

CISL's impact: who we work with and why

CISL works globally to transform economic systems to build a sustainable and resilient future for people, nature and climate.

We aim to catalyse and lead change at pace and scale by working with organisations and individuals committed to take leadership and use their influence and reach for positive impact.

Delivering systems change at scale is complex. Most organisations and individuals today operate within deeply unsustainable business and economic models and practices.

In order to lead transformation, organisations and individuals need to change their own actions, rethink their purpose and performance, and work to change the system itself.

Systemic transformation looks ahead of today's mindsets, markets and needs to drive change right across the economy and wider society. Unlocking solutions to entrenched challenges requires bolder collaboration and innovation between business, finance, policy, technology and civil society.

Our work engages individuals and entrepreneurs alongside businesses, governments, financial institutions and civil society representatives, focusing on their shared potential to reshape economic, social and environmental systems.

How we drive systems change

CISL pursues four mutually reinforcing routes to impact in order to shape, scale and communicate a transformative agenda for people, nature and climate.



Foresight: We harness research and develop new ideas, evidence and resources to inform decision making and support transformation for sustainable business, finance and policy.



Education: We empower hundreds of organisations and thousands of individuals each year to take strategic leadership and action. Our challenging executive, digital and postgraduate programmes create pathways to share lessons learnt, serve as an exemplar, transform value chains and harness wider influence.



Convening: We engage with business, finance and governments across the world to develop future-fit ideas, norms and policies to support and accelerate systemic change, often working in consortia with aligned values and missions. Member organisations of our specialist leadership groups must have systemic, significant and material relevance to the group's goals, potential for influence, and willingness to collaborate to amplify impact.



Innovation: We incubate, support and catalyse new sustainability-focussed ventures and initiatives with purpose at their core, connecting them with an ecosystem of high-ambition partners to accelerate and scale their impact.

Our network – a global community for action - numbers over 30,000 people worldwide, providing a platform for long-term engagement and collaboration on shared challenges and opportunities.

How we make choices

We recognise there are challenging trade-offs when assessing the direct impact of engaging organisations as clients or partners and the wider potential consequences of such engagements.

The following objectives guide us – although not every collaboration will meet every objective:

- **Set a new bar for leadership** and action based on what's needed, not what's comfortable or limited by short-term commercial horizons.
- **Create positive exemplars** for others to follow, and catalyse the development of **new, scalable solutions**.
- Work with those best placed to **influence or drive wider change**, including through policy, regulation, societal and industry norms and narratives, and innovation.
- **Address the dynamics between economic actors** to unlock systems change, rather than working with separate actors in siloed ways.

We apply **core principles** to guide decisions on who we work with:

- we assess organisations' ambition in relation to both their direct and indirect impacts as well as their openness to change.
- we are open to work with organisations that don't yet have a strong leadership position if we believe they have the commitment and potential to change and develop in order to lead positive impact for the future, or that they can play a critical role in unlocking wider change.
- we are likely to decline work with some sectors because of sector-wide challenges, but we may make exceptions if we believe an engagement is essential to drive transformation and are reassured that the net impact of that engagement will be positive.
- we will generally decline work with organisations who:
 - have no clear pathway or ambition to transform themselves to play a positive role in a sustainable economy.
 - have no realistic prospect of developing such a pathway or ambition by engaging with CISL.
 - are locked into commitments incompatible with transformation and are unwilling to reconsider these.
 - act in ways counter to, or which undermine, their public commitments or the impact of their work with CISL.
 - have no openness or commitment to change.

Our **evaluation of an organisation's commitment to sustainability** includes their governance, targets and commitments, their track record, public statements, and other factors as appropriate.

CISL's work with individuals is based on the principle that our open and accredited education programmes are available to all individuals from any region or sector, provided they meet applicable selection criteria. Where we have more applicants than places, we consider a range of factors including their potential for positive impact.

We are committed to make high quality education available and accessible at scale. CISL has therefore built a portfolio of online courses to enable thousands of students to build their individual understanding and capabilities without the associated costs and travel required for in-person learning.