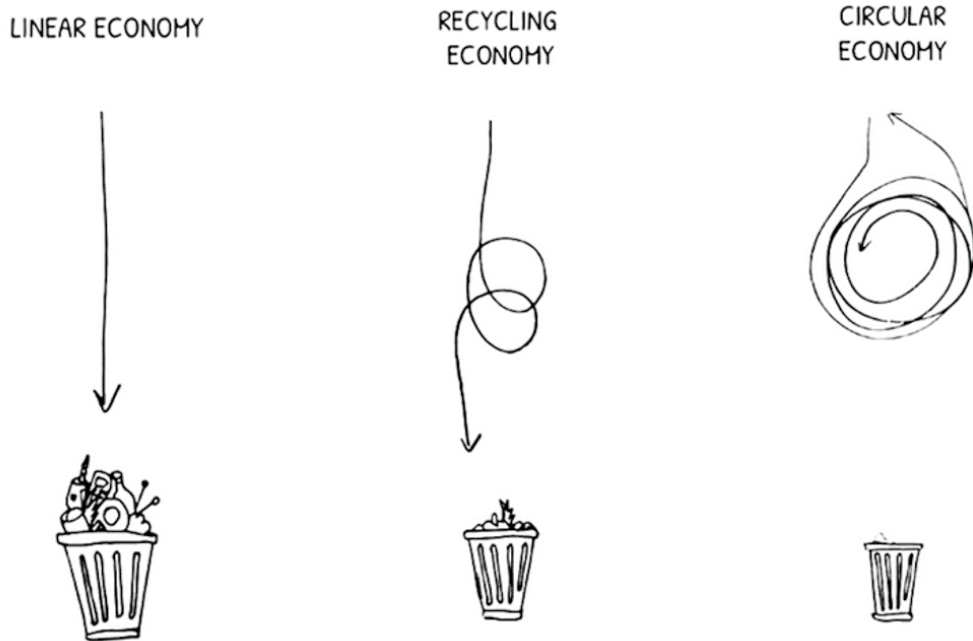




The world is increasingly moving away from a linear economy where raw materials follow a “take it, make it, break it, bin it” lifecycle to one where items are repaired, reused, repurposed, remanufactured and recycled.

This is the circular economy and it looks a little like this:



A circular economy is one that minimises waste through innovative thinking. One that treats waste as an opportunity to turn waste into valuable products.

Examples of circular economy initiatives are all around us and increasing every day.

From something as simple as waste coffee grounds being reused in kitty litter manufacturing to the scientific breakthroughs of micro-recycling where plastics and copper from scrapped IT equipment is remanufactured to give steel better durability.

Moving towards a circular economy could decrease environmental pressures, improve the security of the supply chain, increase competitiveness, boost innovation, stimulate economic growth and create jobs.

With global supply chains severely disrupted by COVID-19, there has never been a more pressing time to build a circular economy and create new value from waste, new jobs and new opportunities for business and entrepreneurs.

Rationale

George Town, Launceston, West Tamar, Northern Midlands, Flinders Island, Dorset, Break O'Day and Meander Valley Councils have included Circular Economy initiatives as a part of their COVID19 recovery packages. Collectively with the Northern Tasmania Waste Management Group and Northern Tasmania Development Corporation, they have made \$300,000 available to support and encourage the development of circular economy initiatives in Northern Tasmania. Grants of up to \$30,000 are available for businesses, groups and individuals to pursue circular economy actions.

Partners

The CSIRO is supporting the Northern Tasmania Circular Economy Grants through engagement in the assessment process and providing linkages to relevant missions within CSIRO and technical support to successful grant projects.

Enterprize and the Van Diemen Project are both available to support successful projects with project development or start up support identified through the early stages of the projects. They will also support the initial symposium of successful projects.

Program Design

These grants will enable businesses and groups or individuals to build capability and scalability in circular economy initiatives with the aim that the initiatives are competitive in new or growing markets. The expected outcomes of these grants are to:

1. Create new or significantly expand existing circular economy initiatives in Northern Tasmania.
2. Improve the recovery rate for existing waste streams/by-products to promote reuse and landfill diversion of these materials.
3. Create new or improved business services, products or goods that generate a benefit for the region.
4. Support adaptation of domestic supply chains and business re-engineering.
5. Contribute to boosting the competitiveness, productivity and profitability of regional businesses beyond the period of funding.
6. Allow regional businesses, groups or individuals to take advantage of emerging and future circular economy opportunities.
7. Increase training, professional development or skills education opportunities in the circular economy sphere including boosting investment in retraining employees in circular economy initiatives.
8. Improve regional education and engagement with circular economy initiatives.
9. Enable local businesses to reach new customers, locally, nationally and overseas.

Target Sectors

No specific sector, however, applicants must be able to demonstrate support and collaboration. Projects must meet competitive neutrality principles.

Eligibility

Eligible organisations include for profits and not for profit but excludes local governments. Projects can be based in any local Government area in Northern Tasmania. Eligible activities must directly relate to the project and can include:

1. Purchase of materials.
2. External labour hire or internal labour offset.
3. Construction of new and upgraded infrastructure.
4. Plant and equipment hire, lease or purchase directly related to the project.
5. External consulting costs directly related to the delivery of the activity.
6. Feasibility study for a future capital project where there is a demonstrated commitment and capacity for the applicant to implement the outcome.

Ineligible project activities & costs

The following costs and activities will not be funded:

1. Infrastructure not directly related to the project e.g., sheds, cement slabs, bunds.
2. Compliance requirements including standard infrastructure upgrades at council transfer stations.
3. Projects for organisations that are based and operate outside of the Northern Tasmanian area as defined by the council boundaries of Break O'Day, George Town, Launceston, Meander Valley, Northern Midlands, West Tamar and Dorset.
4. Projects relating to hazardous waste (including asbestos).
5. Project management costs or staff salaries.
6. Costs of equipment not dedicated to the project purpose (e.g. vehicles).
7. Security or surveillance equipment.
8. Contingency costs.
9. Projects that commenced prior to notification of successful applicants.
10. Projects that seek retrospective funding for work already completed at the time of application.
11. Staff training for training not directly related to this project.
12. In-kind costs (with the exception of schools and not-for-profit community organisations).

What are the funding criteria?

General eligibility criteria

In order for projects to be eligible for funding consideration, all applicants must meet the following criteria:

1. Applications must be submitted by eligible organisations.
2. Applications must be submitted on time.
3. Applications must be correctly and fully completed.
4. Applications must be signed by an authorised representative of the applying organisation.
5. Commercial applicants must agree to provide necessary documentation, if requested by the NTWMG, to demonstrate financial viability.

Expression of interest (EOI)

Initially, applicants lodge an EOI and an assessment is made by the panel to ensure proposed activities broadly align with the intent of the grants. The panel will provide feedback to EOI's.

Successful EOIs would be asked to complete a grant application.

An EOI would answer these quick questions:

1. Organisation name, role and purpose.
2. Project name and summary.
3. Amount requested.
4. Amount contributed.
5. Council municipality.

Assessment criteria

Projects would be assessed in a competitive grant round. A competitive grant would demonstrate:

Essential Criteria

1. Community benefit – how the project benefits the Northern Tasmanian community.
2. Project duration – how long the project provides a benefit to the Tasmanian community.
3. Commitment – the applicant's commitment to improving circular economy initiatives.
4. Landfill diversion – how the project leads to an improvement in resource recovery or waste minimisation.
5. Value for money – the financial value of the project compared to the expected benefits.
6. Cash contributions to the project.

Desirable Criteria

1. The extent to which your project meets local industry strategic alignment, including by unlocking further investment, reaching new markets or creating sustainable employment.
2. The extent to which your project can demonstrate avoidance, better alternatives, reuse and recovery from traditional waste streams.
3. The level of net economic or social benefit your project will deliver to the region during and beyond the project period, including:
 - a. expected number and types of local jobs created by the project in the immediate and long term, including skill level and sustainability.
 - b. expected increase local economy (indirect flow-on effect).
 - c. other indirect economic benefit including the extent that your project will use local suppliers and the potential for other companies or organisations in the region to create jobs as a result of your project.
 - d. Attracting and retaining a working age population within the region.
4. The value for money offered by your project.
 - a. the expected return on investment for the project (including details about the projected return relative to the grant amount invested into the project).
 - b. the extent to which the project leverages additional partnerships, cash or in-kind contributions from other organisations.
 - c. the extent to which the project delivers any broader community benefit.
 - d. Your capacity, capability and resources to carry out the project.

Assessment of applications

Applications will be assessed by a panel. This includes delegates from the NTWMG and NTDC who have no conflict of interest. The evaluation panel may request input from relevant subject matter experts for technical aspects where the evaluation panel does not hold the requisite expertise.

Additionally, as part of the assessment process, commercial or private operators may be asked to provide financial information that allows financial viability to be verified.