

# ResQ Club



## Background

Scandic, a leading hotel chain in the Nordics, faces a frequent challenge. Each day, their hotels serve thousands of guests with high-quality meals ranging from breakfasts to dinner, but inevitably some of this food goes uneaten. The surplus meals, still perfectly good are at risk of going to waste. This was a troubling scenario for Scandic.

Enter ResQ Club, a Helsinki-based Finnish social innovation aimed at reducing bio-based waste. Launched in 2015, ResQ Club offers hope for businesses like Scandic. The mobile app connects consumers with surplus food from nearby restaurants, cafés and grocery stores, allowing users to purchase these meals at a discounted price. With 100,000 active monthly users ResQ Club has created a vibrant community dedicated to sustainability.

Scandic Finland joined the ResQ Club platform becoming part of a network of 10,000 other businesses, including restaurants, cafés and grocery stores. Each week about 3,000 of these businesses actively sell their surplus through the platform. For Scandic, this meant that the surplus meals from their hotels could now find a new home, reducing waste and generating additional revenue. Consumers could now enjoy Scandic's high-quality meals at a fraction of the price ensuring that good food did not go to waste.

The story of ResQ Club began with its founder who was deeply troubled by the environmental impact of food waste. As he delved deeper into the issue he was struck by the staggering amounts of surplus food and the significant CO<sub>2</sub> emissions it generated. This growing awareness ignited a passion in him to make a difference. Drawing on his experience from working on a similar Finnish app he envisioned a modern solution that could bridge the gap between businesses and consumers. Thus, ResQ Club was born – a service designed to reduce waste and promote responsible consumption.

ResQ Club's innovation didn't stop at food. Today, the platform has expanded to include other surplus items with expiry dates such as flowers and cosmetics. This has broadened its impact, helping even more businesses turn potential waste into opportunity. Additionally, ResQ Club has begun addressing food waste at the wholesale level further amplifying its positive effects.

The collaboration between restaurants and ResQ Club prove how innovative solutions can transform challenges into opportunities. By leveraging ResQ Club, restaurants enhance their sustainability efforts but can also strengthen their connection with the community.

## Governance Model

ResQ Club operates as a private company with a mission-driven approach. By partnering with food businesses to list surplus meals on its platform, ResQ Club offers significant benefits to restaurants. Firstly, it increases restaurant revenue by turning potential waste into profit. Secondly, it helps in customer acquisition by attracting new patrons who try out the restaurant offerings through the app.

Additionally, ResQ Club appeals to eco-conscious consumers who prioritise sustainability, thereby enhancing the restaurant's reputation and customer base. The company ensures a seamless and efficient process for both sellers and buyers, taking 25 % of the sales as a commission.

## Social Benefits

The platform fosters a community of environmentally conscious consumers and businesses working together to reduce waste. With the ResQ app, consumers can save by purchasing discounted meals to go, become more aware of how to reduce food waste and reconsider their preference for food freshness. The company also helps to raise restaurant industry awareness of food waste as it educates restaurants on pricing to show how sustainability and discounts can result in a profitable business.

## Environmental Benefits

ResQ Club follows the circular economy strategy of re-use, helping consumers purchase meals that would otherwise be discarded even though they are still in good condition and fulfilling their original function. This approach significantly reduces food waste and consequently lowers CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

In addition to rescuing prepared meals ResQ Club enhances resource efficiency. The platform already helps restaurants by rescuing foodstuffs that go into meal production. To further expand its impact, the company is now piloting initiatives with fruit and vegetable wholesalers, as well as flower shops to sell their surplus directly to consumers.

This new approach addresses a key challenge: The availability and quantity of surplus vegetables and fruits from wholesalers can vary greatly, while restaurants often require specific amounts at specific times. Consumers on the other hand are more flexible and can absorb these surpluses more readily. By connecting wholesalers directly with consumers, ResQ Club can further reduce food waste and make resource use even more efficient.

## Replicability Potential

ResQ Club's model educates consumers about the importance of reducing food waste, and helps them reconsider the fate of slightly less fresh food. The model is highly replicable. The ResQ Club's app combines technology, consumer-restaurant map-based targeting and business model innovation in the food waste reduction domain, a space also recognised by other players like Too Good To Go (<https://www.toogoodtogo.com>), and Karma (<https://staging.karma.life/>). The award-winning model has been successfully adapted to various cities and countries expanding to multiple locations in Finland, Sweden, Estonia and Germany.

Key factors for replication include establishing strong connections between local food businesses and nearby consumers, and encouraging restaurateurs to rethink their pricing and preparation strategies. Drawing from the elements of consumer education, community connection and restaurant service rethinking create ample opportunities for other companies to replicate ResQ Club's success in their own communities, fostering a more sustainable and resource-efficient food system.

### Contact:

E-Mail: [info@resq-club.com](mailto:info@resq-club.com)

Website: [www.resq-club.com](http://www.resq-club.com)

### Sources:

- <https://www.resq-club.com/fi>
- <https://european-social-fund-plus.ec.europa.eu/en/social-innovation-match/case-study/resq-club>
- <https://circulareconomy.europa.eu/platform/en/good-practices/resq-finding-buyer-leftover-cupcake>
- <https://yle.fi/a/3-9156134>
- <https://yle.fi/a/3-9834901>
- <https://www.sitra.fi/en/cases/resq-club-redeems-surplus-food-from-restaurants-and-brings-it-to-consumers-plates-the-service-must-meet-the-needs-of-different-markets/>
- <https://www.lily.fi/blogit/smthng-good/mika-on-resq-club/>
- <https://aim2flourish.com/innovations/goodbye-food-waste>
- Yhteisellä makumatkalla maailman parhaaksi – VR



Funded by  
the European Union

The 3-CO project is funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or European Research Executive Agency. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.