



Pre Budget Submission 2024 – 25
NSW Government

Advancing the circular economy and helping address cost of
living pressures

March 2024

OzHarvest, Thread together and ReLove, three organisations working at the forefront of the circular economy who help people and communities deal with the rising cost of living are pleased to provide a 2024 -25 pre budget submission to the NSW Government.

Circular economy initiatives that this submissions presents cover food, furniture and clothing. All three organisations rescue and redistribute items that would otherwise end up in landfill and receive minimal state government funding. This submission is requesting funding for these organisations to consolidate and expand their existing operations to increase the impact they are having across NSW. This will help ensure circular economy principles and practices can be expanded across NSW in line with the targets from the Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy. It will also help to ensure NSW is reducing the volumes of waste generated amid concerns about the Greater Sydney area reaching landfill capacity in non -putrescible landfills by 2028 and putrescible landfills in 2036.¹ Aside from collecting and redistributing products that would otherwise go to landfill, these organisations are involved in hundreds of conversations every year with suppliers, retailers and customers about the importance of reducing waste across the supply chain.

Key asks:

1. **OzHarvest is requesting \$4.5m per annum for three years to**
 - support their annual rescue and distribution of 4.5m kg of food (the equivalent of almost 9m meals) and the establishment of a new Hub in Western Sydney.
2. **Thread Together have a funding request for \$2.5M per annum for three years to**
 - support the scale-up of operations to respond to the surge in demand, especially across regional and remote parts of the State.
3. **ReLove are seeking \$2.5M per annum for three years to**
 - sustain and expand the ReLove service to five days per week to expand from 700 to over 2000 families per year.
 - expand their geographical reach to the entire Sydney area and surrounds, and to fund pilot programs in regional NSW.

¹ [NSW Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy](#), A guide to future infrastructure needs, p.2

About

OzHarvest

OzHarvest was founded in 2004 to rescue surplus food and deliver it to charities that help feed people in need. They rescue food destined for landfill and deliver it free of charge to charities; for every \$1 invested we can deliver 2 meals. This means charity partners can stretch their limited funds further to help their clients. In 2023 in NSW OzHarvest rescued and redistributed over 5 million kilos, the equivalent of over 10 million meals to almost 550 charities.

Calendar Year 2023

	KGS Collected	CO2e Emissions saved (kgs)*	Active Food Donors	Active Charities
Coffs Harbour (R)	149,377	144,896	24	33
Newcastle	1,288,088	1,249,445	137	114
Port Macquarie (R)	127,093	123,280	21	22
Sydney	3,490,540	3,385,824	725	373
Grand Total	5,055,098	4,903,445	907	542

* Emissions saved were determined using the Carbon Credits (Carbon Farming Initiative—Source Separated Organic Waste) Methodology Determination 2016

Thread Together

Thread Together's mission is to build an inclusive, compassionate, resilient, and sustainable community, embracing a circular economy where up to one-third of brand-new clothes destined for landfill and given new life.

Founded in 2012, Thread Together collects brand-new unsold clothing from across the country, saving it from being discarded in landfills. We work in partnership with thousands of charities and social service agencies to ensure the clothing reaches those in need.

Currently, we rescue over 1.5 million items of new clothing annually from more than 1,500 different brands and retailers, engaging 9,000 dedicated volunteers and collaborating with over 2,000 charity partners. Through this network, we provide essential clothing support to over 125,000 individuals in need each year, and our impact is continuously expanding.

	People Supported ('000)	Active Charities	Active Fashion Brands	Units of Clothes Provided (M)	Unit of Clothes saved from landfill (Kg) ¹	Landfill direct costs saved (\$'000) ²	Values of clothes provided (\$M RRP) ³	CO2e emissions saved (KG) ⁴
FY23	125	1337	514	1.31	786,938	\$377.1	\$78.69	18,239,740
Since Inception	775	2482	1801	6.23	3,738,067	\$1,794.2	\$373.8	86,598,542

1. Average weight per garment is 0.6kg
2. Based on \$480 per tonne
3. Assumes average unit RRP is AUD\$100
4. Source: [Charitable Recycling Australia](#)

ReLove

Established 3 years ago, ReLove provides high-quality preloved furniture and household items to women and children impacted by family violence and people experiencing homelessness. ReLove rescues great quality furniture and household items from corporate relocations, hotels, companies with excess stock and the local community. This has a significant environmental impact, with over 3,500 tonnes of furniture being diverted from landfill last year

Last year ReLove supported over 700 families (>2000 people) across the City of Sydney, Inner West and South East. For a typical move for Mum and 1-2 kids, ~\$15K of material aid is provided for no cost.

	People Supported	Active Charities	Units of Furniture Provided	Furniture saved from landfill (kg)	Landfill direct costs saved (\$'000)	Values of Furniture provided (\$'000)	CO2e emissions saved (KG)
FY23	2,058	36	106,738	1,163,195	558.81	9,259.2	
Since Inception (June 2020)	4218	14	281,788	2,384,262	1,144.9	18,979.2	2,108,800

1. OzHarvest Proposal

OzHarvest is seeing an unprecedented demand for food relief from their charity agencies. Cost of living pressures have resulted in new cohorts of people requesting food relief, including households where one or more people are employed.

Covid related funding from the State Government has ceased and charities who were receiving food relief have been returned to OzHarvest's waiting list (which currently sits at 350 charities throughout NSW). At the same time, it is becoming increasingly difficult to raise money from donors.

OzHarvest is asking for the NSW Government to provide certainty of funding for their operations across NSW (26 trucks) and to help us increase the efficiency of our operations through the establishment of a Western Sydney Hub. The new hub would allow our trucks to spend more time rescuing and delivering food rather than commuting from our base in Alexandria. This would allow OzHarvest to collect and distribute more food in Western Sydney with the current truck fleet.

OzHarvest is requesting \$4.5m per annum for the next three years to help ensure they can keep operating all our trucks and increase our efficiency through the establishment of a Western Sydney hub.

2. Thread Together Proposal

Thread together have seen a surge in demand across its operations, this has occurred especially across regional and remote areas of NSW. Funding is also needed to prepare for and provide support in areas affected by natural disasters.

Thread Together is requesting \$2.5m per annum for the next three years to ensure they can scale up to meet current and future challenges.

3. ReLove Proposal

ReLove's service currently only operates 4 days per week in certain parts of Sydney. Increased funding to sustain and expand the operations to 5 days per week across the entire Sydney area and surrounds will ensure that 2000 families per year will have access to the service up from the current 700. It will also mean the capability to service the entire Sydney area and surrounds and help establish pilot programs in regional NSW.

ReLove is requesting \$2.5m per annum over three years to help achieve expansion of our service in NSW.

For Further information:

Richard Watson
NSW State Manager, OzHarvest
richard.watson@ozharvest.org
0418 226 332

Anthony Chesler
CEO, Thread Together
anthony@threadtogether.org
0416 221 975

Ben Stammer
Co-Founder, ReLove
ben@relove.org.au
0418 125 442