



SQUAMISH

HARDWIRED *for* ADVENTURE

Circular Economy Innovation Challenge Guide

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INTRODUCTION

The District of Squamish is pleased to present a Circular Economy Innovation Challenge (Challenge) in 2024.

This Challenge is funded by the Province of BC's Rural Economic Diversification and Infrastructure Program (REDIP) program. The Challenge will provide funds to Squamish organizations to create circular economy services, products, or programs that reduce the use of virgin materials, prioritize regenerative resources, stretch the lifetime of products, or use waste as a resource. The Challenge is designed to stimulate the adoption of circular practices, by encouraging innovation and implementing circular solutions that support community needs, foster new business development, support business expansion, and promote job creation in Squamish.

The total funding pool is \$60,000, which is intended to be distributed across the applicant pool.

The purpose of this Circular Economy Innovation Challenge Guide is to assist in the preparation of applications.

BACKGROUND

The circular economy (CE) is a system aimed at eliminating waste and promoting the continual use of resources. This approach focuses on reducing use of virgin (new) materials, designing out waste, resource optimization and efficiency, by planning for the ongoing use of materials. The [World Economic Forum](#) states that "circular business models provide a competitive edge because they create more value from each resource unit than the traditional linear 'take-make-dispose' model."

Accelerating the transition to a circular economy is recognized as a global opportunity for new jobs and environmental sustainability and aligns with provincial and national priorities. Recognizing the benefits of a circular economy, in October 2023, the Council endorsed a comprehensive [Circular Economy Roadmap and Implementation Plan](#) (CE Plan). This Plan includes a focus on building the circular business ecosystem, fostering connections with the research community, and supporting local businesses. The efforts to develop a local circular economy align with, and support, several other key plans at the District

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of Squamish, including the [Community Climate Action Plan \(2020\)](#) and the [Zero Waste Action Plan \(2022\)](#).

Squamish's CE Plan expands upon the District's efforts to identify strategies that align with community needs, overcome obstacles to circular adoption, and complement ongoing initiatives within the District and broader community.

The vision for this Challenge is to provide funding for organizations to enhance the adoption of circular economy practices in Squamish, through the development or application of innovative solutions. These solutions should align with the **principles of a circular economy** which is to retain and recover as much value as possible from resources by reducing the use of virgin materials, prioritizing regenerative resources, stretching the lifespan of products, and using waste as a resource.

Proponents for the Challenge should aim to achieve project goals such as those provided in the examples below. While the examples focus on the District's target focus areas; the built environment, food systems, and textiles, as described in the CE Plan, **solutions from any sector are welcome if they align with circular economy principles.**

EXAMPLE PROJECT GOALS

Built Environment

- Reduction of construction, renovation or demolition (CRD) waste generation.
- Reuse or resale of CRD materials and components.
- Integration of circular design principles for construction.
- Utilization of renewable or low-impact building materials, or of innovative designs that align with circular principles.
- Sharing and collaboration platforms to promote resource sharing, prevention of waste generation and/or creating new markets for materials.
- Implementation of regenerative practices and principles into construction or renovation projects.

Food systems

- Reduction of avoidable food waste.
- Reduction of unavoidable food waste.
- Reduction of organic waste sent to landfill.
- Enhancement of local distribution networks.
- Food production technology to preserve or extends the life of food products.
- Improved management or better utilization of residual food products.
- Solutions to upcycle food by-products and "seconds".
- Collaboration, procurement or sharing systems to enhance the local agrifood supply chain.
- Support of regenerative growing practices and principles.
- Implementation of environmental-friendly growing practices; including water-wise techniques, synthetic pesticide, and insecticide-free methods, peat-free agriculture, pollinator friendly approaches, etc.

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Textiles

- Reduction of textile waste generation.
- Implementing solutions for reuse, sharing and repair of textile materials and clothing.
- Recycling or upcycling of textiles into new products and materials.
- Adoption of circular design principles in textile design and/ or production.
- Integration of renewable and biodegradable fibers in textile production.
- Sharing and collaborative platforms to promote resource sharing and waste prevention.
- Implementation of environmentally friendly dyeing and finishing process.
- Extending the lifespan of textiles through repair, refurbishment, and resale initiatives.

Community Asset Development

Proponents are encouraged to enhance the Squamish community's adoption of circular practices through the development or adoption of innovative solutions, including:

- Collaboration tools
- Community assets
- Education and programming
- Contributions to the development of a greater circular innovation ecosystem

Figure 1.0: District of Squamish Circular Economy Framework



FUNDING AVAILABLE

Through the Province of BC's REDIP funding, the District of Squamish intends to allocate \$60,000 to be distributed among successful applicants. The maximum funding request is set at \$20,000. Applications seeking funding exceeding this amount must demonstrate strong *community* engagement, collaboration, and benefits. Applicants are encouraged to outline how they will address future funding needs in their applications.

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ELIGIBILITY

Eligible organizations

- Squamish or Squamish Nation entrepreneurs with a circular economy concept who do not yet have a Squamish business license.
- Existing businesses and non-profits organizations with a Squamish business license.
- Applications representing partnerships and collaborations and seeking funding exceeding the maximum funding amount of \$20,000 require at least one party to have a Squamish business license.

Eligible projects

- Projects must demonstrate alignment with one or more of the core principles of a circular economy, including reducing the use of virgin materials, prioritizing regenerative resources, stretching the lifetime of products, and using waste as a resource. Project must demonstrate innovation.
- Projects will **not be eligible** if they include waste reduction for products covered by an existing stewardship program, or included an Extended Producer Responsibility program.

KEY DATES

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| 1 | Application Submission and Evaluation | Proposal submissions open 19 August 2024 and are due by 27 September 2024 at 5 pm Late applications will not be accepted. Successful applicants will be notified by 15 November 2024 . Refer to Appendix A and Appendix B for the required application format and evaluation criteria. The proposals will be evaluated and adjudicated by a staff advisory body, the Innovation Working Group. The Innovation Working Group , comprised of industry leaders and individuals, and provides input into the innovation efforts of the District of Squamish's Economic Development Department. |
| 2 | Celebration Event | Successful applicants will deliver a 5 to 10-minute pitch showcasing their innovative circular solution at a celebration event in the fall of 2024 . |
| 3 | Disbursement of Funds | Successful applicants will be contacted by 15 November 2024 , regarding the disbursement of funds. These funds will be administered through Community Futures Howe Sound, the District's Economic Development partner organization. |
| 4 | Spending cutoff and Reporting | Successful applicants must fully utilize funds before 31 March 2025 . A Progress Report, highlighting the advancements or outcomes of programs or initiatives associated with this funding, should be |

submitted by is **30 January 2025**. A Summary Report detailing the cumulative results, successes and next steps, should be submitted by **1 May 2025**.

APPLICATION PROCESS

1. APPLICANT SUBMISSIONS

Please refer to the application form outline provided in [Appendix A](#). Applicants are required to submit proposals via email in either Word or PDF document format. Send your submissions to Economic Development Department at the District of Squamish [via email, economicdevelopment@squamish.ca](mailto:economicdevelopment@squamish.ca) by **27 September 2024 at 5 p.m.**

In collaboration with Innovation Working Group, the District of Squamish will assess applications to determine the value of each grant award based on the evaluation criteria outlined in [Appendix B](#) of this guide. **The Innovation Working Group**, comprised of industry leaders and individuals, guides the innovation efforts of the District of Squamish's Economic Development department.

2. CELEBRATION EVENT

Successful applicants will be invited to present a 5 to 10-minute pitch of their innovative circular solution during a celebration event in **the fall of 2024**. This presentation may be given by one or two persons from the organization or group collaborating. Event details to follow.

3. DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS

The Innovation Challenge funds will be administered by Community Futures Howe Sound, a partner organization of the District of Squamish Economic Development. Approved funds must be used exclusively for the items specified in the proponent's application, in accordance with the terms set by the District of Squamish.

The District of Squamish reserves the right to modify or cancel the Challenge at any time. Successful applicants must fully utilize funds before **31 March 2025**.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

The District of Squamish will evaluate the proposals to determine the most beneficial outcomes, promoting innovation, and developing or implementing circular solutions. These solutions should address community needs, foster new business development or business expansion, and contribute to job creation in Squamish.

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Partnership and collaboration will be key criteria in the evaluation process, with additional points awarded for proposals that demonstrate effective partnerships and collaborative approaches, especially those involving businesses, non-profit organizations, research partners, and community organizations.

Selection will be based on the District of Squamish's discretion in evaluating:

- **Resource Efficiency and Circular Solution:** The projects will be assessed for their ability to retain and recover value from existing resources while minimizing the need for virgin materials through:
 - Prioritization of regenerative resources.
 - Extension of products lifetime,
 - Utilizing waste as a resource.

Emphasis will be placed on innovative approaches that contribute to resource conservation and promote circularity within Squamish's economy.

- **Collaboration and Partnership Potential:** This criterion assesses the project's collaboration and partnership potential, amongst interested parties such as businesses, non-profit organizations, government agencies, research institutions, and community groups. Projects will be evaluated based on their ability to build partnerships, leverage collective expertise, and foster collaborative approaches to address challenges. Emphasis will be placed on initiatives that promote collaboration, knowledge sharing, and co-creation of solutions, ensuring that the project benefits from diverse perspectives and resources.
- **Post-Funding Impact:** Projects will be assessed for their sustainability beyond the funding period, focusing on their ability to continue independently, scale, and have a lasting impact. This includes strategies for financial sustainability and organizational resilience. This includes the project's capacity to generate sustained positive impacts and catalyze further innovation and investment in circular economy initiatives. Priority will be given to initiatives that lay the groundwork for long-term transformation and leave a legacy within Squamish's economy and society.
- **Community Engagement and Participation:** The projects will be evaluated for their potential to enhance the convenience and encourage participation in circular economy practices by Squamish residents. Projects will be assessed based on their ability to address community needs, foster social cohesion and community engagement, and facilitating adoption of sustainable behaviours. Emphasis will be placed on initiatives that empower community members to actively participate in the transition towards a circular economy and that includes equity, inclusivity, and social justice lens, ensuring that all community members can access and benefit from the project's outcomes.
- **Applicant Experience and Qualifications:** This criterion evaluates the experience and qualifications of the project applicant(s) relevant to the proposed initiative. Applicants will be assessed based on their expertise, and capacity to successfully execute the project.
- **Market Stimulation:** Projects will be evaluated based on their ability to identify and address barriers hindering the adoption of circular practices, such as regulatory constraints, market inefficiencies, and technological limitations. Emphasis will be placed on initiatives that foster

innovation, create new economic opportunities, and promote systemic change to stimulate markets within Squamish's business landscape.

The District of Squamish will offer debriefings to unsuccessful Proponents, on request, at a mutually agreeable time.

AWARD

- The proposals will be ranked by Innovation Working Group, and the eligible funds will be distributed amongst the highest-ranked proposals.
- Successful submissions will be made public upon approval.

DELIVERABLES

Funding recipients will be required to submit two reports to the District of Squamish:

1. A Progress Report that highlights the progress or results of programs or initiatives associated with this funding. The report should be submitted by **30 January 2025**, and should include, at a minimum:
 - Title and structure of the program(s)
 - Program directors and participants
 - Budget of allocated funds
 - Program/initiative progress
2. A Summary Report will be submitted by **1 May, 2025**, that includes:
 - The cumulative results and successes of the program or initiative and next steps
 - Identify challenges in carrying out this project
 - What opportunity has the Circular Economy Innovation Challenge funding provided
 - Identify future funding needs for this project or other projects within your organization.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

The District of Squamish is bound by the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (British Columbia) and all documents submitted to the District of Squamish will be subject to the provisions of this legislation.

SUBMISSIONS AND CONTACT PERSON

Questions and submissions are to be directed to Economic Development Department, at economicdevelopment@squamish.ca.

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DISCLAIMER

This Innovation Challenge is a grant program only. The grant funds will be administered by Community Futures Howe Sound, a partner organization of the District of Squamish. A contract will be established between Community Futures Howe Sound and the applicant for the disbursement of the funds.

Award of funding will be at the discretion of the District of Squamish and such discretion will not be fettered by this application process. The District of Squamish reserves the right to only partially proceed with this funding or to abandon the Innovation Challenge. All information submitted through this application process is subject to the Freedom of Information and Privacy Act.

APPENDIX A

APPLICATION FORM OUTLINE

Your proposal should follow the format below, and at a minimum, cover the following topics. (**Max Word Count: 1500 words**)

- 1. PROJECT NAME**
- 2. MAILING ADDRESS, AND APPLICANT CONTACT DETAILS**
- 3. APPLICANT OR COMPANY**

Describe the experience and qualifications of the applicant (e.g., resume, organization profile, organization chart, experience).

- 4. PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Describe your project in detail:

- What do you plan to do?
- At what stage is your project at?
- What issue will this project solve?
- What outcomes do you hope to achieve?
- How will the funding support this project?
- How will you ensure its success?
- What kind of market research have you done that supports the success of your project?

Describe how the project is consistent with the objectives of the funding and how you plan to meet those objectives:

- What outcomes are expected?
- How does the project contribute to the Circular Economy Innovation Challenge's vision?
- What are the innovations or unique aspects of your project?

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5. PROJECT EXECUTION

- Roles and Responsibilities: including all staff, volunteers, directors, partners, and contractors.
- Timeline: describe the project timeline and key milestones.

6. BUDGET

Describe the budget for the project including other sources of revenue or funding.

7. PARTNERSHIPS – as appropriate

- Describe the partnerships that will be involved in this project and what kind of group they are (business, non-profit society etc.).
- Describe the role of the partner(s).
- Please provide any partnership agreements or letters of support.

Submit your application via email to Economic Development Department at the District of Squamish at economicdevelopment@squamish.ca with the subject line "Application Submission: Innovation Challenge Guide."

APPENDIX B

EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR APPLICATION ASSESSMENT

This table serves as a guide for evaluating each application form based on specified criteria. Each criterion is thoroughly explained, detailing the factors that Innovation Working Group will consider during the evaluation process.

- Each criterion is ranked based on its importance in alignment with the program goals of the Innovation Challenge, with 1 indicating the highest importance and 6 the lowest.
- The evaluation criteria are being shared with applicants, to offer guidance on preparing their applications.

Application

Title:

| Rank | Criteria | Description |
|------|---|---|
| 1 | Resource Efficiency and Circular Solution | Assessment of the project's ability to retain and recover value from existing resources, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Prioritization of regenerative resources- Stretching of products lifetime- Utilizing waste as a resource. |

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| | | Emphasis on innovative approaches contributing to resource conservation and promoting circularity. |
| 2 | Collaboration and Partnership Potential | <p>Assessment of the project's collaboration and partnership potential with relevant stakeholders, including businesses, non-profit organizations, government agencies, research institutions, and community groups, involves evaluating several factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ability to build partnerships - Leverage of collective expertise - Promotion of collaboration, knowledge sharing, and co-creation of solutions. |
| 3 | Post-funding Impact | <p>Assessment of the project's sustainability beyond the funding period involves evaluating several factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ability to scale - Focusing on its ability to deliver lasting benefits - Catalyze further innovation and investment in circular economy initiatives. |
| 4 | Community Engagement and Participation | <p>Evaluation of the project's potential to enhance convenience and encourage participation in circular economy practices among Squamish residents, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Addressing community needs - Fostering social cohesion and community engagement - Facilitating adoption of sustainable behavior. <p>Emphasis on initiatives empowering community members to actively participate in the transition</p> |

| | |
|---|--|
| | towards a circular economy, ensuring equity, inclusivity, and social justice. |
| 5 | <p>Applicants Experience and Qualification</p> <p>Evaluation of the experience and qualifications of the project applicant(s) relevant to the proposed initiative, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expertise - Capacity to successfully execute the project. |
| 6 | <p>Market Stimulation</p> <p>Assessment of the project's ability to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Identify and address barriers hindering the adoption of circular practices - Fostering innovation - Creating new economic opportunities - Promoting systemic change to stimulate markets within Squamish's business landscape. |