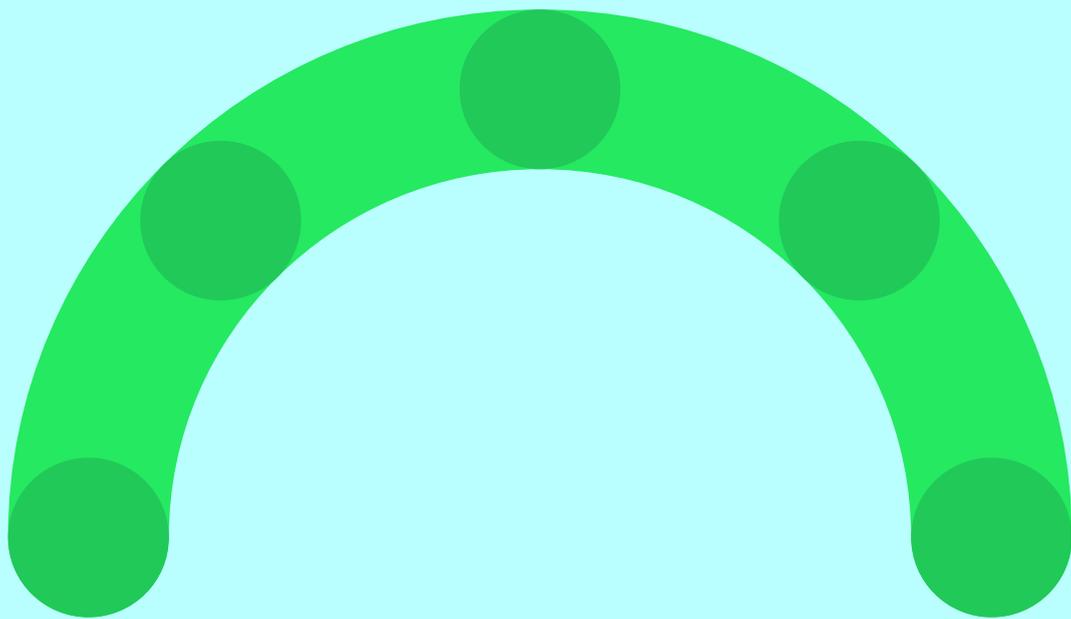


STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN 2020-23



Facilitating the Transition
to a Circular Economy



AUSTRALIAN
CIRCULAR
ECONOMY
HUB
PLANETARK

FUNDING PARTNER



Australian Government

ASSOCIATE SPONSORS



SUPPORTING SPONSOR

TECHNICAL SUPPORTER



COLLABORATION PARTNERS



THIS PROJECT RECEIVED GRANT FUNDING FROM THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT



WHY ARE WE DOING THIS?

We believe the current linear economic model is unsustainable and there is a better way.



OUR VISION

A flourishing society, economy and environment.



OUR MISSION

Facilitating the transition to a Circular Economy in Australia.

CONTENTS

FOREWORD	05
BACKGROUND	07
STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN STRUCTURE	10
GUIDING PRINCIPLES	12
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY	13
BARRIERS TO TRANSITION	15
AMBITION & OUTCOMES	17
FOUR STRATEGIC PILLARS	19
GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE	25
ANNUAL WORK PLANS	27

FOREWORD





AUSTRALIAN CIRCULAR ECONOMY HUB

It is with great pleasure that I share the first strategic plan of Planet Ark's newest program, the Australian Circular Economy Hub (ACE Hub), a public private partnership.

It has become increasingly clear that the transition to a circular economy has moved from why, to how. Creating a path to a circular economy is especially relevant in light of the post-COVID-19 recovery, as it will help create new jobs and build more resilience while also solving many other ongoing problems, from resource scarcity to climate change.

Globally countries and businesses are implementing change and setting ambitious targets to enable the transition to occur. Creating a carbon neutral circular economy will make our human society much more environmentally sustainable and resilient and will reduce pressure on the biosphere that all species depend on for their existence.

The mission of the ACE Hub is to facilitate the transition to a circular economy in Australia. This can only be done with one of the most significant collaboration efforts ever undertaken.

This was illustrated in the in-depth feedback we received from our draft strategic plan from a wide range of stakeholders. A big thanks to those who contributed. While it was not possible to incorporate all your responses, our strategic plan is immeasurably better for your collective input.

We have also benefited from our collaboration partners' input and support. These include our international collaboration partner the Holland Circular Hotspot whose ongoing mentorship and 'learn by doing' philosophy has been invaluable to us.

As we prepare for the official launch of the ACE Hub, we are pleased to already welcome on board domestic collaboration partners APCO, Circular Economy Victoria, Circular Economy Perth administered by Holonic, CSIRO, Deakin University and NSW Circular. We also welcome our first Technical Supporter, Edge Environment, who also supported the development of this strategy, and hope many consultancies follow their lead.

Finally, a huge thanks to our funding partner, the Australian Government and our sponsors Bingo Industries, KeepCup and Planet Ark Power for providing the funding and other valuable support to make the Australian Circular Economy Hub possible.

Please join us on the journey to make our vision of a flourishing society, economy and environment a reality.

Regards

Paul Klymenko

Chief Executive Officer
Planet Ark Environmental Foundation

PLANET ARK

BACKGROUND



BACKGROUND

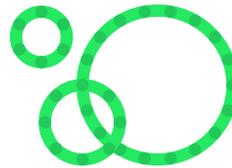
The 2020 Circularity Gap Report (CGR), a global assessment of circular economy progress, states the world is currently just 8.6% circular. This is despite the significant benefits a circular economy represents: potentially \$210 billion in present value to Australia's GDP alone by 2048¹.

Our ambition is that the Australian Circular Economy Hub (ACE Hub) will play a key role in realising this opportunity, and this strategic plan, along with the annual work plans to be developed from it, will be our guiding mechanism.

The ACE Hub strategic action plan was developed with the following approach:



Engagement with industry and stakeholders in Australia.



Gathered learnings and insights from circular economy hubs and networks in other countries (e.g. Holland Circular Hotspot)



Industry and government feedback collected on draft strategic plan (30 responses collected in June-July 2020).



Two sets of annual research among Australian business leaders, titled *Circularity in Business* (2019, 2020), commissioned by Planet Ark to help identify barriers, benefits, knowledge and progress.

¹ KPMG, 2020. Potential Economic Pay-off of a Circular Economy, <https://assets.kpmg/content/dam/kpmg/au/pdf/2020/potential-economic-pay-off-circular-economy-australia-2020.pdf>

The following key themes emerged from the industry and government feedback as well as the commissioned research. These have been integrated into the strategic action plan:



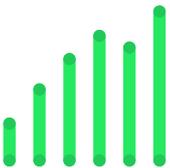
Across the board, it is critical to leverage existing research, plans and initiatives in each state to build a national consolidated view, identify gaps and determine where the ACE Hub needs to focus its effort.



Using systems thinking will help to identify the key challenges across value chains, material types and waste streams. This will ensure that the most effective and appropriate changes are made.



There is a need for supportive policy and removal of legislative barriers.



Circular procurement and robust metrics are essential to drive the transition.



Circular metrics need to be developed at different levels (product, business, city, country, ACE Hub impact), and should be meaningful and actionable.



Education is critical and needs to cater for a wider audience than traditional primary, secondary and tertiary. Continuous learning for all stakeholders will be essential.



Business decision makers who are better informed are more easily able to recognise the benefits of adopting circular principles.

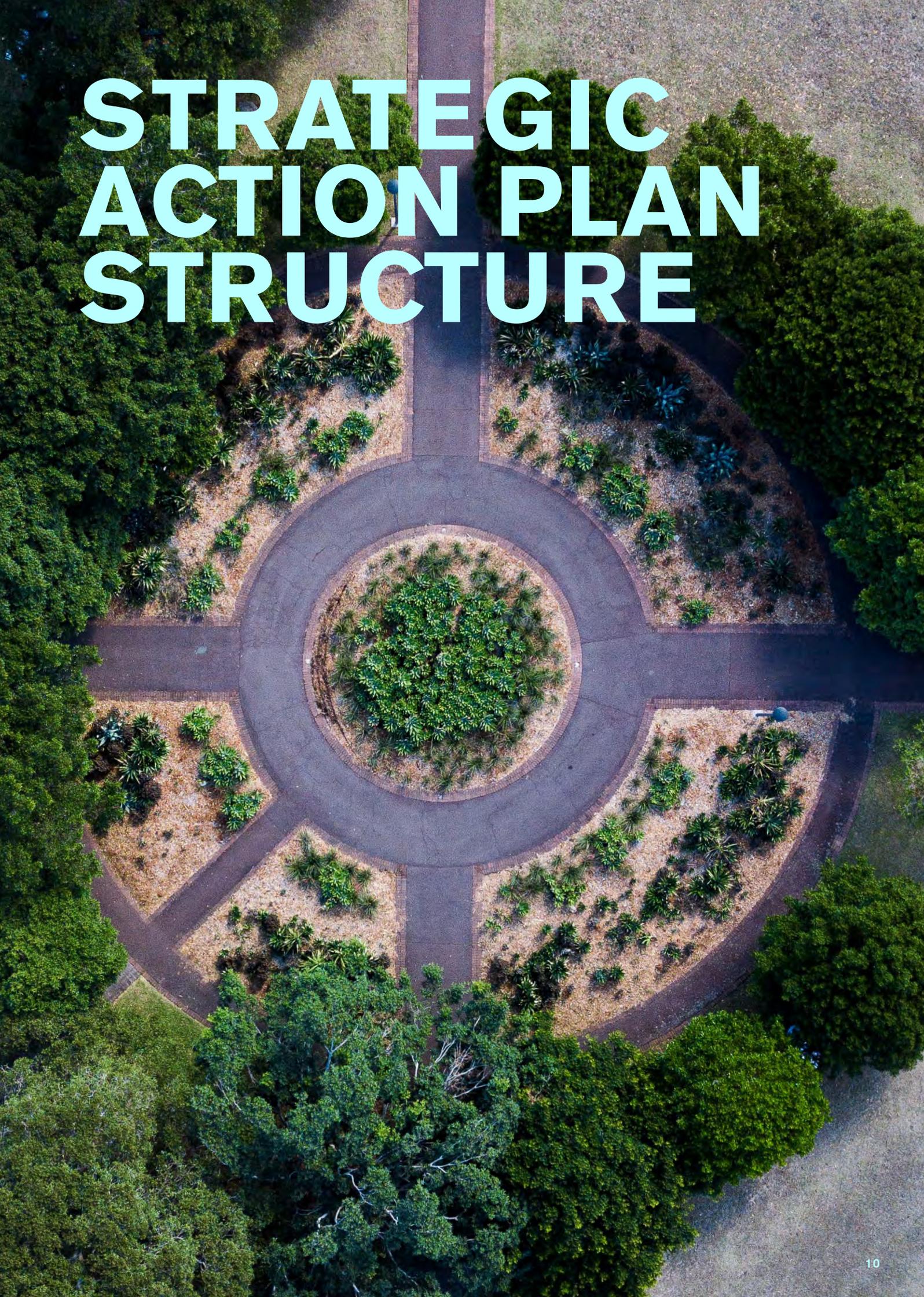


Product stewardship schemes require collaboration across government, industry and community as well as national consistency to be more widely adopted.



Adequate resourcing of the ACE Hub will need to match the ambition of the strategic action plan for it to be executed successfully.

STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN STRUCTURE



The strategic action plan is structured as follows:



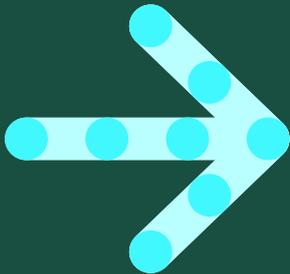
GUIDING PRINCIPLES

A set of precepts that will guide the ACE Hub throughout its life in all circumstances, irrespective of changes to its goals, strategies, type of work or top management.



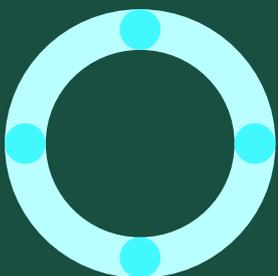
BARRIERS TO TRANSITION

Initial findings.



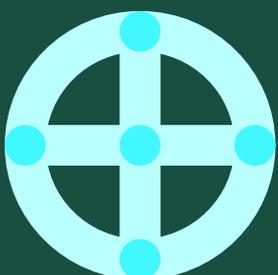
AMBITION & OUTCOMES

Measurable results to be delivered by 2023.



STRATEGIC PILLARS

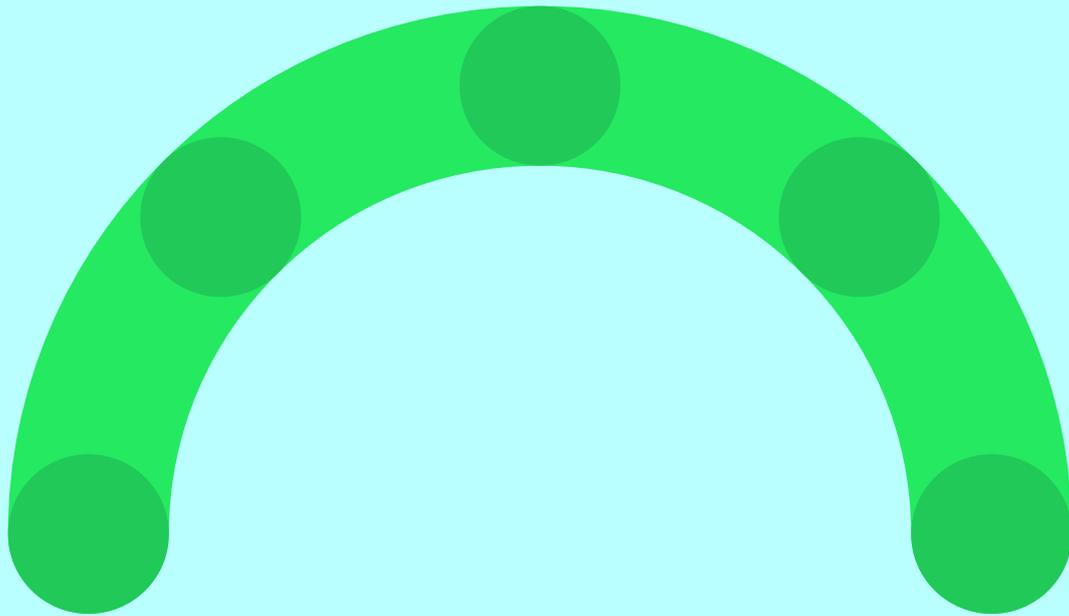
Backbone of the strategy that will achieve the outcomes.



GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

For the effective delivery of commitments made for the ACE Hub.

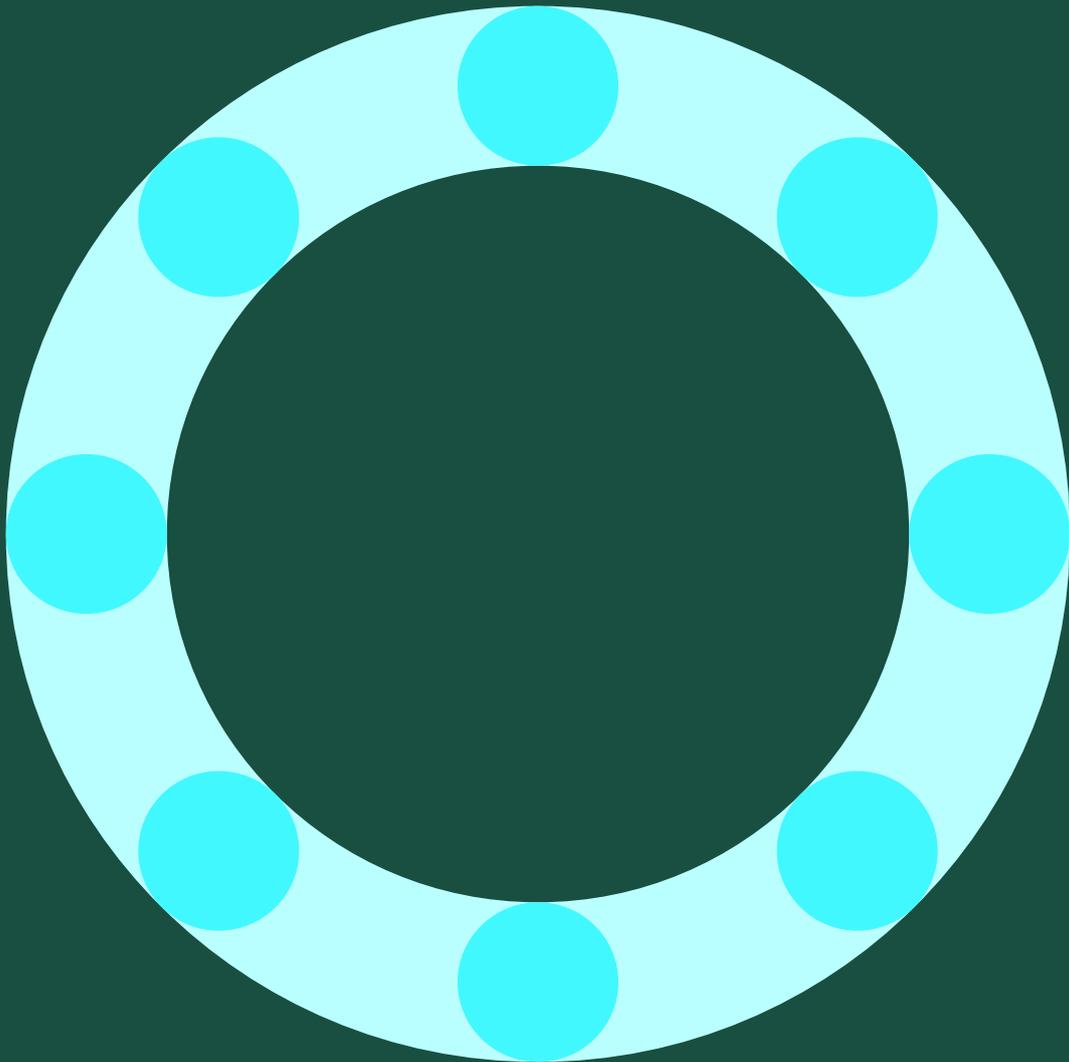
GUIDING PRINCIPLES



To ensure the ACE Hub successfully delivers this ambitious strategic action plan, we have created five guiding principles:

- 01 Be collaborative, transparent and inclusive**
- 02 Leverage and amplify existing resources (people, content, research)**
- 03 Prioritise initiatives that enable action and impact**
- 04 Take the lead only if an initiative scales impact at a national level**
- 05 Always make evidence-based decisions**

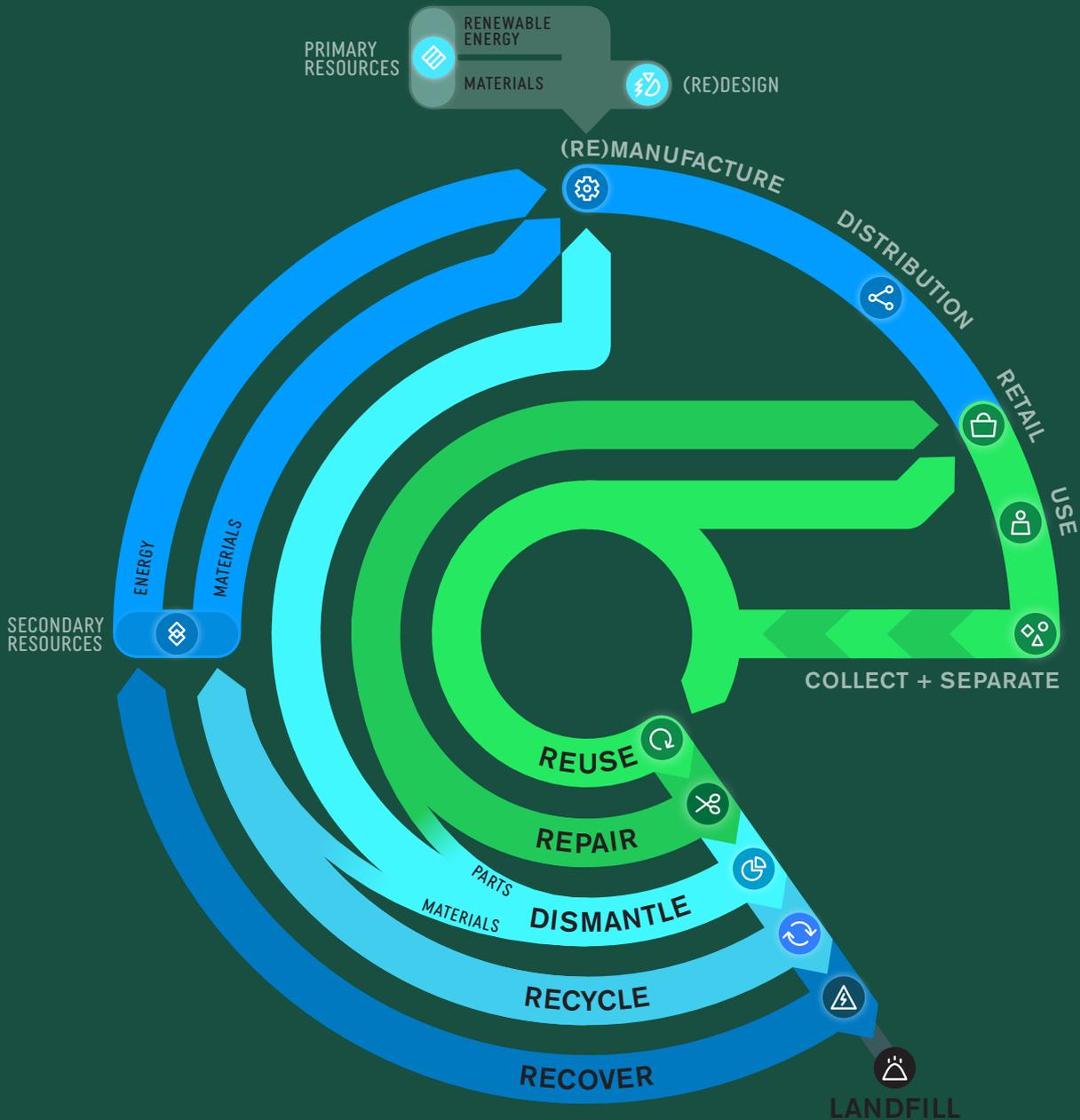
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY



We have devised a working diagram as a tool to help us understand the various elements to consider in implementing the circular economy. We have populated it with a range of case studies, which we will continuously add to in order to demonstrate the benefits and challenges on the road to circularity.

THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY CONTINUES

The circular economy creates new possibilities, extending the life of products and resources, to benefit all of society, reduce business costs and our impact on the planet.



Explore the interactive diagram on our website: acehub.org.au

BARRIERS TO TRANSITION



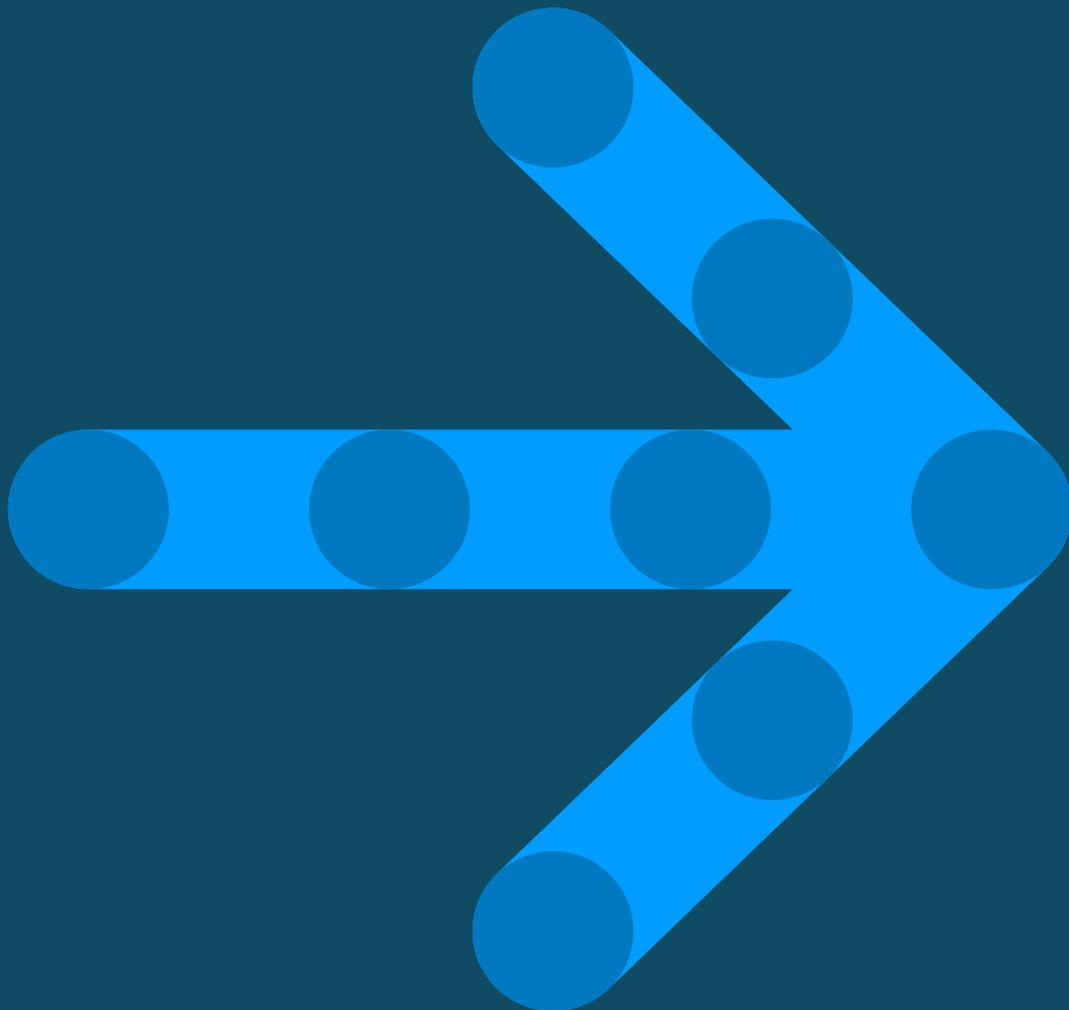
In designing any effective behaviour change program, it is imperative to identify any barriers to achieving the desired state. We recognise that this is an ongoing and iterative process and will form a large part of the work of the ACE Hub in the future.



That said, a number of barriers have already been identified through our research and feedback:

- **The Australian economy is in a COVID-19 induced recession.**
- **Lack of commonly agreed metrics and data.**
- **Regulatory or other limitations to alternative business models e.g. sharing and reuse.**
- **Lack of knowledge among business leaders of what constitutes a Circular Economy.**
- **Lack of data availability, access and transparency.**
- **Supportive policy framework is incomplete.**
- **Existing policy harmonisation is incomplete.**
- **Lack of knowledge about the benefits to governments, businesses and consumers of Circular Economy transition.**
- **Lack of choice or incentives to change linear behaviour to circular behaviour.**

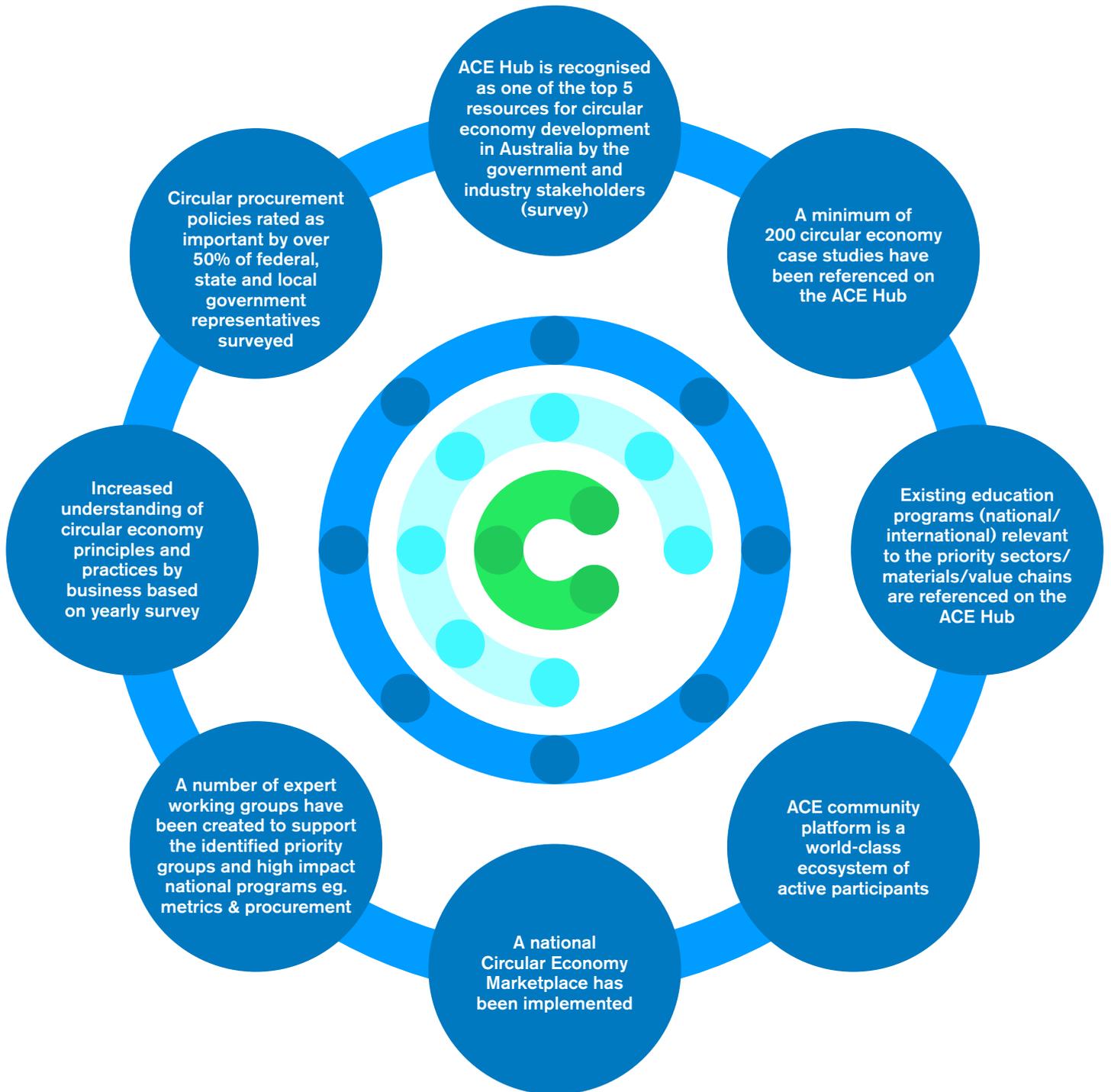
AMBITION & OUTCOMES



Over the next three years, the ACE Hub is committed to facilitating and accelerating the transition to a circular economy in Australia. Becoming a circular economy will require action and commitment from all individuals in our community, government and businesses. The ACE Hub's key role is to establish the network that will support collaboration and knowledge-sharing so that all those active in circularity in Australia can optimise their collective impact. In that context, we have identified direct and indirect outcomes.

It should be noted that a majority of the direct outcomes are currently funded. However, a number are reliant on additional funding being secured.

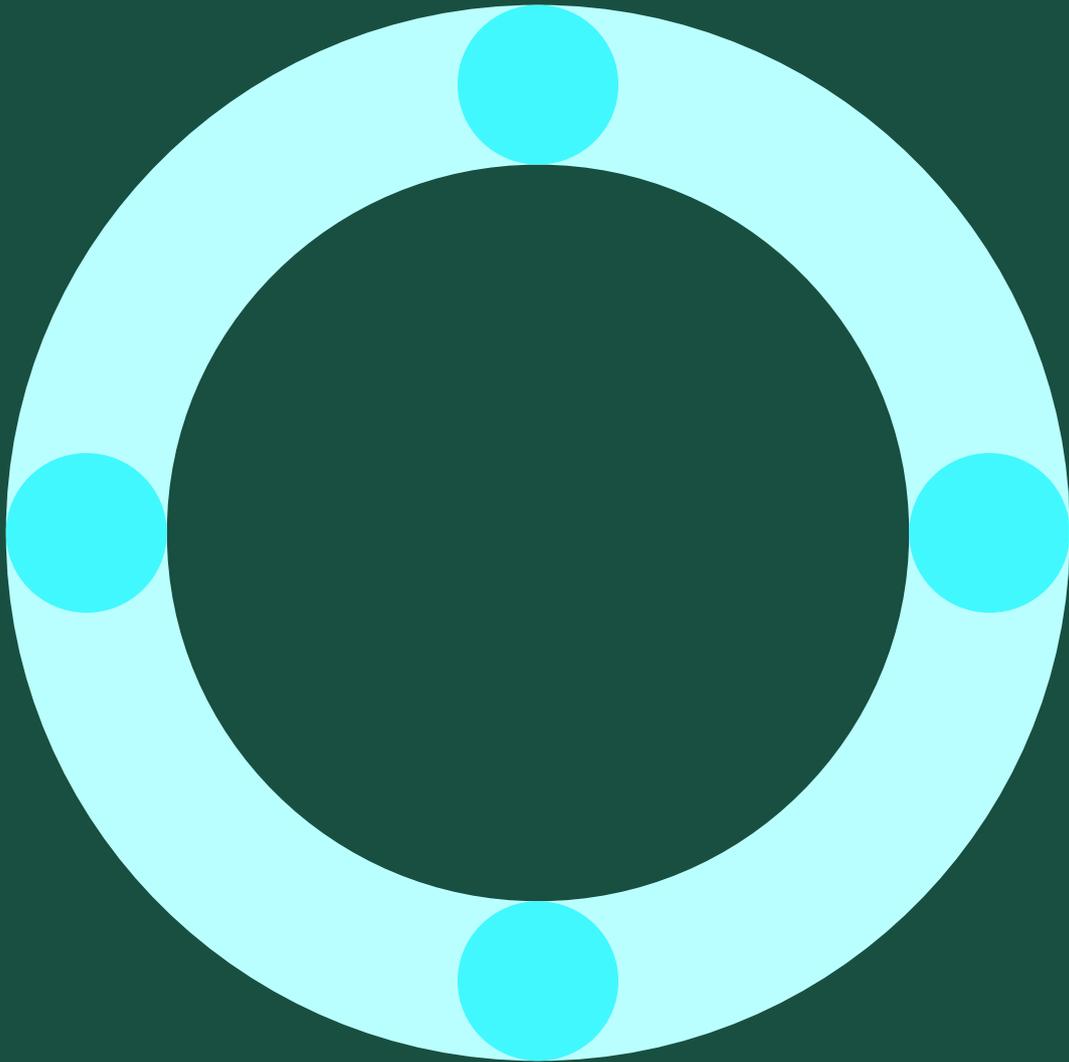
Direct outcomes are measurable results that can be attributed to the ACE Hub if we successfully execute the strategic action plan:



Indirect outcomes are the results we hope to see businesses and government achieve thanks to the ACE Hub's contribution to the overall systemic change required:



FOUR STRATEGIC PILLARS



To achieve these outcomes, the ACE Hub activities will be structured in four strategic pillars. Conscious that this strategic action plan is ambitious, we are committed to be very selective in the initiatives we lead, facilitate or contribute to. We will establish a robust and transparent governance framework and take an evidenced-based approach to decision-making, which will focus on maximising our impacts.

It should be noted that a number of the activities (or their extent) listed below are reliant on additional funding being secured and will be identified with an asterisk*.



01

**INSPIRE &
AMPLIFY**

Drive awareness of CE particularly in business and government.



02

**EDUCATE &
CONNECT**

Build and share knowledge and enable collaboration.



04

**SUPPORT &
PROMOTE
CHANGE**

Identify and overcome barriers to create enabling conditions.

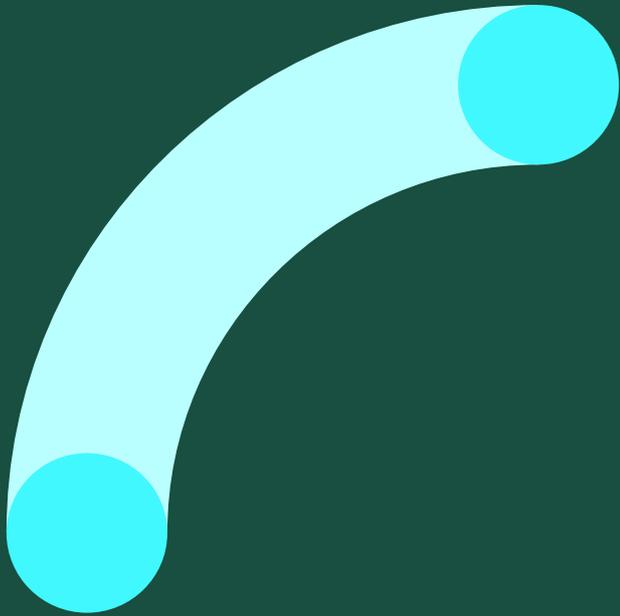


03

**ENABLE
ACTION**

Lead, facilitate or contribute to high impact national initiatives.

INSPIRE & AMPLIFY



Inspire and amplify circular economy principles and practices, to all actors to make circular economy mainstream.

Our priority is enabling action and creating impact. We want to drive awareness of CE particularly in business and government, and to amplify and promote circular economy principles and progress beyond the CE community and pioneers. We will therefore share stories of progress and build a collective understanding of circular economy principles and practices.

This pillar aims to:

- 1.1** Create and deliver a multi-channel communication strategy to educate the Australian market, amplify the work done and monitor progress in the Australian transition.
- 1.2** Coordinate or contribute to high impact events to put circular economy at the forefront for relevant audiences.

EDUCATE & CONNECT

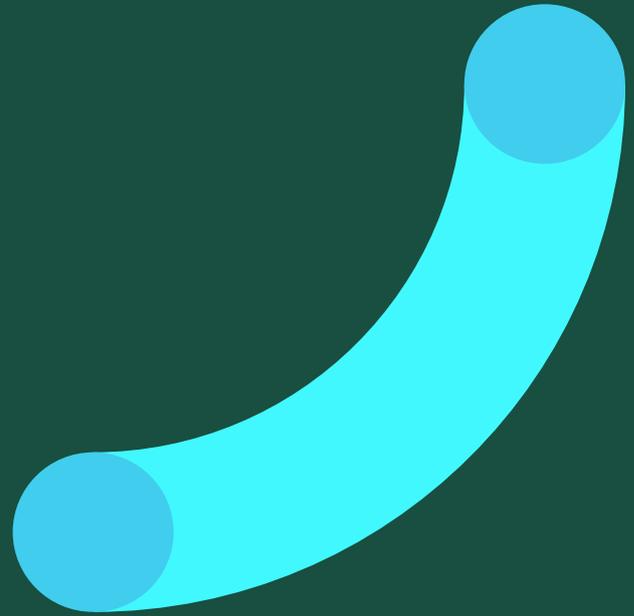


Educate and connect content, people and initiatives to build collective intelligence and enable collaboration.

The ACE Hub will play a critical role in enabling others to learn and collaborate. We will implement activities that allow the ACE Hub to:

- 2.1** Be recognised nationally and internationally as the main source of evidence-based information for CE related topics in Australia.
- 2.2** Develop and support a world-class ecosystem of connected practitioners, pioneers and first movers.
- 2.3** Deliver an engaging user experience to make the ACE Hub the leading online platform for CE in Australia.

ENABLE ACTION



Lead, facilitate or contribute to selected high impact national initiatives to activate the circular economy transition.

The ACE Hub team will develop a prioritisation framework to select high impact national initiatives to either lead, facilitate or contribute to.

The initiatives identified to date are based on international trends, our current understanding of the Australian context and feedback gathered across industry and government stakeholders.

The aim is to:

- 3.1** Lead the identification of priorities and cross-cutting themes across sectors, materials, waste streams and value chains.
- 3.2** Lead the delivery of the ACE Marketplace to enable circular material/products exchange.
- 3.3** Facilitate the assessment and selection of circular metrics frameworks to use for Australia at a national and corporate level*.
- 3.4** Facilitate the integration of circular procurement in government and business*.
- 3.5** Contribute to the development of circular economy education initiatives for target audiences e.g. secondary schools*.
- 3.6** Contribute to initiatives led by other organisations to provide guidance and expertise*.

* Not currently or only partially funded.

SUPPORT & PROMOTE CHANGE



Support and promote change in policy, regulations and investment to create enabling conditions.

The ACE Hub will work to remove obstacles and foster incentives that can accelerate and scale the transition.

The aim is to:

- 4.1** Develop or contribute to national strategies and recommendations for policy, regulations, and investments*.
- 4.2** Become a trusted advisor to key stakeholders in industry, federal and state government who have influence over national priorities.

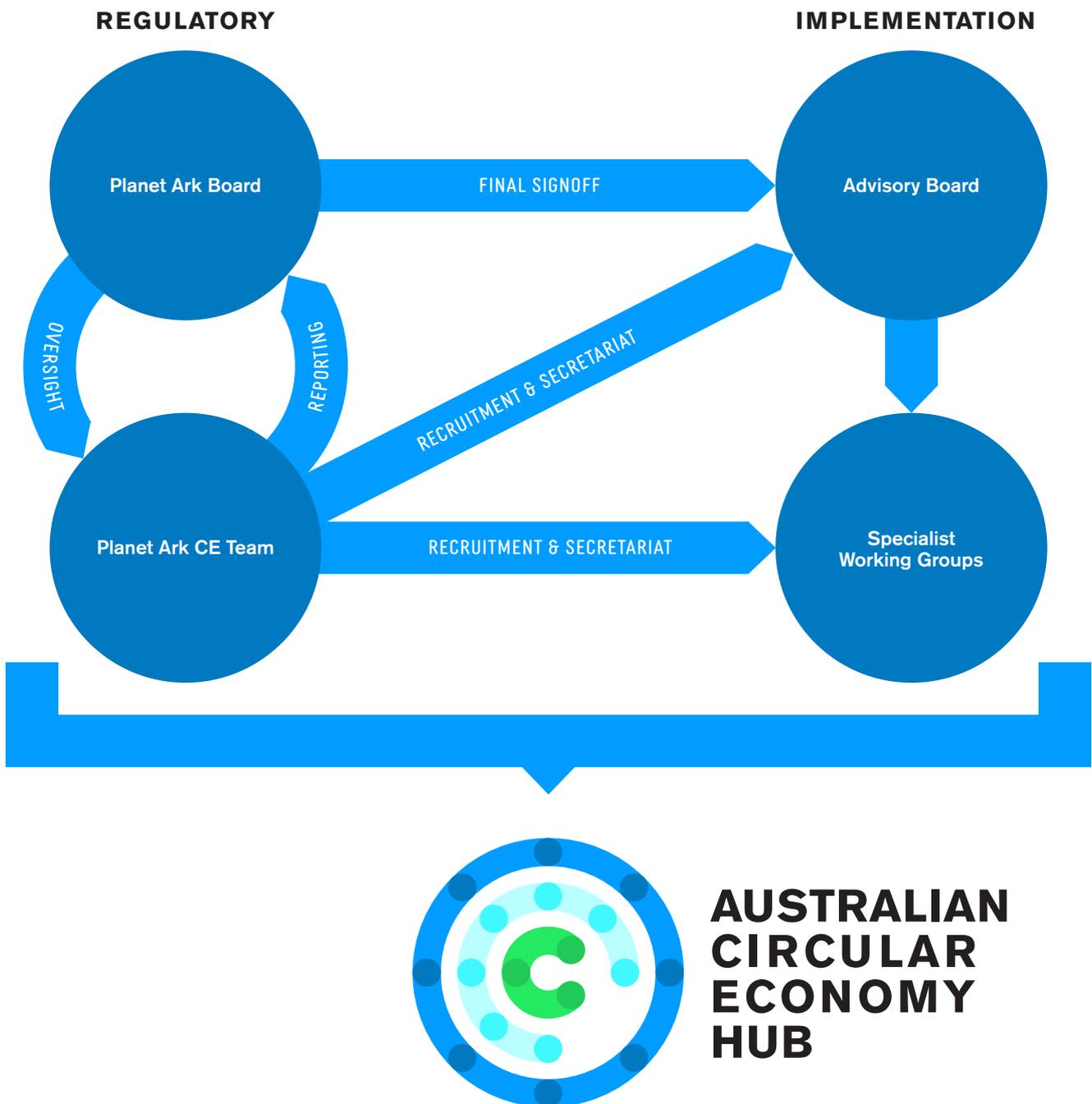
* Not currently or only partially funded.

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE



Given the scope and ambitions of the ACE Hub, it is critical to establish a robust governance structure and a strong focus on strategic partnership development.

GOVERNANCE



The governance structure will enable a holistic view of priorities, progress and dependencies, and ensure synergies across all strategic pillars are maximised. It will also provide the framework for a high-performance team for the effective delivery of commitments made for the ACE Hub.

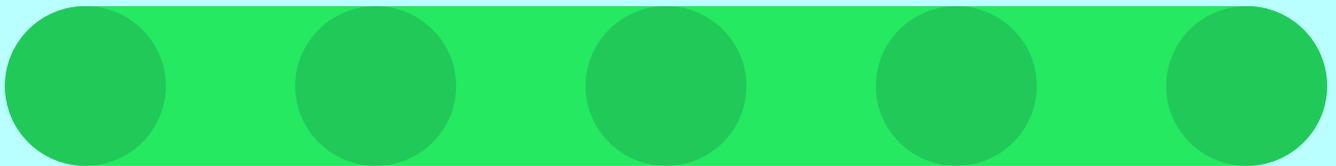
The aim is to:

0.1 Establish and implement ACE Hub governance

0.2 Drive execution of the ACE Hub initiatives

0.3 Establish strategic partnerships to maximise impact of ACE Hub

ANNUAL WORK PLANS



At the start of each calendar year we will publish a work plan for the execution of this Strategic Plan. The work plan will detail the activities needed to deliver the initiatives under each strategic pillar.



AUSTRALIAN
CIRCULAR
ECONOMY
HUB
PLANET ARK