



# Network for Inclusive Circular Employment Final Report

MARCH 2024

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The Share Reuse Repair Initiative is based on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territory of the x<sup>w</sup>məθk<sup>w</sup>əy<sup>ə</sup>m (Musqueam), S<sup>k</sup>wx<sup>w</sup>ú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish), sə<sup>l</sup>ilwətaʔt (Tsleil-Waututh), and k<sup>w</sup>ik<sup>w</sup>ə<sup>l</sup>əm (Kwikwetlem) First Nations. We extend our appreciation and respect to all the **First Nations** who have hosted us in their territories during the course of this engagement project, including the Nation representatives who attended our roundtable events across the province.

## Preface

The Share Reuse Repair Initiative (SRRI), a project of MakeWay Charitable Society, is a women-led organisation whose mission is to create a vibrant culture and economy of sharing, reuse and repair that all Canadians can embrace in their daily lives and livelihoods and that serve as meaningful waste, climate and biodiversity solutions. Through trusted research, engagement, education and program delivery, SRRI has been working since 2018 to make share, reuse, and repair the norm, imagine new relationships to our “stuff”, and create an equitable and inclusive circular economy.

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### Government of British Columbia Disclaimer:

*The views and opinions in this report are those of its authors and not the official policy or position of the Government of British Columbia.*



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# Executive Summary

## PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The purpose of this project was to develop a deeper understanding of the workforce needs and opportunities within the emerging circular economy and how they might be fulfilled through inclusive employment.

The BC economy is transforming to include more green jobs, including circular ones focused on the use and reuse of products and materials. As this transition is made, new circular job opportunities will arise, while other jobs will be lost or displaced. The Network for Inclusive Circular Employment (NICE) project supports the workforce development needs of the emerging circular economy by providing enhanced access to needed workers, particularly those facing various barriers to employment.

Addressing the needs of employers and those seeking work is pertinent when labour shortages, supply chain vulnerabilities, and the impact of rising inflation are evident across sectors and communities in BC. Inclusive hires also show potential for higher worker retention rates and are a key part of ensuring that the transition to a circular economy leaves no one behind. Prior research and engagements highlighted the interest among circular employers in inclusive hiring practices but identified challenges related to knowledge, resources, and connections with ESPs.

## SCOPE AND APPROACH

The project focused on circular economic development in all regions of BC and across a range of sectors including construction (and deconstruction), agrifoods and food services, technology, retail trade, support services (waste management), manufacturing (electronic products and components, apparel and textiles), and transportation and warehousing.

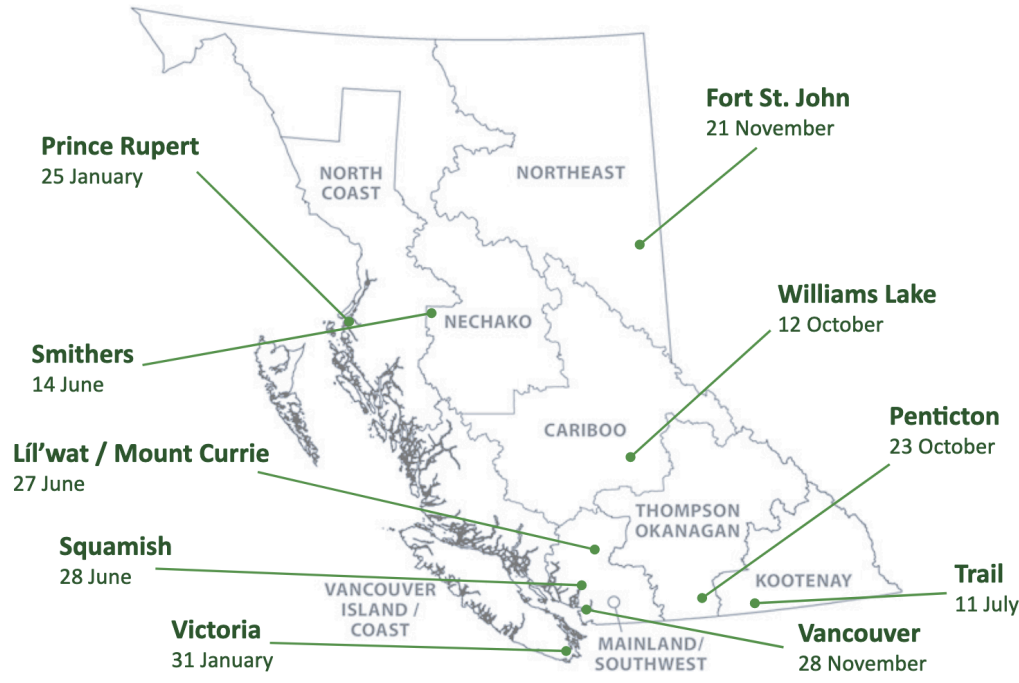
Two primary groups were engaged:

- » **CIRCULAR EMPLOYERS** include any business, entrepreneur, local government, First Nation, or nonprofit that employ or contract people to undertake circular tasks concerning **circular design, optimising the use, and value recovery** of products, materials or organics.
- » **EMPLOYMENT SERVICE PROVIDERS (ESPs)** support those with **barriers to employment** (e.g., people with disabilities, equity deserving groups, newcomers to Canada) to find meaningful work. Through their services (e.g., education and training, resumé and application support, job placements and shadowing, on-the-job support), ESPs promote **inclusive employment**—labour practices that are responsive to the needs of those with barriers to employment to create welcoming workplaces where all employees can thrive.

The project gathered insights from circular employers, ESPs, and other stakeholders in two ways:

- » **Two surveys** gathered data on the labour needs and inclusive practices and interests of circular employers, as well as the current practices and emerging interest of employment service providers to place those they serve in circular jobs. 290 responses were received—196 from circular employers and 94 from ESPs.

- » **Ten roundtable events** were held with key stakeholders in BC's eight economic regions between June 2023 and January 2024 involving 16 local co-hosts, 64 key contributors (publicity partners and guest speakers) and 193 attendees, including circular employers, ESPs, and other contributors (e.g., nonprofit organisations representing underserved communities).



## KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The engagement found that the circular economy is at different stages of development across BC. In regions where the circular economy is more established, stakeholders demonstrated readiness to advance inclusive labour practices for circular jobs. In Northern and Interior BC, with some exceptions, support is needed to develop circular opportunities and tackle pervasive labour challenges to further set the groundwork for inclusive circular employment.

The following key findings and preliminary **priority actions** were identified through NICE engagement to support the growth of inclusive circular employment. The first three actions are most relevant where the circular economy is more developed currently:

- 1. More information is needed about jobs and tasks in the circular economy.** ESPs want more locally-specific information about available circular jobs, including the tasks, skills and training required to match suitable applicants to the positions available. Stakeholders also want future-focused labour market research to understand how development of the circular economy in key sectors will impact workforce and economic trends on a local level.
- 2. Circular employers need support to adopt inclusive employment approaches.** Circular employers vary in their familiarity with inclusive employment practices and the services available to support them. They want to know how to implement inclusive practices within their time and resource constraints. More support is needed to address these challenges, including resources, training, and partnerships.

3. **There is shared interest in further networking opportunities.** Stakeholders expressed interest in further networking opportunities to connect circular employers with ESPs and to facilitate knowledge sharing among businesses regarding inclusive employment practices.
4. **Rural, remote, and Indigenous communities need support to identify and advance circular opportunities.** Roundtable participants in these communities identified a range of circular economy opportunities, with particular resonance for the bioeconomy - forestry, mining, fisheries, and agriculture - and local waste management. However, there is a lack of local capacity and resources to identify and implement viable circular opportunities.
5. **Significant structural and region-specific challenges create barriers to employment.** The high cost of living, and lack of affordable housing, public transport, and affordable childcare impact the ability of employers to find and retain workers. For inclusive hiring practices to be effective requires region-specific approaches to address these systemic barriers.

## CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

The NICE engagement project found that there is a need to more deeply understand the labour market of the circular economy in BC, as well as develop a more detailed strategic plan to guide implementation. Moving forward, the NICE project could implement a two-phase approach to respond to these needs:

- » **Labour Market Research** would explore existing circular jobs, the projected growth and changes in circular jobs over the next 5-10 years across different regions of BC, and identification of inclusive employment opportunities for current and future labour markets.
- » **Strategy Development** that builds on the priority actions articulated during the NICE engagement and draws on findings from labour market research to develop strategic pillars, goals, actions and resourcing approaches with industry partners in sectors best aligning with provincial goals for climate action and economic development.



## Glossary Of Terms

**BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT:** Groups and individuals face a range of systemic barriers to entering and staying in the job market. Examples include: people with disabilities who may find application processes, working hour expectations, and workplace designs pose significant hurdles to their participation; equity deserving groups, such as racialised and gender diverse people, who may face intersectional barriers in hiring and other labour practices due to institutionalised prejudices; newcomers to Canada who face specific administrative, language, and cultural barriers; and other groups who face barriers because of socioeconomic reasons (e.g., those who are unhoused or formerly incarcerated), or because they are underrepresented in their industries, such as women and nonbinary people in the trades.

**CIRCULAR ECONOMY:** The circular economy offers an alternative to the current linear model of resource consumption and waste generation. Unlike the "take, make, waste" approach, the circular economy focuses on designing products and materials for extended use and reuse, and in doing so, minimise waste, and the lifecycle use of virgin resources and carbon.<sup>1</sup> There are three main types of circular economy activities:

- » **CIRCULAR DESIGN** focuses on creating products that are easily repairable, reusable, or made from salvaged, sustainable or recycled materials. This is considered a pre-use or upstream circular solution.
- » **OPTIMISE USE** involves extending the life of products through repair and maintenance, as well as offering spare parts and temporary ownership options.
- » **VALUE RECOVERY** comes into play after the product's initial use and involves selling secondhand and refurbished products, as well as facilitating remanufacturing and recycling.

**CIRCULAR EMPLOYER:** Any business, entrepreneur, local government, First Nation, nonprofit or other organisation that employs people to undertake circular tasks concerning circular design, optimising the use, and value recovery of products, materials or organics. Examples of circular employers include local government solid waste management departments, farms using regenerative agriculture, tool libraries, repair services, reusable container businesses.

**CIRCULAR BIOECONOMY:** An economic framework that prioritises the utilisation of renewable natural resources while striving to reduce waste, substituting the extensive array of non-renewable, fossil-derived products prevalent in current practices.<sup>2</sup>

**EMPLOYMENT SERVICE PROVIDERS (ESPs):** organisations that support those with barriers to employment to find meaningful work. Services provided by ESPs may include education and training, resumé and application support, job placements and shadowing, on-the-job support, and coaching for employees and employers.

**INCLUSIVE EMPLOYMENT:** Labour practices that are responsive to the needs of those with barriers to employment, such as people with disabilities, equity deserving groups, newcomers, underrepresented groups, and youth, in order to create welcoming workplaces where all employees

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<sup>1</sup> Ellen MacArthur Foundation. [The Circular Economy in Detail.](#)

<sup>2</sup> CGIAR Research Center (2021). [The Circular Bioeconomy Knowledge Guide](#)

can thrive. Inclusive employment may encompass the hiring process as well as conditions of employment, workplace environments, and policies.

**LINEAR ECONOMY:** The linear economy is based on a "take-make-waste" approach, where resources are extracted, transformed into products, and discarded as waste after their useful life. The model does not focus on maximising the lifespan of products or materials, nor does it prioritise the reuse and recycling of materials.

## Purpose And Goals

The purpose of this project was to identify and engage with circular employers and employment service providers supporting job seekers facing barriers to employment across BC to develop a deeper understanding of the workforce needs and opportunities within the emerging circular economy and how they might be fulfilled through inclusive employment.

The goals of the project were to:

1. Develop an understanding of the workforce needs of circular employers across BC, including the challenges and opportunities for inclusive employment practices to address these needs.
2. Enable connections between circular employers and employment service providers in order to equip both parties with initial knowledge and relationships to support inclusive recruitment and hiring.
3. Collect preliminary information about the types of jobs that exist within the circular economy that can inform economic development and employment strategies in BC;
4. Identify key stakeholders including circular employers, employment services providers and other entities who are interested in supporting and/or developing inclusive circular jobs in BC.
5. Determine priority actions and future directions for NICE that consider the needs and context of the eight key regions of BC.

In addition to the above goals, the roundtable participants discussed key related issues concerning the broader economy including structural barriers reinforcing labour shortages, and current practices and challenges for inclusive employment. Discussions also focused around needs and opportunities to develop the circular economy in regional contexts.

## Background

Our economy is transitioning to include more green jobs, including circular ones focused on the use and reuse of products, materials and organics. As we make this transition, new circular job opportunities will arise, while other jobs will be lost or displaced in the existing linear economy. The NICE project aims to support the workforce development needs of circular employers as they grow by providing enhanced access to needed workers, particularly those who are facing a range of barriers to employment. By increasing the number of inclusive hires, we support employers with circular practices in addressing their workforce needs in a provincial economy that is facing labour shortages across sectors.

Prior engagement by SRRRI in the Lower Mainland in 2021 and 2022 provided a snapshot of the challenges and opportunities to growing inclusive circular jobs. Many circular employers expressed an interest in hiring inclusively, but lacked the knowledge, connections with employment service providers (ESPs), and resources to undertake necessary training. Those who already embraced inclusive hiring practices cited a range of benefits including better retention rates, enhanced reputation, access to some subsidies and a more inclusive workplace with more diverse life experiences. Employment service providers stated an interest in placing individuals from the

communities they serve with circular businesses, nonprofits and government entities. However, to do so they required a better understanding of the jobs and tasks in demand as well as training required. They also needed avenues to connect with circular employers who were predominantly not in their current networks.

In 2021, SRRRI served as a co-sponsor for a BCIT student consulting project that helped ShareWares, a circular business focused on reusable container systems, to develop a strategy to pursue inclusive employment (see “Integrating Inclusive Employment with Sharewares”). This work underscored the need and benefits of providing similar support to circular employers at the provincial scale.

SRRRI’s 2022 strategy brief “[Growing Inclusive Circular Jobs in the Lower Mainland and BC](#)” summarised research and engagement undertaken, featuring case studies, and outlining priorities to support the growth of inclusive circular jobs. Those engaged identified the need for a network that would connect circular employers, ESPs, and marginalised communities.

The NICE project builds on this prior research and engagement in the Lower Mainland. It provides an opportunity to understand the workforce needs of circular employers, value and grow inclusive employment to meet those needs, and identify priority actions for NICE within the unique context and realities of all eight regions of BC.

## Scope And Approach

The project employed two primary engagement methods—surveys and roundtables—and comprised four key components:

1. Establish Project and Initialize Engagement
2. Survey of Circular Employers and Employment Service Providers
3. Roundtable Engagement
4. Analysis and Reporting

### **1. Establish Project and Initialize Engagement (Jan - Mar 2023)**

Starting in early 2023, key documents were developed, including the Terms of Reference (TOR), the Communication Plan, and the Governance Committee engagement plan. Additionally, the subcontractor agreements were signed during this phase. The TOR defined the project timeline and approach. The communication plan established target audience and key messages to fulfil project objectives. The Governance Committee engagement plan consisted of reference documents to structure work, along with project team and governance committee member roles and responsibilities.

The initial Governance Committee was composed of 12 members representing government, First Nations, employment service providers, circular jobs employers, economic development organisations, and those with lived experience around inclusive employment. In forming the Governance Committee, attention was paid to geographic representation and points of intersectionality. As engagement efforts continued across the province, additional members were

identified and added to the Governance Committee. A final list of all individuals who participated in the NICE Governance Committee can be seen in Table 1.

**Table 1: Governance Committee Members**

First Name	Last Name	Organisation
Khayla	Almonte-Davila	(formerly) Vancouver Economic Commission
Cassandra	Buunk	Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy—Climate Action Secretariat
Mariya	Chugay	(formerly) Vancouver Economic Commission
Mark	Fisher	High Slope Acres Farms
Chelsea	Forbes	BC Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation
Leni	Goggins	Inclusion Powell River
Avery	Gottfried	Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy—Environmental Protection Division
Mary	Halton	Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy—Climate Action Secretariat
Johanna	Li	EMBERS
Amanda	Lindstrom	Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy—Environmental Protection Division
Susannah	Machelak	Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills (PSRF)
Lucinda	Phillips	Indigenous Zero Waste Technical Advisory Group (IZWTAG)
Stacey	Rexin	PACE Penticton - Penticton and Area Cooperative Enterprises
Louise	Schwarz	Recycling Alternative
Anika	Sparling	Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy—Climate Action Secretariat
Jacomien	van Tonder	Metal Tech Alley
Smith		Inclusion Powell River

## 2. Survey of Circular Employers and Employment Service Providers (Mar 2023 - Jan 2024)

**Survey set-up.** In April 2023, in collaboration with Delphi Group, two surveys were launched and kept open until January 31, 2024. One survey was directed towards circular employers and another to employment service providers. Circular employers include businesses as well as First Nations, local government, and non-profits who employ people to undertake circular tasks. The surveys were designed to gather data on the labour needs and inclusive practices and interests of circular

employers, as well as the current practices and emerging interest of employment service providers to place those they serve in circular jobs. See Appendix A for survey questions.

**Survey distribution.** The surveys were promoted through LinkedIn posts and direct emails sent to 864 contacts from Share Reuse Repair Initiative, Delphi Group, and NICE Governance Committee members. From May 2023 to January 2024, roundtable event registrants were also encouraged to complete the survey.

**Survey adjustments.** Based on Governance Committee and staff member feedback, refinements were made to the survey while it was active to optimise responses, including: adjustments to wording introducing the survey, definition of terms to be more clear, and simplification of a few survey questions. Hard copy versions of the survey were also distributed at roundtables, a prize raffle was set up to incentivise participation, and follow-up emails were sent.

### 3. Roundtable Engagement (June 2023 - Jan 2024)

To achieve the project goals, ten roundtable events were conducted with key stakeholders in BC's eight economic regions between June 2023 and January 2024. The purpose of the roundtable events was threefold:

1. **To increase awareness** about the circular economy, circular job opportunities, inclusive employment, and the Network for Inclusive Circular Employment.
2. **To convene and connect** circular employers and employment service providers.
3. **To seek input** on priority actions for NICE to support the growth of an inclusive circular economy and also match the needs and realities of all regions in BC.

Roundtables brought together circular employers, employment service providers, and other contributors (e.g., nonprofit organisations representing underserved communities). See Appendix B for a full list of roundtable event participants.

Each roundtable was co-hosted with local organisation(s) that held affinities with the goals of the NICE project. Roundtable agendas were tailored to the context of each region and included varied combinations of: introductory presentations about NICE, inclusive employment and the circular economy; guest speakers/panellists with inclusive circular employment practices, and small group discussions. Summaries and insights from each of the roundtables are described later in this report. See Appendix C for a sample roundtable agenda (p. 75).

### 4. Analysis and Reporting (Jan - Mar 2024)

Insights from the survey and roundtables, as well as from other secondary research, were compiled and synthesised to develop key findings and priority actions. Survey findings were compared with feedback from the roundtables. A final report was prepared to communicate region-specific and province-wide insights and implications for inclusive circular employment to the province. A presentation to staff from various government ministries will share key findings from the project.

# Roundtables

## ROUNDTABLE OVERVIEW

### Outreach and Event Planning

As a first step in planning the roundtable events, local co-host(s) were sought out with the support of professional networks and governance committee members (see Table 2). Co-host relationships proved to be critical in providing local knowledge, event promotion, and supporting event logistics and facilitation.

Early outreach for each roundtable also involved:

- » **Identifying publicity partners** who could help promote the event and offer their logo for event materials. They included local municipalities, First Nations, businesses, chambers of commerce, employment service providers, and nonprofit organisations.
- » **Connecting with local First Nations.** Those working in First Nations communities have unique and important insights to share about inclusive circular employment. Through these connections, a roundtable event took place at the Tszil Learning Centre in Mount Currie with representatives of the Líl'wat Nation and the Squamish Nation Stitsma Career Centre.
- » **Finding guest speakers** to share their experiences concerning inclusive circular employment.

### Engagement and Promotion

Distribution lists were developed for each event based on existing contacts and contributed to by event co-hosts. Roundtables were promoted through local networks of regional co-hosts and publicity partners, and through social media networks, see Appendix D for an example of a roundtable event promotional banner. The target size for each roundtable varied depending on the size of the community and its network of circular and employment service contacts. For all events, representation was sought from:

- » Circular employers
  - Businesses and nonprofits with circular practices
  - Local government and First Nations waste management and environmental services.
- » Employment service providers
  - Work BC representatives
  - First Nations career and training centres
  - Community organisations providing employment support for the general public or groups experiencing specific barriers.
- » Other key contributors
  - Local government economic development departments
  - Elected officials
  - Other key local employers or inclusive employment champions.
  - Organisations representing underserved populations or groups experiencing barriers to employment.
  - Nonprofit environmental organisations.

Since a project goal was to learn about current labour challenges, a priority was to ensure participation from circular employers. However, the project team was aware that the time and resourcing constraints facing many businesses may prevent them from attending. This concern informed outreach efforts and event planning. The time commitment was kept under two hours, events were promoted through business networks such as chambers of commerce and direct outreach to business contacts, emphasising the opportunity for addressing labour issues and productive networking.

## Implementation

Each event lasted between 90 minutes and 2 hours. While the agenda for roundtables was iteratively refined and adjusted for the regional context and number of attendees, each event included the following key components:

- 1. Introductory material.** A brief introduction to the circular economy, inclusive employment, and the Network for Inclusive Circular Employment was provided tailored to each region; for example, at the Smithers roundtable, the role of bioeconomy industries (forestry, mining, agriculture) in the circular economy was emphasised. See Appendix C for example presentation decks developed for roundtable events.
- 2. Guest speakers/Innovator Showcase Panel.** Two or three guest speakers representing circular employers and employment service providers talked about their circular and inclusive practices, and answered questions about their practical experiences with both. See Appendix E for Innovator Showcase examples.
- 3. Breakout group discussions.** Small groups were formed with a mix of circular employers, employment service providers and other contributors. A table “host” from the planning team facilitated the conversation focused on three questions: *What types of jobs are you struggling to fill? What are the challenges you face when hiring inclusively? What are some proposed solutions to address these challenges?*
- 4. Networking** was encouraged throughout the event starting 15 minutes before and up to 30 minutes after breakout discussions, together with some snacks and refreshments.
- 5. Follow up emails** were sent to roundtable participants to thank them for their participation and to provide a list of attendees willing to share their contact information.

There were some notable variations in the roundtable approach. As smaller events focused on conversation, the Lílwat and Prince Rupert roundtables did not feature formal presentations or guest speakers. The Kootenay event offered a hybrid option so participants could join online—a decision made with the co-hosts based on feedback from prospective participants across the widespread region. The Smithers event included two additional interviews with governance committee member Mark Fisher of High Slope Acres Farm and a site visit with Laurie Gallant of Hazelton Hops and Smithers Climate Action Group.



**Table 2: Summary of Roundtables**

Region	Community	Date	Number of attendees	Co-host
Nechako	Smithers	June 14	21	New Inclusive Economy
Mainland/SW	Lifwat / Mount Currie	June 27	6	Lifwat Nation
Mainland/SW	Squamish	June 28	28	Whistler Centre for Sustainability Engagement + Planning
Kootenay	Trail	July 11	21	Metal Tech Alley / Lower Columbia Initiatives Corporation
Cariboo	Williams Lake	October 12	8	Mary Forbes - Dandelion Tours and Interpretation
Thompson-Okanagan	Penticton	October 23	20	PACE Penticton - Stacey Rexin
Northeast	Fort St John / Dawsons Creek	November 21	10	Northern Lights College - Karen Mason Bennet
Mainland/SW	Vancouver	November 28	40	Recycling Council of BC, Exchange Inner City - Michelle Lackie
North Coast	Prince Rupert	January 25	9	Hecate Strait Employment Development Society and Prince Rupert and District Chamber of Commerce
Vancouver Island	Victoria	January 31	30	Synergy Foundation

## SUMMARY OF ROUNDTABLE EVENTS

### Roundtable 1: Nechako: Smithers

This first roundtable was held in Smithers on June 14, 2023, as part of the New Inclusive Economy (NIE) Roadshow<sup>3</sup> focused around inclusive employment for people with disabilities. Co-hosts for this event were The New Inclusive Economy, High Road Services Society, Smithers District Chamber of Commerce, Smithers WorkBC, and the Town of Smithers. SRRRI conducted outreach to add circular organisations to the event in collaboration with Mark Fisher, from High Slope Acres Farm, who is also on the NICE Governance Committee. SRRRI gave a presentation about NICE, explained the circular economy with examples for consumer goods, bioeconomy, built environment and food, and featured the inclusive practices of Sharewares, a circular business with a platform to supply, sanitise and track reusable takeout containers.

<sup>3</sup> New Inclusive Economy. <https://newinclusiveeconomy.ca/>

The event was attended by over 20 participants, including representatives from the Town of Smithers, Smithers Chamber of Commerce, and High Road Services. Two additional interviews and site visits were carried out by SRRRI with Mark Fisher and Laurie Gallant of Hazelton Hops and the Smithers Climate Action Group.

### **Current Situation**

The circular economy is at an early stage of development in the Nechako region. There are some existing circular jobs in the region through bulk stores, refilleries, and a tool lending library, as well as government jobs in recycling depots and other waste diversion activities.

Inclusive employment support is in place through some employment service providers and social enterprises. Key players include I-Kitchen of High Road Support Services Society and [Grendel Group](#) who provide programs and support for educational and ongoing meaningful work experience for people with cognitive and physical disabilities.

As yet, there are no entities who self-identify as providing inclusive circular employment.

### **Discussion Highlights**

- » Labour shortages are prevalent, precipitated by an ageing population and many workers employed out of town in the resource extraction industry.
- » A lack of public transportation from rural areas compounds labour shortages while creating barriers to employment for those living in surrounding areas.
- » Participants identified some opportunities for circular innovation linked to the region's bioeconomy and waste management facilities such as:
  - A local abattoir could upcycle byproducts to create leather products but lacked local hide processing facilities;
  - Wool processing on a localised basis for sheep on Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) land (currently shearing and processing are out-of-region and inconsistent);
  - Enhanced salvage of materials at the transfer station, which currently involve the intermittent salvage of wood and metal.
- » There are limited resources and labour to develop circular ideas identified in the region that are key to job creation, including those of an inclusive nature.
- » There is a specific gap in skill training and staff resources identified to scale reuse activities at the Smithers transfer station.

### **NICE Priorities**

Participants at the Smithers' roundtable expressed a primary interest in developing the region's circular economy as a necessary first step. They highlighted the need to connect champions and innovators with circular ideas and local knowledge to labour and resource power through, for example, seed funding and business plan development.

Participants found the roundtable helpful to define the circular economy and support secondary conversations. There was a desire for more opportunity to network and connect with the circular economy community, as well as collect more regionally-specific examples of circular innovation.

## **Roundtable 2: Mainland Southwest: Lílwat Nation & Mount Currie**

The first of the Mainland Southwest roundtables was held at the T'Szil Learning Centre in Mount Currie, co-hosted by Lílwat Nation, on June 27, 2023. Graham Turner, Lílwat Retail Operations General Manager, Pemberton Councillor Katrina Nightingale and NICE Governance Committee member Lucinda Philips of IZWTAG, who is a former Chief and Council Member of Lílwat Nation, were also involved in the event planning.

The roundtable involved six participants including representatives from Lílwat Nation Human Resources and Retail departments, Spełkúmtn Community Forest, and Murphy Construction, which often hires in the community.

The roundtable began with a brief, informal review of the concepts of the circular economy and inclusive employment followed by a conversation framed around how these two concepts related to participants' experience in their work and community.

### **Current Situation**

The circular economy is in an early stage of development in Mount Currie, due in part to its small size and remote location. In 2022, Lílwat Construction Enterprises took over management of the Pemberton Transfer Station, a three year contract that would see more circular jobs for Lílwat Nation. Other opportunities to develop circular jobs in the region include mass timber construction, plastic waste reduction, repair sheds, and more durable building materials and practices.

Employment support is provided primarily by T'Szil Learning Centre, which offers a range of academic, post-secondary, and trades courses for adult learners. Lílwat Nation Human Resources department is taking over a contract for Community Living BC to employ people with disabilities.

### **Discussion Highlights**

Workforce issues discussed included:

- » There are labour shortages, which are particularly evident in retail, food and hospitality industries, attributed to factors such as an ageing population, cost of living (i.e. jobs do not always offer appropriate living wages), housing, transportation and child care.
- » The community struggles with few transport links to surrounding towns. Public transit for employment during non-traditional work hours is not available, posing particular challenges for the food and hospitality industry.
- » There is a shortage of managerial and soft skills in the region, which stymies capacity building.

A number of points were made specific to inclusive employment:

- » A lack of employer awareness about trauma and generational dynamics can pose a barrier for inclusive employment and employee retention.

- » Inclusive labour practices were seen as a kind of “circular” practice. The development of meaningful work opportunities in workplaces attuned to the individual and culturally situated needs of employees supported the mobilisation and continuation of Indigenous knowledge, culture, and wellbeing.
- » A range of practices exist in the region to support inclusive hiring and labour retention, including:
  - Flexible application processes e.g., Lílwat Human Resources receives applications for a number of positions, which addresses the challenge that some candidates don’t recognise their compatibility for various jobs.
  - Mentorship about career pathways and growth potential e.g., Murphy Construction offers a career pathway and training for trade skills, supporting employee motivation and retention.
  - Squamish Lílwat Cultural Centre overcomes transport challenges by owning a bus to pick up employees.
  - Improving employee retention by valuing and respecting employees through practices such as carving out time and spaces for relationship building, and implementing coaching rather than disciplinary action when problems arise.
  - Creating awareness about cultural practices and adapting organisational policies to be culturally sensitive.
  - Encouraging youth to consider a diversity of career options by offering site visits to potential employers.

### **NICE Priorities Relevant to Lílwat/Mount Currie**

Participants of the Lílwat/Mount Currie roundtable emphasised the need for holistic approaches to inclusive circular employment, particularly in communities impacted by generational trauma. These approaches may include cultural and trauma-informed training for employers, emotional development, mental health support, and career mentorship, alongside more traditional skills building.

Support is needed to develop more circular opportunities and tackle pervasive labour challenges to set the groundwork for inclusive circular employment. Funding to support these efforts should be sustainable, intentional, and directed.

### **Roundtable 3: Mainland Southwest: Squamish**

The Mainland Southwest (also referred to as Sea to Sky) NICE Roundtable Event was held on June 28th, 2023 at the Squamish Public Library. This event was co-hosted with the Whistler Centre for Sustainability Engagement + Planning. Publicity partners were the Resort Municipality of Whistler and District of Squamish. Other key contributors included Sharewares, Squamish Nation, and Squamish Climate Action Network.

The roundtable was attended by 28 people, with half of those being employers. Some employers identified themselves as circular, some as inclusive, and some as aspiring to be circular or inclusive.

There were also twelve employment service providers in the room, and two representatives from government or educational institutions.

During the event, two guest speakers gave five minute presentations about their inclusive circular practices: Kim Hornaday and Sophie Dodd from Sharewares; and Devan Williams, Career Counsellor at Ta7Inew'ás Education, Employment and Training, Squamish Nation.

### **Current Situation**

The circular economy has support and public profile from the District of Squamish who have developed a Circular Economy Roadmap as part of their Community Climate Action Plan and participation in the Circular Cities and Regions Initiative. They also have a Circular Innovation Agenda and are embarking on a Squamish Trailblazer Program, offering businesses and nonprofits the chance to adopt circular economy practices. The Roadmap for the region focuses on three primary sectors - textiles, built environment and food. There are a range of for-profit, social enterprise, nonprofit entities pursuing circular practices.

Employment service providers often service the whole Sea to Sky region and provide services for specific groups, as well as for the wider adult population. Examples include Zero Ceiling, which supports youth experiencing insecure housing to find employment, and Squamish Nation which provides training support to Nation Members to help them meet their educational and employment goals.

### **Discussion Highlights**

Workforce issues:

- » Local government representatives stated that downstream circular practices like sorting and disassembly are labour intensive and cannot move forward without available labour to fill these roles.
- » The local workforce is constrained by a lack of affordable housing, child care, and liveable wages.
- » Transport is a significant challenge in the Sea to Sky corridor, leaving those who live outside the major town centres (Squamish, Whistler) unable to access work opportunities without a personal vehicle.
- » Participants saw a need for skill building and reskilling workers (e.g., from oil and gas to renewable energy).

Inclusive circular employment:

- » Some employers already incorporate inclusive practices, such as offering flexible work hours, part time, and/or casual employment; removing job requirements; adapting PPE; focusing on strengths and abilities rather than disabilities.
- » Many circular employers face barriers to creating an inclusive workforce, such as time and resource constraints, not knowing where to find relevant resources (i.e., training and wage subsidies, services provided) and lack of access to reputable information to help them understand and use the language of inclusive hiring.

- » Circular employers are seeking support, training, and resources to help them hire inclusively that consider the context of business reality and deal with challenges that may arise (e.g., a phone line to call for advice in difficult situations).
- » Inflexible institutional policies can be a barrier to inclusive hiring practices. The policies may not fit everyone and some efforts to accommodate can be insensitively implemented.
- » There is a need to increase the appeal of circular jobs, for example by: creating day-in-the-life videos showing what work is like; identifying training and certification needed; sharing pictures and bios of company teams; writing a job description that encourages everyone to apply; fostering understanding of connections between employee role and community or sustainability goals.
- » In turn, businesses can be encouraged to hire inclusively by disseminating success stories, benefits, and positive examples of inclusive employment in a business context.

### **NICE Priorities Relevant to Squamish**

Priority actions identified in Squamish were focused on resources and research. Circular employers identified a lack of available resources as a barrier to hiring inclusively, suggesting the need for more accessibility and awareness of existing services offered by employment service providers, as well as the creation of new supports, such as helplines and training concerning inclusive hiring.

Secondly, there is a need to support a better understanding about labour market needs and skill gaps at a regional level with local government and economic development actors. Conducting labour market research for key sectors of the local circular economy would support the growth of the circular economy in the Sea to Sky corridor.

### **Roundtable 4: Kootenay: Trail**

The Kootenay NICE Roundtable Event took place on July 11th, 2023 in Trail. The co-host for this event was Metal Tech Alley, an economic development agency leading the development of a circular economy in the region. Metal Tech Alley is a project of the Lower Columbia Initiatives Corporation.

There were 18 participants at the roundtable including nine circular employers, five representatives from local governments, four employment service providers, three organisations serving equity deserving groups, and five other contributors, including businesses associations, non-profits, and training and education organisations.

During the event, representatives of Selkirk Technology Access Centre (STAC) and Kootenay Outdoor Recreation Enterprise Outdoors shared their experience with inclusive circular employment.

### **Current Situation**

Development of the circular economy is well underway in the region, led by Metal Tech Alley who provides a support network for local businesses, professionals, and educational institutions to embrace circular practices. The focus is primarily on developing an industrial circular economy linked to mining, forestry, metallurgy and technology sectors with focus areas in metallurgical and intelligent materials science, industrial matter recycling, and the Industrial Internet of Things. Circular practices in the outdoor recreation sector are also underway.

In terms of inclusive employment in the region, the Kootenay Association for Science and Technology (KAST) stands out with their initiative to support youth employment by introducing individuals aged 16-30 to entrepreneurial skills.

## **Discussion Highlights**

### Workforce issues

- » Labour shortages exist across many sectors in the region, from municipal public works jobs through car repair etc.
- » There is a lack of a qualified workforce with some key training gaps.
- » The significant lack of affordable childcare (gap of 1,000 spaces) is blocking the entry of women into the labour market in the Kootenays.
- » The quality of existing housing stock is an issue for existing workers and also for attracting new workers to the region.

### Inclusive circular employment

- » There is a gap in understanding about the resources of employer service resources, including training and wage subsidies, to support inclusive circular employment.
- » There is concern that some circular practices like electronics recycling are earning an insufficient return which represents a low incentive to join the workforce.
- » There is a desire to understand viable areas of circular business growth in the Kootenays to discern where decent and enduring circular jobs can be created.
- » It will be important to understand the training needs for inclusive circular employment.
- » Small communities do not fit the provincial government criteria for grants to support circular economy development.

## **NICE Priorities Relevant to Trail**

Attendees of the NICE Kootenay Roundtable emphasised that priority actions for the region should be customised for the smaller scale of its communities. This includes actions to overcome structural barriers and close workforce skill gaps, as well as to further develop their circular economy.

Specifically, attendees wanted to analyse materials and waste flows in the region in order to identify the sectors of the circular economy with the highest growth potential, as well as to determine relevant labour needs and skills gaps. This could help to create a roadmap for circular economy development in the region and identify opportunities to create well-paid circular jobs, including ones of an inclusive nature.

In terms of overcoming structural barriers, the main area of concern in the region was making childcare more affordable. As for skill gaps, roundtable attendees were strongly interested in optimising WorkBC Apprenticeship programs and other existing Work BC resources, as well as obtaining more funding to provide more training and develop broader skill sets for workers.

## Roundtable 5: Cariboo: Williams Lake

The Cariboo Roundtable Event took place on October 12, 2023, using a hybrid format. The co-host was Mary Forbes of Dandelion Tours and Interpretation and publicity partners were Cariboo Regional District, The Inspired Builders Market, Potato House, Cariboo Disposal, Cariboo Literacy, and The Foundry.

Eight people attended the event comprising five employers (two of those being circular), two employment service providers, and one government representative. During the event, SRRI gave a presentation via Zoom, then the floor was opened for discussion.

### Current Situation

The circular economy in Williams Lake is in an early stage of development, driven in part by local champions and grassroots activities, such as the Potato House, which offers the only drive-through composting service in BC.

There are a number of employment services available to residents of Williams Lake and the surrounding region. Youth can access services through Foundry, which provides social and health supports to young people in the region. Local First Nations offer training and employment services and support to Nation members.

### Discussion Highlights

Workforce issues:

- » Labour challenges included staff management and employee retention.
- » Common structural challenges experienced by people trying to access jobs are limited access to transportation and childcare.
- » Employers located outside of the town centre in particular need more travel options for workers. Participants suggested creating a support network for transportation (ride sharing, travel subsidies, taxi vouchers) and providing flexible working arrangements and/or childcare support.
- » The local government Solid Waste Manager stated they needed more staff.

Inclusive Employment:

- » There is a knowledge gap about what it means to hire inclusively and how to do so, including how to access a pool of potential candidates and where to find available subsidies and resources.
- » Participants had questions about how union regulations might impact inclusive employment efforts.
- » Inclusive strategies identified included: encouraging potential applicants to apply and explain their needs even if they do not meet all the qualification requirements; offering employment with flexible hours and flexible terms such as job sharing; and providing strong onboarding and training as soon as staff begin work.

### NICE Priorities Relevant to Williams Lake

Participants at the Williams Lake roundtable prioritised actions that would facilitate inclusive labour practices in the region currently and as the circular economy in the region develops further.



Employer knowledge gaps might be addressed by disseminating information on available resources and subsidies to support inclusive employment. Centralising information for employers, job seekers, and employment service providers through a database of jobs, potential candidates, and/or list of employment service providers may help to facilitate knowledge exchange and job matching.

Like other roundtables, the group was interested in further opportunities to foster more networking and communication between employers and employment service providers. For this region, an online platform where different stakeholders could ask questions and access peer support was valued. Roundtable participants also suggested connecting with other organisations, such as the Brain Injury Foundation and Canadian Royal Purple to facilitate workforce reentry for those who access these services.

### **Roundtable 6: Thompson-Okanagan: Penticton**

The Thompson-Okanagan event took place on October 23, 2023 at the Penticton Trade and Convention Centre. The co-host for this event was NICE Governance Committee member Stacey Rexin, with the Penticton and Area Cooperative Enterprises (PACE). Publicity partners included Wildstone Construction Group, Penticton Wine and Country Chamber of Commerce, Regional District of South Okanagan, and Purpl.

A total of 20 participants attended the event, including three circular jobs employers, 11 employment service providers, two local government representatives, and other contributors, including those from businesses associations and organisations serving equity deserving groups. During the event, representatives from PACE, Wildstone Construction Group, and Penticton Indian Band/Neil Squire Society shared their experiences with circular and inclusive employment. The roundtable in Penticton was complemented by a site visit to PACE's facilities.

### **Current Situation**

The circular economy in Penticton and the surrounding region is somewhat developed, with untapped opportunities such as the reuse of surplus materials/byproducts from existing industries (e.g., new products from byproducts from the brewing industry, reusing wood from construction as a substrate for mushroom farms).

There are many employment service providers active in the region, providing support to individuals seeking work and experiencing a range of barriers. PACE provides a notable local example of an entity providing inclusive circular employment for circular practices including mattress recycling, sorting of construction waste and the repair, resale and recycling of electronics.

### **Discussion Highlights**

Workforce issues:

- » Labour shortages are experienced throughout the region, including for key industries such as farming and wineries that rely on seasonal workers.
- » Transportation, cost of living, and affordable housing were cited as workforce barriers. Participants saw potential in creating a transport support network (e.g., rideshares, subsidised taxis) to overcome public transport shortages.

Inclusive employment:

- » Rigid hiring practices can pose challenges to inclusive hiring (e.g., not allowing “trial employees”, which can discourage businesses to try hiring inclusively).
- » A challenge for inclusive hiring is income limits imposed on those receiving disability support, which can limit the number of hours these employees can work.
- » Flexible employment strategies were discussed that could address labour shortages and provide opportunities for individuals not well-suited to full-time employment. These included temporary work (1-2 weeks), flexible terms, and job sharing.
- » There are an abundance of employment services provided by different organisations in the region, which challenges employers to know what support is available from whom.

Inclusive circular employment:

- » Employment service providers experienced challenges in establishing and sustaining relationships with employers, including circular ones. These relationships could support inclusive hiring by circular entities and also lead to partnership projects and resource sharing, such as organising vans to transport employees to worksites.
- » Employment service providers had knowledge gaps around the circular economy. Some were unaware of the circular economy before the meeting and were eager to learn more about how it could fit into their work supporting inclusive employment.

### **NICE Priorities Relevant to Penticton**

Employment service providers in Penticton are eager to find opportunities for clients in circular jobs. There were some priority actions or NICE identified.

- » Provide continued opportunities for employment service providers and circular employers to network.
- » Develop a better picture of where circular jobs currently exist in the region. The idea of a database or roster of businesses with circular jobs was proposed.
- » Showcase positive examples of inclusive circular employment, using storytelling to demonstrate how it can work and the benefits to businesses.
- » Offer training necessary for circular employment opportunities.
- » Provide further promotion and education about the circular economy

There was also interest in developing the circular economy further in the region as a necessary first step to growing more job opportunities, including inclusive ones.

### **Roundtable 7: Northeast: Fort St John & Dawson Creek**

The Northeast NICE roundtable event was held on November 21, 2023, with Karen Mason-Bennet from Northern Lights College serving as co-host. The roundtable was a hybrid event. Ten participants from Fort St. John joined in-person at the College with SRRI and Dawson Creek joining via Zoom. Unfortunately, participants from Dawson Creek, who included representatives from Work BC, were unable to attend due to a power outage.

Participants included three representatives from the Northern Lights College, two from local government (Blueberry River First Nation and the City of Fort St. John), one circular business (the Salvation Army), and two employment service providers (the Fort St John Association for Community Living and SUCCESS), and the Child Development Centre. The representatives from the Chamber of Commerce, NE Regional Economic Operations Branch and Peace River Regional District had schedule conflicts but were interested in attending.

The roundtable employed a conversational approach. SRRI gave a presentation about NICE, defining circular and inclusive, and sharing circular examples relevant to the region. Participants were encouraged to share priorities and discuss.

### **Current Situation**

The circular economy is at an early stage of development in Fort St. John, with limited local understanding and self-identified circular entities. There is, however, an informal circular economy with sharesheds, thrift stores, and repurposed agricultural by-products. One key player in the region is Jared Braun, the Executive Director from Salvation Army, who runs three thrift stores and is involved in a food recovery program.

There are a number of employment service providers in the region, including those in attendance at the roundtable.

### **Discussion Highlights**

The predominance of employment service providers and educational institutions resulted in a fruitful discussion focused mostly on the circular economy. A key point concerning inclusive employment was that often the same people are on the ground doing the work and they feel they do not receive enough provincial and federal support.

Participants were keen to learn more about the circular economy, with a significant number of questions about the examples presented and their potential to result in higher income jobs and achieve environmental benefits. Other key points about the circular economy were:

- » Existing circular initiatives in the region face challenges, such as the need for further storage (i.e. share sheds), and gaps in government support.
- » There is a knowledge gap around the definitions and benefits of both the circular economy and inclusive circular employment.
- » There are policies that hinder the development of circular practices (e.g., computers used by government employees are disposed of after three years, which was seen as a missed opportunity for electronics reuse and/or recycling).
- » Repurposing agricultural by-products not only as fertiliser but also as animal feed was another untapped circular opportunity.

### **NICE Priorities Relevant to Fort St. John Roundtable**

There was one priority action cited to promote education around inclusive hiring and celebrating differences. Beyond that the other priorities all focused around developing the circular economy as a step towards supporting inclusive employment and other economic and environmental benefits. Priority actions included:

- » Foster a cultural shift to impact individual behaviour change and promote a systems change toward circular practices;
- » Provide further education around the circular economy and its benefits;
- » Review policies that hinder reuse, repair, and sharing practices in the region;
- » Identify viable circular options for the region to grow the existing sharing economy and advance other circular ideas in the electronics, agricultural and other sectors;
- » Determine leadership and funding to develop the Circular Economy, including additional provincial and federal support.

### **Roundtable 8: Mainland Southwest: Vancouver**

The Vancouver event was held on November 28, 2023, together with two co-hosts: Exchange Inner City, an organisation fostering an inclusive and equitable local economy in the Vancouver Downtown Eastside, and the Recycling Council of BC, a non-profit advancing zero waste through public information, collaboration, research and policy development. Eleven publicity partners were also involved including EMBERS East Side Works, Vancouver Community College, Invest Vancouver, Metro Vancouver, City of Richmond, District of North Vancouver, Recycling Alternative, LOCO BC, Nickel Bros, Tilt Relations, and Sharewares.

There were 40 attendees that reflected a good balance of participants, including 20 circular employers or those aspiring to be, 9 employment service providers and 11 other contributors including representatives of local and regional government, and educational institutions.

The Innovators Showcase panellists were Louise Schwarz, Recycling Alternative; Kieran Ray-Daniels, Chop Value; Cassidy v. Ros, Nickel Bros; and Laura Midan, Archway Community Services. See Appendix C for the presentation deck for this roundtable, including a slide for each of the innovators embracing circular and inclusive practices.

### **Current Situation**

The circular economy is at a more advanced stage of development in the Lower Mainland, with a number of start-ups, businesses, and non-profits who self-identify as circular. Metro Vancouver's National Zero Waste Council has held an annual conference addressing circular economy topics since 2015. Circular economy education is provided at universities such as BCIT since 2014 with new offerings under development at UBC. Until recently there was the Greater Vancouver Circular Economy Network co-hosted by SRRI and the Vancouver Economic Commission (now being replaced by a new Business and Economy Office).

There are many employment service providers in the region offering a range of services tailored for individuals facing various barriers, including physical and cognitive differences, challenges associated with being a newcomer to Canada, for youth and mature workers, and for those at the unique intersection of barriers experienced by residents of Vancouver's Downtown Eastside.

## Discussion Highlights

### Workforce issues (circular economy):

- » A shortage of labour with specific circular economy skills or experience was evident across all tables/groups. These roles often include manual labour, including litter collection and street cleaning, recycling sorting, and roles at Zero Waste Centres.
- » Other jobs that circular employers were struggling to fill included drivers, kitchen staff, factory positions, office administration roles, computer repair technicians, amongst others.
- » Circular skill shortages exist; participants wanted these to be identified and investments made in relevant training programs and initiatives.
- » Transportation challenges exist for some; these could be addressed through corporate carpools and shuttles.

### Inclusive employment:

- » Ad hoc or rigid hiring processes can lack room to accommodate persons with various barriers to employment. Examples include: regulatory barriers and union constraints that define certain working demands (e.g., 30-40 hours); inflexible job descriptions; benefit packages and procurement policies lacking inclusivity accommodations.
- » Misconceptions exist about inclusive employment, e.g., it is difficult and may incur additional costs. Employers may also hold biases against those with disabilities or neurodiversity.
- » Employers lack funds to contract support workers, particularly for mental health and addiction issues, and lack knowledge about how to get support through grant writing, securing trust-based funding, and wage subsidies.
- » Some job settings are more challenging to offer accommodations for individuals, including warehouses and remote locations.
- » Participants identified the need for research and stories to share the experiences and positive benefits of inclusive practices with employers and to recognise jobs with consistent inclusive hiring success e.g., moving, sorting, data entry, manufacturing.
- » A range of other strategies to address challenges to inclusive hiring were discussed:
  - Secure organisation-wide commitment and educate HR managers and staff;
  - Implement flexible application processes and job testing;
  - Adapt structures and policies to individuals, ensuring a fit for the person (rather than fitting the person to the job);
  - Conduct awareness and training programs to minimise unconscious biases and discriminatory practices in hiring were suggested;
  - Offer different models of employment, e.g., hybrid employment with in-house childcare and flexible hours.

## **NICE Priorities Relevant to Vancouver**

The circular economy is sufficiently developed in Vancouver that employers and employment service providers are ready to connect and move forward on strategies to advance inclusive circular employment.

Roundtable participants voted on NICE priorities which in order of votes are:

- » Provide more support and education for circular employers to learn how to hire inclusively, secure wage subsidies, retain staff, and support career progression. Consulting support and/or an inclusion coach, resource portals, partnerships with experts and ESPs for continuous training and relationship building were all suggested.
- » Develop a database of circular employers and job openings that includes training requirements made available to all ESPs. Forecasts of circular job growth and skill gaps over time received a vote by 20% of those in attendance.
- » Provide more networking opportunities, both for circular employers to connect with employment service providers and for circular employers to connect and learn together about inclusive hiring.
- » Develop new courses to develop in-demand circular skills.
- » Provide more information about the business value of hiring.

A circular employer at the event also felt strongly about the need for a list of ESPs that summarises who they serve and their services to be provided to circular employers. This was added as a priority near the end of the dotmocracy, so support for this idea is difficult to assess.

## **Roundtable 9: North Coast: Prince Rupert**

The NICE North Coast Roundtable event took place in Prince Rupert on January 25, 2024. It was co-hosted with Hecate Strait Employment Development Society (HSEDS) and Prince Rupert and District Chamber of Commerce. Other key contributors to the event included North Coast Regional District and EcoTrust.

Nine people attended the event, including three from HSEDS, as well as representatives from Coast Mountain College, the Change Makers Education Society, Prince Rupert Friendship House, Inn on the Harbour hotel, Ecotrust, and the Metlakatla First Nation Regenerative Ocean Farm.

### **Current Situation**

The economy of Prince Rupert is heavily reliant on its shipping port and its circular economy is in early stages of development. A key actor in the region's emerging circular economy is Ecotrust, which most recently partnered with Metlakatla First Nation in the development of a regenerative ocean farm for sustainably grown kelp and shellfish. There are also popular reuse stores in town, including Ansen House and Hermit House.

HSEDS is a key longstanding employment service provider in Prince Rupert and Haida Gwaii. Other nonprofit organisations, such as the Prince Rupert Friendship House offer employment assistance programs, while training and adult education programs are provided by organisations including Change Makers' Education Society and Coast Mountain College.

## Discussion Highlights

### Workforce issues:

- » There are widespread skill and labour shortages in Prince Rupert. People tend to favour high-paying employment at the port over other jobs in town, impacting jobs in areas like retail and tourism but also circular practices such as repair.
- » Key structural barriers faced by the Prince Rupert workforce include housing affordability, food insecurity, and lack of amenities. This dissuades people from moving to the area, or encourages them to leave.
- » The trades workforce in Prince Rupert is highly gendered, with the exception of the fishing industry, which has produced inspiring examples, such as BC's first all-women tugboat crew.

### Inclusive Employment:

- » Employers lack dedicated HR staff and support, and thus lack the necessary training and support for staff with barriers (e.g., mental health conditions, good housing, food, etc.). Such staff may not get enough support to meet their needs, impacting their success on the job and employee retention.
- » HR staff and support for persons facing barriers can be expensive. Hiring a contracted HR consultant who works across multiple businesses was an idea to address this.
- » Employee retention was improved by creating positive work environments where employees have agency and purpose, with changes for reciprocal feedback between employer and employee.
- » Workers at the port often experience unpredictable and erratic work shifts and may also hold other jobs. Employers provide some shift flexibility to these workers, allowing them to take time off to fulfil their port shifts.
- » Employers receive requests for flexible employment configurations, such as job sharing, and a rotational temporary service where people collaborate to fill labour needs. This was seen to potentially provide inclusive options to employees who cannot commit to a full-time position because of family, study, or health commitments.

### Inclusive Circular Employment

- » Many ideas and opportunities were discussed to develop the local circular economy. However, labour and resource shortages make starting, formalising or growing circular practises a challenge. The word-of-mouth culture in Prince Rupert facilitates many informal and small-scale circular practices such as repurposing scrap metal to make gates, bike racks, and artwork or a local market gardener composting the spent grain from the brewery.

## NICE Priorities Relevant to Prince Rupert

Participants in Prince Rupert added a new priority action for NICE not previously heard, which was more funding to support both the establishment and growth of circular economy initiatives and for inclusive hiring in rural, remote, and Indigenous communities. There is demand and need for circular practices in Prince Rupert, particularly when it comes to repair services and food (composting, regenerative agriculture). Employers in Prince Rupert would benefit from more support and

education about how to hire inclusively, secure wage subsidies, retain staff and support career progression.

While Prince Rupert can advance inclusive hiring practices generally, they cannot advance circular inclusive employment until rural, remote, and Indigenous communities have the means to more fully participate in BC's circular economy.

### **Roundtable 10: Vancouver Island: Victoria**

The Vancouver Island NICE Roundtable Event was held in Victoria on January 31, 2024 at the Burnside Gorge Community Centre. Synergy Foundation served as co-hosts, represented by Georgia Lavender, Operations Manager, and Kris Ord who is on the Board. Publicity partners were Alacrity, Nulla Project, Elate Cosmetics, Destination Greater Victoria, City of Victoria, Regional District of Nanaimo, Coast Waste Management Association, Malahat Nation, INEO Employment Services, Big Wheel Burger, and Nickel Bros.

Approximately 30 people attended the event, with a balance of local and regional government, circular employers, employment service providers, and other contributors. The Innovators Showcase panel included representatives from Big Wheel Burger, INEO Employment Services, Elate Cosmetics, and Nickel Bros. See Appendix E for a slide for each innovator highlighting their circular and inclusive practices.

#### **Current Situation**

The circular economy in Victoria is well developed, with a range of circular businesses, start-ups, and nonprofits. The work of Synergy Foundation in particular is supporting the development of circular economy start-ups and, more recently, helping established small and medium-sized businesses embrace circular practices across the Island.

There are a well-developed set of services to support those with barriers to employment on Vancouver Island, with the majority based in Victoria. First Nations provide a range of training and career support for Nation members. Community organisations such as Beacon Community Services work with WorkBC to provide employment support. Other organisations, such as Community Living Victoria, provide services catered to specific groups, such as those with intellectual disabilities.

#### **Discussion Highlights**

Workforce issues:

- » Victoria is a government town that is a desirable place to work, and some employers found that filling jobs is not a big problem. There is lots of internal movement within organisations, and many employees work from home.
- » In-person jobs have become harder to fill than remote work. Roles hard to fill include positions in customer service, the trades, front line workers with lower wages, entry level positions, and shifts with long hours.
- » The desirability of Victoria as a place to live presents challenges for housing availability and affordability, particularly for workers earning less than the living wage.
- » Transport poses challenges to access work for some in more remote areas of the Island.



### Inclusive employment:

- » Employment service providers see myths around inclusive hiring that discourage employers e.g., it takes more time and requires months of advance planning.
- » One bad experience can discourage employers from pursuing inclusive employment again. Like other hires, sometimes the employee is just not the right fit. There needs to be a way for businesses and employees to request timely support.
- » Employers do not know how to pursue inclusive hiring, have limited awareness about existing resources, may be hesitant to ask about wage subsidies and are afraid to make mistakes.
- » Employers may lack awareness about the individuals they are overlooking in their hiring strategies, and where the limits of their outreach efforts should lie.
- » Bureaucratic inertia can hinder changes to rigid hiring processes.
- » There are systemic barriers and biases in specific industries e.g., the outdoor industry may be less welcoming to racialised individuals or those with mobility constraints.

### Inclusive Circular Employment:

- » Circular employers often run in start-up mode or with limited resources, thus lacking slack in the system to accommodate for inclusive hires, or even find the time to access information and support.
- » There is a lack of infrastructure and internal systems in place to support individuals once hired, such as: team members to supervise inclusive hires; oversee safety considerations; and support a cohesive team where the inclusive hire is not seen to receive “special treatment.” Remote work can exacerbate these challenges.
- » Employment service providers struggle to make and sustain connections with circular employers and are eager to build more relationships.
- » Circular inclusive hiring is often advanced by individuals, rather than implemented at a policy-level which is seen as a strategic gap.
- » There are opportunities for circular employers and employment service providers to work together to customise employment opportunities such as: considering different work configurations like job sharing and flexible hours; start from the applicant’s strengths to build a position that fits them vs. starting with a rigid job description; paid circular skills training for prospective employees, and on-site coaching.

### NICE Priorities Relevant to Victoria

The following three actions were tied as the highest priority NICE actions identified by roundtable participants:

- » Provide more support and education for circular employers to learn how to hire inclusively, secure wage subsidies, retain staff, and support career progression. Specific ideas included:
  - Easy to access and understand “How to guides” for inclusive hiring
  - Templates for policies and practices for inclusivity

- Resource with examples of inclusive circular jobs
- Resources with benefits and the businesses case of inclusive employment for employers who are focused on ROI.
- » Develop a database of circular employers and job openings that includes training requirements made available to all ESPs. There was also support somewhat less for developing forecasts of circular job growth and skill gaps.
- » Provide networking opportunities for circular employers to connect with employment service providers. These might include employer engagement events hosted by employment service providers.

These next three priorities were tied for a set second-high priority actions:

- » Provide networking opportunities for circular employers to connect and learn with each other about inclusive hiring practices, lessons learned, resources etc. Peer support networks was a specific idea mentioned.
- » Develop new courses to develop in-demand circular skills.
- » Provide support for organisations to develop longer-term inclusive circular strategic plans. This was a new action priority identified by the Victoria roundtable. It was felt important to incentivize managers to show leadership around this matter and to develop organisational level policies to support inclusivity, and ensure internal buy-in.

## Survey Results

### RESPONDENTS

A total 290 survey responses were received—196 responses to the circular employers' survey and 94 to the survey for employment service providers. Potential survey respondents made 1278 visits to the online survey platform, as seen in Table 3. Data analysed was compiled from both partial and completed surveys. In the survey summary that follows, corresponding survey question numbers are listed in parentheses.

**Table 3: Survey Responses (April 2023 - January 2024)**

Type	Responses	Complete Responses	Partial responses	Visits
Circular Employers	196	73	123	744
Employment Service Providers and Communities	94	43	51	534
Combined	290	116	174	1278

## Who responded to the circular employer's survey?

Survey respondents were from across the Province with the largest number operating in the Mainland / Southwest region (46%) and the fewest in the Northeast, with only one circular employer filling out the survey. Almost half of circular employers were social enterprises (49%) and a third were for-profit organisations (33%) (CEs Question 1.2). Employers were of all sizes with the majority small organisations with fewer than 50 employees (72%), 16% medium-sized (50 to 499 employees) and 12% large entities with over 500 employees. Employers had practices across all areas of the value chain with the highest percentage in value recovery at 56%. Their operations cut across all [Work BC industry profiles](#) with the exception of oil and gas and finance, insurance and real estate, with the most represented sector being waste management (28%).

## Who responded to the ESP survey?

The employment service providers who responded to the survey served a variety of equity deserving groups, including people with disabilities (85%), people with mental health conditions (71%), Indigenous communities (60%), 2SLGBTQI+ community (60%), women (60%), and youth (60%). Other categories were newcomers, Black community, and people with addictions. (ESPs 1.1). Most responses from ESPs were from Mainland / Southwest (40%), followed by Thompson Okanagan (28%) and Vancouver Island (21%) regions. No responses were received from ESPs in Nechako, North Coast, or Cariboo regions (ESPs 2.1).

## SURVEY KEY FINDINGS

The analysis of data from both surveys indicated the following key findings:

- 1. Circular employers are seeking candidates with skills specific to the circular economy**, with the majority of positions having low educational barriers to entry. After communications skills, skills specific to the circular economy were the most sought after competency by circular employers. Few required any advanced educational qualifications; 28% required a high school diploma and 38% required no training, with 95% of employers offering on-the-job training. However, 34% of respondents said their positions required certified training. Overall, these results suggest that many existing circular jobs are suited to those who lack traditional educational qualifications.
- 2. Circular employers are struggling to fill positions and retain staff.** Circular employers qualitatively noted a range of positions challenging with about half entry level positions such as general labourers, retail staff, and drivers. About a third were challenged to find tradespeople, including those with repair skills. The remaining were some administrative positions and managers and professionals with IT, marketing, accounting, planning and engineering backgrounds. Insecure funding and not having the appropriate partners to support hiring and/or retention were the biggest reasons for not filling positions; not having job-ready applicants was also mentioned as a challenge.
- 3. 64% of employers offer flexible hours, which was also the highest ranked inclusive employment priority by ESPs.** Flexible hours were most commonly available for front line jobs and jobs in operations, such as sorting, washing, drying, cleaning, packaging, labelling, general labour, junk removal, retail, pest control, and sorting. 83% of ESP respondents said that the communities they served were interested in flexible work of 1-20 hours per week. This

alignment suggests that circular employers are able to provide flexible hours well-suited to meet some of the employment needs of ESP clients.

4. **97% of circular employers were interested in inclusive employment but the majority (62%) are not engaged with ESPs.** Employers described barriers to inclusive employment as challenges in finding qualified applicants, securing funding, supporting inclusive hires, and finding the time to hire inclusively. These insights corroborate the challenges we heard from roundtable participants. These are challenges that ESPs can help to address, further supporting the need and demand to foster connections between ESPs and circular employers.
5. **All ESPs surveyed said that they want to work with circular employers** and 82% believe their clients' values align with circular goals. The interest among ESP survey respondents, together with the insights from roundtables, demonstrates that ESPs are eager to learn more about the circular economy and see circular employers as suitable candidates for advancing inclusive hiring practices.
6. **The circular economy is an area of predicted job growth.** In qualitative feedback, over 80% of circular employers surveyed expected some growth in their business or organisation over the next five years, ranging from modest to robust. Of the remaining 20%, around half did not foresee growth and the other half felt uncertain or that growth was contingent on factors such as new funding or investment. Areas of future job growth identified by circular employers cuts across occupational classifications and sectors. Understanding the extent and nature of this expected job growth was a key priority also identified in the roundtables given its implications for workforce development and inclusive hiring.

## Key Findings And Recommendations

Through this engagement project—comprising survey research and ten roundtables across all economic regions of BC—key findings were developed that indicate priority actions for the Network for Inclusive Circular Employment:

1. More information is needed about jobs and tasks in the circular economy.
2. Circular employers need support to adopt inclusive employment approaches.
3. There is shared interest in further networking opportunities.
4. Rural, remote, and Indigenous communities need support to identify and advance circular opportunities.
5. Significant structural and region-specific challenges create barriers to employment.

### 1. MORE INFORMATION IS NEEDED ABOUT JOBS AND TASKS IN THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY.

The roundtables revealed a knowledge gap about the circular economy. Employment service providers (ESPs) wanted more locally-specific information from circular employers about what jobs are available, tasks that need to be done, and what skills or training are required to fulfil their labour needs. The need for more circular job information indicated three main directions for action:

- 1.1. A database of current circular employers and their job openings.** There was strong interest among employment service providers in the creation of a list of local circular employers with a central access point to view job openings. This was an idea proposed first by ESPs in the Thompson-Okanagan roundtable and was deemed more important as a priority in regions with a more developed circular economy, including Mainland Southwest (Vancouver) and Vancouver Island, where more circular jobs are available but hard to find, identify, or match to potential inclusive hires.
- 1.2. Training information for circular jobs listings.** Employment service providers can help prospective employees prepare for circular jobs by offering training in circular skills, but they need more information from employers about what skills and tasks are involved in the circular jobs they offer. Understanding the skills needed can help employment service providers match suitable applicants to the positions available.
- 1.3. Forecasts of circular job growth and skill gaps.** Stakeholders want to understand how future circular development may impact workforce and economic trends on a local level, suggesting that labour market research is a priority. ESPs wanted to understand what types of circular businesses, both existing and emerging, were capable of providing stable and decent employment. Concerns were expressed by some ESPs that emergent circular jobs may not provide sufficient returns and thus may not be enduring jobs (for example, it is challenging to economically recycle batteries from post-consumer electronics because many are not designed to be optimally recyclable). Moreover, there is a desire from local governments and entrepreneurs to better understand viable areas for circular growth in different regions so that strategic priorities can be set. This priority had support across BC with greater relative importance to the participants in the Trail, Squamish, and Fort St John roundtables.

## **2. CIRCULAR EMPLOYERS NEED SUPPORT TO ADOPT INCLUSIVE EMPLOYMENT APPROACHES.**

Circular employers have a range of familiarity with inclusive employment practices. Some organisations are already adopting practices to support inclusive hiring, employee development, and retention, including accessible job descriptions and interview processes, trauma-informed approaches, shadowing opportunities for youth, and tailoring job positions to build on employee strengths. Other circular employers were less familiar with the language and practices of inclusive employment. There is acknowledgment that implementing inclusive employment takes some additional time and resourcing for circular employers many who don't have a lot of slack in their operations. There is varied but generally quite limited understanding by circular employers about what services ESPs provide and how to access them. Circular employers want to understand what inclusive employment practices work in the context of business reality (e.g., time and resource constraints) and what resources could be available to support managers to do this work well (e.g., support for training, managing challenging situations). The need to provide more support to circular employers to embrace inclusive employment practices indicated three main directions for action:

- 2.1. More support for circular employers about how to hire inclusively, secure wage subsidies, retain staff, and help with career progression.** Circular employers are seeking support, training, and resources to help them hire inclusively and deal with challenges that may arise. The need for this support was consistent across the roundtables and was the highest ranked

recommendation by participants of the Vancouver and Victoria roundtables. Specific ideas of support coming from various roundtables include:

- » A resource portal with centralised information.
- » A helpline to call for advice in difficult situations.
- » Workplace assessments and advice for adapting work environments to different needs.
- » Template documents, such as policies and inclusive job advertisements.
- » Partnerships with experts and ESPs for continuous training.
- » Inclusive employment coaches.
- » Mental health, trauma, and addiction training for employers.

**2.2. More information about the business value of inclusive hiring.** While the social value of inclusive hiring is self-evident, the business value can be less clear to employers working within tight time and resource constraints. ESPs at various roundtables described encountering misconceptions among employers about what inclusive hiring is and what it requires of businesses. These misconceptions can be strengthened by pre-existing biases and beliefs about groups who experience barriers to employment, or by an overemphasis on examples where an inclusive hire has not worked out. A need was stated to showcase positive examples of inclusive hiring, using storytelling to demonstrate how it can work and the benefits to businesses. Demonstrating the value of inclusive hiring in a range of different business types, including small start-ups, established businesses and local/regional, can provide inspiring and informative examples to address employer scepticism.

**2.3. New courses/training to develop circular skills in demand.** Circular employers, ESPs, and educational institutions can work together to identify and build training programs for circular skills that are in demand. The need to identify skills gaps and provide training specific to circular jobs was mentioned in regions where the circular economy is more fully developed (e.g. Squamish, Vancouver and Victoria), as well as smaller communities where specific skills were in need, such as supporting reuse activities at the transfer station in Smithers.

### **3. THERE IS SHARED INTEREST IN FURTHER NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES.**

The roundtable series demonstrated a keen appetite for more networking opportunities to build connections and share knowledge to support inclusive circular employment. This demand was especially strong in Penticton, Williams Lake, Vancouver and Victoria. Suggestions for future networking included:

**3.1. Opportunities for circular employers to connect with employment service providers.** Advancing inclusive circular employment will hinge on the development of strong and supportive relationships between employment service providers and circular employers. Further opportunities for connection and shared learning between these two groups were desired. The NICE roundtable events could serve as a model for future regional network engagements. Such initiatives are more likely to be sustained if led by local champions.

**3.2. Opportunities for business to connect and learn from each other about inclusive employment practices.** The Innovator Showcase panels at roundtables suggested that businesses are especially receptive to hearing from other businesses about how inclusive hiring has been implemented. Bringing circular employers together to learn from each other and share experiences, resources, and strategies was a desired way to ground and promote inclusive practices in the circular economy.

#### **4. RURAL, REMOTE, AND INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES NEED SUPPORT TO IDENTIFY AND ADVANCE CIRCULAR OPPORTUNITIES.**

Where the circular economy is better developed, circular employers are seeking support to hire inclusively right now and, as such, there is a greater readiness for the NICE priority actions as listed above. In Northern and Interior BC, with some exceptions, support is needed to develop circular opportunities and tackle pervasive labour challenges to further set the groundwork for inclusive circular employment.

Circular economy opportunities identified by roundtable participants across BC are abundant and varied. While consumer goods, managing the built environment, and reducing single use items have applicability across the board, residents of rural areas, including Fort St John, Smithers, Williams Lake, Trail, Líl'wat, and Prince Rupert, resonated with circular opportunities connected with the bioeconomy linked to forestry, mining, fisheries, and agriculture, together with opportunities linked to local waste management facilities. Unfortunately, the plethora of circular opportunities were rarely matched by local capacity and resources to make them happen. Rural, remote, and Indigenous communities are wanting support to make circular ideas a reality. Suggestions from roundtables in these regions included support to identify circular opportunities with the highest growth potential, as well as project funding and business plan development for specific circular ideas.

#### **5. SIGNIFICANT STRUCTURAL AND REGION-SPECIFIC CHALLENGES CREATE BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT.**

Employers and communities across all regions of BC are grappling with basic needs that impact their ability to access employment and labour. Cost of living and the accessibility or quality of available affordable housing was a concern raised in all roundtables. The availability of transport was also identified as a key barrier preventing people in smaller, remote, and Indigenous communities from accessing job opportunities. Participants in Trail, Líl'wat, Williams Lake, Squamish and Vancouver, specifically cited access to affordable childcare as a key factor impacting the ability of women in particular to enter the job market. For inclusive hiring practices to be effective requires region-specific approaches to address these other systemic barriers to employment.

## Conclusions and Next Steps

The circular economy involves new technologies, practices, and disruptive innovations that close material cycles through the reuse, repair, remanufacturing, upcycling, and recycling of products, buildings, and organics. The transformation to a more circular economy in BC will impact labour markets by creating new occupations, enhancing demand for existing occupations, and displacing some jobs in the “linear economy.” This, in turn, will impact labour market imbalances, skill gaps and training needs, and the opportunity to develop inclusive employment opportunities.

The NICE engagement project unearthed anecdotal information about the nature of circular jobs in BC, yet we heard an interest in more deeply understanding the labour market of the circular economy, as well as developing a more detailed strategic plan to guide implementation. A two-phased approach that includes labour market research followed by strategy development would respond to these expressed needs.

Stakeholders engaged through NICE wanted to understand three key facets of the labour market for BC’s emerging circular economy:

- » **Existing circular jobs** in terms of occupations, tasks/responsibilities, required experience and education, as well as existing skill gaps and worker shortages in key sectors;
- » **How circular jobs will grow and evolve** over the next 5 to 10 years using a strategic foresight approach in order to understand the implications for worker recruitment and retention, as well as addressing skill and training gaps; and
- » **An identification of inclusive employment opportunities** for both current and future labour markets that fit persons facing a variety of barriers to employment.

Stakeholders in regional markets also expressed interest for localised labour market research to complement research conducted at a provincial level. This was particularly pronounced in regions with a circular economy that is currently more developed and visible.

Key sectors with circular practices for consideration in labour market research might include: food and agriculture; the built environment; mining and minerals; plastics; bioeconomy (forestry and fisheries), and textiles. The existing NICE Governance Committee would need to be expanded to include representatives with relevant industry and circular economy knowledge such as: existing circular practices and jobs; momentum of circular practices adoption; regulatory drivers; degree of automation existing/emerging; and linear risks<sup>4</sup> that are predicted or anticipated to drive further circularity.

Anticipated outcomes from this labour market research include: a definition of circular jobs that builds upon, and links with, existing definitions for green and circular jobs in BC, Canada, and internationally; identification and description of existing circular jobs in key sectors with some classification using NOC 2021; forecasts of circular job growth that consider key trends, risks, and emerging issues; labour market imbalances, workforce issues, and skills gaps associated with

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<sup>4</sup> Linear risks are a range of risks associated with a reliance on or failure to adapt away from linear economic business practices, such as continuing to use unrenovable or rare resources and prioritising the production and sale of new products. See Circle Economy, PGGM, KPMG, EBRD, and WBCSD (2018) *Linear Risks*. <https://assets.kpmg.com/content/dam/kpmg/nl/pdf/2021/services/linear-risks.pdf>



different scenarios; and the identification of inclusive circular job opportunities in both the current and future labour markets for the circular economy in key sectors. The development of a circular jobs database for key regional markets would be considered as part of the scope of work where the strongest demand was expressed (e.g., Mainland/Southwest; Vancouver Island/Coast; Thompson-Okanagan).

A second phase of the research could involve the development of a strategic plan working with industry partners in the sectors from the labour market research deemed to have the most pressing workforce issues, as well as the strongest alignment with provincial goals concerning climate action and economic development. This phase would build upon the priority actions articulated through the NICE engagement and draw from the findings of the labour market research. The outcome would be a set of strategic pillars, goals, actions, and resourcing approaches to guide implementation. Given that the circular economy is developed to varying degrees across key regions in BC, it is anticipated that the strategic plan might have some regional variation.

# Appendices

- A. SURVEY QUESTIONS
- B. ROUNDTABLE PARTICIPANTS
- C. SAMPLE ROUNDTABLE PRESENTATION DECKS:
  - i. VANCOUVER
  - ii. PRINCE RUPERT
- D. SAMPLE ROUNDTABLE BANNER
- E. ADDITIONAL INNOVATOR SHOWCASE EXAMPLES

# Appendix A.

## Survey Questions

## INTRODUCTION



# Circular Businesses & Organizations Survey

### **About the Network for Inclusive Circular Employment Project**

The Share Reuse Repair Initiative (a project of MakeWay) would like to invite you to participate in a survey as part of our Network for Inclusive Circular Employment (<https://www.sharereuserepair.org/network-for-inclusive-circular-employment.html>)(NICE) project. This is a provincially funded initiative intended to facilitate intentional connections between circular businesses and employment service providers supporting equity-deserving groups to create inclusive jobs in BC's circular economy.

### ***We recognize businesses and organizations are increasingly valuing a circular approach.***

They are finding ways to reduce waste and lower their carbon footprint by:

- Designing products to be durable, adaptable and reusable
- Extending the life and usage of products and materials through maintenance and repair, leasing or rental models
- Recapturing and “looping” things back into the economy at their end of life either as whole items or their component parts or materials

To learn more about the Circular Economy and approaches to using fewer resources, using things for longer, using renewable inputs, and using resources again see here. (<https://www.circle-economy.com/circular-economy/what-is-the-circular-economy>)

### ***We also recognize that employers are increasingly facing labour challenges and see value in creating inclusive and supportive work environments.***

Labour shortages, employee retention, navigating a changing workforce and appropriate training are challenges that can be addressed by hiring inclusively through connection with employment service organizations.

***As a circular business/organization with interest in these areas, we need your input.*** Your survey responses will help us learn more about your business or organization, the jobs you offer and your approach and interest in inclusive employment.

***Sign up and enter our Prize Draw!*** At the end of the survey you will have an opportunity to sign up to join the Network for Inclusive Circular Employment and learn more about future opportunities, including networking events. By signing up, you will be entered into our raffle to win one of ten \$50 Support Local BC gift cards to spend at local businesses in your region.

Thank you in advance for taking 10 minutes to complete this survey. Your survey responses will help us learn more about your business or organization, and your approach and interest in inclusive employment. Survey results will inform recommendations to the province about how to increase inclusive circular jobs. Your survey responses will remain confidential and results will be combined.

# Section 1: About Your Business or Organization

Please consider your business operations in British Columbia

\* 1.1. Which of the following is included in your operations? Please select all that apply.

- CIRCULAR DESIGN - design products or materials to make them easy to maintain, repair, reuse, refurbish or remanufacture. Use salvaged, renewable or recycled materials or organics for products or buildings.
- OPTIMIZE USE - repair and/or maintain existing products, equipment, buildings, clothing etc.; sell spare parts or other add-ons to support product longevity; offer things for temporary ownership; replace single-use items with a reusable alternative.
- VALUE RECOVERY (capture value after use) - refurbish or remanufacture items; collect, redistribute and/or resell products, materials or surplus food; transform waste into raw materials as input into new items.

Other (Please specify)

\* 1.2. What structure best describes your business?

- For-profit
- Social enterprise - operated by a for-profit company or non-profit organization that has the goal of achieving social, cultural, community economic, and/or environmental outcomes and earning revenue.
- Co-operative
- Community contribution company - a hybrid corporation that bridges the gap between for-profit companies and non-profit organizations.
- Self-employed
- Local government or First Nation services

Other (Please specify):

\* 1.3. How many people does your business or organization employ (full-time and part-time)?

- Less than 10 employees       10-49       50-99  
 100-299       300-499       Over 500
- 

\* 1.4. What stage of development is your business or organization in?

- Start up (business idea is being brought to life, low or no revenues)       Growth (strong customer base, tangible profits, healthy cash flow, and increased market share)       Maturity (strong presence in target market, stability and steady cash flow)  
 Renewal (adaptation and evolution to changing market conditions and consumer behaviours)       N/A

## Section 2: About the jobs at your business or organization

Please consider jobs in British Columbia only.

\*2.1. What categories of jobs or tasks are required by your business or organization? (select all that apply)

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Accounting                               | <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative         | <input type="checkbox"/> Assembly, Production, and/or Manufacturing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Construction, Engineering, and/or Trades | <input type="checkbox"/> Customer Service       | <input type="checkbox"/> Food Handling and Preparation              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Information Technology | <input type="checkbox"/> Legal                                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Logistics and Transportation             | <input type="checkbox"/> Management             | <input type="checkbox"/> Operations                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Packaging and Fulfillment                | <input type="checkbox"/> Retail and Sales       |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify):                  |   |   |

\*2.2. What skill(s) do these jobs require? (pick the 3 most relevant)

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communication (e.g., active listening, speaking, writing, etc)  | <input type="checkbox"/> Analysis (e.g., critical thinking, reading comprehension, problem solving, etc)    | <input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics and Science   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social (e.g., coordinating, instructing, negotiating, persuading, service orientation, social perceptiveness)         | <input type="checkbox"/> Systems (e.g., judgment and decision making, systems analysis, systems evaluation) | <input type="checkbox"/> Technical (e.g., equipment maintenance and installation, repairing, computer programming, troubleshooting, operations monitoring) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Skills specific to circular economy and materials management (e.g., repair, collection, sorting, cleaning, denailing) |   |  |



2.3. What is the minimum level of education required for jobs at your business or organization?

- Degree                       Diploma                       Certificate  
 Apprenticeship               High school                       No training required  
 Other (Please specify)

---

2.4. Do any of these jobs require certified training?

- Yes                               No

---

2.4. (Part 2) What is the hourly commitment for that training?

- <10                               10-20                               20-40  
 >40

---

2.5. Do you provide on-the-job training?

- Yes                               No

---

2.6. What positions, if any, are you having difficulty filling?

2.7. How and where are you advertising or recruiting for these positions? (select all that apply)

- Online job sites                       Community bulletin boards                       Recruitment agencies
- LinkedIn                                       Word of mouth
- Other (Please specify):

---

2.8. Are these jobs flexible in hours worked (e.g. hours change based on week or individual completing the task)?

- Yes                                       No                                       Not applicable

---

2.8. (Part 2) Please describe the job(s):

---

2.9. Do you anticipate job growth in your business or organization over the next 5 years? If so, what types of jobs?

## Section 3: Inclusive Employment

Inclusive workplaces employ people who represent a wide range of ages, ethnicities, cultural backgrounds, languages spoken, sexual orientations, abilities (physical and mental), gender identities, and education levels. As such, they have access to a wide range of perspectives, experiences, skills and insights, which boosts a company's creativity and problem-solving abilities. Employees also often feel more satisfied in inclusive workplaces and are therefore inclined to stay longer, reducing employee turnover and making teams more productive.

\*3.1. Is inclusive employment part of your business or organization?

Inclusion is a core value

- Yes
- Not yet (hoping to in the future)
- No

We have a formal diversity and inclusion declaration

- Yes
- Not yet (hoping to in the future)
- No

We have intentional, inclusive hiring practices

- Yes
- Not yet (hoping to in the future)
- No

We provide various accommodations for inclusive hires

- Yes
- Not yet (hoping to in the future)
- No

Other initiatives:

---

\* 3.2. What benefits of inclusive employment appeal to you? (check the 3 most important to you)

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Improve employee recruitment and retention rates   | <input type="checkbox"/> Address labour shortages                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Create an inclusive workplace culture with more diverse life experiences |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bring in more diverse skill sets   | <input type="checkbox"/> Improve employee attendance and performance | <input type="checkbox"/> Access to subsidies and resources for inclusive hires                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Enhanced reputation and/or meet social purpose targets (BCorp certification, ESG goals etc.) |  |   |
- 

\* 3.3. What do you perceive as barriers to hiring inclusively? (check all that apply)

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Finding qualified applicants                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Securing funding for training, special accommodations, etc. | <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting inclusive hires (who may require special on-the-job accommodations) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Developing a positive inclusive workplace culture | <input type="checkbox"/> Finding the time to hire inclusively                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Navigating existing union or HR contracts or systems                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify):<br><input type="text"/>   |  |   |
- 

\* 3.4. Has your business or organization partnered with employment service providers to support the hiring and/or retention of employees that face barriers to workforce entry?

- Yes                       No                       Not currently, but we have in the past.
- I don't know
-

\* 3.4. (Part 2) Please explain why you are no longer partnering with employment service providers:

---

\* 3.5. Has your business or organization received subsidies or funding to hire and/or retain employees that face barriers to workforce entry?

- Yes                       No                       No, but we would be interested in learning about this.
- I don't know

Details?

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\* 3.6. What is your level of interest in further pursuing inclusive employment?

Extremely Interested

Not Interested

①

②

③

④

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3.7. Which Work BC industry profile fits best for your business or organization? (Optional. Select all that apply)

Accommodation and Food Services (lodging, food and beverage service)

Agriculture and Fishing (grow, raise, harvest, market, sell food)

Business, Building and Other Support Services (support services for day-to-day operations, operational services, waste services)

Construction (constructing, deconstructing, repairing and renovating buildings, engineering projects, developing land)

Educational Services (instruction and training)

Finance, Insurance and Real Estate (handling financial transactions on behalf of clients)

Forestry, Logging and Support (growing and harvesting timber)

Health Care and Social Assistance (providing health care and social assistance)

Information, Culture and Recreation (telephone, radio, television, etc, performing arts companies, artists, museums, zoos, casinos, spectator sports events, fitness centers, ski resorts, golf courses, marinas)

Manufacturing (transforming materials into new products)

Mining and Oil and Gas (exploring, extracting and developing naturally occurring solid minerals)

Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (providing particular specialized skill sets and knowledge to clients)

Public Administration (engaging in activities of a governmental nature)

Repair, Personal and Non-Profit Services (repair, refurbish and maintenance of various goods, personal, laundry, funeral and other services)

Retail Trade (selling consumers goods that have been purchased from suppliers, including refillables and rentals))

Transportation and Warehousing (transporting passengers and goods, warehousing and storing goods)

Utilities (operating electric power, gas and water systems)

Waste Management, Logistics and Sorting (e.g. recycling)

Wholesale Trade (supplying goods for resale or industrial use)

Other (please specify):

## Section 4: Contact Information

\* 4.1. In which region(s) is your business or organization located? Please select all that apply.

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Province-wide     | <input type="checkbox"/> Vancouver Island / Coast | <input type="checkbox"/> Mainland / Southwest |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Thompson-Okanagan | <input type="checkbox"/> Kootenay                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Cariboo              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> North Coast       | <input type="checkbox"/> Nechako                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Northeast            |
- 

\* 4.2. Are you willing to be contacted by a member of our project team to join the network and find out about future opportunities to engage in inclusive employment opportunities or research? If yes, please leave contact information below. **By signing up, you will be entered into our Prize Draw to win one of ten \$50 Support Local BC gift cards.** Your information will be kept in compliance with the BC Personal Information Protection Act.

- Yes  No
- 

First Name

Last Name

Business/Organization Name

Job role/title (if applicable)

City

Phone

\* Email

\* Re-enter email:



Would you like to be entered into the Prize Draw?

Yes

No

---

4.3. Please provide the link to your business'/organization's website or a one-line description of your business/organization.

## INTRODUCTION



# Employment Service Providers and Communities Survey

### **About the Network for Inclusive Circular Employment Project**

The Share Reuse Repair Initiative (a project of MakeWay) would like to invite you to participate in a survey as part of our Network for Inclusive Circular Employment (<https://www.sharereuserepair.org/network-for-inclusive-circular-employment.html>)(NICE) project. This is a provincially funded initiative intended to facilitate intentional connections between circular jobs and employment service providers supporting equity-deserving groups to create inclusive jobs in BC's circular economy.

***We recognize that employment services providers are interested in matching those they serve with circular employment opportunities.*** Employment service providers supporting equity-deserving groups want to seek the right fit for those they serve to help grow careers and make placements in settings where employees feel good about their work. There is an opportunity to meet these goals by working with circular businesses.

***How are inclusive circular economy jobs relevant to me as an employment service provider?*** Circular employers engaged in sharing, reuse, and repair have tremendous potential to create inclusive jobs for all skill and income levels and support more affordable daily living. These circular employers aim to reduce their waste and lower their carbon footprint by:

- Designing products to be durable, adaptable and reusable
- Extending the life and usage of products and materials through maintenance and repair, leasing or rental models
- Recapturing and “looping” things back into the economy at their end of life either as whole items or their component parts or materials

There is an opportunity to better understand and more effectively communicate what types of circular tasks and jobs are available, and more effectively pursue inclusive employment opportunities. There is increasing recognition that inclusive hiring by working with employment service organizations is a viable way to overcome challenges related to labour shortages, employee retention, navigating a changing workforce and ensuring appropriate training.

To learn more about the Circular Economy and approaches to using fewer resources, using things for longer, using renewable inputs, and using resources again see [here](https://www.circular-economy.com/circular-economy/what-is-the-circular-economy). (<https://www.circular-economy.com/circular-economy/what-is-the-circular-economy>)

*Employee service organizations and circular businesses & organizations have the opportunity to cultivate intentional connections that result in inclusive employment in the circular economy.*

**As an employment service provider, we need your input.** Your survey responses will help us learn more about the needs of those you serve and the services you provide. We will use these results to inform how we bring together employment service providers and circular businesses & organizations for mutually beneficial networking.

**Sign up and enter our Prize Draw!** At the end of the survey, you will have an opportunity to sign up to join the Network for Inclusive Circular Employment and learn more about future opportunities, including networking events. You will also have the chance to enter our raffle to win one of ten \$50 Support Local BC gift cards to spend at local businesses in your region.

Thank you in advance for taking 10 minutes to complete this survey. Survey results will inform recommendations to the province about how to increase inclusive circular jobs. Your survey responses will remain confidential and results will be combined.

# Section 1: About the communities your organization belongs to or serves

\*1.1. What communities does your organization belong to or serve? (select all that apply in British Columbia)

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Indigenous communities                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Black community                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Newcomers and refugees               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> People with disabilities                            | <input type="checkbox"/> People struggling with mental health | <input type="checkbox"/> People struggling with substance use |
| <input type="checkbox"/> People that face home insecurity or are underhoused | <input type="checkbox"/> 2SLGBTQI+                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Women                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Youth (15-34 years old)                             |   |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify):                             |   |   |
| <input type="text"/>   |   |   |
- 

1.2. What types of jobs or tasks are those you serve interested in filling?

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Accounting                               | <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative                | <input type="checkbox"/> Assembly, Production, and/or Manufacturing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Construction, Engineering, and/or Trades | <input type="checkbox"/> Food Handling and Preparation | <input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Information Technology                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Legal                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Logistics                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Management                               | <input type="checkbox"/> Operations                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Packaging and Fulfillment                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Retail and Sales                         |  |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify):                  |  |   |
| <input type="text"/>  |  |   |
- 

1.3. How many hours are those you serve interested in working each week?

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flexible hours (1 - 20 hours per week) | <input type="checkbox"/> Part time hours (20 - 37.5 hours per week) | <input type="checkbox"/> Full time hours (37.5+ hours per week) |
|---|---|---|
-

1.4. Do those you serve sometimes require additional support in the workplace? This can either include initial support in the workplace, ongoing support, or support as needed.

- Yes  No
- 

\*1.4. (Part 2) If yes, please specify

- Initial support  Ongoing support  Support as needed  
 Other (Please specify)

---

1.5. What of the choices below would the community(ies) you serve consider a priority for employment? Please select all that apply.

- Fair compensation  Full time work  Long term career opportunities  
 Alignment with values  Flexible hours  Seasonal employment opportunities  
 Childcare support  Access to benefits  On-site workplace support  
 On-the-job training  
 Other (Please specify)

---

1.5 (Part 2) Of those that you selected, which do you think are the top 3 priorities for the community(ies) you serve?

- Fair compensation  Full time work  Long term career opportunities  
 Alignment with values  Flexible hours  Seasonal employment opportunities  
 Childcare support  Access to benefits  On-site workplace support  
 On-the-job training

## Section 2: Employment Service Provider services

\* 2.1. Are you filling out this survey on behalf of an organization or a community?

Organization

Community

---

\* 2.2. What services does your organization provide to community members? (select all that apply)

Work placement

Developing skills or  
providing skills training

Work experience

Career counseling

Mental health services

Meal services

Housing services

Job services (i.e.  
creating a resume,  
getting references)

Provide equipment

Assist with  
transportation

Other (Please specify)

---

\* 2.3. What services does your organization provide to employers? (select all that apply)

Job posting and  
recruitment

Payroll support  
(accounting, wage  
subsidies)

Insurance (reduce  
liability)

Work coverage (if  
employee is unable to  
make the day, your  
organization can send  
someone in their place)

Assist HR for longterm  
inclusive employment

Other (Please specify)

## Section 3: Circular Economy connections / knowledge

3.1. When we use the term 'circular economy', we mean an economy where we design out waste. We design things to be durable, repairable, and reusable. Then every instance where something might go to waste is seized as an opportunity, with items or materials looped back into the system. Do the values of the community you serve align with the goals described above? (optional)

Yes  No

Other (Please specify)

\*3.2. Does your organization currently, or has it previously, worked with a business whose operations include one of the following circular strategies? Please select all that apply.

CIRCULAR DESIGN - design products or materials to make them easy to maintain, repair, reuse, refurbish or remanufacture. Use salvaged, renewable or recycled materials or organics for products or buildings.

OPTIMIZE USE - repair and/or maintain existing products, equipment, buildings, clothing etc.; sell spare parts or other add-ons to support product longevity; offer things for temporary ownership; replace single-use items with a reusable alternative.

VALUE RECOVERY (capture value after use) - refurbish or remanufacture items; collect, redistribute and/or resell products, materials or surplus food; transform waste into raw materials as input into new items.

Other (Please specify)

3.3. What is your level of interest to pursue inclusive employment with circular job employers?

Extremely Interested

Not Interested

①

②

③

④

## Section 4: Contact Information

\* 4.1. In which region is your organization or community located? (select all that apply)

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Province-wide     | <input type="checkbox"/> Vancouver Island / Coast | <input type="checkbox"/> Mainland / Southwest |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Thompson-Okanagan | <input type="checkbox"/> Kootenay                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Cariboo              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> North Coast       | <input type="checkbox"/> Nechako                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Northeast            |
- 

\* 4.2. Are you willing to be contacted by a member of our project team to join the network and discuss future opportunities to engage in inclusive employment opportunities or research? If yes, please leave contact information below. **By signing up, you will be entered into our Prize Draw to win one of ten \$50 Support Local BC gift cards.** Your information will be kept in compliance with the BC Personal Information Protection Act.

- Yes  No
- 

First Name

Last Name

Organization Name

City

Phone

\* Email

\* Confirm Email:

Job Role/Title (if applicable):



Please do not include me in the Prize Draw

---

4.3. Please provide the link to your organization' website or a one-line description of your organization or community.

# Appendix B.

Roundtable Participants Lists

**Roundtable 1: Nechako: Smithers<sup>1</sup>**

This event was led by the New Inclusive Economy (NIE) and Share Reuse Repaired served as a co-host. The event was attended by over 20 participants, including representatives from the Town of Smithers, Smithers Chamber of Commerce, and High Road Services.

**Roundtable 2: Mainland Southwest: Lil'wat & Mount Curie**

Organisation	Type
Lil'wat HR	Local Government
Lil'wat Retail	Local Government
Pemberton Chamber of Commerce	Other Contributor
Murphy Construction (2) <sup>2</sup>	Circular Employer
Spel'kúmtn Community Forest	Other Contributor

**Roundtable 3: Mainland Southwest: Squamish**

Organisation	Type
Arts Whistler	Other Contributor
Community Futures Howe Sound	Other Contributor
District of Squamish (3)	Circular Jobs Employer
Ecoinspire	Circular Business
Greens Party (2)	Other Contributor
Resort Municipality of Whistler (2)	Circular Jobs Employer
RMOW Economic Development	Other Contributor
Sea to Sky Community Services	Employee Service Provider
Sharewares (2)	Circular Business
Squamish Climate Action Network (2)	Other Contributor
Squamish Helping Hands Society	Other Contributor
Squamish Lillooet Regional District	Circular Jobs Employer
Squamish Nation - Stitsma Career Centre	Employee Service Provider
Squamish Rebuild	Circular Business
Vessel Refillery	Circular Business
Whistler Blackcomb – Sustainability	Circular Business
Whistler Personnel Solutions	Employee Service Provider
WorkBC / Open Door Group	Employee Service Provider
Zero Ceiling	Employee Service Provider

<sup>1</sup> Attendance was not taken by SRRRI at the Smithers Roundtable Event.

<sup>2</sup> Numbers in parentheses represent the number of people from each organisation.

<b>Roundtable 4: Kootenay: Trail</b>	
<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Type</b>
Castlegar and District Chamber of Commerce	Other Contributor
Community Futures East Kootenay	Organization Equity Deserving
Community Futures Greater Trail	Organization Equity Deserving
Greater Trail Community Skills Centre	Employee Service Provider
KC Recycling (2)	Circular Business
Kootenay Association for Science and Technology	Organization Equity Deserving
Kootenay Employment Services (2)	Employee Service Provider
KORE Outdoors	Circular Business
Lower Columbia Initiatives Corporation	Other Contributor
Mercer Celgar	Circular Business
Metal Tech Alley (2)	Other Contributor
Municipality - Fruitvale (3)	Local Government
Municipality - Warfield	Local Government
Selkirk College - Selkirk Technology Access Centre (STAC) (2)	Other Contributor
WorkBC Centre	Employee Service Provider

<b>Roundtable 5: Cariboo: Williams Lake</b>	
<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Type</b>
Dandelion Tours and Interpretation	Circular Jobs Employer
Cariboo Regional District	Local Government
Potato House	Circular Jobs Employer
Cariboo Literacy	Employee Service Provider
Elhdaqox Development Enterprise	Circular Jobs Employer
The Inspired Builders Business	Circular Jobs Employer
Foundry	Employee Service Provider
Cariboo Disposal	Circular Jobs Employer

<b>Roundtable 6: Thompson Okanagan</b>	
<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Type</b>
Ask wellness	Employee Service Provider
BC Product Stewardship Council (Admin) / PACE Board Member	Organization
Interior Health	Employee Service Provider
Kelowna Community Resources	Employee Service Provider
Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation (JEDI)	Circular Jobs Employer
Neil Squire Society	Employee Service Provider
PACE	Employee Service Provider
Penticton - sustainability	Circular Jobs Employer
Penticton and District Society for Community Living (2)	Employee Service Provider
Penticton Centre for Exceptional Learning	Organization Equity Deserving
Penticton City Council	Organization
Penticton Indian Band	Circular Jobs Employer
Purppl (2)	Employee Service Provider
South Okanagan Immigrant and Community Services	
TRM Consulting	Organization
Wildstone construction and engineering	Circular Business
WORKBC SOUTH OKANAGAN (2)	Employee Service Provider

<b>Roundtable 7: Northeast: Fort St John &amp; Dawson Creek</b>	
<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Type</b>
Blueberry River FN	Local Government
Child Development Centre FSJ	Other Contributor
City of Fort St John	Local Government
Northern Lights College (3)	Other Contributor
S.U.C.C.E.S.S.	Employee Service Provider
Salvation Army	Circular Business
The Fort St. John Association for Community Living	Employee Service Provider

<b>Roundtable 8: Mainland Southwest: Vancouver</b>	
<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Type</b>
Agoda	Circular Jobs Employer
Archway Community Services	Other Contributors
ASSET Study- BCCSU/UBC	Other Contributors
Awl Together Leather	Circular Business
Chop Value Manufacturing	Circular Business
Circular Rubber Technologies	Circular Business
City of Richmond (2)	Local Government
City of Vancouver (2)	Local Government
EMBERS Eastside Works	Employee Service Provider
Exchange Inner City	Employee Service Provide
FoodMesh	Circular Business
HAVE Culinary Training Society	Other Contributors
Invest Vancouver	Other Contributors
Learning Employment Action Plan (L.E.A.P) / CBI Consultants	Employee Service Provider
Ledcor	Other Contributors
LOCO BC	Other Contributors
Lush (2)	Circular Business
Metro Vancouver	Local Government
Mission Possible	Employee Service Provider
Neilsquire	Employee Service Provider
Pacific Autism Family Network	Employee Service Provider
Pacific Community Resources Society	Employee Service Provider

<b>Roundtable 8: Mainland Southwest: Vancouver</b>	
<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Type</b>
Reboot Canada	Circular Business
Recycling Alternative	Circular Business
Recycling Council of BC	Other Contributors
Richmond Centre for Disability	Employee Service Provider
Sharewares (2)	Circular Business
Slalom	Circular Business
Sparx Publishing Group (2)	Other Contributors
Vancouver Community College / Adult Special Education Program	Other Contributors
Individuals (5)	Other Contributors

<b>Roundtable 9: North Coast: Prince Rupert</b>	
<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Type</b>
Change Makers Education Society	Employee Service Provider
Coast Mountain College	Employee Service Provider
Ecotrust	Circular Business
Friendship House Association of Prince Rupert	Other Contributor
Hecate Strait Employment Development Society (3)	Employee Service Provider
Inn on the Harbour	Circular Business
Regenerative Ocean Farm/Metlakatla Development Corporation	Circular Business

<b>Roundtable 10: Vancouver Island: Victoria</b>	
<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Type</b>
Big Wheel Burger, bread and butter collective container share. City of Victoria	Circular Business
City of Victoria	Local Government
Coast Waste Management Association	Other Contributor
Community Living Victoria	Employee Service Provider
Cowichan Valley (Economic Development)	Circular Jobs Employer
Delphi	Other Contributor
Destination Greater Victoria	Other Contributor
Elate Cosmetics	Circular Business
Government of BC	Circular Jobs Employer
Grove Outdoors	Circular Business
INEO Employment	Employee Service Provider
Island Deaf and Hard of Hearing Centre	Employee Service Provider
KO Consulting	Other Contributor
Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy	Local Government
Individual	Other Contributor
Nickel Bros	Circular Business
Salt Legacy	Circular Business
Sector Labour Market Partnerships	Local Government
Synergy Foundation / Project Zero (2)	Other Contributor
Work BC - Saanich/ Victoria	Employee Service Provider

# Appendix C.1.

Example Roundtable Presentation Deck - NICE  
Lower Mainland: Vancouver Roundtable Event



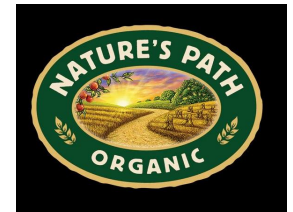


# Share Reuse Repair INITIATIVE

## Network for Inclusive Circular Employment (NICE) Lower Mainland Roundtable

November 28, 2023







*We bring community, business and government together to foster a circular economy that is a waste and climate solution, enables everyone to “live circular” and supports resilient local economies.*

CREATE A GREATER  
**SUPPLY** OF CIRCULAR  
GOODS & SERVICES

CULTIVATE  
CIRCULAR CULTURAL &  
CONSUMER **DEMAND**

**FOSTER EQUITY AND  
INCLUSION** IN THE  
CIRCULAR ECONOMY  
MOVEMENT.

# Network for Inclusive Circular Employment

**Purpose:** to create good jobs in the circular economy for those facing barriers to employment and meet the labour needs of employers.

## Engagement Phase (2023)

- **Raise awareness** about inclusive circular jobs and the network
- **Convene and connect** circular employers and employment service providers
- **Seek** input on future directions and priority actions for NICE

<https://www.sharereuserepair.org/nice.html>



Canada



*Funding provided through the Canada-British Columbia  
Labour Market Development Agreement.*

Vancity

# Agenda

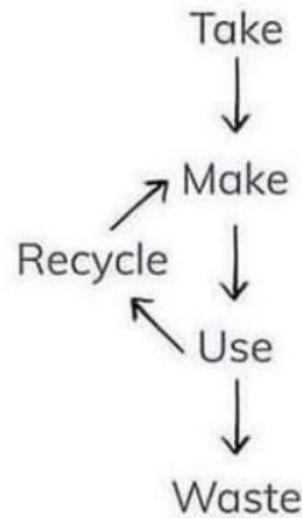
- 9:00 Welcome, Land Acknowledgement  
Project Team & Agenda
- 9:10 NICE Overview
- 9:20 Innovators Showcase for Inclusive Circular  
Employment
- 9:40 Roundtable Discussion - 2 rounds
- 10:40 Networking and Dotmocracy
- 11:00 Wrap up

# Shifting to a Just Circular Economy

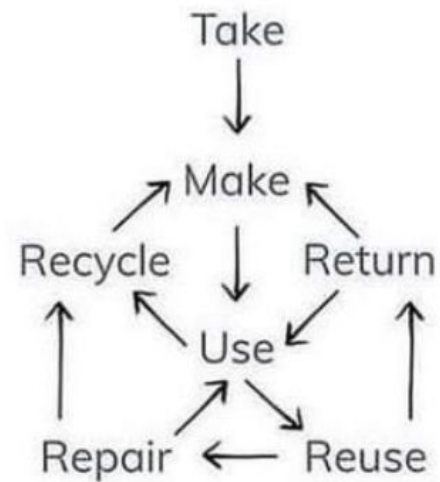
## LINEAR ECONOMY



## RECYCLING ECONOMY



## CIRCULAR ECONOMY



# Circular Economy Areas



**Consumer Goods**  
Repairable Electronics



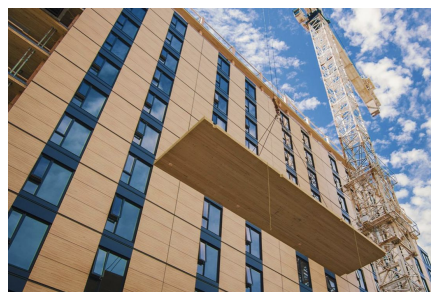
**Textiles**  
Take back and resale



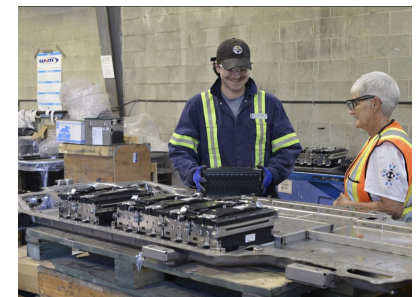
**Food**  
Food Surplus/Rescue



**Built Environment**  
Relocated Homes



**Bioeconomy**  
Forestry Mass Timber



**Recycling**  
3-D Remanufacturing

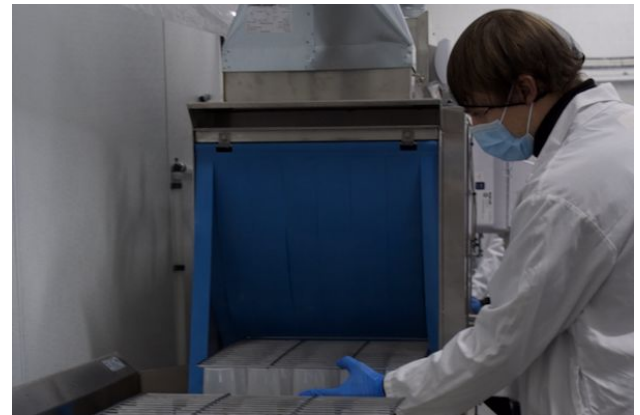


# Who are we connecting?

- Circular job employers  
(e.g. businesses, local government, First Nations, nonprofits)
  - Provide circular jobs
- Employment service providers and community organizations
  - Seek meaningful work for those they serve
  - Support equity deserving groups



Source: Selkirk Technology Access Centre



Source: Sharewares

# Why are we connecting?

- To facilitate employment of any group or community with systemic barriers to entering the job market. Examples:
  - **Diverse abilities** - creating adaptive environments for those with physical, cognitive or sensory challenges
  - **Equity deserving groups** overcoming intersectional barriers (e.g., race, class, gender, sexual orientation)
  - **Newcomers** to Canada; **underrepresented groups** e.g., women and nonbinary people in the trades; **youth** during early career



Source: Pace Penticton

# Why pursue inclusive employment?

- Overcome labour shortages and prepare for circular economy growth
- Increase staff retention and optimize contributions
  - Support connection and relationship building
  - Integrate each employee's strengths
  - Results in a sense of purpose, belonging, and value
- Business benefits
  - Inclusive organizations generate 1.4x more revenue
  - 92% of consumers favour companies that hire people with diverse abilities
  - Millennials and Gen Zs want to work with companies with a purpose beyond profit

# Innovators Showcase: Archway Community Services



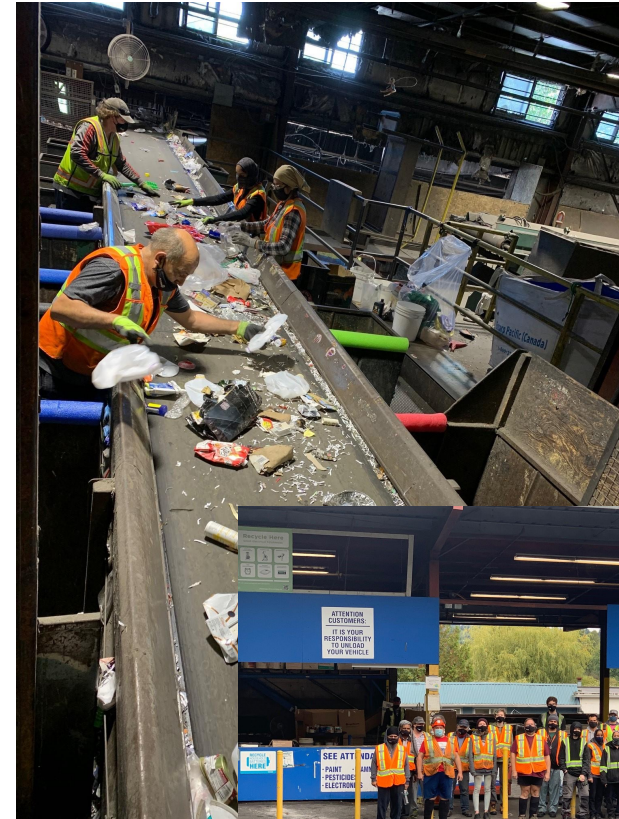
Archway Community Services is a non-profit, multi-service, multi-funded community-based social services agency

## How are we circular?

- Depot operations that collect materials to be reused and/or recycled
- Processing facility for single stream curbside recyclables

## How are we inclusive?

- Provide employment opportunities to individuals who face barriers to traditional employment



# Innovators Showcase: ChopValue

CHOP X VALUE

ChopValue uses distributed manufacturing to upcycle chopsticks into long-lived sustainable products

## How are we circular?

- To-date we have transformed more than 130 million chopsticks and saved over 6 million kgCO<sub>2</sub>e

## How are we inclusive?

- Relationship based hiring, partner with employee services providers
- Formal Diversity Equity Inclusion (DEI) Section in our employee handbook
- Inclusivity incorporated into our team trust agreement, code of conduct, and corporate values



# Innovators Showcase: Nickel Bros



Nickel Bros relocates homes to become affordable housing

## How are we circular?

- Each house preserves roughly 65 tonnes of embodied carbon, 60 tonnes of waste, and 120 trees

## How are we inclusive?

- Allow flexible application methods – provide a resume, write a letter, or give us a call
- Work styles can be altered to suit various abilities; training provided or compensated
- Employees are asked to participate in office design



# Innovators Showcase: Recycling Alternative



Recycling services & full site waste management for the commercial sector – including office towers, malls, food courts, campuses – and apartments

## How are we circular?

- Clean streaming & source separation systems
- Processing & brokering of materials for circular recovery into new products
- On-site composting technology (Terraforma Systems) for circular food waste recovery

## How are we inclusive?

- Partnerships with employment agencies
- Bringing individuals from many walks, cultures and skill levels together
- Flexible work schedules based on individual abilities (e.g., part-time, reduced hours)



# Roundtable Discussion

- Topic - How do we increase inclusive employment for circular jobs in the Lower Mainland?
- Questions to learn perspectives of circular employers
  - What types of **jobs** are you struggling to fill?
  - What are the **challenges** you face when hiring inclusively?
  - What are some proposed **solutions** to address challenges?
- Process - two facilitated discussion rounds - 20 minutes each
  - Round One - raise hand if you are a circular jobs employer, distribute across tables for even representation
  - Round Two - circular employers stay, others move
- Flip chart paper plus stickies for responses



# NICE Priority Actions

1. Circular jobs Information (for employment service providers)
  - a. A database of circular employers and their job openings
  - b. Training information for circular jobs listings
  - c. Forecasts of circular job growth and skill gaps
2. Inclusive employment resources and support (for circular employers)
  - a. More information about the business value of inclusive hiring
  - b. More support about how to hire inclusively, secure wage subsidies, retain staff and support career progression
  - c. Access to training and wage subsidies for inclusive hires
3. Networking
  - a. Opportunities for circular employers to connect and learn together with employment service providers (like today's roundtable)
  - b. Opportunities for business to connect & learn from each other about inclusive employment practices

# Thank you

Rosemary Cooper  
Executive Director

*Rosemarysrri@gmail.com*

Tamara Shulman  
Senior Program Manager

*TamaraSRRI@gmail.com*

## **N**ETWORK FOR **I**NCLUSIVE **C**IRCULAR **E**MPLOYMENT

*Fill out our survey and join the*



*Network for Inclusive  
Circular Employment (NICE)*

[sharereuserepair.org/NICESurvey](http://sharereuserepair.org/NICESurvey)



Funding provided through the Canada-British Columbia  
Labour Market Development Agreement.

## **Appendix C.2.**

Example Roundtable Presentation Deck - NICE  
North Coast: Prince Rupert Roundtable Event



# Share Reuse Repair INITIATIVE

## Network for Inclusive Circular Employment (NICE) North Coast Roundtable

Prince Rupert, January 25, 2024



Funding provided through the Canada-British Columbia  
Labour Market Development Agreement.



# Agenda

- 3:00 Introductions
- 3:10 What is the Circular Economy?
- 3:20 NICE Overview
- 3:30 Discussion
- 4:10 Networking and Dotmocracy
- 4:30 Wrap up



# Share Reuse Repair

INITIATIVE

A project of

MakeWay

A women-led organization working to creating a circular economy that all Canadians can embrace in their daily lives and livelihoods, that serves as a meaningful waste and climate solution, and supports resilient local communities.

**MAKING SHARE, REUSE  
AND REPAIR THE NORM**

**IMAGINING NEW  
RELATIONSHIPS TO OUR  
“STUFF”**

**CREATING AN  
EQUITABLE AND  
INCLUSIVE CIRCULAR  
ECONOMY**

# Network for Inclusive Circular Employment

**Purpose:** to create good jobs in the circular economy for those facing barriers to employment and meet the labour needs of employers.

## Engagement Phase (2023)

- **Raise awareness** about inclusive circular jobs and the network
- **Convene and connect** circular employers and employment service providers
- **Seek** input on future directions and priority actions for NICE



Canada



*Funding provided through the Canada-British Columbia Labour Market Development Agreement.*

<https://www.sharereuserrepair.org/nice.html>

Vancity





# HECATE STRAIT

Employment Development Society

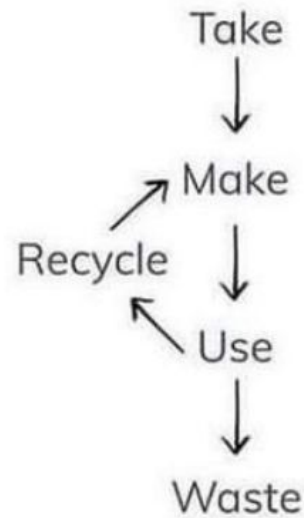


# Shifting to a Just Circular Economy

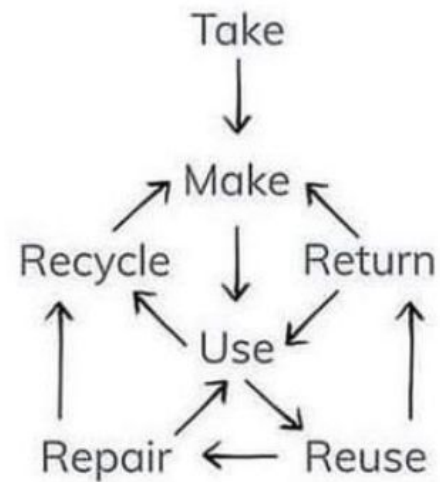
## LINEAR ECONOMY



## RECYCLING ECONOMY



## CIRCULAR ECONOMY



# Circular Economy Areas



**Consumer Goods**  
Repairable Electronics



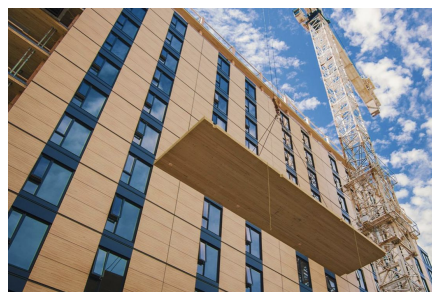
**Textiles**  
Take back and resale



**Food**  
Food Surplus/Rescue



**Built Environment**  
Relocated Homes



**Bioeconomy**  
Forestry Mass Timber



**Recycling**  
3-D Remanufacturing

An aerial photograph of a tall building under construction. The building features a modern facade with vertical yellow panels and dark blue window frames. A large white crane stands next to the building. The surrounding area includes other residential buildings, trees, and a cloudy sky. A black text box is overlaid on the right side of the image.

# **BUILDING & CONSTRUCTION**

Photo: Province of BC, Flickr (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0 Deed)

# Circular Built Environment



Repurposed Offices



Deconstructed Homes & Salvaged Wood



Upcycled Asphalt



Relocated & Repurposed Homes



A large fishing vessel, the 'ALASKA QUEEN II', is the central focus, positioned on a body of blue water. The boat is white with a dark hull and has 'ALASKA QUEEN II' and the number '21382' visible on its side. It is surrounded by a large number of birds, likely eagles and gulls, in various stages of flight. The background features a range of mountains with patches of snow under a cloudy sky. A black rectangular box with the word 'FISHERIES' in white capital letters is overlaid on the right side of the image.

# FISHERIES

Photo: Deborah Freeman, Flickr (CC BY-SA 2.0)

# Circular Fisheries



**SEVEN LEAGUES**

*Fish Leather Tannery & Goods*

Commercial Fish Leather



Compost from fish waste



Regenerative Ocean Farming



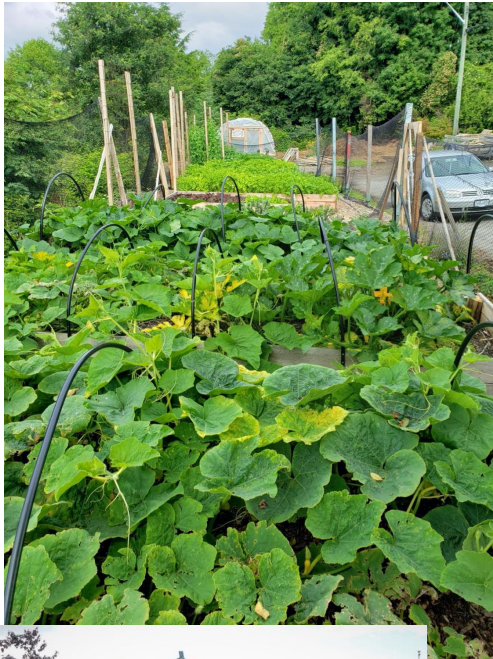
Photo by cattan2011 on Flickr (CC BY 2.0)

A wide-angle photograph of a rural landscape during the golden hour of sunset. The foreground is dominated by several large, rectangular hay bales, their golden-brown stalks catching the low light. Beyond the bales, a green field stretches towards a line of trees on a gentle rise. The sky is a mix of deep blue and soft orange, with wispy clouds. The overall scene conveys a sense of peaceful agricultural activity.

# FOOD & AGRICULTURE



# Circular Food



Urban Farming & Market Gardens



Upcycled flour from brewing



Surplus Food for Less



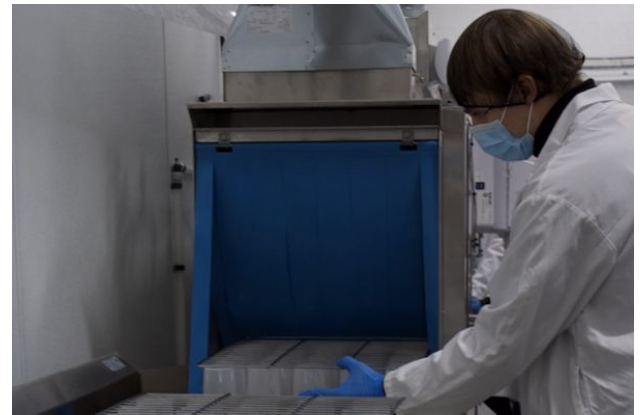
Composting food waste

# Who are we connecting?

- **Circular job employers**  
(e.g. businesses, local government, First Nations, nonprofits)
  - Provide circular jobs
- **Employment service providers and community organizations**
  - Seek meaningful work for those they serve
  - Support equity deserving groups



Source: Selkirk Technology Access Centre



Source: Sharewares

# Why are we connecting?

- To facilitate employment of any group or community with systemic barriers to entering the job market. Examples:
  - **Diverse abilities** - creating adaptive environments for those with physical, cognitive or sensory challenges
  - **Equity deserving groups** overcoming intersectional barriers (e.g., race, class, gender, sexual orientation)
  - **Newcomers** to Canada; **underrepresented groups** e.g., women and nonbinary people in the trades; **youth** during early career



Source: Pace Penticton

# Why pursue inclusive employment?

- **Overcome labour shortages** and prepare for circular economy growth
- **Increase staff retention** and optimize contributions
  - Support connection and relationship building
  - Integrate each employee's strengths
  - Results in a sense of purpose, belonging, and value
- **Business benefits**
  - Inclusive organizations generate 1.4x more revenue
  - 92% of consumers favour companies that hire people with diverse abilities
  - Millennials and Gen Zs want to work with companies with a purpose beyond profit

# PACE Penticton

**Penticton And Area Cooperative Enterprises** has been serving its community for over 20 years:

## **Circular:**

- Recycling programs for mattresses and e-waste
- Refurbish and resell budget-friendly computers, laptops, and accessories.

## **Inclusive:**

- Create social impact programs that employ people living with barriers to employment.
- Create meaningful employment opportunities for people living with barriers – meeting people where they are at, and providing a work environment that is inclusive, flexible and understanding.



# Nickel Bros



**Nickel Bros** relocates homes to become affordable housing

## **Circular:**

- Each house preserves roughly 65 tonnes of embodied carbon, 60 tonnes of waste, and 120 trees

## **Inclusive:**

- Allow flexible application methods – provide a resume, write a letter, or give us a call
- Work styles can be altered to suit various abilities; training provided or compensated
- Employees are asked to participate in office design



# Roundtable Discussion

- What **circular practices** or opportunities do you see in Prince Rupert?
- What **challenges** are you facing in the labour market here?
- What are some **proposed solutions** to address these challenges?

# NICE Priority Actions

1. **Circular jobs Information** (for employment service providers)
  - a. A database of circular employers and their job openings
  - b. Training information for circular jobs listings
  - c. Forecasts of circular job growth and skill gaps
2. **Inclusive employment resources and support** (for circular employers)
  - a. More information about the business value of inclusive hiring
  - b. More support about how to hire inclusively, secure wage subsidies, retain staff and support career progression
  - c. Access to training and wage subsidies for inclusive hires
3. **Networking**
  - a. Opportunities for circular employers to connect and learn together with employment service providers (like today's roundtable)
  - b. Opportunities for businesses to connect & learn from each other about inclusive employment practices



# Thank you!

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Program Manager

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**Rosemary Cooper**  
Executive Director

*RosemarySRRR@gmail.com*

## **N**ETWORK FOR **I**NCLUSIVE **C**IRCULAR **E**MPLOYMENT

*Fill out our survey and join the*



**Network for Inclusive  
Circular Employment (NICE)**

[sharereuserepair.org/NICESurvey](http://sharereuserepair.org/NICESurvey)



 **Share Reuse Repair**  
INITIATIVE  
MakeWay

Funding provided through the Canada-British Columbia  
Labour Market Development Agreement.

# Appendix D.

Sample Roundtable Banner

**NETWORK FOR  
INCLUSIVE  
CIRCULAR  
EMPLOYMENT**

**MAINLAND SOUTHWEST  
ROUNDTABLE  
IN VANCOUVER**

**NOVEMBER 28, 2023  
9 - 11 AM**



**NETWORK FOR  
INCLUSIVE  
CIRCULAR  
EMPLOYMENT**

**VANCOUVER ISLAND  
ROUNDTABLE  
IN VICTORIA**

**JANUARY 31, 3- 5 PM**



# Appendix E.

Additional Innovator Showcase Examples

# Innovators Showcase: Big Wheel Burger



Big Wheel Burger is Canada's first carbon neutral quick service restaurant.

## How are we circular?

- To date 3,261,712.68 kg of carbon offset
- Work with sustainable farmers using innovative techniques to reduce emission in beef production
- Divert 99.6% of waste from landfills

## How are we inclusive?

- Corporate fare wage and employee benefits program
- Higher and promote from within



# Innovators Showcase: INEO Employment Counselling Inc



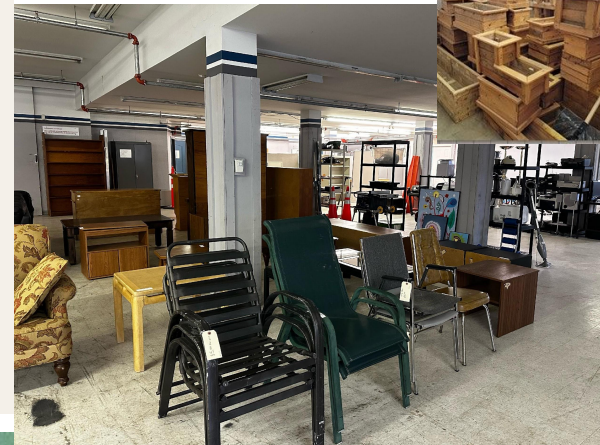
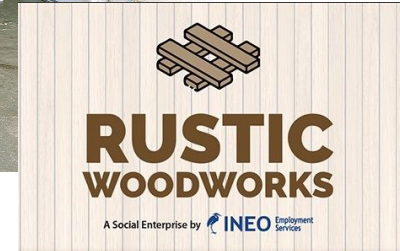
INEO is a for-profit community agency operating 5 social enterprises that provide training & employment for people who experience barriers to finding and maintaining typical employment.

## How are we circular?

- To-date saved over 40,000 mattress from a life in the landfill
- Deconstruct box springs to rebuild & sell functional & decorative wood furniture
- Operate a recycle depot
- Take donations of used furniture, small appliances & construction material to sell in our Re-Use store

## How are we inclusive?

- We train & employ people who have difficulty in securing mainstream employment
- We help individuals to upskill and support a transition into mainstream employment.



# Innovators Showcase: Elate Beauty

ELATE®

At Elate we are disrupting the beauty industry with intentional products that minimize waste and maximize joy.

## How are we circular?

- By refilling and reusing cosmetic compacts we have diverted over 1 million plastic packages from the landfill since 2014.

## How are we inclusive?

- We have formal JEDI policies in our employee guidebook and regularly discuss the topic at team meetings.
- Hiring is done through the lens of cultural add rather than cultural fit.



# Innovators Showcase: ShareWares



Sharewares is a city-wide borrowing platform for reusable containers that supports a transition to the circular economy.

## How are we circular?

- Provides easy and affordable reusable zero waste packaging

## How are we inclusive?

- Supports access to meaningful employment by relationship building, creating an informal interview process, customizing jobs and more
- Partners with employment service provides to make inclusive job hires

