



CIRCULAR BUSINESS INNOVATION AWARD 2025

Sponsored by Untouched World

Background

At Mindful Fashion our mission is to create an innovative, full-circle and thriving future for New Zealand's fashion and textiles industry. This means transforming the way products are designed, made, sold and used so they circulate, ensuring valuable resources are kept in use and out of landfill.

In a circular economy, waste and pollution are designed out, products and materials are circulated and nature is regenerated. At its core, the circular economy is about the interconnectedness of people and the natural world, linked by spirals of continuous renewal and regeneration. This holistic way of thinking is intrinsic to indigenous knowledge and has long been found in the Māori and Pasifika cultures of Aotearoa and the Pacific Islands.

A circular economy for fashion and textiles creates better products and services for customers, contributes to a resilient and thriving fashion ecosystem, and regenerates the environment. What could a more circular and regenerative fashion system look like in Aotearoa New Zealand? How might products, services and business models be redesigned so there is no waste? How might we build circular systems that create shared value?

Recognising the pivotal role of business in transforming our economy to a low carbon and circular system, the Circular Business Innovation Award celebrates businesses that are working to embed circular principles into their business operations and value propositions.

The Challenge

Tell us how your business has (re)designed a product, service, process, or aspect of your business model, away from a linear production model towards a more circular system aimed at minimising waste and making the most of existing resources.

The circular initiative you put forward should be in commercial operation and can be related to any aspect of your business operations.

Open to

Businesses in the fashion, clothing and textile industry in New Zealand.

Award Category

- Circular Business Innovation Award



Entry Process		Date
Stage 1 Enter the Award	Enter the Awards by submitting a completed Entry Form telling us about your circular business initiative by the closing date.	Monday 9th June -
	Entries close.	Friday 1st August
Stage 2 Judging	Entries will be assessed by our panel of independent expert judges. Interviews with shortlisted businesses. Finalists and Award winners selected.	
	Finalists will be notified.	26th August 2025
Stage 3 Award Gala	Circular Design Award gala event in Auckland. Finalists are exhibited and Award winners announced.	Tuesday 7th October

Entry Requirements

Tell us about your Circular Business Innovation on the Entry Form, and include any supporting evidence that might help the judges understand your concept and its impact.

Demonstrate how you defined the challenge, identified solutions and engaged key stakeholders. Outlining waste reduction technologies, process innovation, repurposing, material reductions and value creation are all key.

Judges will be looking for evidence that your business has implemented a more circular approach that aims to minimise waste and make the most of existing resources. You might have started a new circular initiative, or moved an existing linear system – which starts with new materials, and ends with materials being discarded in landfill - to be more circular. Special consideration is given to organisations that work to embed circular economy principles into the core of their business operations and value propositions.



Judging Criteria

The panel of independent expert judges will be looking at entries across three key criteria:

CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION
Circularity Impact	The effectiveness of the solution in implementing a circular system - minimising waste, optimising resource use, and closing material loops within the circular economy framework. How has the lifecycle of your product/materials been maximised, and the lifecycle designed so that at end of life materials are kept in circulation and out of landfill. How has the initiative rejected the traditional take>make>waste model and introduced circular flows. How circular economy principles are being embedded into core business operations and value propositions.
Environmental, Social, and Cultural Benefits	What positive impacts have been created, eg. waste reduction, elimination, and repurposing; reductions in emissions; reduction in resource consumption; its contributions to social aspects like job creation and community well-being, and its ability to respect and integrate local cultural values and practices.
Collaboration and Communication	How the solution fosters collaboration and influence with stakeholders, eg. partners, suppliers, employees, customers; and actively engages and communicates with communities, governments, other organisations and individuals to drive collective action towards circularity.

Judging Process

[The entry form is available here.](#) We request you keep to the maximum total word count for your entry form (excl. supporting docs).

Any confidential data will be treated as such and only shared with the judging panel for this category. All judging takes place under Chatham House Rule and all judges sign a non-disclosure agreement.



KEY TERMS

Circular Economy

The [Ellen MacArthur Foundation](#) defines a circular systems framework that tackles global challenges like climate change, biodiversity loss, waste, and pollution. It is based on three principles, driven by design:

- eliminate waste and pollution
- circulate products and materials (at their highest value)
- regenerate nature.

Circular economy for Fashion and Textiles

A system where businesses create diverse income streams and foster new connections with customers, and where policymakers support the enabling conditions for circular business models to thrive. In a circular system revenue is decoupled from raw material production – through business models such as resale, rental, repair and remaking – enabling greenhouse gas emissions, pollution, and biodiversity impacts to all be reduced.

Circular Business Models

Circular business models for fashion allow organisations to make revenue without making new clothes. In a circular system, products generate revenue more than once. A single garment can be rented several times or sold, resold, repaired and remade, offering multiple opportunities to derive revenue. According to Ellen MacArthur Foundation there are four main, customer-facing, circular business models that keep products in use in the economy and have the potential to decouple revenue streams from production and resource use: repair, rental, resale, and remaking. [Read more here](#).

FAQs

1. Any confidential information provided to Mindful Fashion will be treated as such and only provided to the judging panel if required.
2. Circular Business Innovation entries will be accepted from any business in the clothing and textile ecosystem from across the value chain which operates and is registered in New Zealand. Members of Mindful Fashion are encouraged to enter.
3. Mindful Fashion staff cannot enter nor can any sponsors of this Award.
4. Mindful Fashion Board member companies can enter, as long as this is declared on their entry form.

For any queries email: circulardesignaward@mindfulfashion.co.nz