

## **TEXTILE INCUBATOR ON GABRIOLA ISLAND TO TURN CLOTHING WASTE INTO ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY**

*New circular economy facility will help reimagine used textiles as entrepreneurial prospect*

COURTENAY, 19 July 2021 – The Gabriola Island Recycling Organization (GIRO) upcoming incubator project is set to facilitate entrepreneurial growth in small scale textile manufacturing while tackling the growing and global challenge of clothing waste, with support from the Island Coastal Economic Trust (ICET) DIVERSIFY Capital & Innovation Program.

The “C2C Threads Entrepreneurial project” is a circular economy initiative that will develop a maker/workshop facility, offer business support and access to a consistent textile waste stream. By providing targeted business development information, mentorship and a supportive network, this project will facilitate the growth of an Island-based community of upcycle textile entrepreneurs that could eventually expand beyond the collection of local waste.

“Creating a space that can receive and repurpose textile discard is a valuable and innovative way to diversify the local economy and support small scale entrepreneurs in rural and remote communities,” says ICET Board Chair Aaron Stone. “This project also aligns well with the Trust’s goal to help develop environmentally sustainable economic solutions across the region.”

The C2C Threads – Upcycle Textile Entrepreneurs Incubator project includes construction of a new facility, the Threads Building and purchasing of equipment. The Facility will include a makerspace, workshop space and a third space to produce shredded textile products and textile repair work. The workshop space will be used by entrepreneurs to share information on upcycling, repair, weaving, Sachiko, Boro mending and other approaches to diverting textile waste. Sewing machines, sergers and textile shredders will also be purchased.

“We expect this initiative to support 10-15 textile waste entrepreneurs and workshop facilitators,” says GIRO board lead Fay Weller. “The project will not only help educate local residents about the importance of waste reduction and reuse of unwanted textiles, but can also be replicated in other small communities looking to generate income and business opportunities by reusing waste streams.”

ICET’s DIVERSIFY Innovation Support funding stream helps kickstart programs or services that pioneer a new approach or enable communities, business or industry to seize opportunities to adapt to change and new technology.

The Trust will contribute \$50,000 to the overall \$188,000 cost. The project is expected to get underway shortly.

For more information about the DIVERSIFY Capital & Innovation Program, please see our guidelines and application form: <https://www.islandcoastaltrust.ca/capital-funding-programs#diversify>



Building a diverse and sustainable economy.

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#### **About the Island Coastal Economic Trust**

Created and capitalized by the Province of BC in 2006, the Island Coastal Economic Trust (ICET) mission is to create a more diverse and globally competitive Island and Coastal economy. In partnership with local and regional governments, non-profits and indigenous communities, ICET serves over half a million residents. Funding and support for economic infrastructure and other economic diversification initiatives is delivered through a unique community centered decision-making process. Since inception, ICET has approved more than \$55 million in funding for over 280 initiatives. These investments have leveraged over \$270 million in new investment into the region creating more than 2600 construction phase jobs and 2750 long-term permanent jobs. To learn more, visit [www.islandcoastaltrust.ca](http://www.islandcoastaltrust.ca)

#### **For further information:**

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