

## ***Beyond Waste - A Circular Resources Lab***

*How can social laboratories be used to their full potential to address current societal challenges?*

**Lausanne, December 7th** – Today, a group of 21 individuals, representing business, academia and civil society met with local politics and public administration actors to discuss their prototype solutions for a circular economy transition and the potential of social laboratories, the experimental format they were created in. Circular Resources Lab is a project powered by Sustainable Living Lab at Impact Hub Lausanne & Living Lab Lausanne at EPFL in collaboration with collaboratio helvetica, with the support of the Engagement Migros development fund as well as the Sustainable Development Solutions Network Switzerland (SDSN).

**Current processes of production and consumption are linear and therein produce a lot of waste.** A transition is required to move towards an environmentally sustainable model. Through some of its principles like reuse, recycle, repair and reduce, circular economy offers an alternative model that treats resources in a smart way leaving less or no waste. Shifting to this model requires a systemic approach, a fundamental transformation of our production and consumption patterns as well as change of our mindsets. Here, social laboratories can offer a promising approach: **Beyond Waste | Circular Resources Lab is a four month experimental journey** (Sept - Dec 2018) which consists of a blended learning environment combining online and offline sessions, using social technologies drawn from various approaches and tools, namely Theory U. Over the last four months, our 21 participants learnt how to let go of old convictions and judgements to be able to open up to new ways of understanding and tackling the issue. In accessing resources that come into existence when a group of people connects deeply on a social level they formed four teams around specific topics.

**What are the prototype solutions coming out of this laboratory?** One group searches for ways to foster circular economy communities to support individual change through a dedicated space. A second group researches around the potential of new soil fertilizers stemming from usually wasted mushroom substrate. The third team develops an educational program around circular economy opportunities in the construction sector and the last team wants to integrate the topic of circularity in the social welfare system to harness underutilised human potential.

Today, politicians and public sector representatives are convened at EPFL Innovation Park to hear these solutions and discuss the relevance of public support for social laboratories as a new governance model to generate sustainable innovation through an ecosystem approach.

### **Contact Beyond Waste | Circular Resources Lab :**

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**On Sustainable Living Lab (Impact Hub Lausanne & Geneva):**

Sustainable Living Lab is a pioneering initiative supported by the development fund Engagement Migros and catalysed by Impact Hub Geneva & Lausanne. Our vision is a world in which business, government, academia and civil society openly collaborate in order to support concrete initiatives that solve the most important challenges of our time by taking action locally. We create spaces for collaborative practices and transformative learning, in order to enable cross-sector experimentation and facilitate awareness-based collective action.

**On Living Lab Lausanne (3L):**

Living Lab Lausanne (3L) at GERG Chair at EPFL is a co-creation platform to foster Circular economy solutions within Canton Vaud (CH) and outside. Our Living Lab follows Quadruple Helix Model of governance of innovation. The objectives of 3L: altered resource flows of the region, new programs and initiatives for CE, new partnerships, and new business models for CE, new products and services for CE, changes in public policy to facilitate CE transformation in Switzerland as well as research on CE transition. We plan the following pillars of work within our Living lab: regular workshops on CE issues with invited speakers, social lab on CE development consisting of various stakeholders as well as living lab for testing innovative solutions (products and services) for CE solutions through integrated learning mechanisms.

**On collaboratio helvetica:**

collaboratio helvetica is at once platform, community, organisation, laboratory and movement. We are a pioneer project, which is dedicated to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Switzerland, especially through conveying necessary conditions for fruitful collaboration. This is why we create spaces for open dialogue, experimentation and collaboration to co-create the Switzerland we want to live in. collaboratio helvetica is supported by Engagement Migros, the development fund of the Migros Group.

**On Engagement Migros:**

The Engagement Migros development fund enables pioneering projects in the midst of social change, which break new ground and test solutions aimed at the future. This approach is oriented towards making a difference and combines financial support with coaching services in its Pioneerlab. Engagement Migros is made possible by the companies of the Migros Group thanks to annual funding of approximately CHF 10 million; it has been complementing the Migros Culture Percentage since 2012. For further information: [www.engagement-migros.ch](http://www.engagement-migros.ch)

**On Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) Switzerland:**

SDSN Switzerland - Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals in Switzerland Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) Switzerland mobilizes universities, research centers, civil society organizations, business and other knowledge centers to create and implement transformative solutions to achieve the Agenda 2030 and Paris Agreement in Switzerland and beyond.