

Belgian company is looking for a EU-partner for production of sustainable modular and multifunctional children's furniture.

## Summary

Profile type	Company's country	POD reference
<b>Business request</b>	<b>Belgium</b>	<b>BRBE20241024015</b>
Profile status	Type of partnership	Targeted countries
<b>PUBLISHED</b>	<b>Supplier agreement</b> <b>Commercial agreement</b> <b>Outsourcing agreement</b>	<b>• World</b>
Contact Person	Term of validity	Last update
<b><u><a href="#">Wioletta POLITEWICZ</a></u></b>	<b>28 Oct 2024</b> <b>28 Oct 2025</b>	<b>28 Oct 2024</b>

## General Information

### Short summary

An Antwerp-based startup develops multifunctional furniture designed to grow with children. Their furniture and modules are compatible and serve multiple functions. The company prioritizes safety, quality and sustainability by using only sustainable materials, adhering to ecodesign principles and testing each new model according to European standards. Additionally, they provide a digital service and exchange platform offering services such as repair, maintenance, upgrades and a take-back option.

### Full description

This Antwerp- and Belgium-based startup focuses on the R&D of ecological children's furniture in collaboration with sustainable local and European partners.

The company aims to pioneer circular strategies such as Rethink, Reuse, Repair, Refurbish and Repurpose, with a mission to extend the lifespan of products and intensify (re)use, ultimately leading to resource savings and a reduction in CO2 emissions. They develop more multifunctional and modular furniture than what is currently available on the market. For example, their first product combines five functions to match a child's growth, while similar models typically offer only two or three.

The startup collaborates with a local partner, specializing in circular services, such as testing new circular materials,

repair and maintenance, personalization, refurbishment, take-back, quality control, remanufacturing and the exchange of parts and modules, and another partner focusing on digital and physical sales and marketing.

The company seeks sustainable production within Europe, starting with small production runs of 20 to 30 pieces, with plans to scale to larger batches.

The benefits of these partnerships include:

- 1) Long-term customer loyalty: The products are multifunctional and modular. As a result, consumers build on their initial purchase, expand it with new modules and use the total package for longer. This increases customer loyalty.
- 2) Competitive advantage and market position: By focusing on circularity and sustainable production processes, the manufacturer can differentiate itself from competitors focusing on fast furniture. The project also supports local partnerships, which strengthens the local economy and helps the producer position itself as sustainable and socially responsible.
- 3) Innovation and growth: By participating in the development of circular materials and production processes, the producer gains experience that can be applied in other products and markets. This ensures growth and innovation within the organisation.
- 4) Positive environmental image: By deploying sustainable and circular strategies, such as lowering CO2 emissions and reducing the ecological footprint, the producer strengthens its reputation as an environmentally conscious company.

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#### Advantages and innovations

This startup stands out from its competitors through its eco-design and holistic approach to sustainability and circularity. The company is committed to multifunctionality, modularity, and repurposing products and modules throughout their use. An example of this is a piece of furniture that can fulfill up to five functions and be easily transformed, for instance, from a bed to a desk. This approach is supported by a design strategy focused on repair and maintenance, significantly extending the lifespan of products.

In addition, the startup distinguishes itself by collaborating with local partners, which not only contributes to a smaller ecological footprint but also supports the local economy. This partnership ensures that the entire life cycle of the products—from production to reuse—is accounted for and promotes more intensive use of the furniture by the same or multiple users.

The company incorporates circular principles into every step of the production process and is committed to fostering a sustainable relationship between consumer and product by involving customers in the maintenance and repair of the furniture. This approach challenges the concept of 'fast furniture' and creates a lasting bond between customer and furniture.

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#### Technical specification or expertise sought

The international partner should be an expert in selecting appropriate materials with a focus on sustainability.

The prototype should use sustainable materials that meet technical, aesthetic, and economic requirements. Birch plywood meets the technical and aesthetic standards but, due to the current geopolitical situation, no longer meets the economic requirements, as it has become too expensive to work with. Alternative materials, such as Ecoboards, PowerplexBio, and MDF boards, are being considered. These materials should meet the following criteria:

#### TECHNICAL

Criteria 1 Modularity and multifunctionality: level of adaptable modular use and (dis-)assembly

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Criteria 2 Lifetime extension

Criteria 3 CE certification: The prototype must comply with European safety, health and environmental regulations and be CE-certified to be placed on the market.

AESTHETIC

Criteria 4: No requirements, the material will have a finish.

ECONOMIC

Criteria 5: The production price should be competitive within the upper segment of children's furniture.

Stage of development

Sustainable Development goals

- **Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth**
- **Goal 3: Good Health and Well-being**
- **Goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production**
- **Goal 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure**
- **Goal 17: Partnerships to achieve the Goal**
- **Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation**

IPR Status

IPR Notes

## Partner Sought

Expected role of the partner

**\*\* Prominent Role:**

Production and Processing:

As a manufacturing partner, the furniture manufacturer provides furniture production, including the processing of circular or sustainable materials.

**\*\* Possible Roles:**

Materials Research and Innovation:

The furniture producer can be responsible for selecting and testing sustainable and circular materials. By collaborating with other partners, such as material suppliers, the producer can find innovative solutions that meet technical and aesthetic requirements.

#### Research and Development:

The furniture manufacturer can play an important role in research and development (R&D), testing, and validating prototypes in collaboration with users and other partners. This ensures that the final product is both functional and durable.

#### Supporting Circular Services:

The furniture manufacturer can collaborate with logistics and service partners to offer circular services such as maintenance, repair, personalization, and refurbishing. This requires adapting production infrastructure and training staff to enable these services.

#### Type of partnership

**Supplier agreement**

**Commercial agreement**

**Outsourcing agreement**

#### Type and size of the partner

• **SME <=10**

• **SME 11-49**

• **SME 50 - 249**

• **Big company**

## Dissemination

#### Technology keywords

• **07002005 - Wood Products**

#### Market keywords

• **07004005 - Furnishing and Furniture**

#### Targeted countries

• **World**

#### Sector groups involved

• **Construction**

• **Creative Industries**