



Handbook for
circular
business models

within the
meeting industry

Foreword

This handbook aims to provide an overall understanding of circular economy and practical suggestions on how meeting companies can make their operations circular. It has been produced by AFRY as part of the Crisitivity project, which is being run by Visit Skåne and funded by the European Regional Development Fund via the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth. The project is a collaboration between Visit Skåne, BI Syd, Skånska Möten, Svenska Möten and Almi Skåne. The aim is to strengthen hotel and meeting facilities, making them more adaptable and resilient to changes in the surrounding world. The project will create the right conditions for a more stable, competitive and innovative meeting industry.

This handbook presents a number of interesting circular examples. Use them as sources of inspiration, or view them as potential partners! Their overall sustainability performance has not been analysed in greater depth.

This handbook is aimed at business owners who are curious about circular economy. It can be used as a basis for development work for all those working within the company. It can also support business promotion organisations.

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Photo: Magnus Palmér

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What is a circular economy?

A circular economy – the main objective of which is to contribute to sustainability – is about making use of the resources invested by using them again and again, with high value retention and for as long as possible. The traditional linear economy is based on extracting virgin raw materials, making products out of them, using them and then throwing them away. This involves an unnecessary waste of both natural resources and money. It also generates large quantities of waste and creates a shortage of raw materials.

The transition from linear to circular is based on three principles that involve gradually decoupling economic activity from the consumption of finite resources:

- Designing out waste and pollution
- Keeping products and materials in use
- Restoring natural systems.

A common way to illustrate a circular economy is by using the 'butterfly diagram' developed by the Ellen MacArthur Foundation. The diagram is divided into a biological cycle and a technical cycle. The biological cycle circulates products and materials made from biological materials that are consumed during use, such as packaging and food. These are recycled and then returned to nature to generate new raw materials. The technological cycle circulates products, components and materials that are designed so they can be reused, repaired, refurbished, remanufactured or

recycled. The tighter the circles, the more of the investment is used, such as by repairing a product instead of recycling it or hiring it out instead of selling it. It is in the tighter circles that the greatest environmental benefits and profitability are often achieved.

System changes bring business opportunities

The transition to a circular economy often involves closer cooperation between the actors involved. Supplier chains become 'value networks' where, for example, a former customer becomes the company's supplier when a product is remanufactured. Making the transition to a circular economy does not only involve adjustments aimed at reducing the negative effects of the linear economy. It also involves a system change that creates long-term resilience, new economic opportunities, and environmental and societal benefits. For entrepreneurs, new business opportunities emerge through new customer offerings and cost savings for increased profitability.



The main objective is to contribute towards sustainability.

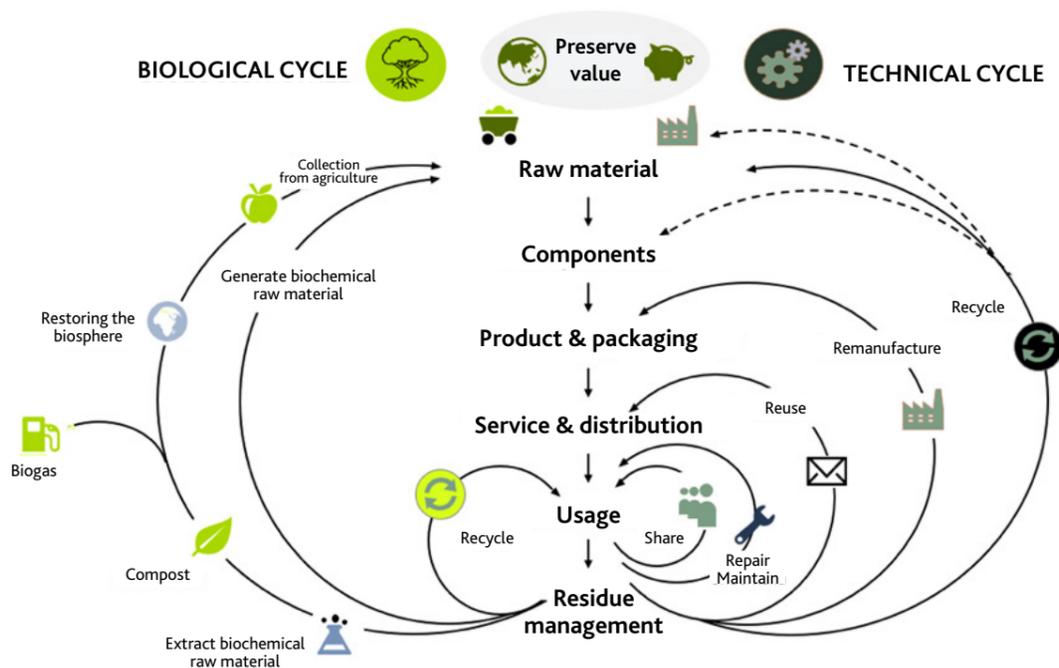


Figure 1: Inspired by the Ellen MacArthur Foundation (2015), based on research by Braungart and McDonough.

The meeting industry was hit hard by the pandemic in 2020–2022. Short-term recovery efforts could push businesses towards ‘business as usual’ linear growth at any cost. However, the industry will need to evolve towards more long-term sustainable and circular business models in order to become more resilient. The meeting industry has a service-based business model, and does not therefore produce many products. As a result, businesses do not need to change their entire business model from the bottom up in order to become circular. Instead, they need to look at how their operations can work more sustainably and circularly in connection with food, use of premises, tourist attractions, services, textiles, furnishings, water, interiors, mobility and other operational aspects.

Acting as a facilitator

The meeting industry has an important role to play in the transition to a circular economy, as it is deeply entwined with and reliant on several key resource flows, assets and raw material chains within society – including agriculture and food, construction, travel and transport. Therefore, through systems thinking based on collaboration, business model innovation and value co-creation, the meeting industry can not only increase the resilience and sustainability footprint of the entire industry and individual businesses; it can also act as a facilitator for other industries.

A circular economy is not only about protecting the environment by circulating materials and resources. It is also a tool for achieving socially and economically

sustainable development, and therefore makes a strong contribution to the UN’s Agenda 2030. Circular initiatives can contribute towards social sustainability by, for example, creating more jobs and making products available to more people. The UN’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) consist of 17 goals and 169 targets, and are a framework that is described as the blueprint for achieving a more sustainable future for all by 2030.

Another sustainability framework is ISO 26000, a standard for social responsibility that provides practical guidance on how businesses can operate sustainably. Like the SDGs, ISO 26000 divides sustainability up into different areas, one of which is the environment.

A Circular Economy Action Plan has been drawn up at EU level. The EU has also identified six environmental objective areas

in its Taxonomy Regulation: climate change mitigation, climate change adaptation, sustainable use and protection of water and marine resources, transition to a circular economy, pollution prevention and control, and protection and restoration of biodiversity and ecosystems.



Figure 3: Sustainable business practices based on ISO 26000.



Figure 2: Agenda 2030 and the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals.

What are the benefits of circularity for my business?

A circular economy is a practical way of contributing towards profitability and sustainability through resource efficiency measures. Circular economy strategies can serve as a compass for day-to-day decision-making, for example in connection with purchasing, developing offerings, repair, reuse and renovation, digitalisation and transportation.

A circular economy also offers the opportunity to develop the business through new business models, for example by selling a service instead

of a product, selling waste as a resource or selling access to premises in new ways. Although a circular economy can bring many benefits, it is also important to analyse each circular initiative from a sustainability perspective to ensure that the choices really are good choices from environmental, societal and cost perspectives. For example, renewable materials are not always obtained in a responsible manner. Nor is it always the case that a product with recycled materials is recyclable, or that a rental model offers significant climate savings if it requires extensive transportation and washing.

Examples of the benefits of a circular economy within the meeting industry:

- Less exposure to rising costs of resources and energy
- Greater innovation when working within a circular economy framework
- Improved brand image
- Attractiveness as an employer and increased employee satisfaction
- Greater customer loyalty, and new and more stable revenue streams
- New sources of revenue
- Cost savings
- Environmental benefits
- New jobs
- New internal and external collaboration
- Becoming more circular is also a proactive way to face future compliance requirements in legislation and regulations



Sigtunahöjden

Interview with Lotta Boman, owner and CEO of Sigtunahöjden

Sigtunahöjden has long focused on sustainability. At the turn of the millennium, they were one of the first players in the hotel industry to achieve the Nordic Swan Ecolabel. At the time, the focus was on saving water and reducing how often towels were washed. The driving force was to empower travel and not over-consume resources.

They now have a sustainability group within each department that initiates various projects and decisions on an on-

going basis, and they work actively with the SDGs. A circular economy is high on the agenda. The meeting industry already has a service-based business model, as Lotta Boman explains: "We can't change our entire business model and start recycling meetings, but we can make sustainability and circular economy the norm."

They work actively to reduce food waste by taking a 'nose-to-tail' or 'root-to-shoot' approach to food preparation.

With the exception of paper, they have removed virtually all their single-use products. They have cut down on purchasing decorations by using plants, flowers and dried flowers that they have grown themselves. They reupholster their furniture and cover it with protective fabric to make it last longer. Sometimes they hold 'flea markets' to sell furniture and crockery that needs replacing. They keep water consumption down by measuring their consumption and having fixed water stations instead of buying bottled water.

They communicate their sustainability efforts extensively. Conference guests sometimes ask them to give inspirational talks. They organise events for their staff and guests, inviting suppliers who focus on sustainability and a circular economy. "We try to make it fun," Lotta continues. "One success factor for our sustainability work has been our storytelling in connection with this."

Another success factor has been their sustainability group, including their staff, working actively with staff wellbeing and focusing on the Global Sustainability Goals early on. "The fact that we've worked on these issues for so long builds credibility. It feels good, we attract attention and we are able to share our experiences, while still attracting staff and being profitable!"

Pitfalls to avoid including buying things that sound sustainable in theory but in actual fact are not sustainable, such as pens made from black recycled plastic that cannot be recycled again. "You need to be a critical friend to your suppliers," she explains.

Lotta also suggests measuring rather than simply guessing, and sticking with good certifications that you can learn from.



Photo: Viktor Gårdsäter

What is a business model – and a circular one?

A business model is how businesses create, deliver and capture value. A circular business model is based on making good use of the value of products and materials, minimising virgin material use and waste generation, and at the same time creating profitability.

When is a business model circular? There is no clear definition for this. Can a business model be called circular even if products are reused only a few times, or if new products made from old components are sold without ensuring that they are dealt with after the use phase? Some would say no, while others would say yes. The most important thing is to be aware of and transparent about possible shortcomings, and to work on keeping products in the inner circles.

The Business Model Canvas (BMC) provides a common language for describing, visualising, assessing and developing business models. The model was developed by Alex Osterwalder in 2005 (see the figure on the next page), and is now used worldwide within all industries. The model describes the logical links between how a business creates, delivers and makes use of value.

At the heart of the model is the value proposition, which shows what value the business delivers to its customers. The left-hand side of the value proposition is usually compared with what happens behind the scenes in a theatre or a restaurant, and is called 'backstage'. Everything to the right is what is visible to the customer, corresponding to the stage or the actual restaurant, and is called 'frontstage'.



Photo: Apelöga

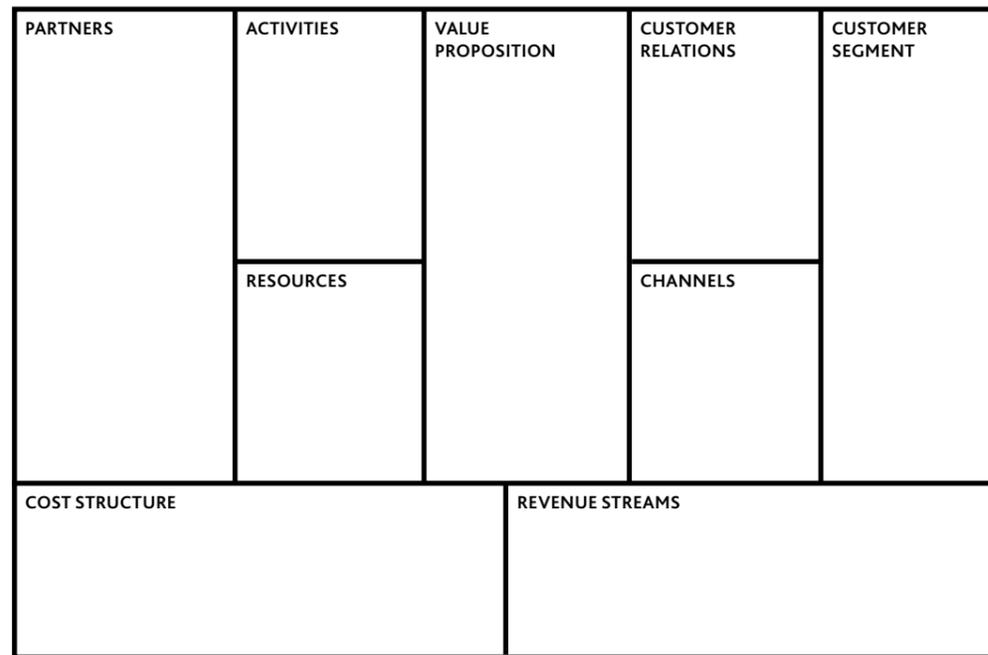


Figure 4: Osterwalder Business Model Canvas+.

Customer segment

For whom do we create value? Who are our most important customers?

Value proposition

What value do we deliver to our customers? Which of the customer's needs do we fulfil?

Channels

Through which channels do our various customer segments want to be reached? How are our channels integrated? (Marketing, sales, distribution, support.)

Customer relations

Which types of relationships does each customer segment expect us to create with them? How do we maintain customer relations?

Revenue streams

What value are our customers willing to pay for? What do they currently pay for?

List the top three sources of revenue. Is there anything we currently do for free that we could charge for?

Key resources

Which key resources are required in order to deliver our value proposition? Staff, knowledge, premises, capital

Key activities

Which key activities are required in order to deliver our value proposition? Things we do to maintain the business model.

Partners

Who are our most important partners? Which resources do we use from our partners?

Cost structure

What are our largest cost items? Are they fixed or variable?

Examples of applications for the BMC:

- **Building consensus.** The model works particularly well when there is a need for a common understanding of what a business model is and what it looks like within the business in question. This in turn facilitates the discussion and a description of the complexity of how the business operates.
- **Analysing competitors.** You can learn a lot from your competitors by selecting a few of them and mapping their business models. This will show you what your customers want and what they are willing to pay for. You will get a better overall perspective of the entire industry and not just your own business.
- **Improving or creating new business models quickly.** By describing the business's current business models, you can also quickly sketch out and test new ones, and see what is affected within the various fields.

When working in a circular way, you can innovate and change the entire business model. However, it is more common to gradually develop your current business model. The most important thing is to start somewhere! As previously discussed, the meeting industry has a service-based business model and does not sell many products. It is therefore often more relevant to optimise different parts of the business from a circularity and sustainability perspective, rather than rethinking the entire business model.

The Circular Business Model Canvas

Osterwalder's BMC is sometimes criticised for not including stakeholders other than customers and partners, such as the environment

and society as a whole. A number of initiatives have therefore been taken to develop the BMC with additional support for sustainability and circular business models. This is why the Circular Business Model Canvas¹ has been developed. However, there is nothing to stop you from using Osterwalder's Business Model Canvas and adding the circular activities to the various fields. If necessary, fields can then be added outside the model.

The Business Model Canvas provides a snapshot, rather than describing a flow or a development process. If you want to describe a change, you can produce two canvases: one for the current situation and one for the desired situation.

1. Tillväxtverket (2022) <https://tillvaxtverket.se/amnesomraden/affarsutveckling/cirkular-affarsmodell/affarsmodell-for-cirkular-ekonomi.html>

A business often has several business models. A conference hotel could be described as having several business models, with the accommodation, the restaurant and the activities on offer all having different business models. If you have different value propositions for completely different customer segments, it is probably worth splitting operations up into different business models.

As well as the business model, there are also many other areas that affect or can be affected by a circular initiative, such as value chains, legislation and regulations, behaviours, operational management and organisation, values, product design, digitalisation and logistics.

The next page shows an example of what the business model could look like for a restaurant that uses food waste as a raw material (inspired by Restaurang Spill).



Figure 5: Many different things need to be considered when creating a circular business model, and the image above shows what research has shown to be important.

PARTNERS Suppliers to restaurants with high volumes of food waste	ACTIVITIES Purchasing and sorting food waste Creating menus, preparing & serving food Skills development	VALUE PROPOSITION Good, healthy breakfast and lunch that raises awareness that a lot of food is thrown away	CUSTOMER RELATIONS Consensus about the importance of sustainability, and of good, healthy food and making use of all ingredients produced	CUSTOMER SEGMENT Officials with strong finances in areas with many offices
	RESOURCES Staff Premises Skills & interest in sustainability		CHANNELS Word of mouth Website Social media	
COST STRUCTURE Staff – somewhat more than at a conventional restaurant Ingredients – food waste reduces purchasing costs Restaurant premises – kitchen and dining room			REVENUE STREAMS Income from breakfast, lunch and conferences at the same level as the rest of the market	

Figure 6: Example – a restaurant that bases its business model on food waste.



Photo: David Seitz



Different circular strategies

In simple terms, a circular economy has three dimensions: use often (e.g. by sharing), preserve value (by using for a long time) and recycle. These three dimensions are useful starting points when developing circular business models.

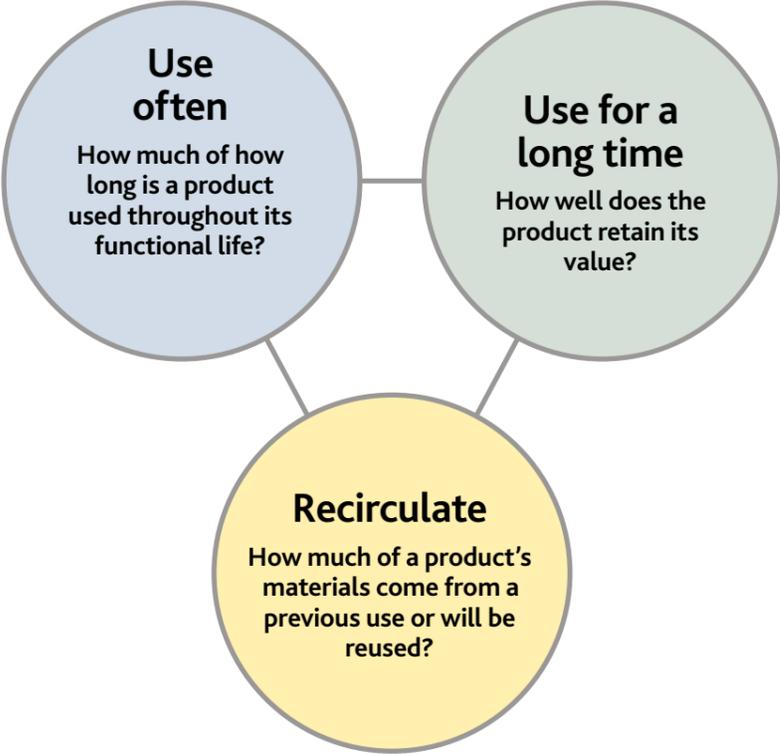


Figure 7: Three dimensions of circularity: Recirculation, utilisation and endurance. Based on the report Three-dimensional product circularity (2021)².

². Report three dimension product circularity (2021) <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/jiec.13109>

The Ellen MacArthur Foundation – a leading expert in international circular economy – has published a framework, ReSOLVE³, which includes examples of different circular strategies.

Examples of circular strategies in the ReSOLVE framework:

Strategy	Description
Regenerate	Shift to renewable energy and materials Reclaim, retain and restore the health of ecosystems
Share	Share assets (e.g. cars, rooms, appliances) Reuse/choose second-hand Prolong life through maintenance, design for durability, upgradeability, etc.
Optimise	Increase performance/efficiency of product Remove waste in the production and supply chain Leverage Big Data, automation, remote sensing and steering
Loop	Remanufacture products or components Recycle materials Digest anaerobically Extract biochemicals from organic waste
Virtualise	Dematerialise directly (e.g. books, CDs, DVDs, travel) Dematerialise indirectly (e.g. online shopping)
Replace	Replace old with advanced non-renewable materials Apply new technologies (e.g. 3D printing) Select new product/service (e.g. multimodal transport)

3. <https://emf.thirdlight.com/link/ip2fh05h21it-6nvypm/@/preview/1?o>



Photo: Carolina Romare

4

Examples of circular activities for development towards a circular business model

The business model is made up of all the activities carried out within the business. Circular economy strategies include different activities that are easier or more difficult to implement, that require more or less investment, and that have different degrees of ecological or societal impact.

Businesses within the meeting industry are often facilities-heavy, with large physical assets. Initiatives to expand and optimise the use of capital and physical resources are therefore particularly important. Materials procurement needs to be adapted in line with a circular flow – one that is designed for maintenance, reuse, remanufacture, recycling and minimising toxins.

Sharing the purchase of 'products as a service' (within and/or between businesses) is a potential source of lower greenhouse emissions over the product's life, capital and cost savings, and/or new revenues. These initiatives can ideally be transformed into convincing, purpose-driven storytelling that contributes to a stronger brand and differentiated market positioning.

Below are some examples of different activities that can gradually be implemented

into the development of your circular business model. They are based on areas where the meeting industry has the greatest potential to create increased circular value, as a key player in various value-creating processes.



Storytelling contributes to a stronger brand.

Food and drink

One third of our global carbon footprint comes from food production. Here, there are excellent opportunities for the meeting industry to develop by reviewing menus and management at restaurants. The circular vision is zero waste! Values and habits are obstacles that need to be overcome. When the Nordic Choice Hotel removed bacon from its breakfast menu, it experienced such a backlash that it backed down. Even if guests do not eat bacon at home for breakfast, there is an expectation that it will be available at a hotel. However, values evolve – don't give up just because something new doesn't work on the first try!

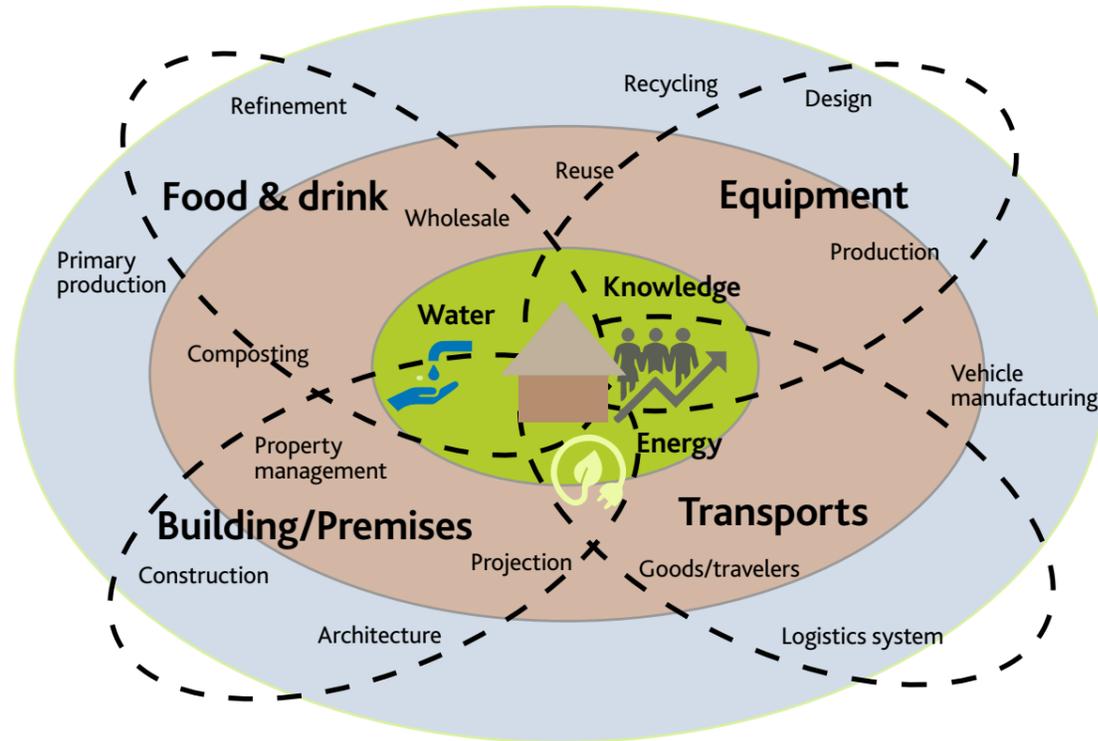


Figure 8: Flows within the meeting industry with great potential for circularity.

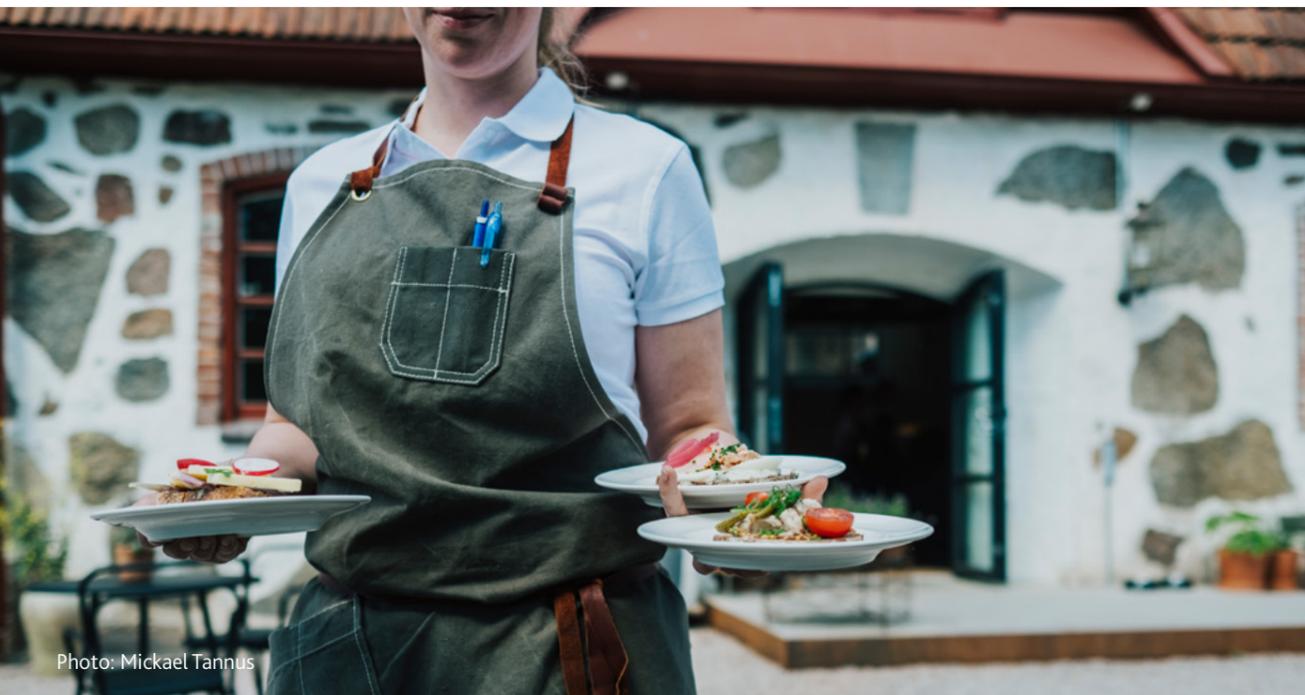


Photo: Mickael Tannus

Examples of circular activities related to food and drink:

Activity	Description
Change the menu to organic and/or KRAV-labelled food	Prioritising organic food brings many positive effects. Respect for the ecosystem results in healthier food, reduces pollution, promotes biodiversity, counteracts soil erosion and promotes the long-term fertility of the soil – and thus the ability to recreate renewable resources. Sweden’s KRAV label has similar requirements to labelling for organic food, but goes further to include animal welfare, reduced climate impact, biodiversity and better working conditions.
Explore opportunities for urban farming and local produce	Urban farming can be anything from a pot of basil on the kitchen windowsill to a city farm. The concept revolves around food being produced where it is consumed, in or next to the city, and being produced organically. Urban farming is often resource-efficient, generates lower emissions and can help to build community and improve health. For example, water consumption and the demands placed on natural land are much lower with urban farming compared to conventional farming.
Smaller plates and glasses	The eye is tricked by large plates and glasses. Smaller plates reduce food waste and overconsumption.
Say no to food waste	By far the most environmentally friendly diet is one without food waste. To minimise food waste, you can ensure that you get the most out of fruit and vegetables, buy food waste from food retailers, make new dishes out of leftovers and use what you currently throw away, such as making beer from dry bread. Other methods for minimising food waste include accepting fruits and vegetables that are not always aesthetically perfect and giving away or selling leftover food.
Reusable containers	Replace single-use packaging with reusable packaging where possible, and reuse it many times. Replace other disposable products with reusable ones. Minimise individual portions of milk, yogurt, jam, sugar and butter. Allow guests to take away leftovers in their own reusable food containers.
Composting	Organic waste is collected and taken to a centralised composting facility, or is composted on site for use in the garden or for growing produce.

Smart urban farming at Garveriet

At the Garveriet venue in Floda, various companies carry out urban plant cultivation practices such as aeroponics, and breed fish using aquaponics. A smart database can predict which plants will be needed by various food vendors before they even know they will need them. The Foodprint Lab organises study visits: [thefoodprintlab.com](https://www.thefoodprintlab.com)

Accor Hotels redistributes leftovers with Too Good To Go

As part of its commitment to reduce food waste at its hotels by 30%, Accor Hotels decided to partner with Too Good To Go at 500 hotels in Belgium, France, Spain, the UK, Italy, the Netherlands, Germany and Switzerland. They let customers take away leftover portions. Since 2016, Accor Hotels has used the Too Good To Go app to redistribute 160,000 meals and prevent more than 400,000 kilograms of carbon dioxide from being generated. [all.accor.com](https://www.all.accor.com)

Fotografiska circulates leftover bread

Fotografiska – en mötesplats för fotografi i Stockholm – samarbetar med närliggande Nya Carnegiebryggeriet för en ny öl med namnet Echo. Brödresterna i bageriet, restaurangen och kaféet tas tillvara och blir till öl i stället för att slängas. Namnet Echo anspelar på att råvarorna humle och malt är ekologiska och att ölet, som ett eko, kommer tillbaka då spillet från öltillverkningen även blir råvara till ett nytt bröd. [fotografiska.com](https://www.fotografiska.com)



Photo: Matilda Lindeblad



Restaurang Spill aims to reach many people

Erik Andersson, founder of Restaurang Spill in Malmö



In autumn 2017, I visited suppliers to let them know that I had quit as a chef at the two Michelin-starred restaurant I worked for. I saw large crates of food and asked what they were. When I learnt that they were full of food to be thrown away, I came up with the idea for Spill: the restaurant I run with my wife, Ellinor.

We realised that a huge amount of food needed to be dealt with, and we wanted to reach as many people as possible. We therefore settled on a restaurant serving lunch in an office district, with the potential to attract a large number of high-spending customers.

In spring 2018, we opened on a small scale in a 40 square metre space. Initially, we encountered negative reactions against cooking with food waste, and many people questioned the name Spill, which is Swedish for 'waste'. But the concept has proved so successful that in August 2019 we were able to move to a larger 550 square metre

space. We define success according to factors such as reaching many people and being able to pay the wages of six employees. We can also see how our guests are starting to change the way they think. What do they do with food waste at home? There has also been considerable interest in Europe, and we have partnerships and take part in conferences in Italy and Spain.

'Sustainability' is a broad word that encompasses a great deal for us. Circular thinking is part of that. Making use of food waste is important, but for us it also includes the wellbeing of our staff and the quality of our food. Everything should have a long life, and much of our kitchen equipment, furniture and crockery was bought second-hand. We also share the kitchen with other tenants to make drinks, for example.

We buy food waste from suppliers who deliver to restaurants, and we negotiate and haggle with them on the price. Most

suppliers have a clearance sale list, from which we choose the meat we want. When it comes to vegetables, we take whatever our selected suppliers can deliver. This means that we don't have fixed menus. Instead, we come up with them the night before or sometimes on the morning of the same day. We buy at a lower price than a regular restaurant, but we have higher staffing costs as we have to sort all the food we receive. The price of a lunch will therefore be in line with other restaurants.

Our biggest challenge has been the pandemic. It takes the same number of staff to serve 120 guests as it does to serve 250, as we have such a large restaurant. We were able to survive financially, thanks in large part to having good contracts for the premises.

We want to develop Spill – to make it better for both guests and staff. In order to grow, we need to hire more staff to free up time for Ellinor and me. We'll be

opening a new restaurant in 2023, and we're planning to expand our conference business.

My recommendations for other entrepreneurs within the industry: Believe in yourself! Dare! Start small – if it doesn't work, it needn't be the end of the world!

 restaurangspill.se



Photo: David Seitz

Energy

Rising energy prices are hitting the meeting industry hard. Energy consumption is either direct (energy consumed within your own operations) or indirect (energy consumed by your subcontractors, customers or partners). The list below focuses on the direct energy

consumption at the venue, but it is just as important to map the entire value chain including purchased goods, guests' energy consumption and transportation. Measure energy consumption, and analyse and monitor this to ensure that the prioritised actions have the desired effect.

Examples of circular activities related to energy:

Activity	Description
Solar cells	Solar cells are installed on or integrated into the building to generate electricity that can be used for on-site processes or fed into the grid. This opens up the possibility of being innovative by offering this stored solar energy to electrical car users. Perhaps at some point in the future a business model can be found for storing surplus electricity in guests' car batteries? Regulations currently prevent this.
Multifunctional card systems	Key cards (wooden or plastic) are used to turn off the electricity when guests leave their rooms. Are there additional uses for these cards? What possibilities are there for preventing the cards from being taken home?
Sustainable building design	Sustainable building design is evolving rapidly. For example, conventional oil-based insulation materials are being replaced by recycled materials or renewable alternatives such as sheep wool, cellulose or wood fibre. There are also other natural ways to reduce energy consumption, such as using natural shade from trees and positioning windows and skylights to increase natural lighting inside the building.
Efficient refrigeration	Food and drink refrigeration should be designed and maintained to minimise electricity consumption, operating at the wrong temperature and food waste.

Smart from the start: The Wood Hotel in Skellefteå

The 20-storey hotel is built from wood using timber from local forests, partly to minimise transportation and partly because the material effectively stores carbon dioxide. Solar panels were installed on the hotel's roof with batteries to store surplus energy, and the adjacent Skellefteälven river was chosen to generate energy. A multifunctional roof garden was created on the roof to insulate against cold, heat and noise, and also to support and preserve biodiversity and slow down water run-off. The hotel was climate neutral as soon as it opened, and is expected to become climate positive within a couple of years. elite.se/sv/the-wood-hotel

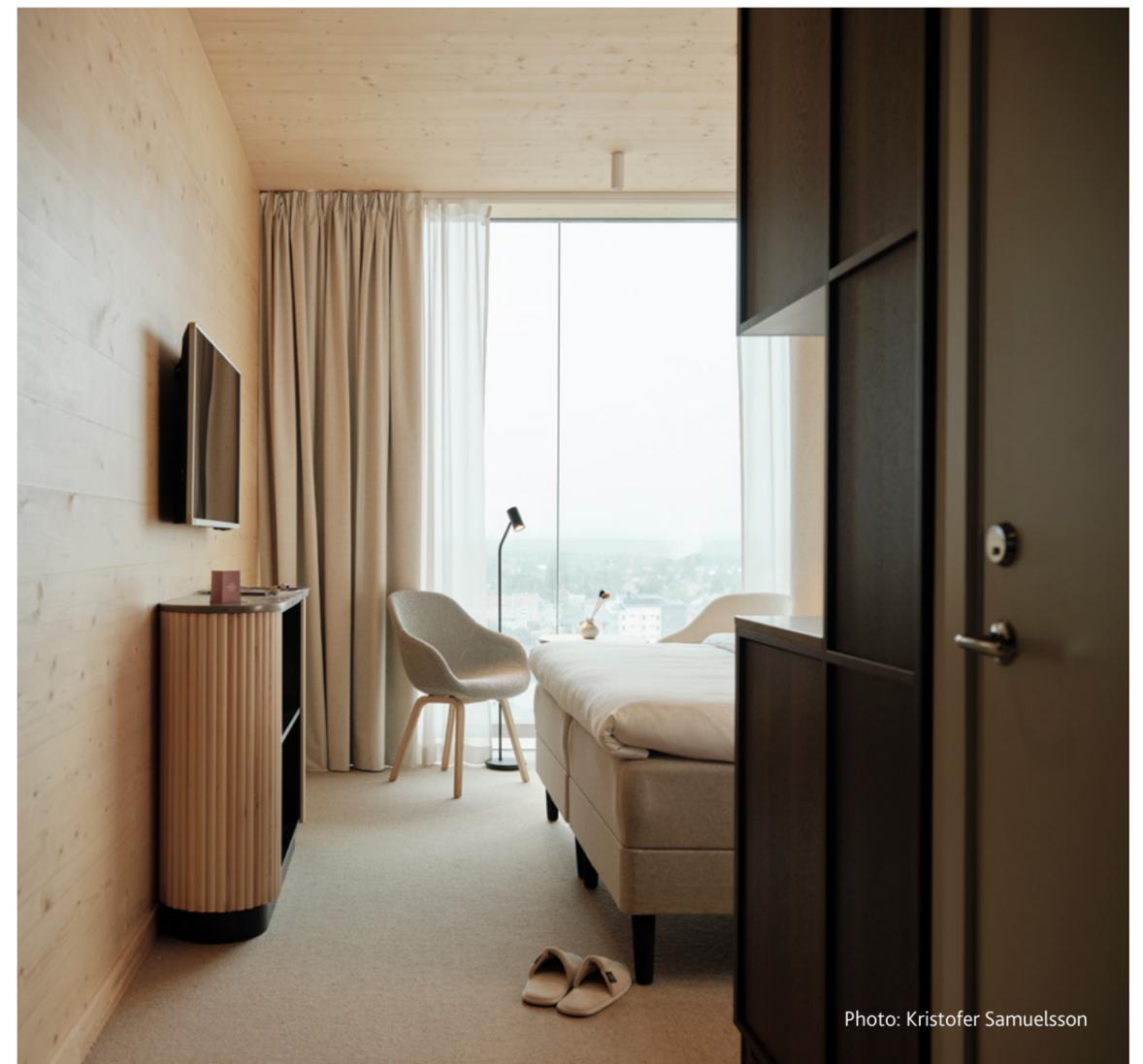


Photo: Kristofer Samuelsson

Transportation

Increased awareness of the negative climate impact of transportation and rising fuel costs are clear trends that are having a significant effect on the meeting industry.

Examples of circular activities related to transport:

Activity	Description
Sharing solutions	Offer guests – and perhaps also local residents – the opportunity to hire bicycles, electric scooters and/or other small electric vehicles. If car hire is not available nearby, hiring electric cars and encouraging carsharing can also be an opportunity to contribute towards more sustainable mobility solutions for guests.
Carsharing as a service	Offer shared transport to and from meetings and activities. Offer digital support for carsharing.
The guest as a transport provider	Are there transportation needs that could be outsourced to guests? Perhaps digital support to enable the customer to easily pick up something en route? This would allow the same means of transport to be used for multiple purposes.
Smart logistics	Running a business such as a restaurant requires an inward flow of goods. In order to minimise transportation, you can try to coordinate with other actors and/or encourage different suppliers to share a transport solution. You can also use parties that transport goods to the business to take back products and materials that will be circulated. It is important to choose an appropriate means of transport from the available options.

Other ways to reduce the need for transportation include working with other actors to create opportunities for guests to take part in multiple activities at the same destination. This can reduce the need for transportation to different activities.

Logtrade offers circular logistics

Logtrade uses the Internet of Things to connect customers, transportation and producers/suppliers. The company is working to create a digital ecosystem around logistics, facilitating local circular material and product flows in an efficient and more sustainable manner.  logtrade.se



Photo: Mickael Tannus

Water

Clean water for consumption and recreation is a question of survival for the meeting industry. Water shortages are increasingly common in many parts of Sweden, and the Baltic Sea is the world's most polluted sea.

Examples of circular activities related to water:

Activity	Description
Natural pools	Natural pools or eco-pools are new circular pool concepts that have been developed in countries such as Germany and the UK. They are also becoming increasingly common in Sweden.
Harvest rainwater	Rainwater can be collected for use in various non-sanitary and non-drinking contexts such as flushing toilets, washing clothes, watering plants/gardens or washing outdoor items. This reduces the use of drinking water from reservoirs that may already be under strain.
Recycle grey water	Grey water is wastewater from showers, baths, laundry or washing machines. As lightly used water, it can be reused in various ways.
Water-saving devices	Flow regulators and aerators in showers and taps can bring significant water savings, and can reduce water consumption without any noticeable loss of pressure or flow. Push-button timers, flush timers and self-closing taps also reduce water flow. Low-flush and dual-flush toilets use a special cistern design to allow waste to be flushed away with less water. How can you ensure that both guests and employees use dual-flush options to choose a half or full flush?
Replacing linens less often	Work with guests and be even tougher when it comes to reducing volumes of laundered sheets and towels. This reduces the consumption of water, electricity and detergent, while also increasing the lifetime of linens.

Wikströms Fisk circulates water

At Wikströms Fisk, a restaurant on the island of Möja, the toilets are flushed using cleaned water from a small nearby wastewater treatment plant. The plant normally treats water from households and businesses on the island and sends it to a filtration bed and out into the Baltic Sea, but a pump has now been installed that pumps some of the cleaned water to the restaurant's toilets. wikstromsfisk.com

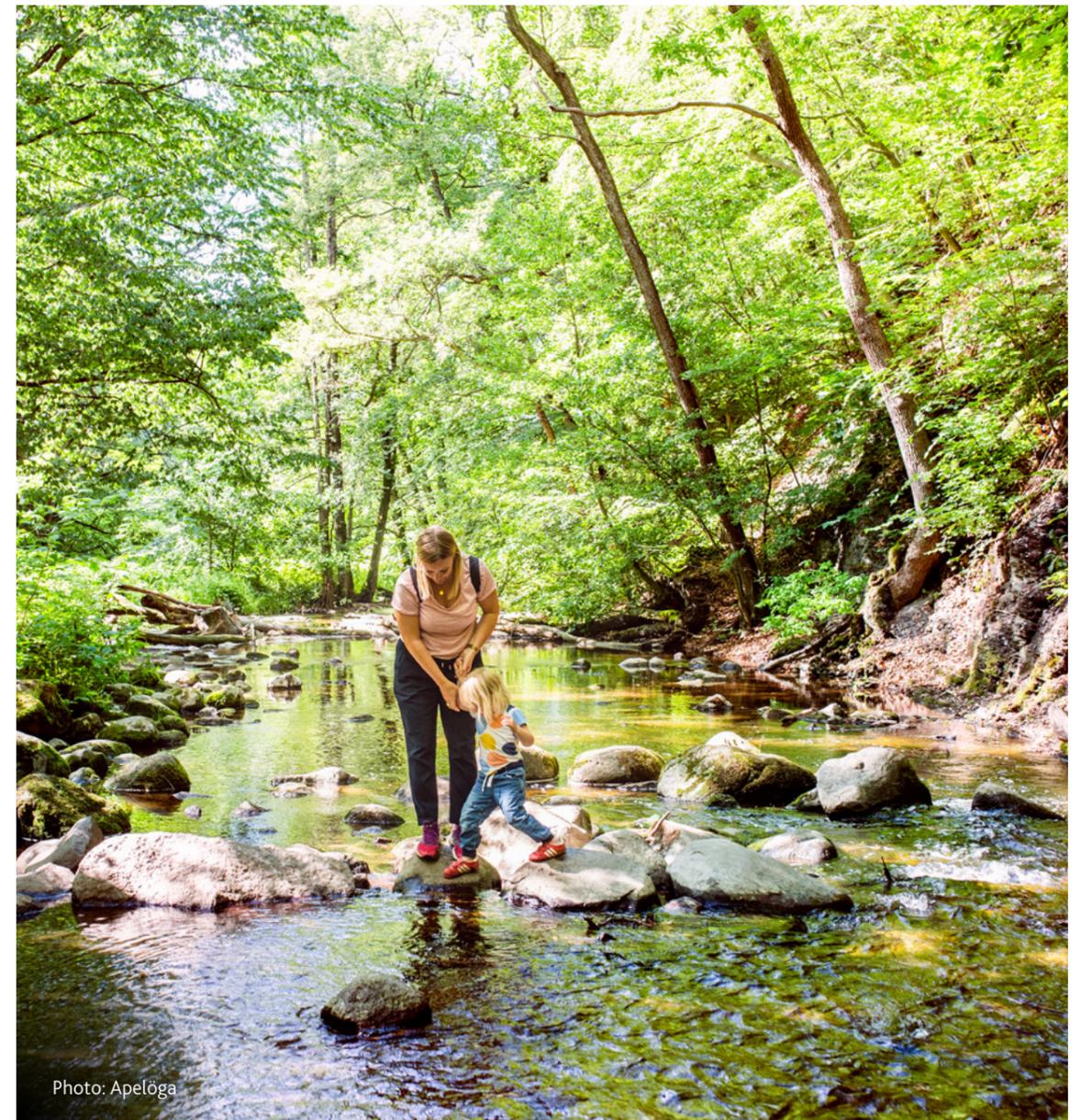


Photo: Apelóga

Innovative fish farming harvests mountain water

Claudio Ferro, Business Development Manager at AFRY in Switzerland

At 57 kilometres, the Gotthard Tunnel in the Swiss Alps is the world's longest railway tunnel. While drilling and constructing the tunnel, the tunnel builders encountered large quantities of warm drainage water from within the rock. This had to be dealt with in order to complete the construction work. "When the workers drained the water directly into a nearby river, the idea of using the mountain water sustainably came about," explains Claudio Ferro, Business Development Manager and Head of Project Management at AFRY in Switzerland. "At Basis 57, a company that focuses on sustainable water use, we received some suggestions for how we could use the water, and we decided to create a land-based fish farm."

The project was initiated in a small canton in Switzerland, with many experts and locals sharing their ideas, raising money and contacting small investors. This showed how citizens can come together locally to achieve

something big – for the sake of the environment, but also for the economy!

Traditional fish farms require large amounts of energy and transportation between farms during the lifetime of the fish, which generates emissions. Not only is the high-quality mountain water extremely clean and fish-friendly, it is also an ideal temperature: 13–15°C. The mountain water can therefore be used as a natural source of power in production, minimising the need for water heating and energy, and reducing emissions.

The fish farm is based on a recirculation system that reproduces the entire product cycle of farmed fish in a sustainable manner, from hatching to adulthood and all the way through to packaged fillets. It consists of several indoor recyclable water tanks used during the various phases of fish farming, creating the ideal aquaculture environment. The plant uses mountain

water, which is recycled and treated before being returned to the river. By using mountain water, almost 100% of the water is reused and purified from harmful chemicals.

All residues from fish production can also be reused to produce by-products such as biofuel and animal feed. And the harvested fish is not only served up by food trucks as shown in the picture – it is also sold at local restaurants!

 afry.com

“ We decided to create a land-based fish farm. ”



Green spaces and better use of premises

Premises and the outdoor environment require major investments, and there is great potential for optimising available space.

Examples of circular activities related to spaces and premises:

Activity	Description
Green roofs	Use the roof as a terrace, or for cultivation and activities. Vegetation reduces the need for air conditioning in the summer and provides insulation in the winter. A green roof also contributes towards better air quality, increased biodiversity and less risk of flooding during rainfall. Additionally, it extends the life of the roof as it is better protected against sun, rain and wind.
Share premises	Sharing workspaces, meeting places, hotel services and premises for services such as preschools, drop-off points, restaurants and gyms provides new market segment opportunities – especially in city centres. By forging new partnerships and through circular design of buildings and premises (for example through modularity and flexibility), premises and spaces can be used in several different ways, spreading risks and improving resilience in the event of various crises. A lunch restaurant can be used for evening classes. An indoor car park can be used for young people to play sports at certain times of the day, and so on.
Optimise the use of premises	Conference facilities can often be a crowded sector. Facilitate sharing premises. For example, one group can carry out outdoor activities in the morning and another in the afternoon. Optimise premises across seasons by targeting different audiences. Optimise use over the course of the day by hiring out premises to associations in the evenings. Collaborate with guests.

Another way to create and use green spaces is to grow food and flowers on the site. The locally produced food can then be used in the restaurant, and the flowers can be used as locally produced decoration. Draw inspiration from Sigtunahöjden, which grows its own decorative flowers and uses them in both summer and winter.

Foodprint creates edible meeting places

Foodprint helps businesses and cities to transform empty asphalt squares, hidden corners and car parks into temporary and permanent green, edible meeting places, urban farms and pop-up parks. They also put on activities to activate, educate and engage passers-by and tourists, resulting in more walking in the city rather than driving. They work with Grow-Here.com, which matches those who want to grow produce with suitable land. This collaboration ensures that there is always someone maintaining the farm in the city and in the countryside, while also making a living and feeding the neighbourhood.  [foodprint.org](https://www.foodprint.org)



Photo: Mickael Tannus

Equipment

Ensure that all equipment is of long-lasting quality, recyclable and non-hazardous to the environment. It can often be worth hiring, leasing, borrowing or sharing equipment with others.

Examples of circular activities related to spaces and premises:

Activity	Description
Lease, hire or share equipment	Fitness equipment, IT equipment, kitchen equipment, coffee machines, speakers, water fountains, linen, rugs, furniture and work clothes are examples of products that could be leased or hired instead of being purchased. Various sharing models with other actors can also generate new revenues.
Furniture and textile management	Instead of being thrown away, old furniture and textiles can be renovated, repaired, sold or donated to families or associations. Draw inspiration from Sigtunahöjden, which holds flea markets to sell furniture.
Choose second-hand and recycled	Kitchen equipment, IT equipment, toilets, sinks, furniture, etc. rarely need to be new. Choose second-hand wherever possible. If you decide to buy new, choose products made from recycled materials or products that have been reused. Check not only that these products are made from recycled materials, but also that they can be recycled again!
Choose non-toxic	Materials and components need to be non-toxic in order to be able to circulate. Choose non-toxic. Dispose of oils and hazardous chemicals in accordance with environmental legislation.
Impose demands on suppliers	Ensure that products have a high degree of environmental performance by reviewing their environmental product declarations and by imposing demands in terms of recycled materials, reused components, recyclability and/or repairability. Be careful not to impose demands that result in higher emissions than newly produced items!
Choose multi-use instead of single use	Look at which single-use items you can replace with reusable items, such as cleaning equipment, cutlery and glasses. Find out whether there will be a lower environmental impact.

ONEPan circulates the frying pan

ONEPan's PFAS-free frying pan is part of a circular economy – it has been created for more than one life. When the coating on the pan becomes worn, users can order another newly coated pan and return the old one to ONEPan. The old one will then be refurbished and brought back into use. Over and over again.  onepan.se

Envivo circulates office furniture

The main reasons why businesses replace furniture are that they have grown, shrunk or relocated, or that their way of working has changed and consequently so have their needs. This means that furniture with a lifespan of twelve to twenty years is replaced far too early – regardless of its condition. Envivo prevents this. Envivo enables businesses to hire furniture and fittings. The company deals with any existing items, and can renovate them or ensure that they are reused or recycled. Furniture can be replaced during the contract period, meeting any requirements for flexible use of furniture and fittings.  envivo.se



Transparent's speakers improve with time

Transparent hires out and sells speakers that are designed to last a lifetime, thanks to their high quality, modular design that makes them repairable and upgradeable with the latest technology. Moreover, the speakers are only made of materials and components that are absolutely necessary, making them largely transparent.  transparent.se

Outdoor Buddies – the outdoor wardrobe of the future

Outdoor Buddies in Åre hires out leisure clothing and equipment on a short- or long-term basis  outdoorbuddies.se

Hire out clothing!



Photo: Mickael Tannus

SIPTex automatically sorts recycled textiles

The textile industry is one of the world's most polluting industries, and has a significant impact on both people and the environment. Every year, 4.3 million tonnes of textile waste is sent to landfill or incinerated in the EU. More than 140,000 tonnes enter the Swedish market, but less than 5% of this is recycled. Large-scale textile recycling requires consistent quality and high volumes. Today's manual textile sorting cannot meet the market's need for quality-assured products. Automated sorting is currently the missing link between collection and high-quality recycling of textiles.

Sysav's SIPTex plant in Malmö is the world's first automated, large-scale textile sorting facility. It sorts textiles by colour and fibre composition using near-infrared light, allowing it to handle large flows and produce textile fractions that are suitable for different recycling processes. The SIPTex plant was opened in November 2020, and is operated by Sysav with support from project partner IVL Swedish Environmental Research Institute. It will become an important part of a circular cycle for textiles that will transform recycling opportunities.

 sysav.se

Collaboration/partnerships

Collaboration allows for greater joint impact and bigger cost savings. Digital support is a great benefit when collaborating for longer and between many different actors.

Examples of circular activities related to collaboration/partnerships:

Activity	Description
Certifications and standards linked to a circular economy	<p>There are several labels that guarantee a level of environmental performance, such as Green Key, IACC Greenstar and the Nordic Ecolabel. The Nordic Ecolabel for restaurants, hotels and conference facilities⁴ includes requirements for minimising waste and the unnecessary use of resources. Cradle to Cradle Certified is a product certification based on circular design principles. The ISO 14001 standard relates to a circular economy. New standards are also being developed: ISO 59014 for secondary materials and ISO 59004 for circular economy implementation. TCO Certified is an eco-label for IT equipment that is durable, repairable, upgradeable and recyclable.</p> <p>Choose to work with business partners who use one or more of the abovementioned ISO standards and labels. Refuse to work with those who cannot clearly account for their sustainability work. Also consider labelling or certifying your own products and operations.</p>
Share premises	<p>Sharing workspaces, meeting places, hotel services and premises for services such as preschools, drop-off points, restaurants and gyms provides new market segment opportunities – especially in city centres. By forging new partnerships and through circular design of buildings and premises (for example through modularity and flexibility), premises and spaces can be used in several different ways, spreading risks and improving resilience in the event of various crises such as pandemics. A lunch restaurant can be used for evening classes. An indoor car park can be used for young people to play sports at certain times of the day.</p>

4. <https://www.svanen.se/att-svanenmarka/kriterier-ansokan/hotell-logiverksamhet-055/?productGroupID=156001>

Apron collaboration captures CO₂

H&M Foundation's Planet First programme has worked with the Hong Kong Research Institute of Textiles and Apparel (HKRITA) to develop an apron that looks like an ordinary apron, but captures carbon dioxide from the air. The Carbon Looper pilot project at Fotografiska converts carbon dioxide collected in the apron into nutrients for hydroponic cultivation in the basement. [hmfoundation.com](https://www.hmfoundation.com)

Inrego extends the lifespan of IT equipment

Inrego buys used smartphones, computers and other IT products from businesses and organisations, refurbishes them and then resells them to businesses and individuals. [inrego.se](https://www.inrego.se)



Photo: Apelöga

5

How to do it

Circularity is not a one-off project. Instead, it is a journey of development that will take many years. This development journey is, by definition, an iterative journey that is supported by a process of trial and error, constantly evolving in a quest for continuous improvement. In order to succeed, all development must take account of the business context, external trends, desired market positioning, target customers, core capabilities, and operational strengths and weaknesses.

And, of course, there is more than one way to do this. It is important that you choose the one that suits your business. Circular development is easier if employees, guests and partners all pull in the same direction. This requires knowledge that brings awareness. The relationships can be complex, and there are many myths about sustainability.

Ensure an overall perspective

Before embarking on a development journey, it may be worth ensuring that all employees have basic competence regarding circularity and sustainability. It may also be worth reviewing employees' roles and responsibilities. One possible barrier to seeing and implementing circular solutions may be employees' responsibility being too narrow to see the bigger operational picture. An example of where things can go wrong is switching entirely to lactose-free products. These are a godsend for people who are lactose-intolerant, but

they also require more production steps. So switching entirely to lactose-free products for all guests is not optimal for the environment. Here, we have summarised a possible process for getting started. Create a team with slightly different skills and roles to work through the following steps together.

1. Environmental scanning
2. Brainstorm ideas
3. How does it contribute to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals?
4. How are your finances affected?
5. Setting targets, imposing demands and measuring
6. From idea to reality
7. Develop your communication



Photo: Apelöga

1. Environmental scanning

Which trends and other external changes will have the greatest impact on the future of the industry?

Which external changes do you see affecting the industry today and in the future? Some trends are contradictory. We live in an increasingly globalised world, while at the same time we are also seeing a growing focus on local resilience and self-sufficiency. We are also seeing trends that affect many industries.

A new business logic is emerging in the wake of the pandemic, shifting from 'just in time' to 'just in case'. The sharing economy has

grown rapidly, and all indications suggest that it will reshape established industry logics. Airbnb's global success story is hard to beat. Digitalisation enables a number of new players to approach the industry – you can choose to see them as potential partners or as competitors.

Many new laws and regulations are being introduced, based on demands for increased sustainability and circularity. In Spain, for example, it is now the law that customers should always be offered a doggy bag to take food home from restaurants.

The EU is also drawing up new requirements for circular solutions, both for organisations through the EU Taxonomy and for products through the new Ecodesign regulations.

List the changes you see and think about the implications for the industry:

Trends/regulations/new actors	Possible consequences for the meeting industry



Photo: Carolina Romare

Airbnb grows with the sharing economy

Airbnb is a global online marketplace for renting and booking primarily private accommodation, and has grown incredibly quickly since being founded in 2008 in San Francisco. For some years now, the company has also been adding experiences. Its business concept is based on the principles of the sharing economy, whereby individuals are both suppliers and customers. Businesses have gradually also decided to market their accommodation and experiences via Airbnb. In 2020, the company's shares were listed on the Nasdaq stock exchange. On the first day of trading, its stock rose 112% to a market capitalisation of USD 86.5 billion. [airbnb.se](https://www.airbnb.se)

Visit innovative companies within different industries

A circular economy is about daring to think differently – doing things that go beyond traditional behaviour within the industry and collaborating with others. It is therefore interesting to draw inspiration from companies in completely different industries.

Which stakeholders are affected by - or influence - your business's circular journey?

Add key stakeholders and potential partners to the circles.

- Who might be positively or negatively affected by the business's decisions or circular activities?
- Whom within the value chain would we be able to collaborate with?
- Who has been involved in the past when similar issues were dealt with?

Think about the stakeholders within your own organisation (internal world), stakeholders that are local or someone in your country (local world), and stakeholders that are international (external world).

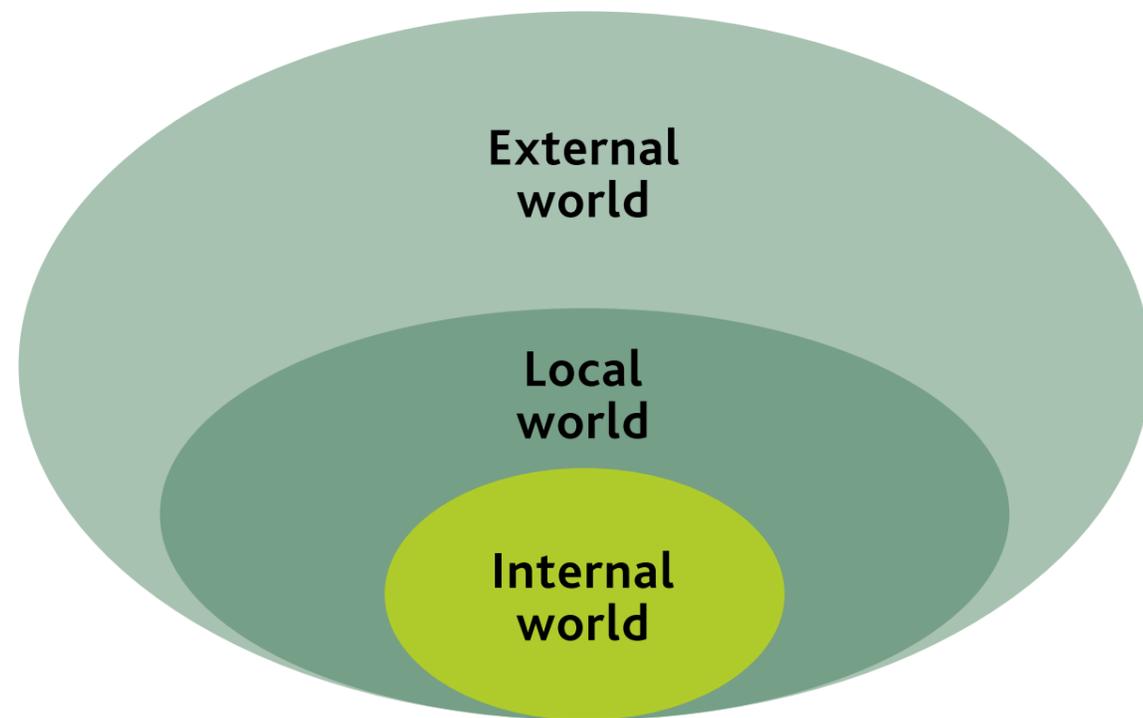


Figure 9: Map stakeholders inside and outside the business.

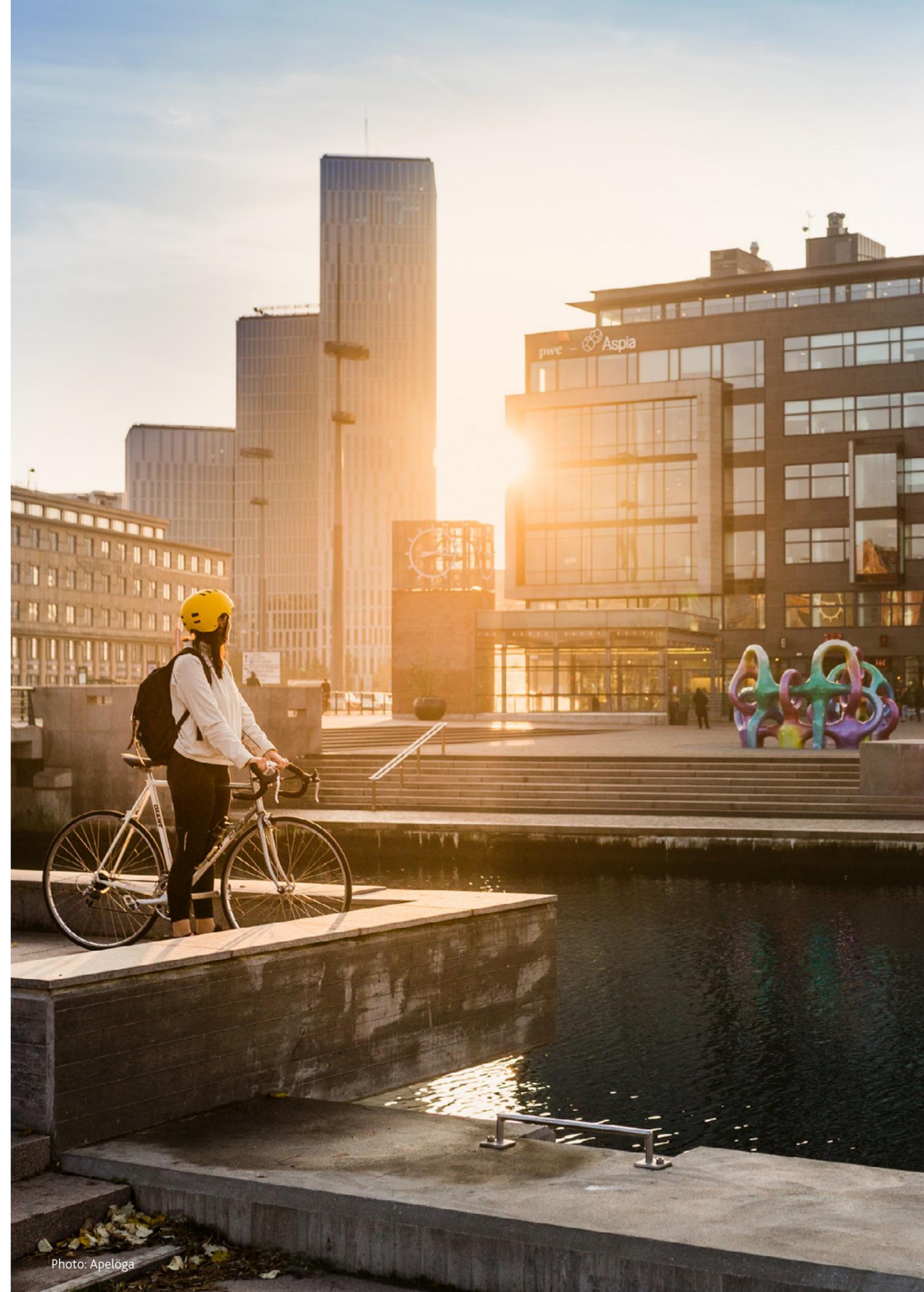


Photo: Apelöga

2. Brainstorm ideas

Brainstorm how you can become more circular.

Answering the following questions can kick-off the process:

- How will the trends/legislation/regulations/actors that we identified above affect us?
- Who are the most important stakeholders, and what are their demands and needs?
- How can we prevent our products from losing value (e.g. by making better use of products, repairing, renovating, etc.)?
- How can we prevent waste generation?
- Which products do we not need to own, and can instead rent, lease or share with others?
- Which resources could we make better use of (e.g. optimise the use of premises)?
- Which demands would we like to impose on our suppliers?
- What could we virtualise or digitalise to reduce resource consumption?
- Reflect on the list of examples of activities and strategies (the ReSOLVE framework).
 - What do we already do?
 - What could we do more of?

Don't stifle creativity by being critical of other people's ideas.

List as many ideas as possible!



Prioritise ideas

Add all the ideas to a two-by-two matrix, based on the impact of the proposal and what would be required to achieve it.

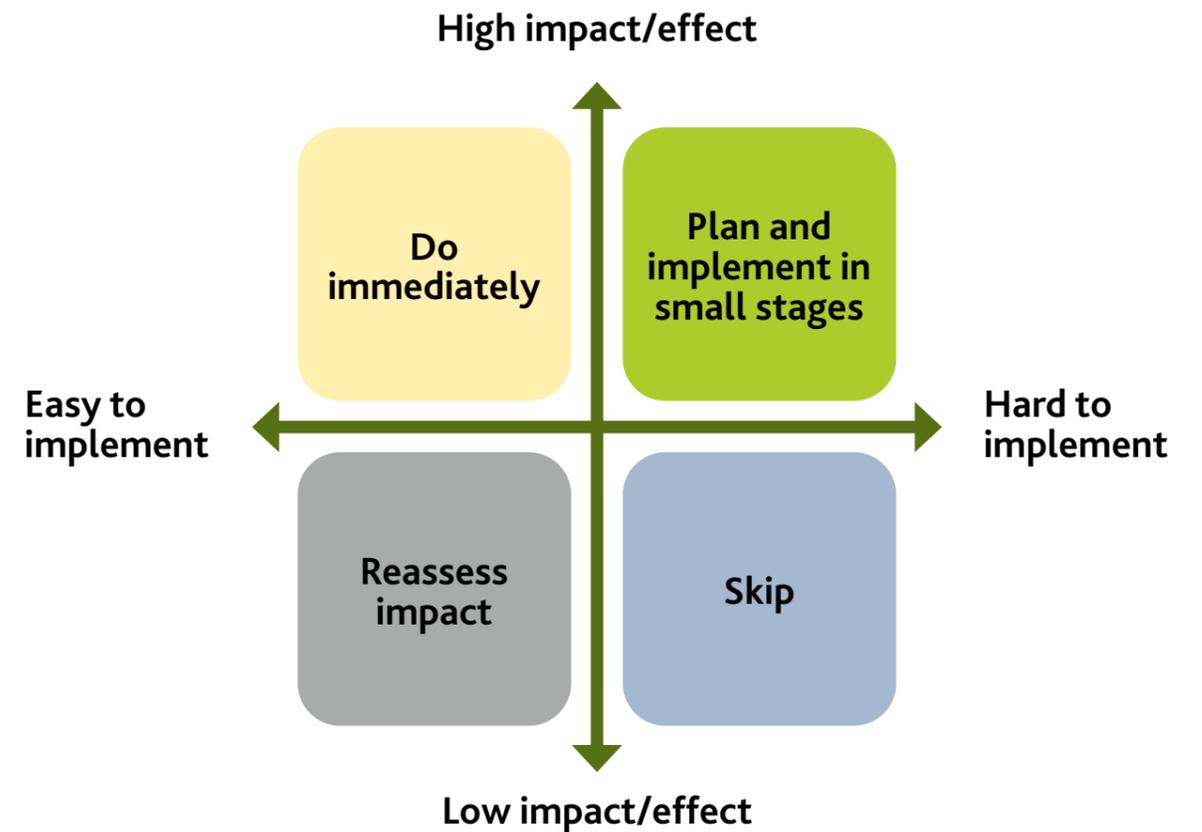


Figure 10: Prioritise according to degree of difficulty and impact.

How do the prioritised circular initiatives affect the business model?

A circular initiative is likely to affect several aspects of the business model. Describe the idea and think about which aspects of the business model are affected.

IDEA: Describe what is to be done

FOR WHOM: Who are affected?

WHY: In what way does this have a positive impact? How does this make us more circular?

WITH WHOM: Who – internally or externally – can contribute?

Figure 12: Template for describing each idea.

PARTNERS	ACTIVITIES	VALUE PROPOSITION	CUSTOMER RELATIONS	CUSTOMER SEGMENT
	RESOURCES		CHANNELS	
COST STRUCTURE		REVENUE STREAMS		

Figure 11: Business Model Canvas – Template to help describe a business model.

3. How does the circular initiative contribute to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals?

Circulating materials and products often – but not always – contributes to more sustainable development. The recycled material may be extremely energy-intensive to produce, the renewable material may compete with food production, the reused products may require long transportation routes, and the products may have been handled or produced under poor working conditions.

Circular initiatives can also have particularly positive effects! Repair services and second-hand consumption can help people outside the labour market to find employment.

Hiring out products or selling them at flea markets can result in more equal access to products. The choice of farmer can contribute to increased biodiversity.

Livscykelperspektiv

Since circular initiatives can have both negative and positive effects from a sustainability perspective, it is important to analyse these in order to identify risks, opportunities, conflicting objectives and low-hanging fruit early on. Think from a lifecycle perspective. In other words, analyse how decisions affect the use of raw materials, transportation, manufacture and use, and how products, components and materials are dealt with after use.

You can carry out a sustainability scan based on the SDGs⁵. You can do this at the level of the 17 goals or the 169 targets.

Global goals	Factors that contribute towards or counter the goal	Relevance for the circular activity (low, medium or high)
1. No poverty		
2. Zero hunger		
3. Good health and well-being		
4. Quality education		
5. Gender equality		
6. Clean water and sanitation		
Etc....		

5. <https://www.globalamalen.se/om-globala-malen/>

4. How are your business's finances affected by the circular initiative?

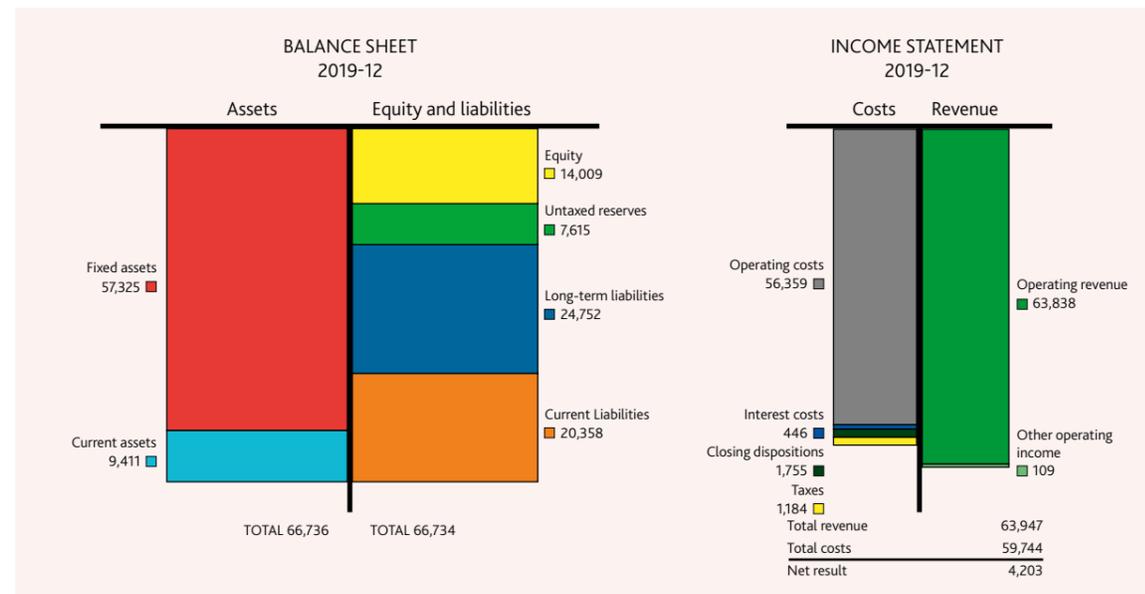
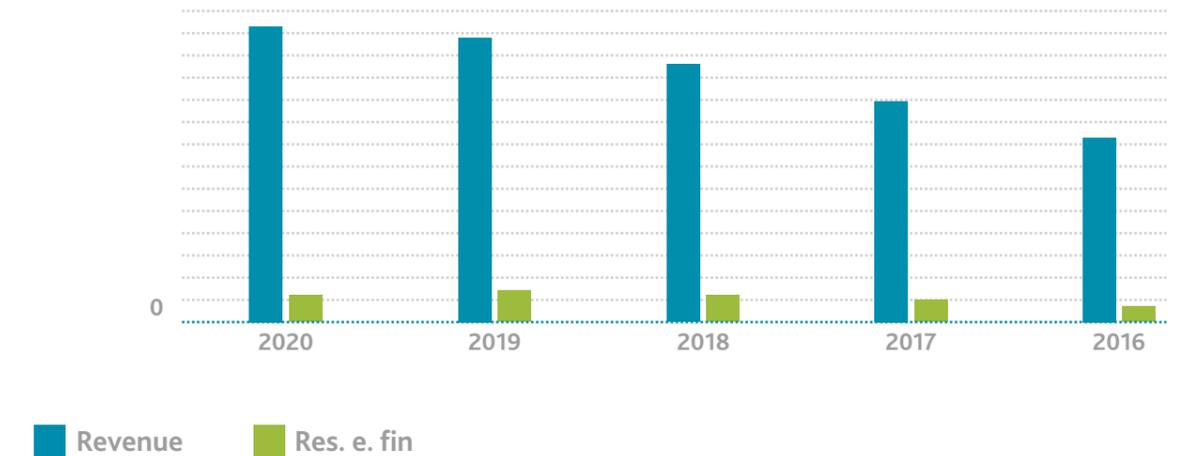
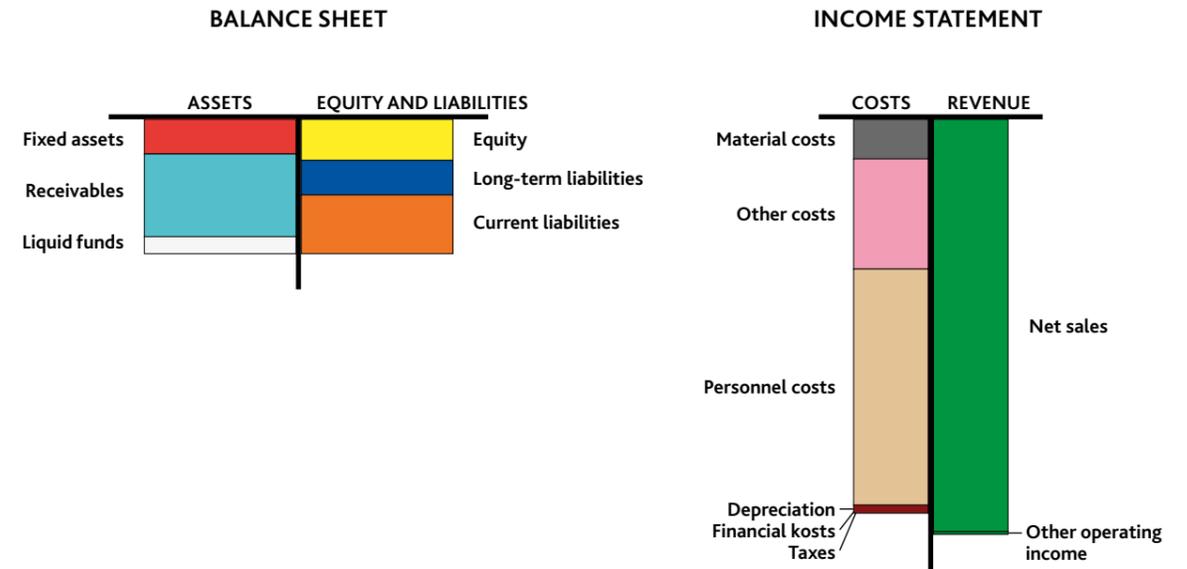
What are the potential economic consequences of the circular economy initiative? How can it enable increased profitability?

The balance sheet on the next page provides a snapshot of the business's assets and liabilities at a specific point in time. The left-hand side of the balance sheet shows your assets, while the right-hand side shows how you have financed these assets. The depreciation of your assets is reported as an expense in the income statement. The income statement shows your expenses and income during the financial year. The profit is shown in the income statement as the difference between income and expenses

Monitoring cash flow

Both the balance sheet and the income statement are affected by your circular initiatives. For example, if you rent instead of selling products, these products will remain as assets on your balance sheet for longer. It is also likely to take a little longer to generate income that corresponds to the products' purchase price, but at the same time you will hopefully generate more income in total over the lifetime of the product. This means that you also need to monitor how change affects your cash flow, i.e. you must ensure that you have enough liquidity. Talk to Almi or your bank. There are opportunities to obtain preferential funding for green initiatives.

The example below shows the balance sheet and the income statement for a conference facility with a hotel, restaurant, conference venue and events. The company has gradually expanded its operations, and has been profitable since 2016.



A circular initiative affects the business model.

A graphical presentation of your limited company's balance sheet and income statement can be found via Allabolag's Plus service. Reflect on the effect of your prioritised circular initiatives.

5. Setting targets, imposing demands and measuring

For circular initiatives, it is important to set targets that include the entire value chain – in other words, not only for your own operations but also for the expectations of your suppliers, partners and guests.

Objectives should ideally be SMART:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Relevant
- Time-bound

Setting targets is easiest when you can influence the design of a process, service or product. Take a holistic approach based on the results of the Agenda 2030 scan. SDG 12 is about responsible consumption and production. For example, if you see that your circular activity affects how much waste you generate, you can set a target for reducing waste by x% and related actions. You may also see that the activity relates to SDG 5 on gender equality, as it needs to be designed to suit both men and women. You can then set targets and actions related to this.



Photo: Nina Olsson.

Ask for an environmental product declaration (EPD)

If you are buying a product or a service instead and you do not have the same degree of control over its exact design, you can impose requirements on the supplier. When it comes to requirements linked to environmental sustainability, you can for example review a product's EPD and compare it with other products' EPDs. You can ask the supplier for an EPD. If they do not have an EPD, you can ask for an environmental lifecycle analysis for the product.

You can also impose demands in terms of:

- using recycled materials instead of virgin materials
- the product being recyclable
- pre-used components being used in the product
- the product being easy to repair.

Discuss with the supplier how the product or its components can be used again when you no longer need it. Could the supplier take the product back?

Be careful not to impose requirements that result in a greater environmental impact than newly produced items! It is also important that the requirements allow for economically sustainable operations for all actors.

Why is it important to measure?

It is often said that what gets measured gets done. By measuring, the work becomes more concrete, it can be monitored, and it is easier

to see the areas where you have already come a long way and those which still need more work. It is also easier to make comparisons between operations and to evaluate how well an operation aligns with new legislation and regulations.

There are several tools and methods for mapping and measuring the circularity of an operation. Something you can think about when it comes to products is trying to measure circularity in the three dimensions:

- how much and how often a product is used
- the proportion of the product that is recirculated and can circulate again
- value preservation, i.e. the product's lifetime.

Choose metrics that suit your operations

Businesses currently use different metrics and tools to monitor their circular economy work. Some businesses use carbon emissions as a metric (e.g. CO2 per delivered product or value), while others use the proportion of recycled or reused raw materials in products. Others set qualitative targets instead, such as the number of circular initiatives in a year.

“ **The product should be recyclable.** ”

Many metrics and tools have also been developed to measure and monitor your circular economy work. For example:

- The ME-metric (value preservation of products)
- The C-metric (proportion of circular material in products)
- Circulytics (circular economy at organisational level)
- Circular transition indicators (circular economy at organisational level)

However, the tools available for measuring and monitoring circular economy at organisational level can be resource-intensive, and are thus primarily suitable for larger companies.

More standardised measurement methods are being drawn up, including via the forthcoming EU Circular Economy Taxonomy and ISO standard 59020 Circular Economy – Measuring Circularity Framework. The EU already has the EU Monitoring Framework, which will be supplemented with more circular metrics. Statistics Sweden has also been commissioned to develop measures to monitor Sweden’s circular economy development.

A simple way to get started is to select metrics based on the three dimensions of a circular economy and the operational levels you are focusing on:

Level within the business	The three circular dimensions	Examples of metrics
Metrics that show how circular a business or product is as a whole.	A. Use often	B. x tonnes of virgin material per unit of generated value.
Metrics that focus on parameters, linked to material flows, that directly contribute to the overall circular performance of the business or product.	B. Recirculate	B. x % reused components in the production process at our suppliers. C. x % refurbished furniture compared to new purchase since 20XX.
Metrics that focus on what is required to improve the circularity of material flows in the value chain.	C. Use for a long time	A. New collaborations to share products that are rarely used. B. Policy to minimize food waste.

Figure 13: Examples of circular metrics linked to the three dimensions of a circular economy and operational level.



Photo: Frits Meyst

6. From idea to reality

Ensure that everyone involved is pulling in the same direction.

Here are two examples of how to communicate a vision or a mission statement.

“We’re not saving the world – we’re doing something that shows that a lot of food is thrown away.”
– Erik Andersson, Restaurang Spill

“Our vision today is a world-class Nordic hotel experience, where Scandic is the most sustainable place to eat, meet and sleep away from home.” – Scandic Hotels Group

Success factors

Driving change takes both courage and support from others. As circular activities often involve many different actors and roles, it is important to understand which people are important for success externally (owners, board, partners, etc.) and internally (intrapreneurs, etc.). Intrapreneurs are employees who have the necessary ability and interest to drive change.

Who are the success stories (external and internal)? Arrange them in a two-by-two matrix based on their ability to influence/interest.

Some activities are relatively obvious and simple. Then it is simply a matter of appointing someone to take responsibility, deciding on the

resources and getting started! Other initiatives involving external actors can usefully be developed using an iterative approach involving customers, employees and partners.

Draw up a future-oriented action plan that clearly shows both the purpose and the anticipated results. Examples of headings for each area: Aim, Desired outcome, Activities, Metrics, Resources, Responsibility, Time and Funding.

It is important not to forget about administration. Do you have clear processes to continue on the desired path? Also ensure that you have documented purchasing procedures to ensure that purchases comply with sustainability and circularity requirements.

Things to think about: It is better to choose something small that actually gets done, rather than producing a long list that you are not sure you can manage. Besides – what gets measured gets done. Ensure that there are metrics that can be monitored. And actually monitor them!

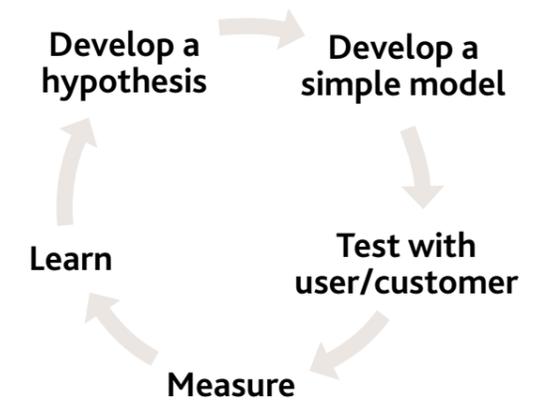


Figure 15: An iterative development process.

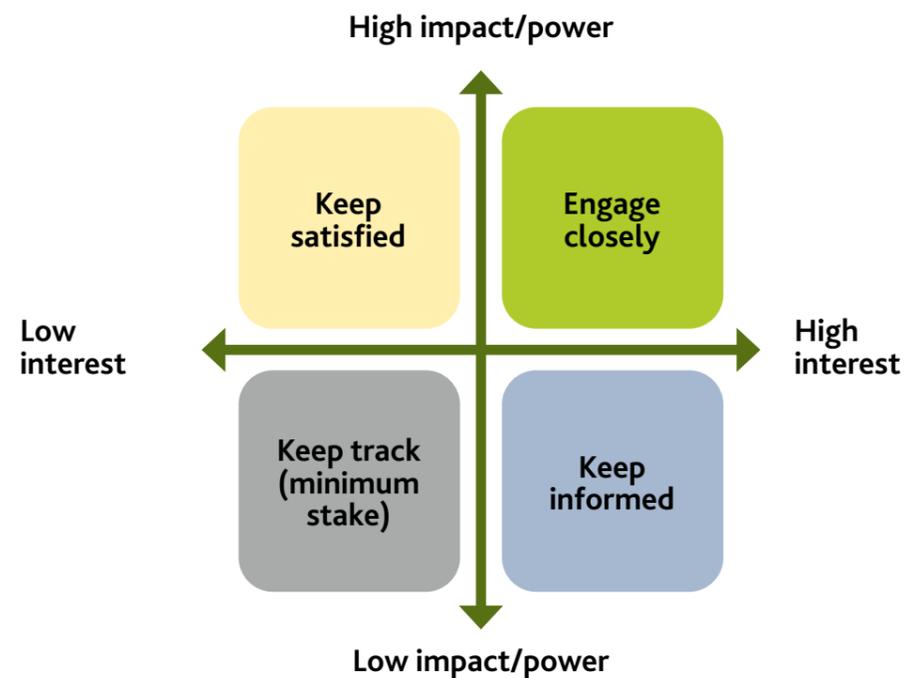


Figure 14: Successful individuals by degree of interest and impact.



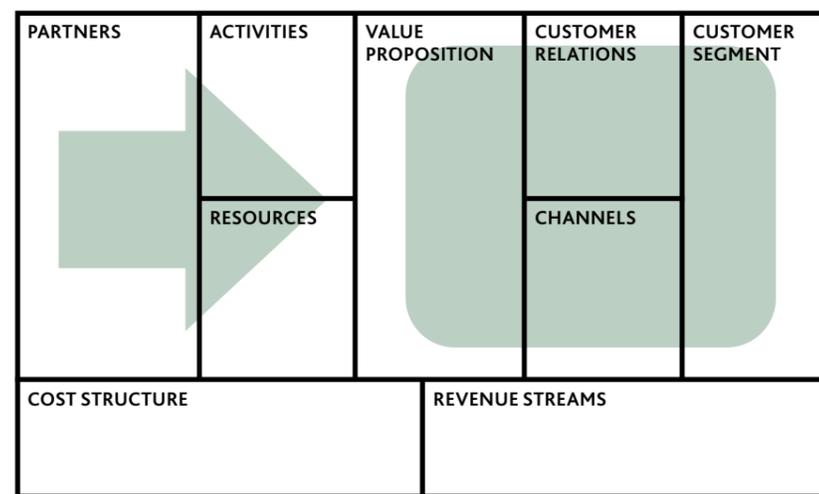
Photo: Frits Meyst

7. Develop your communication

Whom do you contact? What do you say?
Who says it? When, and via which channel?

Communication normally includes the right-hand side of the business model with

value proposition, customer relations, channels and customer segments. When communicating circularity, it is also important to highlight the changes – partners, resources and activities – that you make on the left-hand side of the business model. For example, it may be important to show how you interact with other actors and use resources efficiently.



Examples of other communicative changes that circular initiatives can lead to:

- New customer segments: With a greater degree of sustainability and circularity, new target groups can be reached in new channels.
- A broader view of your guest: An individual with different roles, in their work life and their private life. This can allow for greater use of resources throughout the year and on weekdays and weekends – and perhaps the guest can become a co-creative partner!
- Stronger employer branding: It is often challenging to recruit for service professions. A circular, sustainable business increases the chances of finding committed employees.
- A sharper focus on and synchronisation of messages: This is particularly important when collaborating with (many) partners.

- For a communication strategy to be effective, it should include a number of different elements:
- Show how circularity works in practice: Use examples and illustrations to explain your initiatives in concrete terms.
- Be objective: Show clear benefits that your new solutions offer: 25% reduction in CO₂, zero single-use items... Access to data enables guests and employees to make environmentally informed decisions.
- Be educational: Not everyone is aware of circularity and its benefits.
- Invite: Use your communication to engage your stakeholders. Ask your guests to be part of the change, and to act in a more resource-efficient manner.
- Choose a creative narrative: Your development journey engages. What made you start your journey? How did you go from developing a set of small actions to completely overhauling your business model?

Re:sign – communication with circular signs

Accus in Malmö meets the need for responsible climate awareness with re:sign, a signage portfolio with sustainable and circular signs that can be reused, remanufactured and recycled. [accus.se](https://www.accus.se)



Concluding advice



Get the bigger picture, and dare to start small!

- It is better to start with a small change towards a circular economy than preparing for the perfect, large-scale circular solution that might never come about.
- Get an overview of which circular activities you want to carry out so that you have an overall picture and a clear ambition. Then work on one or a few activities at a time.

Carry out sustainability analyses from a lifecycle perspective

- Remember to analyse potential circular activities with regard to sustainability from a lifecycle perspective, so that you can minimise potential negative effects and reinforce potential positive effects.
- Be critical of what is communicated as being sustainable or circular to avoid greenwashing. Can this recycled black plastic pen really be recycled again?

Develop skills

- The transition to a circular economy has only just begun, and there is still a significant lack of circular economy knowledge among businesses and individuals. Develop all staff's competence on the subject to facilitate your transition. Take the opportunity to share this knowledge with your guests.

Collaborate

- A circular economy is complex, and not everyone can create their own circular systems. In this guide, we have provided some examples of possible partners. There are many more! Dare to collaborate with competitors when it comes to resource consumption and suppliers.
- Collaborate internally – circular actions are a team effort.

Communicate

- Communicate concrete actions you have taken, or want to take, via a poster in the canteen.
- Communicate your objectives so that they are clearly visible to all employees and guests. For example, communicate your sustainability pledge and include circularity. This could take the form of a large inspirational sign at the entrance to your building! Why not join forces with others in the industry and develop a pledge together? Draw inspiration from the Swedish Tourist Association's sustainability pledge⁶.
- Measure, monitor and communicate successes and challenges! Dare to be transparent about where you have room for improvement.

Create incentives

- Make it easy for your employees and guests to make more circular choices, and make it hard for them to make mistakes.
- Create incentives for employees to work with a circular economy, for example by setting targets for managers.

Further reading

The Ellen MacArthur Foundation – training, reports, etc.
<https://ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/>

Cradlenet – networks, knowledge dissemination, newsletters, reports
<https://www.cradlenet.se>

Sitra – reports and projects
<https://www.sitra.fi/sv/%C3%A4mnen/cirkular-ekonomi/>

RISE – reports and projects
<https://www.ri.se/sv/vad-vi-gor/amnesomraden/cirkular-omstallning>

Circle-Economy – reports
<https://www.circle-economy.com/circular-economy/insights-publications>

RE:SOURCE – project database, funding announcements
<https://resource-sip.se/>

The Delegation for Circular Economy
<https://delegationcirkularekonomi.se/>

The European Commission – Circular Economy Action Plan
https://environment.ec.europa.eu/strategy/circular-economy-action-plan_en

6. <https://www.svenskatouristforeningen.se/om-stf/stfs-hallbarhetsarbete/hallbarhetslofte/>

AFRY Sustainability Consulting

AFRY is an international consultancy that works with engineering, design and consulting, and was established as ÅF in 1895. We have 17,000 dedicated experts working all over the world to create sustainable solutions for future generations.

ÅF hired its first environmental consultant in 1904, and we have since included sustainability – and, more recently, circular economy – in our customer offering. When ÅF merged with Pöyry in 2019, we became AFRY. We work hard to support our customers within the public and private sectors as they develop more sustainable products, services and operations.

AFRY Sustainability Consulting often works together with AFRY's other experts to

strengthen sustainability in 'their' projects, but also offers direct support to our customers in connection with their business development, for example with climate strategies, reporting, EU taxonomy and climate calculations. We also offer support for developing circular business models and strategies, and for circular economy investigations, eco-design and lifecycle analyses, training and handbooks.

Some of AFRY Sustainability Consulting's employees have been responsible for producing this handbook on behalf of Tourism Skåne. We thank you for your trust, and we hope that this guide will be of great benefit to all users!





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