



**The Great Recovery will build new professional networks that are actively inspiring and promoting the co-creation of circular economy manufacturing models – in which design innovation plays a pivotal role.**

The Need for the Project

The current flow of raw materials in our manufacturing economy is becoming unsustainable. Valuable resources which could be profitably recovered end up in landfill. This is occurring at a time when new legislation on End of Life (EOL) is being introduced by the EU, landfill tax is rising and concerns over resource security are increasing.

The economic and environmental problems of linear manufacturing are well-known: The UK's government estimate British business could save £23bn each year through resource efficiency and, like many European countries, the UK's economy is highly dependent on several at-risk materials. The Ellen MacArthur Foundation note that the waste of materials to landfill represents an unrecoverable loss of elements for future generations, as well as their loss in providing valuable ecosystems services.

To address these problems, designers and design engineers, who consciously or unconsciously determine approximately 80% of a product's environmental impact by their design decisions, need greater understanding and training to incorporate 'closed loop thinking' into their design process. Research from the EC, UK Government, Green Alliance and Ellen MacArthur Foundation all note the pressing need for new approaches to design in response to the problems caused by linear manufacturing processes.

The Great Recovery will address this knowledge and innovation gap by building an informed community of designers who understand these complex problems and are equipped to design for a new circular economy model. This project will build networks that link this community to scientists, experts, manufacturers and material recyclers who together can co-create new systems and businesses.

The project will provide a significant number of practical demonstration projects which illustrate how 'problem products' could be better designed. Over the course of this project, data will be collected using multiple digital platforms, amassing a large and unique body of knowledge to help identify and bridge the current innovation gap.

The Great Recovery is a 2 year joint project for the Technology Strategy board (TSB), RSA and other significant partners. Each partner brings specific expertise and interest areas including resource efficiency and technological innovation and design excellence and thought leadership. The project's aim is to foster new partnerships between designers and others in the circular economy that could forge ideas to bridge the innovation gap.

Project Activities for year 1:

1. Launch Event  
The project will be launched at the RSA with the showing of a commissioned film and an event for press, commentators and policy makers with eminent speakers and an afternoon workshop around the challenges.
2. c.10 x Closed Loop Workshops  
These in-depth workshops will bring together groups of designers and experts at recovery facilities to deconstruct 'problem products', reconsider their lifecycle and consider how they may be redesigned from a closed loop perspective.
3. Community Building  
A programme of talks, hackathons, open innovation sessions and networking events will support and build the community of designers knowledgeable about design for recovery, and able to thrive on the circular economy challenge.
4. Knowledge Building  
A website and database will capture knowledge and the project will facilitate the construction of strong cross discipline networks (face to face and online) between designers, manufacturers, resource experts and other relevant specialists, while identifying the innovation gaps that currently slow progress towards a circular economy.
5. c.50 x Feasibility Projects  
Feasibility projects will be identified from previous workshops and proposed through new partnerships set up through the networks of the programme. They will be offered seed funding to assist the creation of a study and report, demonstrating the circular economy in practice.
6. c.6 x Demonstration Projects & Businesses  
Through a competitive process, a smaller number of awards will be made to the most promising new technology projects & businesses.

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