



**CIRCULAR
CREATIVES**

CASE STUDIES

EMPOWERING CIRCULAR MARKETPLACE'S



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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Empowering Circular Creatives Case Study Compendium, a sister resource developed alongside our Guide-Book to Creating a zero waste Circular Marketplace, part of the [Circular Creatives](#) Erasmus+ Project. Our European-wide partnership includes [Momentum Educate + Innovate](#) and [Roscommon Leader Partnership](#) from Ireland, The European E-Learning Institute ([EUEI](#)) in Denmark, Academy of Entrepreneurship ([AKEP](#)) in Greece, Global Impact Grid ([GIG](#)) in Germany, and [Šibenik University of Applied Sciences](#) in Croatia. This compendium and the Guide-Book provide comprehensive resources and examples designed to empower creative entrepreneurs across Europe to build and sustain zero waste, circular marketplaces.

The case studies that are presented to you are an integral part of the guide, offering real-world examples from a wide array of progressive initiatives. These range from social cooperatives that enhance the skills of marginalised creatives to National Circular Economy Centers, and even include a forward-thinking company that upcycles boat sails into travel gear. Each case study provides unique insights into the practical application of circular economy principles in various creative sectors.

This document serves as both a standalone resource and a complementary addition to the larger guide, providing narratives of success stories and innovative approaches in circular economy. It aims to inspire and guide creative entrepreneurs who will pioneer their first set of practices zero waste marketplace events. Furthermore, together they are a valuable asset for local authorities, policymakers, and business leaders who are keen to promote sustainable practices in their regions.

The ultimate goal of these success stories and the guide is to increase public awareness of circular business practices and their benefits. By illustrating successful examples of circular economy in action, Circular Creatives aims to foster long-term partnerships between entrepreneurs and local stakeholders, ultimately transforming marketplaces into hubs of circular economy and creative excellence. The impact of these cases, and the ensuing marketplace event guidebook is envisaged to be far-reaching, contributing significantly to the promotion of sustainable practices in the creative sector and beyond.

Please explore the other Circular Creatives resources also contributing to these goals, the [ECCE Knowledge Sharing Platform](#), The [Creatives and Job Opportunities Exploratory Panels](#) and the [Circular Creatives Online Course](#).

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Company Name

Thelma Steimann- Knitwear Designer

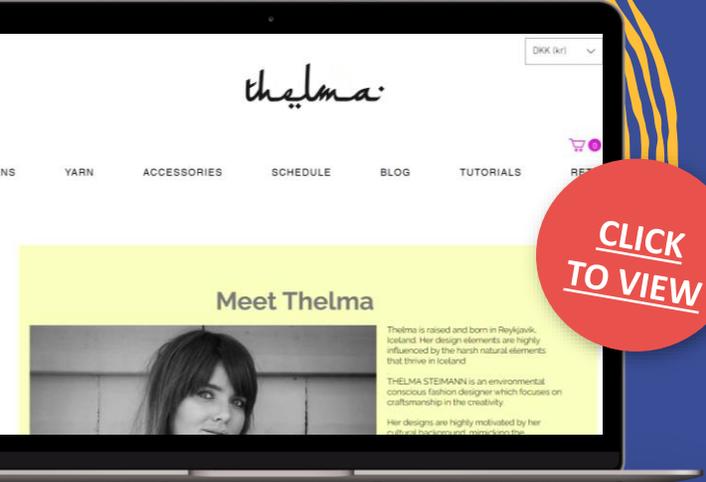
Date of Interview

April 2023

References

[Nordic Magazine](#)

During her business studies in Reykjavík, Thelma Steimann discovered a profound interest in fashion, which led her to rediscover her longstanding, though secretive, affinity for knitting. Yearning for a more specialised education, she uprooted her family to Copenhagen in 2014 to enrol in the Sustainable Business and Fashion program at KEA. Post-graduation, Steimann has been fervently cultivating her slow-fashion brand, gaining recognition for her distinctive knitwear. Currently, she's fully engaged in crafting exquisite knitwear and disseminating her designs to an ever-expanding clientele. Steimann openly discusses her journey, the complexities of sustainable fashion, and innovative strategies to enhance consumer engagement in sustainable practices.



thelma

Meet Thelma

Thelma is raised and born in Reykjavík, Iceland. Her design elements are highly influenced by the harsh natural elements that thrive in Iceland.

THELMA STEIMANN is an environmental conscious fashion designer which focuses on craftsmanship in the creativity.

Her designs are highly motivated by her craft and evidence and inspiration from

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TO VIEW



"knitting is a mindful and therapeutic practise that has proven to be very healing towards stress and other mental diseases e.g. alzheimer, tourettes syndrome and physical ones such as muscle tension."

- Creator of Thelma Steimann



Continued...

I have experimented with different elements within the sustainable work frame. That includes making garments from dead stock, up-cycling and zero waste pattern making and mixing those methods together. I still come down to the conclusion as before - Why should I pick up the shit that was made by somebody else?

There are just too many bad quality garments that are thrown out every day, and coming across good quality fabric is just really difficult. I have researched a lot of consumer habits and their relationship with shopping and disposal. In almost every case, the most valuable pieces are the ones that have been made by someone you know, or yourself even.

Knitting is a mindful and therapeutic practise that has proven to be very healing towards stress and other mental diseases e.g. alzheimer, tourettes syndrome and physical ones such as muscle tension. By creating your own style, you can alter it to your own needs, select the colours that fit your own style and personalise the garments. So no matter what I dig myself into, I always go back to knitting. I think everyone should knit as well, and that's the mindset that I'm working from right now.

As a result of the past years from my experience working with dead-stock, zero waste and recycled materials, I made the decision to stop with those production methods. The main reason was due to the low quality of materials. I was getting a lot of fabrics containing micro plastics of some sort, which I didn't think was sustainable at all. As I have developed as an artist and entrepreneur, I have learned that quality in material and service is everything.

For me, the only way to practice that while surviving as a business is to share the responsibility with the consumer so every party involved is taking actions. There are a lot of different aspects you need to consider when labeling yourself as sustainable, and often one aspect challenges another. For example, I considered becoming a vegan label, but the alternatives to wool are often not environmentally friendly at all. That comes back to the point of my up-cycled materials being often made from man-made fibers. So instead, I work with the best quality wool that I can get my hands on.



DESCRIPTION OF YOUR BUSINESS/SERVICE?

Thelma Steimann was founded in 2015 Copenhagen, where Thelma Steimann had been working as a freelance knitwear designer for various fashion brands. In 2018 Thelma published her first knitwear pattern and since then the variety of patterns has grown rapidly. Late 2020, the passion for knitwear was pushed to another level, as Thelma started hand-dyeing yarns to go along with her patterns. Her passion is to create colour stories that are fun to play with and can be used for both knitting and crocheting.

Thelma's passion is sustainability and quality, which she elaborates into her design. Every colour has a story and a purpose, as each colour has been carefully selected to create an exciting colour story, by building something beautiful and unique. Many of the colours come in limited editions so it's recommended to purchase enough yarn for each project and remember that the yarn is hand dyed and therefore the colours might change slightly between yarn bases or redyes.

All bases are without any plastic, which means that the bases are without super wash. It's recommended to hand wash or machine wash on wool program, to keep the yarn in the best possible shape. Wool items should not be washed too frequently, and the rule of thumb is to only wash when it has stains or an odour.



MOTIVATION FOR BEING AN ENTREPRENEUR?

While working at Barbara I Gongini, I turned dead stock and zero waste patterns into my own unique designs. It was during this time that Bianco I Iceland presented an opportunity to showcase my line, which emphasised classic designs with a modern twist. The central theme was 'wardrobing'—streamlining the customer's wardrobe for simplicity and elegance. A knitted jersey cardigan from this range quickly became a bestseller, persistently selling out and challenging me to meet the high demand. This success marked the beginning of my brand, which has significantly evolved in the time since.



THE JOURNEY SO FAR - CHALLENGES FACED & HOW YOU HAVE OVER COME.

When I first heard about sustainable fashion, I found the topic uninteresting. It came off as an extra hard work for an already difficult journey as a start-up designer, only to produce simple and unattractive styles. But I really think that people don't understand what that concept means in general. It has become somewhat of a buzzword, and you see more of it every day. My experience tells me that consumers are often misled by the big giants of the fashion industry.



“the only way to practice while surviving as a business is to share the responsibility with the consumer”



BENEFITS YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED/POSITIVE IMPACTS?

I think my customers are mostly people who admire design, understand the mindset behind it and like to have that added value of uniqueness to their style. I think there is nothing as rewarding to a designer than to see your styles featured as favorites by your costumers, and I think that has something to do with the added value of hand-made. I would love to think that they're environmentally conscious, but sustainability is still today an extra label. Design, quality and price are still the major purchasing factor.



PLANS & VISION FOR YOUR BUSINESS?

For the past year, I have worked towards simplifying my business and to focus on the core, which is knitting. I have published a new platform on my website, where I'm selling my patterns and encouraging people to create their own styles. You can access video tutorials to simplify the patterns, where I have also simplified the main instructions. By doing that, I am making knitting more user-friendly and less complicated for people with zero experience. The health benefits of practicing this craft have already been scientifically proven to be extremely beneficial to mental health. But to add, the value of the storytelling of a handmade style is going to build a sustainable value on its own. Instead of putting the main responsibility on the designer, I want it to be shared equally between the designer and the customer. I will of course continue to make styles by order if the customer is not ready to take on a project yet, and unique handmade styles will continue to be released and can be accessed from the webpage. In the future I can see myself designing more avant-garde styles, and I am working slowly towards that with a fellow designer. There are a lot of techniques that I haven't been able to put in garments yet and are a bit too complex to sell as knitwear patterns. For now, I am settled in my comfort zone, but that doesn't mean that I'm quite done yet with the fashion industry.

Company Name

Cecilie Thorsmark, CEO of Copenhagen Fashion Week

Date of Interview

March 2023

References of Interviews:

[Nordic Magazine](#)

[Hurrs-Official](#)



Fashion week allows designers to present their newest collections to the world, but followed by a toxic footprint that the manufacturing process leaves behind. At By Babba X Bumble's Career Day in February, a panel discussion on sustainability was held, and women of different areas of the fashion industry, including CEO Cecilie Thorsmark, came together. The CEO's thoughts on fashion week did not sugarcoat the real effects it has on the world, and we appreciated that.

The information in the below Interview case study was sourced by the interview undertaken by Johanna Vigdis from Nordic Style Magazine who sat down with Cecilie in March 2023, as well as an additional interview from Bonnie Langedijk from Hurrs to talk with Celcilie about her background in fashion, her opinions on sustainability, and the sustainability action plan that Copenhagen Fashion Week is looking to launch by 2023.

**Fashion week a
- CPHFW CEO spe
Summit**

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DESCRIPTION OF YOUR BUSINESS/SERVICE?

Regarded as the fifth global fashion week, Copenhagen Fashion Week welcomes leading international press, buyers and industry leaders across their global network to four days of shows, presentations, installations and events alongside the trade show CIFF x Revolver.

Sustainability is the core focus for Copenhagen Fashion Week, striving towards making substantial changes to inspire and encourage the industry to accelerate their sustainability efforts. In January 2020, Copenhagen Fashion Week unveiled an ambitious three-year Sustainability Action Plan, presenting an innovative system of requirements for brands to be part of the official schedule that was implemented at the AW23 edition of CPHFW. The Action Plan is revised and released every three years, positioning CPHFW as the leading fashion week within the sustainability field.



HOW DID YOU GET YOUR POSITION?

First of all, I graduated from Copenhagen Business School in 2009, and with my degree in Marketing Communication Management, I joined the Danish Fashion Institute. The company was the organiser of fashion week when I wrote my masters on CPHFW. After that, I became the Head of Communication for the Danish Fashion Institute and CPHFW. The Danish Fashion Institute decided to say goodbye to CPHFW and became a separate company and turned into the 'Global Fashion Agenda' and the organiser of the Copenhagen Fashion Summit.

From 2016 to 2018 I worked with the Copenhagen Fashion Summit and the Global Fashion Agenda as their Communications Director - I focused on sustainability, as you can probably tell. After two years of an outsider's perspective on CPHFW, it made me to think, 'finally something needs to be done'. I was looking at all of the fashion weeks thinking, why aren't they focusing on sustainability? In 2018, I finally got the position as CEO of CPHFW. "I dream that CPHFW will become home to the brands that are the best in their class - above all in design and sustainability. In other words, that is what I want CPHFW to stand for".



THE JOURNEY SO FAR - CHALLENGES FACED & HOW YOU HAVE OVER COME.

CPHFW 2020 started in February with a press conference, where Cecilie and her team introduced a new sustainability action plan, that focuses on the reduction of the week's climate impact by 50%, having zero waste from the shows by 2022, and therefore making the event fully sustainable by the year 2023.

For a brand to be eligible and apply to show/present at Copenhagen Fashion Week, they must receive a certain score and meet of the 17 minimum standards for sustainability. Some examples are strategic direction, material choices, and worker conditions. Cecilie recommends to get familiar with the sustainability plan ASAP in order to spread this message! Most importantly, "this is something we are doing for the industry and not against the industry."

How was the response from designers and brands towards CPHFW's new sustainability plan?

I have only received a positive response! If we would have announced this three years ago, I don't think people would have taken as well to it. I think the industry knows that it needs to take action now. The sustainability plan does not clash with the designer's ambitions, and I hope that the brands will be able to reach the sustainability requirements. We are at risk of losing brands, although it will pay off in the long run!



“If we would have announced this three years ago, I don’t think people would have taken as well to it. I think the industry knows that it needs to take action”



BENEFITS YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED/POSITIVE IMPACTS?

About the Fashion Week in March 2023. I think it was successful, and we are experiencing brands using the platform for sustainability more and more. If you look at fashion weeks, they are being a little bit too ignorant in the context of sustainability, and they are not taking advantage of the platform that they have to drive the industry in a better direction. We need to be rethinking our role in the fashion industry!



PLANS & VISION FOR YOUR BUSINESS?

I want to grow Copenhagen Fashion Week to be a bigger and more influential platform, where more brands can participate. I’m seeing the 2023 sustainability requirements as a means to attract brands, but also as a way to educate brands. I want the 2023 sustainability requirements to be something that the brands implement not only because it allows them to be a part of the fashion week, but because it enables them to progress. We are also introducing CPHFW NEWTALENT, a program investing in the next generation of designers and brands. It allows us to provide an encompassing program for the talents to build their brand on an international scale and to introduce them to our global audience.

In terms of the industry, I hope it commits to more responsible business practices. The goals that we’ve set for 2023 won’t be static goals. We’ll likely set new goals by 2026 and implement new ones every three years. That way we keep pushing for change in the industry. And then I’m hoping that it spreads to other countries. But this shouldn’t be a new standard. This is something that’s based on knowledge, and existing standards and certifications. It’s just a new way of filtering and ranking brands. I hope more organizations and Fashion Weeks will be working with it, because for change to happen it has to be on a more structural and systemic level. If we have several countries, entities and organizations working together towards the same goal, it can make a difference.

CIRCULAR CREATIVES



Company Name

The Useless Project

Website

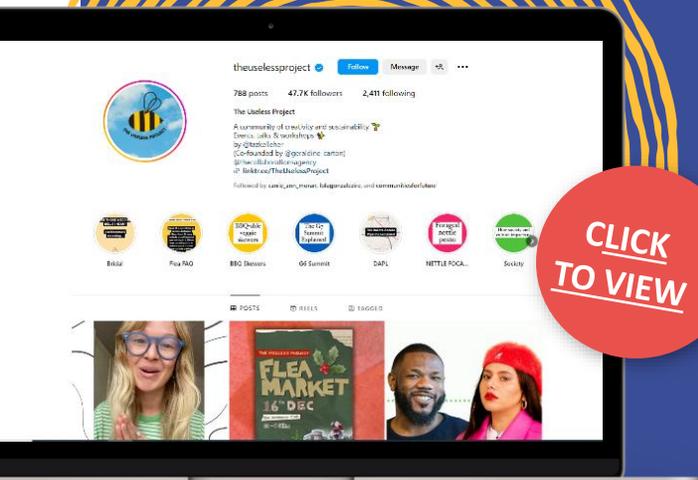
@theuselessproject

Country

Ireland



The Useless Project, founded by Taz Kelleher and Geraldine Carton in Dublin, Ireland, is an initiative focused on promoting sustainable living and the circular economy. The project addresses various environmental issues, with a primary goal of helping people reduce waste and feel empowered in the fight against climate change.





DESCRIPTION OF THE EVENT OR MARKETPLACE

The Useless Project hosts a number of vibrant and eco-conscious events throughout the year, with one of their main ones being their Flea Markets, which are held every month or so.

They bring together individuals, communities, and businesses committed to sustainable practices. This carefully curated gathering serves as a platform for promoting environmentally friendly choices and fostering a sense of community engagement as well as a zero waste mindset.

Some of the key features visitors can find at one of these flea markets are, 40+ stalls with a diverse range of second-hand and upcycled treasures, ranging from clothing and accessories to household items. The Flea Market encourages a circular economy by giving new life to preloved items.

The market also often features engaging DIY workshops where attendees can learn practical skills for upcycling, repairing and repurposing items.



MOTIVATION FOR BEING AN ENTREPRENEUR?

The inspiration behind embracing a circular, zero waste model comes from their shared concern for the environment and a desire to address the throwaway culture of today's society.

The Useless Project started off as a side project called 'Sustainable Fashion Dublin' when the pair shared an interest in sustainable fashion and thrifting. However, once their eyes were opened to the horrors of the fast fashion industry, they began to wonder what else is happening in the world that we don't realise. As Geraldine said, "it's inherently unsustainable to just focus on one area of life", so following a rebrand and a lot of work developing their events and social media presence the Useless Project now address issues like recycling, food waste and greenwashing by large corporations.

The now run events (including a monthly flea market!), workshops and provide a wide range of education and awareness-raising resources from DIY upcycling videos and sewing tutorials, to batch cooking recipes, climate justice deep-dives and listicles of their favourite sustainable brands in Ireland and beyond.

WHAT WERE THE MAIN CHALLENGES YOU FACED, AND HOW DID YOU OVERCOME THEM?.



“
A shift towards the circular approach is necessary, inevitable and a superior source of value creation”

Jamie Butterworth

One of the main challenges the Useless project faced was changing people’s mindsets in the throwaway culture of today, where daily decisions contribute to global greenhouse gas emissions. They acknowledged that while we can’t solely place the burden of change on consumers, it’s vital for everyone to play a role in responsible decision-making and waste reduction.

To tackle these challenges head-on, The Useless Project launched educational campaigns that specifically resonated in the vibrant atmosphere of their flea markets, providing practical insights into sustainable living.

Collaborating with local influencers became pivotal, as their impact extended to the heart of the markets, encouraging attendees to embrace positive change. Additionally, they embraced and crafted a positive and welcoming environment at the flea markets, turning them into spaces where individuals could engage in sustainable practices without the weight of the larger problem.

Their ongoing journey is centred on helping people use less and feel less ‘useless’ in the context of climate change with the markets acting as a catalyst for meaningful, sustainable choices and embracing the zero waste mindset.



Event/Festival Name

SNNTG

Country

Germany

Established

2017

SNNTG is a non-profit cultural association founded in 2017 with the aim of promoting art and culture in the Hanover region. "SNNTG aims to be a platform for art, music and other cultural projects that helps connect various cultural disciplines, practices and people from different fields," explains co-founder Philip Hellberg. The association wants to initiate participation in social interactions and activities as well as socio-political participation but remains politically independent.

One of the ways SNNTG achieves this is by offering a low-threshold cultural programme. The focus lies on collaborative, interdisciplinary work. Currently, the SNNTG association consists of nearly 80 volunteer members, among them students, trainees, freelancers and professionals, many of whom are involved in other collectives and (non-profit) associations as well.





DESCRIPTION OF YOUR BUSINESS/SERVICE?

The association is based in Hanover, and the SNNTG Festival takes place in the neighbouring town of Sehnde. The Wehmingen district is home to a historic tram museum, which temporarily becomes the festival's site. "The combination of a festival and historic tram museum is certainly unique," Hellberg says.

During the festival, guests can visit and ride historic trams and thus experience a part of the museum up close. The name of the festival comes from the German word for Sunday ("Sonntag").



THE CHALLENGE YOU FACE?

The festival doesn't have the financial means to pay for a CO2 analysis, Hellberg tells us. However, according to a CO2 analysis of the OpenAir St. Gallen, with which SNNTG is in contact, the arrival and departure of guests by car equates to a major portion of a festival's total emissions. Consequently, the aim for SNNTG Festival is to avoid its audience members, crew and artists travelling by car.

Many of SNNTG's visitors come from the Hanover region, so travelling with public transport is possible, says Hellberg. Yet, the question of how to transport their luggage must be solved. On their mission to cut out every car ride possible, the festival is also looking at the production transports, team travel and artist travel.



THE JOURNEY SO FAR - CHALLENGES FACED & HOW YOU HAVE OVERCOME.

SNNTG has several approaches to make the different areas of travel and transport more sustainable. For their audience, they provide information on how to get to the festival by bus, train and bike and encourage these forms of travel. "It takes about an hour to cycle from Hanover Central Station to the festival. There is a closer tram station in Kronsberg that is a 15-minute bike ride away," Hellberg describes. For guests arriving on bike, SNNTG provides cycling routes, offers a luggage shuttle and a joint bicycle arrival as a separate event. There is a free shuttle bus going to the festival site from the train station in Kronsberg for those without a bike. The festival does still offer car parking, but they have increased the prices to discourage arriving by car.

The team is always working on creating incentives for cycling. For 2022, they are turning the bicycle journey into an event, with stops for food and drink, possibly with music on the way. On site, the festival used to offer bikes for rent to the visitors thanks to a cooperation with the bicycle renting company Swapfiets. They could also be used to explore the region.

Hellberg regrets that the partnership couldn't be renewed for the 2022 edition as the COVID pandemic had simply made long-term planning impossible for the volunteer crew.

To reduce production travel emissions, the team ensures that there is as little car driving as possible by using bikes instead. During the set-up, execution and dismantling periods the crew borrows and uses cargo bikes.

SNNTG has a no-fly policy for artists and encourages them to come by train. To make this easier, they offer a shuttle service that brings artists from the train station to the festival site. As often as possible, the team uses electric cars for this. Up until the last edition, partner company MOIA ran this service with e-shuttles – but similarly to Swapfiets, the cooperation fell victim to the pandemic. For 2023, Hellberg and his team are keen to find new partners to renew their bike renting and shuttle services.



“It is absolutely worth it!”



LESSONS LEARNED?

Cooperating with MOIA and Swapfiets came without financial costs for the festival and enabled them to offer more sustainable services to their visitors. The shuttle service for the festival goes costs the festival a high our-digit sum though Hellberg says it “is absolutely worth it!” All these ideas were developed by the organisers, who then approached suitable partners to make it happen. To become more creative and find new ideas, they also got in touch with other festivals.

To implement travel and transport measures successfully, it is crucial to collaborate with suitable and committed partners, Hellberg says. However, some projects are still not (yet) viable for the festival because it lacks the required funding – for example to integrate free (regional) train tickets into the festival ticket. “When it comes to public transport, projects often fail because of the high prices,” Hellberg knows.

Another lesson learnt: “It’s important to make sustainable travel as convenient as possible, but if it’s necessary, be brave and put sustainability before convenience.”



PLANS & VISION FOR YOUR BUSINESS?

Within the next few years, SNNTG wants to achieve zero visitors coming by car. Additionally, the team wants to determine the festival’s emissions of CO2 equivalents and write or commission a comprehensive sustainability concept. To do that, SNNTG would like to get external advice as sustainability can be a very complex field to navigate through, Hellberg knows.

CIRCULAR CREATIVES

Company Name

Shedia Art

Date of Interview

26/10/2023

Contact Person

Popi Christopoulou

Email

project@akep.eu



DESCRIPTION OF YOUR BUSINESS/SERVICE?

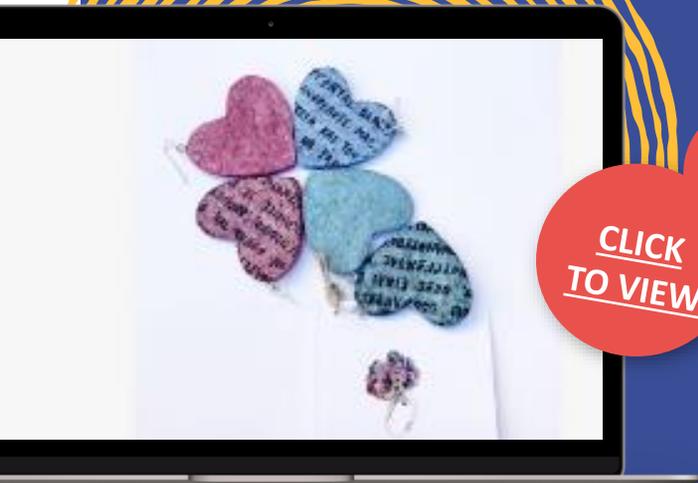
Shedia Art, established in 2017, is a unique initiative led by Christos Alefantis, focusing on the intersection of art, sustainability, and social responsibility. As a social cooperative, Shedia Art operates educational workshops, training marginalized individuals, including the homeless and long-term unemployed, in the recycling and transformation of unsold magazines and recyclable materials into useful products for retail and wholesale.

Shedia Art is a social cooperative dedicated to sustainable development and social services of general interest. Through educational workshops, the organization empowers marginalized individuals by training them in the art of recycling. Unsold magazines and recyclable materials are transformed into useful products, reflecting the organization's commitment to a circular, zero waste model.

MOTIVATION FOR BEING AN ENTREPRENEUR?

Christos Alefantis, Founder and Editorial Director of Shedia Art, expresses a deep commitment to both sustainable development and social services of general interest. The motivation behind Shedia Art lies in utilizing art and recycling to make a positive impact on the community, addressing both environmental and social challenges through a circular, zero waste model.

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“...through collaboration with local sustainable suppliers and comprehensive training for our artists, we successfully overcame these challenges”

Christos Alefantis Founder and Editorial Director of Shedia Street Magazine

THE JOURNEY SO FAR - CHALLENGES FACED & HOW YOU HAVE OVERCOME.



Shedia Art's journey has been marked by challenges in sourcing eco-friendly materials and educating the team on sustainable practices. However, these obstacles were overcome through collaboration with local sustainable suppliers and comprehensive training programs for artists, demonstrating the organization's resilience and adaptability.

BENEFITS YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED?



Embracing a circular, zero waste model has yielded substantial benefits for Shedia Art. The organization has significantly reduced its environmental footprint, garnered increased support from customers appreciating its commitment to sustainability, and witnessed positive transformations in the lives of the artists involved, fostering skills, empowerment, and social inclusion.

PLANS & VISION?



Shedia Art envisions expanding and engaging the broader community in creative processes. The organization plans to collaborate with more local artists and establish a physical circular art marketplace in Athens. This marketplace aims to provide educational and employment opportunities, allowing people to witness the creative journey, purchase sustainable handcrafted pieces, and experience dining areas, such as cafes, fostering a sustainable and inclusive future for all.



VMC

dles

Company Name

VMC Candles

Date of Interview

14/12/2023

Contact Person

Vinnie

Email

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TO VIEW

My name is Vinne and I'm a Chandler, which is a Candle Maker. I am the founder and owner of VMC Candles

DESCRIPTION OF YOUR BUSINESS

Handmade beautiful candles, made from coconut and rapeseed wax. We sell candles, wax melts, car fresheners, reed diffusers, wax burners and backflow incense burners. We make candles for different occasions for example, colored and scented wedding candles, party flavors, baby showers, and birthdays. We have some fun wax melts for the hen parties. For Halloween I made special candles, named Salem and Headless Horsemen. We have fun wax melts with bubble-gum fragrances!



Refilling the candle jars is one example; they can be refilled twice only due to safety reasons. After that, they can be reused for holding pens, jewellery etc.

Vinnie



THE JOURNEY SO FAR - CHALLENGES FACED & HOW YOU HAVE OVERCOME.



It started as a hobby just for me. I wanted nice some smells in the house. I went into business just under a year ago in 2023. For valentine's day, my friend wanted to give a gift to her boyfriend and asked me when I was going to start selling my candles, so I started then.

In the beginning I needed to test the candle holders to make sure they were safe and wouldn't break. I did a power burn for 15-16 hours to see if the glass is strong enough. This is not wasted because it makes my house smell lovely.

The wicks also needed to be tested. Different wicks are used based on candle diameters and contents. My products are in currently being sold in Roscommon shops - [Rummage](#) & JJs. I made a special Rummage candle for the Rummage shop.



MOTIVATION

We are looking at ways to embrace circularity in our business model. Refilling the candle jars is one example; they can be refilled twice only due to safety reasons. After that, they can be reused for holding pens, jewellery. They are really beautiful jars.

When there is a little leftover wax, it does not go to waste, we make small samples to give to customers, so we are trying to embrace a zero-waste model.

We're also exploring options for sustainable packaging.



One of my customers is allergic to both paraffin and soy. She is my best customer – she bought 15 wax melts yesterday!



BENEFITS YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED/POSITIVE IMPACTS?

VMC candles utilise sustainable materials such as rapeseed and coconut wax, offering an eco-friendly alternative to traditional candles. Paraffin, commonly used in other candles, is a by-product of petroleum extraction. Soy candles, although popular, necessitate the felling of trees and significant water consumption.

In contrast, rapeseed thrives in Ireland, providing a readily available resource that is gentle on the environment. Coconut wax also presents a natural and sustainable option that is both easily obtainable and vegan-friendly.

Furthermore, beeswax presents a viable alternative, notable for its natural fragrance, thus eliminating the need for added scents. This option became available when I was approached by a local church interested in beeswax candles.

With an increase in available space, I am now able to expand the production of these environmentally considerate candles.



PLANS & VISION FOR YOUR BUSINESS?

Looking ahead, the objective is to enhance our online presence. We plan to engage with potential customers through targeted social media advertisements to expand our reach. Regrettably, the unique fragrances of our candles cannot be conveyed through these ads, but we maintain visibility by sharing new content daily.

Awareness is crucial; without a consistent online presence, businesses can quickly fade from memory. To this end, we're nearing the completion of our website, vmccandles.ie, which will serve as an additional platform for our products. We are also exploring opportunities to stock our candles in a wider selection of retail outlets across Ireland.

Simultaneously, we are dedicating efforts to embrace more sustainable business practices, focusing on zero waste and circular economy principles to further our commitment to environmental responsibility.

Company Name

Salty Bag

Date of Interview

30/10/2023

Contact Person

Popi Christopoulou

Email

project@akep.eu



[CLICK
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Salty Bag is a pioneering upcycling company based in Greece, founded by Spyros Ntaikos. Specializing in creating bags and travel gear from sails with a rich history in the Greek seas, Salty Bag is distinguished by its commitment to upcycling and preserving the stories of each sail, documented in booklets accompanying their products.

Salty Bag is an innovative upcycling company with a mission to breathe new life into discarded sails from the Greek seas. Founder Spyros Ntaikos leverages his deep connection to Greece's maritime heritage, transforming decommissioned sails into unique bags and travel gear. The company's emphasis on craftsmanship, premium materials, and the preservation of each sail's story sets them apart in the upcycling space.

Spyros Ntaikos was inspired to start Salty Bag during a Corfu Sailing Club seminar in 2013, driven by a commitment to sustainability and a belief in creating products that last a lifetime. His motivation stems from a profound love for the sea and a desire to contribute to a circular economy by designing ultra-low impact, handcrafted, upcycled bags.



Even after reaching its end of life at sea, a sail retains its strong, long-lasting, weather-resistant nature, making it perfect for upcycling

Spyros Ntaikos-Founder of Salty Bag



THE JOURNEY SO FAR - CHALLENGES FACED & HOW YOU HAVE OVERCOME.



Salty Bag's journey has been one of creativity and innovation, creatively reusing decommissioned sails, kites, and parachutes. Challenges have likely included sourcing and handling materials with a rich maritime history. Successes lie in the company's unwavering focus on using the best and strongest materials while incorporating reusability into every design.



BENEFITS YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED?

Salty Bag's approach to upcycling extends the life of sails, reduces the need for new materials, and promotes sustainability. The documentation of each sail's history adds a unique and meaningful aspect to their products, contributing to the preservation of Greece's maritime heritage and encouraging eco-friendly choices.



PLANS & VISION?

Salty Bag envisions continuing to create exceptional upcycled products that resonate with individuals appreciating sustainability, history, and unique design. The company aims to expand its product range by collaborating with talented artisans and designers who share their commitment to sustainability. In addition to their product line, Salty Bag aims to create awareness about the potential of discarded materials and inspire a sustainable lifestyle.

"We place a strong emphasis on craftsmanship, premium materials, and the time needed to create something unique."

Spyros Ntaikos-Founder

CIRCULAR CREATIVES



Company Name

The Strandhill People's Market

Website

<http://strandhillpeoplesmarket.ie/>

Country

Ireland

Helping small businesses to grow and scale. A Weekly event open to the public where you can support artists, food producers & crafters in a community atmosphere.





DESCRIPTION OF THE EVENT OR MARKETPLACE

Strandhill People's Market is not just a market; it's a celebration of local creativity and commerce. Every week, they open their doors, offering a diverse array of local crafts, foods, and textiles.

From European and Asian cuisine to home-baked goods, fair trade coffee, and handmade crafts, the market caters to a wide range of tastes and preferences. Set against the stunning backdrop of Knocknarea Mountain, providing a unique and inviting atmosphere for the community.



MOTIVATION FOR BEING AN ENTREPRENEUR?

At Strandhill People Market, the inspiration to adopt a circular, zero waste model is driven by their deep commitment to environmental sustainability and the values of our community. Recognising the global environmental challenges, they aspire to lead by example, demonstrating that commerce can coexist harmoniously with responsible environmental practices.

The plan is to create a marketplace that not only supports local businesses but also serves as a responsible custodian of the environment, contributing to the global effort to reduce waste and foster sustainability.

WHAT WERE THE MAIN CHALLENGES YOU FACED, AND HOW DID YOU OVERCOME THEM?.



“
A shift towards the circular approach is necessary, inevitable and a superior source of value creation”

Jamie Butterworth

Transitioning to a more circular, zero waste model at Strandhill People Market has been an ongoing journey, marked by both progress and challenges.

One notable challenge has been coordinating with vendors across diverse stalls to shift towards more sustainable practices. While they have made strides in this direction, it remains an ongoing effort that requires continuous communication, education, and collaboration to ensure a collective commitment to waste reduction.

Infrastructure adjustments, particularly in implementing effective waste separation and disposal systems, have been part of the ongoing initiatives. Strategic investments in infrastructure, coupled with ongoing support and education for vendors, are helping them address this aspect.

Tailoring solutions to the specific needs of each stall and fostering a shared commitment to sustainability have proven crucial in overcoming these challenges.



CIRCULAR CREATIVES

Company Name

The New Raw- The Zero Waste Lab Thessaloniki

Date of Interview

24/10/2023

Contact Person

Popi Christopoulou

Email

project@akep.eu



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The New Raw, a Rotterdam-based research and design studio, is at the forefront of innovative sustainability projects. Co-founder Panos Sakkas leads the organization, and one of their groundbreaking initiatives is the Zero Waste Lab Thessaloniki. This project empowers Greek citizens to upcycle plastic waste into urban furniture, showcasing the potential of 3D printing for sustainable solutions in Thessaloniki.

DESCRIPTION OF YOUR BUSINESS

The Zero Waste Lab Thessaloniki, initiated by The New Raw, is a pioneering project focused on transforming plastic waste into valuable urban furniture. Utilizing 3D printing technology, the initiative empowers citizens to actively contribute to a circular economy by designing and creating long-lasting, high-value applications from recycled plastic. The project aims to redefine public spaces in Thessaloniki, Greece, through innovative and sustainable design.

MOTIVATION

Panos Sakkas, co-founder of The New Raw, expresses a deep motivation rooted in addressing environmental challenges posed by plastic waste. Recognizing the design failure of plastic as often single-use and contributing to pollution, the Zero Waste Lab Thessaloniki was conceived to provide an innovative and sustainable alternative, actively involving citizens in shaping a circular economy.



We aim to recycle four tons of plastic waste over the project's duration, equivalent to what 14 family households in Greece typically produce

PANOS SAKKAS
Co- founder of The New Raw



THE JOURNEY SO FAR - CHALLENGES FACED & HOW YOU HAVE OVERCOME.

The Zero Waste Lab Thessaloniki's journey began with prototypes introduced in 2018, aiming to engage citizens and gather feedback. Challenges in the production process were addressed by optimizing the quality of materials and production efficiency. The project has evolved to the second phase, opening the lab to citizens, marking a significant milestone in overcoming initial hurdles.



BENEFITS YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED/POSITIVE IMPACTS?

The launch of the second phase of the Zero Waste Lab Thessaloniki has resulted in substantial benefits. Citizens actively participate in plastic recycling and circular economy education, designing new furniture for their communities. The project not only reduces plastic waste but also empowers citizens to shape their city's public spaces according to their unique needs and preferences, promoting a healthier and environmentally friendly urban lifestyle.



PLANS & VISION FOR YOUR BUSINESS?

The future vision for The New Raw involves continued citizen empowerment and circular initiatives. The project's website, "Print Your City," plays a pivotal role in engaging citizens and informing them about plastic recycling requirements for their designs. The organization aims to reduce plastic waste, expand circular initiatives, and create a more sustainable and environmentally friendly urban environment through active citizen involvement and innovative design solutions.



Company Name

Lydia Clayton Goldsmith

Date of Interview

December 2023

Contact Person

Lydia Clayton

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DESCRIPTION OF YOUR BUSINESS

I design & create contemporary, high-end, hand-crafted jewellery for a discerning clientele that wishes to collect or gift unique pieces, which are individually inspired & one of a kind. I design and create bespoke engagement rings. I re-imagine/ the design of wedding & engagement rings, creating an engaging point of difference. I redesign heirlooms and/or other treasured jewellery, for those who want pieces of sentimental value reimagined and turned into something contemporary and new while still preserving precious memories.

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MOTIVATION

When I redesign a piece, I could use materials from 4 or 5 different pieces of jewellery and melt it down into one piece

Lydia

I know that I can use all my resources so that nothing goes to waste but my main reason for adopting a circular model is that I am able to create more sustainable and innovative piece for my clientele. When I redesign a piece, I could use materials from 4 or 5 different pieces of jewellery and melt it all down into one piece.



THE JOURNEY SO FAR - CHALLENGES YOU HAVE FACED

Some of the biggest challenges I faced were my self to be honest. Knowing that everything is on you and that you are responsible for all the work – Especially when you are starting out can be very daunting. Having self-belief is a huge thing. You can do anything you put your mind to – but sometimes your mind can be your enemy. Working with a coach had helped me with my confidence and my self belief and it allows me to work on projects I didn't think I could do.



BENEFITS YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED?

Some of the impacts I have made is redesigning old pieces and heirlooms for people. This jewellery could be 20-30 years old and being able to redesign it into something more modern is such an experience and I love seeing the reaction of the clientele when the piece is finished. Some benefits to my work are that I get to showcase my work in a national gallery up in Dublin for multiple people to see, so that really helps get the word out there about my business.



PLANS & VISION?

I would love to open my own workshop studio and have people come in a visit to view and buy my pieces. I would also love to design special and unique pieces for Irish celebrities in the future.



CIRCULAR CREATIVES

convert art

is the art of upcycling

Company Name

ConvertArt

Date of Interview

01/11/2023

Contact Person

Popi Christopoulou

Email

project@akep.eu



ConvertArt is a Greek startup founded by Marina Griponisioti, specializing in the upcycling of materials into stylish jewelry, accessories, and design objects. The company's collections, including Urban, Freight, Luxury, Comfort, and Cruises, feature handcrafted items made from recycled inner tubes, tires, electrical equipment, wood, and aluminum.

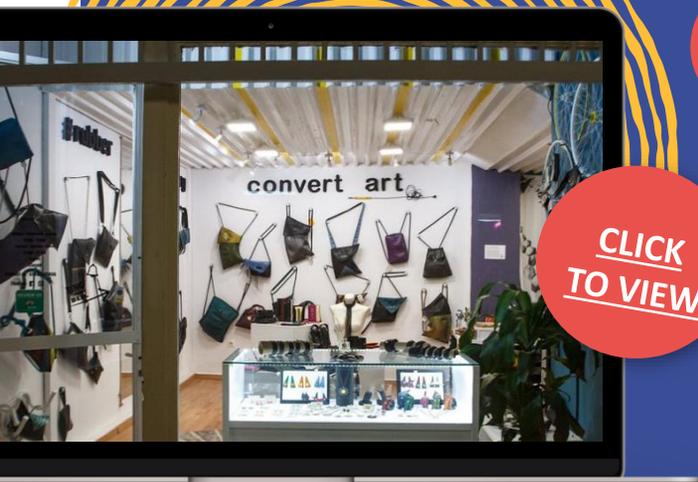
DESCRIPTION OF YOUR BUSINESS

ConvertArt is dedicated to transforming discarded materials into fashionable and eco-friendly creations. The company's product range includes handmade accessories, bags, jewelry, wallets, agendas, tobacco cases, and coasters. By exclusively using recycled materials, ConvertArt aims to challenge the conventional view of waste and demonstrate that upcycled items can be both environmentally friendly and fashion-forward.

MOTIVATION

Marina Griponisioti's journey as an entrepreneur began unexpectedly in 2012 when she transformed an old motorcycle tire into a stylish belt. This sparked her passion for upcycling, and the positive feedback from friends and clients encouraged her to establish ConvertArt. The motivation behind the business is deeply rooted in challenging the traditional notion of waste and showcasing the potential for discarded materials to be given new life as stylish and environmentally responsible products.

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“The company has successfully created various collections and products, overcoming obstacles through innovation and a commitment to maintaining the quality and safety of their items”.

Marina Griponisioti Profession: Founder and Designer at ConvertArt

THE JOURNEY SO FAR - CHALLENGES FACED & HOW YOU HAVE OVERCOME.



The journey of ConvertArt has been marked by creativity and experimentation. The founder, Marina Griponisioti, highlights the challenges faced in the upcycling process and the need for continuous experimentation. Despite these challenges, the company has successfully created various collections and products, overcoming obstacles through innovation and a commitment to maintaining the quality and safety of their items.

BENEFITS YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED?



One of the primary benefits of ConvertArt's upcycling approach is breathing new life into discarded materials, preventing them from ending up in landfills. The company's meticulous cleaning process ensures that their products are not only stylish but also eco-friendly and safe for customers. The positive impact lies in reducing the environmental footprint of waste and offering consumers unique, handmade, and environmentally responsible alternatives.

PLANS & VISION?



Looking ahead, ConvertArt envisions continuing to create unique and stylish upcycled products. The company believes in the value of handmade items in a world dominated by mass production. With a store in the Psyrri district in Athens and an online presence, ConvertArt plans to expand its reach and continue showcasing its commitment to stylish and eco-friendly design. The vision is to contribute to the fashion and design industry by offering distinctive, environmentally responsible products that appeal to various ages and lifestyles.



CIRCULAR CREATIVES

Company Name

Rediscovery Centre

Date of Interview

November 2023

Contact Person

Claire Downey

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info@rediscoverycentre.ie
Policy & Research Director



 **REDISCOVER**
CENTRE

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Claire Downey, as the Policy & Research Director, oversees the research and education teams at the Rediscovery Centre, which is recognised nationally as a leading institution for the circular economy. The Centre is dedicated to advancing this economy through education, demonstration, advocacy, and collaboration.

Within the educational remit, the Centre's team develops workshops that are aligned with primary, secondary, and university level curricula, promoting the principles of the circular economy. As a demonstration centre, all activities are centred around circular practices. There are workshops focusing on the reuse and repair of textiles, furniture, bicycles, and paint, showcasing practical applications of the circular economy.

In addition to these hands-on demonstrations, the Rediscovery Centre's research division is committed to creating evidence that informs policy change, underpinning their advocacy efforts. Collaboration is a key strategy for the Centre, working alongside state agencies and community groups to effectively engage the public with the concepts and benefits of the circular economy.



Running of a Marketplace

The Rediscovery Centre annually hosts a Christmas craft fair, which is designed to blend a mainstream activity with the promotion of sustainable living. A Christmas craft fair is quite common during the festive season, but the Centre's unique approach ensures that all products featured are circular, zero waste, or sustainable. This strategy not only draws people with a familiar concept but also introduces them to sustainable options, offering exposure to circular practices within the context of Christmas—a period typically associated with high consumption.

In 2023, the event was particularly successful, attracting over 400 visitors. The regular hosting of such events over the years has been strategic, steadily building interest and enhancing the Centre's ability to effectively communicate the importance of circular and sustainable practices to a growing audience.



What inspired you to run a zero waste market?

The Rediscovery Centre is well-known for its commitment to zero waste, integral to its operational activities. It is dedicated to fostering the circular economy, prioritising citizen engagement and wide-reaching communications. To connect with a range of audiences and interest groups, the Centre employs a variety of outreach strategies.

Located in Ballymun, an area faced with social challenges, the Centre understands the importance of community ties. It leverages popular events to draw individuals of different backgrounds, using such gatherings as an opportunity to exhibit sustainable creativity and innovation.

The Centre itself is celebrated for its creative atmosphere, which serves as a source of inspiration for visitors. This environment has been instrumental in shaping a model that not only motivates but also educates visitors on the value and practices of sustainability and innovation.



It's just so fantastic to see people being inspired and seeing how creativity can be a great channel for communication.

**Claire,
Policy & Research Director
Rediscovery Centre**



Success Stories & Challenges

Claire Downey, the Policy & Research Director, has been working at the Centre for two years and played a key role in its development. Claire finds it an immensely inspiring place, observing that visitors often leave radiant with inspiration after touring the facility. This highlights how creativity can be an effective medium for communication.

Under her guidance, the Centre has seen a positive trend of visitors returning for courses and individuals initiating their own projects. A significant initiative led by her involves engaging community members to support them over the course of a year in starting new reuse or repair projects, yielding impressive results. The success of these projects is largely due to the Centre's environment that fosters circular and creative thinking, enhancing their effectiveness.

Furthermore, in her role, Claire has been instrumental in the operation of the Centre's EcoStore, which focuses on stocking and promoting circular products. A rigorous screening process has been developed under her direction to ensure the authenticity of these products, crucial in maintaining the Centre's commitment to genuine sustainability and avoiding greenwashing. She also acknowledges and addresses the challenge of the perception that circular and zero waste products are more costly, demonstrating the Centre's commitment to making sustainable choices accessible.



Success Stories & Challenges

It's acknowledged that while it's not always the case, circular products can sometimes be more expensive. However, the Centre strives for a balance by offering low-cost items as well. An example of this is the sale of remixed paint, created from surplus, water-based paint collected from recycling centres. This recycled paint is sold at about a third of the price of new paint, making it an affordable option for consumers.

The Centre recognises that some upcycled items, despite being of high quality and beautifully crafted, may be priced higher due to the time and effort invested in their creation. Addressing the public's perception of the cost of circular products is challenging and requires time. However, the success of recent events at the Centre indicates that these challenges are manageable and are being actively considered in their approach.



Future Plans

The Centre is currently developing a new initiative, a food surplus cafe, which extends beyond just a specific event. This cafe will demonstrate a zero waste model, meaning that it will not produce waste itself. Additionally, it aims to utilise 'unwanted' vegetables and fruits, often described as wrinkly, ugly, or simply surplus, sourced from local markets that would otherwise discard them. These ingredients will be creatively incorporated into the cafe's menu.

The objective for the next year is to expand the cafe's offerings to include not only dishes made from these reclaimed ingredients but also possibly a range of preserves and other innovative examples of preserved foods. This initiative is not just about providing food; it's an educational tool to change perceptions about food and food waste, demonstrating how to maximise the use of available ingredients.





*Future Plans?
Zero Waste Café coming up...*

Claire Downey
Policy & Research Director



Tips for setting up and making your market more green

Claire emphasises the importance of screening products, a critical aspect of their approach. In addition to this, they highlight the Centre's focus on engaging activities, particularly in light of the irony of selling products while advocating for reduced consumption. Although most items sold at the Centre are made from materials that would have otherwise been wasted, the act of purchasing still remains.

To counter this, the Centre has organised 'make your own' events at marketplaces, teaching people how to utilise materials they already have at home, thereby eliminating the need to buy new items. For instance, one such activity involved creating wreaths from the rims of paint lids and hessian from unwanted coffee sacks. This not only imparts practical skills to participants but also demonstrates how creativity can lead to significant reductions in consumption.

Furthermore, the Centre has introduced a Christmas jumper swap rail, where people can exchange their jumpers at no cost. This initiative serves as a simple yet effective way to inspire and remind people that it's not always about purchasing new items. These activities align well with the Centre's ethos and complement their events effectively.

Company Name

Doda Pčelarica

Date of Interview

25 October 2023

Contact Person

Doris Banić owner and apitherapist

Email

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Doris Banić is the owner of the company Doda Pčelarica, BeeLand, and runs the Bee4U project. She is a certified apitherapist. Doris invites her guests to try her professional treatments in her apiary located on the slopes of the Krka River, in Dubravice near Skradin.

OPG Banić is an enterprise located in Dubravice - Skradin. Doris is a member of the company and together they have been developing activities at OPG for years. The farm is engaged in beekeeping, the production of olives, vineyard - grapes, and the cultivation of honey and medicinal plants. They sell their products on the market by selling them directly to their customers.





DESCRIPTION OF YOUR BUSINESS/SERVICE?

As parents of three children, we wanted to eat as healthy as possible by consuming our farm-produced products, so we decided to replace sugar with natural honey after some research. In the beginning, we had just a few beehives but now we have grown to 50. At the start, it was to obtain honey for personal needs, but we fell in love with these little creatures, so it grew into a relationship. The more we realized how vulnerable bees are, the more we grew to love them. Now we feel somewhat responsible for them. Because our welfare will be affected by what we do for them today. We produce honey, and natural cosmetics with honey and bee pollen. In addition, we also provide apitherapy, and educational workshops for children.



MOTIVATION FOR BEING AN ENTREPRENEUR?

In dealing with bees, I realized that environmental pollution has a bad effect on people and nature and directly affects bees and all other pollinators. How alarming the situation is also shown by the fact that regulations and laws are being passed for their protection and the measures that need to be taken. Pollen and nectar as the basic food for bees are threatened, and then so are we humans who depend on their survival. Waste products, impurities, and pesticides react in the atmosphere and produce harmful substances. Air quality is reduced due to pollution, so pollinators suffer from disorientation and cannot find recognizable smells that mean life to them and us. Bees, like many pollinators, know where the air is clean, so we can use them as an indicator of pollution. Wild landfills, pesticides, fires, and the reduction of areas under meadows and forests threaten the survival of pollinators. Taking all this into consideration, we decided to be different, to minimize our negative impact on the environment, and to embrace a circular model.



THE JOURNEY SO FAR - CHALLENGES FACED & HOW YOU HAVE OVER COME.

Climate changes that are directly related to human action on nature, large fires that force bees to migrate, and the sensitivity of bees that start to get sick because of all the above results in that every year is not profitable, which is not very motivating for further work. Due to this, the costs are increasing, and the profitability of beekeeping falls. The fact is that those who want to engage in beekeeping for the sake of earning can immediately give up. For us, it has become a love and a bit of an obsession to help them. In addition to training and reading a lot of literature, we realized that this is a job that we cannot do alone. We need the whole community. One of the main tasks is to convince people through education that a responsible approach to nature benefits us all, not just those who are engaged in beekeeping.



„An emotional connection with pollinators and empathy are the main tools in motivating people towards change and encouraging them to become active.“



BENEFITS YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED/POSITIVE IMPACTS?

You can only work with bees if you love them. Each beehive is a small universe that is incredibly organized. When the conditions are ideal, they reward you with endless flowing honey, pollination, and other products. As a result, every flower or fruit tree you plant near the apiary will thank you with a lush canopy available for you to consume.

Recently, many organizations have been talking about the threat to bees so many have started to have their initiatives to protect them. This movement has made us all very proud. We are doing our best to educate and protect bee populations in our community.



PLANS & VISION FOR YOUR BUSINESS?

The plan is to arrange BeeLand as an educational resting place in nature, an apiary where everyone can learn something about the importance of preserving nature and the environment of bees. Visitors would come to get information and knowledge on how they can contribute to a better environment.

For example, they would sort food waste that can be used as material for high-quality fertilizer that is used in gardens to improve the health of plants. These plants become food for the bees. In addition, a seedling of a local plant can be purchased which they can plant in their yard or at the apiary itself. From the flower of this local tree, a tea can be made. We will make and drink tea sitting under the shade of the same tree. In conclusion, those coming would learn the cycle of benefits from a small bee to a tree to us.

Another plan includes workshops in making natural products from plants in our apiary such as balm from beeswax and medicine from medicinal plants in the apiary. The aim is to present how much we benefit from nature if we preserve it, the natural content of the balm presents a chemical-free product, and there can be no waste in the production of items. Emotional connection with the pollinators and empathy are the main tools in motivating people for change and encouraging them to become active.



Company Name

Fortress of Culture Šibenik

Date of Interview

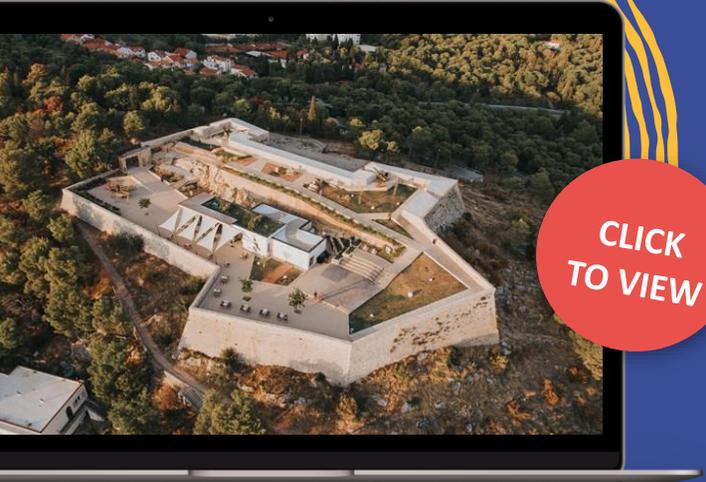
20 October 2023

Contact Person

Gorana Barišić Bačelić, director of Fortress of Culture Šibenik

Email

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The Fortress of Culture in Šibenik was established in June 2016. It evolved from the Department for the Management of Fortification System Facilities within the Šibenik City Museum, which was founded in 2014.

Today, this institution is for the management of three meticulously restored buildings in Šibenik fortresses which are St. Michael's, Barone, and St. John's Fortress.

Furthermore, from June 2023, we manage the Croatian Coral Center on Zlarin, where the centuries-old tradition of coral cultivation on this small island in the Šibenik archipelago is presented in an innovative and captivating manner.

The Fortress of Culture also administers City Point, the information center for Šibenik's fortresses, promoting the various activities and programs held at the fortresses while serving as a ticket sales point in the Šibenik city center. Fortress of Culture is a synonym for excellence in cultural heritage management and cultural events organization.



DESCRIPTION OF YOUR BUSINESS/SERVICE?

During 2020 and 2021, the Fortress of Culture Šibenik was a partner in the Šibenik Zero Waste City project, which arose from the need for a more comprehensive approach to waste management. The project included the organization of numerous volunteer activities, educational workshops, and the procurement of solutions for collecting and reducing the disposal of plastic waste in the environment with the main goal of raising awareness among citizens - with a focus on young people - about the importance of environmental protection. In this way, 15 bins for separating waste were placed on the fortresses, educational workshops were designed and held by the Eco Guardians of Šibenik, in which children are reminded through various tasks of the amount of waste we create to encourage them to actively participate in reducing it themselves through the principle: reduce, reuse, recycle.

Also, by introducing reusable cups instead of disposable plastic cups, they directly influenced the reduction of the amount of plastic waste at their locations. Specially designed cups for multiple use made of polypropylene had their premiere at St Michael's Fortress and the Let's Rock Festival in 2020. For a deposit, visitors collect their glass when buying a drink at the bars in the fortress, and at the next order, the used glass is exchanged for a clean one, which is made possible thanks to the Zero Waste catering station, i.e. the glass washing station. At the end of use, visitors can return the glass and make a deposit refund or keep it (without a deposit refund) as concert memorabilia. Thus, symbolically, event visitors are made aware of the responsible attitude towards waste and the environment.



MOTIVATION FOR BEING AN ENTREPRENEUR?

The adoption of a circular business model without waste is motivated by many important reasons that simultaneously bring benefits to the individual, the community, and the environment. Thus, our main motivations are a contribution to the preservation of the environment and the reduction of pollution, saving resources, increasing awareness of consumer habits with their consequences, and encouraging positive changes in the community by making visitors aware of sustainability.



THE JOURNEY SO FAR - CHALLENGES FACED & HOW YOU HAVE OVER COME.

One of the challenges that we successfully overcame at the institution was related to creating a sustainable environment and reducing waste in daily work. With a team decision, we decided to take small steps forward. Thus, in 2020, we abolished bins for personal waste in offices and created a recycling yard, by using printers more economically, we reduced the consumption of printing paper by more than 80% and reduced the costs of office cleaning services by 40%. We recently acquired a small composter for the office.



If you don't change the drink, you don't change the glass either

Adventura organizers



BENEFITS YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED/POSITIVE IMPACTS?

Educational workshops on waste reduction and recycling are included in our educational workshop program for children, My Fortress of Knowledge; a direct result of the use of reusable cups at the Fortress reduced plastic waste during the past 4 concert seasons - approximately 50,000 disposable glasses per season at the fortress would have ended up in waste if we had not introduced multi-purpose ones; the turnaround in business contributes to the branding of the institution as an eco-friendly organizer of cultural programs; and at the same time we managed to create an internal eco-friendly business culture in the institution.



PLANS & VISION FOR YOUR BUSINESS?

Our activities are based on a modern approach to the sustainable management of cultural assets, which means that we continue to think and in the coming period plan to introduce new sustainable solutions at our locations - from smart waste sorting containers, composters, greening of fortress surfaces, introduction of efficient lighting systems.



CIRCULAR CREATIVES

Company Name

Tourist Board Zlarin

Date of Interview

25 October 2023

Contact Person

Sineva Grabić, director of Tourist Board Zlarin

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CLICK
TO VIEW

Zlarin is a small, undiscovered gem on the coast of Šibenik with untouched nature and an extremely rich cultural and historical heritage. Due to its geographical position, it has always had a significant strategic role as the guardian of the entrance to the channel of St. Ante and guardian of the city of Šibenik.

This green island with a total length of 8.19 km² will enchant you as soon as you enter the port, which is naturally protected from the south and northeast winds, thus attracting many sailors. The benefits of the sea and vegetation are seen at every step, and the silence that stretches across the island is only disturbed by the cry of seagulls, the call of pheasants, the chirping of woodpeckers or the hoot of an owl. It is also important to point out that there are about 2,700 hours of sunshine here per year, making it one of the sunniest islands in the Adriatic.



DESCRIPTION OF YOUR BUSINESS/SERVICE?

The initiative "Zlarin without plastic" was launched by volunteers from the organization La Révolution Albatros with the strong support of local authorities, and trade businesses from Zlarin.

The goal of the initiative is for Zlarin to become an island without single-use plastic and to encourage other communities to initiate and introduce changes that are necessary for a sustainable way of life.

The term "single-use plastic" includes all types of plastic that are used only once such as straws, cups, lids, plates, cutlery, bags, decorative items for cocktails/ice cream, and the like.



MOTIVATION FOR BEING AN ENTREPRENEUR?

The idea for the initiative developed during the summer of 2018, when it became apparent how much single-use plastic waste is produced during the summer season. The organization La Révolution Albatros, in cooperation with the Tourist Board of Zlarin, organized a well-attended screening of the documentary film "Plastic Ocean", and the first successful concert without single-use plastics - "Andreja, Rundek and Ftičeki" - was held, for which CupUp System from Pazin provided reusable plastic cups. These two events showed that there is interest in a different approach.

With the support of local businesses and authorities, Ana Robb wrote the project "For Zlarin without plastic" and submitted it to Adriatic Plastic Challenge where it won the first prize!



Plastic Free Zlarin Charter

Sineva Grabić

Director of Tourist Board Zlarin



Sustainability is the key.

Sineva Grabić, director of Tourist Board



THE JOURNEY SO FAR - CHALLENGES FACED & HOW YOU HAVE OVER COME.

After the Adriatic Plastic Challenge, the team started contacting producers and distributors of substitute products, creating educational materials for residents and tourists, and negotiating with local artisans and associations about the use of substitute products. In March 2019, all local stakeholders signed the Plastic Free Zlarin Charter, which committed them to:

- Adhere to a verbal agreement not to use single-use plastics in their business
- Highlight the poster and logo "For Zlarin without plastic" and support and promote the initiative during all cultural and entertainment events in Zlarin.

The beginning of the summer season was marked by the release of the educational video "Take a Break from plastic!" The goal of the video is to raise public awareness of the existence and size of the problem of sea and ocean pollution with plastic and simple everyday solutions to reduce pollution.

All local associations and craftsmen agreed to use substitute products, even though it was a little more difficult at the beginning, e.g. especially to stop the use of small plastic bags in shops, which were much cheaper, and replace them with more expensive canvass ones. Every change is difficult at the beginning, but with education, everyone immediately agreed and started a project together, which we believe has greatly helped to remove single-use plastic.



BENEFITS YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED/POSITIVE IMPACTS?

Today, canvas bags are used for going to our stores, the food is packed in paper bags, and single-use plastic is completely out of use!



PLANS & VISION FOR YOUR BUSINESS?

We continuously strive to raise everyone's awareness about living with less waste and generally raising awareness about the amount of waste we produce, about plastic pollution, about biodiversity and a sustainable way of life.



Company Name

Nathan Huggins – Freelance Artist

Date of Interview

12/1/2024

Contact Person

Nathan Huggins

Email

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My name is Nathan Huggins and I'm a Freelance Artist. I specialise in pet portraits but I'm open to a multitude of designs and mediums such as Pencil, ink, and chalk for drawing, Oil, tempera, and watercolour for painting. I also create sculptures using clay and plaster Paris.





DESCRIPTION OF YOUR BUSINESS/SERVICE?

I've been interested in Art for as long as I can remember. I really wanted to do something in art for work so when I completed my science degree I pursued a course in Art and Design in Galway University to help me upskill and network. In early 2022 I began taking commissions from friends and family. I started out just doing landscapes and nature, but after my dogs passed I drew a portrait of them for my family. It was received very positively so I then started to do commissions for pets.



MOTIVATION FOR EMBRACING A CIRCULAR, ZERO WASTE MODEL?

In my last place of employment, a lot of packaging from stock was thrown away, and I knew from my Art course that I was able to make use of most of the waste that was thrown out. Almost all recyclable packaging and waste such as cardboard, greyboard and newspaper can be used to create sculptures, be used in print work, or can be used as a canvas for painting.

Adopting this practice has allowed me to cut back on expenses as I no longer need to buy canvases to paint on. Instead, I can use almost any box I come across instead of throwing it away. Waste becomes an opportunity this way. It also means I produce a lot more work as I don't fear making a mistake with materials that are considered "waste".

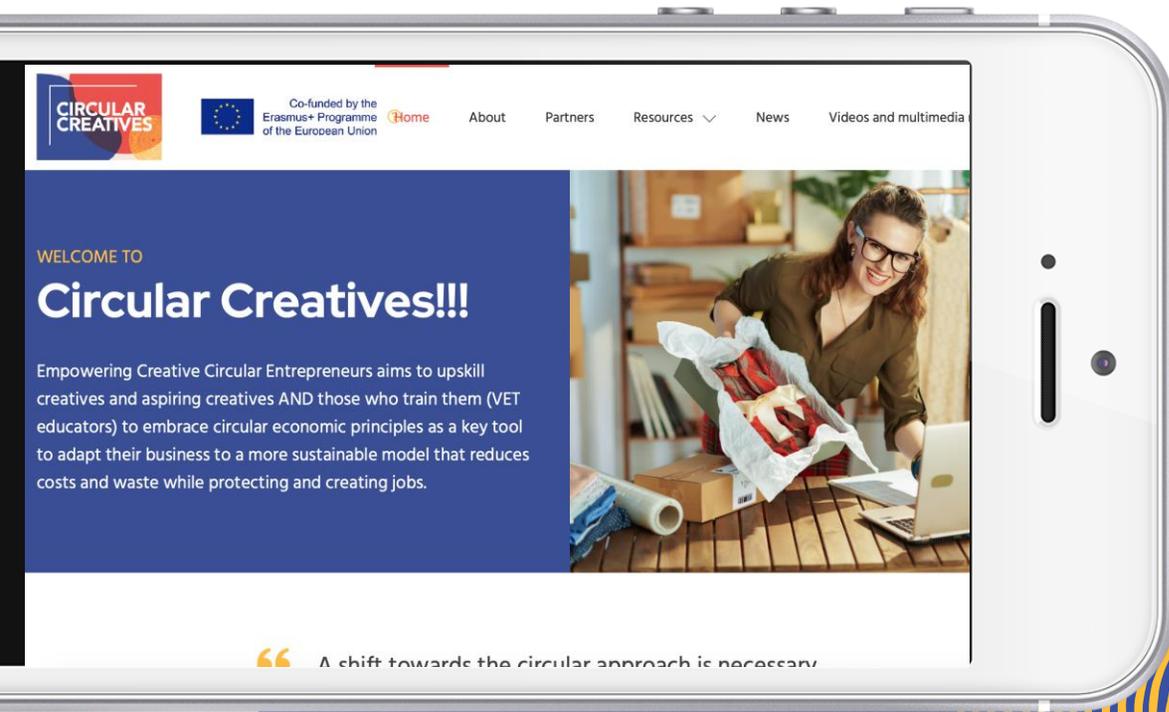


“Waste becomes an opportunity this way”



WHAT ARE YOUR PLAS FOR FURTHERING SUSTAINABILITY IN YOUR BUSINESS OR INITIATIVE

I would like to lean towards more zero waste-friendly mediums. For example, I would like to experiment with package-free paint or watercolors. Where I can't buy package free I would like to buy from a local and sustainable brand that creates packaging that can be recycled or reused.



Please explore the other Circular Creatives resources, the [ECCE Knowledge Sharing Platform](#), The [Creatives and Job Opportunities Exploratory Panels](#) and the [Circular Creatives Online Course](#).