

Green Funding Collaboration Tackles E-waste and Digital Equity

Case Study: Quadrent and BNZ

[Quadrent and BNZ have partnered to deliver a New Zealand first](#) - a green leasing solution for technology assets that will combat the burgeoning problem of e-waste and address digital inclusion in vulnerable communities.

The e-waste problem

The [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals Report 2021](#) stated that in 2019 the world generated 53.6 million metric tons of electronic and electrical equipment waste (e-waste), an increase of more than 20 per cent since 2014. Each person generated about 7.3 kilograms of e-waste in 2019, of which *only* 1.7 kilograms was documented to have been managed in an environmentally sustainable way.

Improper disposal of e-waste causes poisonous chemicals to be released into the soil and water, putting environmental and human health at risk. It results in a significant loss of scarce and valuable raw materials, such as gold, platinum, cobalt and rare earth elements, and as much as 7 per cent of the world's gold may currently be contained in electronic devices.

A common assumption might be that New Zealand must be better? Wrong. New Zealand is one of the world's worst producers of e-waste with a whopping [19.2kg generated per person, per year](#).

"Our goal is a simple one and that is to help create a better future for coming generations. One which is economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable. Quadrent Green Lease aligns perfectly with that goal and is an example of how New Zealand businesses can collaborate to make a big difference. We are very excited to be launching it with the support of BNZ."

Quadrent CEO, Martyn Masterton



The digital equity divide

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals Report 2021 also states: With schools and workspaces transitioning online due to COVID-19, information and communication technology (ICT) skills have become critically important. However, available data from 2017–2019 indicate that less than 40 per cent of youth and adults reported performing one of the basic ICT skills in the last three months, such as sending an email with an attachment.

In New Zealand having access and being able to use a laptop, a mobile phone and the internet is something most of us take for granted. However, the sobering fact is that [1 in 10 New Zealanders are excluded from performing these basic tasks](#).

How a Quadrent Green Lease tackles digital waste and equity

A Quadrent Green Lease helps stop the proliferation of e-waste in New Zealand and bridge the digital equity divide, by providing a tangible and scalable way of disrupting the traditional supply chain, procurement and ownership models associated with technology.

The Quadrent Green Lease is green loan funded and designed, at least initially, for

large corporate users of technology. It helps:

- sustainably manage the entire lifecycle of their technology assets.
- reduce emissions and the levels of poisonous chemicals released into our landfills caused by e-waste, by entering technology assets into the circular economy.
- address digital inequity, when at the end of the lease term, a portion of the high-spec and high-quality tech devices are donated and redistributed into communities that need them most.

The Quadrent Green Lease is a collaboration between the lease customer and Quadrent to develop, measure and implement the changes needed to reduce waste, emissions and boost digital inclusion. These changes are driven by sustainability representatives in each organisation and include:

1. Putting in place sustainable asset use and product selection protocols.
2. The use of sustainable transportation for delivery of technology assets.
3. The use of recycled/recyclable packaging and/or the sustainable disposal of used packaging.
4. Organisational education about the sustainable, energy efficient use of technology assets and about their responsible disposal.
5. The lifecycle management of technology in accordance with Quadrent's Sustainability Hierarchy of: repurpose, refurbish, recycle, responsibly dispose.



6. The secure data erasure of Quadrent Green Lease assets when relinquished by the lessee.
7. A pledge from our corporate customers (matched by Quadrent) to donate a portion of their ex-lease devices to communities that most need them, with a strong emphasis on helping young kiwis.

“We must all play our part to reduce e-waste and emissions and support communities in need. With digital technology clearly at the centre of our economic future, we are thrilled to be partnering with Quadrent to deliver a scalable service that will help reduce e-waste and increase access to digital technology in vulnerable communities.

BNZ Head of Sustainable Finance, Louise Tong

Making it work

Quadrent recently worked with a professional services firm employing over 1,600 people throughout New Zealand, that had begun investigating where they could proactively make changes to implement a best practice ESG framework.

After reviewing their device ownership model, they discovered that leasing versus outright ownership could be more beneficial than just delivering efficient cost-effective technology

to improve employee retention and engagement. Leasing could also help improve sustainability by reducing the number of unwanted, out of date devices that ended up in landfill and improve data security, all aligning with the organisation’s strong commitment to embedding ESG across all areas of its business.

They now maintain a rolling refresh of their technology, with the best tools readily available to all staff. This has led to the overall staff satisfaction with the company's IT processes rising from 50% to 85%, while none of their 1,600 previous devices were e-wasted, compared to an average of 15% for companies using a traditional purchase model.

“It is great to see this level of collaboration amongst our members. What is most exciting about Quadrent Green Lease is that it has a tangible and real impact on both the environment and digital equity with an exciting potential.”

Mike Burrell, Executive Director of the Sustainable Business Council

For more information [read the media release here](#), and to explore further you can download the Quadrent Green Lease Brochure [here](#).

