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The GRI Partnership for ISO 26000

ISO has embarked on its first ever multi-stakeholder standard-setting process with the aim of creating the ISO 26000 Guideline for Social Responsibility. Scoping work on this began in 2004, technical began in 2005, and the results are expected in 2008.

The ISO 26000 Guidance Standard has the potential to provide much needed guidance for organizations and their stakeholders in the complex area of codes, norms, standards, and tools in the area of Social Responsibility. However, the ISO Guidance Standard will not be developed in a vacuum. In order to be of value the new ISO initiative should provide guidance that fits with, and adds to, the various codes, norms, standards, and tools that have been anchored in international and national law or that have been adopted widely around the world on a voluntary basis. Duplication would add to the high levels of confusion in this complex field and add to the costs of organizations and their stakeholders that are trying to make sense of it all. ISO challenge is to promote convergence between codes, norms, standards, and tools that are already widely used, while innovating in new areas.

GRI is therefore keen to make its contribution to the ISO 26000 process with a view to seeing a future ISO Guideline on Social Responsibility that adds value to the current collection of standards, tools and initiatives. In order to achieve this the ISO multi-stakeholder process must be credible and robust. GRI has welcomed ISO's invitation to get involved directly in the process over the next few years. GRI is invited to be represented in four of the technical working groups that were convened to create this Guideline, specifically:

- The Chair's Advisory Group to the ISO Working Group on Social Responsibility
- ISO 26000 Task Group 1 - Funding and Stakeholder Engagement
- ISO 26000 Task Group 5 - "Core Context" (Structure of the Guideline)
- ISO 26000 Task Group 6 - "How" (Content of the Guideline)

The ISO process will be complex and time consuming. In order to make an effective contribution GRI is aiming to involve two of its close associates who are expert in this field:

- [Paul Hohnen](#), former GRI Strategic Director and current GRI Associate to sit on the Chair's Advisory Group, and Task Group 1.
- William Blackburn, long time sustainability reporting practitioner and expert, and current GRI Stakeholder Council member to sit on Task Groups 5 and 6.

With their direct engagement GRI would have an effective capacity to contribute effectively to the ISO process and to ensure that its experience and expertise is optimally used to develop an ISO 26000 Guidance Standard for Social responsibility that adds value for the future users of the GRI Sustainability Reporting Guidelines and the new ISO Guidance Standard.

Join the GRI Partnership for ISO 26000

The *GRI Partnership for ISO 26000* was designed to bring together organizations that share an interest in the GRI and in the successful development of ISO-26000 and who are keen to stay closely up-to-date on progress.

Partnership members will get direct access to the experiences of GRI delegates in regular telephone conferences and written reports outlining progress made and seeking input on key issues and questions.

Organizations joining the Partnership are invited to contribute €5000 per year over three years, for a total of €15000 to support our effort towards the ISO-26000 process. This contribution can be paid in one upfront contribution or in three installments spread evenly over 2005-2008. This will enable GRI to dedicate top professionals to the process, effectively prepare and attend the meetings.

The following briefing provides more information on the process, GRI's position and interests in the process, and how GRI plans to engage with your help. For further questions or to discuss joining the partnership please contact James Murphy (murphy@globalreporting.org).

Related Links

- [GRI and ISO](#)
- [Financial support](#)