



Better Stands reusable stands framework opens to global industry

Now hosted by Net Zero Carbon Events and supported by IFES

Thessaloniki, 6 June 2025

Better Stands is now open to the entire global events industry, meaning the framework can now be adopted by all organisers, service providers, venues and associations around the world.

Better Stands promotes, drives and celebrates the transition from single use to reusable stands. It encourages best practices that enable reusable stands to deliver cost savings, greater efficiency and particularly make stands more sustainable.

It has today (6 June 2025) been launched as a worldwide initiative to be supported by the International Federation of Exhibition & Event Services (IFES) and hosted by Net Zero Carbon Events (NZCE). The launch was announced at the UFI European Events Week in Thessaloniki, Greece.

Better Stands is stewarded by a Steering Committee of 13 organisations, representing organisers, service contractors, assessors, venues and associations who have trialled the initiative.

The concept for Better Stands was created by Informa and has been piloted by a group of organisers since 2023. This pilot was extended to a group of service providers, assessors and others in 2024. To date, Better Stands has been successfully implemented at over 400 events in more than 37 countries.

Better Stands operates by providing a consistent framework to measure the reusability of event stands, setting classification criteria according to how much of a stand or booth is reusable or recyclable. Stands can achieve Bronze, Silver or Gold Better Stands level, recognising and celebrating the work and commitment of exhibitors and stand contractors to sustainability. This status can be achieved either through a Pre-

Certification process, where contractors gain recognition for their reusable build methods ahead of the event, or via onsite assessments conducted by trained assessors during the event itself. More than 50,000 stands have so far been assessed under the Better Stands criteria in the development stage of the initiative.

James Rees, President of the Joint Meetings Industry Council, which hosts Net Zero Carbon Events on behalf of the conference, exhibition and business event industries worldwide, said: “The Better Stands Steering Committee deserve tremendous praise and great appreciation from the industry worldwide for pioneering this initiative and developing it so successfully in a very short time.”

“The pilot period of Better Stands has rapidly demonstrated that it has enormous potential to make a major contribution to the industry’s drive to reduce its carbon emissions substantially. By combining the Better Stands and Net Zero Carbon Events initiatives we will be able to use JMIC’s global network to reach many more exhibition and congress organisers, stand and service contractors, exhibitors and venues enabling everyone to better understand the measurable benefits they will bring.”

Jörg Zeissig, IFES President, commented “IFES is in the role of being responsible for the execution and further development of Better Stands with a balanced and united group of industry leaders forming a Steering Committee. We are proud of the Better Stands initiative that gives us the opportunity to unite the industry by providing easy solutions for an ecosystem that drives innovation and value adds to all stakeholders in the event and exhibition industry by promoting reusable resources at all events globally. The beauty of Better Stands within the NZCE is the neutral ground, ease of usability, open source and the potential to become a global standard to compare apples to apples.”

Chris Skeith OBE, CEO & Managing Director of UFI – The Global Association of the Exhibition Industry said “Better Stands fosters collaboration among organisers, venues, contractors, and exhibitors to drive sustainability and set a new standard for future-ready exhibitions. Under the Net Zero Carbon Events initiative, this shift towards reusable stands also boosts creativity, cost-efficiency, and smarter resource use across the industry. UFI is proud to support this important initiative and looks forward to continuing to do so.”

Ben Wielgus, Head of Sustainability at Informa commented: “Better Stands has already worked at hundreds of events worldwide. The Framework, created over several years and tested in more than 30 countries, offers straightforward approaches to understanding the reusability of the elements of exhibition stands and celebration for those exhibitors and service providers who already meet future customer demands. We’re really excited for this next stage of its growth, leveraging NZCE’s global scale to increase the efficiency, sustainability and commerciality of events of all shapes and sizes. This is an invitation to the whole industry – join us, explore the opportunities the programme creates and help grow Better Stands as the international standard.”

Natalie Wing, Commercial Director, GES EMEA said “At GES, we look after the infrastructure of some of the biggest events in the industry. We're constantly looking at ways we can reduce our impact, use and re-use resources, and be smarter with environmental design; it's central to our own Net Zero commitment.

“Better Stands helps us collaborate even closer with our industry peers to find best practices, share data, and give reassurance to customers across the event ecosystem. We're delighted to give it our full support and encourage other businesses to do likewise. This is a shared, industry-wide ambition that we can achieve better together.”

Ellen Osborne, ESG Manager – Clarion Events commented: “Clarion Events joined Better Stands as connecting people more sustainably is a business imperative for us. Better Stands offered a proven way to exhibit more sustainably while aligning the industry around a consistent, credible framework. It lets us track progress, reinforce positive behaviours, and move faster - together.”

Johannes Siems, Founding Partner & CSO, DIFER - Event Crafting, says: “Better Stands is the platform which the service provider will greatly appreciate seeing that it not only helps you to train your staff and change your business vision, but also makes your client happy due to an improved end result. And all of this under one umbrella organisation which will result in straight forward demands being able to be met globally, whatever the size of your company may be. It is a great step forward for the whole industry and will greatly improve the way stands will be built and perceived in the future. DIFER - Event Crafting is very proud to be a part of this new way of thinking and highly recommends all of our peers to join.”

<https://betterstands.org/>

<https://netzerocarbonevents.org>

<https://www.themeetingsindustry.org/>

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Note to editors

The organisations who have partnered in the development of Better Stands include: 4 for everything, Abraxys, BEST, BLG, Clarion Events, DIFER – Event Crafting, ESSA, Faversham House, Galis, GES, The Hong Kong Exhibition & Convention Industry Association (HKECIA), Holtmann, Hyve, IBC, International Federation of Exhibition & Event Services (IFES), IMEX Group, Informa, ISE, JA, Joint Meetings Industry Council (JMIC), Meplan, Messe Frankfurt UK, Montgomery Events, Opt-Safe, RAI, Raccoon Media, Realis Design, Reset Connect, Re-Think, Solutions2, Terrapinn and UFI.

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