

## Project Proposal

### Project Concept

Circular Economy (CE) grey literature has been excluded from evidence synthesis and policy / decision making process because unlike scientific literature which is systematically documented and made available in two major databases (Web of Science, Scopus), grey literature is not documented in a transparent manner - it is often difficult to find and worst of all, green-washed. This project is inspired by a recent IPCC report namely "Saving resources and the climate? A systematic review of the circular economy (CE) and its mitigation potential (<https://doi.org/10.1088/1748-9326/abeb7>)" which nevertheless acknowledged the importance of grey literature which often comprises more updated and detailed information compared to scientific literature and that it should be included into future policy / decision making process.

This project is currently supported by The Impact Hub Berlin, The Senate of Berlin and The European Social Fund where a Minimum Viable Product (MVP) will be developed. The final core product

1. excludes fake news duplicates and low grade teaser content
2. provides precision tools e.g Boolean operator, controlled vocabularies, fielded data to help zero in on highly precise search results
3. features a knowledge exchange platform
4. is highly internationally scalable (language, geography, value chain, climate change theme)

### Objective

CE grey literature is still wild content that is prone to link rot, concealment, underutilisation and likeliness to disappear. We believe that many tools are there to find this content but they don't work together. We are thriving to make this content useful - we will find this content and assign Digital Object Identifier (DOI) to each of them. We enrich the content with AI and other automated tools to ensure curated and high quality collections which are preserved in the first CE grey literature database and made available to all CE practitioners on an easy-to-use and interactive web platform.

The project aims to centralise CE grey literature on an one-stop location to realise an overview of CE landscape alongside current, hard statistical and factual content (e.g initiatives, researches, debates), and to catalyse collaboration between policy makers, scientific and non-scientific community. The core product comprises

1. a database of curated and high quality publications from vetted and hard-to-find sources and are uniquely indexed, preserved and made discoverable
2. a knowledge exchange platform to identify experts and discover sources from world's leading CE practitioners

By making previously overlooked grey literature centrally available, this project aims to engage policy makers with the non-scientific community to establish constructive, progressive and enforceable measures which are supportive and effective to businesses, by reference to the expertise and best practices from NGOs, IGOs, think tanks, consultancies, private companies and government agencies.

## **Plan and Methodology**

With the first governmental grant from The Senate of Berlin and The European Social Fund, a MVP will be developed during a period of six months (Stage One: March - August 2021) through an incubator program (Better Together) supported by The Impact Hub Berlin. The project is concurrently supported by European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) through a pre-accelerator program (EIT Jumpstarter) and Global Shapers Munich Hub through a mentoring program (MentorUp). These programs put partnership and funding / investment at the core. Expertise from the following organisations are consulted during the research and development of the MVP (alphabetical order):

1. Circular Economy Club (CEC)
2. Coherent Digital
3. Ellen MacArthur Foundation
4. German Environment Agency (UBA)
5. Impact Hub Berlin
6. International Resource Panel (IRP)
7. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)
8. Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI)
9. Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)
10. Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK)
11. UN Environment Program (UNEP)

This project is seeking for strategic and financial partnership for Stage Two (September 2021 - August 2022) and the budget sought is EUR100,000. This budget will be mainly used for the expansion of team to accelerate the development of the MVP into the market-ready product to secure significant financial deals for the next stage. The Stage Three (September 2022 - August 2023) will then scale up and achieve a meaningful number of commercial transactions and attract commercial investments.

## **Organisational Skills**

The first co-founder (Li Wah Wong / Malaysia: [linkedin.com/in/liwah/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/liwah/)) is an Expert Reviewer of IPCC AR6, with 10 years of academic and industrial R&D experience in climate change (renewable energy, smart city / built environment, CE). She is also an IBM and Microsoft certified software engineer.

The second co-founder (Karl Barton / Germany: [linkedin.com/in/karl-barton-5857421/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/karl-barton-5857421/)) is a Senior Product Manager at the Volkswagen Group, with 10 years of corporate experience in the German and highly dynamic Chinese markets. He also has an academic background in finance and banking.

During the Stage One, the team is supported by three highly reputable advisors from Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK), European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) and Global Shapers Munich Hub. The team speaks a total of seven languages (alphabetical order: Cantonese, English, German, Malay, Mandarin, Polish, Spanish) and has extensive work experience in government agency, corporate, academia and NGO in Asia (China, Malaysia, Singapore) and Europe (Estonia, Germany, Netherlands, Switzerland, UK).

### **Progression and Translation**

This project is highly scalable and can be implemented at a local, national, regional and international level. The Stage One (March - August 2021) aims to find a market niche, to develop a financial model, to build a business model and to identify specific criteria for technical and market entrance. As it serves as a pioneer project, a pipeline of potential strategic and financial partners are identified for collaboration in the Stage Two (September 2021 - August 2022) which aims to develop the final product to get ready for launch and enter the market. The final product will include extra features such as data analytics (e.g latest CE landscape), data visualisation (e.g using Machine Learning) and impact assessment (e.g citation statistics). It will complement respective partners' CE roadmaps, policies and strategies. Intellectual partnership with IPCC and IRP is also outlined. The Stage Three (September 2022 - August 2023) should focus on commercialisation which should bring in commercial investments and partnerships in at least three geographies (e.g China, Germany, Malaysia, Singapore), alongside continuous expansion of the team and global expansion.

### **Added Value from Grant Funding**

To date there is no comparable solution in CE, granters will pioneer in the world's largest CE grey literature database and knowledge exchange platform, and take up leadership in their value chain, industry and geography. This holistic game-changing solution offers a radically sustainable service in the CE sector and will be able to rapidly grow and bring impact at a global scale within the next three years.