

2019 / 20



**2019 Annual Report &  
2020 Progress Report**

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SEPTEMBER 2020

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# Foreword

## Dear Partners,

I am pleased to present The Circulate Initiative's first annual report.

After launching in November, 2018 with a mission to end ocean plastic and build thriving, inclusive economies, we have worked hard to develop our strategy; build a network of partners across philanthropic, government and corporate sectors; engage with key stakeholders that are essential to developing holistic solutions; and launch new programs that help to incubate, measure and amplify inclusive solutions for waste management, recycling and the overall circular economy. It has been an exciting and rewarding time, and we are proud of what we've accomplished.

The problem we face is massive: there are 150 million tons of plastic in the ocean and 8 million tons are added each year – the equivalent of one garbage truck of plastic dumping into the ocean each minute.

We know that solving this requires a wide range of solutions that change and potentially radically redefine our patterns of consumption, waste management systems and value chains. It involves not only reducing consumption and redesigning products and materials, as well as reimagining how we deliver them, but also creating equitable, sustainable, and broadly supported waste management ecosystems.

This calls for a systemic approach to ensure we can embed solutions in economies and communities for the long term. Ultimately, the solutions to ocean plastic are not just about the ocean, but about building thriving communities with dignified employment, and enhancing public health and well-being.

We believe this approach is critical and requires engaging and supporting all stakeholders, including entrepreneurs, investors, policymakers, corporations, formal and informal waste workers, and civil society. At The Circulate Initiative, we focus on supporting entrepreneurs who advance the circular economy and improve waste management and recycling systems.

Recognizing that no entrepreneur succeeds in a vacuum, we also work to establish a broad set of enabling conditions to help these innovators succeed.

The need for this holistic approach has never been greater. The last six months have brought many challenges for us all. The COVID-19 pandemic has severely disrupted the waste management value chain. Waste collectors, both formal and informal, are critical to helping deliver a circular economy, yet they are among the most marginalized people in the world and are disproportionately impacted by COVID-19.

We are proud to support them during the crisis through a Global Giving campaign, in partnership with Meridian Institute, PYXERA Global and WORK, which raises money to provide necessities for those working in the sector.

Meanwhile, our flagship incubation program, The Incubation Network (TIN), run in partnership with SecondMuse, encourages more and better innovation in waste management and the circular economy, bringing together Entrepreneur Support Organizations from across the globe and helping talented entrepreneurs transform their ideas into profitable businesses.

Our inaugural Plastics Data Challenge has helped 10 semi-finalists with innovative, data-driven solutions develop their ideas and business models to test and pilot on the ground. In parallel, The Circular Innovation Jam 2020 launched with the support of local incubation partners in India, Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam as a platform for innovators to collaboratively develop and design solutions to advance local circular economies for plastics and effective waste management systems to reduce ocean plastic.

# Foreword

Also under the auspices of TIN, the Ocean Plastic Prevention Accelerator in Surabaya, Indonesia is creating a collaborative network to address challenges in the local waste management and recycling sector. We are excited to see the results and impact these solutions will have on local communities and systems, as well as amplify the success of the entrepreneurs and businesses that have emerged from these programs.

More details about The Incubation Network and its initiatives can be found on pages 15-18 of this report.

The Circulate Initiative is also investing in creating field-leading, open-source impact measurement to equip stakeholders – in particular investors – with the tools and resources they need to assess the ocean plastic problem and develop solutions to effectively address it. Working with a multisectoral group of experts, we surveyed the data, resources and tools that exist to help key actors set baselines and measure their impact and released this as a resource for the entire community. We look forward to building on this report to develop a measurement framework for plastic waste management solutions that will meet the specific needs of investors to measure outcomes.

And finally, in partnership with Ocean Conservancy and the Global Resilient Cities Network, we were pleased to launch the Urban Ocean program at the World Economic Forum and Friends of Ocean Action's Virtual Ocean Dialogues in June.

The program aims to help cities in South and Southeast Asia and Latin America develop solutions to the ocean plastic and waste management problem that also support resilient, healthy communities, improve public safety and health, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and advance the circular economy. For the next 15 months we will be working with the first cohort of partner cities to learn and share knowledge for collective progress.

You can read more about this exciting program on page 19 of this report.

The Circulate Initiative actively contributes our experiences and learnings from all of this work to the global discourse around ocean plastic, waste management and the circular economy with the aim of highlighting tangible solutions and the people behind them. This has included participation at The Economist's World Ocean Summit Insight Hour and the World Bank and Global Resilient Cities Network's Coronavirus Speaker series, just to name a few.

While we continue to experience challenges as we weather the impacts of COVID-19, from the rise of plastic waste to the invisible consequences for waste workers, we will continue to push forward on our initiatives in support of those on the front lines of the ocean plastic problem. We do believe that in crisis there can also be opportunity to learn and improve, and this will be our guiding principle for the coming year.

I would like to heartily thank the collaborators and supporters of The Circulate Initiative as we work towards our mission to end ocean plastic and build thriving, inclusive economies. I look forward to another year of partnership.

**Susan Ruffo**  
Executive Director



*Right: Susan Ruffo, Executive Director, introducing The Circulate Initiative at Our Ocean 2019.*

# The Circulate Initiative's Board of Directors



## **Rob Kaplan, Board Member**

Rob has played a key role in the establishment of The Circulate Initiative and serves as a Board Member. He is the Founder and CEO of Circulate Capital, an investment management firm dedicated to financing companies, projects, and infrastructure in South and Southeast Asia that prevent the flow of plastic waste into the world's ocean and advance the circular economy. The US\$106M Circulate Capital Ocean Fund is the world's first venture capital fund looking at addressing Asia's plastic pollution crisis.

Rob is also Co-Founder and Senior Advisor to Closed Loop Partners, an innovative platform for impact investing, sustainability, and the circular economy. The Fund has deployed more than \$60M into recycling and circular economy investment opportunities focused in North America.

Previously, Rob served as Director of Sustainability for Walmart Stores, Inc. He led Walmart's cross-functional efforts to eliminate 20 million metric tons of greenhouse gas from the supply chain. Before joining Walmart, he helped lead corporate responsibility and brand strategy for Brown-Forman Corporation, where he developed marketing strategies to engage consumers, improve social and environmental performance, and advance business objectives.

Rob has also served as State Communications Director for Fight Crime: Invest in Kids California and as a political consultant for M&R Strategic Services in Washington, DC. Rob received his MBA from University of California, Berkeley where he studied marketing, corporate responsibility, and social entrepreneurship and a BA in political communication from the George Washington University.



## **Todd Khozein, Board Member**

Todd Khozein is a Board Member of The Circulate Initiative and the Founder and Co-CEO of SecondMuse, an impact and innovation company building resilient economies by supporting entrepreneurs and the ecosystems around them. Under his leadership, the company has designed and implemented programs on all 7 continents with over 600 organizations such as NASA, The World Bank, Nike, USAID, The World Health Organization, and The Rockefeller Foundation.

The company is a manifestation of Todd's impassioned belief that economic and social systems can be built inclusively and not at the expense of human dignity or the health of the planet. To test his theories and gain a deeper understanding of how to build and execute better systems, Todd earned a medical degree from the University of New Mexico, spent years developing a range of businesses, and co-founded SecondMuse in 2008. He also serves on the Board of Directors of TechSoup Global.

# The Circulate Initiative's Board of Directors



## Michael Sadowski, Board Member

For 20 years, Michael Sadowski has worked with companies to solve business challenges, including sustainability. Over this time, Michael has been a trusted advisor to senior executives, managed organizations and teams, driven change from within companies, led research and authored reports, and facilitated multi-stakeholder collaborations.

From 2017 to 2019, Michael led a project on behalf of the World Resources Institute to develop guidance for apparel and footwear companies to set science-based climate change targets. With the guidance published in June 2019, the work has shifted to a cross-value chain effort in collaboration with the Apparel Impact Institute to identify how the sector will drive greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050.

Michael is currently advising the Sustainable Apparel Coalition and Textile Exchange on their climate change efforts, and is working with a number of apparel and footwear companies on topics including science-based targets and circular economy.

Prior to this, Michael led strategy and managed external partnerships for Nike's Sustainable Business & Innovation team, and led the company's efforts on the circular economy. Before Nike, Michael was a Vice President at SustainAbility, Inc. where he advised companies including BMW, Brown-Forman, Gap, Goldman Sachs, HP, Nike, and Walmart on strategy, communications, stakeholder engagement, and trends. He played a key role in developing multi-stakeholder collaborations including the Zero Discharge of Hazardous Chemicals Group and the Closed Loop Fund. He was also a frequent public speaker and author on various topics including the business case for sustainability and ratings.

Michael serves as a Board member of DendriFund (Brown-Forman's environmental foundation), as well as the Circulate Initiative (a non-profit working to address ocean plastic). He holds a BA in Economics from Columbia University and an MBA with high distinction and an MS (Environmental Policy) from the University of Michigan.

# The Circulate Initiative's Team



## **Susan Ruffo, Executive Director**

Susan is the founding Executive Director of The Circulate Initiative. With over two decades working for governments, philanthropies and NGOs, Susan is a leader in the sustainability and environmental industry. Her work has focused on conservancy and supporting cities and communities manage change related to climate issues.

Before joining The Circulate Initiative, she worked as Managing Director of International Initiatives at the Ocean Conservancy, where she led the organization's global efforts to promote a healthy ocean, on issues such as ocean acidification, marine plastics, and climate change.

Previously, Susan led the Vibrant Oceans portfolio for Bloomberg Philanthropies, supporting simultaneous reform of local and industrial-scale fisheries and development of financial strategies to ease transition to sustainable fishing.

From 2011 to 2015, Susan served as Associate Director for Climate Preparedness at the White House Council on Environmental Quality. There she led the development and implementation of the climate preparedness pillar of President Obama's Climate Action Plan and worked with state, local, and tribal leaders to better prepare the United States for the impacts of climate change.

Susan has also worked at The Nature Conservancy and as a Foreign Service Officer with the U.S. Department of State, serving in China, Argentina, Nigeria and Washington D.C. Susan has degrees in Economics and Political Science from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.



## **Ellen Martin, Advisor**

Ellen Martin is an advisor to The Circulate Initiative and leads the development of impact measurement tools and metrics for investors. Ellen brings expertise in circular supply chains for packaging, recycling technologies, impact investing, business model innovations, inclusive supply chains and informal waste workers, measurement and evaluation, and partnerships.

In addition to her role with The Circulate Initiative, Ellen advises Circulate Capital, as well as other investors, corporations, technology providers, and nonprofits. Ellen regularly presents and facilitates experts and stakeholders on these topics, as a lecturer at the University of California, Berkeley's Haas School of Business, and with the Sustainable Packaging Coalition, GreenBiz, and other convening organizations.

Previously, Ellen led impact and research at Closed Loop Partners. As a member of Closed Loop Fund's investment team, she managed the Fund's due diligence process and investment portfolio as it grew to \$60M in project financing deployed across North America. While at Closed Loop, Ellen also directed research, including studies on advanced recycling technologies, the capital landscape for circular supply chains, and the economics of PET recycling.

Ellen has also worked as a strategy consultant at social impact consulting firm FSG. She holds an MBA from University of California, Berkeley and a BA from Yale University.

# The Circulate Initiative's Team



## **Amandine Joly, Communications Manager**

As Communications Manager, Amandine leads The Circulate Initiative's communications strategy and implementation. Amandine brings with her ten years of strategic communications expertise in stakeholder engagement, reputation management and public affairs.

Amandine has been working for a wide range of actors, from multinationals to NGOs, in Europe, Asia and Latin America, supporting each of them to define and implement impactful engagement strategies to address social and environmental challenges.

Prior to joining The Circulate Initiative, she worked for the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in Vietnam where she was in charge of engaging with corporations, non-government organizations and academics to develop collective efforts against marine plastic pollution. She also previously worked for Danone as Senior Public Affairs Manager, managing the company's key stakeholders among Government, Parliament and civil society organizations to support the implementation of Danone's sustainable business strategy in France.

Amandine also worked as an independent consultant for social enterprises, NGOs and corporate foundations across Southeast Asia and Latin America. Amandine started her career as a public affairs and strategic communications consultant at APCO Worldwide, advising multinationals on their communications to strengthen their license to operate.

Amandine holds a Master degree in Public Affairs from Sciences-Po Paris, France.

An aerial photograph showing a dark blue ocean on the left and a black sand beach on the right. The ocean's surface is textured with small waves. The beach is wide and dark, with a few birds in flight. One bird is visible in the lower left over the water, and another is in the middle right over the sand. The sky is not visible, suggesting the photo is taken from a high angle looking down.

# Establishment of The Circulate Initiative

# Over the last five years, ocean plastic pollution has become one of the world's most talked about environmental challenges.

In 2015, Dr. Jenna Jambeck and colleagues published a paper in *Science*<sup>1</sup> that provided the first set of estimates for how much plastic is flowing into the world's ocean and where it is coming from. Their estimate, that eight million tons of plastic enters the ocean each year, largely from mismanaged waste in Asia, sparked a new urgency to end this flow of plastic waste.

Further research by Ocean Conservancy<sup>2</sup> highlighted that investment in improving waste management systems in five countries in Asia could reduce this flow by 45%, and that a key barrier to improving those systems is a lack of finance for the sector. However, there was still a gap between this knowledge and tangible solutions.

Ocean Conservancy worked with Rob Kaplan, then at Closed Loop Partners, to address this issue with the support of corporate partners. This led to the creation of [Circulate Capital](#), the world's first investment firm focused on reducing ocean plastic in South and Southeast Asia.

## **Circulate Capital deploys capital to strengthen the circular economy, and particularly the waste management and recycling sector that forms the foundation of this economy.**

Further research, such as that published in Circulate Capital's South and Southeast Asia regional [investment handbook](#)<sup>3</sup>, identified the need to strengthen the pipeline of investment ready opportunities in waste management in the region for all investors and a need for structured incubation mechanisms to enable talented entrepreneurs to transform their ideas into profitable businesses.

This included early stage interventions in the waste management and recycling sector such as provision of basic technical assistance to entrepreneurs (i.e. incubation and acceleration).

Recognizing that no entrepreneur succeeds in a vacuum, this research also pointed to the need to ensure the enabling conditions around them - from public policies to consumer engagement to strong science and data - are in place as well. The Circulate Initiative was founded in 2018 with the support of Circulate Capital to address these needs.

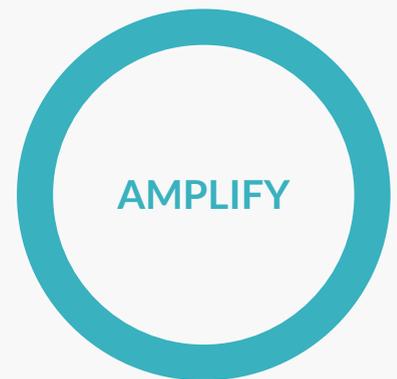
## **The Circulate Initiative's mission is to end ocean plastic pollution and build thriving, inclusive economies.**

The Circulate Initiative's programs are designed to address the fundamental needs noted above - to improve the circular economy, and particularly basic waste management and recycling, in critical geographies by connecting financial resources with innovative ventures in the sector, and by helping to build the enabling policy, social, and economic conditions needed for those ventures to succeed.

Backed by philanthropic, government and corporate partners, The Circulate Initiative provides entrepreneurs, policymakers, and investors with the knowledge and skills they need to incentivize, create, support and operate plastic waste-reducing, inclusive, circular economies. We do this by incubating, measuring and amplifying inclusive solutions for waste management, recycling and overall circular economy.

# Three Core Strategies

The Circulate Initiative's three core strategies—Incubate, Measure, and Amplify—are designed to attract and support entrepreneurs to the circular economy, give them the tools they need to succeed, and share lessons learned with key stakeholders.



The goal of The Circulate Initiative's Incubate strategy is to increase the number and quality of innovators in the waste and recycling sector and create the conditions they need to succeed.

The Circulate Initiative's Measure strategy is focused on developing tools and metrics for all investors to track environmental and social impacts of interventions to end ocean plastic.

The Amplify strategy will share the knowledge and lessons learned from The Circulate Initiative's work as well as success stories and impacts of partners such as entrepreneurs and business and political leaders, decision makers, and the public.

The Circulate Initiative is designed to work with and through other actors, providing expertise, but also a platform and forum to bring others together to share knowledge, resources, and lessons learned and scale and replicate what works.

The Circulate Initiative is focused on practical, scalable solutions that are tailored to address key needs in the investment related communities. It is uniquely positioned to fill these needs given its broad partnerships with major private sector companies and with investors such as Circulate Capital.

With the hiring of Susan Ruffo as the first Executive Director in July, 2019, The Circulate Initiative began ramping up operations and its flagship program, The Incubation Network, significantly.

Major milestones in 2019 included the announcement of the first members of The Incubation Network at the Our Ocean Conference in Oslo in October, and the launch of the Plastics Data Challenge, the first global program sponsored by The Incubation Network, in November.

The Circulate Initiative's work continued in 2020, although the COVID-19 pandemic forced the delay and/or redesign of some programs. For example, the launch of the first cohort of Urban Ocean was delayed from March to June 2020, and the program has been expanded to include specific attention on rebuilding more resilient systems post-pandemic.

For The Incubation Network, signature programs like the Plastics Data Challenge and Circular Innovation Jam have been redesigned to be virtual, from general convenings to training and mentor sessions.

# Major Milestones

**NOVEMBER 2018**  
The Circulate Initiative  
officially incorporated



**JULY 2019**

Susan Ruffo appointed Executive Director  
of The Circulate Initiative



**AUGUST 2019**  
The Circulate Initiative granted  
501(c)(3) nonprofit public charity  
status by the U.S. IRS

**OCTOBER 2019**

The Circulate Initiative introduced  
publicly by Circulate Capital and Susan  
Ruffo announced the initial members of  
The Incubation Network at Our Ocean  
Conference



**NOVEMBER 2019**  
The Incubation Network launched  
its first global program the  
Plastics Data Challenge

**MAY 2020**

The Circulate Initiative's Impact Metrics  
Working Group Launched with 20+  
members from multiple sectors



**JUNE 2020**  
Urban Ocean program launched in  
partnership with Ocean Conservancy  
and Global Resilient Cities Network



**JULY 2020**

The Incubation Network organized the  
Circular Innovation Jam, a week-long  
ideation virtual event across 5 countries.



**Core Strategy:**  
**INCUBATE**

# The Circulate Initiative's core strategy is to incubate circular economy entrepreneurs, particularly in the waste management and recycling sectors, and to create the enabling conditions needed for their businesses to thrive.

The focus of this work is on South and Southeast Asia, where plastic leakage is greatest.

The goal of the Incubate strategy is to attract new innovators to the waste and circular economy sectors, give them the tools they need to succeed as entrepreneurs, and build enabling environments around them that support that success.

This requires working with innovators directly and indirectly through Entrepreneur Support Organizations (ESOs) such as incubators and accelerators, as well as working with political and civil society leaders to create a larger ecosystem in which they can thrive.

Necessary elements of that ecosystem include supportive enabling policies, public awareness and education.

The Circulate Initiative has two core programs under the Incubate strategy:

- **The Incubation Network**
- **Urban Ocean**

Under the Incubate Strategy, The Circulate Initiative's accomplishments in its first year and a half are:

## **Established The Incubation Network, The Circulate Initiative's flagship program**

- Recruited approximately 30 Entrepreneur Support Organization members to The Incubation Network
- Designed, launched, and implemented the Plastics Data Challenge, to source, support, and assist ventures aimed at creating and leveraging data to address plastic leakage in South and Southeast Asia (see page 16)
- Designed, launched, and implemented the Circular Innovation Jam 2020, engaging 9 organizing partners across 5 countries to run concurrent events (see page 17),
- Ran local programming in Surabaya, Indonesia through the Ocean Plastic Prevention Accelerator (see page 18)

## **Launched the Urban Ocean program in partnership with Ocean Conservancy and Global Resilient Cities Network**

- Announced the first cohort of five "learning" cities participating in Urban Ocean
- Launched a Community of Practice on Waste Management in Crisis and Recovery with the Global Resilient Cities Network and Ocean Conservancy

# The Incubation Network



**The Incubation Network is The Circulate Initiative's flagship program and was created to act as a catalyst for action and investment to prevent the flow of plastic waste into the world's oceans.**

It was launched by Circulate Capital, SecondMuse, and Ocean Conservancy at the G7 Environment Ministers' meeting in Halifax, Canada in September 2018.

The overarching goals of The Incubation Network are to reduce plastic leakage to the ocean while improving equity and economic prosperity for waste workers in key countries that contribute most heavily to this issue. The Incubation Network is dedicated to supporting innovators across South and Southeast Asia to develop viable, effective, and ultimately investable enterprises.

Experience and research show that the way to increase and support these ventures is to provide them with technical assistance either directly or through Entrepreneurial Support Organizations (ESOs), and to work with governments, civil society, the private sector, and other stakeholders to create the enabling conditions they need to succeed.

To do this, The Circulate Initiative partnered with [SecondMuse](#), a U.S. registered B-Corp focused on building resilient economies, to create a collective of innovators, investors, and civil society organizations to drive innovation for inclusive waste management solutions.

The Incubation Network's first members were announced publicly at the Our Ocean Conference in Oslo, Norway in October 2019.

They include some of the most innovative business incubators and accelerators in South and Southeast Asia, such as Impact Hub (Indonesia & the Philippines), Climate Hub (Asia Pacific), Climate Collective (India), xchange (Philippines) and Circular Design Lab (Thailand), as well as global players such as McKinsey.org and The Incubation Network's own local incubator, the Ocean Plastic Prevention Accelerator in Surabaya, Indonesia (see page 18).

The Incubation Network provides its members with information, programming, resources, and support to run programs focused on circular economy and waste and recycling. Programming includes identifying, promoting, and incubating innovative technologies, business models and entrepreneurs across the region through challenges (see the Plastics Data Challenge on page 16), hackathons or design jams (see the Circular Innovation Jam on page 17), collaborative programs, and technical assistance and support.

As of June 2020, The Incubation Network has grown to include approximately 30 ESO members, with more pending. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, programs that span the entire South and Southeast Asian region such as the Plastics Data Challenge and the Circular Innovation Jam have been redesigned to run virtually. In addition, The Incubation Network is providing programming to ESO network members designed to build resilience in the face of COVID-19, including training in providing virtual programming and business continuity. This program - Build Back Better, run in conjunction with Spring and Convenors.org, has been well received by the community.

We have also been working to leverage the support of corporate and philanthropic partners for The Incubation Network. In the first half of 2020, Global Affairs Canada awarded U.S. \$6.9M Contribution Agreement under the International Development Assistance Program to SecondMuse to further build out work under TIN, with a particular focus on improving the livelihoods of people, especially women and girls, working in waste management and recycling systems.

## Entrepreneur Support Members



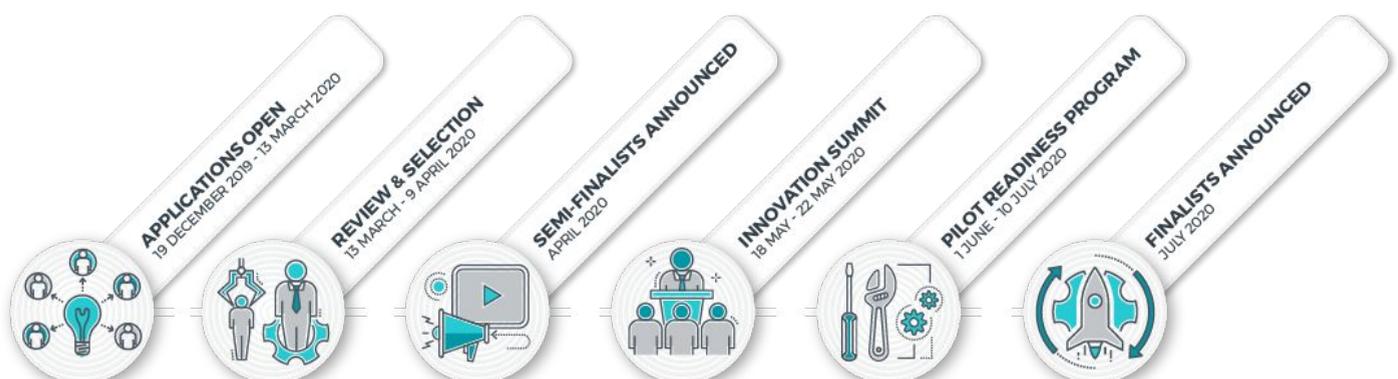
# PLASTICS DATA CHALLENGE

**The Plastics Data Challenge (PDC) is The Incubation Network's first global innovation challenge.**

Designed to address the lack of information and data on sources, types and amounts of plastic waste, this program has sourced, supported, and will assist in piloting solutions that create and leverage data to address plastic leakage in South and Southeast Asia.

Launched in November 2019, the PDC has built a diverse, collaborative global community around plastics data that included an advisory council of 23 thought-leaders in sectors from data science to circular economy, 27 mentors and local advisors from 11 countries, more than 20 design-support partners, over 30 private sector partners, more than 92 innovators from 39 countries currently tackling this issue, and over 15 NGO, government and university partners.

Through the PDC, ten Semi-Finalists were granted mentorship and technical support customized to their needs. The Incubation Network team developed a custom framework for pilot-readiness that was used to guide the cohort of Semi-Finalists through a three-month program to support the development and implementation of innovative pilots for data-driven solutions across the region. Three finalists were ultimately chosen to receive \$10,000 USD and support for piloting their innovations in South and Southeast Asia.



## CIRCULAR INNOVATION JAM 2020

July 18-25

India | Indonesia | Philippines  
Thailand | Vietnam

  @TINcubation  The Incubation Network

Register Now

**The Circular Innovation Jam (CIJ) is The Incubation Network's first program to be delivered through the network, in collaboration with incubator and accelerator partners.**

The Circular Innovation Jam was designed to develop innovative and inclusive solutions to advance local circular economies for plastics, reduce ocean plastics, and build effective waste management systems across South and Southeast Asia. It was implemented in partnership with nine The Incubation Network members simultaneously across India, Indonesia, Vietnam, Thailand and the Philippines.

Participants focused on developing inclusive solutions and prototypes around critical issues:

- **Reuse models/Packaging:** Development or adoption of innovative reusable and environmentally-friendly packaging or mechanisms in households
- **Waste Systems:** Efficiency or effectiveness of existing waste collection, management and recycling systems, including the informal sector
- **Waterways:** Prevention or reduction of plastic waste in rivers and waterways

The Jam invited problem-solving by local citizens, not just institutions, and sought to design solutions with the people who know and interact with the issues.

The CIJ attracted 1151 applications, over 400 participants, and generated 111 ideas. Of these, 25 were selected as finalists from the region. These finalists will enter into an online support program, lead by The Incubation Network, for 4-6 weeks of idea refinement. From this cohort, three top teams will receive up to \$5,000 USD worth of support (financial and/or technical) to launch their solution pilot in the region.



Application Phase

June 5 - June 30



Orientation

July 6 - July 17



The Jam

July 18 - July 25



Idea Refinement  
Phase  
(Finalist)

August



Regional Finals

September

## OCEAN PLASTIC PREVENTION ACCELERATOR

“Building an innovation ecosystem  
to reduce ocean plastic pollution”

**Located in Surabaya, Indonesia, the [Ocean Plastic Prevention Accelerator \(OPPA\)](#) is a local incubator program started in 2018 and operated by SecondMuse, through its partnership with The Circulate Initiative and The Incubation Network.**

OPPA seeks to create a collaborative network for innovative solutions to address challenges in the local waste management system and recycling sector.

Managed by The Incubation Network and originally funded with a grant from the Australian Government's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, OPPA works with local and regional waste management and plastic recycling communities and industry to increase both the quantity and quality of waste and recycling entrepreneurs.

As part of its response to the COVID-19 crisis, The Circulate Initiative and OPPA also provided informal waste collectors with personal protective equipment and basic supplies, to provide emergency support and relief. Partner Peduli Sungai Sejahtera, a local community educating and advocating for clean rivers, distributed 300 supply packages of essential supplies and equipment to Surabaya waste collectors and waste pickers and families.

OPPA ran several activities in 2019 and the first half of 2020, including:

- The inaugural Oh, Plastic! Festival and Waste Data Hackathon in October 2019. The event included a fair showcasing key waste management stakeholders, a panel discussion on plastic waste, a movie screening, a photography competition and a concert featuring regional Indonesian bands. The event had 38 collaborators and more than 400 participants in the activities.
- Its first accelerator program, featuring a cohort of 8 local innovators to support and scale new approaches to advancing the plastic waste management and recycling infrastructure in Greater Surabaya. The program began in November 2019 and will last until August 2020.
- The Surabaya Access Pad (SAP), a three-month “landing pad” program explicitly designed to help global ventures that are creating innovative ocean plastic pollution prevention products or services establish a business in Surabaya. Over three months, this program will provide support in three critical areas of business expansion: network, local industry knowledge, and access to funding.
- The Surabaya Waste Action Network, to facilitate connections and increase collaboration between local waste management stakeholders. This is an open forum focused on waste management issues. The members of this network comprise more than 20 stakeholders in the Surabaya waste management ecosystem.

# Urban Ocean



**Urban Ocean is a unique initiative by The Circulate Initiative, Ocean Conservancy and Global Resilient Cities Network designed to align work to reduce ocean plastic with city priorities.**

Urban Ocean empowers cities in South and Southeast Asia and Latin America to achieve a genuine transformation of municipal waste management systems that will improve public health and safety, create dignified employment, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, advance the circular economy, and fight ocean plastic, particularly as they weather and recover from the impacts of the current COVID-19 crisis. The goal is to demonstrate how waste management and recycling systems can be both more effective and inclusive and contribute to solving a range of city challenges.

The program will work with city leaders to solve waste management-related problems and harness their critical role in setting policies, developing infrastructure, and driving citizen education and awareness. In response to COVID-19, the program will also focus on how cities can build better and more resilient waste management systems to reduce future vulnerabilities post-pandemic.

Over the next 15 months, Urban Ocean will work closely with city leaders in Can Tho (Vietnam), Melaka (Malaysia), Semarang (Indonesia), Pune (India) and Panama City (Panama), known as

“learning cities”, as well as other cities from the Global Resilient Cities Network community, known as “mentor cities”.

This first cohort of cities was selected because of their commitment to improving waste management as part of resilience-building efforts and their potential to provide solutions in geographies with high waste leakage rates (learning cities), or because they are leading the way in the fight against river and ocean plastic or in implementing circular economy approaches (mentor cities). Pune (India) is an example of a city doing both through its successful work with the informal sector, and has been selected as both a learning and mentor city.

As a complement to the Urban Ocean work, in May 2020, The Circulate Initiative also partnered with Global Resilient Cities Network and Ocean Conservancy to form a [Community of Practice on Waste Management in Crisis and Recovery](#) to provide cities with the knowledge and tools they require to address the immediate need for emergency action to manage waste during COVID-19, and to provide urgent relief for waste workers. As cities begin to execute on their recovery plans, this partnership will support them as they move towards a circular economy that will unlock economic, environmental, and social benefits.





**Core Strategy:**  
**MEASURE**

# The Circulate Initiative's second major strategy is to advance efforts to measure the amount of plastic flowing into the ocean and the impact that interventions – particularly investments – can have on that flow.

Across the community working on the ocean plastic issue, actors are trying to answer the question of how to measure the impact of actions to reduce plastic leakage. In addition, many actors, including investors, would like to measure related impacts such as reductions in GHG emissions and improvements in livelihoods of waste workers.

At this point, some data, research, and methods exist, but they are highly fragmented. The Circulate Initiative's strategy is focused on bringing together experts to analyze existing tools, identify gaps, and develop new resources (e.g. metrics, tools, methodologies) in order to meet the specific needs of investors to measure their outcomes. As part of this work, The Circulate Initiative is partnering with Circulate Capital and other investors to learn from their early work on measures for their own investments, and to test metrics and methods with real investments in real places, and will be sharing the results of this work.

Under the Measure Strategy, The Circulate Initiative has accomplished the following:

- **Completed interviews with more than 40 experts and stakeholders** and reviewed more than 80 recent reports and research studies on impact measurement, investing, and ocean plastics solutions, to understand the state of the ecosystem and identify priorities for impact data and methods.
- **Defined the first research agenda** as a result of initial research, including the Measures initiatives to undertake in 2020-2021.
- **Established a multi-disciplinary Impact Metrics Working Group.**
- **Designed the first major Measures initiative**, to develop an impact modeling tool for GHG emissions benefits specific to South and Southeast Asia and other emerging markets.

The primary vehicle for The Circulate Initiative's metrics work will be its Impact Metrics Working group. Launched in December 2019, the working group is made up of representatives from several leading organizations, including the Asian Development Bank, Circulate Capital, Danone Ecosystem Fund, Encourage Capital, IUCN, MorganStanley, Ocean Conservancy, SecondMuse, Arizona State University, University of Georgia, University of Toronto, USAID Clean Cities Blue Ocean, WIEGO, and WWF, as well as individual contributors. They all bring a broad spectrum of expertise, allowing the group to address environment and social issues.

Through the working group, The Circulate Initiative also launched a new effort to measure the impact of interventions in the waste sector on GHG emissions. In the U.S. and Europe, tools (e.g., the U.S. EPA's WARM model) exist to model the emissions impact of better waste management and recycling infrastructure. However, these tools are not useful for South and Southeast Asia and other emerging markets because they do not reflect realities on the ground such as open dumping and burning and are not designed for poor data availability. The Impact Metrics Working Group will build on these existing models and adapt them for use in South and Southeast Asia. We expect this effort to be completed in 2022.

In August 2020, The Circulate Initiative put out a [standard-setting metrics guide/white paper on ocean plastic related impact metrics and methods](#). It has also launched a [research repository](#) that will serve as a resource for the larger community.

# Core Strategy: AMPLIFY



# The Circulate Initiative's final major strategy focuses on amplifying the lessons, stories, and results developed through its programs and partnerships.

This strategy has two key streams. The first is focused on building a set of resources to inform the overall discussion on ocean plastic. Our goal is to ensure the global and public narrative on ocean plastic is informed by science and practice and focuses on tangible solutions, including the importance of circular waste management and recycling.

The second stream is about bringing real, tangible, and practical lessons and tools to policy makers, businesses, and others so they can take action. This stream focused on reaching key decision-makers and influencers directly. Audiences for this work include mayors and national leaders, investors, entrepreneurs, and others, through targeted events, speaking engagements, etc.

In both streams, The Circulate Initiative strives to provide a platform for partners and actors on the ground - from entrepreneurs and investors to mayors and waste pickers - to tell their stories directly.

Under the Amplify Strategy, The Circulate Initiative has provided expert advice and input in key fora. Examples include:

- Provide recommendations for ASEAN regional plastics plan, Q1 2020
- Co-organizing a panel on waste management during COVID-19 for the Global Resilient Cities Network and World Bank speaker series titled Cities on the Frontlines, June 2020
- Co-organizing and moderating a World Economic Forum and Friends of Ocean Action panel on cities role in combating ocean plastic, June 2020
- Speaking on The Economist's World Ocean Initiative panel on Solutions to Manage Ocean Plastic: From Source to Sea, June 2020



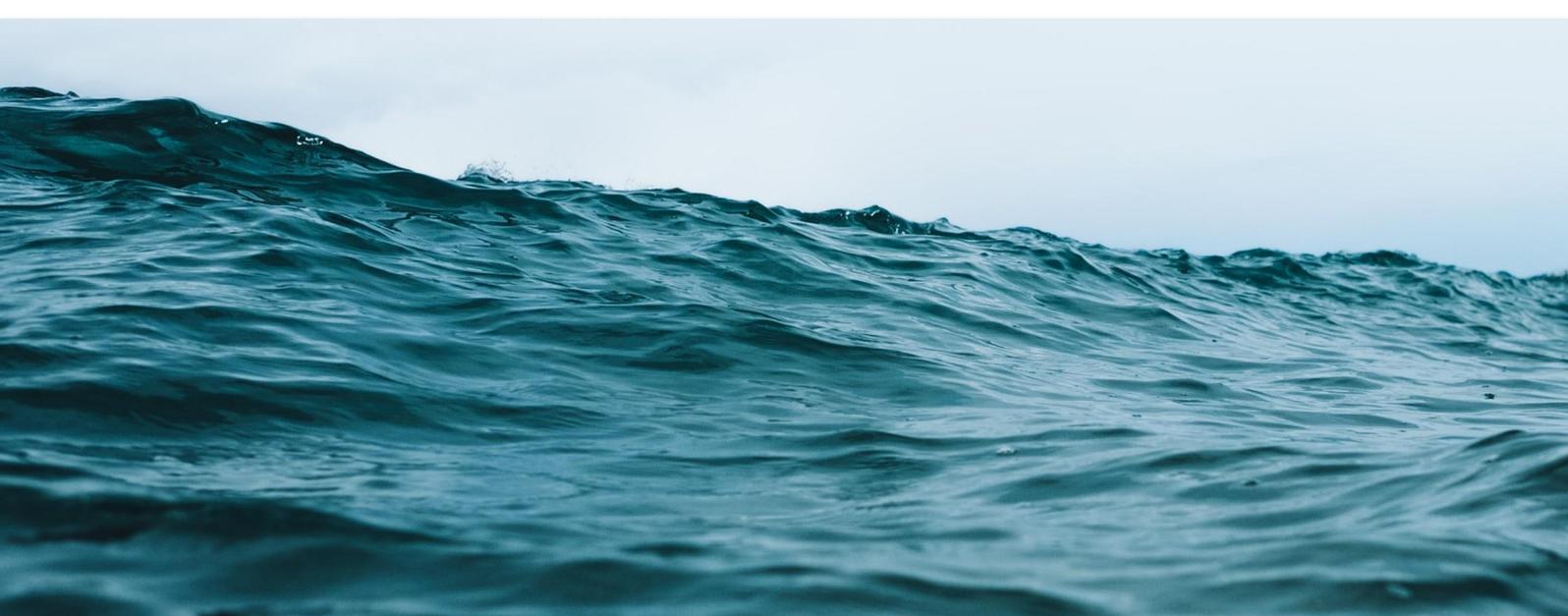
# Financial Report

# The Circulate Initiative's 2019 spending reflects a focus on executing the Incubate strategy and building the organization.

## Circulate Initiative Inc. 2019 Expenses

January - December 2019

PROGRAM EXPENSES	Amplify	Incubate	Measure	Other	Total Program	Fund-raising	Admin	Total Expenses
Program Contractors	38,500	908,133	5,168	248,000	1,199,801			1,199,801
Payroll	4,456	62,386	8,912	4,456	80,211	1,782	7,130	89,123
Insurance	313	4,380	626	313	5,632	125	501	6,258
Travel		1,052			1,052		12,123	13,174
General Expenses	916	13,066	1,832	916	16,729	366	16,809	33,904
Meals & Entertainment							529	529
Administrative Contractors							35,013	35,013
Legal Fees		2,117			2,117		99,933	102,050
Other Expenses							137,111	137,111
<b>TOTAL PROGRAM EXPENSES</b>	<b>44,185</b>	<b>991,134</b>	<b>16,538</b>	<b>253,685</b>	<b>1,305,542</b>	<b>2,274</b>	<b>309,148</b>	<b>1,616,964</b>



# The Circulate Initiative's Partners



The Circulate Initiative thanks the following collaborators and supporters for their ongoing partnership in our work to end ocean plastic and build thriving, inclusive economies.

## Our Collaborators



**Jenna Jambeck, PH.D.**  
GAA Distinguished Professor in Environmental Engineering, New Materials Institute, University of Georgia College of Engineering



**William McDonough**  
Chief Executive  
McDonough Innovation

## Our Supporters



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## References

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2. [Stemming the Tide](#). Ocean Conservancy (2015)
3. [Investing to reduce plastic pollution in South & Southeast Asia: A HANDBOOK FOR ACTION](#)  
Circulate Capital (2019)