



Annual Report **2023**



STENKROSSEN
mycket
SNACK &
mycket
VERKSTAD

WELCOME

to our first Annual Report!

Let us introduce ourselves. Circle Centre is a non-profit organisation that runs a Library of Goods, 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.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Why is the sharing economy important?	3
Our mission	3
A word from the Board	4
How did we grow until today?	5
Circle Centre in 2023	7
2023 in numbers	7
Member testimonials	9
Events	10
Educational events	10
Community events	12
Our Partnerships	14
Partner testimonials	17

WHY IS THE SHARING ECONOMY IMPORTANT?

Sharing economy allows society to create more value without growing the economy. In the case of our organisation, value is added by means of highly motivated volunteers from the local community and by our members. Thus, costs are low though outcomes are large: less waste, more affordable usage of material items, more thoughtful consumption. Prolonging the life of the library items means minimising social and environmental impact. Thousands of students move to Lund every year and they are often forced to buy new items, which they soon have to leave behind. If we choose to share items instead, we can avoid unnecessary consumption and waste, save space and contribute to creating a stronger sharing community.



Circle Centre actively contributes to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals 11 and 12



OUR MISSION

The mission of Circle Centre is to challenge the dominant trend of overconsumption. We do that in two ways. First of all, through our Library of Goods we create a community that prioritises sharing over ownership. Secondly, we prioritise culture and intellectual growth over material goods by creating a space where people can gather, work on their creative projects, share skills and ideas. We have three values that lead our vision: sustainability, equity and community.

A WORD FROM THE BOARD

This autumn Circle Centre is celebrating five years since the project was first proposed by a group of Lund University students in 2018! Looking back, it feels incredible to see how a small project made for a university course has sprouted and grown into a strong established community that keeps on growing!

This year, the Board has mainly focused on finding ways in which we can allow Circle Centre to keep on growing and building its member base, without compromising on our values of community, sharing and creating together! We have worked on updating our bylaws to better fit our now much larger organisation, and are currently busy with running our first ever annual members meeting. We hope that these annual meetings can strengthen our internal democracy, where every member feels like they have a say in the direction of the organisation.

We have also continued working with our partners, and been in frequent contact with both Lunds Kommun and Lund University. We have also been thrilled to see how many external actors are interested in our organisation, and have welcomed several visitors from both within and beyond Lund!

For the upcoming year, the focus of the Board will rest on finding a new space for our Library of Things that can fit both our growing shelves of items, as well as our various events and gatherings. We want to make sure that our physical space is as inclusive as the spirit of the organisation!



Ronja Karvinen

*President of the Board of
Circle Centre*

HOW DID WE GROW UNTIL TODAY?



2018

Circle Centre's story started in October 2018, when a group of five students proposed the concept of a place for sharing rather than individual ownership as a way to tackle overconsumption. This happened during **Climathon Lund**, a 24-hour sustainability hackathon competition hosted by Climate-KIC.

Encouraged by positive feedback, the students kept pursuing Circle Centre as their **local action project** for a course within their master's degree in Environmental Studies and Sustainability Science. By the end of November, the **first Circle Centre meeting** took place, precisely on Black Friday, November 23rd 2018.

Around the same time, the founding team that in the meantime had grown to seven students started to look for ways to make Circle Centre a reality, and submitted an application to **Stenkrossen**, the cultural hotspot of Lund run by Lunds Kommun. In December 2018, the application was accepted, and in March 2019 Circle Centre officially moved into a recently renovated Stenkrossen.

2019

The rest of the winter between late 2018 and early 2019 saw the Circle Centre team **applying for funding** and **collecting items** for the Library of Goods. The items were acquired mainly through donations and the first of them was the famous **CC doughnut maker!** The efforts to collect items through donations, dumpster diving and small purchases continued throughout spring 2019. Around the same time, two other important milestones were set, as **Circle Centre hosted its first event** and was officially **registered as a Swedish NGO!**

In autumn 2019, Circle Centre participated in the **Lund University Arrival Days** for the first time, which would become a tradition until today. The **first opening hours** as we know them took place at Stenkrossen, and a call for applications was also published for a new officer team, yet another tradition that lives on today as our officer team changes every year.

2020-2021

As 2020 arrived, the **new officer team** stepped up. Sadly, the Covid-19 pandemic meant the new team had to deal with restrictions, but this did not shake their motivation, as throughout spring 2020 **events kept happening online**. In autumn 2020 and spring 2021, as the world was still battling with several infection waves and lockdowns, Circle Centre was always active through **hybrid events and opening hours**, finally adopting **Lend Engine** as its online platform for loans and inventory.

2022

In 2022, Circle Centre bounced back from the pandemic even stronger, through **larger events and a growing interest** and recognition by the local community of Lund. This recognition was shown through the environmental prize **Lund Miljöpris 2022** awarded to Circle Centre by Lunds Kommun and the funds obtained through the **Viable Cities** program. In the summer, Circle Centre participated in the LU Arrival Days once again, this time offering its now famous **bedding kits!**

2023

2023 saw Circle Centre growing even more, in size but most importantly in impact. With an **enlarged officer team and sub-teams** to better distribute the work and expertise, 2023 was a year full of events, outreach and collaborations in Lund and beyond. Highlights from the year include the **15 events** hosted or co-organised, the **Circular Roundtable** gathering local organisations working for a common goal, the move to **Petroleumhuset**, a new (temporary) location next to Stenkrossen, as well as the **first Circle Centre Annual Meeting** open to all members.

All of this and more of our 2023 was captured and summarised below, to form the first **Circle Centre Annual Report!**

CIRCLE CENTRE IN 2023

2023 was an amazing year! Here we provide some statistics gathered from our online platform **Lend Engine** to celebrate the growth of our Library of Goods and of our sharing community. Data was collected starting from January 1st 2023 to December 31st 2023. Items contained in our bedding kits are counted singularly, except when referring to “bedding kits” specifically (see next page).

2023 in numbers

478

new members joined
our community

1876

times our items were
loaned during the year

August was our busiest month!

160

new members joined in
August alone

564

times our items were
loaned in August alone

121

items were added to our
inventory in September,
for a total of **1465**
items in our
Library of Goods!



79

times our bedding kits (small and big) were loaned in total



The most favourite single item was the air mattress pump OC-11-c. It was loaned **14** times



The most popular category of single items was our sleeping bags. They were loaned **60** times in total

On average, items in our inventory were loaned **1.72** times.

This however includes long-term loans of 1 whole year.

Excluding 1-year loans, our estimate becomes **3.01**

...and all of this would not have been possible without the

use cycles per item in 2023!

1573

members of our sharing community!

Member testimonials

*"I needed to fix my bed and drill holes in. So I found the only place I could borrow a big drill. I mean, **which other student has a drill at home?** Before, I had never ever used a drill in my life. After a couple of YouTube videos, I felt confident to drill holes and get my bed fixed. End of the story, I broke the bed and I sleep with a mattress on the floor now. Did I fix my bed? No! **Did I have a lot of fun using the drill and learn how not to do it? Yes, absolutely!**"*

Nils

*"We borrowed some stuff for our fundraising selling snack event during Kulturnatten from Circle Centre. It's a wooden tray that can be moved around, I think it is usually used for tapas or taco party. It was very useful! **We don't need to buy stuff for one time event** and borrowing from Circle Centre is really helpful in this situation. Looking forward to borrow more stuff for our events in the future"*

Feny

Food Saving Lund

EVENTS

2023 was a fruitful year - we hosted a total of **15 events** and **regular Craft Cafés!** Below we described some of them to give an overview of what we managed to do.

Educational events

Secondhand Fashion Show

Sustainability Week in Lund is a very important period for us that we can't miss when we're planning our activities! One of the events that we organised was a **Secondhand Fashion Show and Clothes Swap**, which was a space for people to exchange their clothes and dive into sustainable fashion. For this event we collaborated for the first time with **Svalorna Second Hand Shop**, as well as with **Hållbart Universitet**, one of our frequent event partners. Apart from the main activities, we organised a corner with a **mending table** to help others fix clothes and provided fika with bread rescued by **Food Saving Lund**. About 50-60 people participated in the event.

Repair events

To celebrate the **International Women's Day**, we collaborated with **Repair Café Malmö** to create a space where people could learn new repair skills and **break gender roles** that are often associated with specific activities. We encouraged everyone identifying as women and non-binary to try their hand at **electronics or bike repair**, but we also prepared **sewing machines** for men who never had a chance to try out or practise this skill. Of course, everyone was welcome to try any skill they wanted, and we made sure to keep a **safe and open space!**

On **International Repair Day** in October we organised a **skill sharing repair event** with **Hållbart Universitet**. The idea was to bring your own clothes or non-electronic items and learn how to repair them, or alternatively help us repair Circle Centre items. Later that day, one of our officers hosted a **workshop** on how to create a **no waste pumpkin** from scrap fabric. The event attracted a lot of our community members and provided a sustainable alternative for a Halloween pumpkin tradition!



Our mending table during the Secondhand Fashion Show event



Photos from our educational events

At the top: International Repair Day event at Circle Centre

In the middle: Sustainable pumpkin made out of scrap fabric

At the bottom: International Women's Day repair event in collaboration with Repair Café Malmö



Community events

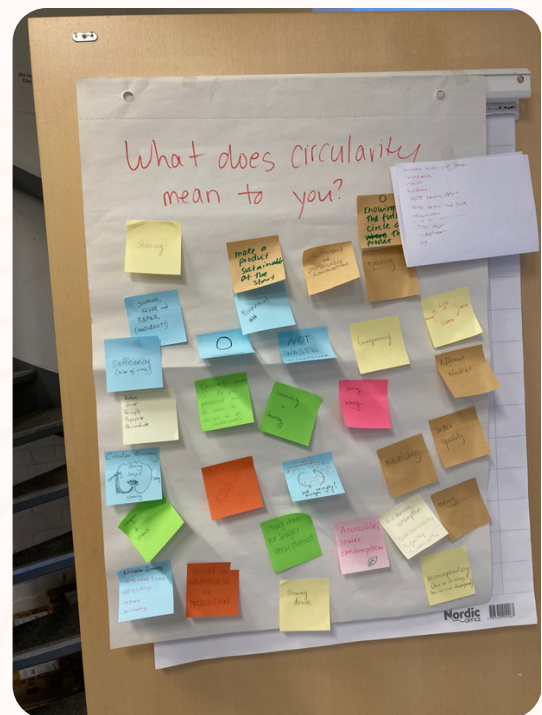
Regular Craft Cafés

Craft Cafés are an essential part of Circle Centre aimed to **build the community** among our members and encourage people to **share skills** with each other. This year, we were dedicated to making Craft Cafés even more **frequent, fun, and engaging**. For this reason, we established a new position in our team - the Common Workspace Events officer, whose biggest task was to develop and improve our Craft Cafés.

In the first half of the year, we organised a few Craft Cafés during **Stenkrossen's Open House** events, when we gathered together with other projects hosted by Stenkrossen. After moving to Petroleumhuset, we managed to introduce more regular and frequent **bi-weekly Craft Cafés** during our opening hours. The regularity and the more accessible space helped us engage even more of our members in skill sharing and community building. Our recurring Craft Cafés see many people bringing their **own art projects** that they work on, for instance **crochet, knitting or embroidery**. We also provide a **sewing machine** that the members can use during the Craft Café to create or mend their clothing, or to learn a new skill.

Community Forum

As a part of **Sustainability Week**, we also organised a **Community Forum**. The aim of the event was to gather **views and inputs** from our local community members regarding their vision of **circularity in Lund**. By exploring together different ideas, we tried to build more consciousness about the circular economy, but also help guide the activities and focus of Circle Centre towards the **visions of the community**. The participants represented different groups of the community, which brought many **different perspectives** to the discussions and allowed us to look beyond the student perspective.



Participants' views and insights on circularity during the Community Forum event



Photos from our community events

At the top: Participants discussion during the Community Forum event

In the middle: Traditional Turkish paper dyeing technique presented during one of our regular Craft Cafés

At the bottom: Community Forum event discussions



OUR PARTNERSHIPS

2023 saw Circle Centre increase its external relations activity in and outside Lund and grow its network of partners. As an organisation strongly rooted in community and collaboration, we are extremely grateful for all our local and international partners, as well as all like-minded organisations with whom we had the pleasure to exchange ideas throughout the course of the year.

Lunds Kommun has been supporting us since the very beginning, and it has been a crucial partner throughout 2023 as well. Support from the city of Lund came into many forms. First of all, through **Stenkrossen**, the cultural centre of Lund that has been hosting us since the start, and by hosting us in Petroleumhuset for the duration of renovations at Stenkrossen. To advance the circular economy in Lund, the project **Klimatneutrala Lund 2030** has been offering us recognition and ongoing support. The **Viable Cities** strategic program that Lund Kommun takes part in, supported by the Swedish Energy Agency, Vinnova and Formas, also provided us with support by awarding Circle Centre a grant to scale up its activities and impact.

Lund University is another of our closest and most valuable partners. In 2023, Circle Centre was invited to participate in the **LU Arrival Days** once again, offering students the opportunity to kickstart their student life in Lund sustainably by borrowing one of our bedding kits. This would not have been possible without the help and resources offered by LU and its **Division of External Relations**. The **Lund University International Desk** has also been supporting us by informing international students about Circle Centre. We are grateful for the support received and excited to collaborate more in the future!



Circle Centre at the LU Arrival Days 2023, with our bedding kits

The circular community of Lund has been growing and we had several fruitful collaborations and exchanges throughout 2023. A special effort coordinated by our 2022 and 2023 External Relations officers was the **Circular Roundtable**, an event co-hosted by Circle Centre and Lunds Kommun to foster dialogue and collaboration across actors and organisations active in the circular economy in Lund. The event saw representatives from **AF Bostäder**, **Fritidsbanken**, **Renhållningsverket**, Lund University, **Återbrukarna**, Lunds Kommun, Circle Centre, **Folk & Frö** and **Repair Café Malmö** come together and discuss opportunities and challenges for circularity in Lund.



Circular Roundtable participants after the final visioning session

Other occasions of dialogue and exchange with like-minded organisations came up during the year, such as the **Global Climate Strike** by **Fridays For Future** that Circle Centre took part in, and the **Open House** in Malmö organised by **House Ödet** and **Cohabit** where Circle Centre was invited and participated. We are extremely grateful for these opportunities to connect, share and grow together with other organisations in the area and we hope these events will be the beginning of greater and wider networks of synergies for a common goal.

Circle Centre's list of partners is ever evolving, but some of our partnerships have been there for a long time already, and 2023 saw these largely confirmed and strengthened. These are the partners that we co-hosted several events with (**ABC**, **Repair Café Malmö** and **Hållbart Universitet**), or shared a space with (e.g. in **Stenkrossen**, with **Bike Kitchen**, **ABC** and **Food Saving Lund**), and in general collaborated with more than once during the year. To them goes our gratitude and the hope of even closer collaboration in the future!

Looking outside of Lund and its local community, Circle Centre has partners and receives attention from abroad as well. Internationally, Circle Centre has had the opportunity to exchange ideas and experiences with other sharing economy organisations and libraries of things, one of which is our long-standing partner **Share Oxford**. In 2023, we also received increasing attention from local policy-makers and young people interested in the concept of library of things and on how Circle Centre kicked off. This took the form of virtual and in-person meetings, as well as visits, like the one by students from **Musashino University** in Japan.



Photos with our partners

At the top: Local policy-makers
visiting Circle Centre in
Stenkrossen

In the middle: Discussion round
at the Circular Roundtable

At the bottom: First Circle Centre
Annual Meeting



Partner testimonials

Circle Centre and the Student Experience and Mobility Team at External Relations at Lund University have been having a very successful continuous collaboration since 2022. Circle Centre has been present at the Arrival Day venue where they offer the opportunity to rent sustainable bedding packages and other household items. They also inform the newly admitted international students about sustainable choices students can make. **Having Circle Centre present at Arrival Day is very important in order to promote sustainability** and introduce ways for students to make sustainable choices. For the Student Experience and Mobility team and for Lund University, promoting sustainability is a crucial aspect of the university's organisation and work, as well as the student life, and collaborating with Circle Centre is an important aspect of the sustainability work the university does. **We are very happy that a collaboration like this has been established** and that international students get introduced to Circle Centre so early on in their stay in Sweden. The staff at Circle Centre have been nothing but kind, and **the work that Circle Centre is doing is very important and inspiring** in our opinion. The collaboration has, from our point of view, worked really well and **we are excited to see if we can develop and deepen the collaboration in the future.**

Maria Yartseva

Student Relations Officer
The Student Experience and Mobility Team
Division of External Relations
Lund University

Since February 2023, I have been the creative coordinator at Stenkrossen, in that assignment I have been in contact with all projects connected to Stenkrossen via the support model mini, midi, maxi. As a maxi project, **Circle Centre has distinguished itself as an organised and professional organisation. Their operations in terms of planning, execution and communication are conducted with quality and in a friendly manner.** With the range of projects in different areas within culture, art and culture at Stenkrossen, Circle Centre certainly contributes with their work and what they offer as a project.

Mia Hempel

Creative Coordinator for 2023
Stenkrossen
Lunds Kommun



Thank you!

info@circlecentrelund.org

Kastanjegatan 15
22357 Lund, Sweden

©2024 Circle Centre