



How Collective Investment Turned Polypropylene into a Widely Recyclable Success

The Approach

The Partnership convened the Polypropylene Recycling Coalition—a cross-sector network spanning resin suppliers, manufacturers, brand owners, recyclers, and end markets. Backed by catalytic grants and a shared sense of urgency, the Coalition set out to rebuild polypropylene recycling access and confidence across the U.S.



Each grant was designed for measurable system impact:



Improve access

through MRF sortation upgrades and community outreach.



Strengthen end markets

by ensuring recovered polypropylene is sourced here in North America.



Track outcomes

through The Partnership's National Recycling Database and Circular Packaging Assessment tool.

In its first two years, The Recycling Partnership's Polypropylene Recycling Coalition turned data, dollars, and determination into measurable national change. What began as an urgent challenge—polypropylene's place in the recycling stream thrown into uncertainty—became a proof point: collective investment can move an entire material category toward circularity.

The Challenge

When the How2Recycle label downgraded rigid polypropylene containers to “Check Locally” in early 2020, it sent a signal to the market: access was inconsistent, and end markets weren't keeping pace. Without action, this critical packaging material risked losing its footing in the recycling system.

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What We Found

The investments made by the Coalition exceeded expectations, delivering tangible progress in record time. Through 24 grants totaling \$6.7 million, the Coalition improved recycling access for roughly 8% of U.S. households—reaching more than 20 million people and enabling an estimated 25 million additional pounds of polypropylene recovery every year.

Those gains, paired with stronger North American end markets, laid the foundation for a milestone achievement: in 2022, How2Recycle officially upgraded rigid polypropylene containers to “Widely Recyclable.”



The Impact

The Coalition’s progress proves what’s possible when the industry acts in concert toward a clear, data-driven goal. Together, Coalition members helped deliver measurable system change even faster than anyone thought possible.



THE POWER OF COLLABORATION ACROSS THE VALUE CHAIN CAN BE SEEN THROUGH THIS SUBSTANTIAL SYSTEM-WIDE SHIFT FOR POLYPROPYLENE. THE PRECEDENT WE ARE SETTING FOR MATERIALS, COALITIONS, AND INNOVATIONS IS EXCITING AND HOPEFUL.

Keefe Harrison
CEO, The Recycling Partnership

What’s Next

The Coalition’s mission continues: expanding access, strengthening processing, and ensuring long-term market stability for polypropylene. Each new investment compounds the system-wide return, fueling a stronger, more circular economy.

Focus on the challenge.
Deliver what works.
Get the right systems in place.

PARTNER WITH US. LET’S SOLVE RECYCLING’S
TOUGHEST CHALLENGES, TOGETHER.

By the Numbers

\$6.7M

Invested through 24 Grants

20M+

People Gained Access
to Polypropylene Recycling

25M

Pounds of Polypropylene
Recovered Annually for
North American End Markets

6%

Increase in National Access
(59% to 65%)