

# Turning Off the Tap

## Why Better Design Can Increase Resource Resilience and Reduce Consumption

Presidential Report 2024

Exec Summary 3min Read



## Exec Summary

**This years' presidential report explores the role of design in the creation of 'stuff'.**

**It reveals how the resources and waste sector can influence better choices to stem, and in some instances, stop the flow of waste while protecting our precious resources.**



# Exec Summary The Problem

The planet is under unprecedented pressure and we are overwhelmed by waste. We can't continue to use and degrade valuable natural resources in the way we do today.

We need to transform how we use raw materials from today's extractive, linear way to a more responsible one.

Many brands intentionally design products to have a short life or be difficult to fix.

Products often comprise of multiple materials, bound together in a way that cannot be reversed at end of life – designed for single use.

Design can be a powerful tool to reduce impact if harnessed correctly and applied first at business model level, then across systems, processes and products.

BUT WHY  
ISN'T DESIGN  
DELIVERING  
WHAT'S  
NEEDED?



# Exec Summary The Solution

The research has unravelled what it really means to 'design' and how it can be difficult to challenge the design brief.

By double-clicking on the design process, creative industry, stakeholders and regulation impacting design it's clear that designers often don't have the agency required to make change. An organisations commissioning agenda, financial expectations and existing business design can be significant limiting factors.

We need to work with designers alongside a wider set of stakeholders involved in design and development to enable circular design.

To stem the flow we must all reflect on our individual and sector actions that influence growing levels of consumption and own our part of the shared responsibility.

## > DOING BETTER

WE NEED TO DO MORE THAN INFLUENCE BETTER DESIGN

WE NEED TO ELEVATE CIRCULAR SKILLS, FOCUS REGULATION TO MORE EFFECTIVELY ADDRESS CONSUMPTION

MOST IMPORTANTLY, WE NEED TO DESIGN BUSINESSES RIGHT FROM THE START



# Exec Summary Sector Responsibility

## Design Sector

- Upskill designers to increase knowledge and credibility
- Create and share 3<sup>rd</sup> party verified resources, i.e. guidelines

## Trade / Professional Bodies

- Invest in external expertise, particularly when producing guidance
- Stay relevant by looking beyond the sector – work with other bodies to incorporate holistic views

## Academia

- Ensure all creative and manufacturing courses are accredited by a relevant professional body
- Focus student competitions and awards on circularity

## Government

- Focus regulation higher up the waste hierarchy to reduce consumption
- Move beyond recycling and create less regulation with better measures

## Retail

- Go beyond compliance with existing regulation to futureproof and build resilience
- Encourage staff performance metric around circularity to embed behaviour

## Media

- Ensure subject matter experts are judging awards
- Review and challenge evidence submissions and discount sponsorship and awards entry

## Waste Sector

- Develop a feedback loop to brands / manufacturers / designers on key problematic items
- Highlight the economic impact of waste disposal on the public sector





# Exec Summary – CIWM Recommendations

## ➤ STRONG LEADERSHIP

- CIWM and CEI become the trusted professional bodies for circularity
- Support collaboration of cross-industry best practice
- Challenge increasing consumption and problematic items

## ➤ IMPACTFUL REGULATION

- Work with other trade organisations / professional bodies to promote the benefits of circularity – including a green taskforce to take a macro view
- Pose options for regulation to reduce consumption

## ➤ CIRCULAR SKILLS

- Be the course/accreditation provider of choice for circular skills
- Explore academic course accreditation / support





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