

Advisory Board Meeting Communique

04 February 2022

The eighth meeting of the ACE Hub Advisory Board saw members updated on ACE Hub program activities including research reports and upcoming events. The meeting also continued discussion on the role of the Advisory Board in advocating and influencing policymaking.

Following an Acknowledgement of Country, the board welcomed new member Judith Blake, Acting Director of the Industry Settings Branch of the Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources, to her first official meeting. Judith expressed DISER's interest in understanding circular economy opportunities for business and the practical applications of these concepts through supply chain technology, particularly in terms of productivity, competitiveness and innovation.

Following on from previous meeting discussions on policy, members raised the following points:

- Members agreed the Advisory Board's role is to be a trusted advisor and partner that provides the basis and evidence to inform policy but leaves policymakers to develop policy.
 - The group noted the importance of developing qualitative evidence alongside existing quantitative data to demonstrate positive outcomes of circular approaches.
- The Board agreed they could provide advice on policy tools and instruments that would help address the gap in knowledge and understanding of the purpose and impact of these frameworks.
- The Board could also assist policymakers to identify bottlenecks or constraints that are impeding progress and offer solutions to address them.
- It was noted that even with good policy intentions there can be perverse outcomes, and that the board should be careful in advocating for measures that may get in the way of real progress.

The ACE Hub has commenced work on priority policy areas raised in previous AB meetings, including metrics, procurement and education, with additional areas to be identified by the Board and ACE Hub where relevant. The recently released metrics report (see ACE Hub updates below) identifies key areas for further work including mandatory targets, research regulations, material use and measurement of jobs. The group also referenced the Belgium government's recent [Federal Action Plan for a Circular Economy 2021 – 2024](#) as a potential resource for identifying other priority policy areas.

Updates on ACE Hub program activities, which correspond to the [ACE Hub Strategic Action Plan 2020-2023 and Work Plan 2021-2023](#) included:

- **Reports**
 - Post-launch update on the [Circularity in Australian Business Report](#), noting a significant rise in engagement from the previous CIAB report in November 2020.
 - Update on the [Measuring the Circular Economy: An Australian Perspective Report](#) which launched on February 16th, with thanks to members of the Advisory Board for contributing to the review.
 - Update on the upcoming PFAS (Polyfluoroalkyl substances) report set for released in early March.

- **Australian Circular Economy Conference**
 - In partnership with Diversified Communications, the ACE Hub is holding a circular economy conference on November 24 and 25, 2022. Some members of the Advisory Board have agreed to join the Steering Committee for the conference and will help guide the structure and themes of the event.
- **ACE Hub Portal (beta testing)**
 - Update on the ACE Hub's online collaboration platform — a growing community of over 400 members currently in the beta testing phase. This covered the recent launch of a 'Circular Conversation' series, roundtable discussions developed to engage and network with members.
- **Working Groups**
 - Metrics Working Group
 - Updates on current work and focus including:
 - The principles of circular economy metrics
 - Workshops to map circular economy definitions to ANSZIC Codes
 - Discussions on methods for engaging with business.
 - Procurement Working Group
 - New member – Myla Bulaon, Associate Director, NSW Treasury.
 - Updates on current work and focus including:
 - Evaluating current procurement policies and opportunities in Australia and assessing existing resources such as toolkits, guides and research
 - Developing a CE procurement ecosystem and mapping procurement to the SDGs
 - Establishing a procurement toolkit, guide, and/or checklist with key circularity dimensions as well as case studies to provide examples of effective circular procurement practices.

Find information on the [ACE Hub Advisory Board members and meeting summaries here.](#)