



**Alister Henskens**

Minister for Science, Innovation and Technology  
Minister for Skills and Training

**James Griffin**

Minister for Environment and Heritage

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **NSW GOVERNMENT COMMITS TO A CIRCULAR ECONOMY**

Sustainable, economically viable and environmentally friendly projects have received NSW Government funding through a program which is fostering innovation through the state's world-leading researchers and companies.

Minister for Science, Innovation and Technology Alister Henskens said the Circular Economy Challenge Program will help to remove barriers and build new sustainable supply chains that minimise or eliminate waste as well as generate jobs and investment in new circular industries.

"The Circular Economy refers to a model of production and consumption which aims to eliminate waste by keeping products and materials in use through innovative methods," Mr Henskens said.

"This funding is supporting exciting ways for businesses and people to participate in the new zero-carbon, zero-waste circular economy, ensuring NSW stays at the forefront of innovation and research in this area."

The funding was announced today, coinciding with Minister Henskens addressing the [Australia Circular Economy Forum](#) hosted by [NSW Circular](#).

Minister for Environment James Griffin said the projects are focused on solving the greatest environmental challenges through innovation.

"The circular economy is already in action in NSW, through programs including our wildly successful Return and Earn scheme, which has had more than 7 billion plastic containers returned," Mr Griffin said.

"I'm focused on boosting the circular economy even more to help support our environment through the NSW Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy, which begins implementation this year."

NSW Circular CEO Lisa McLean said collaboration is the key to solving the big challenges of transitioning to a circular economy.

"These research projects are proving there are new and better ways to reduce, recycle and reuse waste across many sectors - health, waste management, construction, infrastructure and finance," Ms McLean said.

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## **2022 Circular Challenge Funding Scheme recipients:**

Grants of \$200,000 were allocated to the following projects, with the lead companies pledging matching funding:

**1. Achieving Circularity: *Development of a sustainable and scalable model to recycle and reduce the cost of polypropylene waste in hospitals***

State-of-the-art technology used for the first time in Australia, which will convert non-woven hospital waste, such as disposable surgical gowns, drapes, tray wraps, face masks and cubicle curtains, into plastic briquettes to be used for recycling into a wide range of products.

**Partners:** UTS, UNSW Sydney, Multigate Medical Products, 180 Waste Group, Allmoulds Plastic Group and South Western Sydney Local Health District (SWSLHD).

**2. Repurposing recovered organic materials as alternative raw materials for brick production**

Composted municipal organic waste is repurposed into bricks, reducing waste sent to landfill and associated greenhouse gas emissions. The project reduces fuel use in brick production and produces a durable, economically viable and environmentally friendly brick product.

**Partners:** Western Sydney University, Macquarie University, Global Renewables, Austral Brick Co, Parramatta City Council.