



## How BSI worked with Positive Luxury to help brands meet the highest sustainability standards

BSI and Positive Luxury formed a partnership to build the next generation of the Butterfly Mark Assessment, underpinned by best practice.



### The story at a glance

- The Covid-19 pandemic and the growing urgency of the climate crisis has pushed sustainability to the top of the global agenda.
- Positive Luxury is the company behind the Butterfly Mark – an independent accreditation mark of sustainability that is awarded to luxury brands that meet the highest standards of verified innovation and environmental performance.
- Working with Positive Luxury, BSI advised on and helped to develop the update of their sustainability certification scheme, with a focus on identifying the most relevant best practices and building these into the latest framework.
- Positive Luxury and BSI have now developed a longer-term partnership to help customer brands prepare for the assessment, identify opportunities, and prioritize actions, along with future evolution of the framework.
- Underpinned by BSI's expertise, the Butterfly Mark scheme not only has a positive impact on the planet – it can also boost the bottom line of the businesses that take part.

### The starting-point

Sustainability has risen to the top of the global agenda, as the Covid-19 pandemic and the climate crisis accelerate the need to create a different and better world.

This change is driven by the younger generations, who want businesses to improve their relationship with the planet and prove their commitment to environmental and social issues. "Generation Z align their values to brands and they will walk away if those brands are not doing the right thing," says Martin Townsend, BSI Global Head of Sustainability and Circular Economy.

Luxury brands are inherently more sustainable, as they value quality over quantity in their design, materials, and processes. The luxury industry has the capability to make changes that can lead the way in how brands source, design and craft their products – as well as influence consumer behaviour and their purchasing decisions.

Positive Luxury was established in 2011 with the aim of engaging luxury brands in caring for the environment. It created the Butterfly Mark as an accredited certification for brands who meet the highest sustainability standards. It is a growing community of over 150 global organizations, from Dior Couture and Krug, to Anya Hindmarch and IWC.

The Butterfly Mark certification is built around an ESG+ framework (Environmental, Social, Governance, and Innovation) and is in consultation with a panel of experts at the Positive Luxury Sustainability Council, which includes the British Standards Institution (BSI).



“It’s incredibly important for us to have valuable partnerships like BSI to build this framework, it means the framework is governed by guidelines, legislation and best practice. It ensures that the assessment and the outcome of it is fair, transparent and based on tangible points of proof.”

Amy Nelson-Bennett,  
Co-CEO, Positive Luxury

## The challenge

Positive Luxury wanted to maximize the positive impact of their client brands over the next few crucial years, particularly as it’s good for business as well as the planet. “When we measure the impact of businesses who’ve invested in sustainability, two-thirds of them see an economic benefit to their business within three to five years,” says Co-CEO Amy Nelson-Bennett.

The company needed to revise the Butterfly Mark framework in a way that would help its customers put sustainability strategy right at the heart of their organizations. But luxury brands face a complex array of challenges when trying to ensure the sustainability of their direct activities and their supply chains. They also need a continuous improvement mindset, challenging established practices and constantly finding new ways to drive positive change. And as no two companies are identical, a one-size-fits-all assessment wouldn’t work.

Importantly, Positive Luxury did not want to create just another certification scheme but rather an insightful, data-driven tool that

companies could use to understand their true sustainability impact and compare with their peers. The scheme needed to be robust and remove the ability to manipulate or allow for “greenwashing” from businesses.

## The solution

### A next-generation scheme

BSI worked with Positive Luxury, providing strategic advice and leveraging BSI’s expertise in best practice and certification schemes to build this next-generation sustainability assessment. Together, Positive Luxury and BSI developed:

- A long-term plan to drive the objectives of the Butterfly Mark through an evolving framework including customer testing continual improvement
- A new assessment built around ESG+ (Environment, Social, Governance and Innovation) that included:
  - Categorization of sustainability issues relevant to the luxury sector;

- Creating standardized questions, focused on data and automation to reduce human interventions, leverage relevant best practices and set out in a digital, user friendly application;
- Robust scoring methodologies ensuring a required base level of performance all round must be achieved with relevant prioritisation of key topics; and
- Setting the target levels of compliance to be awarded the butterfly mark
- A plan for the roll-out of the new scheme, including communications and market engagement

Key to the revised framework was its customization to each company according to its activity or vertical, turnover, and the location of its operations and supply chain. This level of customization is what makes the assessment truly 'next generation'. Instead of treating all businesses as identical, the framework assigns each brand a bespoke collection of Positive Actions that signifies their unique efforts, illustrating their sustainable and ethical business practices in a simple and consumer-friendly way. This allows them to become more effective and efficient at sustainability in a way that works for them.

### An advisory service for brands

BSI is also continuing to work in partnership with Positive Luxury to provide a consultancy service to help luxury brands that are preparing for Butterfly Mark certification or looking to drive the recommendations from having undertaken the scheme.

Depending on where a company is in the journey, this can include:

- **Readiness:** workshop and materiality analysis to help prepare for the Butterfly Mark assessment
- **Strategic planning:** discovery workshops, sustainability objectives and strategy
- **Programme development:** gap assessments, roadmaps, policies, capability building and metrics
- **Monitoring and reporting:** life cycle assessments, auditing, accounting, analytics and reporting

## The result

The expertise provided by BSI ensures that the Butterfly Mark assessment is rigorous, independent and reflects the latest best practice and standards.

The updated framework helps businesses to develop and implement a tailored, progressive, action-oriented sustainability strategy – making it a valuable tool for growing their brand equity and financial health.

One of the objectives for BSI is to simplify the sustainability journey, so the new framework is updated every six months. This means that when a business starts its sustainability journey with Positive Luxury, it can be confident that it is working with relevant data that will allow it to set goals in the knowledge that when they are achieved, the business will be at the absolute forefront of sustainability in luxury.

In addition, BSI's advisory service is helping luxury brands to:

- Identify standards and best practices that underpin sustainability approaches that help them achieve their business goals
- Set sustainability strategies that meet the Butterfly Mark assessment criteria
- Implement sustainability improvements leveraging international best practices
- Monitor, report on and continually improve sustainability performance to meet the Butterfly Mark criteria

## About the client

Since 2011, Positive Luxury has been helping brands adapt to the new sustainability economy. It established The Butterfly Mark, an industry-leading certification that highlights luxury businesses that are committed to having a positive impact on nature and society.

Positive Luxury supports its clients with independent certifications, expert advice and industry analysis, keeping them at the forefront of the world's rapid transition towards a sustainable future.

# Why BSI?

For over 100 years, our services and solutions have been helping organizations around the world to improve performance, build competence and support sustainable growth. Our mission is to share knowledge, innovation and best practice to help people and organizations make excellence a habit.

## Our aim

Our consultants can shape your strategies for standardization and business improvement; we can evaluate processes, practices and policies; or carry out market research and analysis.

We combine our analytic and consulting rigour, so that your organization can benefit from our deep expertise, cross-sector knowledge and an unmatched network of global contacts.

To learn more about how BSI's consulting team can help you create excellence for your organization and industry

[Talk to an expert](#)

Read more about Positive Luxury [here](#).



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