

News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Circular Economy Accelerator Program seeks businesses to turn waste to wealth

DUNCAN, BC – [Synergy Foundation](#) is seeking businesses in the Cowichan Region to take part in the [Project Zero Circular Economy Accelerator](#).

The first of its kind in Canada, the program supports businesses who seek to adopt circular economy principles, reduce waste and emissions, and develop innovative practices. Each participant completes an in-depth on-site assessment with an advisor and receives an opportunity assessment, detailing suggested actions to incorporate circular economy solutions and reduce waste, energy use, and emissions. Participants also receive environmental metrics that they can use to track sustainability performance, attract investment, and position themselves as green leaders.

The Circular Economy Accelerator was piloted in 2022-23 as an initiative of the Vancouver Island Coast Economic Developers Association (VICEDA) and Synergy Foundation, with sixteen businesses completing assessments, including two supported by the CVRD and two by the Municipality of North Cowichan. This resulted in a cumulative 714 circular opportunities identified which, if adopted, have the potential to conserve 22,565 m3 of water, reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 1,098 tCO₂e, and divert 288,844 kg of waste from landfills. Synergy will conduct Circular Economy Assessments for up to 6 businesses within the Cowichan Region over the next two years.

The program sets the stage for a resilient localized economy in the Vancouver Island Coast region by facilitating partnerships and multi-sector collaboration. In the words of Georgia Lavender, Director of Program Operations for Synergy Foundation, “Sometimes one business’ waste is another’s resource. Working directly with businesses allows us to create a circular ecosystem and identify opportunities for further cluster development.”

Program intake opened on April 3 and will be ongoing until all spots are allocated. Businesses can learn more and sign up for the program at www.project-zero.ca/accelerator.

The Accelerator is delivered by Synergy Foundation and supported by Island Coastal Economic Trust, VICEDA, Cowichan Valley Regional District, Municipality of North Cowichan, District of Saanich, City of Nanaimo, City of Victoria, Destination Greater Victoria, Sunshine Coast Regional Economic Development Organization, Rural Islands Economic Partnership, City of Campbell River, and City of Port Alberni.

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