



Implementation of the Recycling and Upcycling (RU) Business Incubation Program and Post-Incubation Support under KOICA and UNDP supported Green Job Creation Through Recycling and Upcycling (GCRU) project in Pokhara Metropolitan City.

About the organization

[Impact Hub Kathmandu](#) (IH KTM) is a female-led Nepali not-for-profit organization started after the 2015 Nepal earthquakes under the premise that a disaster can be a catalyst for innovation. It has evolved into an accessible, safe and inclusive innovation-led community Hub. The Hub is designed to give innovators, entrepreneurs, activists, artists and change-makers a creative space to meet, work, network and learn, while harnessing new ideas to help address social and environmental challenges. An amiable open space that welcomes people from across Kathmandu, and beyond! We are part of a global network of 100+ Impact Hubs in over 60 countries, working across disciplines, acting across sectors, with amazing people putting ideas into action.

About the project

UNDP's "Green Job Creation through Recycling and Upcycling (GCRU) project" in collaboration with Pokhara Metropolitan City, is designed to promote the green economy by establishing recycling/upcycling (RU) enterprises based on the circular economy model, in place of the current 'throw-away' linear approach, thereby increasing green jobs and reducing pollution and negative environmental impact of solid waste. The project focuses on three interlinked areas: policy and coordination, promotion of RU enterprises, and community empowerment for awareness and local RU initiatives.

The project envisions creating a supportive policy environment to encourage RU enterprises and public participation in waste reduction through source segregation and material recovery. Learning and innovation platforms like the Green Venture Zone (GVZ) will support RU enterprises through education, capacity-building, and incubation. Community RU groups will benefit from GVZ's programs and supply processed raw materials to the enterprises.

Currently, RU capacity in Pokhara is insufficient, with few enterprises handling limited waste fractions. The business incubation program will equip new entrepreneurs/enterprises with skills, technology, and support to launch RU enterprises, while also helping existing ones grow, diversify, and expand. The project targets the establishment of 30 RU enterprises and the creation of over 300 green jobs in Pokhara by 2029.

For the implementation of the Business Incubation and Post Incubation Support Program the GCRU project is partnering with Impact Hub Kathmandu (IH KTM). The project aims to incubate 25 aspiring business ideas and existing enterprises with the potential to develop



and sustain RU enterprises. **At the end of the incubation phase, eight businesses will be selected to receive post-incubation support.**

IH KTM is delighted to open nationwide applications for this RU Business Incubation Program in PMC. We invite applicants either registered or intending to register in PMC, working on innovative waste recycling/upcycling solutions, to apply. This is an opportunity to strengthen your green enterprise and contribute to a more sustainable future. Apply now to be part of this transformative journey in PMC.

NOTE: It is MANDATORY that, if selected, you set up a business or branch in Pokhara Metropolitan City (PMC) by the end of the incubation program. The business must operate and utilize waste generated within PMC, while creating jobs for the community.

Why apply for the program?

The selected incubatees will have the following benefits:

- 1. Masterclasses:** The selected 25 aspiring and registered entrepreneurs/enterprises will be capacitated through monthly masterclasses that focus on contextualizing waste management focusing on recycling and upcycling.
 - ❖ Masterclass 1: Orientation
 - ❖ Masterclass 2: Product Designs and Development (HCD approach)
 - ❖ Masterclass 3: Business Model Canvas
 - ❖ Masterclass 4: Financial Management with feasibility plan
 - ❖ Masterclass 5: Legal and Compliance
 - ❖ Masterclass 6: Marketing Strategies and Branding
 - ❖ Masterclass 7: Business Roadmap - business brief and pitch
- 2. Coaching sessions:** Monthly one-on-one business, financial and technical¹ coaching sessions to guide the selected 25 aspiring and existing entrepreneurs/enterprises to meet company/team milestones.
- 3. Networking and collaboration:** The selected enterprises/entrepreneurs will get the opportunity to meet, build connections with UNDP GCRU, PMC and IH KTM's network of industry experts, institutions and technical consultants through which they can enhance their business with exposure to potential markets.
- 4. Technical and equipment support:** The top eight entrepreneurs/enterprises, who will be selected on the Graduation/Demo Day, will be receiving technical and equipment support. (**Conditions applied*).

NOTE: Participants selected for the incubation program will not receive any type of financial support to attend the monthly masterclasses and coaching sessions (in-person or virtual).

Selection process

¹ Technical sessions will be provided on the need/s of the enterprise.



The Recycling and Upcycling (RU) Business Incubator will be selecting 25 incubatees for the cohort. There will be two rounds of selection, the first round selection will be conducted internally by the IH KTM project team members based on the information submitted in the application form. The first round of scoring will be done on the basis of the selection criteria (i.e. eligibility criteria and evaluation criteria) provided below. During the scoring process the applicants may also receive a call from the team for clarification and/or reference check. The top 30 applicants will be selected from the first round of application scoring and will be invited for in-person and virtual interviews (second round). **Please note that if you did not receive an email from the project team, you are not selected for the second round.**

The second round of selection will be conducted by an interview panel of experts who have experience in business incubation, circular business models, engineering and product development, diversity, equity and inclusivity (DEI), environment and climate change. The interviews will be based on the information requested in the application form. After the in-person and virtual interviews 25 applicants will be selected for the incubation program. **Please note that the selected candidates from the second round are informed regarding the onboarding process through an email and follow-up call. Those who are not selected will receive an email from the project team.**

The eligibility and evaluation criteria are as followed:

Eligibility Criteria: Aspiring or registered entrepreneurs/enterprises in PMC who are in the ideation or operation phases are eligible to apply. Priorities will be given to:

- 1. Enterprises:** Aspiring or registered entrepreneurs/enterprises in the waste sector **(except for trading businesses and NGOs).**
- 2. Registration:** Registered or planning to register according to the laws of the Government of Nepal in Pokhara Metropolitan City.
- 3. Location:** Pokhara Metropolitan City (PMC).
- 4. Products and Services:** Registered entrepreneurs/enterprises whose products and services are introduced in the market with basic features (minimal viable product i.e. the product must have undergone the necessary quality testing confirming it can be commercialized²) are encouraged to apply. Aspiring RU ideas should be supported by a clear and actionable pathway to implementation and success.
- 5. Application form completion:** The applicant needs to comply with the application process to be considered for selection. This includes the completed application form (address all questions) and provide all the required information.
- 6. Previous participation:** New applicants are encouraged to apply. Enterprises that are participating in another IH KTM incubation program will not be eligible. The enterprise has to have graduated from the incubation program.

² A minimum viable product is a version of a product with just enough/basic features to be usable by early customers who can then provide feedback for future product development.



NOTE: We are pleased to announce the call for application for the program, where we aim to foster inclusivity and gender balance. Women, youth and marginalized groups - underrepresented communities and ethnicities such as Dalit, LGBTIQA+ are encouraged to apply and will be prioritized.

Evaluation criteria

All the applicants will be scored based on the criteria below for the first (application based) and second (1on1 interviews, virtual) rounds of selection.

S.N	Criterion	Criterion Description	Scoring Scale Interpretation
1.	Innovation	The company demonstrates the willingness and potential to innovate and integrate circularity interventions, strategies and initiatives within their business - current products and services, knowledge and understanding of circular economy. The company has innovative and creative ways to rethink, recycle, reuse, repurpose, or use innovative technologies, etc.	<p><i>Scoring Scale (maximum score 5)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Score 5: The company has a high level of innovation, integrated circular business ideas and from the project they will be able to capacitate their members to strengthen the circular business model of their company. b. Score 4: The company has a circular solution using the rethink, recycle, reuse and repurpose innovative thinking. Through the project the company wants to prototype/test their solution. c. Score 3: The company is willing to incorporate circularity within their business model but they are looking to learn and innovate towards a circular business model. d. Score 2: The company does not yet see a potential to innovate but is keen to learn about the circular economy. e. Score 1: The company does not demonstrate any initiative to integrate circularity within their business model.
2.	Social Impact	Demonstrates efforts in fostering a sense of community and solidarity among members. Initiatives are innovative, inclusive, and have a substantial positive impact on the community's cohesion and development. Efforts in job creation are well-structured, sustainable, and have a transformative effect on the local economy. In addition, the company should be able to address the solution for a specific	<p><i>Scoring Scale (maximum score 5)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Score 5: High community building initiatives. Actively creates jobs. Exceptional educational initiatives leading to transformative effects. b. Score 4: Has created jobs. Strong community engagement. Significant educational impact achieved. c. Score 3: Minimal job creation. Potential to create jobs. Has created a few jobs. Moderate community building efforts. Moderate educational initiatives by the enterprise. d. Score 2: Potential to create jobs. Some



		social problem that they seek to solve through their business.	community engagement activities. Some educational programs were initiated. e. Score 1: No job creation. Limited community engagement. Limited educational efforts with minimal reach.
3.	Environmental Impact	Sustainable use of natural resources, biodiversity conservation, integration of concepts such as reuse, reduce and recycle (amongst others), waste management and renewable energy adoption and energy efficiency. It contributes to the environmental consciousness of the consumers. Creates positive impact through the design and delivery of the products and services. The company addresses environmental problem/s that they seek to solve through their business.	<i>Scoring Scale (maximum score 5)</i> a. Score 5: High level of commitment to creating positive environmental impact. Active contribution to the environment. b. Score 4: Actively implements environmental strategies and practices, and be innovative in its solution/s. c. Score 3: Clarity in direction and starting to incorporate measures into operations, but needs to improve. d. Score 2: Started to implement strategies or practices but not comprehensive or fully integrated into the business model and operations. e. Score 1: No initiatives or practices in place to address environmental concerns. It's not a core part of the solution.
4.	Financial Viability	The company's ability to achieve business operating objectives and fulfill its mission from generating revenue, diversified revenue stream, and strategic plan for business sustainability. This can be adapted through supply chain strategy and market understanding, customer positioning, awareness of regulatory dynamics and emerging sector trends.	<i>Scoring Scale (maximum score 5)</i> a. Score 5: Financial viability is high. b. Score 4: The business has clear strategies. Efforts towards circular strategy are visible. c. Score 3: The business has clear direction and has developed strategy. d. Score 2: Initial steps towards financial management and innovation. The business is making an effort. e. Score 1: Financial viability is low.
5.	Growth	Potential to grow the business in the future - vision, mission, need for the solution to support growth. The company demonstrates the potential to scale/grow (expand the business) without incurring equal or greater costs in the existing business operation model. This can be achieved through modular operational frameworks, strategic partnerships, technology-driven efficiencies, investment strategies (funding) and adaptability to	<i>Scoring Scale (maximum score 5)</i> a. Score 5: Exceptional potential for scalability or growth, positioning it as a market leader. b. Score 4: Exhibits high potential for scalability or growth, with clear pathways for expanding its operations. c. Score 3: Demonstrates moderate potential for scalability or growth, with opportunities to expand its operations and reach new markets. d. Score 2: Has some potential for scalability or growth, but faces significant barriers or constraints that



		market demand.	limit its expansion. e. Score 1: Exhibits minimal potential for scalability or growth, with limited prospects for expansion beyond its current scope.
6.	Team Performance	Clarity, Confidence, Commitment towards generating social and environmental impact and solutions, and diversity, equity and social inclusion (team).	<p><i>Scoring Scale (maximum score 5)</i></p> <p>a. Score 5: Exceptional performance across all dimensions, setting a standard for commitment, diversity, social inclusion, integrity.</p> <p>b. Score 4: Excellent performance across multiple dimensions, excelling in commitment, diversity, social inclusion, and integrity.</p> <p>c. Score 3: Exhibits above-average performance across multiple dimensions, demonstrating strong commitment, diversity, social inclusion, and integrity.</p> <p>d. Score 2: Average performance across multiple dimensions, with solid but limited performance in commitment, diversity, social inclusion, and integrity.</p> <p>e. Score 1: Below-average performance across multiple dimensions, with room for improvement in commitment presentation quality diversity, social inclusion, and integrity.</p>
7.	Co-financing	The idea demonstrates a strong commitment to investing in their business idea and includes a clear willingness to co-finance complementing the support provided by the project.	<p><i>Scoring Scale (maximum score 5)</i></p> <p>a. Score 5: Demonstrates a high level of financial commitment to the idea. The co-financing plan is detailed, realistic, and fully aligned with project goals. Resources are secured or clearly earmarked. Reflects long-term sustainability and strong entrepreneurial commitment.</p> <p>b. Score 4: Applicant provides a well-articulated co-financing plan, with defined financial/in-kind contributions. Evidence of available resources (e.g., savings, partner investment, revenue stream) to complement project support. Demonstrates solid ownership and risk-sharing.</p> <p>c. Score 3: Clear expression of intent to cofinance. Partial financial or in-kind contribution (e.g., equipment, infrastructure, volunteer labor) identified with some justification. Moderate alignment with the proposed support</p>



			<p>from the project.</p> <p>d. Score 2: Minimal co-financing intent indicated, but vague or non-specific. Limited financial or in-kind contribution is suggested, but not quantified or justified. Unclear how it will be mobilized or sustained.</p> <p>e. Score 1: No evidence of financial commitment from the applicant. No mention of co-financing plans, resources, or intentions to invest in their enterprise. Entirely dependent on project support.</p>
<p>Based on above mentioned evaluation criteria, the applications submitted (round 1) and subsequent interviews (for applicants selected from round 1) will be scored from 0-5 (0 being the lowest and 5 being the highest). Priority will be given to those ideas that score high in all the criteria.</p> <p>We invite all interested people from diverse backgrounds to apply to the program. This initiative is committed to building an inclusive and dynamic cohort that reflects the richness of our communities. By promoting diverse participation, we aim to unlock a broader range of ideas, experiences, and innovations ultimately driving stronger and more sustainable impact by converting waste into viable business.</p> <p>DISCLAIMER: IH KTM reserves the right to cancel the call for applications in any case of receiving less applications and relaunch the call.</p>			

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If you have any queries, please contact us at 01-5430229 (Monday-Friday, 9:30 am - 5:30 pm) or sajina.bhandari@impacthub.net, pallab.shrestha@impacthub.net, and kathmandu@impacthub.net.