



The Great
SWAP

www.greatswap.ca

Letter from the Founder

To Our Community,

I'm excited to be writing this letter to you as the Founder of The Great Swap. When I think back to our very first event, I never could have imagined how quickly a small grassroots idea would grow into a movement. Especially one that is now shaping conversations about consumption, waste, and community across Nova Scotia.

The early days were humble: a single event, organized with the help of friends and volunteers, a lot of donated clothing, and a shared belief that there had to be a way to refresh our closets affordably and sustainably. The challenges were real; limited space, limited resources, and of course, introducing people to the idea of clothing swaps, especially on a scale larger than in someone's living room. But what we discovered was enormous potential: people were hungry for connection, eager for affordable access to clothing, and ready to reimagine how fashion could be part of a circular future.

Since then, our team and volunteers have rolled up their sleeves to grow The Great Swap into something much bigger than a single event. We've expanded into Cape Breton, diverted tens of thousands of pounds of textiles from local landfills, supported charities, and built partnerships with organizations who share our vision of a circular economy. Along the way, we've seen how something as simple as swapping clothes can spark joy, foster belonging, and strengthen communities.

For me, this journey has never been just about clothing. It's about reshaping how we consume, how we care for one another, and how we take shared responsibility for the places we call home. Looking ahead, our vision is to make The Great Swap a cornerstone of Atlantic Canada's circular future; where fashion comes full circle, communities flourish, and every garment swapped carries a story of connection, care, and possibility.

I invite you to be part of this journey. Together, we can close the loop on textiles, strengthen our communities, and demonstrate that sustainability isn't just the right choice, it's also the most practical, affordable, and accessible one.

With appreciation,



Charlotte Genge
Founder, The Great Swap



Our Story & Mission

The Great Swap began with The Great Halifax Clothing Swap in 2023, rooted in a simple idea: *what if we could refresh our wardrobes without harming the planet?*

Founded by Charlotte Genge, a circular textiles expert and lifelong thrift enthusiast, the Swap has become a bi-annual community event where all ages, sizes, and identities come together to trade clothing, shoes, and accessories. What sets the Swap apart is its **triple impact**:

- **Economic:** community members gain access to high-quality items and an affordable, flat-rate.
- **Environmental:** tens of thousands of pounds of clothing are diverted from landfills annually; the circular economy is made accessible to the broader public, encouraging behavioural shifts and normalizing reuse.
- **Social:** inclusive, stigma-free access to clothing and community; proceeds directed to local causes, turning fashion into food security, mentorship, and mental health support; volunteers gain work experience and strengthen community connections.

By 2025, the Swap has become more than an event. It is a movement for circularity, sustainability, inclusion, and community well-being.

Impact Snapshot

Cumulative (Since April 2023)

The inaugural Great Halifax Clothing Swap was held on Earth Day, April 22, 2023. Since then, over the course of 5 events, the Swap has generated:

- **2,300+ attendees** (all ages, sizes, and identities)
- **200+ volunteers**
- **25,000 lbs of clothing** processed
- **\$22,500 raised** for local charities

Spring 2025:

On May 3, 2025, Halifax proved what happens when sustainability meets community spirit:

- **800+ attendees**
- **60+ volunteers**, donating 240+ hours of labour
- **8,700 lbs of clothing processed**
- **8,400 lbs rehomed** (a **94% swap rate**)
- **\$6,500 raised** for Feed Nova Scotia
- 85 lbs in a single donation

This is the power of collective action:

- Thousands of garments found new homes
- Fashion was transformed into social good
- The circular economy was made accessible to all



How it Works

1



Participants bring 5+ items of gently-used clothing, shoes, or accessories for any age, size, and identity. (If you wouldn't be proud to give it to a friend, it probably shouldn't be swapped.)

2



A flat-rate door fee is collected upon entry (\$15 with a donation, \$25 without)

3



Donations are placed on a table upon entry and volunteers sort items by type (e.g., jeans, shoes, short-sleeve shirts, dresses) and display them on swap tables.

4



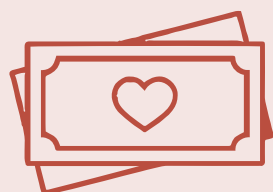
Attendees browse and take what they need, there is no limit.

5



Leftover items are donated to Big Brothers Big Sisters ReNew Crew and other local charitable collectors, supporting youth mentorship programs and other social causes.

6



Proceeds from admission fees (after expenses) donated to local charities (FeedNS, Laing House, and others).

Our Team

The success of The Great Swap is powered by community. At the heart of our work is a volunteer Executive Committee, a dedicated group of leaders who bring expertise, creativity, and passion to every event. Together, they oversee planning and execution, ensuring that each Swap is not only seamless but also welcoming, impactful, and true to our mission of sustainability and inclusion.

Each member contributes unique skills making the Swap a vibrant, collaborative effort. Their leadership, paired with the energy of our broader volunteer base, is what transforms this grassroots idea into a movement that grows stronger with every event.



Anne Batten

Anne has volunteered with the Great Swap since 2023. A federal public servant specializing in disability inclusion, accessibility, and Indigenous health, she holds degrees from the University of Ottawa and Dalhousie University.



Ally Chant

Ally is a Waste Resource Education Officer with HRM. With a background in education and community engagement, she promotes waste reduction and sustainability through thrifting, upcycling, embroidery, and crochet.



Erica Cormier

Erica, a North End Halifax resident and former owner of 11 Street Boutique, brings nine years of retail experience. Inspired by the Swap's mission, she joined the executive team to connect fashion with community.



Samantha Daniels

Samantha is a federal user researcher ensuring services meet diverse needs. She holds a BSc in Psychology and a Master of Information from the University of Toronto, with experience advancing sustainability initiatives.



Charlotte Genge

Founder of The Great Swap series, Charlotte is a serial entrepreneur with an MBA and engineering background. She leads EnsembleCo Consulting, co-founded By the Pound Thrift, and advances circular economy solutions nationally with The National Association for Charitable Textile Recycling.



Leann Grosvold

Leann combines backgrounds in chemistry, public relations, and hospitality with an entrepreneurial spirit, consulting in small business and regenerative tourism. A proud Bluenoser, she is passionate about sustainability, community, and local food.



Jovana Randjelovic

Jovana is a design strategist, proposal specialist, and media, film, and event producer whose multidisciplinary practice spans architecture, material arts, media, and music. A Glasgow School of Art graduate, she centres sustainability and resiliency in her work.



Paddy Williams

Paddy is passionate about sustainable fashion and community connection. With experience in consignment, retail, and styling, they now work as a Residential Counsellor, blending style with inclusion, sustainability, and social impact.

Your Support Matters

Our donors come in many forms, but all share a common thread: a commitment to building stronger, more sustainable communities.

- **Changemakers:** corporations that step forward as visible, purpose-driven partners (e.g., Atlantic Superstore, Atlantic Lottery).
- **Sustainability Champions:** co-ops, credit unions, and socially-minded businesses passionate about environmental and social good.
- **Community Connectors:** individuals and small businesses with personal ties to the cause.
- **Local Leaders:** service clubs and associations who strengthen communities through civic support.

Together, these partners make it possible to turn clothing into connection and fashion into impact. Every contribution, big or small, helps weave a brighter, more sustainable future for Nova Scotia and beyond.

Donor Recognition

Your support won't go unnoticed. Sponsors of The Great Swap are recognized through event materials, media mentions, and post-event storytelling, building visibility while aligning your brand with sustainability and community impact.

- Logo on promotional posters, signage, and event tables.
- Verbal thanks during media features and event announcements.
- Acknowledgment in email newsletters and social channels.
- Special mention in the post-event impact report.
- Opportunity for sponsors to be spotlighted in donor thank-you stories and swapper testimonials.

SELECT ORGANIZATIONS WE'VE SUPPORTED



Feedback from our Swappers

“

Maxed to capacity that the fire marshall would allow. Could have been viewed as anarchy, somehow working beautifully. I thought to myself, 'If only people could learn to work together like this all the time!

“

Great opportunity to clear out for a good cause and a fun day out!

“

Wonderful event! Lots of items to look through, a good venue with adequate space, and a very accessible set up, with a well-managed line up to get in, volunteers to take donations off your hands when you join the line, and a stamp to allow you to come back as many times as you like throughout the day.

“

The volunteers were amazing, kind, welcoming and helpful! Thank you everyone!

“

Was my very first experience doing this, and to me that is the best way to recycle, or maybe the true way to have a sustainable fashion. Everybody was looking for something special to wear, and even some clothes needed a little mending/repair, it doesn't matter cause all the people who attended this, really know the value of giving a second chance to things that still are useful. Less pollution, less waste, and instead make friends, laugh (was extremely fun!) and make a community strong sharing the same feelings.



Marketing & Visibility

- Audience Reach: **150,000+ impressions** on socials; 1,700 subscribed to email updates; 1,900+ followers on Instagram; 800+ attendees in Halifax; strong local turnout expected in Cape Breton.
- Municipal Support: **Partnerships with municipalities** (HRM, CBRM) and Divert NS extend our reach and amplify awareness through their established community networks.
- **Media Coverage:** In such publications as The Coast, Discover Halifax, local news (e.g., Global), radio (e.g., CBC), Instagram, and Facebook. Feature on website and email newsletter.
- Volunteer Power: 60+ **volunteers amplify your brand** across the community.
- Visual Assets: **Photos and testimonials** showcase positive, inclusive energy.

Future Vision

The Halifax and Cape Breton events are the **beginning of a regional tradition**. Within two years, we aim to host swaps in multiple Atlantic Canadian municipalities (Halifax, Cape Breton, St. John's, Fredericton, Charlottetown), expanding both our environmental and charitable impact, and unifying communities across the Atlantic Region.

Your sponsorship builds the foundation for this sustainable future.



Join us as we grow this community-powered movement across Atlantic Canada. Together, we can make clothing circular, turning it into community connection, social good, and empowerment.

For partnership inquiries, contact:

Charlotte Genge

Founder, The Great Swap

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