

ACT
~~SOON~~
~~LATER~~
~~TOMORROW~~
NOW

The following prompts are intended to **stimulate discussion and foster dialogue in an inclusive, collaborative environment**. While we have provided a starting point to engage in thoughtful conversation, participants are encouraged to bring forward their own experiences, viewpoints, and knowledge about these particular issues.



**ONE HOME,
ONE PLANET
U.S. 2022**

Theme

Making **sustainable living** accessible for as many people as possible

Our homes and the way we live have a huge impact not only on our wellbeing, but also on our planet. Research shows that 90% of people feel motivated to live more sustainably, but only 3% know how to take action.¹ At the same time, the more people feel they know about climate change, the more likely we believe they are to make meaningful change—and the more willing they may be to do even more in the future.

¹ [Climate Action Research Report - 2018](#)

² [Yes, plant-based meat is better for the planet](#)

³ [Why food deserts are still a problem in America](#)

What people eat, how they consume, and how they interact with their communities and share resources are all huge parts of their everyday lives—and can have a tremendous impact on their climate footprint. For example, a plant-based dish can have up to 89% lower carbon footprint from greenhouse gases than a meat equivalent.² To meet climate targets, sustainability cannot be merely a luxury for the few—it needs to be affordable, attractive, and accessible for the many. Businesses have a role to play in promoting sustainable products, services, knowledge, and

resources to make healthier and more sustainable living achievable for as many people as possible.

In this theme's CoLab session, we'll tackle the challenges of making sustainable food options accessible for the many, since research shows that as many as 19 million Americans live in “food deserts” not served by a grocer.³ Additionally, we'll discuss ideas on how to market these food options to better appeal to consumers who may or may not be familiar with plant-based and other sustainable food options. ■

Topic within this theme

1. Advancing healthy and sustainable food accessibility

Topic 1

Advancing healthy and sustainable food accessibility

While the availability of healthy and sustainable food options in the U.S. has grown in recent years, many Americans are still unable to access these options, whether because of geographic location, cost, supply chain, or simply a lack of awareness.⁴

Moving toward plant-based diets is increasingly understood to be a helpful step in reducing carbon emissions and contributes to the health of both people and the planet.⁵ And yet, many Americans struggle to access healthy and sustainable food.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) defines a food desert as a place where at least a third of the population lives more than one-half mile from the nearest supermarket, supercenter, or large grocery store for an urban area or more than 10 miles for a rural area. As of 2021, more than 53.5 million people have low access to sources of healthful food.⁶

In 2021, USDA announced plans to invest in and take several steps

to “advance goals of ending hunger and malnutrition and building more sustainable, resilient, and inclusive food systems.”⁷ But despite this tremendous potential and investment, the retailers and restaurants that offer healthy and sustainable food options often find themselves struggling to reach those in greatest need—whether due to distance, lack of appropriate payment methods, or simply a lack of customer awareness.⁸

It will require the joint efforts of retailers, restaurants, businesses, and policymakers to scale healthy and sustainable food accessibility and meet the goal of building more sustainable, resilient, and inclusive food systems in the U.S. ■

The following prompt is meant to stimulate discussion and thoughtful conversation. Please bring forward your own viewpoints, research, and perspectives to this CoLab session.

CHALLENGE: How might we accelerate the enablers to make existing healthy, sustainable, and affordable food offerings more accessible to the many people?

In this CoLab, participants will explore different tools and tactics to expand the availability of healthy and sustainable food offerings. How can we bridge the gap and reach more of the many people?

⁴ America is hungrier than ever for sustainable food systems. Can we build them?

⁵ Yes, plant-based meat is better for the planet

⁶ USDA Food Access Research Atlas documentation

⁷ USDA Takes Significant Steps to Build More Sustainable, Resilient and Inclusive Food Systems

⁸ America is hungrier than ever for sustainable food systems. Can we build them?

Theme

Accelerating the transition towards a net-zero society

With only one planet and limited resources, the long-term prosperity of our society depends on our shared efforts to tackle the climate crisis. A global transition to a net-zero economy will be needed to reverse the damage done by climate change, and all individuals will have a role to play in transforming our economy and ways of living.⁹

⁹ Net zero: why is it necessary?

¹⁰ Online shopping is polluting the planet - but it's not too late

¹¹ E-Commerce Has a Climate Problem

¹² A Secret Recording Reveals Oil Executives' Private Views on Climate Change

Shifts in consumer behavior, partially driven by the pandemic, have led to increased emissions stemming from home parcel deliveries.¹⁰

E-commerce sales have skyrocketed in the last two years, and the world's largest delivery services have reported increased CO2 emissions of over 10% year-over-year.¹¹ The difficulty of measuring emissions from last-mile delivery and packaging has posed challenges for carbon accountants, yet these two parts of the supply chain represent some of the largest shares of total CO2 emissions in the e-commerce industry.

Additionally, packaging and other shipping materials produce enormous amounts of waste that build up in landfills, contributing to harmful methane emissions.¹² While many people understand the benefits of recycling and eliminating landfill waste, the standards for what is and is not recyclable often vary and more education is needed to empower individuals to divert more waste.

In this theme's CoLab sessions, participants will explore how to expand zero-emission last-mile deliveries to reduce the environmental impact of e-commerce. Additionally, the group will discuss legislative and regulatory barriers to a zero-waste future and how to better educate individuals on proper recycling to increase waste diversion. ■

Topics within this theme

- 2. Expanding zero-emission delivery zones
- 3. Breaking through barriers to zero waste

Topic 2

Expanding zero-emission delivery zones

The urgency for companies to accelerate the transition to electric vehicles is underscored as the demand for e-commerce—and with it, last-mile deliveries—soars.¹³ The increase in last-mile delivery trucks contributes not only to the volume of local traffic but most notably to local air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, hurting both the planet and people's health.¹⁴

The World Economic Forum estimates that without any intervention, the number of delivery vehicles in the top 100 cities globally will increase 36% by the end of the decade.¹⁵ To help meet this demand while curbing harmful emissions, many companies are accelerating corporate vehicle electrification, and select communities are piloting zero-emissions delivery (ZED) zones. These pilot ZED zones have emerged across several metropolitan areas. One of the first, the Santa Monica ZED zone, is sponsored with assistance from IKEA. It aims to connect companies interested in zero-emissions deliveries

with zero-emissions vehicle fleet owners to handle last-mile deliveries within the zone. In return, companies and fleet owners are incentivized to participate in the program with preferred curb access and less parking and delivery regulation.

While the ZED zones have shown promise, until there is a critical mass of consumers requesting zero-emissions deliveries, companies may be more reluctant to act and contract with zero-emissions fleet owners, considering the technology is fairly new and more costly than traditional, internal combustion vehicles. ■

The following prompt is meant to stimulate discussion and thoughtful conversation. Please bring forward your own viewpoints, research, and perspectives to this CoLab session.

THE CHALLENGE: How might we scale zero-emission delivery (ZED) zones in our neighborhoods?

In this CoLab, participants will explore the different enablers that could support the scalability of development and maintenance of ZED zones in neighborhoods and

communities throughout the U.S. How can we incentivize cities to adopt these zones? Can we market this technology better so that customers demand it? How can we support companies looking to transition their fleet to zero-emission vehicles?

FURTHER READING:

[Accelerating Zero Emissions Delivery: An innovative approach to transforming the last mile](#)

[Santa Monica Zero Emissions Delivery Zone Pilot](#)

[The Future of Last-Mile Ecosystem](#)



¹³ [Global Autonomous Last Mile Delivery Market to Expand at a 19% CAGR: States Fact.MR](#)

¹⁴ [Accelerating Zero-Emissions Delivery: An innovative approach to transforming the last mile](#)

¹⁵ [The Future of the Last-Mile Ecosystem](#)

Topic 3

Breaking through barriers to zero waste

Despite near-universal understanding of the benefits of recycling, there are wide variations among different jurisdictions on what is recyclable, what is not, and how collection is conducted. Coupled with an infrastructure that is overwhelmed by the current waste stream, this leads to significant barriers for organizations and individuals to achieve a zero-waste future.

When looking at the percentage of waste diverted from landfill, nationally, the average waste diversion rate is about 35%, while reported diversion rates around the country vary widely, from single digits to just over 80% for San Francisco at the top of the scale.¹⁶ However, accurate data on municipal waste flows is often absent, outdated, or hard to find.

Of course, diversion rates are just one piece of a much larger puzzle and don't tell the entire story. Often, when raw materials become limited due to availability or pricing, or

disposal becomes too expensive or restricted, more products are reused or their components are recycled, creating feedback loops into the system.¹⁷ Feedback loops help the circular economy, especially in instances where disposal of the items is not easily achievable.¹⁸

The end of the waste stream is almost always at the local level, a relic of the 1900s when this express power was delivered to local and county governments and away from federal oversight. This makes the introduction of a harmonized waste stream across town, county, and state borders especially challenging.¹⁹ ■

¹⁶ [Despite Recycling Success, S.F.'s Zero Waste Goal Remains Elusive](#)

¹⁷ [The Obstacles in the Pathway to Zero Waste](#)

¹⁸ [The Obstacles in the Pathway to Zero Waste](#)

¹⁹ [A Tale of 5 Cities: Plastic Barriers to Zero Waste](#)

The following prompt is meant to stimulate discussion and thoughtful conversation. Please bring forward your own viewpoints, research, and perspectives to this CoLab session.

THE CHALLENGE: How might we create a more effective recycling system in the United States?

In this CoLab, participants will discuss the obstacles facing businesses and individuals on the path to zero waste. What conditions or policies are needed to support the growth and adoption of a more effective system? Should this be tackled at the local level or elsewhere? How can businesses, individuals, and governments work together to divert waste from landfill and create a more circular society?

FURTHER READING:

[Plastic Barriers to Zero Waste](#)

[Governing Magazine: The Pathway to a Zero Waste Future](#)

Theme

Creating opportunities for all people to thrive in a diverse and fast-changing world

Rapid environmental, technological, and economic changes leave a lasting impact on people and the communities in which they live. Governments, NGOs, and activists have long studied the impact of these changes on individuals and their livelihoods. In addition to these groups, businesses also have a role to play and must ensure that cultural and biological diversity are respected while conducting their operations. When it comes to climate change specifically, the business community must step up and take the lead in instances where governments have yet to act.

²⁰ Climate Justice: How Business Climate Action Can Reduce Environmental Racism

²¹ Climate Justice: How Business Climate Action Can Reduce Environmental Racism

Climate change threatens everyone, but recent research by Business for Social Responsibility suggests that many BIPOC communities are the most vulnerable to climate impacts.²⁰ These communities also suffer disproportionately from the broader socioeconomic impacts of climate change, manifesting in ways like disrupted access to social services and increased energy costs—so much so that race is the most salient indicator in the U.S. of how the climate crisis affects people.²¹

In this theme's CoLab session, participants will explore how businesses can take environmental-justice concerns into account when opening new facilities. Participants will strategize how to create conditions that integrate equitable strategies such as stakeholder engagement and public involvement in the decision-making process during expansion to help ensure no individuals or groups are left behind or shut out of the dialogue. ■

Topic within this theme

4. Setting the standard for environmentally just expansion



Topic 4

Setting the standard for environmentally just expansion

The built environment touches every part of our lives. How and where infrastructure and buildings are sited can be a major contributor to equity—or inequity—in society. Businesses can continue to perpetuate issues of inequity in their communities, or they can build in the right controls to ensure they expand in a thoughtful and just way.

When businesses look to expand their operations and open new locations, they consider any number of variables, from ease of access to potential for profitability. What hasn't always been included is the impact to the local community's social needs and cultural customs. To be truly inclusive and respect the existing and new communities in which a business will operate, companies' expansion criteria should also include environmental justice, defined by Green Action as when "both

cultural and biological diversity are respected, and where there is equal access to institutions and ample resources to grow and prosper."²²

To help break the cycle of inequity, it's important that companies look at their expansion more holistically, ensuring they are considering the full impact of where they decide to site a new office or facility. If not, we risk continuing to exacerbate the structural racism built into our cities and towns. ■

The following prompt is meant to stimulate discussion and thoughtful conversation. Please bring forward your own viewpoints, research, and perspectives to this CoLab session.

THE CHALLENGE: How might we ensure environmental-justice concerns are considered when expanding into new and existing communities?

In this CoLab, participants will explore solutions to ensure both cultural and natural biodiversity are respected through companies' expansion process. Instead of contributing to the problem, how can businesses expand in a way that promotes environmental justice? How do we ensure this is a standard part of the decision-making process?

²² Environmental Justice & Environmental Racism

Theme

Exploring life and society in a changing world

Our world is undergoing drastic disruption. Between now and 2030, our planet will continue to see environmental, technological, and societal paradigms change. People and businesses will need to adopt more resilient practices to create a better everyday life for the many people—today, and in the future.

Many studies have covered the current level of consumption in our country and whether it's truly sustainable in the long term. And while, on the surface, business and sustainable consumption may seem to be at odds with one another, there are many opportunities for businesses to thrive while being environmentally conscious.

According to thredUP's 2021 Retail Resale Report, the second-hand retail market is expected to double in size over the next five years, reaching \$75 billion with many brands launching their own reselling marketplaces.²³ Consumers are actively seeking out secondhand goods, with Gen Z and millennials leading the way. 53% of consumers within these two generations say they will increase their spending on secondhand goods over the next five years.²⁴

Additionally, consumers increasingly expect companies to use their voice and platforms to weigh in on the political and social issues of the day.²⁵ In an era of partisan gridlock in Washington, customers are looking to the brands they know and trust to drive the momentum necessary to enact change.

In this theme's CoLab sessions, participants will explore how to better position secondhand goods to be a consumer's preferred option when making a purchase and how businesses can interact with policymakers and activists to advocate for meaningful policies that benefit society in the political arena. ■

Topics within this theme

- 5. Making secondhand the first choice
- 6. Accelerating corporate activism

²³ Nike enters the resale business

²⁴ thredUP 2021 Resale Report

²⁵ Majority of Consumers Want Brands to Take a Stand on Social and Political Issues



Topic 5

Making secondhand the first choice

In a world where consumption is a major contributor to declining natural resources, increased emissions, and a host of other ecological concerns, how can retail be part of the solution and make a secondhand item the preferred purchase?

According to the latest projections, the global population could grow to 8.5 billion in 2030 and 9.7 billion in 2050. The equivalent of almost three planet Earths would be required to provide the natural resources needed to sustain current lifestyles.²⁶

To balance the needs of the many people and the future of the planet, businesses must find ways to embrace the circular economy and attack overconsumption head on. As a society, we'll need to create systems, solutions and frameworks that tackle global

challenges like climate change, biodiversity loss, waste, and pollution.

Against this backdrop, consumers' attitudes toward secondhand goods are rapidly changing. Demand from Gen Z and millennials is contributing to exponential growth in the secondhand market.²⁷ Even still, how can all generations benefit from seeking out secondhand purchases as the primary option? Participants in this dialogue will explore pathways to make secondhand the first choice, not just for consumers, but also retailers in the marketplace. ■

The following prompt is meant to stimulate discussion and thoughtful conversation. Please bring forward your own viewpoints, research, and perspectives to this CoLab session.

THE CHALLENGE: How can retailers make buying secondhand the preferred purchase?

In this CoLab, participants will seek to unlock the barriers to making buying and selling secondhand a more desirable, safe, and equitable option in

retail. This includes identifying opportunities to increase customer participation in existing solutions, creation of new retail experiences, and ceasing production of new items. Barriers to implementation and increasing public sentiment will also be explored along with existing regulations and customer education.

FURTHER READING:

[Ellen MacArthur Foundation: Circular economy introduction](#)

[One Planet Network: Natural resource use and environmental impacts](#)

²⁶ Sustainable Development Goals

²⁷ Gen Z's shopping habits are shaping the future of fashion: online thrifting

Topic 6

Accelerating corporate activism

In recent years, companies have become increasingly vocal in addressing environmental and social issues in society. And in a time of increased partisanship and government gridlock, many companies are looking to define the role of business in creating impact on issues that matter to them.

When facing issues as large as climate change and racial injustice, it will take concerted effort and partnerships within all parts of society—governments, individuals, and business—to effect change. We know consumers are increasingly looking to businesses to take a stand. According to the 2022 Edelman Trust Barometer, when considering a job, 60% of employees expect their CEO to speak out on social and political issues they care about.²⁸ 81% of those surveyed believe CEOs themselves should be visible

when discussing public policy or work their companies have done to benefit society.²⁹

There's been increased movement on this front in recent years especially, with more companies raising their voices on issues in society and a growing understanding that the purpose of a company is larger than simply serving their shareholders.³⁰ Still, consumers believe more can be done, including on issues like climate change, economic impact, and systemic injustice.³¹ ■

The following prompt is meant to stimulate discussion and thoughtful conversation. Please bring forward your own viewpoints, research, and perspectives to this CoLab session.

THE CHALLENGE: How can businesses drive true change on societal issues?

In this CoLab, participants will explore the role of businesses in addressing environmental and social

issues in society, going beyond simply issuing statements, and instead working to be true activists for societal change. What is the most effective way to amplify and complement the work of governments, NGOs, and individuals? What are the most effective and appropriate strategies for companies looking to impact positive societal change?

FURTHER READING:

[Edelman Trust Barometer 2022](#)

²⁸ Edelman Trust Barometer 2022

²⁹ Edelman Trust Barometer 2022

³⁰ Business Roundtable: Statement on the Purpose of a Corporation

³¹ Edelman Trust Barometer 2022

