

GB/T 20004-2026

Code of Good Practice for Association Standardization

(Draft for Comments)

Explanation of Preparation

I. Overview of the Work

1. Origin of the Task

The Code of Good Practice for Association Standardization was developed under the national standards development and revision plan issued by the Standardization Administration of China in 2026. The project plan number is 20262052-T-469, with completion planned for 2026. The project was proposed by and is under the jurisdiction of the National Technical Committee on Standardization Principles and Methods (SAC/TC 286).

This document replaces GB/T 20004.1-2016, Association Standardization - Part 1: Guidelines for Good Practice, and GB/T 20004.2-2018, Association Standardization - Part 2: Guidelines for the Evaluation of Good Practice. It is mainly based on GB/T 20004.1-2016 and incorporates the content of GB/T 20004.2-2018, revising the document from a guidance standard into a code standard.

The main drafting organizations are the China National Institute of Standardization, the State Administration for Market Regulation, the Zhongguancun Materials Testing Technology Alliance, the Certification and Accreditation Technology Research Center of the State Administration for Market Regulation, the China Association for Standardization, China Quality Standards Publishing & Media Co., Ltd., the China Inspection and Testing Society, and the China Society of Automotive Engineers, among others. The principal drafters include Zhu Xianghua, Song Guojian, Yi Tingting, Du Xiaoyan, Wang Peng, Pang Zhenghu, Wu Haiwen, Wang Tianyi, Yu Hua, Ding Wei, Wang Lijun, Wu Linfeng, Jiang Kexin, Cai Tingting, Shi Boli, Chen Ming, Ding Yanci, Chen Jing, Li Qiang, Hu Mengting, Che Di, and others.

As the lead drafting organization, the China National Institute of Standardization established the drafting working group for the Code of Good Practice for Association Standardization. The division of work was as follows: Zhu Xianghua, as group leader, was responsible for the overall framework design, the direction of the revision, and overall review and harmonization of the standard, and also drafted the chapters on management functions of association standards organizations and the working system for association standardization. Song Guojian was responsible for the direction of the revision and provided application cases from industry association standardization. Yi Tingting drafted the Foreword, Introduction, Scope, Normative References, Terms and Definitions, Appendices, and Bibliography. Du Xiaoyan and Yu Hua jointly drafted the chapter on the drafting of association standards and organized the text in accordance with GB/T 1.1. Wang Peng and Chen Ming jointly drafted the chapter on association standard development procedures. Pang Zhenghu and Shi Boli jointly drafted the chapter on general requirements. Wu Haiwen and Cai Tingting drafted the chapter on implementation and application of association standards. Wang Tianyi and Jiang Kexin participated in drafting the chapters on implementation and application and internationalization, and provided industry application cases. Ding Wei, Wang Lijun, and Shi Boli jointly drafted the chapter on internationalization. Wu Linfeng and Chen Jing participated in drafting the chapters on management functions of association standards organizations and the working system for association standardization. Ding Yanci and Hu Mengting provided application cases from industry association standardization and participated in drafting the same chapters. Li Qiang participated in determining the direction of the revision and the positioning of the standard. Che Di participated in drafting the chapter on association standard development procedures and was responsible for overall proofreading and harmonization of the standard.

2. Background to the Development of the Standard

Association standards are an important part of China's standards system and are the main form of market-driven standard development. They play a positive role in promoting technological innovation, industrial upgrading, and high-quality development. Since the Standardization Law of the People's Republic of China established the legal status of association standards, they have developed rapidly. As of December 31, 2025, 8,415 social organizations had registered on the National Association Standards Information Platform, and a total of 122,428 association

standards had been published. These standards have supported the development of new products, new industries, and new business models and have helped increase the supply of high-quality products and services.

At the same time, as association standardization has advanced, a number of practical problems have become apparent. Some social organizations have irregular standard development procedures, unscientific technical content, inadequate implementation oversight, and insufficient participation by interested parties. As a result, the quality of association standards varies widely, and problems such as “many but not refined” and “fast but not good” have become increasingly prominent. Stronger guidance and supervision are urgently needed.

In recent years, the State Administration for Market Regulation, together with the Ministry of Civil Affairs and other relevant ministries and departments, has taken active measures to strengthen the governance of association standardization activities. It has issued documents such as the Provisions on the Administration of Association Standards, the Opinions on Promoting the Standardized and High-Quality Development of Association Standards, and the Compliance Guidelines for Fee-Charging Practices of Industry Associations and Chambers of Commerce, thereby continuously improving the governance system for association standardization. The Third Plenary Session of the 20th CPC Central Committee made important arrangements for deepening the reform of industry associations and chambers of commerce, and relevant departments have also put forward clear requirements for regulating association standardization activities. Under these new circumstances, GB/T 20004.1-2016, Association Standardization - Part 1: Guidelines for Good Practice, is no longer adequate in terms of binding effect, systematization, and operability. Therefore, revising the standard and establishing a scientific, efficient, standardized, and orderly system of good practice for association standardization has important practical significance for guiding social organizations in carrying out association standardization work.

3. Drafting Process

In accordance with the national standard development and revision procedures, the following work was completed in preparing the national standard Code of Good Practice for Association Standardization.

1) Collection of Materials

During the drafting process, the drafting working group collected the following materials: GB/T 1.1-2020, Directives for Standardization - Part 1: Rules for the Structure and Drafting of Standardizing Documents; GB/T 20000.1-2014, Guidelines for Standardization - Part 1: General Terms for Standardization and Related Activities; GB/T 20003.1, Special Procedures for the Development of Standards - Part 1: Standards Related to Patents; GB/T 20004.1-2016, Association Standardization - Part 1: Guidelines for Good Practice; the Standardization Law of the People's Republic of China; the Provisions on the Administration of Association Standards; the Opinions on Promoting the Standardized and High-Quality Development of Association Standards; the Compliance Guidelines for Fee-Charging Practices of Industry Associations and Chambers of Commerce; the Comprehensive Performance Evaluation Indicator System for Association Standards Organizations; the Antitrust Guidelines for Standard Essential Patents; the Regulations on the Registration and Administration of Social Organizations; and relevant domestic and international materials on association standardization practices.

2) Drafting of the Standard

From January to February 2026, research on association standardization practices was completed, the draft standard and the application materials for a recommended national standard project were prepared, the basic approach and schedule for the development of the standard were clarified, and the project was advanced for approval.

From March to April 2026, a standard drafting working group was formed with experts from the China National Institute of Standardization, universities, association standards organizations, enterprises, and other relevant entities. On April 10, 2026, a kick-off meeting for the revision was held. Officials from the Department of Standards Innovation Management of the State Administration for Market Regulation, the China National Institute of Standardization, and experts from relevant parties attended the meeting. The meeting clarified the positioning, framework, drafting principles, and division of work for the revision.

From April to May 2026, several working group meetings and thematic seminars were organized:

- On April 24, 2026, a seminar was held on the framework and overall approach.

- On April 28, 2026, a thematic seminar was organized for association standards organizations to discuss internal management and departmental structure.
- On May 8, 2026, a seminar was held to present and discuss the draft chapters of the standard.
- On May 21, 2026, legal experts were invited to participate in a discussion on intellectual property issues.
- On May 22, 2026, a workshop was held to consolidate the chapter drafts, resulting in the draft for comments.

On the basis of the above work, the drafting working group revised and improved the draft standard according to the framework and comments formed at the meetings. It also further compared and analyzed relevant domestic and international standards and policy documents, and ultimately formed the draft for comments.

II. Drafting Principles, Main Content, and Basis for Determination

1. Drafting Principles

This document was developed in accordance with the following principles.

First, it follows a problem-oriented and goal-oriented approach. The document focuses on the prominent problems currently facing association standards, such as uneven quality, “many but not refined,” and “fast but not good.” It takes the high-quality development of association standardization as its objective and comprehensive compliance in association standardization as its starting point, and proposes targeted and innovative measures.

Second, it follows the principle of normativity. In drafting and wording, the document strictly follows the drafting rules in GB/T 1.1-2020. As a code standard, it clearly distinguishes the modal verbs “shall,” “should,” and “may” in its clauses and adds negative constraint provisions.

Third, it follows the principle of consistency. The document is consistent with higher-level laws, regulations, and policy documents such as the Standardization Law of the People’s Republic of China, the Provisions on the Administration of Association Standards, and the Opinions on Promoting the Standardized and High-Quality Development of Association Standards. It is also aligned with the foundational national standards system, including GB/T 20000 and GB/T 20001.

Fourth, it follows the principle of operability. Taking into account that users of this document include standardization personnel from various social organizations, the text is written in language that is as clear and accessible as possible. The provisions are specific and clear, setting out behavioral requirements that are actionable, traceable, and verifiable.

2. Main Content of the Standard

This document specifies the general requirements for association standards organizations in carrying out standardization activities, as well as specific requirements for functional management and system development, association standard development procedures, standard drafting, implementation and application, and internationalization. It establishes an indicator system and evaluation rules for good practice in association standardization. The specific content is as follows:

- General requirements: Specifies the basic requirements that association standardization activities should follow, including compliance, openness, transparency, fairness, consensus, systematic planning, and applicability.
- Management functions of association standards organizations: Specifies functional arrangements and organizational requirements for standardization decision-making, technical management, administrative management, standard implementation, and standard drafting.
- Working system for association standardization: Specifies requirements, directional guidance, and recommendations for personnel management, funding management, technical management, document management, meeting management, appeals management, self-evaluation, emergency response, external cooperation, and intellectual property management, including patents, copyrights, logos, and trademarks.
- Association standard development procedures: Specifies the required stages of the development procedure, as well as the work requirements, directional guidance, and recommendations for the eight stages of proposal, project approval, drafting, solicitation of comments, technical review, approval, numbering and publication, and review.

- Drafting of association standards: Specifies requirements, directional guidance, and recommendations for drafting preparation, structure, and drafting requirements.
- Implementation and application of association standards: Specifies basic requirements and requirements, directional guidance, and recommendations for implementation, including promotion, training and interpretation, and implementation support; application, including use in public administration, procurement and contracts, conformity assessment, brand building, and industry self-discipline; evaluation of implementation and application; and feedback and improvement.
- Internationalization: Specifies requirements, directional guidance, and recommendations concerning the internationalization of association standards, the internationalization of members, international exchanges and cooperation, the internationalization of association standards organizations, and good practice for international professional standards organizations.

3. Basis for Determining the Main Content

The main content of the standard was developed primarily with reference to the following documents, standards, and policy materials.

First, with respect to laws, regulations, and policy documents, the main references included the Standardization Law of the People's Republic of China, the Provisions on the Administration of Association Standards, the Opinions on Promoting the Standardized and High-Quality Development of Association Standards, the Compliance Guidelines for Fee-Charging Practices of Industry Associations and Chambers of Commerce, the Comprehensive Performance Evaluation Indicator System for Association Standards Organizations, the Antitrust Guidelines for Standard Essential Patents, and the Regulations on the Registration and Administration of Social Organizations.

Second, with respect to national and foundational standards, reference was made to GB/T 1.1, Directives for Standardization - Part 1: Rules for the Structure and Drafting of Standardizing Documents; GB/T 20000.1, Guidelines for Standardization - Part 1: General Terms for Standardization and Related Activities; and GB/T 20003.1, Special Procedures for the Development of Standards - Part 1: Standards Related to Patents, among others.

Third, with respect to practical experience and industry norms, reference was made to the association standardization practices of the China Society of Automotive Engineers, the China Association for Standardization, the Zhongguancun Materials Testing Technology Alliance, and other association standards organizations, as well as to institutional documents established by some social organizations for handling appeals and complaints and managing intellectual property.

4. Major Technical Changes Compared with GB/T 20004.1-2016

This document is mainly based on GB/T 20004.1-2016 and incorporates the content of GB/T 20004.2-2018, revising the document from a guidance standard into a code standard. Compared with GB/T 20004.1-2016, in addition to structural adjustments and editorial changes, the main technical changes are as follows:

- “General Principles” has been changed to “General Requirements” (see Chapter 4; Chapter 4 of GB/T 20004.1-2016).
- The functional management of association standards organizations has been refined, with the responsibilities of standardization decision-making, technical management, administrative management, implementation management, and drafting functions specified in greater detail (see 5.1; 5.1 of GB/T 20004.1-2016).
- The working mechanisms for association standardization have been refined, including personnel management, funding management, technical management, document management, meeting management, appeals management, self-evaluation, emergency response, external cooperation, and intellectual property management, including patents, copyrights, logos, and trademarks (see Chapter 6; 5.2 of GB/T 20004.1-2016).
- The association standard development procedure has been refined, with further clarification of the specific requirements for the stages of proposal, project approval, drafting, solicitation of comments, technical review, approval, publication, and review (see Chapter 7; Chapter 6 of GB/T 20004.1-2016).
- The normative requirements for drafting association standards have been refined, with clarification of the selection of core technical elements, rules for citation, wording, prohibited content, and control of technical duplication (see Chapter 8; Chapter 7 of GB/T 20004.1-2016).

- The implementation and application of association standards have been refined, adding detailed rules on basic requirements, implementation, including promotion, training and interpretation, and implementation support; application, including use in public administration, procurement and contracts, conformity assessment, brand building, and industry self-discipline; evaluation of implementation and application; and feedback and improvement (see Chapter 9; Chapter 8 of GB/T 20004.1-2016).
- A chapter on “Internationalization” has been added, covering the internationalization of association standards, the internationalization of members, international exchanges and cooperation, the internationalization of association standards organizations, and good practice for international professional standards organizations (see Chapter 10).
- The indicator system for the evaluation of good practice in association standardization and the rules for determining evaluation results have been revised, and scoring criteria have been added (see Appendix A; Appendix A of GB/T 20004.2-2018).

III. Analysis of Experimental Validation, Summary Reports, Technical and Economic Feasibility, and Expected Economic, Social, and Ecological Benefits

Based on domestic practice, association standardization plays an important role in stimulating market vitality and promoting technological innovation. The revision of this document is expected to produce the following social benefits.

First, the document fully draws on advanced domestic experience in association standardization and the latest policy requirements. It establishes code requirements for good practice in association standardization and provides actionable, traceable, and verifiable behavioral rules for various social organizations in carrying out standardization activities. Once implemented, the standard will help move association standards from “many but not refined” and “fast but not good” toward standardized and high-quality development, and will enhance the credibility and authority of association standards.

Second, the document systematically specifies requirements for internal governance, standard development procedures, implementation and application, and international development of association standards organizations. It will help social organizations establish sound standardization systems, regulate fee-charging practices, prevent intellectual property risks, and improve the professionalism of standardization work.

Third, the document clarifies mechanisms such as public self-declaration and self-supervision and evaluation, and links them with the National Association Standards Information Platform. This will help form a governance structure for association standardization that combines government guidance, industry self-discipline, and social supervision, and will promote the adoption and application of association standards in industrial policy, government procurement, and conformity assessment activities.

Fourth, the document adds content on internationalization and encourages qualified association standards organizations to participate in international standardization activities and develop into international professional standards organizations. This will help increase the international influence and competitiveness of China’s association standards.

IV. Comparison with Similar International and Foreign Standards

At present, international standards organizations such as ISO and IEC have not issued dedicated standards or documents for association standardization. The main international document relevant to this document is Annex 3 to the WTO/TBT Agreement, Code of Good Practice for the Preparation, Adoption and Application of Standards, which sets out principle-based requirements for good conduct by standards bodies.

Based on the above international rules and taking into account the actual development of association standardization in China and its legal and policy environment, this document provides more specific and systematic provisions on the organizational management, development procedures, intellectual property management, implementation and application, and internationalization of association standardization. Overall, the document is at a leading

international level. It is consistent with internationally accepted good practice for standard development and also reflects China's innovative practice in the governance of association standardization.

V. Use of International Standards as a Basis for Drafting, Compliance in Citing or Adopting International and Foreign Standards, and Reasons for Not Adopting International Standards

Because international standards organizations such as ISO and IEC have not issued relevant standards or documents specifically addressing association standardization, this document was not drafted on the basis of an international standard. It therefore does not involve the citation or adoption of international standards and does not involve copyright issues in that respect. The document is primarily based on China's laws, regulations, policy documents, and practical achievements in association standardization.

VI. Relationship with Relevant Laws, Administrative Regulations, and Related Standards

This document is consistent with the Standardization Law of the People's Republic of China, the Provisions on the Administration of Association Standards, the Opinions on Promoting the Standardized and High-Quality Development of Association Standards, the Compliance Guidelines for Fee-Charging Practices of Industry Associations and Chambers of Commerce, and other laws, regulations, and policy documents. It elaborates and implements these documents at the operational level.

This document is part of the foundational national standards system that supports standards development. Together with GB/T 1, Directives for Standardization; GB/T 20000, Guidelines for Standardization; GB/T 20001, Rules for Drafting Standards; GB/T 20002, Guidelines for the Drafting of Specific Content in Standards; and GB/T 20003, Special Procedures for the Development of Standards, it forms a coordinated series of standards. This document is consistent with the above standards in its use of terminology and drafting rules.

VII. Handling of Major Disagreements and Basis for Their Resolution

No major disagreements arose during the preparation of this document.

VIII. Explanation Regarding Patents

No patent-related issues were involved in the preparation of this document.

IX. Requirements for Implementation of the National Standard, Including Organizational Measures, Technical Measures, Transition Period, and Implementation Date

It is recommended that this document be approved, published, and implemented as a recommended national standard. A two-month transition period is recommended so that social organizations can make the necessary preparations in areas such as organizational structure, institutional documents, adjustment of standard development procedures, and staffing.

To promote implementation of this document, it is recommended that, after approval and publication, training and outreach be carried out for social organizations, standardization technical bodies, and industry authorities. Such activities may include recorded online courses, standard training sessions, promotional materials, and promotion through the National Association Standards Information Platform, in order to support the effective implementation of the standard.

X. Other Matters to Be Explained

None.