



# Corporate Colocation and Cloud Buyers' Principles Toolkit

*Corp-Colo Toolkit for Implementation*



# Welcome to the Corp-Colo Toolkit

The Corporate Colocation and Cloud Buyers' Principles Toolkit (Corp-Colo Toolkit) is designed to help sustainability teams and other internal advocates from signatory companies engage with their colo data centers and cloud service providers to put the Principles into practice. This toolkit will help you form and communicate your "asks," collaborate with other customers, and learn from other stakeholders to ensure efforts are viable, strategic, relevant, and actionable. In short, the purpose of this toolkit is to:

- Support signatories in pursuit of meeting the Principles.
- Turn the six criteria outlined in the Corporate Colocation and Cloud Buyers' Principles into action items.
- Help signatories engage with their colo vendors and develop specific asks that align with the Principles.
- Maximize renewable energy solutions at colos and ultimately help to power the internet with 100 percent renewable energy.

The toolkit includes:

- A practical step-by-step guide to help signatories and supporters structure their approach to the Principles
- A self-assessment of current practices
- Tear-off resources to engage directly with colo vendors



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*The toolkit is intended to support [Corporate Colocation and Cloud Buyers’ Principles](#) signatories and supporters as they work together to maximize renewable energy solutions at data centers, and to provide clear steps for turning the Principles into action. Specifically, the toolkit is designed to be a practical implementation guide with best practices, case studies, and new concepts to consider and explore.*

*The development of the toolkit was informed by feedback from Principles signatories and supporters, as well as other stakeholders.*



# The Principles

The Future of Internet Power (FoIP) initiative brings together companies to address challenges and collaborate on solutions that will enhance the ability to procure renewable energy to power data centers. As prime customers of energy-intensive colocation data center facilities (colos), FoIP members believe that increased ambition and efforts to maximize renewables at colos will result in a cleaner cloud.

Given the growing interest among both colo customers and service providers in using low-carbon energy sources and meeting sustainability goals, the Future of Internet Power created the **Corporate Colocation and Cloud Buyers' Principles** (The Principles). Customers of colo data centers and cloud services are invited to sign on to the Principles, thereby demonstrating their company's support for the six Principles. Cloud and colo providers are welcome to become supporters of this effort and work with their customers to put the Principles into practice.

## The Corporate Colocation and Cloud Buyers' Principles

As customers of colocation and cloud services, we agree that the following principles, if followed by colocation and cloud service providers, will help us meet our sustainability goals. We will give preference to providers who do the following:



### 1. Options

Provide options for cost-competitive services powered by renewable resources that reduce emissions beyond business as usual.



### 2. Data

Deliver monthly data on the colo customer's direct and indirect energy consumption, water consumption, greenhouse gas emissions, and other environmental data.



### 3. Incentives

Align the partnership between customer and service provider so both parties have an incentive to reduce energy consumption.



### 4. Collaboration

Provide options for colo customer collaboration on efficiency and renewable energy enhancements.



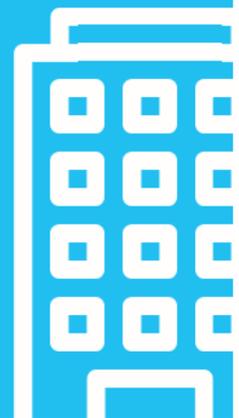
### 5. Disclosures

Disclose individual sites and total global corporate footprint, as well as site-specific energy sources.



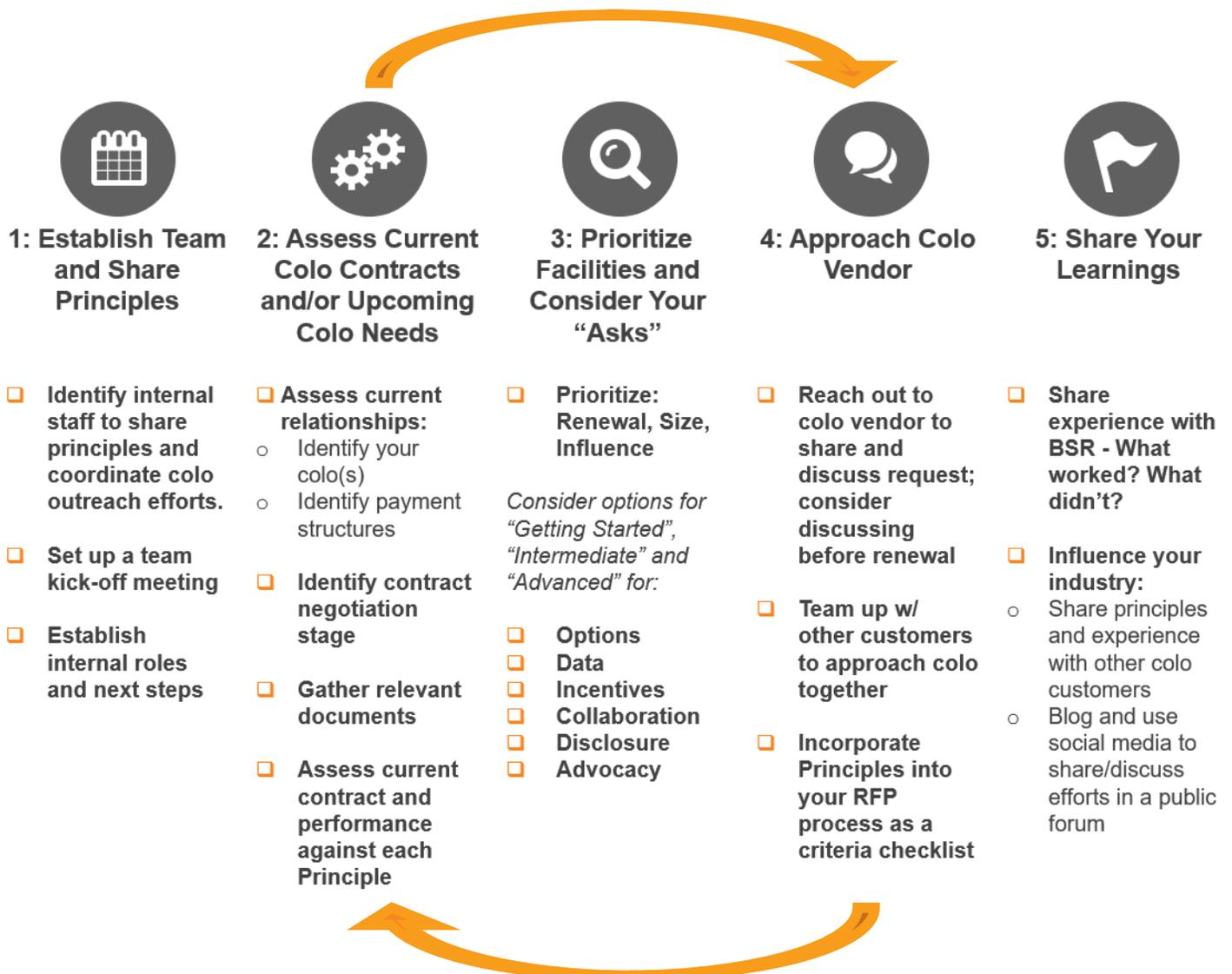
### 6. Advocacy

Engage in policy advocacy efforts that support the use of renewable energy.



# Toolkit Checklist

Implementation of the Principles is an iterative, cyclical process that can and should be flexible enough to reflect your company’s needs, ambitions, and relationships with vendors, as well as the unique opportunities and challenges that each vendor faces. As illustrated below, FoIP recommends establishing an internal team to champion Principles implementation (step 1), then working through steps two through four on a cyclical basis as appropriate for your needs, ambition, and current relationships. In the spirit of collaboration and continuous improvement, we encourage Principles users to share their experience, feedback, and learnings throughout the process.



# Step 1: Establish Team and Share Principles

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1. Identify internal staff to share Principles and coordinate colo outreach efforts. This will vary by company and should include:
  - a) Individuals responsible for:
    - Colo siting; Procurement/vendor relations; Colo contract negotiations
  - b) Members of the environmental sustainability team. For example:
    - Chief Sustainability Officer; Head of Facilities and Operations; Any external energy/environmental consultants
  - c) Others:
    - IT team
    - Benchmarking team (to compare vendors across the market)
    - Someone strategic in nature and senior in your organization that wants to implement Principles across different consumables, tied to strategy and high-level direction, e.g. “Head of Data Center Strategy.”
  
2. Set up a kick-off meeting to review the Principles, explain why your company signed on, and communicate that you’d like to coordinate outreach to your colo to discuss putting the Principles into action.
  - a) *Tip: Consider asking FoIP members to join the call to help explain the Principles and discuss outreach efforts.*
  
3. Establish internal roles and next steps.
  - a) To establish roles, consider:
    - Who can provide information on your company’s current colo practices and contacts?
    - Who should be involved in the outreach to the colo?
  - b) **Next Steps:** Schedule follow-up meeting and confirm the team that will complete the assessment of current colo relationships and current colo contracts against each principle (see “Step 2”).
  - c) *Tip: Tailor messaging and approach to suit current needs and culture of your colo vendors.*
  - d) *Tip: Remember this guide is a process; not everything will happen on day one. You will need to continually revisit and enhance these efforts.*



## Step 2: Assess Current Colo Contracts and / or Upcoming Colo Needs

Before engaging with your colo, it is important to get a baseline understanding of your current contracts, or the needs that will be covered by upcoming contracts. The following steps can help you gather the information needed to understand your current colo's performance against the Principles and identify potential areas of opportunity.

### 1. Assess current colo relationships (if applicable):

- a) Identify your colo(s):
  - Who are they? Where are they located? Who are the primary contacts?
- b) Identify payment structure:
  - Is it fixed price or based on actual usage (sub-metered)?
- c) Assess state of current relationship and overall vendor performance

### 2. Identify contract negotiation stage:

- a) Begin by identifying which stage of the contract negotiation process your company is currently navigating. Challenges and opportunities will vary depending on whether you are: engaging with a brand new colo or an existing colo at a new facility, at the RFP stage, at the contract negotiation stage, or already have a signed contract.
- b) *Tip: If possible, incorporate the Principles into your RFP process!*

### 3. Gather relevant documents for current and future colo contracts, such as:

- a) Current colo contracts; monthly bills; previous and current RFPs; siting criteria used to identify and select colo options (e.g. risk assessments).

### 4. Assess current colo contract and performance against each Principle

- a) There are a variety of ways to obtain the information necessary to understand colo performance against the Principles and to gather sufficient data to make accurate and transparent renewable energy claims.
  - For example, signatories can look up colo providers on industry sustainability rating platforms to better understand baseline performance (e.g. CDP's ICT Sector Module or EcoVadis' Supplier Sustainability Ratings).



## Step 3: Prioritize Facilities and Consider Your “Asks”

1. **Prioritize Facilities:** For companies with multiple colo vendors, it is important to prioritize your facilities and decide who to engage first. Suggested prioritization criteria include:
  - a) **Renewal:** Prioritize colo contract(s) next up for renewal
  - b) **Size:** Prioritize your largest colos. There are many ways to define "largest," from greatest spend to total energy use to greatest connection or use within your company.
    - **Case study:** When assessing environmental impacts, one Principles signatory with many colo vendors and facilities focuses first on the facilities that represent 75% of server deployment.
  - c) **Influence:** Prioritize colos you know your company can influence to maximize impact—for example, contracts of high value or long duration, or where your company has been a long-standing customer.
  - d) **Current Sustainability Performance:** Prioritize colos that are already advanced in their sustainability efforts.
    - **Note:** It may be easier to get started by engaging with colos that already have sustainability efforts. However, there is significant value in educating other colos on the importance of renewable energy and, ultimately, applying pressure to drive performance improvements.
2. **Consider your “Asks:”** Once facilities (current or potential) are prioritized, consider whether they are getting started, intermediate, or advanced with reference to the Principles (from your assessment in “Step 2”). Remember, the expectation of the Principles is that a colo’s ability to provide data will improve over time, not that all facilities will be able to provide all of the information on day one.

**Note:** Certain documentation is required for colo clients to leverage renewable energy procured by vendors to make legitimate zero carbon claims. This documentation will vary depending on the procurement mechanism. Clear guidance on exactly what documentation is required to comply with Section 2.5 of the Scope 2 Guidance does not currently exist. FoIP members engaged with key stakeholders—including verifiers and colocation facilities—to gather feedback and address this challenge. The output of this collaboration was a white paper that provides guidance on documentation requirements for colo clients: [Documentation Requirements for Supplier-Procured Renewable Energy](#).



# Step 3: Examples of Good Practice

Pages 9-11 provide additional detail on what “getting started,” “intermediate,” and “advanced” performance looks like in practice for each of the six Principles. Note that these are intended only as illustrative examples.



## Principle 1: Options

*Provide options for cost-competitive services powered by renewable resources that reduce emissions beyond business as usual.*

Getting Started	Intermediate	Advanced
Ask the colo provider what energy sources they use or have available.	Request the colo or cloud provider include renewable energy options in their service.	Incorporate renewable energy option availability into colo or cloud service contracts.



## Principle 2: Data

*Deliver monthly data on the colo customer’s direct and indirect energy consumption, water consumption, greenhouse gas emissions, and other environmental data.*

Getting Started	Intermediate	Advanced
Inquire as to what energy use information is available at the facility and customer levels.	Request data on the facility’s energy use, PUE, and GHG equivalent.	Include regular disclosure of renewable energy procurement in colo or cloud service contracts.



## Step 3: Examples of Good Practice



### Principle 3: Incentives

*Align the partnership between customer and service provider so both parties have an incentive to reduce energy consumption.*

Getting Started	Intermediate	Advanced
Inquire as to IT hardware efficiency options as well as service provider overhead energy efficiency efforts.	Request billing such that tenants pay for energy use and therefore see reduced costs from energy efficiency.	Partner with colo or cloud service providers to explore mutually beneficial energy reduction opportunities, e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint goals in contract language;</li> <li>• Shared rebates;</li> <li>• Investment in multi-party aggregation RE procurement deals</li> </ul>



### Principle 4: Collaboration

*Provide options for colo customer collaboration on efficiency and renewable energy enhancements.*

Getting Started	Intermediate	Advanced
Consult this toolkit!	Create opportunities for customers to identify themselves among their neighboring tenants (via online communities and/or physical meetings on-site) and establish common efficiency and renewable energy priorities.	Coordinate and work with peers and providers to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design and execute multi-party renewable energy aggregation agreements</li> <li>• Establish shared data request and collection system</li> <li>• Consider advocacy with local utilities or other energy regulators</li> </ul>



## Step 3: Examples of Good Practice



### Principle 5: Disclosure

*Disclose individual sites and total global corporate footprint, as well as site-specific energy sources.*

Getting Started	Intermediate	Advanced
Ascertain which of providers report total global and site-specific carbon footprint.	Request all providers to publicly disclose global and site specific footprints through a regular reporting, such as CDP or an annual environmental report.	Incorporate global and site-specific public disclosure requirements into contracts.



### Principle 6: Advocacy

*Engage in policy advocacy efforts that support the use of renewable energy.*

Getting Started	Intermediate	Advanced
<p>Assess colo or cloud service providers' current advocacy efforts (e.g. participation in sign-on opportunities). Encourage peers and providers to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participate in the Renewable Energy Buyers' Alliance</li> <li>Sign on to the Corporate Colocation and Cloud Buyers' Principles</li> <li>Sign on to the Corporate Renewable Energy Buyers' Principles</li> </ul>	<p>Publicly support pro-renewable energy policies at the local, state, and federal level. Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Joint letters with colo or cloud service vendors and other customers to advocate for renewable options</li> <li>Attending integrated resource planning meetings or hearings in key geographies</li> </ul>	<p>Coordinate and lead companies in publicly tying availability of renewable energy to the siting or other investment opportunities in specific geographies.</p>



# Step 4: Approach Colo Vendor

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1. **Consider outreach timing, and approach colo vendor to share and discuss requests.**
  - a) Consider the best timing to reach out to colo vendor to share the principles and discuss requests: For existing colo contracts, consider discussing before upcoming contract renewal to negotiate terms and make requests that align with the principles.
  - b) Appendix Resource: [Template Emails](#)
2. **Team up with other customers to approach colos together**
  - a) Are you aware of other colo customers in your facility? Consider teaming up and approaching the colo together with a unified request.
3. **Incorporate Principles into your RFP process as a criteria checklist**
  - a) Looking for a new colo or cloud provider? Incorporate the Principles into your RFP process as a criteria checklist and reference them during new contract negotiations.
4. **At regular intervals, repeat steps 2 through 4 to ensure updated engagements and encourage progress over time.**



## Step 5: Share Your Learnings

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1. **Share experiences with REBA:** What worked well? What didn't? What did the colo offer, or push back on?
  - a) Share any RFP or contract language that was helpful in negotiations
  - b) Join REBA's FoIP task forces to share learnings, ask questions, and discuss challenges
  
2. **Influence your industry**
  - a) Share principles and experiences with other colo customers
  - b) Blog and use social media to share / discuss efforts in an open forum



## Appendix Resources

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*The following resources are stored in REBA's member portal and available on the REBA website. These resources will be updated and additional resources will be added over time.*

- [Template emails](#) for use in socializing principles internally, engaging color vendors, and inviting others to join the Principles as signatories or supporters
- [FAQ](#)

*Questions? Trouble accessing a resource?*

*Please reach out to Lily Proom ([lproom@rebuyers.org](mailto:lproom@rebuyers.org)).*





[rebuyers.org](https://rebuyers.org)



*Building a resilient, zero-carbon energy system where every organization has a viable, expedient, and cost-effective pathway to renewable energy.*