



# Seattle REconomy



2025 ANNUAL REPORT



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# Letter from the Board

In a world increasingly defined by rapid consumption and disposable culture, it can feel like everything is built to be thrown away — from the packaging our products arrive in to the items themselves. We’ve all seen it or done it: people buying things just to toss them minutes later. This cycle doesn’t just create waste — it harms our environment, burdens frontline communities, and exploits workers around the globe.

At Seattle REconomy, we are building a different future. One where joy isn’t measured by what you buy and own, but by what you share. Where community replaces consumption, and access is more important than ownership. Our model, which is rooted in reuse, sharing and circularity, redirects dollars away from wasteful systems and toward local prosperity, environmental stewardship, and inclusive access to resources.

A central pillar of our work is ensuring that everyone, regardless of income or background, feels welcome and included. That’s why we offer a pay-what-you-can membership model, sliding-scale classes, and materials at reduced cost. In 2025, we deepened this commitment with the hiring of an outreach coordinator and a renewed focus on reaching underserved communities. We’ve also become a hub for other reuse-focused organizations, amplifying the impact of the circular movement throughout the region.

But this work is also personal.

A couple of years ago, our executive director, Josh Epstein, and his then-3-year-old, Cedar, were facing a classic parenting dilemma: their toys were taking over the house, and they couldn’t bear to part with a single one. One afternoon, they were visiting the Tool Library as an afternoon activity when inspiration struck. Why couldn’t kids share toys the way adults share tools? Cedar named it the Abracadabra Toy Library, and just like that, their attachment transformed into generosity. They donated dozens of toys and still help manage the Toy Library today. They found the joy and freedom of sharing.

This is the heart of what we do. In a time when it’s often easier to accumulate than to responsibly rehome, our programs offer a way to slow the flood. We help items stay in use, circulating through the community, and ensure that everyone has access to what they need, without being drowned in stuff.

As we look ahead to 2026, we remain inspired by the creativity, generosity, and resilience of our community. We’re proud to be that neighbor you can count on — to lend a tool, share advice, and invite you into something bigger than any one of us.

Thank you for being part of this movement.

With gratitude,  
**Joann, Josh, Justin, Natalie, Robin, Ryan and Susan**  
**Board of Directors**  
**Seattle REconomy**



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## Since our founding, Seattle REconomy (formerly Sustainable Northeast Seattle) has committed to addressing the growing challenge of climate resilience.

Our central mission is to reduce our community's footprint and increase our climate resilience through sharing resources, knowledge and practical solutions. Our evolution has allowed us to expand far beyond what we could do when we started 16 years ago.

This year we have continued to grow our programs and widen our reach. Our focus is on ensuring the broadest access possible to goods, services and resources. We have onboarded initiatives such as reduced-cost materials sales and our Bike Shack partnerships, and have brought in a whole new group of community members for our repaired bicycles at an accessible cost.

We measure success by tracking how many tools, bikes and materials we give new life and how much sharing we enable, and this year we strengthened this impact data by adding physical weight measurements.



33,522 tool loans



\$59,063 used goods sold



238 used bikes rehomed



231 items repaired at Fix-It Nights



80,000 used tools sold at Tool Sales



66,058 lbs total weight of donated materials accepted



## Highlights of 2025

- Awarded King County RE+ grant, which allowed us to add hours, increase staffing, purchase a transport van, build out storage and reach new partners
- Grew active memberships to over 4,000 for first time
- Strengthened and continued partnerships to organizations including Magpie Thrift Store, KidVantage, King County Solid Waste, Seattle ReCreative and Furniture Repair Bank
- Connected with community through events including the Shoreline Sustainable Skills Series, Fix-It Nights, Fabric Fix-Its, Community Threads and the Fall Harvest Festival

*"I've been using the tool library since 2021. I love those specific tools that I don't own, so I go to the tool library to get it. This is important because it uses community resources to empower people to learn, to share knowledge, and to create! Me and my wife spent maybe \$3,000 to build a small mudroom that a contractor quoted us \$60,000 to do. The tool library made it possible."*

– Jeremy Tiawo, member





Sustaining community, along with the environment, is Seattle REconomy’s primary goal.

We energize members through educational opportunities, community events, social media, and tool library gatherings such as Fix-It Nights or Book Clubs.

Our Inclusivity Committee works to ensure our programs and spaces are welcoming and accessible to everyone. We collect demographic data to understand who is in our community, who is missing, and how we can better support underrepresented groups. These insights guide our efforts to design programs, events, and volunteer opportunities that reflect our values and meet the needs of the full community like our Tool School for Women+ workshop, which creates a supportive learning space for women and nonbinary people.

We also are creating infrastructure to support what this data illuminates. This year we hired an Outreach Coordinator to increase the number of people who know about Seattle REconomy, implemented sliding-scale class fees and opened a new class for individuals who identify as women, and continue to build partnerships that widen our reach and the reach of other organizations.



“ I love donating to this place. I donate something and come in the next week and see someone using it. It’s how I contribute. My clutter becomes someone’s resource.”

– Tom Wegman, member



150 classes offered



656 class registrants



46 class topics



# VOLUNTEERS

## Seattle REconomy is powered by volunteer energy.

Our base is more robust than ever, offering support across initiatives including operations, marketing and engagement. They staff outreach events, manage the desks at the tool libraries, oversee the Bike Shacks, organize inventory, lead classes, and participate on our boards and committees. They are teachers, fixers and experts, who bring not only a wealth of knowledge to their roles but an enthusiasm for helping others.

### Special thanks to our VOLUNTEERS OF THE MONTH

- January  
**Jim R., Rob S. and Dave M.**
- February  
**Jaime H. and Tim T.**
- March  
**Laura A. and Mark B.**
- April  
**Amie A. and Tom W.**
- May  
**Eli H. and Mike F.**
- June  
**Andrew B. and Bill S.**
- July  
**Natalie W. and Ryan A.**
- August  
**Cori R. and Steve M.**
- September  
**Ruth T. and Johnathan M.**
- October  
**Joel G. and Joe W.**
- November  
**Tricia L. and Ashley P.**
- December - Volunteer of the Year  
**Russ S. and Lynette W.**



70%  
VOLUNTEERS  
FROM 2024



542 volunteers



9,444 volunteer hours



20 outreach events  
attended

“While exploring various volunteer opportunities, I found the tool library, which was more in line with my values of community supporting each other. I volunteer because I am given a sense of purpose with like-minded members and am able to meet generous, supportive and enthusiastic people.”



– Lee Hewitt, volunteer



# FUNDING & PROGRAMS

Over the past two years, Seattle REconomy has dramatically increased its solicitation of grants from across the city, county and country.

We have been the chosen recipients of grants including:

- City of Shoreline Environmental Mini Grant
- King County RE+
- Washington Department of Ecology Public Participation Grant

Other major sources of funding are membership fees and donated goods. Our membership model is pay-what-you-can, which means everyone can access our resources.

With this income, we are able to provide a wealth of sustainability-focused programs and stock a variety of tools that surprise even some long-time members with its breadth. Throwing an event? Want to start a garden? Hosting a game night? For all that and more, we've got you covered.



Grants	\$308,580
Membership fees	\$228,443
Materials sales	\$56,411
Fundraisers	\$27,844
Classes	\$26,066
Bike Shack	\$27,758
Donations	\$23,627
Matching gifts	\$12,559
Fees	\$8,524
Sponsorships	\$5,000
TOTAL INCOME	\$724,812



Staff wages	\$291,046
Facilities	\$129,362
Contractors	\$56,139
Operations	\$32,503
Tool Specific	\$7,982
Food and beverage	\$4,672
Outreach	\$4,271
Events	\$1,846
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$527,882



\* Preliminary 2025 numbers

## Overview of programs

- **Event Loans and Reservations:** The inventory of event essentials gives members a way to throw a great party. The libraries have supplies including tables, chairs, catering equipment and dishes. These items are reservable, because events are date-specific.
- **Woodshop:** The Woodshop at NESTL is a place for members to work on projects with a knowledgeable shop steward. The space is equipped with a table saw, compound sliding miter saw, band saw, drill press, router table, jointer, planer, spindle sander, scroll saw and various hand tools.
- **Materials and Tool Sales:** The second-use building materials store at the Shoreline Tool Library gives new life to items that are outside typical TL inventory or redundant stock.
- **Bike Shacks:** The Bike Shacks are places for members – regardless of bike repair experience – to work on bikes with a volunteer bike mechanic. The space is equipped with bike repair tools, a work stand and parts for purchase.
- **Seed Library:** This unique collection offers donated seeds for most any gardening desire. The Seed Library strengthens access to food resources, keeps rare plants circulating and protects food source diversity.
- **Classes:** Our public classes focus on DIY skills, home ownership education and supporting recreational interests.

“The Tool Library helps the community in a substantial way because it’s so convenient. It’s easy to sign up and get a membership. Excellent service and hospitality!”

– Kenneth Wright, new member





# ABOUT US

Seattle REconomy is a 501(c)3 tax-exempt nonprofit working to reduce our community's footprint and increase our climate resilience through sharing resources, knowledge and practical solutions.

## History

Seattle REconomy started in 2008 as Sustainable NE Seattle (SUSNE). Three NE Seattleites, Susan Gregory, Joann Kerr and Carol Kibble, were passionate about making a contribution to solving the climate crisis so they created the organization to harness the power of community to reduce our collective impact on the planet. SUSNE focused on food and also established the now-foundational NE Seattle Tool Library. In 2023, SUSNE rebranded as Seattle REconomy to illustrate its broadened focus, both in terms of geography and philosophy.



“It’s been quite a journey from a handful of folks with the idea of creating a tool library, to thousands of active members and tools, with 2 locations, 10 employees plus interns, multiple programs, partner organizations, classes, workshops and much more. Excited to see what the future brings.”

– Ken Yu, founding steering committee member



## Values

- **Celebration:** We recognize the role of community in acknowledging the seasons and our passage through them. We take time to celebrate our place, our relationship to one another and the gifts we are given.
- **Communication:** We communicate regularly about the activities of the organization, and are transparent in our decision making processes.
- **Creativity:** We acknowledge the role of creativity in bringing about change, and design activities which engage the whole person.
- **Inclusiveness:** We aim to include all members of our neighborhood, regardless of race, age, religion or economic status. We communicate across generations in conversations about sustainability and resilience.
- **Relationship to Nature:** With respect for the connectedness of living things, we find active ways to promote an ecologically and socially just future.
- **Respect:** We listen respectfully and participate as fully as we are able. We seek and integrate feedback about our organization on a regular basis.



# ABOUT US

We are guided by a board and two tool library steering committees made up of volunteers, while staff manage operations and day-to-day logistics.

### Board

- Chair Justin Avellar
- Secretary Natalie White
- Treasurer Ryan Abe
- Executive Director Josh Epstein
- Founder and Member Susan Gregory
- Founder and Member Joann Kerr
- Member Robin Blomster

### Steering Committees

#### Shoreline Tool Library

- Ryan Abe
- Alyx Mikulski
- Lynette Wachholz
- Travis White
- Sean Warlick
- Ryan Townsend
- Aakanksha Sinha
- Natalie White
- Rachelle McCarty
- Domenick Dellino

#### NE Seattle Tool Library

- Ken Yu
- Susan Gregory
- Jessica Longo
- Joel Gregory
- Amelia Adkins
- Kristina Herrera
- Justin Avellar
- Jennifer Belk
- Jaime Hatch



Seattle REconomy Board, from left: Josh Epstein, Justin Avellar, Susan Gregory, Joann Kerr, Robin Blomster, Natalie White, and Ryan Abe.



Seattle REconomy staff, back row from left: Josh Epstein, Colin McElroy, Peter Schmalzer, and Anna Wilson. Front row: Marlee Blue, Rebecca Roush, Ava Lim, and Anna Marie Wing.

“The Shoreline Tool Library is more than just a place to borrow tools — it’s a community hub where neighbors can learn new skills, share resources and connect. In collaboration with Seattle REconomy, BECU introduced financial health classes designed specifically for Tool Library members, supporting their mission to provide low-barrier access to lifelong learning.”

– Maia Lark, BECU branch manager

### Organizational partners

- Age Friendly Seattle
- Around Again
- BECU
- Build Lake City Together
- Cascadia Consulting
- City of Lake Forest Park
- City of Shoreline
- Edmonds Food Bank
- Floor Coverings International
- Furniture Repair Bank
- GeerGarage
- Homebody
- KidVantage
- King County
- Magpie Thrift Store
- Modern Woodsmen
- North Helpline
- Puget Sound Energy
- Recology
- Refugee Artisan Initiative
- Reuse Consulting
- Ridwell
- Salvation Collective
- Seattle Good Business Network
- Seattle Office of Economic Development
- Seattle Public Utilities
- Seattle ReCreative
- Shoreline Chamber
- Windermere
- Shoreline Community College
- Shoreline Library
- South King Tool Library
- Start Sustainability Consulting
- Washington Department of Commerce
- Washington State Department of Ecology
- Wrasse Consulting
- Zero Waste WA