

Choose Circular funding for NSW Government agencies – expression of interest

Applicant information

November 2023

Introduction

The NSW Government is providing up to \$3.6 million in funding through the Choose Circular program to support NSW Government agencies to increase use of recycled materials. This funding is part of the broader Circular Innovation Fund initiative.

The Choose Circular program will make it easy for NSW Government agencies to source and use recycled materials, stimulating market demand and leading the state towards a circular economy over the next 20 years.

We are seeking expressions of interest (EOIs) from NSW Government agencies for activities that will help increase their use of recycled materials. Choose Circular funding can be used for a broad range of activities. It is anticipated that around 3 to 7 agencies will receive funding.

EOIs will close on 27 November 2023.

Benefits for your agency

Choose Circular funding can provide NSW Government agencies with many benefits, for example:

- accessing tailored support and resources
 - delivering corporate sustainability strategy and net zero plan objectives
 - boosting environmental sustainability and social outcomes
 - identifying potential cost savings
 - stimulating local economies
 - meeting the NSW Government policy requirement to preference purchasing recycled material as outlined in the [NSW Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy 2041](#).
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Eligibility

This EOI is open to all NSW Government agencies. Eligibility requirements are as follows:

- Activities must be finalised by no later than 30 June 2025. Activities starting this financial year will be preferred.
- Commitment to allocate appropriate staff and resources to oversee activity delivery.
- Executive (or other appropriate financial delegate) endorsement for the proposed activity/activities.

Find out more and submit an EOI

- Attend one of our information sessions to learn more about the process. Information sessions will be hosted on 13 November 2023 and 16 November 2023. Contact [us](#) if you have not received an invitation.
- To submit an EOI, complete this [form](#) and send back to [us](#) before 5 pm on 27 November 2023. We will review the EOI and contact you directly to discuss the opportunity.

More about Choose Circular and the Circular Innovation Fund

Choose Circular is a program under the [Circular Innovation Fund \(CIF\)](#) that aims to stimulate innovation and demand for recycled materials through NSW Government procurement. It supports the requirement under the [NSW Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy 2041](#) for agencies to preference products that contain recycled content on an 'if not, why not' basis – where there is no significant additional cost or negative impact on performance or the environment.

The CIF aims to support research into new technologies and uses for recycled material and provide opportunities to pilot them in government projects.

\$3.6 million in funding is available to support NSW Government agencies to increase their use of recycled materials. Outputs from this may support development of circular procurement tools and resources for broader NSW Government agency use.

NSW Government action on recycled materials

Choose Circular funding can help your agency meet policy commitments relating to recycled materials, including:

- Meet the '[if not, why not](#)' requirement.
- Identify opportunities to embed circular design principles in new NSW Government buildings, infrastructure and precincts.
- The EPA and Infrastructure NSW's upcoming [Protection of the Environment Policy \(PEP\) for sustainable construction](#). The PEP will promote low-carbon design and construction, and increased use of recycled material in public infrastructure projects.
- Implement key initiatives to decarbonise infrastructure delivery from the Infrastructure NSW and Transport for NSW [Decarbonising Infrastructure Delivery Roadmap](#).
- The [Procurement \(Enforceable Procurement Provisions\) Direction 2019](#) to award tenders that will provide the best value for money. Value for money must take into consideration the environmental sustainability of the proposed goods and services (such as use of recycled products).

Priority recycled materials

Activities addressing priority recycled materials will be preferred. These priority recycled materials are:

- plastics

- paper/cardboard
- tyres
- organics
- coal ash
- textiles
- materials derived from clean energy waste (for example from solar panels, wind turbines, batteries)
- materials derived from e-waste.

Funded activities

Choose Circular funding can support a range of activities that increase the use of recycled materials in NSW Government agencies. Agencies can submit EOIs for multiple activities. We anticipate that around 3 to 7 agencies will receive funding.

Table 1: Examples of potential activities that could be funded.

Activity	Description of what this activity would entail
Recycled material action plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A strategic document outlining specific initiatives that increase the use of recycled materials in operations, projects, products or services. This may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Goals and objectives: clear and measurable targets related to the use of recycled materials, waste reduction and environmental impact reduction. – Opportunity identification: scan of current/upcoming projects, identifying opportunities to use and/or pilot innovative recycled products. – Recycled material sourcing: strategy to identify and purchase recycled materials, including identifying potential suppliers of recycled material products for new or existing applications, ensuring the quality of recycled inputs, and tracking the sources of recycled materials. – Material flow analysis and bills of quantity: analyse the movement and transformation of materials within your agency operations and capture data. – Supply chain integration: plans for integrating the use of recycled materials throughout the supply chain, from raw material sourcing to distribution and disposal. – Stakeholder engagement: strategies to raise awareness and promote the use of recycled material products to stakeholders. – Asset management plan: outline the management and maintenance of physical assets containing recycled materials (for example, infrastructure, facilities, equipment and any other tangible assets). – Monitoring, reporting and metrics: establish mechanisms and metrics to track progress toward goals, measuring the

Activity	Description of what this activity would entail
	<p>impact of recycled material initiatives and reporting results.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recommendations for other circular procurement opportunities – for example, recyclability, circular design and increasing the lifecycle or value of a material/product currently wasted. <p>Note: Some of these components could be delivered individually (for example, recycled material sourcing or asset management planning). Please indicate if this is preferred in the EOI form.</p>
Business case development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed assessment that outlines the rationale and justification for using recycled materials in a project.
Feasibility studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive analysis and evaluation of the practicality, viability and potential success of a proposed project that incorporates recycled materials.
Quality assurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research, assessment and testing (for example, durability assessment) of products containing recycled materials to ensure they meet quality standards.
Specification research and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate the use of recycled material through new or updated specifications. This could include, but is not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - review of agency specifications and identification of opportunities for research - research for the development of new specifications - establishing new test methods/protocols - integration/piloting within agency processes and systems
Planning for recycled material procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake risk and opportunity assessment for high impact spend categories, engage market on material availability and pricing. • Set environmental requirements based on this market sounding to inform procurement strategy and supplier sourcing strategy.
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circular procurement training for NSW Government agency staff.
Case studies for recycled material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop case studies which showcase best practice applications of products containing recycled material.

Your agency may have a proposed activity not included in this list of examples. Agencies are encouraged to submit an EOI for any activities with the potential to increase the use of recycled materials.

Evaluation criteria

Table 2: EOI responses will be evaluated against the following criteria

Evaluation criteria	Weighting
<p>Impact:</p> <p>Potential impact of the activity, relative to its cost. This could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">likelihood that activity will result in action (for example, is linked to an approved construction project)the activity effectively addresses barriers to agency use and procurement of recycled materialsthe activity is exploring new or inventive approaches to incorporate recycled materialsextent to which the activity may reduce consumption of virgin resources and address priority materials (see list above)extent to which the activity will encourage materials circularity and the highest value use of materialslikelihood that activity will result in broader benefits to other NSW Government agencies – for example, supports development of circular procurement tools.	40%
<p>Collaboration:</p> <p>Demonstrated willingness to collaborate with relevant stakeholders. Can clearly demonstrate project benefits would be shared across one or more stakeholders.</p>	20%
<p>Resourcing:</p> <p>Demonstrated capacity and willingness of NSW Government agency staff to lead and champion the project.</p>	20%
<p>Timeframe:</p> <p>Demonstrated ability to meet funding timeframe (project completion by 30 June 2025). Projects commencing this financial year will be preferred.</p>	20%

Condition of EOI

The program team does not make any commitment to fund your project. EOI responses will be reviewed against the criteria and NSW Government agencies will be contacted to discuss next steps.

Contact us

If you have any further questions, contact us at choose.circular@environment.nsw.gov.au.