



## 2025-26 VE National Human Resources Competition (Written) Support Guide

**Note:** The purpose of this guide is to assist you in your preparation for the 2025-26 National Human Resources Competition. This in-depth guide is being provided to assist facilitators and their firms when creating the written HR Competition submission. Examples are given throughout this body of work as suggestions, and are not designed to be the ideal or sole writings within your work. Firms should follow the [2025-26 National HR Competition Scoring Guide](#) for the most current criteria and required elements.

*The following sample excerpts have been adapted from past VE CSR submissions and are intended solely for educational reference. Company names and details have been fictionalized. Please note that the HR competition has been updated for this year, so actual sample submissions will not be available until the competition cycle concludes.*

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## Company Corporate Social Responsibility Mission and Standards (15%)

*How well does the company articulate its CSR mission and standards?*

- Provides a letter from the firm or a company representative, including a Corporate Social Responsibility mission that represents what the company stands for, but narrow enough to give direction for its CSR focus.
- Mission and letter should clearly convey what the company sells to the audience.

**Curriculum Task Alignment:** MGT-4, MGT-5, BR-1, BR-2

### Example:

Dear Pawfect Planet Community,

At Pawfect Planet, we believe that the way we treat our pets reflects how we care for our planet and each other. Our mission is to create a world as our pets see it - one filled with play, compassion, and care for every living being.

As a company that provides eco-friendly pet products, we are committed to promoting the health and happiness of pets, empowering people and communities, and protecting the environment we all share. We recognize that sustainability and social responsibility are not add-ons to our business; they are at the heart of everything we do.

Our Corporate Social Responsibility Mission is to:

- Promote Pet Health and Happiness: We partner with local shelters and animal health organizations to support adoption drives and provide wellness resources for pets and their owners.
- Empower People and Communities: We dedicate 5% of our annual profits to community grants that fund animal education programs and youth volunteer initiatives.
- Protect the Planet: Our packaging is made from polylactic acid (PLA), a biodegradable alternative to traditional plastics, ensuring our products bring joy without leaving a harmful footprint.

Through these efforts, Pawfect Planet aims to operate ethically, responsibly, and playfully, just as our pets would want. Together, we can build a future where every tail wags a little longer and every community thrives.

Warm regards,

The Pawfect Planet Team

Corporate Social Responsibility Department



## Core Values (15%)

*Does the company provide core values?*

- Explains 3-5 of the company's core values, demonstrating ethical and standard behavior within the company.
- Core values should include 1-2 sentences describing why the core value aligns with the company's mission and/or product/service.
- Core values should encompass all 3 pillars of corporate sustainability (environmental, social, economic).

**Curriculum Task Alignment:** HR-10

### Example:

At ThriveWell, our core values guide every decision we make and reflect our mission to promote health, wellness, and sustainability. These values define who we are as a company, how we treat others, and how we contribute to a healthier, more equitable world.

#### 1. Integrity and Inclusion

We act with honesty, transparency, and respect in all our interactions. ThriveWell fosters a workplace where every individual feels valued and empowered to contribute, regardless of background. This commitment to ethical business practices ensures we build trust with our customers, employees, and community partners.

#### 2. Environmental Stewardship

ThriveWell believes that wellness begins with a healthy planet. We've adopted internal environmental principles to ensure that sustainability is part of our daily operations, not just our products. Our offices and facilities use energy-efficient lighting and equipment, and all marketing materials are printed on 100% recyclable paper using eco-friendly inks. We also maintain a company-wide recycling program and encourage our employees to reduce waste through green office initiatives.

#### 3. Product Responsibility

We are dedicated to creating safe, effective, and inclusive fitness solutions. Every product we design, whether equipment or digital tools, is backed by research that prioritizes user health and well-being. This focus on quality and safety aligns directly with our mission to promote responsible wellness.

#### 4. Partnership for Progress

ThriveWell collaborates with suppliers and organizations that share our ethical and environmental commitments. We ensure our partners uphold fair labor standards and responsible sourcing practices, advancing sustainability across our supply chain.

#### 5. Employee Growth and Well-Being

We believe that a thriving company begins with thriving people. ThriveWell invests in professional development, wellness programs, and a supportive culture that encourages balance and innovation. When our employees are healthy and fulfilled, our company and community benefit.



## Industry Standards (10%)

*How well does the company align its Corporate Sustainability and Social Responsibility plan to CSR standards?*

- Cites and explains 2-3 relevant focus areas of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aligned with the company's CSR initiatives.
- Includes the relevant details of impact reports conducted from governmental or intergovernmental agencies in these focus areas.
- Identify 2 trends within the firm's industry that demonstrate action taken to achieve the SDGs.

**Curriculum Task Alignment:** HR-10

### Example:

At Frosty Scoop, we are committed to aligning our business practices with global sustainability standards while delivering high-quality, enjoyable ice cream products. Our Corporate Sustainability and Social Responsibility (CSR) plan focuses on initiatives that reflect both environmental and social stewardship in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

#### 1. Climate Action – SDG 13: Climate Action

Our offices and production facilities are powered primarily by solar energy, reducing our greenhouse gas emissions and energy costs. Frosty Scoop participates in local carbon-offset programs and has set a goal to reduce operational emissions by 20% over the next five years. The UN Environment Programme reports that small and medium food manufacturers that adopt renewable energy strategies significantly lower their carbon footprint and demonstrate leadership in climate action.

Industry Trend: Renewable energy adoption is becoming a key differentiator in the ice cream and broader food industry, with companies marketing their sustainability credentials to environmentally conscious consumers.

#### 2. Social Responsibility – SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

Frosty Scoop is dedicated to ethical labor practices and the well-being of our employees. We comply with all EEOC and local labor regulations, ensure fair wages, and maintain safe working conditions in production facilities. Additionally, Frosty Scoop allocates 1% of annual profits to Sweet Futures Foundation, a nonprofit supporting youth nutrition programs in underserved communities. Impact reports from similar nonprofit collaborations have shown measurable improvements in childhood nutrition and wellness in local areas, aligning our philanthropic efforts with measurable outcomes.

Through these initiatives, Frosty Scoop demonstrates that it is possible to deliver high-quality, delicious products while actively contributing to environmental protection, social equity, and industry sustainability. By aligning with SDGs, following recognized standards, and adopting key trends within the ice cream industry, Frosty Scoop sets an example for responsible business practices.



## CSR Goals (20%)

*Does the firm provide short and long-term goals to meet sustainability and social responsibilities?*

- Includes 3-5 Corporate Social Responsibility Goals which the company plans to achieve. Two should be short-term goals achievable within the fiscal year for the VE firm.
- Goals should follow the SMART framework.

**Curriculum Task Alignment:** FIN-22, HR-10

### Example:

At Verdant Threads, our mission is to create stylish, high-quality clothing while promoting environmental sustainability, social equity, and ethical business practices. To achieve this mission, we have developed clear short-term and long-term CSR goals:

#### Short-Term Goals:

1. **Sustainable Packaging:** By the end of the fiscal year, 100% of Verdant Threads' packaging (shopping bags, tags, and shipping materials) will be made from 100% recyclable or compostable materials.
2. **Local Community Engagement:** Within the next 12 months, Verdant Threads employees will participate in at least four community volunteer events, including clothing drives and local clean-up projects.

#### Long-Term Goals:

1. **Ethical Supply Chain:** Over the next three years, Verdant Threads will ensure that 100% of our suppliers adhere to fair labor practices and sustainable material sourcing, verified through annual supplier audits.
2. **Carbon Footprint Reduction:** Within five years, Verdant Threads will reduce operational greenhouse gas emissions by 25% by implementing energy-efficient lighting, reducing waste, and sourcing renewable energy for production facilities.
3. **Diversity and Inclusion:** By the end of three years, Verdant Threads will achieve gender and ethnic diversity representation across all departments that reflects the local community demographics.

By setting these short- and long-term goals, Verdant Threads demonstrates a clear commitment to responsible business practices, community engagement, and environmental stewardship, ensuring our brand grows sustainably and ethically while making a positive impact.



## Philanthropy & Volunteerism (20%)

*How well does the firm explain its initiatives to promote philanthropy and volunteerism in favor of its goals?*

- Explain 2-3 initiatives that the company takes to achieve its CSR goals.
- Note: A goal is a broad, long-term aim that the firm seeks to achieve. An initiative is a set of specific actions or programs undertaken to support or advance the CSR Goals. Examples include: allocating a percent of profits towards a specific nonprofit, providing x hours of volunteer services, including mental health days, or other.
- At least one initiative should be achievable during the fiscal year for the VE firm.
- Includes any relevant business partnerships to the VE firm. All partnerships should be with real, existing companies with verifiable documentation.

**Curriculum Task Alignment:** HR-10

### Example:

At ClearWave Technologies, our mission is to develop innovative cleaning solutions while promoting environmental stewardship, community well-being, and employee wellness. To advance our CSR goals, we implement specific initiatives that combine social impact with meaningful engagement for our team.

#### 1. Employee Wellness Initiative – Mental Health Day

To support the well-being of our employees, ClearWave Technologies designates one Mental Health Day per quarter, during which all staff are encouraged to step away from work to rest, recharge, or participate in wellness activities. This initiative helps foster a positive workplace culture, reduce stress, and maintain productivity, aligning with our CSR goal of prioritizing employee growth and well-being.

#### 2. Community Cleaning Partnerships – Environmental Stewardship

ClearWave partners with local organizations such as Keep America Beautiful and The Ocean Conservancy to organize monthly community clean-up events. Employees volunteer 2–3 hours each month to clean parks, beaches, and public spaces. These activities directly support our CSR goal of environmental sustainability and demonstrate tangible action in our local community.

#### 3. Educational Philanthropy Program

ClearWave donates 5% of annual profits to Science Buddies and other nonprofits promoting STEM education. We also host hands-on workshops for local high school students, teaching them about sustainable cleaning technologies and eco-friendly innovation. This initiative aligns with our long-term CSR goals of promoting ethical innovation and social impact, helping students gain knowledge and inspiration while fostering a pipeline of future environmentally conscious engineers.

Through these initiatives, ClearWave Technologies demonstrates a commitment to philanthropy, volunteerism, and employee well-being, ensuring our business contributes positively to both the environment and society while maintaining a supportive and responsible workplace culture.



## Organization & Design (10%)

*How well does the company organize and design the CSR plan?*

- Logical organization, well-designed and branded, free of errors, quality writing, and effective use of charts, graphs, or graphics. Includes applicable footnotes or citations to research.

**Curriculum Task Alignment:** DES-7

## Suggestions:

Think of your CSR plan like a story about your company. Make it easy to read and follow. Use clear headings, consistent fonts, and colors that match your company's brand to help guide the reader. Break up text with charts, graphs, or images where they make your points clearer or show data in a visual way. Take time to proofread so your writing is polished and professional. If you use facts, statistics, or ideas from research, cite them with footnotes or a reference section.





## Appendix (10%)

*How well does the appendix provide relevant information to demonstrate the firm's CSR policies?*

- Appendix includes relevant citations.
- Verification is provided for all partnerships.
- May include any other applicable documentation, such as a code of conduct, relevant reports.

### Example:

#### Appendix A – Partnership Verification

EcoPrint Co. (Brooklyn, NY): Local printing partner providing 100% recycled paper for packaging and marketing materials. Verified via company website: [www.ecoprintco.com](http://www.ecoprintco.com)

Clothing Cares Foundation: Nonprofit organization supporting youth clothing donation drives. Verification: Annual report 2024, [www.clothingcares.org](http://www.clothingcares.org)

#### Appendix B – Supplementary Documentation

Verdant Threads Code of Conduct – Outlines ethical business practices, employee expectations, and supplier standards.

CSR Impact Report (Fiscal Year 2024) – Summarizes progress toward environmental sustainability goals, including reduction of packaging waste and energy usage in facilities.

Sample Marketing Materials – Shows use of eco-friendly, recycled paper and plant-based inks.

#### Appendix C – References / Citations

United Nations. (2023). Sustainable Development Goals. <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

Environmental Protection Agency. (2023). Reducing Packaging Waste in Businesses. <https://www.epa.gov/smm/sustainable-management-materials>

Keep America Beautiful. (2024). Community Cleanup Programs Annual Report. <https://kab.org>