




**CIRCULAR
REPUBLIC**
**Introduction at
Sustainability Circle**

Munich, February 18 2026



The Linear Economy Has Reached Its Limits - Circularity is the Way Forward, but Progress Stalls

Linear Economy – The system under pressure



Rising systemic supply chain risks

Supply shortages, price volatility and geopolitical disruptions increase due to import reliance for critical raw materials

Policy and regulatory pressure

EU regulation is rapidly shifting to binding requirements and frameworks (e.g., EU Green Deal, CE Action Plan, and EPR)

Exceeded planetary boundaries

Resource depletion and environmental degradation turn the current linear model economically & *ecologically* unsustainable

Circular Economy – The opportunity for transformation

Strengthens resource sovereignty and resilience by keeping critical materials in local loops and value chains

Fosters innovation and long-term value creation through new business models and technological solutions

Lowers environmental pressure by decoupling economic prosperity from primary material extraction



Implementation and collaboration gap

Awareness ≠ action

Companies see the potential but struggle to operationalize it

Fragmented efforts

Pilots remain isolated, expertise is dispersed, and industries often lack coordination

Limited internal capacity

Teams face constraints in time, skills, and access to partners along the value chain



**The direction
is clear.
Implementation
is the challenge.**



What's missing:
A neutral platform
for transformation to
start, scale, and stick

This is where
**CIRCULAR
REPUBLIC**
comes in.

We are Europe's Leading Implementation Platform for the Circular Economy.



We turn circular ambition into action and connect leading actors from industry, startups, policy and research to set system-changing impulses.

Working with partners along the entire value chain we orchestrate hands-on cross-company projects in targeted sectors, build competencies within established companies, and contribute to public discourse.

Together, We Turn Circularity from Ambition into Action



As part of UnternehmerTUM - **Europe's leading center for innovation and business creation** - CIRCULAR REPUBLIC leverages an ecosystem of 500+ corporates, startups, researchers and investors, bringing together the capabilities, technologies, and infrastructure required for innovation.

Transformation

Build circular competencies and enable organizational transformation

We enable organizations to build skills and structures to shape circular strategies through internal alignment and capabilities based on a modular, needs-based program

Co-innovation

Co-create circular solutions in projects that move from pilot to scale

We act as neutral orchestrator bringing together industry leaders, startups and public players to develop, test and scale solutions no organization could build alone

Ecosystem

Connect the ecosystem and showcase circular success

We connect relevant actors, highlight success stories and inspire others to act through public and ecosystem formats, joint publications and storytelling



Build Circular Competencies & Enable Organizational Transformation

We co-design a transformation journey aligned with organizational objectives to embed knowledge, skills, and practices across structures and teams.

Tailored Journey

We develop a modular workshop offer tailored to organizational goals and circular maturity - drawing from a portfolio of proven formats.

Strategic Sparring

We provide continuous guidance to translate workshop outcomes into priorities and concrete next steps for the circular economy strategy.

Empowered Teams

We train circular economy promoters and ambassadors who drive circular initiatives and anchor the topic across the organization.

Create internal alignment

Build a shared, organization-wide understanding of circularity.

Identify strategic circular economy opportunities

Uncover new business models that create circular value and growth.

Develop actionable roadmaps

Translate insights into concrete implementation steps supporting circular economy strategies.

Build circular leadership

Train circular economy leaders and connect them with peers to learn from best-practices.

Design and prototype circular products

Develop product or business-model concepts as foundations for future pilots.



What Organizational Transformation Looks Like in Practice

How we work

Momentum instead of abstraction

Workshops provide a shared language & impetus for teams to go beyond buzzwords.

Decisions grounded in practice

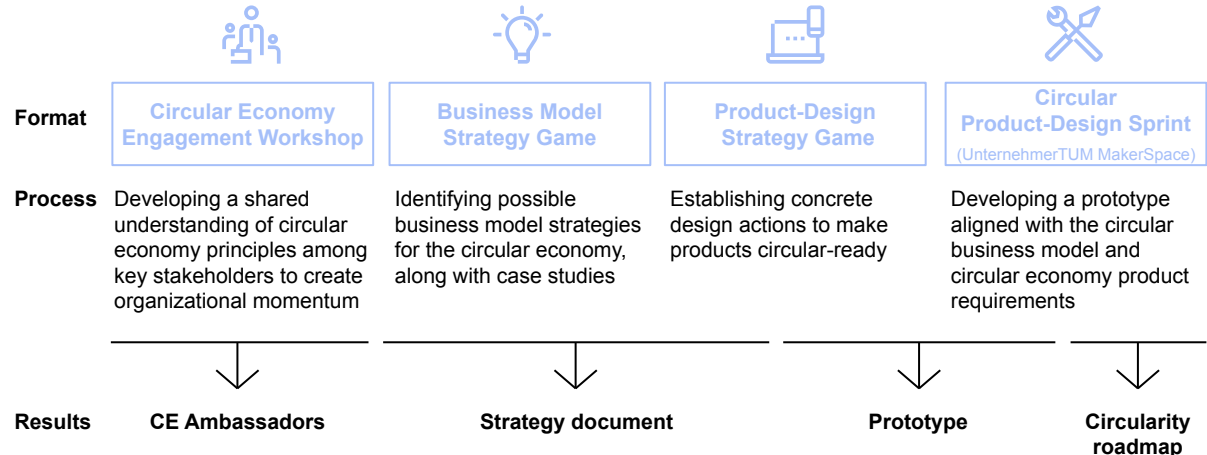
Strategic options are tested through concrete use cases, design formats & prototyping.

Visible outcomes

Each step produces tangible results, building alignment to move towards execution.

Example Journey: “From Post-it to Screwdriver”

In 2025, one of our industry partners embarked on a four-step Transformation Journey to build internal circular economy competencies, align key stakeholders, and gain the strategic clarity needed to move confidently into circular implementation.



Co-create Circular Solutions in Projects that Move from Pilot to Scale

We set up and run pilot projects together with multiple relevant players to address industry-specific challenges and circular opportunities.

Spark cross-company collaboration

We connect different players, incl. corporates and startups, to jointly run projects and build foundations for long-term relationships.

Pilot circular value chains & business models

We create the space and structure for industry-scale pilots to move quickly from concept to measurable outcomes and scalable solutions.

Set up circular processes & enablers

Together, we explore the operationalization of circular strategies, related success factors and framework conditions.



Batteries & Vehicles

- EV Batteries Recycling
- "Car Recycling 4.0"
- Recovery of E-Motors Materials (EV and industrial)



Electronics & ICT

- Industry Electronics Circularity
- HVAC* Retrofit and Refurbishment
- White Goods Disassembly
- Energy Infrastructure Recycling



Packaging

- Reuse of Personal Care Packaging
- Cosmetics Content Repurposing
- Packaging Recycling



Textiles

- Apparel Recommerce
- Textiles EPR Blueprint
- Seat Cover Recycling
- Footwear Return und Recycling



What Co-Innovation Across Organizations Looks Like in Practice

How we work

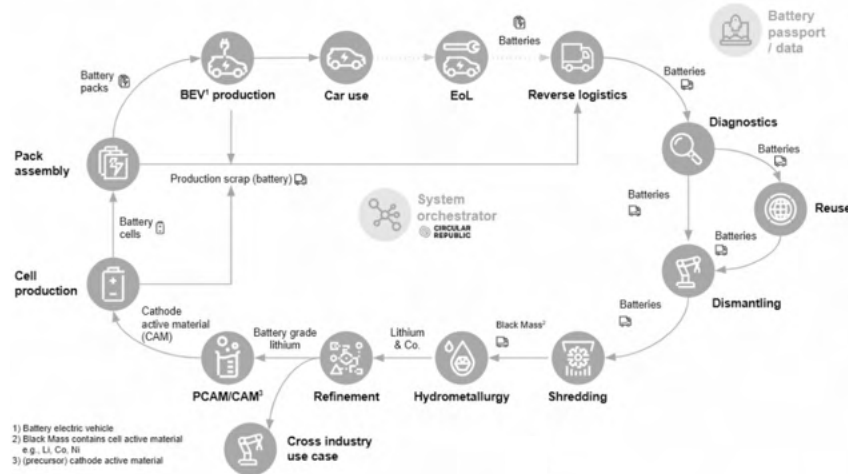
Neutral collaboration platform across companies
incl. provision of operational structure for joint projects

Dedicated project manager
to keep stakeholders and activities on track

Insights and expert support
leveraging the know-how of our network across industry and research

Project Example: EV Batteries Recycling

Between 2023–2024, we ran a pilot project demonstrating how collaboration between startups and established industry players can close the loop on EV batteries while addressing technical, logistical, and economic challenges. The project resulted in a scalable model for recovering and reusing critical materials such as lithium, cobalt, and nickel.



[Read the Project Report](#) →

Connect the Ecosystem & Showcase Circular Success

We connect relevant stakeholders, amplify outcomes and shape public discourse through active exchange, visibility and storytelling.

Expand network

We connect decision-makers and practitioners from industry, policy, research, and startups - curated by topic and maturity level.

Increase visibility

We put circular progress and success cases in front of the right audiences through industry stages and trusted channels.

Build thought leadership

We position key insights and partner organizations in the current discourse through co-authored, publication-ready content.

Network scouting

Early access to what's emerging in the CIRCULAR REPUBLIC network - relevant topics, partners, and opportunities

Curated ecosystem formats

Access to curated network events plus site visits - to connect in person and learn from real circular economy implementation

Stage presence & media exposure

External visibility through events (e.g., IFAT, beyond economy) and media exposure (e.g., Table.Media, Focus Online Earth)

Storytelling

Co-authored publications and tailored storytelling aligned for both partner and CIRCULAR REPUBLIC channels



What Ecosystem Access Looks Like in Practice



How we work - Example: CIRCULAR REPUBLIC FESTIVAL



Position partners as circular leaders on stage
by showcasing real challenges and success stories



Connect partners with peers, policy, & research
with formats like workshops and networking sessions



Create direct access to startups and talent
through pitches and dedicated meetups



Extend brand visibility beyond the venue
through media coverage and continuous communication
on CIRCULAR REPUBLIC channels (incl. [LinkedIn](#))

Key Figures 2025

1,000+ participants across 2 days

200+ companies onsite

10 innovation & impulse areas

59.6 Mio media impressions

55k+ LinkedIn impressions with...

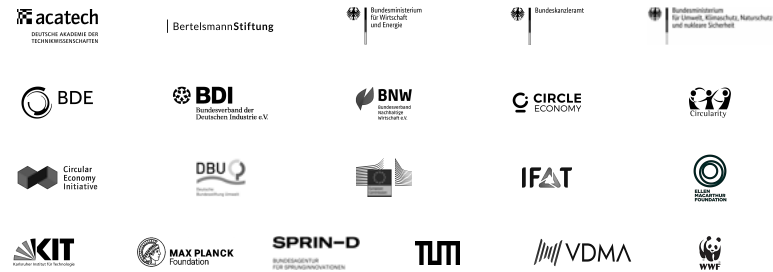
53% ...engagement rate

Our Ecosystem Spans Business, Policy and Media

Industry Leaders (selection)



Institutions & Networks (selection)



Leading Media (selection)



Further Examples of Current Projects and Activities



Circularity Catalyst

*Das Leadership-Programm für
Circular Economy*



Nominieren Sie Ihre Führungskräfte

Start des Programms Mai 2026

<https://www.circular-republic.org/circularity-catalyst/>

Industry-Led Textiles EPR-Precursor for Germany: Pilot for Practical and Smooth Rollout

Germany must implement a mandatory **Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) system for textiles** by 2028. This industry-led precursor in 2026 provides real-world data and tests options to support an effective national system design.

Pilot Focus Areas

Model, Compliance and Institutions

Testing governance, roles and enforcement mechanisms

Data Backbone

Piloting data, reporting and tracking infrastructure

Base / Service Fee

Assessing realistic fee structures and cost allocation

Eco-Modulation

Developing criteria and standards + testing demonstration methods

Collection – Sorting – Repair – Second Hand

Implementing and evaluating pathways and operational standards

Fiber-to-Fiber Recycling & Other tracks

Exploring scalable recycling routes

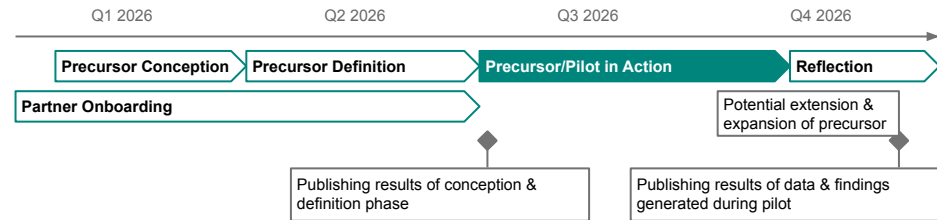
Partners




Public / Stakeholder Value

- Ensuring **implementation readiness** across industry, infrastructure actors and public stakeholders ahead of the national rollout
- Enabling **evidence-based policy decisions** on fees, eco-modulation and system architecture
- Safeguarding **existing German collection and sorting infrastructure** before it disappears and thereby reducing long-term system costs
- Positioning **Germany as a European frontrunner** in practical textile circularity

Timeline



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E-Motors Materials Recycling: Pilot Project for Recovery of Critical Raw Materials

Europe must secure access to critical raw materials and reduce strategic dependencies. This cross-industry pilot builds and tests a **European recycling value chain for rare earth magnets and copper** - laying the foundation for scalable industrial deployment.

Challenge

- **Recycling can be a major lever for supply security**, but industry remains heavily dependent on primary materials from China
- **Valuable critical raw materials are not retained** within Europe due to export of end-of-life e-motors
- **It is imperative to build European recycling capacities** while ensuring plannable demand and investment security

Approach

- **Cross-company collaboration** from recyclers over magnet manufacturers to major OEMs
- **Development of an efficient process chain** with high-value-retention disassembly and recycling of rare earth magnets (NdFeB) and copper from EV and industrial servo/linear motors
- **Implementation of industry-scale pilot project** to close material loops and forge partnerships to scale

(Planned) Outcomes

- **Creation of European recycling and processing value chain** for increased REE and copper recycling incl. recyclers, component manufacturers, Tier-1s, OEMs
- **Recycling-based permanent magnet prototypes** to be available Q4/26 for testing
- **Proof of technical feasibility** for higher recycling rates as base for purchasing decisions and offtake agreements



The Topic of Critical Raw Materials (CRM) Shows How Our Ecosystem Creates Value - Beyond Single Projects



Share Insights

Publications on risk costs of supply chain vulnerability and circularity as a way out, and rare earth magnet recycling in Europe - with insights reported by media (e.g., Handelsblatt)



Create Awareness

Panel discussion at the Munich Security Conference 2025 and positioning at other public stages and media outlets

Events with SPRIND* for launch and promotion of the 'Tech Metal Transformation Challenge'



Spark Collaboration

Workshop series with the Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs and the German Mineral Resources Agency (DERA)

Launch of implementation project for recovery of CRM from E-Motors (neodymium) to pilot circular value chains

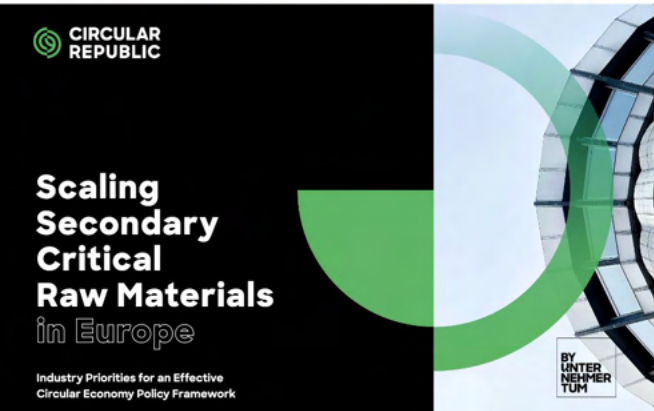
Highlights 2026

- **Sessions at Munich Security Conference, IFAT and other events** to keep CRM on the agenda
- **Report** with concrete proposals for policy makers for CRM sovereignty
- **Continued collaboration with SPRIND** to speed up commercialization of recycling technologies

*Federal Agency for Breakthrough Innovation



MSC Startup Hub at Munich Security Conference 2026: Resource Sovereignty - From Ambition to Implementation



These Key Themes Will Shape Further Activities in 2026



Critical Raw Materials

Strengthening circularity and European recycling value chains for critical raw materials

Continue convening industry, recyclers, and policy makers to accelerate recovery of CRMs within Europe and advance industry and public sector action, incl. integration of research and startup solutions, scalable reverse logistics, market and policy levers to create resilient supply loops while securing strategic materials

Public events and publications (MSC, IFAT, ...)
Startup Award



Automated Disassembly

Exploring automation as a key enabler of scalable circular economy solutions

Bring together insights from industry and academia - from robotics, and AI-driven planning to design-for-disassembly - to explore cross-sector use cases, technical and economic hurdles, and the metrics that matter to unlock safe, scalable recovery of components and critical raw materials across electronics and mechanical systems

Workshop (July 1)
Startup Award



AI & Data Centers

Examining the promise and material realities of AI in a circular future

Address AI as a solution enabling circularity (data, detection, and automation to extend product life and scale circular flows) and as a dependent system regarding the material and energy behind models and data centers – from semiconductors, electronics, cooling and ventilation, to building infrastructure

Theme Day & Workshop (April 29)
Implementation project



Let's stay in touch...



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