

Investing in Circular Business Models in North America & Europe with Maya Hassa from Circular Innovation Fund

Key Learnings



Europe Is Ideal for Consumer-Centric, Localized Business Models

Europe leads in early-stage circularity thanks to regulatory momentum (e.g., Green Deal, eco-design directives) and a cultural fit for localized models. Business ideas like **reusable packaging, appliance repair services, and product-as-a-service** work well here - particularly when targeting consumer goods sectors with strong sustainability commitments.

North America Favors Industrial Tech and Materials Scale-Ups

For entrepreneurs focused on **materials innovation, chemical solutions, or large-scale recycling**, North America provides a more mature industrial base and better access to capital-intensive infrastructure. **Biotech and advanced materials** ventures targeting industrial applications are especially promising.

Scalability Hinges on Supply Chain and Material Access

Even the best ideas can hit geographic limits. Business models relying on niche raw materials (e.g., specific plant fibers or oils) **must consider availability early**. Scaling circular solutions globally is harder when infrastructure, regulation, or resource access vary dramatically across regions.

Software and Platform Models Are Gaining Traction

Digital solutions that **optimize logistics, traceability, and waste flows** are attractive and scalable. **Resale marketplaces with embedded logistics** (e.g., leasing or repair platforms), and **AI-driven waste sorting or material tracing software**, offer promising low-capex pathways - particularly for tech-savvy founders looking to scale quickly.

B2B Demand Is Highest in Branded Consumer Goods

Corporate demand is strongest in **consumer goods sectors under public pressure to reduce plastic use and emissions**. Startups offering sustainable packaging, reusable systems, or materials substitutes have clear entry points - especially when linked to regulatory deadlines (e.g., 2030 targets) or procurement needs.

Listen to the full episode here:

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