel and footwear businesses.

Beyond direct engagement with factories, Better Work collaborates with governments to align national labor laws with International Labour Organization (ILO) standards and enhance the capacity of labor inspectors to enforce compliance. Additionally, Better Work partners with global apparel brands to ensure that improvements made at the factory level are sustained over time.

Better Work also works with employer and worker organizations by providing industry data and insights while supporting unions in strengthening their capacity to amplify workers' voices. Moreover, the program engages with development partners to advance broader industry-wide and economic development goals.

Better Work Academy

[Better Work](#) has extensive experience in fostering sustainable improvements in the apparel industry. Since 2015, the program has been building the capacity of brands, manufacturers, and industry stakeholders to problem-solve and implement long-term solutions. By adopting innovative methodologies, Better Work has demonstrated that its approach has a greater impact than traditional social compliance auditing alone. The program shifts the focus from audits to partnerships and coaching, helping factories drive meaningful and lasting improvements.

The [Better Work Academy](#) in the past was mainly designed for brands committed to driving meaningful change and transforming workplace practices in the apparel sector. The Academy offers specialized training and advisory services to global teams, equipping them with the skills to apply Better Work's proven methodologies across their supply chains.

Brands have increasingly recognized the limitations of an "assessment-only" approach to improving factory conditions. To support this transition, the Better Work Academy helps social compliance and sourcing teams adopt advisory strategies that enhance working conditions, increase productivity, and foster better worker-management relations.

The program prioritizes effective workplace communication, promoting collaborative, long-term solutions to the root causes of non-compliance while encouraging shared accountability between the private and public sectors.

The Academy was built over a flexible, two-year program tailored to participants' specific needs. Training consists of 12 to 16 in-person days, delivered in four-day modules, complemented by e-learning, virtual coaching, and in-factory shadowing between sessions. Pricing was determined based on the final curriculum and number of participants. Training sessions were company-specific or included a shared group of learners from multiple organizations.

Objective

To align with evolving industry needs and leverage its expertise, Better Work seeks to expand the Better Work Academy (BWA) beyond its traditional brand-focused training approach. As industries face increasing regulatory demands, shifting workforce dynamics, and heightened expectations for responsible business practices, the need for comprehensive, high-impact training programs has never been greater. Expanding the Academy's reach to a broader ecosystem, including suppliers, industry bodies, policymakers, and employers' and workers' organizations will enable Better Work to drive systemic improvements across multiple sectors, both within and beyond apparel.

To achieve this, a robust and scalable business model will be developed, integrating a certification framework, structured training curriculum, network of master trainers, sustainable pricing strategy, and a quality assurance system to measure impact.

Under the supervision of the Better Work Global Learning and Capacity Building Specialist, an external consultant will lead the design and execution of this model. Key responsibilities include:

- Conducting a comprehensive needs assessment to tailor training solutions to diverse stakeholders.
- Designing a certification mechanism that ensures credibility and industry recognition.
- Developing a structured capacity-building framework adaptable across sectors.
- Establishing a financially viable pricing framework to support long-term sustainability.
- Design a robust impact monitoring system to evaluate effectiveness and inform continuous improvement.

Scope of Work and Key Deliverables

The consultant will support the Global Learning Team and Better Work Global Operations with the following:

No.	Task	Description
01	Needs Assessment	<p>Conduct a comprehensive stakeholder analysis, define the scope of work, identify key focus areas, and assess demand for a certification-based learning framework.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a comprehensive stakeholder analysis, engaging: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Current and potential brand partners participating in the Academy. ○ Factories and manufacturers seeking capacity-building support. ○ Tripartite stakeholders (governments, employer organizations, worker organizations). ○ Other relevant industry stakeholders beyond apparel (e.g., footwear, textiles, agribusiness, electronics). • Identify key challenges, gaps, and opportunities in the current BWA model. • Assess global demand for a certification-based learning framework.

		<i>Deliverable: Document findings in a needs assessment report with strategic recommendations.</i>
02	Development of the New Business Model	Define a revised value proposition, develop an inclusive business model, and deliver a documented framework with an implementation roadmap and stakeholder engagement plan.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define a revised value proposition for BWA beyond brands and across industries. • Develop an inclusive business model, outlining: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Target audience segmentation. ○ Learning pathways, certification, and accreditation processes. ○ Partnership engagement strategies. ○ Revenue models (e.g., paid training, memberships, sponsorships). ○ Integration with existing Better Work advisory services.
		Deliverable: Deliver a documented BWA Business Model framework, including an implementation roadmap and stakeholder engagement plan.
03	Curriculum & Capacity-Building Package	Design a structure of the curriculum outline and framework for implementation.
		Build upon existing Better Work Academy methodology and content, ensuring alignment with ILO standards and industry needs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design a basic structure of the modular training curriculum for the new Better Work Academy, incorporating: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Core learning themes (e.g., labour standards align with FPRW and CLS, worker engagement through effective social dialogue and IR frameworks, responsible sourcing, OSH, Management systems, problem solving etc,). ○ Digital and blended learning approaches. ○ Different levels of knowledge and understanding
		Deliverable: A basic structure of how the Better Work Academy curriculum is implemented
04	Trainer Qualification & Certification System	Define competency requirements, establish Master Trainer selection criteria, and create an ongoing assessment and renewal mechanism to ensure quality and consistency.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define competency requirements for trainers. • Establish Master Trainer selection criteria and certification process.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop ongoing assessment and renewal mechanisms to ensure continuous improvement.
		Deliverable: Trainer qualification guidelines, and accreditation structure.
05	Pricing and Financial Sustainability	Develop a cost-recovery model, conduct a cost-benefit analysis, and propose a sustainable pricing framework aligned with industry benchmarks.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define a cost-recovery model in collaboration with the Better Work Global Finance Manager. Conduct a cost-benefit analysis for various training formats (e.g., online, in-person, blended packages). Provide a pricing model recommendation aligned with industry benchmarks and financial sustainability.
		Deliverable: Justification and financial sustainability plan.
06	Quality Assurance, Impact Monitoring, and Evaluation	Establish a Quality Assurance Framework, develop key performance indicators (KPIs), and design a data collection strategy for long-term impact monitoring.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a Quality Assurance Framework to ensure consistency and excellence in training delivery. Develop an Impact Monitoring System, outlining: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for training effectiveness. Mechanisms for tracking participant progress and feedback. Longitudinal impact assessment tools for measuring workplace improvements. Design a data collection strategy to inform continuous program refinement and evidence-based decision-making.
		Deliverable: Framework for tracking training effectiveness and long-term impact.

Deliverables and Timelines

Deliverable	Description	Deadline
Needs Assessment Report	Comprehensive stakeholder analysis, identification of key focus areas, and assessment of demand for a certification-based learning framework.	1 May 2025

Better Work Academy Business Model	A revised model outlining the expanded scope beyond brands, strategic recommendations for implementation, and a stakeholder engagement plan.	31 May 2025
Training Curriculum & Capacity-Building Package	Development of a basic structure of a modular curriculum aligned with ILO standards.	15 June 2025
Trainer Qualification & Certification System	Definition of competency requirements, Master Trainer selection criteria, and an ongoing assessment and renewal mechanism.	30 June 2025
Pricing Model & Cost-Benefit Analysis	Justification and proposal for a sustainable pricing framework, including financial feasibility assessment.	15 July 2025
Quality Assurance & Impact Monitoring System	Establishment of a framework for monitoring training effectiveness, tracking key performance indicators (KPIs), and developing a data collection strategy.	15 October 2025

*** The contract duration is from 1 May until 31 October 2025. The work period falls within the contract period; however, this does not represent the actual number of workdays.

Cost and Payment Schedule

Documents and other deliverables will be requested during the contract period and according to the needs of the Better Work Program. A request will be made in the form of an email to the external collaborator which will set out the work to be done. The external collaborator should then send an email agreement to the proposal.

The External Collaborator will only be paid upon satisfactory completion of deliverables and upon receipt of signed invoices, referring to deliverables as described in the contract with the respective amount and working days indicated.

Qualifications

- Experience designing business models for international organizations and non-profit organizations
- Excellent strategic thinking and analytical skills
- Experience working to develop interventions to strengthen systems, build capacity, improve decent work and promote compliance;
- Excellent writing and presentation skills, with the ability to produce clear, concise, and insightful documents;
- Strong understanding and knowledge of ILO, Better Work, global garment supply chains;
- Fluency in English, both verbal and written;
- Experience working in diverse cultural settings, showing sensitivity and adaptability to local contexts.

Reporting

The consultant will report to ILO Better Work Learning and Capacity Building Specialist

Submission

All applicants must send their technical and financial proposals to betterwork@ilo.org. The deadline to submit your application is 1 April 2025 at midnight (CET). Only selected applicants will be contacted for an interview

Confidentiality Statement

All data and information received for the purpose of this assignment are to be treated confidentially and are only to be used in connection with the execution of these Terms of Reference. All intellectual property rights arising from the execution of these Terms of Reference are assigned to IFC and ILO. The contents of written materials obtained and used in this assignment may not be disclosed to any third parties without the express advance written authorization of the IFC and ILO.