

Go Full Circle 2022 Boroondara case studies

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About the program

The Go Full Circle program is aimed at helping small businesses to learn circular economy principles and balance economic, environmental and social objectives. It is designed for small and medium-sized businesses in the hospitality, retail, and professional services industries.

We delivered the Go Full Circle program in partnership with City of Melbourne and City of Stonnington.

Developing the Boroondara business case studies

Eleven Boroondara businesses completed the program in its first year in 2022. Participants were invited to prepare a case study as part of the course. Six of the 11 Boroondara businesses that completed the program prepared case studies, which are included in this document.

Case Studies

Cannings Butchers

Retail butcher chain with 9 stores located across Melbourne's eastern suburbs. The Cannings Group has been operating for twelve years. Chief Operating Officer Caroline Gill and Project Manager Joseph Lynch participated in the first Go Full Circle program in 2022.



What the business does, customers, goals

Cannings are retail butchers on a mission to provide high-welfare produce, guided by their values and commitment to what's right. Their motto is to lead positive change. The business's guiding principle is to care for its team, customers, and the produce they source. Their goal is to exceed expectations and drive positive and innovative change. Cannings aims to be a leader in providing high welfare, ethically sourced produce, with a commitment to continuous improvement throughout the business. Guided by their B-Corp certification and internal benchmarks, they strive for positive growth and impact.

The business's customers are located around the eastern suburbs of Melbourne: Boroondara, Stonnington, Yarra City, Banyule & Whitehorse councils. Their target groups are focused on quality, convenience, and ethics, with customers ages varying from 25-85. With a focus on delivering quality products, Cannings customers respect their premium pricing position. Their customers tend to shop locally and appreciate the seven-day and longer trading hours to accommodate their busy lifestyles.

Why did they decide to do the Go Full Circle program, and what did they want to achieve?

Cannings joined the program as soon as they heard about it. They are keen to network with like-minded businesses, and to initiate and improve sustainable practices that can make positive differences in their operations and for their customers.

Number of circular opportunities identified during the program

During the program, Caroline and Joseph identified eleven new potential circular initiatives that could benefit the business and its customers.

Chosen lead circular initiative

The Circular Initiative that Cannings settled on tackling first was implementing a composting waste stream for food waste and other compostable materials. The general goal of Cannings is to develop and implement a comprehensive circular strategy for the business with a number of compounding initiatives.

Why did your business choose this particular opportunity?

In building their circular strategy, Cannings selected this opportunity as composting is currently being evaluated and verified, and there's a clearly defined need. Furthermore, composting satisfies the re-earth 'R' clearly (of the 12 R's). It can be managed locally and is not highly resource-intensive to implement. The business will use this as a case study for broader, more complex and longer-term implementations of its Circular Strategy.

How might this opportunity be “newsworthy”?

Whilst Cannings deem that their first selected Circular Initiative won't be newsworthy in isolation, they have a bigger vision. Within their more extensive plan, this first step will serve as an example of their intentions, and a symbol of their pledge to move toward circularity with staff, customers and suppliers. It is an important move that will take effect over 9+ locations with the intention to open more internal conversations about the business's waste impact, gain staff support for the business's direction, and spur further actions as they progress along their journey to circularity.

How does the circular initiative align with your company values?

The circular initiative aligns with the company's core values. As a B Corp-certified business, Cannings has pledged to address its environmental impact, and this is a clear expression of that commitment. They also value innovation and aim to develop implementation systems to fulfil more initiatives like this.

What barriers have you identified?

There are some initial barriers in knowledge that still need to be worked through, with some questions to be resolved: Are all composting services created equal? Where does the soil go? What materials are accepted in these streams? Cannings have, however, chosen this project as it has demonstrably fewer barriers.

Describe your business's ability to implement your chosen circular initiative

Cannings have both the drive and budget to implement this initiative. They also have a team who are engaged and invested in waste reduction. With the right comms and training, they are confident they can roll this out across all of their locations and adjust to site-specific variables as required.

Key actions necessary to create Cannings' Circular Initiative

- Expand on initial waste audit in one location, to gauge compostable waste volume across all locations.
- Contact providers and collectors about acceptable materials and end-user or composting by-products.
- Select provider/s and develop internal procedures and infrastructure.
- Consult and train staff to get on-the ground buy-in.
- Implement streams at pilot location/s.
- Assess pilot and implement across remaining locations.

Benefits Cannings expects from their Circular Initiative and participation in the Go Full Circle program

Financial benefits:

- Redirecting waste processing budget away from landfill collection to composting processing.
- Newfound focus on the waste stream may result in more frugal behaviours.

Staff and company culture benefits:

- More closely align with waste minimisation sentiments within the team.
- Educate the team on the realities of waste streams and circular economy.
- Low-complexity piloting and co-design.

Customer benefits:

- More closely align with waste minimisation sentiments within the customer community.

- Extending the composting service to invite customers to return pulp trays, paper bags, etc., for composting as part of the extended value and uplifted customer experience.

Environmental Impact benefits:

- Remove tonnes of food waste from entering landfill each year.
- Turn environmental net negative impact (more landfill) into net positive impact (new soil).

Community Impact benefits:

- Composting providers may feed into local community gardens.
- Aim for local service providers to encourage a local circular economy.

De Barcelona

Spanish Restaurant, Hawthorn. Sam Aldemir is the owner of the Spanish restaurant De Barcelona which has been operating in Glenferrie Road, Hawthorn, for ten years. With a keen interest in the circular economy, Sam participated in the 2022 Go Full Circle program.



What the business does, customers, goals

De Barcelona offers a Spanish culinary experience. The business's goals are to offer traditional Spanish food and educate customers about Spanish cuisine. An additional goal is to be a financially as well as environmentally sustainable business.

The typical De Barcelona customers are family groups, students, and office workers. They serve both a younger demographic who love their famous churros and mature customers who are enjoy conversation over tapas and wine.

Why did they decide to do the Go Full Circle program, and what did they want to achieve?

De Barcelona joined the program to learn more about the principles of the circular economy and how the restaurant might utilise circularity to assimilate with changing customer interests as well as engage with other local traders. As a result, de Barcelona could assume a leadership position in this space and transform every aspect from purchasing to product delivery. Moreover, Sam argues that shifting to a circular mindset would make new, more socially and environmentally friendly generations proud.

Number of circular opportunities identified during the program

During the program, Sam identified five new potential circular initiatives that could benefit the business and its customers.

Chosen lead circular initiative

The first Circular Initiative Sam and De Barcelona settled on was to speak to other businesses, gather used coffee husks to compost, and talk to market gardens and the city council about providing parks and garden beds space for urban gardening.

Why did your business choose this particular opportunity?

Sam and his colleagues decided to progress with this initiative because it provides an accessible starting point to collaborate with other stakeholders in a friendly and approachable way.

What barriers have you identified?

Sam has identified some potential barriers to succeeding with this Circular Initiative, being: storage, capture and transport.

Describe your business's ability to implement your chosen circular initiative

As Sam is the president of the street association, he feels this is an easy entry point for businesses to become aware of circular economy opportunities and jump on board. He considers this Circular Initiative is achievable, and a solid starting point for engaging the wider trading community.

Key actions necessary to create De Barcelona's Circular Initiative

- Identify local, like-minded stakeholders and seek their support and buy-in.
- Review the costs and impacts for the participating businesses.
- Present the benefits of the Circular Initiative: creating a feel-good factor, marketing advantages, and enhancing social and community licence to operate.

Hone Built

Moving from waste to resources in residential construction. Exploring cultural change and on-site 3D printing. Steve Pettitt, the owner of the residential construction company Hone Built Pty Ltd, is an alumnus of the first Go Gull Circle program cohort. Based in Surrey Hills Melbourne, Hone Built, has been operating for over three years.



What the business does, customers, goals

Hone Built is aiming to be a leader in the sustainable construction space, by providing a net benefit to society and with the goal to eliminate all waste from their construction processes. The company targets homeowners within the inner-eastern and inner-northern suburbs of Melbourne — people interested in custom architectural homes and sustainability and who are conscious of their energy bills.

Why they decided to do the Go Full Circle program, and what they wanted to achieve?

Steve Pettitt decided to join the Go Full Circle program to improve Hone Built's waste and resource management processes and to learn from experts and other businesses.

Number of circular opportunities identified during the program

Thanks to the program's training and ideation phases, Steve has identified twelve new waste and resource initiatives that could benefit the business and its customers. Through a careful selection process, each participating company selects one Circular Initiative to implement in their business.

Chosen circular initiative

The new Circular Initiative — 3D printing and culture change. The first Circular Initiative that Steve settled on combines several ideas that he surfaced through the program. Steve's and his colleagues' ideas have resulted in the establishment of a recovery process where all on-site waste would be collected and utilised for reuse in an innovative 3D printing process. The 3D printing will, for example, turn plastics into practical on-demand products for on-site reuse — such as, packers and cable ties as well as high-quality custom items for clients.

Steve's and Hone Built's goal is to create a cultural shift among all trades on their construction sites. “Within twelve months of implementing our Circular Initiative, resources should no longer be seen as waste—but as the resources they are”, says Steve. In addition, the progress of the Circular Initiative will be measured through tracking of compliance throughout this period, with an 80% improvement against current compliance levels.

Why did your business choose this particular opportunity?

The implementation of collection and 3D printing processes, and ultimately the culture change within the business and among other trades, will happen in several steps. Initially, the target is to work with soft and rigid plastics. “In the following steps, we'll progress to include hardwood and softwood. Then, once the correct procedures are in place, the idea would be to set up similar processes for even more materials”, says Steve.

Steve describes that he picked this Circular Initiative because it combines a set of ideas that are part of the “Remanufacture” and “Re-earth” (compost) continuum of the 12 Rs of Circularity and Zero Waste. Steve argues that his Circular Initiative supports the reframing from waste to resource and the refusal of “business as usual” in the construction industry.

How might this opportunity be “newsworthy”?

Steve continues: “3-D printing and the goal of culture change is achievable and exciting. It can potentially create a significant impact through a much-needed mindset shift on a personal level— we’re moving from dealing with waste to resources. This could open up opportunities to further facilitate greater decentralisation of our “waste” processing at the government, industry and individual levels”.

How does the circular initiative align with your company values?

Hone Built's key company values include respect, accountability, and personal development. Steve reasons that shifting the mindset from waste to resource gives the materials they interact with the respect they deserve. Along with accountability, this initiative also tackles climate change. The shift toward the circular economy directly reduces greenhouse gas emissions. In addition, it fosters personal development by introducing new skill sets, such as 3D printing.

“To live our values, we need to respect our natural resources, do our bit to mitigate climate change and continue to develop as individuals and a company. We feel this initiative does just that.”, says Steve.

What barriers have you identified?

Since the transition to the circular economy is just starting, Steve recognises that Hone Built's Circular Initiative will have to overcome several obstacles along the way. Some challenges are organisational and will require updates to internal policies and procedures. However, Steve deems these are within their control and mainly require time and effort to implement. Further, in the future, an investment might be needed, which requires further investigation.

According to Steve, the greatest obstacle is behavioural change, especially on the building site. “It will take time to break habits, but our workforce will be easy enough. The subcontractors will be more difficult, especially those that are only on-site for short periods.”

Steve further describes that technical challenges related to learning and understanding the technology of 3D printing will take time and require room for “trial and error”. Another challenge down the line is that 100% bio-based 3D wood printing technology is not yet commercially available. “That gives us time to prepare and position ourselves”, continues Steve.

Describe your business's ability to implement your chosen circular initiative

As a small business on a growth trajectory, Hone Built may have the advantage of making internal policy and procedure changes more easily than some of its larger competition. However, they might be disadvantaged regarding the proportion of profits

required to fund the initial capital outlay for the Circular Initiative. Steve again: “An advantage to this disadvantage is that it creates a “barrier to entry” for other businesses. This may give us a head start on establishing a first-mover advantage in the market, further improving our USP”.

With sustainability at Hone Built's core, this initiative is an excellent opportunity to explore beyond “business as usual” and allows the company to establish itself as an emerging leader in sustainable residential construction within Melbourne.

Steve describes his aspirations: “Whilst there are barriers, none of those identified is insurmountable. We have the capital reserves and the employees positioned to direct, implement, and support the Circular Initiative. Further analysis will hopefully strengthen the business case and allow for the full support of its implementation.”

Benefits Steve expects from Hone Built's Circular Initiatives and participation in the Go Full Circle program

Financial benefits:

- Strengthening business goodwill.
- Creating new revenue streams and reducing operating costs.

Staff and company culture benefits:

- Building social and environmental purpose among team members.
- Improving learning culture.
- Attracting and retaining talented staff that share their core values.

Client benefits:

- Improving the client experience
- Increasing word-of-mouth recommendations
- Growing the number of clients

Environmental Impact benefit:

- Reducing waste to landfill, CO2 emissions and virgin material use, and negative impacts on biodiversity

Community Impact benefits:

- Improving neighbour relations (free mulch and cleaner sites).
- Implementing restorative environmental actions.
- Educating and demonstrating to stakeholders (subcontractors, clients, and architects) the importance and achievability of transitioning to the circular economy.

Key actions Hone Built are taking as they build their Circular Initiative

- Collating existing research and identifying gaps.
- Adjusting their Circular Initiative based on internal and external feedback.
- Discussing ideas with current clients and architects for feedback and validation.
- Conducting audits of on-site plastic types.
- Creating 3D prototypes.

Sorborium: Sorbet Lab

Why? Because everyone loves sorbet! Sorborium: Sorbet Lab has been in operation for five years. Daniel Blashki is the business's owner and participated in the 2022 Go Full Circle program.



What the business does, customers, goals

Sorborium designs and creates artisanal sorbet, accessible to everyone and made from a mindful food science perspective that considers dietary choices, allergies and sensitivities. The company goals are to produce premium sorbet of uncompromising quality and ingredients, to maintain a rigorous approach to the research and development and product optimisation that results in the most accessible products to market. But most of all, it is to put smiles on the faces of all their customers. The typical Sorborium target groups include adults and kids who like a dessert or an anytime treat. In addition, vegans, dairy intolerant and general wellness and food sensitivity customers are also important groups.

Why they decided to do the Go Full Circle program, and what they wanted to achieve?

Sorborium joined the program to improve its business model, learn more about sustainable practices, and work on growth, mainly through networking and generating local opportunities for the business. Implementing Circular Economy principles to the business can create a confirmation that the business is currently implementing the right practices, and it can also help them learn what additional steps they can take. Another aspiration is to grow the business as a result of implementing circular business practices.

Number of circular opportunities identified during the program

During the program, Daniel identified eight new potential circular initiatives that could benefit the business and its customers.

Chosen lead circular initiative

The Circular Initiative Sorborium settled on was a return system for wholesale five-litre tubs from business-to-business sales at restaurants.

Why did your business choose this particular opportunity?

Daniel decided to go with this initiative because it's a measurable and quantifiable process that is a simple yet effective step in the ongoing improvement of sustainable, non-waste practices. Beyond Daniel's and his staff's efforts to reuse, the Circular Initiative asks customers who buy wholesale to return empty containers. Furthermore, it demonstrates the buy-in from partners throughout the value creation chain.

How might this opportunity be “newsworthy”?

Sorborium's Circular Initiative shows cross-sale cooperation between producer and consumer. In single-use food and hygiene situations, initiatives that address the return of items typically discarded are rare.

How does the circular initiative align with your company values?

The Circular Initiative aligns with the company's values. Reusing items is economically sound and helps track the use of inventory. Increasing the turn-around rate of items with many reuse opportunities will help achieve this.

Describe your business's ability to implement your chosen circular initiative

Daniel believes that the Circular Initiative is achievable, as it only requires a passive level of cooperation and the desire to wash and store the plastic tubs for a limited time.

StyleColab Preloved

StyleColab Preloved has been in operation for one year. Vicki Doufas is the owner and participated in the 2022 Go Full Circle program.



What the business does, customers, goals

StyleColab Preloved are eager to change how we shop — selling, buying and re-loving — everything happens in one place. The business accepts clothes and accessories on consignment and offers customers a chance to earn money and bring joy by giving them the opportunity to find unique pieces in excellent condition. Their main products are consignment sales and “renting a rack”. The business’s goals are to grow the customer base, operationally and financially, with a focus on sustainability. An additional goal is to offer an outstanding customer service experience.

The business targets women ages 25-70 who are looking for access to high-quality, unique pieces in excellent condition. This includes women who want to see their items re-loved and worn while still getting some of their money back.

Why they decide to do the Go Full Circle program, and what they wanted to achieve?

StyleColab Preloved joined the program to learn more about providing an in-demand service more efficiently and sustainably and growing further, both financially and operationally. Applying Circular Economy principles in the business could enable the company to serve clientele and the community better, improve marketing, and expand business growth opportunities.

Number of circular opportunities identified during the program

During the program, Vicki identified ten new potential circular initiatives that could benefit the business and its customers.

Chosen lead circular initiative

The Circular Initiative Vicki settled on first is to encourage more people to consign their pre-loved clothing to extend the life of the products. This Circular Initiative entails several aspects:

- Encouraging people to shop locally and purchase items in excellent condition rather than buying brand-new items.
- Focusing the marketing on how consignment customers can earn money—and potentially purchase new clothes with that money.
- Communicating the reduced textile waste to landfill.
- Communicating personal and high-quality customer service.
- Transitioning to digital receipts and a new digital-only consignor registration without printouts, and to reuse bags and packaging where possible.

The goal of the Circular Initiative is to improve the opportunities to re-purpose and re-sell clothing whilst reducing wastage and the number of items being sent to landfill.

Why did your business choose this particular opportunity?

Vicki decided to pursue this Circular Initiative because too many items are ending up in landfill. Most people want to do the right thing, but they don't know what to do with their clothing items except to throw them out or retain them. This provides an excellent opportunity to declutter and earn money, and it brings joy to others. It's also possible to get quick wins and get staff's support to implement the Circular Initiative.

How might this opportunity be “newsworthy”?

Beautiful clothes and accessories can be enjoyed and bring joy for longer — they can be re-purposed and gifted.

How does the circular initiative align with your company values?

The Circular Initiative aligns with the company's values. StyleColab Preloved believes in sustainable style and rewarding such behaviours — and avoiding wasteful behaviours.

What barriers have you identified?

Vicki has identified three crucial potential barriers to succeeding with this Circular Initiative: staff resistance to change, consignors overestimating the prices that their products can be resold for, and goods and service taxes payable by the consigner.

Describe your business's ability to implement your chosen circular initiative

Vicki considers the Circular Initiative achievable in the interim — it is possible, but it will take time.

Key actions necessary to create Style Colab's Circular Initiative

- Update the website with new messaging, e.g. “Let's change the way we shop”
- Update social media to reinforce the circular message to customers
- Add processes to communicate directly with customers, in-store
- Encourage desired customer behaviour through a new reward-program
- Reach out to customers and consignors with updates e.g. new store, new offerings and incentives like rent-a-rack
- Continue to make operations more sustainable, e.g. introduce digital systems and processes

Benefits Vicki expects from Style Colab's Circular Initiatives and participation in the Go Full Circle program

Financial benefits:

- Reduce operating costs

Staff and company culture benefits:

- More digitalisation means less for the staff to do
- Attract talent who want to work in the circular economy and feel good about their choices

Customer benefits:

- Have access to new and preloved clothing in excellent condition
- Feel good about their purchases
- Improved customer loyalty

Environmental Impact benefit:

- Reduced waste, and textile waste to landfill.

Sunspun

Sunspun has been in operation for thirty-five years. Virginia Cui is the owner and participated in the 2022 Go Full Circle program.



What the business does, customers and goals

Sunspun exists to help, inspire, and guide customers to make something beautiful using ethically sourced yarn that they are proud to wear or gift to others.

The business's goals are:

- Provide trusted knitting advice and guidance that benefits their customers whilst continuing to grow the customer base across Australia and New Zealand.
- Increase community engagement by creating a welcoming place for knitters to share their joy and passion for knitting through workshops, memberships and social events.
- Expand their yarn product range with local and international suppliers of high-quality yarns, patterns, and accessories.

The target customers are knitters and yarn lovers—beginners to advanced skill level; 20 to 40 years old, women, and men from varied occupational backgrounds that appreciate wool sustainability and ethically sourced yarn; and people who are art and crafty, looking for a new hobby, and stress relief activity.

Why they decide to do the Go Full Circle program, and what they wanted to achieve?

Sunspun joined the program to learn from experts and meet with like-minded small and medium sizes enterprises. Furthermore, to understand how to utilise sustainable resources, reduce waste, and adopt circular economy methods into operational actions, resulting in better environmental and performance outcomes for the business, customers, and suppliers. Virginia's wish for joining the program is to better identify existing operations opportunities that should be changed to reduce waste and cost and create sustainable practices. In addition, understand the framework and appropriate communication to staff, customers, and suppliers on the why and how the business could improve supply chain sustainability for everyone partnering with the company.

Number of circular opportunities identified during the program

During the program, Virginia identified eleven new potential circular initiatives that could benefit the business and its customers.

Chosen lead circular initiative

The Circular Initiative Virginia and the Sunspun team settled on was to start using reusable tote bags for shopping and return unused yarn for re-purposing. The business's goal is to implement ten circular opportunities by the end of 2023 with active participation from all stakeholders. The aim is to achieve a 50% reduction in waste through the application of the 12Rs principles across supply chain activities over the next two years. An additional aspiration is to have one staff and one customer be the champion and drive the circular initiative roadmap.

Why did your business choose this particular opportunity?

Virginia and her colleagues decided to go with this initiative because the eco-friendly tote bag prompts circularity in customers' shopping experience each time. Furthermore, using the same bag eliminates single-use plastic bags and reduces waste. In addition, Sunspun is planning to consider rewards for participation as the bag is used as a marketing and awareness tool and enables customers to participate actively in this circular opportunity.

How might this opportunity be “newsworthy”?

The reusable tote bag made from eco-friendly materials will change customer behaviour with storing shopping purchases and carrying project materials on the go and travelling. In addition, the influence of circularity among the customers will spread to their friends in the knitting community via word of mouth. This will drive behavioural change in other yarn shops throughout Victoria to follow and create a more significant circular economy influence in the knitting world.

How does the circular initiative align with your company values?

The Circular Initiative aligns with the company's values: sustainability awareness and customer community engagement.

What barriers have you identified?

Virginia has identified a potential barrier to succeeding with this Circular Initiative. It might prove difficult to change the mindset and behaviours of some customers.

Describe your business's ability to implement your chosen circular initiative

Virginia considers the Circular Initiative achievable. However, providing clear and compelling messaging on the “why” to engage customers is essential. In addition, there’s a need to create a feedback loop to continuously refine the circular actions to achieve successful implementation.

Key actions necessary to create Sunspun’s Circular Initiative

- Providing an eco-friendly tote bag, including an incentive to get the customer to return with the bags, unused yarns or scraps for store credit.
- Communication with customers - through our newsletters, social media, and in-store.
- Communicating to staff members about the initiative.

Benefits Virginia expects from Sunspun’s Circular Initiative and participation in the Go Full Circle program

Financial benefits:

- Improved business goodwill.
- Sales from new customers who value an eco-friendly business.

Staff and company culture benefits:

- Building social and environmental purpose among staff.
- Creating and improving the learning culture.

- Increased awareness among staff.

Customer benefits:

- Improved customer experience and loyalty.
- Increased word of mouth and visual marketing.

Environmental Impact benefit:

- Reduced waste to landfill.
- Improved material performance.

Community Impact benefits:

- Educate and demonstrate to community members the importance of the Circular Economy.