

Circular design resources



This toolkit is for those who want to learn, apply, and contribute to bringing circular design to life.

Within this toolkit you will find a selection of curated resources to support you in your exploration and application of circular design. You'll find links to online learning courses, conversations with experts, workshops and methods, as well as online spaces where you can connect with other circular designers.

We have arranged this guide into four sections:



Explore the fundamentals: learn about the circular economy and get inspiration from leaders working in different design disciplines, biomaterials, architecture, urban planning and more.



Apply the principles: get to grips with the approach and get a sense of what designing for a circular economy can mean for your industry, work, or research



Connect with others: exchange ideas and inspiration with your peers, and get feedback on your circular design thinking and work



Contribute and be part of the transition: Do you want to contribute to the acceleration of the transition? In this section you will find different types of opportunities to be part of the global circular design movement.

**Why is design
essential for
the circular
economy?**

Everything around us has been designed:

from the clothes we
wear to the buildings
we live and work in,
to systems that deliver
food and mobility.



ELLEN
MACARTHUR
FOUNDATION

Today most things have been designed for a linear 'take-make-waste' model.

In industries such as fashion and plastics packaging, products and systems are designed in such a way that >80% of material flows are destined for landfill, incineration or even leaked into natural environments.



“Why is design essential?”



**Everything
around us has
been designed
by someone**



**Important
decisions are
made during the
design stage**



**Once designed,
it's hard to
reverse: “We can’t
unscramble an
omelette”**

What are you looking for?

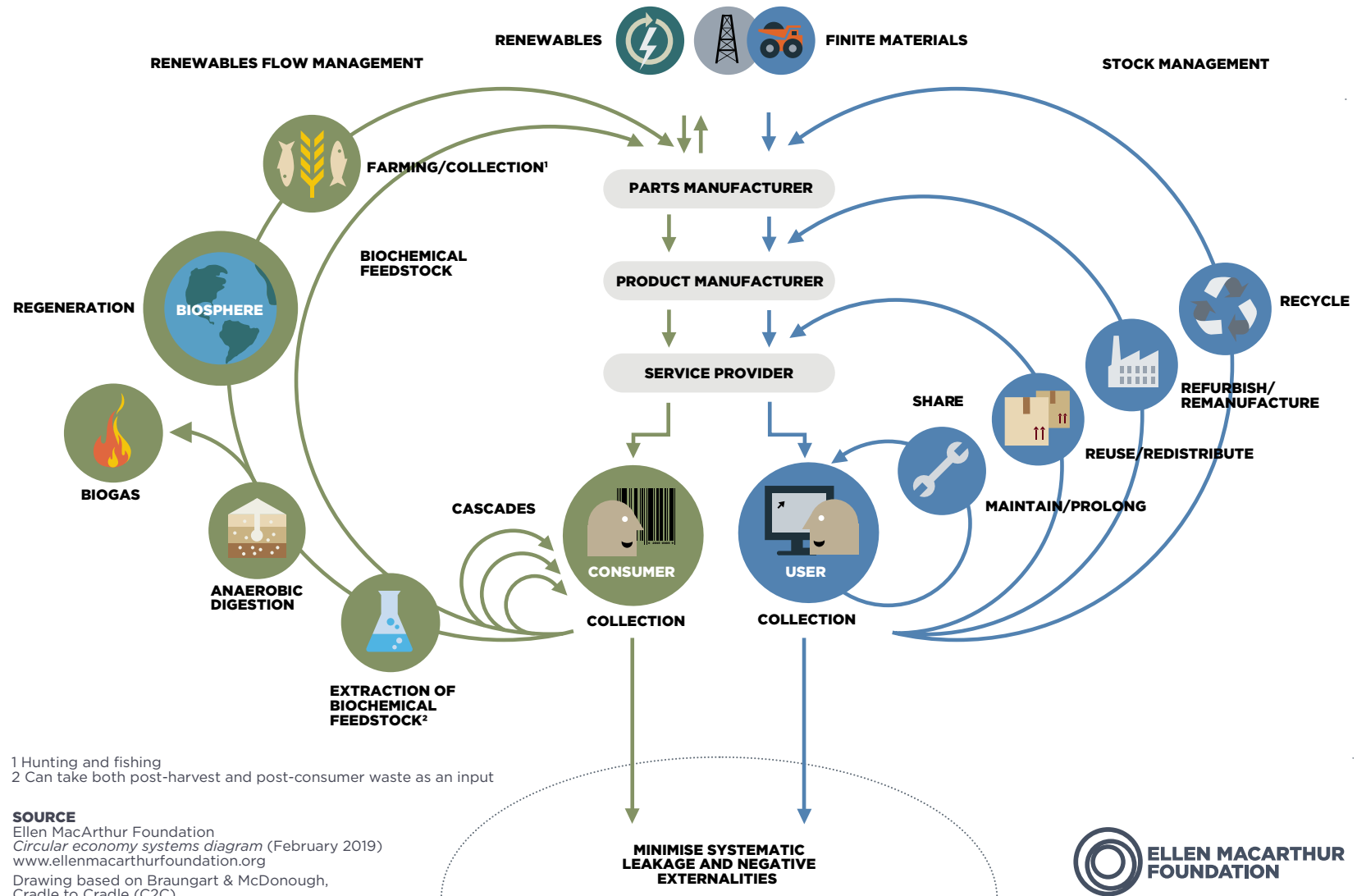
Inspiration & learning

Basic

Intermediate

In-depth

Circular economy diagram



The Learning Hub

Recommended videos

**Re-connecting designers
with materials**

Ecosystems design

**Three stories: how we apply
circular design**

Co-designing a better city

Remaking our living spaces

**Circular Design in Sub
Saharan African countries**

**The magic of materials
and making**

**Introducing the next era
of design**

View more talks from DIF, the Ellen MacArthur Foundation's interactive online event series that aims to shift mindsets and inspire action towards a circular economy.

Case study library

‘From Linear To Circular’ programme

From Linear To Circular (FLTC) is a global learning programme designed for young professionals and postgraduate students from different disciplines.

Are you at the start of your career, a postgraduate student or an emerging innovator? Do you want to stay ahead of the curve, be a changemaker, and bring greater purpose to your working ventures?

Whether you are an educated designer, policy maker, architect, economist, business person or engineer, you can take part of the programme. Click on the link to find out more about it and the dates for the next edition.

[Read](#) or [listen](#) to the stories of some FLTC participants that became EMF Pioneers after the programme

What have some of the participants said about it?

“I felt empowered and ready to take my work in the CE to another level.”

Participant working in digital transformation consultancy

“It gave me the final conviction to start a reusable packaging business.”

Founder of Bumerang

“My voice was more empowered to influence groups of the private and public sectors to bet on long term strategies for a circular economy transition in our island.”

Participant working in digital transformation consultancy

TU Delft Circular Economy MOOCs

**Circular economy:
An introduction**

**Engineering design for a
circular economy**

**Sustainable packaging in a
circular economy**

**Circular economy
for a sustainable built
environment**



Practising circular design



Resources



Workshops

The Circular Design Guide website

On the Circular Design Guide website, you will find methods and resources to help create more elegant, effective, creative solutions for the circular economy.

Workshops: Circular design strategies

Circular Design Strategies workshop

cards, sheets and
facilitator notes

Workshops: Product journey mapping

Circularity means rethinking a linear use cycle of your product or service with a beginning, middle, and end. If a product or service is truly circular, it will never actually have an end to its life, but continuously take a new form. Mapping this journey will ensure that your product stays in a useful state for as long as possible and adds value at every stage.

**Product Journey
Mapping** sheets
and facilitator notes

Workshops: Safe & Circular Materials Journey Mapping

**Safe & Circular
Materials Journey
Mapping** sheets and
facilitator notes

Workshops: Smart material choices

Fashion: Jeans Redesign



The Jeans Redesign sets out guidelines which set minimum requirements on garment durability, material health, recyclability, and traceability. The Guidelines are based on the principles of a circular economy and will work to ensure jeans last longer, can easily be recycled, and are made in a way that is better for the environment and the health of garment workers.

Cities: Designing buildings, mobility, and products for the circular economy

The **Circular Economy in Cities** is a suite of resources for urban policymakers and change-makers. **Circular Economy in Cities** focuses on opportunities in three key urban systems - buildings, mobility, and products - and looks at how **city governments** can enable a **circular economy** transition.

Designing for reuse and circulation of products and materials

Designing buildings for adaptable use, durability, and positive impact

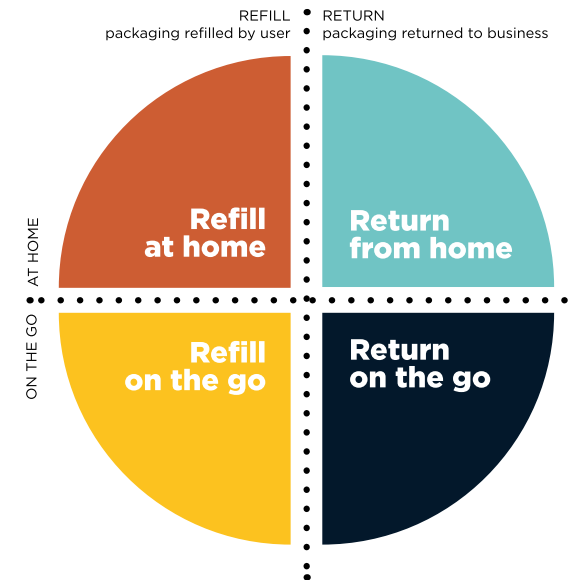
Designing mobility assets for components and material recirculation

Plastics: Reuse - Rethinking Packaging

While improving recycling is crucial, we cannot recycle our way out of the plastic pollution. Wherever relevant, reuse business models should be explored, reducing the need for single-use plastic packaging.

Innovative reuse models can unlock significant benefits, enabled by digital technologies and shifting user preferences, including: delivering a superior user experience, customising products to individual needs, gathering user insights, building brand loyalty, optimising operations, and saving costs.

Find out more in our Reuse book, which provides a framework to understand reuse, identifies six major benefits, and maps 69 examples from around the world.



Food: Stories

Whether you represent a business or public organisation, or are simply a concerned individual, the Ellen MacArthur Foundation Food Stories collection is bound to inspire you.

In it, you can find examples from all over the world of restaurants, city halls, national governments, and other actors working to promote a circular economy for food for the benefit of people and the planet.

From setting up effective organic collection systems to re-designing restaurant menus, our Food Stories collection illustrates what is possible when we holistically rethink our food system.

Circular Design Challenge

Getting into the routine of reimagining how products and services can look in a circular economy can be a great starting point when becoming a circular designer.

The Circular Design Challenge is a project that aims to encourage people to put their circular economy knowledge into practice by releasing a weekly circular design challenge. Do you dare to try?

Connect with like-minded people

Stay in touch

Social Media

Stay in touch & be part of it!

Circular Design Guide LinkedIn group



Register your Interest

Share your story and find inspiring designs

Are you a designer, student or start-up applying systems thinking and circular economy mindsets? We want to showcase pioneers that are pushing the boundaries of circular design. Find circular designers from different geographies and industries.

How can i contribute?

I have run a circular design workshop and would like to share it

Inspire others by sharing the story and the takeaways/learnings with our [community on LinkedIn](#)

I want to run a circular design activity with my team

Find workshops on the [Circular Design Guide](#).
Feel free to ask tips on the CDG community

I want to share more in depth the circular design project/processes I'm working on

[Apply](#) to speak at the EMF live online events

I want to join a community of designers where to practise circular design

Check out [openIDEO](#) communities

I am multilingual and would like to contribute with bringing circular design to my country/community

Help make our live content accessible for everyone by [translating](#) it into other languages

I want to become an EMF circular economy Pioneer

Apply to the [From Linear to Circular](#) programme

I would like to use my Social Media channels to help spread the word

Excellent! Share your story.

These are our handles:

Twitter: [@circulareconomy](https://twitter.com/circulareconomy)

Instagram: [@ellenmacarthurfoundation](https://www.instagram.com/ellenmacarthurfoundation)

These are the **hashtags** we use:

#circulareconomy #circulardesign #circulardesigners