

**Circle Centre**

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# **OUR VISION**



# SHARE GOODS, IDEAS AND SKILLS.

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By running a Library of Things (LoT), we aim to foster a culture of sharing in the community, where both resources and skills can be exchanged. A LoT functions as a regular library, but instead of books our members can borrow various tools, household appliances, outdoor equipment and various other items. By providing affordable access to a diverse array of items, we strive to reduce the environmental strain caused by excessive material consumption.

Additionally, our library serves as a space for skill-sharing, particularly in repair and reuse practices, promoting sustainability within our community. Through this initiative, we aspire to cultivate a mindset of mindful consumption and collaborative living, ultimately contributing to a flourishing and resilient community.

We assume that Lund, being a leading centre in education, research, and innovation, will also require an engaged community in which life will be sustainable, yet affordable, for locals, students, guests, and tourists.

# WHERE ARE WE NOW?

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Circle Centre is a non-profit organisation that runs a Library of Things, where our members can borrow items instead of buying them. We also organise educational events promoting sustainable living and reuse, and we offer a common workspace for the local community to share creative skills or ideas.

Circle Centre was initially started as a student project, in 2018. Since then we have grown tremendously, and are open to all community members of Lund! Currently, we have over 1500 members, and over 1800 items in our Library of Things Circle Centre is completely volunteer-run and our team consists of people with diverse backgrounds and experiences.

The large interest in our organisation, and the amazing growth we have witnessed, has nourished our dreams for a larger sharing network across the municipality! Let us tell you a bit more about the network that we envision for the future.



# VISION 2040

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## A constellation of sharing neighbourhoods

By 2040, Circle Centre will become Circle CentreS: a network of sharing neighbourhoods where people can conveniently borrow anything that could be shared and reused. These local centres will be adapted to the neighbourhood population (student/family oriented...) in terms of the types of items available and the types of events organised. We will partner with item producers to improve the maintenance, repairability, and overall circularity of the items.

## Circular products

As a sharing organisation, our impact on the circularity of the actual items is limited. The donated items can be difficult to repair, maintain and have poor recycling properties when reaching end-of-life. On the other side, item producers don't have access to feedback from sharing organisations and few opportunities to shift from linear to circular business models. We believe we can be part of a circular system as a middle agent managing the borrowing and maintenance of the items while providing feedback on the circularity of the items.

## Strengthening community

By being present in every neighbourhood, and by adapting to the local neighbourhood populations, we aim to create a greater sense of belonging. This should lead to a greater participation in the projects of the centres and an improved performance of the library (more loans, less overdue, better care of the items...).

## Accessibility

In order to shift the mindset from owning to sharing goods, sharing must be as accessible as possible. This means that sharing centres must be accessible geographically, temporally and socially.

### Temporally

By having extended opening hours, where we are open several days a week, we will enable more users to borrow as there are various time options that can fit different types of personal schedules.



### Geographically

By being present in all the neighbourhoods, the Circle Centres should be accessible to any resident in the municipality by public transport, or other form of low-carbon transport in 15 minutes. This is an important factor in increasing accessibility by cutting the time cost, while further lowering the GHG emissions of borrowing.



### Socially

By having a non-for-profit organisational model, we want to reduce the monetary cost of borrowing. We are also open to developing different forms of payment, where for example volunteers could have reduced or no loan-fees.



## Welcoming and living centres

The local Circle Centres will be welcoming spaces where the local population can exchange their skills, learn about the circular/sharing economy, and dedicate their time to the community. We will make these centres active by organising workshops and educational events. These centres will provide the locals with work desks and tools to repair and maintain their own items. The centres will also function as a social meeting place, promoting meaningful interactions between people living in the neighbourhoods.

The Circle Centres will co-host other NGOs with compatible visions. From our experience at Stenkrossen, we have learned that many small-scale NGOs have a great impact on the local community but struggle to find a place to run their activities. Most of them need a small space and can share meeting and event spaces with other organisations.

The Circle Centres will organise workshops, educational events and other forms of sharing experiences. These events will be organised by our volunteers, other NGOs and locals.

We want to take an active role in the education of the local population on sustainability issues, especially on the topics linked to circularity. While the processes of climate change start to be better understood by the general public, the environmental and social impacts of our material consumption are not well known. Our role as a solution-provider places us in a great position to educate about these issues, by not only raising awareness, but also by suggesting the solutions needed to drive the required change.

## A global network of Libraries of Things

We will lead a network of Libraries of Things (LoTs) that will help individuals to start similar concepts around the world and help existing LoTs to develop their activities through experience sharing.

Community-based Libraries of Things (LoTs) provide alternatives that aim to reduce overconsumption, waste, environmental degradation – but also work to foster social bonds within local communities. A growing number of individuals are recognising the LoT concept as a viable local solution for increasing sustainability.

From almost the start of the Circle Centre project we have been receiving requests from individuals (mainly exchange students living in Lund) and municipalities (both from Sweden and abroad) wanting to learn more about our model and how they can reproduce it locally. There are many different models and structures of LoTs, and Circle Centre is only one example of how a LoT can be run. That is why we think a European network of LoTs comprising various experiences and models would be a better way to manage the requests and the guidance for individuals interested to lead new LoT projects.

Many aspects of the creation and day-to-day management of a LoT need to be covered when answering these requests. We think that creating a complete guide would be a better way to answer these requests in detail.

# HOW DO WE GET THERE?

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For the next coming years, our main focus will be on:

## **LoT development**

We are already looking for new locations and more space for our constantly expanding library.

## **Coherence**

As a growing team of volunteers we are working on producing written visions and strategies, that will help in aligning our work and in welcoming new volunteers.

## **Clear non-profit business strategy**

For us it is important to remain as a non-for-profit association, but in order to do so we are working on improving our business model. We are also looking into the possibility to have an employee.

## **Strengthening the local network of organisations**

We want to continue working with other local actors in the community, and find ways to support each others' needs and visions.

## **Visibility**

An important part of assuring that more people can access and use our LoT is increasing our visibility and outreach.

## **Volunteer working model**

Our organisation would not exist without our team of volunteers, and we are working on finding models of volunteering that will work also with a larger network of sharing neighbourhoods.



# OUR GOALS FOR 2030

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As part of our vision to open several small Circle Centres around Lund, by 2030 we want to have opened our first local neighbourhood centres.

## **Open a local centre in a student neighbourhood**

1

We envision the first local centre to be placed in a neighbourhood with student housing, as a place to experiment and develop the organisational model. This centre will be tailored for the needs and interests of students.

## **Open a local centre in a family neighbourhood**

2

We want to open another local centre in a family-centred neighbourhood, where the items available in the library can be tailored for the needs and interests of families with children. We will also work to develop events, and sharing spaces suitable for families.

## **Experiment with the combination of employees and volunteers**

3

We are currently run by volunteers only, but want to explore the possibility of having an employed coordinator organising the logistical aspects of the coordination of the sharing centres.

# WHAT DO WE NEED?

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Our main obstacle right now is **finding a suitable space** that can house our LoT. Due to the constantly growing selection of items in our LoT, we are in need of a larger space to store all our items. We are also looking to broaden our LoT and start running several small libraries across town, in different neighbourhoods.

But in order to do this, we are in need of partners, who can help us with the provision of a locale, or other means of funding. Since we run through the help of volunteers, and with very low borrowing fees (to increase accessibility), we are not able to pay a full rent for the type of locale that we need.

We are currently looking for potential partners who could help us with space and location, but also partners who are able to offer funding opportunities for the experimentation of a larger sharing network across the municipality. In return, by being our partner, you get the opportunity to learn more about the circular economy/sharing economy model, and get to take part of a sustainable transformative change.

## **We would love to hear back from you!**

Whether you know of some funding opportunities, space solutions or simply want to know more!

**Email:** [board@circlecentrelund.org](mailto:board@circlecentrelund.org)

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