RECOUP Project Sponsorship Opportunities

A significant portion of RECOUP's initiatives are conducted as core activities funded collectively by RECOUP membership. However, certain projects require additional support to advance understanding, knowledge, or evidence related to plastics circularity and recycling.

Why you should support RECOUP projects

- Enhance your organisation's **reputation as a leader in sustainability** and improve brand reputation.
- Fulfill your **ESG and CSR** commitments.
- **Showcase leadership** to customers and stakeholders by advocating for **evidence-based changes** in the plastics value chain.
- Shape research that **influences policy and regulation**.
- Pilot new ideas in a **low-risk environment** with RECOUP handling all project management aspects.
- Potential to share project costs through **cross sector collaboration.**

Benefits of supporting a project for your organisation

- ✓ Inclusion of your logo and organisation name in reports, press releases, presentations, and project outputs.
- ✓ Mention of your organisation in any external presentations related to the project.
- ✓ Regular project updates and the chance to influence the project's direction and objectives.
- ✓ Early access to findings.
- ✓ A case study for your organisation's communication purposes.
- ✓ Opportunities for you to directly engage with or gain insights from the project.
- ✓ Networking possibilities with other project partners.

If you would like to find out more about any of the projects express your interest in supporting a projector propose a project idea then please contact us at enquiry@recoup.org.

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Projects to Support

Project	Funding required
Litter Data Warehouse	£50,000
AI Deep Listening - Citizen Insight	£20,000
Small items - Composition Analysis and Design Solutions	£15,000
The Seabin - Next Steps	£50,000
Blister packs - Design and Solutions for Kerbside Collection	£10,000
Research and Trials into a Recycling Scheme for PP Paint Pots	£12,500
Local Authority Communications and Behaviour Change	£100,000 (or £20,000 per local authority)
Recycle Zone: Capturing Non-DRS On-the-go Plastics	£50,000
Kerbside Collection for Reusable Packaging	Phase 1 : £25,000 Phase 2 : £100,000 Phase 3: £1,000,000
Agricultural Plastic Recycling - Bring Back Scheme	£15,000

If you are interested in sponsoring a project then please get in touch enquiry@recoup.org

Litter Data Warehouse

Project brief

Littering is a widespread issue that affects our environment daily. Keep Britain Tidy estimates that more than **two million pieces of litter are dropped in the UK each day** leaving our streets and natural spaces untidy and uncared for. Waste crime is estimated to **cost taxpayers £1 billion each year**.

In depth scientific understanding around the composition of litter and where it comes from, is lacking. This detail is imperative in determining the sources and most effective strategies for curbing this form of pollution. The focus of this project is to **develop a platform that can lead to a single source of truth for litter data** utilising a standardised way to collect, analyse and use the data. This project will benefit communities, industry, the country and the environment.

Project aims

- Develop a tool accessible to community groups, businesses and other individuals to upload their litter findings, as well as organisations and technology specialists, in order to create a uniquely extensive resource that can be consulted and queried to aid in the development of litter pollution prevention schemes.
- Produce a database that is comprehensive, granular, robust , and comparable, as well as interactive and user-friendly, presenting information in a way that is easy to understand and minimises the chance of misinterpretation.

Funding requirements

Funding is required to carry out stakeholder research, collate data and to design, develop and test the platform. Dsposal, an award-winning technology company specialising in innovation, data and circular economy service design, will partner with RECOUP to deliver this project.

Dsposal

RECOUP is seeking support of **£50,000** to deliver this project.

To find out more about this project contact:

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AI Deep Listening - Citizen Insight

Project brief

What do people really think and say about plastic? How does it impact their everyday lives? What do they find confusing about recycling systems, and how aware are they of upcoming legislation, such as deposit return schemes? Traditional research methods can offer some insight into these questions, but they are often limited by self-reporting bias, with respondents giving answers they believe are expected or socially acceptable.

To overcome these limitations, RECOUP proposes to undertake **innovative AI-driven behavioural research**. Working in collaboration with data and behavioural scientists, we will **analyse millions of organic public conversations**, across social media, forums, blogs, and more. This approach will allow us to uncover genuine public attitudes, misconceptions, barriers to behaviour change, and levels of awareness in a way that is scalable, real-time, and rooted in what people are actually saying.

Project aims

- To uncover genuine public attitudes, emotions and beliefs around plastic use, recycling, and environmental impact by analysing millions of organic online conversations.
- To pinpoint specific barriers and misconceptions to plastics recycling and to assess public awareness of upcoming policies such as Deposit Return Schemes.
- To generate actionable insights that can guide industry, government, and NGOs in designing more effective education, communication and intervention strategies.

Funding requirements

To deliver this innovative AI behavioural research project, RECOUP is seeking **£20,000** in funding to cover the following core components:

- Advanced consumer insights modelling utilising AI based tools - questions will be developed with project sponsor.
- A comprehensive report summarising key findings, actionable recommendations, and implications for policy, industry, and public engagement.

To find out more about this project contact:

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Small Items - Composition Analysis and Design Solutions

Project brief

Small items, fines, residues, they go by many names, but they all mean the same thing. Small items whether they are plastic, paper, or metals have been a problem for packaging designers, brands, sorting facilities and recyclers and will continue to be unless we start actively looking for a solution.

RECOUP are often asked how to make items more recyclable, 'what if we make it from this material,' is often a question we hear. However, it is often not the material that is the problem it is the size or format. Even now there is no definitive analysis of the quantities and material composition of the fines fraction.

By understanding the scale of the problem, we can make better informed choices on which design guidance is required to mitigate the problem of small items.

Project aims

- To gain a better understanding of the volumes and composition of materials and items in the fines fraction.
- To pinpoint common items that contaminate the fines fraction, understand how they are captured and to understand where design can reduce contamination.
- To generate actionable insights that can guide the recycling industry to design infrastructure with a focus on mitigating contamination of the fines fraction.

Funding requirements

To deliver this crucial research project, RECOUP is seeking **£15,000** in funding or support to cover the following:

- Collection and analysis of fine samples from various MRFs for analysis in the RECOUP Litter Lab.
- A comprehensive report summarising the key findings, recommendations, design guidance for brands and mitigation solutions.

To find out more about this project contact:

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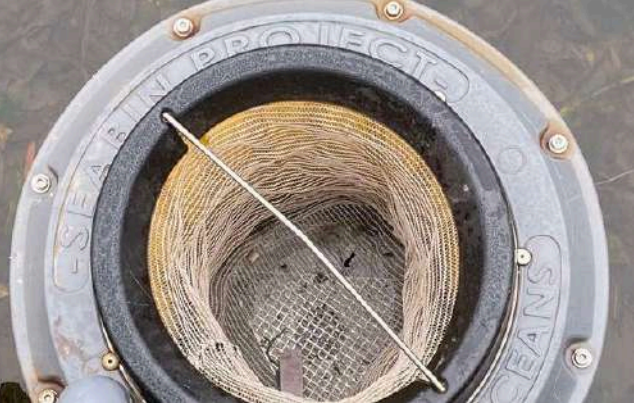
The Seabin - Next Steps



Project brief

Aquatic pollution remains a persistent and growing threat. Litter that enters the environment gradually breaks down into micro-particles, which can infiltrate the food chain, impacting both wildlife and humans. Marine and riverine debris not only harms aquatic biodiversity and disrupts ecosystems but also contributes to visual pollution, degrading the natural beauty of our waterways.

Seabins offer a powerful solution for cleaner waterways, capable of capturing up to 20 kg of debris per unit each day, including litter and microplastics. The collected material can be recycled, analysed for microplastic content, and used as a hands-on educational resource to foster environmental awareness and encourage sustainable behaviour. Additionally, Seabins help address the current gap in data on aquatic litter and microplastics, providing valuable insights that can inform future environmental policies and decision-making

Project aims

- Relocate the Seabin to a more suitable site to ensure the continued collection and analysis of aquatic litter and microplastics. This will support ongoing research efforts and contribute valuable data to our environmental monitoring initiatives.

- By adding these findings to our Litter Composition & Pathways project database, we can build a more robust dataset to inform targeted interventions and guide future policy and decision-making.

Funding requirements

Funding is required to install the Seabin in a suitable location, collect, sort and dispose of material and analyse material for microplastics using the RECOUP laboratory. Estimated costs can vary depending on the location, frequency of collecting material and analysis of microplastics.

Cost range depending on delivery from **£8,000-£80,000**, but this could be more depending on the ambition and scale of the project:

- Seabin installation: £5,000
- Material collection and analysis: £25,000
- Microplastics analyses: £20,000

To find out more about this project contact:

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Blister Packs - Design and Solutions for Kerbside Collection

Project brief

Blister packs present a number of challenges when it comes to recyclability before you start to consider kerbside collection. Traditionally produced using PVC plastic with an aluminium foil backing, this mix of materials made them almost impossible to recycle.

Now brands are looking to move to a more recyclable design using PET trays with PET backing. However, questions still remain over the suitability of the materials in the recycling system, particularly around printing inks and the potential for the packs to be lost into the fines or residual waste streams.

RECOUP has connections and expertise within the industry to be able to tackle this problem and research potential solutions.

Project aims

- To research into the optimal design for recycling for blister packs, including material use, printing inks and size.
- To understand the limitations of blister packs for sorting and investigate solutions to ensure recycling, with further investigation into PET recycling from reprocessors.
- To produce a report detailing the key findings and solutions to ensure the recycling of blister packs from kerbside collections or recommend viable alternative solutions.

Funding requirements

To deliver this research project, RECOUP is seeking **£10,000** in funding to cover travel costs and resources for site visits, research and the accompanying reporting.

To find out more about this project contact:

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Research and Trials into a Recycling Scheme for PP Paint Pots

Project brief

Polypropylene (PP) is a plastic commonly used in the manufacturing of paint pots. However, due to the contamination issue of residue paint, PP paint pots are not accepted for recycling in kerbside collections and many local recycling programs. There are outlets for the disposal of the residue paint, but this has not progressed with a solution for the recycling of PP paint pots. Previous work carried out by RECOUP in this area has identified potential areas for further exploration.

RECOUP seek help from current and new partners to take this objective forward with help from connections across the industry to research and trial potential pathways to improve the recyclability of PP paint pots and end markets.

Project aims

- To research and outline a sustainable, commercially viable recycling solution for plastic paint containers by outlining a pilot programme to evaluate the feasibility, logistics and market implications.
- To understand the limitations of paint pots for sorting and investigate solutions to ensure recycling, with further investigation into PP recycling from reprocessors.
- To produce a report detailing the key findings and most suitable route for recyclability of PP paint pots.

Funding requirements

To deliver this project, RECOUP is seeking **£12,500** in funding to cover research and project costs that cover travel costs, resources for site visits and the accompanying report.

To find out more about this project contact:

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Local Authority Communications and Behaviour Change

Project brief

Residents are regularly confused how to recycle both at home and away from home, which has multiple impacts. Effective communication and behaviour change programmes should be a vital part of our waste and recycling systems, yet they largely remain a significant untapped opportunity to increase recycling rates and reduce contamination, litter and disposal costs.

This project will explore, evaluate, and improve the communications used at the kerbside and in communities. It will investigate static (e.g. printed materials, lorry signage), interactive (e.g. roadshows, school visits) and digital formats, with a particular focus placed on on-the-go recycling bins, where public understanding and correct usage is often low, limiting their effectiveness, and run a campaign to support the needs of the authority.

Project aims

- Map current local authority communications used at kerbside and in community settings, reviewing evidence, gathering feedback on communication effectiveness and barriers to participation.
- Launch campaign focusing on recycling in the community which aims to improve awareness of on-the-go services, increase recycling and reduce contamination of community recycling bins, through the use of multiple physical and digital communication channels.
- Launch campaign to support kerbside recycling services, to enhance public understanding of the often wider range of materials that can be recycled at home to improve recycling and reduce contamination rates.

Funding requirements

The funding requirement is dependent on local authority size, implementation scale and delivery options - but is often in the range of £20,000 - £25,000 per project. This covers all research and delivery costs, including a final report.

To find out more about this project contact:

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Recycle Zone: Capturing Non-DRS On-the-go Plastics

Project brief

As the UK prepares to roll out a national Deposit Return Scheme (DRS), the focus is on improving collection rates for drinks containers. However, a significant proportion of plastic packaging used 'on-the-go' falls outside the scope of DRS. This includes valuable plastic material that could otherwise be recycled into new products but is often disposed of in general waste or as litter.

The Recycle Zone project proposes to re-establish and modernise a previously successful initiative (funded by Coca-Cola) to capture these overlooked materials. By installing dedicated recycling infrastructure in public spaces, the project aims to improve the capture of recyclable plastic packaging not covered by DRS, increase recycling rates, and reducing environmental leakage.

Project aims

- Reinstate Recycle Zone infrastructure in targeted public spaces to collect 'on-the-go' plastic packaging that will not be captured by DRS (e.g. non-bottle plastic packaging).
- Trial and test modern solutions (e.g. improved signage, bin design, AI sorting technologies) to reduce contamination and improve recyclability of collected materials.
- Generate data and insight on the composition, volume, and recycling potential of non-DRS plastics disposed of away from home, to inform future policy and infrastructure investment.

Funding requirements

We are seeking funding in the region of **£50,000** to support this project to include the purchase and installation of tailored Recycle Zone collection units. Staffing, monitoring and data collection in trial locations (e.g. transport hubs, shopping centres, events). Engagement with local authorities and recyclers to track materials through to end markets and reporting, evaluation, and recommendations for wider rollout.

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Kerbside Collection for Reusable Packaging

Project brief

Scaling up reusable packaging systems remains a significant challenge. One of the critical steps to success is ensuring the return of packaging from consumers back into circulation. Leveraging existing infrastructure and consumer behaviours, particularly those established around plastic recycling, presents a valuable opportunity to scale reuse systems without the need for major infrastructure investments. A local authority-led kerbside collection of reusable packaging has been demonstrated as a viable method for large-scale reuse[1]. This project focuses on trialling the collection of reusable packaging alongside existing recycling streams, with the aim of identifying both the challenges and opportunities for wider implementation. [1] https://gounpackaged.com/infrastructure-modelling

Project aims

- Assess and estimate the infrastructure changes required to support reusable packaging collection : Vehicle adaptations, Collection methods (e.g., co-mingled, separate compartments, additional bags), Storage and sorting requirements, Route adjustments.
- Understand citizen behaviour to inform future communication and engagement campaigns.
- Pilot returnable packaging collection systems in a small city.

Funding requirements

The project is designed to be delivered in stages, beginning with foundational research and a simplified trial, progressing to a comprehensive, multi-stakeholder pilot. RECOUP is seeking the following support:

- **£25,000 for Stage 1**: Research, including stakeholder interviews and a simplified operational trial (no citizen participation). Outcome: Report detailing initial findings and outlining future objectives.
- **£100,000 for Stage 2**: A small-scale household trial focusing on behaviour change and communication strategies. Outcome: Data and insights to refine citizen engagement approaches and operational planning.
- **£1,000,000 for Stage 3**: A six-month pilot involving all key stakeholders (retailers, local authorities, waste management providers, washing services, and citizens). Outcome: Proof of concept for scalable returnable packaging systems integrated into existing waste and recycling infrastructure.

To find out more about this project contact:

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Agricultural Plastic Recycling - Bring Back Scheme

Project brief

The agricultural plastics recycling rate in the UK currently sits at around 25-30%. The reasons behind this are primarily high contamination levels, logistical challenges and the limited infrastructure available for collection and recycling.

Farms are dispersed across a wide area, making farm-to-farm collections an expensive logistical nightmare. RECOUP plans to collaborate with APE UK to set up a network of bring back centres in the UK. The project aims to create a central hub for farmers to being their plastics for collection, reducing the logistical burden. RECOUP will then work with recyclers to identify the suitability of the plastics for recycling.

RECOUP has connections and expertise across the plastics value chain and with the combined knowledge and expertise of APE UK will be able to tackle this problem and research potential solutions.

Project aims

- To research the feasibility of a bring back model at a central hub in Lincolnshire as a proof of concept to secure funding for wider expansion into other UK farming communities.
- To connect and collaborate with DEFRA to incentivise farmers to bring their agricultural plastics to a central hub for collection and recycling.
- To identify suitable recycling routes, partners and end-markets for a range of agricultural rigid and flexible plastics.

Funding requirements

To deliver this research project, RECOUP is seeking **£15,000** in funding to cover resource costs for meetings, site visits, travel and reporting. The Project will aim to run on an incentivised farmer pays model to finance the collection and transport of the materials to recyclers.

To find out more about this project contact:

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