



# County of Fairfax, Virginia

To protect and enrich the quality of life for the people, neighborhoods and diverse communities of Fairfax County

December 15, 2020

From: Cathy Muse, Director, Dept. of Procurement and Material Management (DPMM)

Subject: Fairfax County Supply Chain CSR Initiative

Dear Supplier,

As you may know, Fairfax County is in the process of implementing social equity and environmental policies, including a [One Fairfax Policy](#) on social and racial equity and an [Operational Energy Strategy](#). The County is also developing a [Community-wide Energy and Climate Action Plan](#). A key goal of these efforts is to manage the impacts of the County's operations in alignment with the County's vision and values. One of our objectives is to better understand the social and environmental performance of our large and complex supply chain and to collaborate with suppliers to improve its health and sustainability.

In this context, Fairfax County is partnering with [EcoVadis](#) on a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) monitoring initiative. EcoVadis is a recognized global provider of sustainability ratings and conducts supplier CSR assessments covering four focus areas: environment, labor and human rights, ethics, and sustainable procurement. This rating process is carefully tailored to each supplier's industry, size, and location to ensure fair, relevant, and actionable assessments and recommendations.

Fairfax County's Supply Chain CSR Initiative was launched in February 2020, and has so far been a success: thanks to the participation of invited suppliers, we now have visibility into the social and environmental performance of over \$275 million of the County's annual spend!

**As a strategic partner of Fairfax County, your company has been selected to participate in our Supply Chain CSR Initiative. You will soon receive an invitation email from EcoVadis with instructions on how to begin your CSR assessment.**

Kindly note that your company will be asked to fund its own portion of the assessment (learn more at [fees.ecovadis.com](http://fees.ecovadis.com)). This assessment will not only provide a platform for deeper collaboration with Fairfax County, but we also hope that it will create additional value for you through its expert analysis, benchmarking against other similar companies, and clear guidance for improving your sustainability performance over time, and the ability to share your CSR scorecard with other clients to demonstrate your commitment to sustainability.

Please take a moment to review the Frequently Asked Questions below this letter. Should you have any additional questions, you can contact our Sustainable Procurement Team at [suppliersustainability@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:suppliersustainability@fairfaxcounty.gov), email me directly, or learn more about the initiative on our [website](#). If you need help during the assessment process, please do not hesitate to contact the EcoVadis Engagement team at: <http://support.ecovadis.com>.

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**Department of Procurement and Material Management**

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[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/procurement](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/procurement)

We thank you in advance for joining this strategic initiative on which we can work together for a more sustainable future.

Sincerely,



Cathy Muse

Cathy Muse  
Director/Chief Procurement Officer  
Department of Procurement and Material Management  
Fairfax County

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## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: Is it mandatory for my company to participate?

A: Participation is not mandatory to maintaining your relationship with Fairfax County at this time, however we strongly recommend that all invited companies join us in assessing the impact of our supply chain as we aim to meet our environmental and social equity goals. As a key partner to Fairfax County, your participation is important.

Q: Do I need to pay a fee to participate?

A: We are asking participating suppliers to fund their own portion of the assessment. See [www.fees.ecovadis.com](http://www.fees.ecovadis.com). The fee can be paid upon submission of the questionnaire to EcoVadis. You are welcome to select whichever level of membership you prefer ([Basic](#), [Premium](#), or [Corporate](#)). Please note that in addition to helping the County this assessment can also be of great value to your company. It is similar to obtaining a consultant's analysis of your company's social and environmental sustainability (but at a much lower cost since this is co-funded by the County), along with industry-specific comparisons and suggestions for areas of improvement. Since there are options to share your scorecard with multiple buyers, this can help provide a competitive advantage.

Q: I did not receive an invitation email from EcoVadis. What should I do?

A: If you were expecting an email from EcoVadis but did not receive it, please send the following information to your IT department:

- *To ensure that EcoVadis emails are not blocked on the recipient's end, domain "[ecovadis.com](http://ecovadis.com)" (and NOT "[@ecovadis.com](mailto:@ecovadis.com)") needs to be whitelisted. Emails from EcoVadis may come from the following addresses: [support@ecovadis.com](mailto:support@ecovadis.com); [support@reg.ecovadis.com](mailto:support@reg.ecovadis.com); [support@survey.ecovadis.com](mailto:support@survey.ecovadis.com); [info@inv.ecovadis.com](mailto:info@inv.ecovadis.com); and [info@platform.ecovadis.com](mailto:info@platform.ecovadis.com).*

Q: Is this actually relevant to my industry/my small company?

A: Yes! As long as your company is a for-profit entity, it can and should participate. The assessment process will be customized to your company's size, industry, and location, and you will obtain a CSR scorecard that is relevant, actionable, and comparable to other companies similar to yours. Your company is not expected to have the answers to all the questions. Not having certain answers does not necessarily mean you will not score well.

Q: What if my company gets a bad score?

A: First, note that the EcoVadis scoring scale (0-100) has different standards from what many of us saw in grade school. The average score for all 70,000 rated companies is about 43 out of 100, and obtaining a score of 75 out of 100 is exceptionally good! More importantly, Fairfax County does not intend for this to be a pass/fail exercise. The scorecard will be a toolset for your company to learn where it stands and how it can become more sustainable. We want to understand the overall sustainability performance of our supply chain, and then collaborate with our suppliers to improve performance as needed.

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