



## **Green Productions Innovation Institute Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Q: What is the Green Products Innovation Institute?**

**A:** The Green Products Innovation Institute, Inc. (“GPII”) is a non-profit organization based in California focused on transforming the making and consumption of things into a regenerative force for the planet. The Institute uses design, based on the laws of nature, to help industry create products that are safe for people and the environment.

The GPII was founded in December 2009 by a group of design, science, industry, government, environmental and sustainability professionals. It is supported by California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and advances the framework outlined in “*Cradle to Cradle*,” the seminal book by architect and designer William McDonough and chemist Dr. Michael Braungart.

### **Q: How will the GPII achieve its mission?**

**A:** The GPII, using the Cradle to Cradle® (C2C) certification protocol, will work with leaders from academia, the NGO environmental community, government and industry to establish a rating system for evaluating products. Products that meet the transparent criteria of this rating system will receive the C2C certification mark representing the company’s work to sustainably design or redesign these products.

To help companies obtain certification, the Institute will train and certify licensed assessors, who will assist companies in complying with the protocol. Companies will submit their assessments to the Institute for auditing, and a certification will be issued if the product meets the pre-requisites. After the Institute has rated a given product, it will work with companies to voluntarily share information about the chemistry of their materials.

### **Q: What is the Cradle to Cradle framework?**

**A:** The Cradle to Cradle (C2C) framework is a paradigm shift to eliminate waste through innovative design. Developed in 1995 by architect William McDonough and chemist Dr. Michael Braungart, the framework posits that sustainable design, based on the laws of nature, can transform the consumer economy into a regenerative force. The C2C model provides a blueprint for redesigning products and ingredients to become nutrients, enabling old products to become the raw material for new goods and services.

### **Q: What will the Cradle to Cradle certification protocol be based on?**

**A:** The C2C certification (cm) will be based on the current certification developed by McDonough and Braungart with input from numerous stakeholders. MBDC (McDonough Braungart Design Chemistry) has given the certification mark along with the C2C protocols to the Institute, which will now be responsible for certifying the products in the United States. Companies from multiple industries, such as Herman Miller, Shaw Industries, Ford Motor Company, Method, and Aveda, have already demonstrated the viability and benefits of designing products according to the C2C framework. To date, more than 90 companies with over 300 products have engaged in the C2C certification process.

### **Q: How will the GPII use the framework and work with established governmental agencies?**

**A:** The GPII is collaborating with leading academics, NGOs, and industry members to expand alternatives assessment to the five Cradle to Cradle criteria: material health, take-back, renewable energy, clean water, and social fairness. The result will inform the California Department of Toxic Substances Control and the California Environmental Protection Agency as they provide companies, government and consumers with data on the toxicity characteristics of chemicals and materials used in products. The GPII will also augment governmental resources so that industry cannot only identify “chemicals of concern,” but also “positive” chemicals, materials and processes that could be used instead. The Institute’s goal is to work toward a positive list of alternatives, providing an open innovation platform available to the world.

### **Q: Who is behind the creation of the Institute?**

A: The GPII's creation is supported by Governor Schwarzenegger and the State of California, with co-founders William McDonough and Dr. Michael Braungart, who have gifted its certification mark along with the C2C protocols to the Institute. Other Founders' Circle members and supporters include Brad Pitt, Robert Kennedy, Jr., Terry Tamminen, Chad Hurley, Yves Behar, Wendy Schmidt, Julie Wrigley, Richard D. Kaplan and Jillian Manus. We are also graced with a phenomenally talented series of Advisors. Please see "SUPPORT" for more details.

**Q: Why is the Institute based in California?**

A: The GPII's headquarters will be in California due to California's forward-thinking environmental policies and Governor Schwarzenegger's bold commitment leadership as laid out in his Green Chemistry Initiative. The goal is to expand internationally.

**Q: What has Governor Schwarzenegger and the State of California done thus far to fulfill this commitment to a Cradle to Cradle economy?**

A: In 2005, Governor Schwarzenegger signed the nation's first law requiring disclosure of chemical ingredients in cosmetics. In 2006, he signed a law creating a bio-monitoring program to measure human exposure to chemicals. Then in 2008, he signed a landmark, first-in-the-nation green chemistry program into law that requires manufacturers to identify all harmful chemicals in the products they sell in California and to evaluate safer alternatives. This law also gave authority to California's Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) to take certain actions following an evaluation that range from "no action" to "restrictions or bans" giving the state the authority to prohibit the sale of products with chemicals that cause harm to humans or the environment.

**Q: How will the Institute expand to play an international role?**

A: The GPII will play an international role in two ways: first, the GPII in California will be the global reference standard for Cradle to Cradle certification (cm), with multiple other countries already interested in following suit. The C2C design principles are already informing major industrial redesign efforts by the governments of the Netherlands, Abu Dhabi and China. Our governance structure will allow for this model to be replicated throughout the world while the core tenets and metrics remain coherent. Second, California's green chemistry policies will have a worldwide impact because California, as the 8th largest economy, is one of the world's largest markets for goods. Manufacturers will be compelled to produce goods that the people of California are asking for – and we anticipate other states, and other countries, are closely behind.

**Q: How will the Institute help create jobs in California and across the globe?**

A: We believe if we follow the laws of nature, we can grow healthy systems – social, environmental, and financial. We cannot regulate our way out of toxic problems; we need partnerships – academia and industry, NGOs and communities – to create innovative solutions. This rethinking of how we design, manufacture and use products will spur a new era of research and innovation, driving economic growth and competition in all manner of materials, take-back programs, and the green chemistry sector as a whole. We are already seeing this with companies including Shaw Industries, Herman Miller, Steelcase, Aveda, Method and others, who are being financially rewarded for inventive solutions. They are showing companies around the world how to make well-designed products that promote human and ecological health; they are the pioneers of the new C2C economy.

**Q: How is the Institute funded?**

A: Initially, the Institute will be funded by private donations from organizations and individuals with the same core values as the Institute. After the Institute is established, it will be funded through training and product registration fees.

An initial grant has been generously provided by the DOEN Foundation in the amount of \$165,000, with additional grants pending. DOEN actively seeks pioneers who make a positive contribution to decrease the negative effects of human behavior on climate change, cultivating an open society based on solidarity and promoting a new economy. The Foundation was established in 1991 by the Dutch Postcode Lottery to generate funds for charity organizations dedicated to 'people' and the 'planet.' As well as issuing grants, DOEN also encourages entrepreneurship by issuing loans and guarantees, and by having a

participating interest in various companies. DOEN supports both small and larger initiatives that are compatible with the Institute's core values, namely sustainable, entrepreneurial and spirited.

Additionally, a grant has been promised by the J.M. Kaplan Fund. The J.M. Kaplan Fund was established in 1945 and has its focus on three program areas: environment, historic preservation and migrations.