



HEAD OF STANDARDS SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT at the Sustainable Fibre Alliance (SFA)

UK (remote-based)

OVERVIEW

Post Title: Head of Standards System Development

Salary Range: Competitive

Hours: 35 hours per week (*flexible working considered*)

Contract Length: Permanent (*following a 3-month trial period*)

Responsible To: Chief Operations Officer

Location: UK (*remote-based*)

Date Issued: 9th April 2026

Applications Due By: 22nd April 2026

Start Date: ASAP

JOB CONTEXT

The Sustainable Fibre Alliance (SFA) is a non-profit international organisation working with the extended cashmere supply chain, from herders to retailers, to promote a global sustainability standard for cashmere. Our vision is a responsible & inclusive global natural fibres sector that safeguards the health and well-being of people, animals and the environment. Founded in 2015, we are a standards-holding and capacity-building organisation with offices in the UK, Mongolia and China. Our SFA Animal Fibre Standard offers a holistic, evidence-based sustainability standard for cashmere and other animal-based fibres that is both global in focus and locally adaptable. The SFA is entering a pivotal stage of its development, and we are committed to ensuring our standards are robust, transparent and in line with best practice. The Head of Standards System Development role will lead the continued evolution and improvement of our standards system and supporting services with passion, credibility and technical innovation.

ABOUT THE ROLE

As Head of Standard System Development, you will be responsible for leading the development and ensuring credibility is maintained in the structure and implementation of the SFA Standard System (SFA standards, guidance, assurance system, chain of custody and claims).

Specifically, you will lead the standard development processes, ensuring strong multi-stakeholder engagement, including producers, members and relevant committees. You will be accountable for the refinement and future-proofing of our assurance systems, which includes certification and accreditation processes. A focus on proactive and constructive communication, engagement and relationship-building with SFA stakeholders is required for all aspects of the role.

You will work closely with the SFA's country offices to ensure global consistency in the standards system where required, alongside country-specific interpretation and approach that maintains the system's credibility. You will be responsible for quality control and integrity of system documentation, including all SFA standards and accompanying materials.

ACCOUNTABILITY

The Head of Standard System Development will report to and be supported by the SFA Chief Operations Officer.

The Head of Standard System Development currently has two direct reports – the Training & Assurance Manager and the Standards Manager.

Critically, the role is also responsible for matrix management of key standards roles in the Mongolia and China offices, to ensure close collaboration across the organisation, alongside global consistency and local applicability in the SFA standards.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Lead the development and maintenance of the SFA Standard System: ensure all elements align and incorporate traditional knowledge with the latest scientific, technical and legislative elements, resulting in credible and robust standards that drive on-the-ground impact and add value to producers and the supply chain.
- Drive and develop the universe of materials necessary for the strong functioning of the standards system, including guidance and auditing systems, policies, procedures, training and reporting.
- Lead and facilitate all stakeholder outreach related to standard reviews and system development.
- Keep abreast of textile market developments and the competitor landscape to ensure the standard remains relevant and sought-after in the market.
- Ensure the Standard System is in line with ISEAL membership requirements and drive the progress required for the SFA to become compliant with the ISEAL Code of Good Practice.
- Engage other standard setters to explore potential interoperability, synergies and partnerships.
- Provide people-centred leadership to your team, and more broadly across the organisation.

SKILLS & EXPERIENCE

Required:

- A comprehensive and expert understanding of voluntary sustainability standards systems and chain of custody programmes, and their strategic development and implementation (preferably within ISEAL member organisations).
- Demonstrable experience in leading multi-stakeholder standard development.
- Expertise in chain of custody, traceability and claims management.
- A passion for interconnecting issues in the animal welfare, sustainability, and textile and apparel landscapes.
- Excellent interpersonal, communication and management skills and high cultural sensitivity.
- Strong leadership skills, able to inspire your colleagues and clients with a passion for action.
- Excellent project management skills, including handling, directing, and prioritising multiple assignments/projects with a keen attention to detail.
- Budget-management experience.
- Comfort with public speaking, recordings and delivering presentations.
- Bachelor's degree or equivalent experience in environmental management, supply chain management or other relevant field.
- Excellent data skills and a willingness to learn new systems.
- Fluency in English.
- Experience working in multi-cultural contexts.
- Willingness to travel in the UK and internationally if required.



Desirable:

- Experience working in the animal fibre, textiles and apparel industries.
- Knowledge of the legal and policy landscapes and developments around sustainability in the textiles industry.
- Interest in and understanding of IT and technologies used in project management, chain of custody and traceability systems and CRM systems (e.g., Salesforce, Chainpoint).
- Postgraduate degree or equivalent experience in relevant field.
- Experience or language skills associated with working in Mongolia and/or China.

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

We're looking for applicants who are professional, approachable and organised. This post would suit someone who is self-sufficient and able to work on their own initiative in a way that supports SFA staff and stakeholders in the pursuit of SFA's objectives.

A multi-tasker and strategic thinker who has a thorough and methodical approach to work, with great attention to detail and is calm under pressure. Being a small and collaborative team, we seek a team player who is flexible, takes initiative and has a positive, can-do attitude.

TO APPLY

To apply for this role, please send an email marked 'Vacancy: Head of Standards', including your CV and a cover letter, to jobs@sustainablefibre.org by 22nd April 2026.

Please note that applications will be considered on a rolling basis.

First round interviews are provisionally scheduled for w/c 4th May and will be conducted remotely using Teams.

We thank all applicants for their interest; however, please note that we cannot provide feedback to candidates who are unsuccessful in being shortlisted for interview.

HIRING STATEMENT

The Sustainable Fibre Alliance is committed to building a diverse and inclusive team. We are committed to attracting, developing and retaining exceptional people, and to creating a work environment that is dynamic, rewarding and enables each of us to realise our potential. Our work environment is safe and open to all employees and partners, respecting the full spectrum of race, colour, religious creed, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, political affiliation, ancestry, age, disability, genetic information, and other classifications. Please be informed that by applying for this position, you automatically accept our Data Protection Information on processing your personal data.