**How can businesses promote a circular economy in Wales?**

Proactive government strategy, financial support and a strong culture of regional collaboration means Wales is well-placed to transition to a circular economy. It’s already a stand-out performer in the UK when it comes to recycling rates, and has a burgeoning repair and refurbishment scene.

To build on this success and fully embed circularity throughout Wales, we need to keep momentum going and put circularity on everybody’s agenda. Those that are just starting out can be influential in encouraging their peers and counterparts along with them, while the businesses and organisations that have already adopted circular principles are now in a great position to drive action beyond their own operations. Wherever a business is on its circularity journey, it has an important role to play in encouraging action across all sectors in Wales.

**1. Engage suppliers**

Careful and considered procurement is critical to the principles of circularity. Individuals in this field can go further than ensuing goods are responsibly sourced by actively engaging those in their supply chains to do better themselves, and to consider the circularity of their *own* supply chains. This is especially important as Scope 3 Emissions – and the reporting complexities associated with them – become a greater part of the sustainable business conversation. Engaging suppliers beyond the point of sale and leveraging them as partners in the drive for circularity will have positive impacts that extend far beyond your own organisation.

**2. Join networks**

Regional and nationwide networks provide a valuable opportunity for businesses to share ideas and knowledge, collaborate on initiatives, and pool skills and resources, thus driving new possibilities for circularity throughout Wales. For example, working with other organisations both within and outside of your sector can enable the repurposing and reuse of resources, or turn unavoidable waste into resources for other industries. [Circular Communities Cymru](https://circularcommunities.cymru/about) and of course the [Circular Economy Innovation Network](https://ceicwales.org.uk/ce-innovation-network/) are great places to start, as are wider sustainability networks within Wales, such as [Sustain Wales](https://cynnalcymru.com/) and the [Responsible Business Network](https://www.bitc.org.uk/business-in-the-community-cymru/).

**3. Look at funding and support**

Businesses in Wales can access a wide range of funding and support from Welsh Government’s £43 million [Circular Economy Fund](https://businesswales.gov.wales/innovation/support-and-funding/circular-economy-funding), which is designed to accelerate Wales’ shift towards circularity while facilitating business growth and the creation of new jobs. Its central purpose is to enable capital investment in keeping resources in use for as long as possible, and provides funding to businesses, community groups, publicly funded bodies, universities and research groups to develop a diverse range of innovative circular economy projects. By tapping into this resource, organisations demonstrate an appetite for circular economy innovation, which in turn helps to guide policy and future circularity initiatives by policymakers.

**4. Support local circular economy initiatives**

Businesses can drive circularity throughout Wales in an impactful way by offering direct support to initiatives working in this area. Repair cafes, community fridges, upcycling enterprises and more often need assistance, whether that’s in donations, fundraising or volunteering. Creating supportive partnerships with such organisations promotes a circular economy, enhances local communities, and makes a valuable contribution to a businesses’ ESG responsibilities. This can also be a great way to engage employees with circular economy principles.

**5. Make a commitment**

Making a public commitment to circular economy principles tells the world that you care about people and the planet, and that you’re prepared to be held accountable for your organisation’s impacts. This is an extremely powerful way to influence your peers, competitors and wider industry, as it sets you apart as a changemaker. There are lots of ways this commitment can be made publicly, such as on your website, via social media, or in your annual reporting. Many companies choose to sign up to dedicated initiatives, such as the [Green Growth Pledge](https://businesswales.gov.wales/topics-and-guidance/sustainability-and-social-responsibility/green-growth-pledge) in Wales, in order to access community and support in their efforts. However you make your commitment public, the most important thing is that you act on it, and help keep the momentum going for a thriving circular economy throughout Wales and beyond.

Wherever you are in your circularity journey, the CEIC can offer education, support and valuable opportunities for collaboration throughout Wales. Learn more at <https://ceicwales.org.uk/>.