



Image: TÜV Rheinland ©

Questions and answers about SMETA Sedex audits

We have answered some of the most frequently asked questions about Sedex audits in the widely-used SMETA format. **Contact us to learn more!**

1. WHAT ARE THE SMETA CRITERIA?

SMETA stands for Sedex Members Ethical Trade Audit and is one of the most widely used ethical audit formats in the world. It combines the best practices in the field of corporate social responsibility. The concept describes a methodology based on the Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) Base Code. Audits in the SMETA format focus as much on labor conditions and occupational safety as on environmental standards and ethical business practices.

The latest version debuted in April 2017, with SMETA 6.0 becoming the standard implementation as of June 2017. The basic structure and fundamental principles remain unchanged, but now the audit incorporates issues such as temporary work and human rights.

2. WHAT IS THE ETI BASE CODE?

The ETI Base Code is a fundamental set of principles guiding the Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) and its members. The Base Code lays out minimum standards for participating companies. This codex includes topics such as the right to self-determination in employment contracts, health and safety at the workplace, or the ban on child labor. Companies applying the ETI Base Code should also abide by national and any other applicable laws.

3. WHAT IS SEDEX?

Sedex is short for Supplier Ethical Data Exchange. The Sedex database is a widely recognized online platform where registered companies openly share information about their social and ethical performance. [Sedex audits](#) are usually conducted on the basis of SMETA guidelines.

4. WHAT ARE THE STEPS IN AN AUDIT?

1. Submit a self-evaluation form

All applicants are required to complete a self-evaluation form before we begin with our Sedex audit. Forms are filled out by the sites to be audited.

2. Conduct a Sedex audit on site

Our auditors visit the sites to be audited. An auditing team assesses the extent to which your social management documentation meets the SMETA criteria. The duration of any given audit depends on the number of employees and locations.

3. Issue a report and CAPR

Once the Sedex audit is done, our auditors create a corrective action plan for you along with a detailed audit report (SMETA Report & CAPR), which you can now upload to the Sedex database. Once completed, you may opt to review your Sedex audit with us.

5. WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF A SEDEX AUDIT?

- Improve your image by showing your customers and partners that you are committed to the principles of ethically and socially responsible business.
- Sedex offers internationally recognized and globally applicable audit formats: Save time and money by avoiding duplicate audits and certifications by other standards.
- Stand out from the competition with neutral evidence of your corporate citizenship.
- Mitigate risks in the fields of social responsibility and sustainability.
- Drive the continual improvement of your supplier relations.

6. WHO CONDUCTS THESE SEDEX AUDITS?

Auditors who want to conduct these types of ethical audits can register with the Sedex database, either through simple membership as a freelance auditor or by becoming a full member of the Sedex Audit Company Group. Interested parties can use the platform to find a suitable auditor for their company.

7. HOW CAN MY COMPANY JOIN THE SEDEX DATABASE?

You can join the Sedex database by performing a SMETA-guided Sedex audit in your company. After a successful audit, you have the chance to register with the Sedex platform, where you can share your SMETA reports with other members and your customers. You will be asked to complete a self-evaluation form, and then someone from the business development team will contact you by phone to determine your membership category.

8. WHAT CATEGORIES ARE THERE FOR SEDEX-REGISTERED COMPANIES?

The Sedex database registers its members in the following categories:

Buyer (A) Members:

For companies managing their own suppliers on the Sedex database, such as retailers at the end of a supply chain.

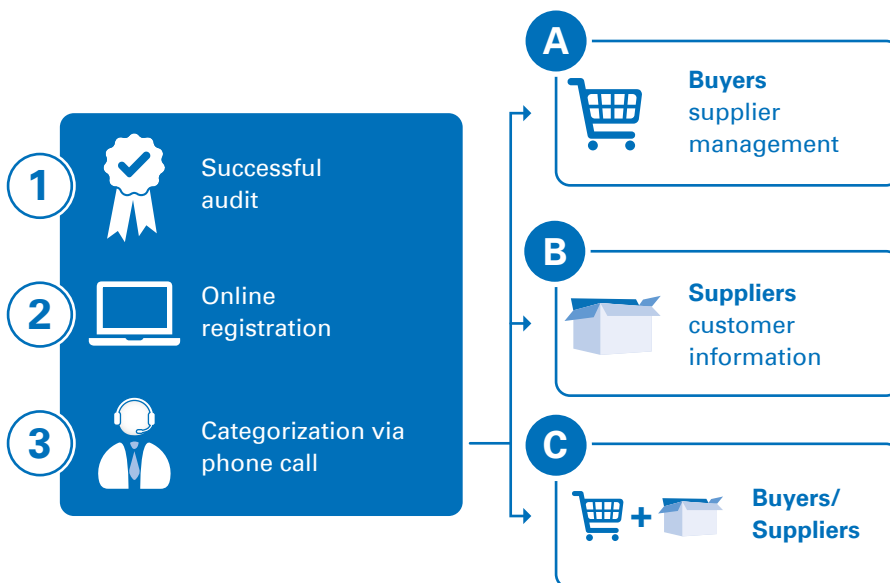
Supplier (B) Members:

For companies required to publish their Sedex reports to the database, such as producers at the beginning of a supply chain.

Buyer/Supplier (AB) Member:

For companies that manage reporting from their own suppliers but also provide their own reports to buyers, such as trading or processing firms in the middle of a supply chain.

HOW TO JOIN THE SEDEX DATABASE



9. WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF JOINING THE SEDEX DATABASE?

Membership credibly demonstrates to your customers and partners that your work is compliant with the principles of ethically and socially sustainable production methods. Additionally, the platform produces valuable insights into labor conditions along your supply chain, supporting you with the administrative effort. Buyers can use the Sedex database to productively manage their supply chains in accordance with the principles of Sedex, thereby reducing their risks. The Sedex platform has a significant positive impact on the improvement of ethically responsible business practices across the entire value chain.

YOUR QUESTION WAS NOT ANSWERED HERE? WOULD YOU LIKE A CUSTOMIZED NONBINDING PROPOSAL FOR YOUR CERTIFICATION? CONTACT US TO LEARN MORE!

[ONLINE CONTACT](#)