



## **UN Global Compact Network UK**

### **Circular Economy Working Group – Overview**

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#### **Overview:**

The purpose of this group is to provide a forum for companies to discuss ongoing challenges and solutions related to the implementation of circular economy principles that support businesses to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and create positive outcomes for nature and people. This group is for companies that have already begun to identify and address their material impacts, risks, and opportunities related to resource use and the circular economy, but are experiencing key obstacles or barriers to achieving their goals.

#### **Overall Aims and Objectives:**

- Bring participating UK Network members together with experts to overcome challenges related to the implementation of circular economy principles.
- Support network members by providing practical advice, knowledge, and insights into emerging topics that impact all businesses, as well as demonstrating action taken in a variety of sectors that may open doors to new avenues of collaboration.
- Share good practices and identify concrete actions that companies, both individually and as a group, can take to make progress on improving circularity within their operations and broader supply chain.

#### **Recruitment:**

##### **Welcome and Innovation Session**

- Two participants per company (15 companies max)
  - Lead representative for the company who will attend all sessions.
  - One representative of your choice. Ideally a colleague within your immediate team.

##### **All Other Sessions**

- Three participants per company (15 companies max)
  - One lead participant who would be expected at each session.
  - Two additional participants per company – with a focus on individuals from different departments. Individuals will be invited by lead participant depending on the topic of the session (e.g., if we were to have a session focused on financing a circular economy, individuals from finance teams may be invited).

#### **Orientation activities**

- Each company will be invited for a 45-minute introductory call to establish a better relationship and gain a greater understanding of the challenges they face.

#### **Session Ideas**

**Welcome and innovation session – one day in-person event (central London venue location (tbc)):**

#### **Part 1:**

- Set out the purpose of the group and make links between circular economy, nature-based solutions; and emissions reductions. Please note that the purpose may change in response to the interests of WG participants. More specific deliverables/outputs may be agreed by WG participants.

## Part 2:

Innovation provides a structured process to get to the root cause of the problems and creatively design new initiatives and services. In addition to this, using innovative techniques can help to design more effective solutions, at a much faster rate and a much lower cost.

The second part of the session, forming most of the day, will be led by Tanya Popeau, Director of Synthesis. This interactive session will provide an overview of innovation techniques, skills, and tools which have been used globally, to address global challenges and design new solutions. It will focus on key areas of the innovation from framing challenges to designing, testing, and scaling solutions.

Link to more information can be found, [here](#).

## Session Formats:

The introductory research calls and welcome and innovation session will support the UK Network Secretariat to establish a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by participating members. This will help us tailor sessions to support specific challenges. Initial research has already suggested that there is interest in covering topics such as:

- 1) **Circular economy metrics** – Support companies to adopt the European Sustainability Reporting Standards (ESRS).
- 2) **Emerging legislation** – Focus on the implication of ‘simpler recycling’ for businesses and how it will work with emerging extended producer responsibility legislation.
- 3) **Industrial symbiosis** - Explore case studies showcasing how companies and industries can work together to maximise the outputs that can be generated by resources, saving money, and reducing consumption.
- 4) **Financing circular economy initiatives** – Discussion on available capital and innovative finance models needed to support the transition into new circular business models.

*\*Topics will be reviewed on an ad hoc basis and can be tailored to meet participants’ needs. Additional meetings may be scheduled where appropriate, based on demand.*

The purpose of this group is focused on **peer-learning**, so members will be encouraged to share as much information on their challenges, successes, ways of working, etc. as they feel comfortable doing. Sessions will include the following elements:

- Topic expert or leading company not in the working group to present on defined topic and support participants in answering questions to challenges they may have in this area.
- One or two companies provide an extended update on challenges they have identified and projects they are working on, related to the session topic. Lead participants are encouraged to invite colleagues from different departments that have contributed to the work discussed, to support with the presentation.
- Participants will be provided with questions for discussion in advance of the session, which will be reflected upon during the call.

**Total Number of Sessions (inclusive of welcome and innovation session):** 5 sessions held across the year. One whole day in-person event (location tbc), followed by 4x 2-hour virtual sessions. All meetings will be held under Chatham House Rule. Recordings will not be shared.

**Annual fee for company membership: £450+VAT.**

Participants will have the opportunity to renew their participation in the group at the end of the five sessions.