



The State of Colorado is looking for the next big idea in sustainable design, reuse, repair, compost, recycling or recovered material end markets. NextCycle Colorado, a program of the Colorado Circular Communities Enterprise (C3), is now accepting applications from teams with an interest in establishing a new end market or expanding an existing end market for recovered commodities or organic materials.

Program Goals

NextCycle is designed to promote circular economy-based ventures and foster innovation in sustainable design, reuse, repair, compost, recycling or material recovery solutions for end markets in Colorado.

Program Benefits

NextCycle provides teams with expertise and support to stimulate the expansion of Colorado's circular economy. Teams accepted into NextCycle Colorado will have access to:

- **Business Development Bootcamp:** A multi-day business planning-focused bootcamp hosted in the Boulder metro area. The event includes individual time with sustainable design, reuse, repair, compost, recycling or recovered material end market specific business mentors, investment and pitch session workshops, and interactions with other NextCycle teams. Travel and attendance costs are covered by NextCycle.
- **NextCycle Colorado Pitch Session:** Teams will have the opportunity to pitch their business ideas to potential investors and partners while competing for a cash prize during the NextCycle pitch competition event.
- **Potential for Future Funding:** NextCycle teams are encouraged to apply for funding provided by C3. Over one-third of past NextCycle teams have received funding through the state's funding programs, totaling \$3.1 million. Additionally, Closed Loop Partners has pledged up to \$5M in competitively priced and flexible financing for qualified NextCycle projects.
- **Technical Advisory Committee (TAC):** Access to business, circularity, and technical subject matter experts as well as investors. The TAC is composed of subject matter experts covering material processing, infrastructure, manufacturing, finance, risk assessment, partnerships, and market development. The TAC includes experts from a variety of established organizations who will provide guidance for building a successful business plan.
- **Business Plan Development:** Consulting assistance provided by Resource Recycling Systems' (RRS) economists, circularity practitioners, engineers, analysts, and graphic designers. Advice

may take the form of economic reviews of business plans and proformas, making connections throughout Colorado for feedstock and project partners, and pitch deck, website, and graphic design support.

- **Colorado Networking:** Assistance in connecting with for-profit, nonprofit, and governmental organizations around Colorado.
- **Access to State Support:** NextCycle includes staff and advisors from both C3 and the Office of Economic Development and International Trade, providing teams with easy access to a wide range of support and data.
- **Recognition and Publicity:** Teams are promoted through press releases, social media, and articles, providing teams with exposure to potential investors and partners.

Key Dates & Timeline

October 23, 2024: NextCycle Colorado application released

December 4, 2024: NextCycle Applications Due by 5:00PM Mountain Time

December 2024: Informal interviews with eligible applicants

January 2025: Teams accepted into NextCycle

Late January 2025: Project kick-off and development of individual business growth plans

February 2025: Business support and consulting begins

March 5-7, 2025: Bootcamp – Boulder area (in-person attendance required; all travel expenses are covered¹)

May 2025: Colorado NextCycle Pitch Session (final date TBD, attendance required, all expenses are covered)

June 2025: Exit interviews, NextCycle ends on June 30

Application Criteria

The application evaluation process utilizes a 1-5 scoring system across key criteria, described below. NextCycle Colorado program staff and the TAC will evaluate completed applications.

Criteria 1: Value Proposition. How does the project create, grow, or innovate a sustainable design, reuse, repair, compost, recycling or material recovery solutions for end market needs in Colorado? What is the market demand for the project? How does the project add or create value?

¹ Travel expenses will be allocated as appropriate and applicable.

Criteria 2: Market Impact. What is the project's projected throughput (tons of material), job creation, and local economic impact? Where is the impact realized? Does the end-product of the project have a market value? Can this project be scaled or replicated?

Criteria 3: Financial Viability. What is the project's business plan? How do you intend to grow your business? What are your actual or projected project costs? What level of outside financing is needed to make the project work? If needed, can the project secure private sector financing?

Criteria 4: Project Team. What is the experience, background, and leadership of the proposed team? Does your project team contain diverse backgrounds? Are you a disadvantaged, minority or women-owned applicant? Are there regional or local partners involved in the project? Are there outside resources already identified that will help support the project? What is the team's commitment to the program and their business venture?

Application Submission Details

How to Respond: Applications are due on or before 5:00 PM Mountain Time on December 4, 2024. Applications must be submitted electronically to nextcycle.colorado@recycle.com. The email must include 'Application' in the subject line. Each team's application must be submitted in Microsoft Word or PDF formats.

Eligibility: Projects that directly improve existing end markets or create new end markets for sustainable design, reuse, repair, compost, recycling or material recovery solutions are eligible for NextCycle. End markets for NextCycle are projects, businesses, or other entities that turn recovered materials into marketable products; such as manufacturing, secondary processing, and re-use. Recovered materials are materials that have reached the end of their current use and may include plastics, metals, fibers, organics (including food scraps), and construction and deconstruction materials. Projects that involve the combustion of municipal solid waste (MSW) for energy are not eligible for NextCycle. Projects that collect materials but do not process the collected materials are not eligible. There is no maximum or minimum project size, and there is no preferred geographic distribution of projects within Colorado. Entities that have received previous Recycling Resource Economic Opportunity (RREO) or Front Range waste Diversion (FRWD) program grant funding are not eligible to apply.

Teams: NextCycle teams can include for-profit, nonprofit, university, governmental, or other members. A project team can consist of an individual person or a single company, or it may include any number of cross-sector entities. Teams are encouraged to include regional partners. Out-of-state teams are eligible, but the project must directly address end markets in the State of Colorado.

Criteria: The innovative nature of the NextCycle project recognizes that teams accepted into the business development pipeline may take any number of forms. Regardless of the team details, a set of four major criteria areas will be used to evaluate each team's application: Value Proposition, Market Impact, Financial Viability, and Project Team. These criteria were created specifically to assist the review team in understanding the project's current status, long-term outlook, and potential for success.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: The NextCycle vision for a local circular economy is one where the local economies, businesses, and people benefit first and foremost. This program aims to be inclusive in its engagement and will employ a lens that values diversity, equity, and inclusion. Minority and women-owned businesses are encouraged to apply.

Project Commitment: Participants must be committed to engaging in the entire program. This includes an onboarding meeting upon selection to the cohort, additional follow-up meetings with their project consultant team, participation in the multi-day bootcamp, preparation and participation in the pitch competition, and additional engagements as appropriate.

Application Format: Teams vying for acceptance into NextCycle must submit a signed application; e-signatures are acceptable. Only one application is required per team submission, and project teams may include as many cross-sector partners as required for long term project success. Each team must designate a single primary point of contact. If selected for consideration, informal interviews will be scheduled before the cohort session begins. The application must adhere to the following format to be eligible. Applications that do not follow *all* of the requirements may not be considered. If there is proprietary information or trade secrets in your application, please indicate where to ensure the information remains confidential and is only used for evaluation purposes.

1. Team Information, Project Name, and Event Availability: Include the following required information about the project team:

- a. Primary contact: Name, address, phone, email, website (if available).
- b. Project name: The name of the project.
- c. Project team: Listing of all founders and partner organizations.
- d. All teams must answer the following questions:
 - i. Can you attend the NextCycle Bootcamp on March 5-7, 2025? *Yes or No* (Team travel expenses will be covered on a pre-approved basis; in-person event will be held in Boulder County.)
 - ii. Self-identify your business stage: *Early Stage Start-up Growth Expansion Mature*
 - iii. Have you participated in a business accelerator or incubator before? If yes, which one(s)?
 - iv. Have you applied for an RREO or FRWD grant before? *Yes or No* If yes, what was the outcome?
 - v. Previous RREO or FRWD grant recipients are *not* eligible for NextCycle.
 - vi. Please identify your organization ownership? *Disabled owned, Minority owned, Veteran owned, Immigrant owned, Woman owned, None of the above*
- e. Signature: Signature and date of authorized individual. Can be an e-signature.

2. Project Overview: Please provide concise responses to the following questions.

- a. Business Pitch (400 words or less): Pitch your business idea for transforming recovered materials into valuable products in Colorado. This is your team's opportunity to succinctly 'sell' your business idea and explain why you are going to be successful. Clearly articulate how your business will operate, what inputs you will use, and what product(s) are you making? What is your plan for becoming economically viable? Who is on your team and what experience do they bring to the project? Do you have any early successes, are you operating a similar project elsewhere? When do you think the project would be full scale? Include the information needed to pitch your business.
- b. Project Impact (250 words or less): What is the projected impact in Colorado? If fully implemented, approximately how many tons of recovered materials (throughput) will the project impact annually, and how many jobs will be created through the project? How can your project be scaled up or replicated elsewhere? Clearly identify what inputs you will be using and whether you have already identified or secured the feedstock. What will be the output of the project (units sold, tons of output, other metrics)? Are there additional environmental or other benefits realized through a full-scale implementation of the project (emissions reductions, water savings, etc.)?
- c. Financial Viability (250 words or less): Describe how your project plan results in a financially sustainable business within Colorado's economic landscape. What is your estimated total funding need for the project? What are your anticipated revenue sources

and how long will it take for your project to become profitable? What is your current market traction? Where will you secure funding for the project development? If you have a new technology, do you own your IP, or if not, is it licensed and from whom? Include details on your end-product, what its anticipated value is in the market, and its position relative to competition in the marketplace.

- d. Project Need (250 words or less): Why are you interested in participating in NextCycle Colorado? What do you hope to get out of your time in the accelerator? Are there specific technology or business milestones you are seeking to accomplish in the next 6 to 12 months?
- e. Visioning (100 words or less): Imagine it is 2027, and your business has flourished. Craft a short social media post that captures what this vision entails. Share what you have achieved, milestones you reached, and/or impact you have had thus far.
- f. Competition? List your top three competitors.

3. Project Teams & Partners

- a. Partners: Do you have any partner organizations or project advisors? i. If yes, please provide partner organization(s)' or advisor(s)' contact information: Organization Name, Contact Name, Contact Email, Contact Phone Number.
- b. Project Team (250 words or less): Briefly describe your project team and their experience. If there are partnerships with other entities, highlight the partnerships and how they will contribute to a successful outcome. Full resumes or qualifications will not be reviewed as part of the submission.

4. Optional Information. There is no penalty for not submitting the optional additional information.

- a. Additional Information (1 page PDF maximum): You may submit an optional single page, one-sided PDF of relevant information about your team, business, or project. Examples of additional information may include marketing material examples, investor pitch, P&L statement, letter or support, MOU for feedstock or offtake agreement, or information about the founder(s).
- b. Where did you hear about NextCycle Colorado?
 - i. Webinar/Conference
 - ii. Social Media
 - iii. Email
 - iv. E-newsletter
 - v. Article
 - vi. Personal Referral/Colleague
 - vii. Other: _____

Examples of Success

- 1. A Colorado startup has partnered with a university to invent a new process to produce commercially viable agricultural products from recovered organic materials. The process

improves the end markets for finished compost in the state. After acceptance into NextCycle, the team is able to develop a business plan, eventually breaking ground on their first full-scale installation in the state.

2. An established Colorado nonprofit company collects and processes used mattresses for recycling. Mattresses are broken down to their constituent parts and sold as commodities to both in and out of state markets. During NextCycle, the nonprofit is able to improve their business pitch for future investors and partners as well as identify and test equipment that will significantly increase the long-term financials of the organization. As a result, the organization is able to expand across the state, increase profitability, and double the amount of mattresses diverted from landfill disposal on an annual basis.
3. An established multinational firm joins NextCycle to explore potential partners, locations, and feedstock supplies in Colorado. During NextCycle, the business is able to identify a site location, partners and funding for the development of their manufacturing process in Colorado. They are also able to refine their projections for income and expenses. Following NextCycle, the firm secured financing along with a public sector partnership and broke ground on a new location in Colorado.

Have questions? Sign-up for office hours

To help you through the application process, project staff are hosting virtual 'office hours'. The office hours are 20 minute blocks of one on one meetings where interested teams can ask questions about the project and receive guidance on the resources available to develop their application.

Sign up for a virtual Office Hours session at:

[NextCycle Colorado Office Hours Link](#)

Email us at: nextcycle.colorado@recycle.com Call the project staff at 303 953 2461

Resources

If your end-market business is already established and you want to know more about state circularity legislation, connect with other associated organizations/ businesses, or find additional funding opportunities , try...

Colorado Circular Economy Development Center (CEDC). The CEDC is a strategic partner of Colorado NextCycle and works on behalf of the state to create new and expand existing end markets in Colorado.

[Contact CEDC](#)

Recycle Colorado. Recycle Colorado is the state's independent, nonprofit recycling industry group that is also working to advance end markets in the state.

[Recycle Colorado Website Link](#)

If you are a start-up looking for info on how to own / operate in Colorado or need some one-on-one general business mentoring, look to...

Colorado's Small Business Development Center. SBDC is a nonprofit public / private partnership that offers free one-on-one business consulting at 14 centers throughout the state. Also provides an excellent, one-stop, comprehensive resource book with the city, state, and federal resources and requirements.

[Colorado SBDC Consulting Link](#)

[Colorado SBDC Resource Book Link](#)

If you are an international or domestic company looking to move or expand to Colorado and want to explore the state's economic incentives or gather location insight, check out...

Colorado's Office of Economic Development and International Trade. This state office specializes in domestic and foreign business recruitment and has excellent resources on financial and other business incentives, as well as deep dives into key industries and transportation access.

[Colorado Office of Economic Development Website Link](#) | Dan Lane, dan.lane@state.co.us

If you want to know more about Colorado's regulatory environment...

Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Materials Management Unit. Offers specific guidance on Colorado's regulatory environment pertaining to solid waste.

[CDPHE Solid Waste Management and Recycling Website Link](#) | Wolf Kray, Wolfgang.kray@state.co.us

Colorado Small Business Assistance Program Through the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. Offers general guidance on a wide range of environmental regulation.

[CDPHE Small Business Assistance Program Website Link](#)

If you want to know more about Colorado's funding opportunities...

Colorado Circular Communities Enterprise (C3): HB24-1449 established the Colorado Circular Communities Enterprise (C3). As a result of this legislation, communities throughout Colorado will benefit from a single statewide program that employs a circularity framework for reducing and averting waste. The new C3 enterprise replaced the Recycling Resources Economic Opportunity (RREO) program and the Front Range Waste Diversion (FRWD) programs on July 1, 2024. This new program modernizes pollution prevention, establishes a single board of directors, and will provide greater flexibility for project funding and technical assistance for all of Colorado.

[C3 Website Link](#)

To learn more about what a NextCycle project team looks like, visit our YouTube page to watch last year's pitch session. The five-minute pitches can be viewed on the NextCycle Colorado YouTube channel.

[NextCycle Colorado Youtube Channel Link](#)