

REUSE25 sessions - Stay tuned for our exact schedule with session times and room locations!

Seeing Things Whole: A threefold perspective on organizational challenges

Keri Clifton, Reell Office of Seeing Things Whole at Augsburg University

Seeing Things Whole is a leadership framework that cultivates whole leaders and thriving organizations to positively impact the common good. Through this framework, leaders learn to consider their values and strengths while seeking input and perspectives in order to best understand, reflect, and make decisions on the challenges they face. During this presentation, we will introduce the framework for thinking about our work, built on three interconnected dimensions. We will walk through an interactive dialogue to consider your current organizational challenges and how this leadership model can create organizational success across multiple bottom lines.

Moving CPG forward: Planning for a more circular future

Lindsey McCoy, Plaine Products, (virtual presenter)

Jaime Durham, Refillery Collective, (virtual presenter)

We live in a world with finite resources. Moving from a linear economy to a circular one allows us to use those resources more efficiently. Consumer packaged goods, especially those expected to have a long shelf life, like beauty products and home goods, present opportunities for new models of consumption. This discussion will showcase how reuse, in a variety of forms, fits in as one of the solutions to reducing waste & carbon in the Midwest, and across the country.

Lindsey will bring the perspective of a brand, a retail outlet, and, through partnership with the Refillery Collective, a larger perspective on the status of reuse + refill shops across the Midwest, and the nation, sharing where she is seeing growth and what is making shops successful.

Catalyzing reuse: Insights from the Reuse Solutions Network

Melissa Jung, Upstream

The reuse movement is gaining momentum year after year—and Upstream is helping lead the way. Through the Reuse Solutions Network (RSN), we bring together a dynamic community of NGOs, entrepreneurs, local organizations, community leaders, and government partners—all working to accelerate the shift to reuse.

In this presentation, you'll hear highlights from RSN discussions and discover key insights on topics like reuse in extended producer responsibility (EPR), local reuse programs, school-based initiatives, and more. You'll also learn how to get connected and play a meaningful role in advancing reuse in your community.

We'll wrap up the session with time for small-group discussions to dive deeper into advancing Minnesota's reuse movement and share ideas for taking action.

Reuse in EPR: An update on MN's packaging EPR law

Sydney Harris, Upstream

Mac Sellars, r.World

Two of the MN Packaging Waste and Cost Reduction Act Advisory Board members, Sydney Harris (Upstream) and Mac Sellars (r.World) will provide a status update on the progress of implementing the law to date and share their perspectives on how things are shaping up for reuse systems, highlighting opportunities to expand reusable packaging and foodware programs under the new law and general ways to get engaged. Bring all your packaging EPR questions!

From bin to benefit: Embedding a culture of reuse at HCMC

Holly Johnson, Hennepin Healthcare

Laura Tveite, Hennepin Healthcare

At Hennepin County Medical Center, we believe in community-first stewardship of our valuable resources. As a trusted community pillar, HCMC has created a culture of reuse—where sustainability is safe, supported, and celebrated.

- Reuse center: Our onsite reuse center captures surplus furniture and office supplies, storing them for future use instead of sending them to landfill.
- Annual Clean Sweep: Each year, we host a “Clean Sweep” event to declutter spaces, rehome unwanted items, and keep them out of the trash.
- Patient needs closet: Our psychiatric clinic maintains a closet stocked with gently used clothing, offering support and dignity to patients in need.
- Medical supply donation program: From unopened gauze and syringes to functioning medical devices, our donation initiative redirects surplus supplies to local nonprofits and global partners, reducing waste and supporting underserved communities.
- Community partnerships: We collaborate with local organizations to rehome furniture and supplies that are no longer usable within the hospital, extending our impact beyond our walls.

Together, these efforts illustrate HCMC’s commitment to environmental responsibility and compassionate community care. From one clinic’s project to our system-wide reuse model, we show that meaningful change can start small—and grow when grounded in purpose. Join us in reshaping healthcare’s footprint, one reused item at a time.

Connecting in a divided world: How to build respect, trust, and collaboration—even when we don’t agree

Sebastian Dziuk, Dziuk Studios LLC

We’re missing the human factor when it comes to connecting today. The divides may seem wide, but they are not impassable.

Using his background as an LGBTQ+ Public Affairs Sergeant in the U.S. Army, Sebastian brings the audience on a journey of finding connection in unlikely places, support when it matters most, and ultimately bringing an open heart and mind to every interaction.

In this session, you'll:

- Acquire the tools you need to build genuine connections in your personal and professional life.
- Build a more connected team to enhance collaboration and build trust.
- Learn how to ask better questions to build rapport and create a culture of belonging.

Sebastian engages the audience through thoughtful questions, encourages interaction, and brings a new level of vulnerability to create a space where the audience can be vulnerable themselves.

No boring badges: Craft a reusable name badge as unique as you

Courtney Selstad, City of West St. Paul

Stand out in event crowds with a unique, reusable name badge! Single-use name badges are expensive, wasteful, and generally boring. At this session, you'll have the tools to craft a name badge that's unique to you and that you'll be proud to wear everywhere. All supplies, including cardstock, markers, scissors, decorative paper, and necklaces, will be provided.

Small appliance motor repair & recycling

Robert Hiller, Minnesota Tool Library

Small appliances like mixers, vacuums, sanders, and fans all rely on brushed AC motors — and with a little knowledge, they're easier to maintain than you might think.

In this session, you'll learn how to safely disassemble, inspect, clean, lubricate, and reassemble a brushed series motor. We'll walk through how these motors work using real appliances and disassembled components to explore their internal construction and maintenance needs.

We'll also cover responsible recycling practices for both the motor and appliance once they reach the end of their life, helping you keep more materials in use and out of the landfill.

Reuse in action at local co-ops

Aubre Suttle, Lakewinds Food Co-op

Sophie Hakala, Eastside Food Co-op

Lindsey Countryman, Wedge Community Co-ops

Natalia Mendez, Seward Co-op

Moderator: TBA

Join this moderated panel featuring leaders from local co-op grocery stores as they share real-world examples of how reuse is embedded in their operations and values. From bulk foods

and reusable packaging to creative community initiatives like swap events, zero-waste education, and upcycled signage, these co-ops are rethinking retail waste from the ground up. Panelists will discuss the strategies that have worked, the unexpected challenges they've encountered, and the opportunities ahead—like promoting bulk shopping, supporting home cooking, and advancing a circular economy in their communities. Learn how reuse shows up in surprising places: plant sale trays, reusable deli containers, culled food donation, and even reimagined branding materials. Whether you're part of a grocery co-op, a sustainability-minded business, or simply reuse-curious, you'll leave with actionable ideas and inspiration to support waste reduction in your own work.

Retold Recycling: Telling a new story with old textiles

Beth Carreño, Ramsey County

Amelia Trumble, Retold Recycling, (virtual presenter)

At Retold Recycling, our mission is to transform how people think about textiles, shifting the focus from disposal to conscious consuming. We were founded to address the growing textile waste crisis by making recycling accessible, while also empowering individuals to extend the life of their items through mindful consumption and creative reuse!

Retold helps consumers make more informed choices by educating them about the many ways textiles can be reused before they're discarded. From mending and repurposing clothing to sharing donation and upcycling tips, we aim to inspire sustainable habits long before items reach the end of their life.

For those items that truly can't be reused, Retold offers a convenient mail-in service for textiles. Including clothing, undergarments, and fabric scraps. We also partner with local governments and organizations to support large-scale collection efforts.

Every item we receive is carefully sorted for upcycling, recycling, or resale, supporting our #NoLandfill mission and reinforcing a circular economy. By working with domestic recycling services, we help create a more sustainable, education-driven, and environmentally responsible future.

Cool Trash, precious plastic, and the future of sustainable materials

Emma Crutcher-McGowan, Cool Trash / Outta Trash

This session explores how Outta Trash LLC is redefining what's possible in plastic reuse right here in the Twin Cities. Moving beyond traditional recycling, their model emphasizes creative reuse by transforming plastic waste into durable, functional materials that can be reintegrated into daily life and design.

Attendees will learn about a three-pronged approach:

- Granulating and pelletizing plastic waste for use by makers and manufacturers committed to circular design.
- In-house production of reusable 4'x8' panels made from waste plastic—ideal for construction, art, furniture, and other long-term applications.
- Upcycling hard-to-recycle plastics (like multilayer packaging and coffee bags) into sturdy 22-pound blocks using the ByFusion ByBlock system—diverting materials from landfills and giving them a second life in building projects.

This session will highlight how reuse-focused solutions can build local economies, reduce environmental impact, and reframe how we value discarded materials.

Folk schooling: Crafting community through hands-on learning

Carmel DeMaoribus, Duluth Folk School

Molly Sanford, Marine Mills Folk School

Moderator: TBA

Join representatives from Marine Mills Folk School and Duluth Folk School for an inspiring conversation about the evolving role of folk schools in building stronger, more connected communities. This moderated panel will explore the rich histories of these schools and the creative, intergenerational programming they offer—from traditional crafts to events like swaps and Fix-It Clinics.

Learn how Duluth Folk School transformed its space using salvaged and repurposed materials, and how both schools prioritize sustainability, collaboration, and community engagement. Panelists will share insights into the “magic” of learning directly from others, the power of partnerships, and the challenges and opportunities they face as part of a growing national folk school movement.

Major scale - Managing large instrument waste responsibly

Grant Dawson, Keys 4/4 Kids, Inc.

This session will recap our experience designing, developing, and implementing a large-scale piano recycling program with the aid of a BizRecycling Grant in 2023 and 2024. While a significant portion of the program focuses on recycling metal components, just as critically, it has generated a substantial amount of reusable wood material. Finding outlets for all of this wood continues to be a worthy challenge—but one we've made exciting strides in addressing. Join us as we share key lessons, unexpected hurdles, and the creative solutions that have shaped this unique initiative.

The power of diversion: Strategies to redirect waste for a cleaner tomorrow

Jason Allen, Better Futures MN

Victor Krause, University of Minnesota, Natural Resources Research Institute

While there is no universal solution to solving the problem of waste, intentional waste diversion practices can help slow the landfill pileup in Minnesota. Better Futures Minnesota is working to create positive environmental impacts by helping to change the waste-generating behavior patterns of Minnesotans through the promotion of reuse, repurposing, recycling, and composting. Better Futures Minnesota is trying to effect that change through partnership and by removing some of the barriers to reuse with increased access and participation opportunities.

Upcycle tees into totes & pouches

Mai Lauer

Laura Schroeder

Give your old t-shirts a second life! In this hands-on session, you'll learn how to turn a worn or stained tee into a reusable produce or tote bag — perfect for groceries, markets, or everyday errands. Then, we'll repurpose the sleeves into eco-friendly drawstring pouches. All materials are provided, but bringing your own fabric scissors or a t-shirt to upcycle is encouraged. Let's reduce textile waste and get creative!

Zipper repair basics: History and application

Lily Sevilla, Repair Lair

In this session, we'll explore the key components of zippers—including sliders, stoppers, and more—and break down the three main types: Vislon, coil, and metal. You'll learn how to identify different zipper sizes and understand their specific applications, as well as how to recognize waterproof and "reverse" zippers. We'll also cover how to troubleshoot common zipper issues, such as broken or missing sliders and jacket zippers that pop open. The session will include several live repair demonstrations.

Simplifying sustainability: Creating online and in-person pathways to increase household-level reuse

Amy Cox, Flourish - A Furniture Bank

Leslie Scott, Re.Use.Full

Jennifer Victor-Larsen, Donate Good Stuff

Discover how Re.Use.Full and Donate Good Stuff are using regionally focused donation-matching platforms to increase in-kind donations, support more people and pets, and keep usable items out of landfills. Learn how these tools have helped organizations like Flourish Furniture Bank assist individuals and families as they start over in new homes.

Meditation in motion: Finding present moment, inner peace & harmony in T'ai chi movement

Yelty Koe, KAOM, LAc., Le Meridian Acupuncture

T'ai Chi (Taiji) is a centuries-old Chinese martial art that blends graceful movement, deep breathing, and focused intention. Originally developed for self-defense, it has evolved into a practice for cultivating health, balance, and inner peace. Its slow, flowing forms are designed to harmonize the body's energy (qi), enhance flexibility, and calm the mind. Often described as "meditation in motion," Tai Chi is gentle yet powerful—making it accessible to people of all ages and fitness levels. Practitioners find it improves posture, reduces stress, strengthens muscles, and fosters overall well-being. Whether approached as exercise, therapy, or philosophy, Tai Chi offers a pathway to harmony between body and mind in everyday life.

In this introductory class, participants will learn simple exercises to find alignment and feel

movement through the body. T'ai-Chi can help you find stillness and peace within the core and project into movement. You are welcome to bring a mat or towel, as we will spend some time on the ground.

The mended way: Studies on textile repair and “words of our garments” over 10 years

Lucy Kruesel, Diatom Books/Rochester Public Schools

A century ago, preserving cloth was second nature; today, with modern conveniences, we've lost both the attention and the skills to maintain what we own. The act of getting dressed merits excavation—what we wear tells stories and is deeply personal, shaped by identity, culture, utility, and access, and is tied to consumer choice. This session explores how textile repair reflects societal values, focusing on “visible mending” as both a practical and symbolic act that reduces waste by reframing attitudes toward secondhand and reworked garments. Through case studies, reflective exercises, and insights from her workshops, Lucy will explore a timeline of mending culture—especially since COVID-19—and show how local action can help reclaim the power to repair in a world of fast fashion and disposability.