

# Circular Enterprise Programme

2024 Guideline Brochure

PREPARED BY THE  
CIRCULAR CITIES ASIA TEAM



ACCELERATING CIRCULAR ECONOMY INNOVATION

# Background

**Circular Cities Asia** is a purpose-led organisation with a mission to build a community that accelerates circular economy innovation across Asia.

We see a growing movement and interest in the circular economy, social innovation and entrepreneurship. Innovation and the circular economy are becoming recognised as opportunities for overcoming waste issues and transforming the world of business.

Our **Circular Enterprise Programme** aims to inspire, motivate and build the capability of students in the areas of circular design thinking, innovation and entrepreneurship. We give young people the opportunity to practise what they have learnt with hands-on opportunities to build circular economy solutions and enterprises.

Since 2021, Circular Cities Asia has partnered with universities to offer applied learning opportunities for students and alumni, focused on the intersection between circularity and innovation.

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# About the Circular Enterprise Programme

**The Circular Enterprise Programme** has been designed to encourage young and aspiring innovators to collaborate and design circular solutions for the region's most pressing waste challenges. Our learning sessions and toolkit will give an introduction to circular innovation frameworks and help participants develop the in-demand skills for this emerging economy. Students will learn how to research problems from a systems perspective and ideate circular solutions.

As part of this programme, students will have the opportunity to participate in a circular innovation competition. We'll guide participants through the circular innovation process to come up with a circular idea for the competition. Teams who join the competition don't need to have a working prototype or a financial forecast. We're looking for ideas with the highest potential to bring circularity to the communities where the universities are located.

The Circular Enterprise Programme is run by Circular Cities Asia, with the support and expertise of industry leaders and mentors. The programme is also supported by the **Regional Project Energy Security and Climate Change Asia-Pacific (RECAP)** of the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS).

BROUGHT TO YOU BY:



## Benefits of Participation

### *Students:*

- Take part in an experiential, hands-on learning experience to innovate local solutions to local problems, for the local people and ecosystems
- Broaden your knowledge of circular economy, innovation and social enterprise
- Acquire skills that are relevant and in-demand
- Gain a certificate of completion
- Differentiate yourself from other students by broadening your academic experiences
- Explore the opportunity of building a circular economy startup
- Compete for a chance to win an incubation opportunity and seed funding to support your research and circular solution development

### *Higher education institutions:*

- Universities can actively contribute to the achievement of sustainability goals locally/regionally
- Opportunities for cross-sector collaboration to implement circular economy solutions that are fit for the local context
- The university campus becomes a centre of excellence for circular economy innovation
- Differentiate your students in the employment market

## Challenge Space

*“Managing public space is a big and important blind spot of urban and regional planning and design. Important, because major transition challenges, such as climate adaptation, energy transition, circular economy, mobility, and governance require substantial changes in public space – both physical and social changes”* ([Duivenvoorden et al., 2021](#)).

Public space plays an important role in the quality of life and functioning of cities and communities, yet we are seeing the health of these spaces decline from waste and pollution-related problems. For both humans and other species, this poses challenges for the quality of their experience in public spaces.

To help address these problems, engaging citizens is essential as they are among the key stakeholders involved. We believe that initiatives should not only be innovative, but also collaborative from the start. Stakeholder engagement that reflects the diversity of a community is a key component for developing successful long-term solutions that meet the needs of the community at large.

## Call for Innovation

### ***How can we use circular economy innovation to increase the health and enjoyment of public spaces?***

Participants will be tasked with developing innovative solutions within the framework of a circular economy to:

- Reduce waste and pollution in public spaces
- Improve management systems for solid waste, water, air quality, climate adaptation, etc.
- Promote stewardship of public spaces at the community level

Solutions should consider local contexts, infrastructure limitations, and the involvement of various stakeholders such as governments, businesses, academia, and civil society.

Ideas might include solutions for solid waste, water issues, air quality issues, or other waste challenges that impede the health of green spaces, waterways or oceanside areas.

\*Before submitting an idea for the competition, please read the [terms and conditions](#) and our [photo and video release statement](#).

## Participant Checklist

- Read this brochure
- Connect with the campus liaison of your university
- [Pre-register](#) for the Circular Enterprise Programme as an individual
- In April look out for a welcome email from Circular Cities Asia before the programme starts  
*(if you do not see an email from us in your inbox, please check your junk/spam folder and then add our email address to your contacts)*
- Visit [our website](#) for the finalised dates and details of programme events
- Put all programme sessions and deadlines in your calendar and set reminders
- Build a team (if you're entering the innovation competition), in adherence to the following criteria:
  - Teams should have a minimum of 2 members
  - A team of no more than 5 is recommended
  - Teams should be diverse and multidisciplinary
  - All team members must be aged 18 and above, and a current student or recent alumni of a higher education institution that's participating in this year's programme
- Work through the circular innovation toolkit and attend the programme sessions
- [Register as a team](#) if you're entering the innovation competition  
(the form will be opened for responses after the programme sessions are conducted)

## Programme Timeline

**February-April 14:** Pre-registration for programme

**Mid April-End May:** Participants work through the circular innovation toolkit, attend the programme sessions (introduction, problem research and ideating circular solutions), and prepare pitches for the innovation competition

**May 27:** Team registration closes for the competition

**Early-End June:** Pitch events are conducted by each higher education institution

**July 7:** Deadline for top teams from each university to submit their pitch presentation and video recording for final shortlist

**Early July:** Shortlisting of submissions

**July-October:** Incubation for shortlisted teams

\*Exact dates will be posted on the [programme webpage](#).

## Registration

### Pre-Registration

To take part in the programme and gain access to the circular innovation toolkit and virtual sessions, participants must submit a completed [pre-registration form](#) by **April 14, 2024**

After pre-registering, you will be added to the programme mailing list and will be sent email invitations to the virtual learning sessions and programme materials.

### Team Registration

To join the pitch event organised by your university, students must register their team for the innovation competition. Please submit the [team registration form](#) by **May 27, 2024**.

*The team registration form will be opened for responses after the programme sessions are conducted.*

By registering for the programme and innovation competition, you are agreeing to the [terms and conditions](#) of the Circular Enterprise Programme competition and our [photo and video release statement](#).



# Competition Parameters

## Teams

This competition is open to teams of 2-5 entrants. We encourage participants to form teams that are diverse and multidisciplinary. Having a diverse team with a wide range of experiences, backgrounds and skills can help broaden perspectives and spark new and creative ideas. Circular Cities Asia celebrates differences and views diversity from a very broad perspective.

Our definition of diversity includes, but is not limited to, ethnicity, race, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, socio-economic status, ability, and age, as well as nationality, academic discipline, and professional experience. We welcome people from all backgrounds to join the competition.

*All team members must be aged 18 years old and above, and a current student or recent alumni of a participating higher education institution. To see the list of participating universities, please visit the [programme webpage](#).*

Each university will have one or more faculty/staff members to coordinate, promote and champion the programme. The campus liaison(s) will also provide coaching support and advice to participating teams or will connect them to faculty or staff that are able to do so. Circular Cities Asia encourages our university partners to support their students to keep testing and piloting their ideas on campus even after the competition has been completed.

## Incentives

Select teams will be invited to take part in an incubation opportunity, which includes mentoring and coaching for prototyping their proposed circular solution and developing as an enterprise.

Each incubation team will also receive seed funding to support this research and development of their circular idea.

## Pitch Events

As part of the programme, each participating university will organise and host a pitch event for their students. Local stakeholders will be invited so that they can learn about the student ideas and provide feedback on the proposed circular solutions. *Pitches can be conducted in the local language where the pitch event is taking place.*

During each event, a panel of judges will choose the top student teams that will go on to submit their pitches to the Circular Cities Asia team for the final shortlist. The jury will use the following criteria to assess the pitches:

- Problem research
- Innovative solution
- Local relevance and feasibility
- Circular design

The shortlisting criteria for the competition will be available and shared with participants when the programme starts.

By taking part in a pitch event, you and your team members are agreeing to the [terms and conditions](#) of the Circular Enterprise Programme competition and our [photo and video release statement](#).

### **Pitch Presentation Template**

All teams will be required to develop their pitch according to a pitch presentation template. The template will be available and shared with participants when the programme starts.

## Final Shortlist

The top student teams chosen from each university pitch event will be eligible to submit their pitches for the final shortlist.

Circular Cities Asia will conduct the final shortlist of teams who will take part in the 3-month incubation, which includes seed funding for the development of their circular solutions. Decisions on the shortlist are final.

### Pitch Submission

After each university pitch event, we ask the student teams to take the feedback they received during the event (from local stakeholders, faculty, etc.) and revise their pitch accordingly.

**To be eligible for the final shortlist, each team must submit the following:**

- An updated pitch presentation deck
- A pitch video recording (maximum length: 6 minutes)

*Your pitch presentation deck and video recording must be made in English.*

### Shortlisting Criteria

Selection will be based on the following criteria:

- Problem research
- Innovative solution
- Local relevance and feasibility
- Circular design

Before submitting your pitch, please review the shortlisting criteria that will be shared when the programme starts.

# Acknowledgements



We'd like to thank our main programme sponsor, the [Regional Project Energy Security and Climate Change Asia-Pacific \(RECAP\)](#) of the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS), and all of our partners who have given their time, expertise and support for our programmes.

Circular Cities Asia would also like to acknowledge the hard work of our team in bringing this programme to life:



**Suzanna Pomeroy**  
*Director*  
[suzanna@circularcities.asia](mailto:suzanna@circularcities.asia)



**Roleen Sevillaena**  
*Programme Manager*  
[roleen@circularcities.asia](mailto:roleen@circularcities.asia)

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