

SITES SUBMISSION AND CERTIFICATION PROCESS

****Please read entire document before submitting for your first review****

Contact Us

- ❑ Please email all questions or requests to sites@gbci.org and include the SITES Project ID number in the subject line.

Preparing Documentation for your Application

SITES Platform

- ❑ **Use Dropbox for project submission.** A specific folder in Dropbox is provided to each project as the file sharing platform where the application form and documentation will be saved and submitted.
 - The Project Administrator listed in SITES Online is invited to access the Dropbox folder. Email sites@gbci.org with any team members you would like to add to this folder, and we will happily add them (please provide names and email addresses).
 - GBCI staff will not access this folder until you email sites@gbci.org stating that the project is ready for a review.
 - Note, SITES Online is not used for uploading or reviewing documentation. It is mainly for registration purposes (entering basic project information and for payment transactions).

General Guidelines for Documentation

- ❑ **Refer to the “Submittal Documentation”** section in the *SITES v2 Reference Guide* for all prerequisites and attempted credits for what to document for compliance.
- ❑ **SITES worksheets, templates and calculators** are templates provided by GBCI to be used for certain SITES credits. These are available in two locations: a project’s SITES Online account within the “Resources” tab and the project’s Dropbox folder under “SITES submittal templates_worksheets”. Submit the completed SITES v2 worksheets and calculators in Excel format. Place completed worksheets in the corresponding prerequisite or credit folder in your project’s Dropbox folder.
- ❑ **Complete the *SITES Application form*** provided by GBCI (available in the project’s Dropbox folder). Include a short narrative description describing the approach the project took for each prerequisite and credit being attempted and complete all other relevant fields. Ensure it is clear to a reviewer which prerequisites/credits are being submitted for each review phase.
- ❑ **Provide clear and relevant documentation.** Each file name should be clearly labeled with the document name and the corresponding prerequisite or credit number, where applicable. Please do not ‘over submit’ beyond what GBCI is requiring unless it is to explain a special or unique circumstance.

Before Your First (Preliminary) Review:

- ☐ Confirm that the registration and certification fees have been paid by checking the project's SITES Online account or emailing sites@gbci.org.
- ☐ Verify that the certification agreement has been signed and emailed to sites@gbci.org.

When Your Project is Ready for a Review:

- ☐ Email sites@gbci.org to state that the project application is completed, and all documentation is uploaded to Dropbox, and ready for a review. For the first (Preliminary) review, ensure the *SITES Application form* indicates which of the following two review paths your team will pursue. Note, there is no additional charge for either review path chosen.
 - The **Standard review path** is where you'll submit your entire application (i.e., all the prerequisites and credits the project is pursuing). The project will have one Preliminary review and one Final review.
 - The **Split review path** allows you to submit part of your application at the end of your project's design phase (Split Design) and the rest at the end after construction is completed (Split Construction). It is at the project's discretion which credits to submit for the 'Split Design' review, however, do not submit Section 7 or 8 credits in this review phase. For the 'Split Construction' review, projects can submit all other remaining prerequisites and credits. Note, the 'Split Design' review and 'Split Construction' review will each offer a Preliminary and Final review.
 - Note that for each review path selected (Standard or Split), each prerequisite and credit will have two rounds of review at most unless a project is submitting a credit for the first time in the final review (i.e., Standard Final review or Split Construction Final review).

Preliminary Review

Folder organization

- ☐ The folder labeled "Preliminary Submittal" is for the first or preliminary application. Within this folder are separate folders for each prerequisite and credit. Upload the required documentation for prerequisites and the credits being attempted for that review.
- ☐ The folder labeled "General" is for the following information.
 - Completed *SITES Application Form*. In this form, it is important to be clear on which credits the project is attempting and submitting for that review phase.
 - General documents, such as project drawings, plans, and narratives (that may be referenced in multiple credits) can be uploaded to the "General" folder. Worksheets that cover multiple credits (e.g., Materials Worksheet) may also be uploaded once in the "General" folder and teams should clearly reference this in the *SITES Application Form*.
- ☐ You will not be able to add/remove/edit files in your Dropbox folder while the project is under review. The folder will be placed under "View Only" access while the project is undergoing review.

Review process

- ☐ GBCI will relay the anticipated return date to the Project Administrator upon submission. GBCI reviews take approximately 20-25 business days.
- ☐ GBCI will review all information submitted via the Dropbox folder and make a preliminary ruling on each credit and prerequisite (typically marked as “earned” or “pending”). Feedback known as “Technical Advice” will be provided in the review report when credits are marked ‘pending’.
- ☐ You will receive an email with the Preliminary Review Report when complete. It is recommended but not required that projects submit for final review within 25 business days.
- ☐ Your team may choose to accept the results of your preliminary review (and skip the final review) or provide clarifications and submit for final review.

Final Review

Folder organization

- ☐ The folder labeled “Final Submittal” is for any clarifications to ‘pending’ credits (based on any “Technical Advice” in the previous review report). Be sure to create individual folders for the prerequisites and credits that are submitted for a second (final) Review. Upload documentation as requested. New credits may be submitted for review at this time but note that for ‘Standard Final’ or ‘Split Construction Final’ reviews, these credits would only receive one round of review.
- ☐ Include an updated *SITES Application Form* including associated narratives describing which credit(s) have new or revised information. In this form, it is important to be clear on which credits the project is submitting for that specific review phase.
- ☐ You will not be able to add/remove/edit files in your Dropbox folder while under review. The folder will be placed under “View Only” access while the project is undergoing review.

Review process

- ☐ GBCI will relay the anticipated return date to the Project Administrator upon submission. GBCI reviews take approximately 20-25 business days.
- ☐ GBCI will review all new/revised information submitted via the “Final Submittal” folder in Dropbox and make a final ruling on each credit and prerequisite. Credits that receive two rounds of review and have not clearly demonstrated compliance will receive a final ruling of “not approved”.
- ☐ You will receive an email with the Final Review Report when complete. You will have the opportunity to accept the results as final, or appeal individual credit rulings that are “not approved” for a fee.
- ☐ Certified projects will be connected with GBCI Marketing and Communication for promotion and all other next steps, including adding your project to the community of certified projects on the SITES website!