

## Workshop 2a Summary

### About Workshop 2

On February 4, 2021 the Lab team convened the first of two sessions in the “Designing Potential Solutions” Bioplastics Workshop. We brought together 16 participants with varying roles and experiences with bioplastic packaging to start exploring solutions to some of the complex problems in the bioplastics system.

### Potential Solution Areas

Our team introduced some potential solution areas and workshop participants contributed additional ideas, resulting in the following broad solution areas:

- **Regulation:** regulatory standards for bioplastic testing and labelling; regulating single-use items; enforcing current federal marketing guidelines; banning bioplastics that are not compatible with current composting systems.
- **Consumer behaviour:** influencing purchasing and disposal behaviour; educating the public about bioplastics and composting.
- **Alternate systems:** Shifting towards a reusables system and culture; promoting a sharing economy; increasing collaboration and communication across the supply chain.
- **End-of-life management:** infrastructure for certified compostable products; increase the value of bioplastic packaging to increase rate of collection; increase the value of compost in the market; work with processing facilities; develop sorting technology.
- **Material change:** designing for end of life; incentivize the regeneration of farming materials; simplify what is on the market so that products can fit across multiple local contexts.
- **Small and local production:** incentivizing and supporting small and local businesses developing alternative bioplastic products; prioritizing local production where bioplastics and single-use items are needed.



Once we identified these solution areas, we asked the participants to vote on which topics they were most interested in. The most popular solution areas were **Regulation, Consumer behaviour, and Alternate systems.**

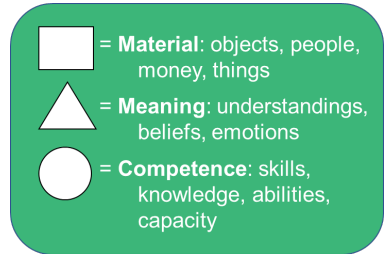
Figure 1. A screen capture of workshop participants voting on Regulation as a potential solution area (participant names have been redacted).

## Design Jam 1

For our first design jam we split into three groups, each one focusing on one of the solution areas: alternate systems, regulation, and consumer behaviour. Each group brainstormed ideas on how to intervene in the system within their solution area and categorized their ideas by where they fit in the “Places to Intervene in a System” categories.

## Design Jam 2

For the second design jam, we once again split into the three potential solutions groups and expanded on the solutions brainstorm by playing virtual bricolage. Each group selected their top solution ideas and expressed it via a shared bricolage drawing. Groups were asked to consider the materials, meanings and competences that would be required to bring their solution to life, and to consider questions such as “who needs to be involved to make this a success?” and “what resources are required?”.



**Group 1 – Regulation:** Started by looking at regulating labelling for bioplastic products as a potential solution. The group also explored some of the complexities around regulations for bioplastics labelling and end-of-life due to the variation among different regions and processing facilities, as well as current trends in organics processing.

**Group 2 – Consumer Behaviour:** Explored the idea of using social media, influencers, and ambassador programs to promote and normalize sustainable behaviour among consumers. They included the use of school curriculums to promote circularity and gamification to encourage shifts in behaviour. Within these ideas they identified the need to have some type of quality control on the messages that are shared through these initiatives to ensure they are accurate, helpful and evidence based.

**Group 3 – Alternate Systems:** Chose sharewares (reusable and shareable foodservice ware) as their potential solution to promote an alternate system. The goal of this solution is to move consumers away from the dominant paradigm of single-use and disposables towards a more circular approach. This group discussed the need to find the best quality materials and designs, and to address the beliefs and emotions of consumers to make this solution successful.

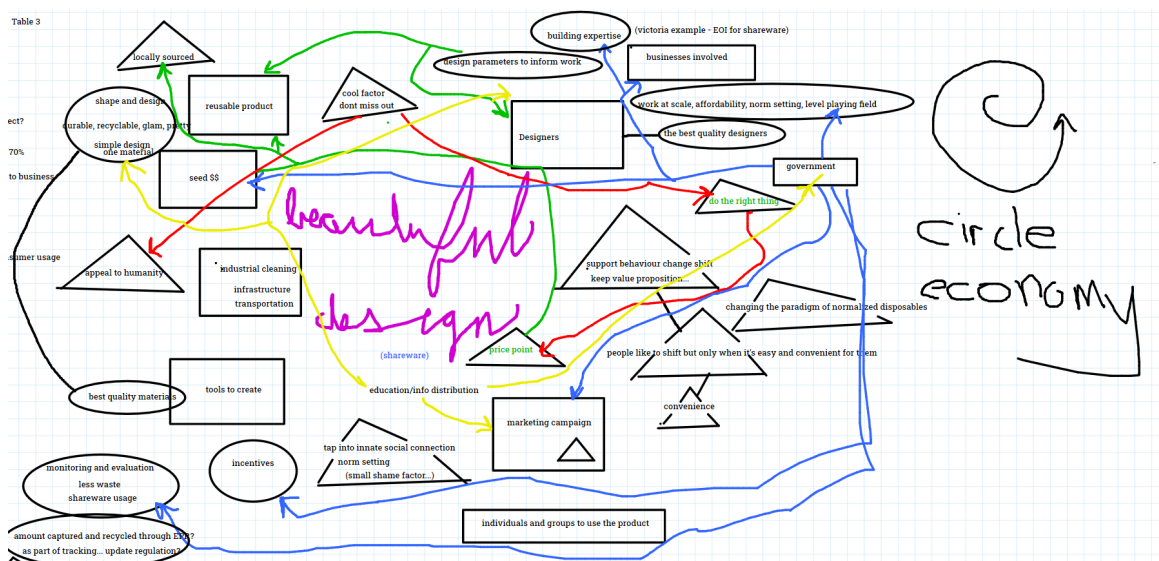


Figure 2. The bricolage drawing for Group 3 – Alternate Systems

## What's Next?

Session 2b on Thursday February 11<sup>th</sup>, 9:00am-12:00pm PDT. In this session we are going to dive deeper into potential solutions to the environmental and social challenges of bioplastic food packaging. See you there!

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