

Highlights

- Upstream's vision is for 30% of consumable goods to be sold in reusable formats in the U.S. and Canada by 2030.
- Our role is as: conveners, facilitators, bridge builders; content creators & knowledge curators; solutions ideators & catalysts.
- To see our way to The New Reuse Economy, we need corporations at the table. But we will not cover for half-measures or efforts to roll back progress.
- We are still working on and supporting policy efforts.

Envisioning the New Reuse Economy at Upstream

Our strategic direction as the reuse landscape shifts & expands

We're excited to bring you into the conversation about an updated direction for Upstream and what we're working to accomplish in the world. **Four years ago, when we started our journey as Reuse Solutioneers, the world looked very different:**

- Virtually all consumer brands were skeptical of reuse/refill, primarily focused on recycling and actively opposed extended producer responsibility (EPR) and deposit-return systems (DRS).
- Very few NGOs and institutions were engaged around reuse.
- While there was some interest and engagement on city policy, there were almost no opportunities at the state or federal level.
- There were a small number of reuse service companies operating in North America.
- Communities of color and low-income communities (i.e. those most impacted by the throw-away economy) were excluded from strategic conversations.

But today, the landscape is changing:

- Most consumer brands have signaled support for EPR and DRS; and many have now piloted reuse systems in food service, beverage and consumer packaged goods.
- More and more NGOs are developing reuse initiatives.
- There are big opportunities at the state and federal levels, and lots of interest in city policy.
- There are now dozens of reuse service companies operating throughout North America.
- Increased awareness of the disparities brought on by climate change has created a major shift for organizations and corporations to prioritize equity and justice.

The sea change is that the private sector is now engaged. More than ever, we want to support our community in taking advantage of this new landscape. To start, our vision is for 30% of consumable goods to be sold in reusable formats in the U.S. and Canada by 2030 – by transforming the food service, beverage and consumer packaged goods sectors. 30 by 30.

And we've painted a picture for what this could look like. We call it the **New Reuse Economy**, and it involves working with – and serving – non-profit, government, community AND business leaders in making this vision a reality. But we know we're working to co-create a future that doesn't exist yet. There has to be ideation, experimentation and alignment around strategies to get us there.

Our role in the growing reuse landscape

At Upstream, we will continue to help leaders ideate, accelerate, and scale circular strategies that create thriving communities and build the reuse service infrastructure of tomorrow. This will require innovators, corporate sustainability officers, NGO staff, community and environmental justice leaders and government officials – all working together to transform how we consume. Building and scaling a new reuse economy will require a wholesale shifting of supply chains for consumable goods and services from the current single-use paradigm to new reuse service models.

Our vision is for 30% of consumable goods to be sold in reusable formats in the U.S. and Canada by 2030.

We see our core roles in this process as:

CONVENERS, FACILITATORS & BRIDGE-BUILDERS:

Growing and supporting a community of "Reuse Solutioneers" across nonprofit, business, community and government sectors. Our networks include:

- The National Reuse Network: serving more than 450 NGOs, community, and reuse service company leaders. [Join today.](#)
- The Government Reuse Forum: serving more than 240 government officials in state and local government. [Join today.](#)
- The Reuse Coalition Leadership Network: serving leaders in Community Reuse Coalitions across the United States and Canada. [Join today.](#)
- The Reuse Refill Action Forum: co-produced with the Ocean Plastic Leadership Network and the Meridian Institute and serving more than 160 leaders from food service, beverage, CPG and retail brands. E-mail priscilla@upstreamolutions.org if interested.

CONTENT CREATORS & KNOWLEDGE CURATORS:

Developing and producing content that adds value, showcases the reuse economy we're working to create, and helps facilitate shared learning, understanding and action across sectors. Our content is featured via:

- [Indisposable Live](#): our livestream series focused on deep diving into topics and issues important to our community.
- [The Indisposable Podcast](#): featuring the heroes working to make reuse a reality.
- [Our Blog and Vlog](#): featuring news and topics of interest.
- [Our website](#): rich with resources arranged by topic.

- Reports, briefs, fact sheets and other resources.
- Ongoing programming in the National Reuse Network, Government Reuse Forum and Reuse Refill Action Forum.

SOLUTIONS IDEATORS & CATALYSTS: Creating partnerships to develop projects, initiatives and tools to scale the new reuse economy. Some of our products and solutions include:

- [The Reusies](#): an awards show celebrating the heroes of the reuse movement
- [The Reuse Business Directory](#): a comprehensive reuse service directory
- Reuse toolkits in [Extended Producer Responsibility](#) and [Deposit Return Systems](#)
- A groundbreaking software and data analytics platform that's currently in beta mode

Ultimately, our primary role is to serve our growing community of Reuse Solutioneers - supporting and celebrating their success. In this way, we are orienting our work around listening and learning so we can support through convening, content creation, and catalyzing solutions.

We are not here to provide cover for half-measures or inaction. We are here to support corporations in building real, long-term solutions and holding them to account.

Because the new reuse economy is about supply chain transformation and public infrastructure, we believe corporations are critical players who need to be brought to the table. At the same time, we recognize that corporations are disproportionately responsible for the negative environmental and social impacts of our current single-use consumption models, and many of them make efforts to fight or roll back progress. **We are not here to provide cover for half-measures or inaction. We are here to support them in building real, long-term solutions and holding them to account.** And we are optimistic that we now have an opportunity to engage them in meaningful dialogue and action around solutions.

We're still working on policy, and we're here to help.

We see environmental advocacy as being vitally important, and we will continue to support advocates in our communities to help them succeed. We will also continue to support the ideation and replication of best practices in reuse policy development in the US and Canada. But because we want to convene and facilitate broad networks of stakeholders that have competing interests, we are stepping back from supporting activities - like direct and indirect lobbying - that could compromise our ability to facilitate solutions.

As an organization, we ground our work in 5 core values and environmental justice principles, follow the Jemez Principles for Organizing, and are committed to building transformational relationships with our community partners. All stakeholders and sectors are essential to moving reuse solutions forward, and we seek to build a movement that is just and equitable for all.

We hope you are as excited about this updated direction as we are. And we invite you to join our community of Reuse Solutioneers, stay engaged if you already are, and work with us to co-create a brighter future.