



## Abt Global

### 2024 Organizational Leadership Awardee

Abt Global (Abt) is a mission-driven consulting and research firm. For almost 60 years, Abt has tackled society's toughest problems, pioneering evidence and innovation that improves policy, systems, and lives. We partner with clients and communities to advance solutions in health, technology, environment and climate change, and social policy—empowering people with the tools, resources, and expertise they need to realize equitable futures, build resilient systems, and create sustainable economic opportunities for healthy, secure lives.

Abt serves more than 50 countries and territories in the regions of Australia, Asia Pacific, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Americas, South and Central Asia, the Middle East and North Africa, and Sub-Saharan Africa. It is a privately held professional services firm headquartered in Rockville, Maryland U.S. The company has ten total corporate/co-working locations in the U.S., two in Australia, and one in the U.K.

Abt is being recognized for an Organizational Leadership Award for the following achievements, which took place during 2020-2023:

#### ***Setting aggressive science-based GHG reduction targets(s):***

Abt has made the commitment to align climate mitigation targets with the goal of keeping global warming to 1.5°C and reaching science-based net-zero emissions by 2050. Abt's near-term target was validated by the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi) in June 2022, and its net-zero target in May 2023.

***Near-Term Target:*** Abt Global commits to reduce absolute Scope 1 and 2 GHG emissions 38.6% by 2027 from a 2019 base year. Abt Global also commits to reduce absolute Scope 3 GHG emissions from, business travel, employee commuting, and upstream leased assets 38.6% within the same timeframe.

***Long-Term Target:*** Abt Global commits to reduce absolute Scope 1 and 2 GHG emissions 90% by 2050 from a 2019 base year. Abt Global commits to reduce absolute Scope 3 GHG emissions from business travel, employee commuting, and upstream leased assets 90% within the same timeframe.

**Overall Net-Zero Target:** Abt Global commits to reach net-zero GHG emissions across the value chain by 2050 from a 2019 base year.

**\*\*Note:** confirmation of Scope 3 category allocations pending SBTi re-certification**\*\***

***Developing comprehensive GHG mitigation strategies:***

**Establishing remote work as a permanent option:**

As a result of business continuity changes related to COVID-19, Abt saw an opportunity to support employees' well-being and shift its operational strategy. Launched in 2022, Abt's Remote Work Policy recognizes that work can be performed from anywhere and that employees can regularly perform their assigned job duties at a location other than the conventional workplace, such as remote locations including the home or a client project site. During this time, Abt continued to thoughtfully reimagine its cultural norms, implementing technology investments such as upgrading its virtual private network (VPN), digital collaboration tools, and file storage capabilities to give staff meaningful flexibility, while significantly driving down emissions associated with employee commuting. Employees were encouraged to select one of three work types, and update on a quarterly basis as needed:

1. **Onsite:** At least three days per week in the office, assigned workspace, eligible for 75% monthly public transit subsidy.
2. **Hybrid:** 1-2 days per week in the office, no assigned workspace, eligible for above public transit subsidy as well as a home technology stipend that renews every five years.
3. **Remote worker:** No in-office requirements or assigned workspace, not eligible for public transit subsidy, eligible for home technology stipend and one-time home ergonomics stipend.

As of the end of 2023, 87% of Abt's U.S. workforce was either fully remote or hybrid. This resulted in a 74% (645 MT CO<sub>2</sub>e ) reduction in emissions related to commuting to an Abt U.S. office between 2022 and 2019. At the time of this award, 2023 data and GHG inventory is in development.

**Optimizing physical footprint:**

Abt leases 100% of its physical assets (offices) under contract periods of 10 years or less to allow for flexibility and changing work environments—such as the transition to remote work and co-working sites. Through these workforce shifts, Abt was able to right-size its leased offices to optimize employee utilization rates and safeguard against potential risks related to climate change and extreme weather events. As a result, Abt was able to shift three of its U.S. offices to co-working locations, shift two U.S. offices to fully remote

operations, and right-size one of its larger U.S. offices, subleasing the additional square footage. In total, Abt reduced its U.S. office square footage by 42,600 sq. ft. from 2020-2023, which accounts for a 16% reduction in its U.S. physical operating space. By 2022, Abt reduced its emissions from office-based utilities (purchased electricity and natural gas) by 37% (496 MT CO<sub>2</sub>e). At the time of this award, 2023 data and GHG inventory is in development.

**Identifying key Scope 3 drivers for meeting GHG targets:**

Based on the results of Abt's 1.5°C pathway scenario analysis, it was determined that air travel was a key driver of emissions and represents the largest transitional risk to meeting the organization's 2027 near-term GHG emissions reduction target and its 2050 net-zero GHG target. To manage this risk, Abt launched an annual air travel emissions budget in 2023 for its U.S.-based entity, with the goal of optimizing air travel activities across business units. Abt partners with its corporate travel agency to track segmented-level data, including routes, frequency of flights, seat class, and more, to develop a dashboard tool for visualization. Senior leaders are engaged to forecast air travel requirements based on business pipeline opportunities, project execution, and administration needs to enable proactive management and resource optimization. Abt is continuing to mature its approach and transition focus from measurement and reporting to effecting change at the point of decision-making.

**Advancing our commitment to equity and climate justice:**

Applying a climate lens to Abt's work and operations empowers teams to apply risk mitigation strategies to protect outcomes and ultimately deepen our commitment to equity, while also creating a more welcoming and supportive environment for all employees.

**Equity in Abt's work & operations:**

In 2022, Abt signed a key pledge sponsored by the Coalition for Racial & Ethnic Equity in Development (CREED), committing signatories to build racial and ethnic equity (REE) into their policies, systems, and culture and to instill REE in international development. A key part of Abt's strategy is to have a learning continuum between what our experts learn in the field through our work and our own internal equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility (EDIA) strategy. 2022 and 2023 saw an expansion of mandatory employee training series by covering the topics of ableism, casteism, and colorism. In 2023, EDGE (Economic Dividends for Gender Equality) recertified Abt globally at the MOVE level, the second-highest rating available, a follow up from our initial certification in 2021.

**Expanding organizational leadership and climate-related engagement across the value chain:**

**Demonstrating sustainability leadership:**

In 2023, Abt Global became the first-ever company to earn a new sustainability certification, the only one of its kind designed specifically for the professional services industry. The NSF/ANSI 391.1 General Sustainability Assessment Criteria for Professional Services measures professional services firms across environmental, social, economic, and sustainable supply chain criteria. Abt earned the highest “Leadership” level certification for transparency and rigor of practices, policies, and commitments spanning these domains.

Prerequisite criteria for certification include having documented ethical business, human rights, labor, environmental, and supplier diversity policies; integrated sustainability principles and practices in the company’s code of conduct and supplier code of conduct; demonstrated GHG reductions; increased spending with diverse suppliers; a commitment to support nonprofit organizations and/or provide pro bono services, and more.

*Employee education and capacity building:*

In 2023, Abt launched a foundational climate literacy training course for all staff: *Introduction to Climate Change and Climate Risk*. The goal of the training is to strengthen staff understanding of climate change and associated risks to employees, as well as the project outcomes the firm strives to achieve on behalf of its clients. The training establishes a structured understanding of climate risk and empowers teams to apply risk mitigation strategies that deepen the company’s commitment to equity. This training is the first of several internal capacity building initiatives on climate change that are planned to be launched over the course of 2024.

*Enhancing climate integration across the business portfolio:*

In 2022, Abt launched the Global Climate Office and appointed Eric Reading as the organization’s first Chief Climate Officer. The Global Climate Office enables Abt to accelerate climate-readiness across the organization and catalyze a whole-of-Abt approach to the climate crisis across operations, supply chain, and services the firm delivers to clients worldwide. Recognizing that climate change exacerbates inequity and threatens hard-earned development in health, economic stability, and security, Abt mainstreams climate integration across its solutions, design, and program implementation to deliver evidence-based approaches to protect outcomes from climate shocks and make a 1.5°C future a reality.