



CIRCULAR ECONOMY  
V I C T O R I A

## RICE WORKSHOP

Exploring a Circular Economy  
for the G21 Region



# OPPORTUNITY

Momentum has been building around the circular economy over the last decade. Europe and China have been early adopters and there is now numerous case studies of how circular principles are being used to drive economic, social and environmental value through stakeholder platforms, accelerators and innovation networks.

Australia's adoption of the circular economy, as a mechanism for macro change, has been largely driven by the ban on the export of recyclable materials. Over the last few years significant research has been conducted to support the growth of a domestic recycling industry that would be large enough to meet the waste requirements of local governments and industry.

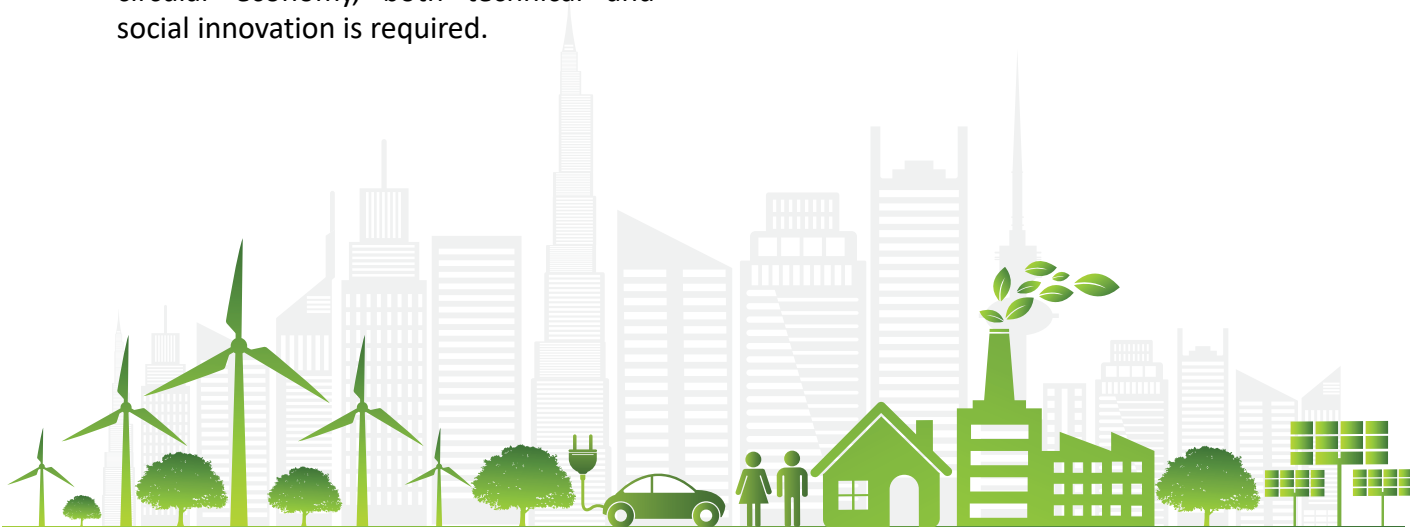
Government can, however, only fund this development to a point. New markets need to be established to create the demand for recycled materials, and by doing so create a reinforcing feedback loop that builds a circular economy that can add significant value to the Australian economy.

In order to support the development of a circular economy, both technical and social innovation is required.

Victoria has yet to establish a circular economy hub or innovation centre. Currently state government is in the design phase of a Circular Economy Business Innovation Centre as part of the commitments from the Recycling Victoria policy, released in February 2020.

This provides RICE with an opportunity to position itself as a leader in circular economy innovation within the state, as well as the country. The first mover in this space will be front of line for significant public funding in the short-to-medium term, and also build the market confidence needed to access large scale private funding in the medium-to-long term.

With the support of a strong steering committee from the G21 Regional Alliance, RICE could help revive manufacturing in Geelong and drive a next innovation cycle in the Australian economy.





# CIRCULAR ECONOMY VICTORIA

Circular Economy Victoria (CEV) is an incorporated not-for-profit that works to catalyse transformative change through social innovation in Victoria. Our vision is to help create a world where people can thrive in balance with the living planet. We see the circular economy as a key economic mechanism to help realise this vision.

CEV was incorporated in June 2019 and has since hosted 8 awareness events, 3 community education workshops, multiple engagement sessions with both industry and local governments, and worked to bring grass root organisations together to compound impact around the transition to a circular economy in Victoria.

CEV's mission is to empower every individual to experience their lives through a circular lens. Through a five step engagement model, individuals and groups are provided with contextualised circular economy content and case studies that help unlock hidden value and provide a clear journey to circularity.

This process has been refined into a workshop where participants identify their goals and map their shared journey. Using both design and system thinking tools, CEV helps groups cut through the noise and focus on the impact areas most relevant to their local contexts.



# REGIONAL INNOVATION FOR A CIRCULAR ECONOMY

The circular economy conversation began in the G21 region through a 2019 Clever and Creative Lecture Series: Design and the Circular Economy, hosted by Deakin University and the City of Greater Geelong, in June 2019.

This was followed by the RICE conference in August 2019. The conference was held at Waurin Ponds Estate with over 120 people in attendance. It was organised by a committee including representatives from the Barwon South West Waste and Resource Recovery Group, CSIRO, Deakin University (IFM), Regional Development Victoria, Sustainability Victoria, and the Geelong Manufacturing Council and City of Greater Geelong, through Cleantech Innovations Geelong.

It is now time for the RICE working group to take the next step along this journey, and use their strong support network to build an innovation platform that can drive the transition to a circular economy forward in the region and in Victoria.

Circular Economy Victoria is proposing an exploratory workshop for key G21 Regional Alliance stakeholders to work through the potential opportunities and barriers for the next development stage of RICE.



CIRCULAR ECONOMY  
C L U B

*Perth Sydney Melbourne*

## VIC



Sustainability  
Victoria

## NATIONAL



## SA



## WA



## NSW



## QLD





# FACILITATORS



**Sean Trewick**

Sean is a business process engineer and community organiser. He has worked to build people focused strategies and lean driven operations for SME's, multinationals and community groups in both Africa and Australia. Currently he is focused on helping to activate communities in his role as a Director at Circular Economy Victoria.

Drawing inspiration from his roots in South Africa, Sean believes in the power of \*Ubuntu to unite people around a common goal. A systems thinker with high levels of empathy, he highlights the value and importance of every individual's role within the transition towards a circular economy.

*\*Ubuntu: The belief in a universal bond of sharing that connects all humanity*

**Ian Wong**

Ian is a highly experienced consultant having worked across multiple industries including Banking, Insurance, Energy Retail, FMCG, and Federal Government as a Partner at IBM. He has now focused his energy on environmental and social initiatives through his work as a Director at Circular Economy Victoria, Board of Directors for the Royal Botanic Gardens Foundation Victoria and the Yarra Riverkeeper Association.



Ian has a strong systems approach to problem solving that leverages off his international experience. He is well versed at helping groups find contextualised solutions that build local resilience. His journey has taken him across the world including England, Mauritius, Canada, Singapore, the USA and has finally settled in Melbourne with his wife and two young children.

# RICE PLATFORM PROPOSAL (OVERVIEW)

**NOTE: THIS WAS PRESENTED AS PART OF A LARGER PROJECT PROPOSAL. PLEASE KEEP WITHIN HCES WORKING GROUP.**

## Project Description

This project has been set up to establish the Regional Innovation for a Circular Economy (RICE) platform as a connected network of regional stakeholders from across Industry, Community, Government and Academia. The platform will work to catalyse circular innovation by supporting individuals and organisations throughout their journeys from linear to circular.

The supported circular innovation would work to add social, environmental and economic value to the region by empowering local stakeholders to apply circular principles in their spheres of influence, in order to realise circular advantage for themselves and their communities. The ultimate goal is to establish Geelong and the surrounding region as the national hub for regional innovation for a circular economy.

This project builds on the strong foundation laid in 2019 by Barwon South West Waste & Resource Recovery Group, City of Greater Geelong, and the Geelong Manufacturing Council.

The platform will be built on a suite of existing leased software that specialises in driving engagement, building skills, and driving innovation. The platform architecture will be designed around CEV's AECEA engagement model that will guide both the technical and social innovation sides of the circular economy. Contextualised content based on international best practices and local examples will then be overlaid on the AECEA model in order to embed the platform in the regional context and make the engagement model relatable to stakeholders.

The project will run for twelve months, and be split into three phases:

- Phase 1: Define (3 Months)
- Phase 2: Implement (3 Months)
- Phase 3: Operate (6 Months)



# RICE PLATFORM PROPOSAL (DETAILED)

Based on the learnings from building CEV, the project will be separated into three distinct phases. Each phase will have clear deliverables and work to embed RICE as a self-sustaining innovation platform in the Geelong region.

## Phase 1: Define

July 2020 – September 2020

The first three months of the project will be focused on creating a three-year strategy (2020- 2023) for RICE, as well as developing the platform architecture.

In collaboration with key stakeholders in the region, phase 1 of the project will conduct qualitative and quantitative research through face-to-face meetings (pending COVID-19 restrictions), interviews, stakeholder workshops and market analysis. The outcome of this research will be analysed through a systemic framework to obtain a regional circular 'portrait'. This 'portrait' will be used as the guide for the development of both the RICE strategy and RICE platform architecture.

In addition to the above two focus areas, this phase will also serve to reignite interest in the platform and start to generate new interest throughout the region. Through CEV's community marketing approach, the project team will work to build a brand for RICE that fits into a 21st century narrative of open innovation and systems thinking.

### Deliverables:

- RICE Strategy 2020-2023
- RICE Platform Architecture



## **Phase 2: Implement**

October 2020 – December 2020

The next phase will be focused on setting up the RICE governance structure, releasing the first iteration of the platform, conducting key stakeholder training, and officially launching RICE.

The RICE platform will be based on CEV's AECEA engagement model. The model consists of five steps on the journey to circularity: Awareness, Education, Collaboration, Empowerment, Advocacy. Four training sessions based on CEV's Journey to Circularity workshop will be held to help participants see their own skillsets, passions, projects, and daily lives in the context of the circular economy.

Based on the success of the 2019 RICE conference, CEV would work with the newly established RICE Governance Board to launch the platform at a possible 2020 RICE conference. Depending on COVID-19 and other concerns, the launch event could also be done in a smaller or online setting.

### **Deliverables:**

- RICE Governance Structure
- RICE Engagement Platform (Version 1)
- RICE Launch Event
- RICE Stakeholder Training Sessions (4 Sessions)





### **Phase 3: Operate**

January 2021 – June 2021

In order to embed the RICE platform as the go to support platform for anything circular economy related in the region, CEV will manage the platform under the Governance Board for six

months. During this time CEV will deliver key outcomes from the RICE Strategy, including a self-sustaining business model and management team. The second iteration of the platform will also be developed as user experience data is captured and used to refine the user experience.

As part of the operations of the platform, CEV will deliver projects on all five steps of the AECEA engagement model. These projects can be found below.

The final delivery for this project will be the first RICE annual report, reporting on the project outcomes in alignment to the three-year RICE Strategy.

#### **Deliverables:**

- Administration of RICE Engagement Platform (6 Months)
- Monthly Online Awareness Events (6 Online Events)
- Ongoing Online Education Courses
- Ongoing Online Collaboration Opportunities
- Quarterly Empowerment Event (3 Events)
- Ongoing Online Advocacy Opportunities
- RICE Engagement Platform Update (Version 2)
- RICE Annual Report 2020-2021

The RICE platform at this stage will be an established space, both virtual and face-to-face (pending COVID-19 restrictions), where stakeholders can come together to drive circular innovations. Through the online platform and guided by the operational management team, stakeholders will be able to connect to projects that help establish Geelong and the surrounding region as the national hub for regional innovation for a circular economy.

A few examples of how projects using the AECEA model can add tangible benefit to the region:

- Projects can drive circular economy Awareness and Education through content -> This will lead to trained individuals -> This will enable circular employees who can support circular initiatives/organisations
- Projects can drive circular economy Collaboration and Empowerment through networks and accelerators -> This will lead to circular entrepreneur/intrapreneurs who start circular initiatives/organisations -> This will create a demand for circular employees in order to scale
- Projects can drive circular economy Advocacy through reach of the platform -> This will lead to circular consumers -> This will work to mature the market for circular products and services



CIRCULAR ECONOMY  
VICTORIA