

Circular Economy Academy Member Support 2023

1. Native Events:

Through the Academy, the Centre supported the early stage development of a sharing and exchange platform for material resources within the cultural sector. In 2023, a market sounding exercise was undertaken to gauge the appetite for and inform the design of such a platform. Next steps include supporting the development of a business model for the sharing and exchange platform.



2. Udaras Na Gaeltachta:

Through the Academy, the Centre supported the early stage development of a reuse and repair hub in Connemara.

Since joining the Academy in mid 2022, Rediscovery Centre has provided advice on product reuse and repair models and supported funding applications. Udaras has obtained a site, won grant funding for a feasibility study, and won EU funding to deliver EEE repair training and workshop. Next steps include supporting the development of the physical reuse and repair hub.

3. Spraoi Agus Sport:

Through the Academy, the Centre supported the development of a reuse and repair hub in Donegal.

Since joining the Academy in early 2023, Rediscovery Centre has provided advice on fitting out and recruiting for reuse workshops. Spraoi Agus Sport has won a number of grant awards, developed both furniture and sewing workshops and has refurbished their charity shop. Next steps include developing a bicycle repair and paint workshop.





4. CLAN:

Through the Academy, the Centre supported the development of a service offering to textile retailers supporting more circular purchasing and sales strategies.

Since joining the Academy in September 2022, CLAN has been focused on developing training and networking with the wider sector. Next steps include supporting a pilot study with retailers to identify models for circular purchasing and reducing overall textile consumption.

5. ClareCare:

Through the Academy, the Centre helped to bring circular design principles to ClareCare building projects including a major new civic centre in Shannon.

Since joining the Academy in May 2023, Rediscovery Centre has provided architectural advice and supported the development of pitch documents for the Shannon project. ClareCare has secured 6 million EUR to begin development of the civic centre. Next steps include architectural advice on this and another refurbishment project.



6. Roger Nagle:

Through the Academy, the Centre supported Roger to explore the development of a reuse and repair hub in Mallow, Cork.

Since joining the Academy in mid 2023, Rediscovery Centre has provided advice on and shared knowledge on business models for reuse and repair hubs. Next steps include a design thinking workshop to further develop the idea.

7. Phibsborough Tidy Towns:

Through the Academy, the Centre helped the Tidy Towns to map and explore developing Phibsborough as a circular village.

Since joining the Academy in Nov 2023, Rediscovery Centre has advised and commented on a funded “library of things” study. Next steps include a design thinking workshop to map the potential for Phibsborough to become a circular village.



8. Repair Acts:

Through the Academy, the Centre supported Repair Acts to develop a studio offering a place based arts approach to repair in Westmeath through research.

Repair Acts joined the Academy at the end of 2023. Next steps include supporting engagement workshops with key stakeholders, facilitating networking and collaborating on a circular festival in Kilbeggan in late 2024.

9. We Make Good:

Through the Academy, the Centre helped We Make Good to deliver a new uniform repair programme.

Since joining the Academy in Nov 2023, Rediscovery Centre has developed a stakeholder contact list and provided introductions to similar organisations, connected the project with procurement agents and helped to codesign a market sounding approach. Next steps include developing, delivering and analysing a market survey and pilot to assess uniform repair requirements.





10. ClareHaven Horizons:

Through the Academy, the Centre aimed to support ClareHaven in developing a new reuse enterprise. Due to delays and lack of capacity, this did not go ahead.

In addition to the above, the Rediscovery Centre operates an open door policy for the Circular Economy Academy. In this regard, staff at the Centre have met with and delivered bespoke support to numerous other social and fledgling enterprises including Habitat for Humanity, Noirin Byrne (regarding post consumer textile sorting), the Wasty Project, Hair Together, The Gaiety School of Acting, EDI Longford (alumni member) and many more - providing support in their early stage exploration of CE concepts.

ANNEX B: Rediscovery Centre regional hubs feasibility study: Circular Economy Academy

An analysis of the Circular Economy Academy model in 2022, funded by the EPA as part of the Rediscovery Centre regional hubs feasibility study, found there was a real opportunity to continue to grow the Academy in particular through the alumni. With 20 past academy members there are an increasing number of organisations and businesses across the country who are members of the alumni. As these organisations and businesses continue to scale and grow there exists the potential, and interest, for some to evolve into community multipliers who can in turn mentor others. There is also scope through the Academy for a number of Academy or Alumni members to come together and collaborate in areas of common interest. By operating under the same banner and branding as well as operating to the same set of principles this will increase visibility and meaningful access to a quality product and/or services across the country.

Furthermore, the analysis identified significant scope to recruit new Academy members and to continue to run the programme for national impact. With each new intake of Academy members the range of businesses and circular models continues to grow as does the academy's ability to support and enable these diverse businesses. This increase in technical knowledge within the Academy is building an important knowledge and support hub for those wishing to adopt circular principles within their businesses or their projects.

Key challenges identified included its resource intensive nature (from both an on-boarding and an ongoing support level) and the ability to track the ongoing development of alumni members once they have completed their time in the Academy. For this reason, the programme has been refined to more effectively manage the resources the academy demands.

Finally, the review found that quantitative and qualitative feedback from the Circular Economy Academy participants has been overwhelmingly positive and speaks to a gap in type of supports that are otherwise on offer, in terms of both access and focus. Feedback rated the overall experience with the Academy as 8.9 out of 10 accompanied by a high promoter score (9.3 out of 10). This means that the large majority of enterprises who previously engaged with the Circular Economy Academy would strongly recommend it to other organisations in a similar position to them.