

# Collective Commitment to Reuse

## CC2r version 1.1

## What is CC2r?

The Collective Commitment to Reuse (CC2r) sets out to foster decolonial trans\*feminist practices of reuse.

Reuse can include (but is not limited to) getting inspiration from, quoting, attributing or referring to, making copies or a derivative work of, adapting, modifying, reperforming, making available, redistributing existing or collectively developed cultural practices.

CC2r is a commitment to: (i) building and supporting a practice of interdependency and solidarity by cultivating a collective ground from which to commit and act; (ii) sharing and reusing generously and continuously; (iii) refraining from sharing and reusing when it would mean harmful extraction.

CC2r exists because default legal frameworks of intellectual property force us into assumptions of originality and individual authorship, and [we see What is CC2r?](#) need something else. We demand something that enables collective creation, that supports generosity toward the work done before and after us. CC2r exists because all around us creative practice is being appropriated, extracted or ignored. We feel that Free licences and mainstream Open Access protocols struggle to account for the complexity, porosity and for the multifaceted processes of cultural practice. They also seem to stop short of addressing the power structures at play.

CC2r fosters collective action designed to resist the ways conventional copyright constrains cultural practices from circulating among peers, and from being picked up and transformed by fellow practitioners, while at the same time failing to protect creators from expropriation of their work.

CC2r is an attempt to articulate a transformation towards different ways of reusing, building upon and passing on practices, works, creations – in solidarity, together.

We invite you to read this document as a collective experiment which is far from finished and has many ambiguities. It is clear, however, that it engages with a world not centred around possession. And that it is prefiguratively creating communities – and ideally worlds eventually – in which there is no need of copyright licences, just commitments. It is also clear that a commitment cannot be practised alone, and needs to be made in relation to other activisms to help bring this world about. We don't know if it can work, but we want to try – with you.

## Why a commitment?

A commitment is a dedication (of time, money, knowledge, thinking, support) to an activity or cause. In that sense, a commitment supports a practice of solidarity, rather than acting as a licence (legal liability) or a set of conditions (responsibility).

A collective commitment is therefore a long-term engagement designed to be embedded in every stage of cultural work. It is dedicated to a practice of reuse that is always in the making and requires continual experimentation, evaluation, contestation and adjustment. This ongoingness distinguishes a commitment from a transactional, one-time permission that is simply sprinkled on top at the end of a process, for example at the point of release.

A commitment is an attempt, not a guarantee. Especially as so many of us are living and working in environments that are ruled by racial capitalism and possessive individualism. Together with practices of support and solidarity, this commitment contributes to those resources that help us stick with the tensions and contradictions that emerge within practices of reusing and of being reused.

## Decolonial trans\*feminist practices of reuse

In common with many intersectional, trans\*feminist, queer and decolonial thinkers, movements and makers, CC2r starts from the premise that “first times do not exist” (thank you to that multiplicity of human and other-than-human actors and agents that are gathered under the name of [Cristina Rivera Garza → https://www.vanderbiltuniversitypress.com/9780826501219/the-restless-dead/](https://www.vanderbiltuniversitypress.com/9780826501219/the-restless-dead/)), that nobody ever arrives first at the scene (thank you similarly [Jennifer Hayashida → https://parsejournal.com/article/conversation-transcripts/#conversationwithjennifer](https://parsejournal.com/article/conversation-transcripts/#conversationwithjennifer)), that there has always been something and someone before. There is no *tabula rasa*. Authorial practice is always building upon existing work and has always (already) been collective. Originality is therefore a painful myth that we have been forced to apply again and again as institutions, creators, writers, collectives.

CC2r proposes to divert that energy towards a different narrative - one that celebrates the fact that when we create something we always relate to others. Images, words, ideas need to circulate in order to flourish; they thrive through iterative adaptations (thank you FLOSS) and lively disappropriations (thank you again Cristina Rivera Garza).

CC2r is a commitment to collectively figuring out how to consider authorial practice as a *making your own* rather than *owning* (thank you (Katherine McKittrick → <https://www.dukeupress.edu/dear-science-and-other-stories>)); and to collectively figuring out what is meant by “your” and by “owning”. It is an attempt to practice reuse based on intimacy and on building relationships rather than relying on transactional licences and contracts.

CC2r endeavours to take the implications of reuse into account. This requires the development of pedagogical tools, creative experiments, critical reflection, redistribution of financial resources and capacities for negotiating disagreements. It is a practice of solidarity and support trying to not replicate (consciously or unconsciously) the power asymmetries we wish to challenge and change.

# Pause: Reflecting on Reuse

Deciding whether to take on a commitment requires careful consideration. As a soft entering to CC2r, we invite you to pause and reflect on the idea of reuse and what it means to be a reuser in practice. Devoting some time and space to reflection helps to begin the continuous process of identifying the relation between the [principles \*see Glossary\*](#) that underpin this collective commitment to reuse and your own practice: How can CC2r become *critical, urgent, radical* and *transformatory* for your approach to cultural work? How can CC2r enable the kind of accountability that we rush towards with energetic joy? How can it be a reminder of the joy in our connections as opposed to instilling a sense of fear and punishment that can come from licences set up only to matter when notions of *who owns what* emerge?

To support you in this moment of reflection, we offer some exercises. You can engage with them on your own or together with others. We invite you to start with a warm up exercise called [Passing On → \*https://reuse.constantvzw.org/index.php?title=Passing\\_on\*](https://reuse.constantvzw.org/index.php?title=Passing_on). This exercise helps you to unpack the feelings you have towards your work and towards potential future reusers of it. Don't worry if certain things come up which make you uncomfortable, this is part of the process.

From there, you might wish to engage with [a set of questions → \*https://parsejournal.com/article/questions-no-answers/\*](https://parsejournal.com/article/questions-no-answers/). Take notes using pen and paper (or a shared online pad) and discuss them as you wish. Take as much time as you need, but try not to overthink (!).

You can also play the game [Rebeing: A practical exercise in psycholexicography → \*https://parsejournal.com/article/reuse-prompts/#rebeing\*](https://parsejournal.com/article/reuse-prompts/#rebeing). This exercise can help you to dwell on what 'use' actually means and the vast ways it can be interpreted and enacted.

Finished with your exercises and ready to commit?

# Commitments

The Collective Commitment to Reuse is about taking care of the conditions in which creations and knowledge exist, live, acquire attribution, inspire, and are shared, reused, reworked or integrated into new practices, released and made available to new and known reusers. The commitment comes in three parts:

## Building a relational practice (commitment i)

CC2r is a continuous practice that constitutes the ground from which to commit and act. Reuse does not exist as a fixed or abstract concept, but rather requires an ongoing and active engagement with the tensions that arise when it is practiced.

Reusers commit to:

-  building a web of generosity that triggers desires for the generation of further reuse - including of CC2r - and further communities of reuse, each operating at their own speeds and scales.
-  engaging with CC2r as developing practices of interdependency and relating.
-  embracing complexity and porosity by making space for tensions, contradictions and disagreements that might emerge - both within practices of reusing and being reused, and between communities of reuse. This includes not just the latter's different practices of reuse, but also the very relations between these communities, how these relations are perceived and understood (thank you (Mario Blaser and Marisol de La Cadena → <https://read.dukeupress.edu/books/book/2507/chapter/1248460/IntroductionPluriverse-Proposals-for-a-World-of>))).

*Note: This first commitment refers to communities of reuse because no single community can be intimate and build relationships with every potential collaborator everywhere. Such universality is not possible; nor is it desirable, for reasons that will be set out in relation to forgoing release and reuse (commitment iii). They include the danger of repeating a neo-colonial model of geopolitics which organises the world into centre and periphery in which those in the epistemological Global North are able to export their knowledge and present it as 'universal' while those in the epistemological Global South are not, as well as of collaborating only with those who have more or less the same values and worldviews.*

Certain communities may wish to forge relationships with others through a gathering, an exchange or event focused on reuse in the name of solidarity, diversity or pluriversality, collaboration and cocreation. Or they may want to expand their particular forms of community and interpretations of CC2r, perhaps with a view to generating sufficient critical mass to disrupt conventional systems of copyright, and eventually even attain a position of hegemonic dominance over them. But it is also conceivable that communities may choose to refuse invitations to connect and communicate, because in their specific context they see doing so as an **extractive** *see Glossary* practice. They might see it as a means of otherwise cancelling their differences, because they have concerns about who would benefit and who might face further exclusion or marginalization. They might also believe there is a risk that making such connections could reinforce, rather than challenge, the existing power imbalances and related asymmetries.

**Example:** Ideas expressed in a Tamazight language (an indigenous language in Morocco) being translated and published in the language of a European coloniser as a way of continuing to center speakers of English, Spanish, French, Portuguese, German or Italian.

Rather than aiming to develop a single, universal community bound by a single, universal document, such as CC2r, the first commitment is also about aspiring to have a diverse range of communities working on reuse practices, including CC2r itself.

## **Release and reuse generously (commitment ii)**

CC2r proposes to practice with courage the basic assumption that nobody can take hold of cultural practice as their exclusive possession.

Reusers commit to:

-  not claiming exclusive ownership over cultural practice, since it has always been already collective, while not giving up on the right to earn a living through one's labour.
-  exercising entangled and relational forms of authorship - through inclusive attribution, which, for example, acknowledges acknowledges and gives credit to the range of agents, people and sources that contributed to a work.
-  working against the violent settler colonial claim of originality, while tending carefully to valuing the labour of (marginalised) creatives facing the equally violent settler colonial appropriation of their work by corporations training genAI models, automating their labour and embodied and situated practices. These practices are collective and build upon the work of others, but also offer something specific to that particular moment and context that is more than reuse.

*Note: The second commitment is made at a moment in time when AI companies are using copyrighted cultural works without permission to train their generative models. In response to Google, Meta and governments pushing for AI-friendly copyright policies, many creative writers and performing arts leaders demand stronger regulatory protections. The 'solution' to what OpenAI, Stability AI and co. are doing, however, is not to take refuge in, or even strengthen, existing copyright law. That would be to continue to uphold a system that benefits a relatively small group of organizations and creatives to the disadvantage of nearly everyone else. The debate over such extractive appropriation and reuse isn't as simple as open vs closed, Big AI vs creatives, free vs monetised, piracy (both progressive and appropriative) vs tighter regulation. When it comes to creativity, authorship and ownership, CC2r is trying to move beyond such binaries - not least with its emphasis on forgoing release and reuse when it is extractive.*

## **Refraining from release and reuse (commitment iii)**

CC2r asks reusers to take the implications of reuse into account. This includes an awareness that the defaults of openness and transparency might have different consequences in different contexts. Openness cannot be understood as being universally good. Some occasions call for opacity and ask you to refrain from release or extractive reuse.

Reusers commit to:

-  asking who benefits from release and who may suffer the risk of being further excluded and marginalized; for example when materials, knowledges or traditions that belong and are meaningful to certain communities are used without these communities benefiting from the reuse.
-  making an effort to remain aware of power inequalities and the ways in which potential reuse would add to or ease such asymmetries, even if this will never be easy to gauge;
-  and, based on this analysis, refraining from release when reuse would constitute an extractive practice.

*Note: This third commitment takes into account, firstly, that much of the criticism directed at closed technologies such as proprietary software derives from the ideals and values of specifically Euro-Western counter-cultural movements (thank you [Payal Arora](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QwxIfAtAWKA) → <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QwxIfAtAWKA>). Secondly, some creatives, especially in the epistemological Global South, have neither the resources nor the time to be actively involved with the likes of open source and open data infrastructures, often seeing them as very white and cis-male spaces. Thirdly, openness can also easily be used as a means of appropriating knowledge and resources from those who need them for the benefit and further enrichment of those who are already powerful and well-off.*

In case of doubt, consult these [practice documents](https://parsejournal.com/article/practice-documents/) → <https://parsejournal.com/article/practice-documents/> to find an exciting set of diverse approaches to reuse.

# How to reuse CC2r?

CC2r is a provocation to put decolonial trans\*feminist tools into practice with others. To do so, CC2r proposes to make its three commitments to reuse (or not) part of the creative process, all along. The collective commitment to reuse does not make much sense when it is simply attached, as we're used to doing with licences, as a document at the last minute. Instead, it should be part of the mechanisms of building collective practices, setting up workflows and developing the content of works. As we said before, we do not know if it will work, but we want to try - with you.

## Reusing means...

In the context of CC2r, reuse can include (but is not limited to) getting inspiration from, quoting, attributing or referring to, making copies or a derivative work of, adapting, modifying, reperforming, making available, redistributing existing or collectively developed cultural practices. The kinds of reuse practices we need and want, acknowledge that creative practice is never outside of extraction, so it's about finding ways to practice in solidarity, with care and love. The kind of reuse we are NOT committed to, is the toxic and extractive recycling of lithium batteries in industrial plants, or Meta downloading the whole LibGen archive to train its models.

## Referencing what is being reused

CC2r invites us to experiment with generously referencing the reused material or common practice and the communities involved. Gathering references and names of a wide range of agents, people and sources that contributed to a work might be a pleasant compilation to make along the way. When applicable, mention names of reusers and, if possible, sites where to find other versions of the project and practice. Attention: CC2r might change the context or the outcome of the work!

## Legality and compatibility

Even if the thinking around CC2r started from copyleft and Free licences, this text is not written as a legal document. However, collectively committing to reuse means to detour the default assumptions of conventional copyright and this is important. With CC2r we make explicit how we want to commit to reuse. The trust relation that is formed makes law between us.

Protection of cultural practice, as we know from decades of copyright cases, is not a question of legal documents, but rather a question of having the power and resources to exert legal pressure. As a commitment, CC2r is first of all about building a space of trust in which others know that their practices are being taken care of because people are committed to doing so. We have to rely on each other for making decisions on how to build relations (i), and whether to reuse (ii) or not reuse (iii).

Unlike Free licences, CC2r does not follow the logic of copyright, where a licence is attached to a cultural work. Because of its different nature, CC2r does not replace Free licences so the question of compatibility is not to be understood in a legal sense. CC2r can of course be used alongside a Free licence. In that case, you simply mention the specific Free licence, plus add that the work is part of a practice that collectively commits to reuse.

## CC2r as an invitation

To show ongoing commitment to CC2r, and to invite others to do the same, you may want to include the document on your website or as an email signoff, have a printout displayed in your workspace, or take some time at the start of a new collaborative project to read it and go through the (exercises suggested above *see Pause: Reflecting on Reuse*). The shift from licence to conditions towards commitment is still fresh, so day-to-day ways to translate this document into practice are still being explored and invented. As such, you could think of CC2r as a meeting point, a node that brings together communities of reusers, who organise gatherings, exchanges and reflections around reuse.

You can reach out to other reusers that committed to CC2r via this (mailinglist → <https://lists.riseup.net/www/info/cc2r>), which is used as a space to collectively think, share, and practice reuse.

# CC2r in the making

CC2r is an ever-evolving node. Definite resolution is not our goal, committed and radical tinkering is.

In this document, ‘we’ refers to a group of individuals and collectives that are connected by mutual concerns, shared experiences and practices of technology, art and activism. We cross many genders, are differently racialised, include multiple generations and are not at all the same in terms of how we live oppression or access. We are based in different parts of the world (with a large amount living in the north of Fortress Europe), and most of us went through higher education. This ‘we’ emerged as a necessity after years of experience with Free and Open Source culture as decolonial trans\*feminist practitioners. Our ‘we’ is open, situated, demanding, and based on circles of mutual trust and community of thought, and a joyful acknowledgement of our different views and social positions.

CC2r started out as a revisited version of the [Collective Conditions for Reuse \(CC4r\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/) → <https://constantvzw.org/wefts/cc4r.en.html>, which was developed during the Constant worksession [Unbound Libraries](https://constantvzw.org/wefts/unboundlibraries.en.html) → <https://constantvzw.org/wefts/unboundlibraries.en.html> in 2020 and followed from the work done during the study day [Authors of the future](https://constantvzw.org/wefts/authorsofthefuture.en.html) → <https://constantvzw.org/wefts/authorsofthefuture.en.html>, in 2019. CC4r is inspired by other licensing projects such as the (Cooperative) Non-Violent Public Licence and the Decolonial Media Licence. CC2r diverts from CC4r by not imposing a specific set of conditions to which reusers must comply (without being a licence), but rather advocating for active engagement towards the concept of reuse and its consequences.

After four years in circulation CC4r was revisited in the worksession [Revisit Reuse](https://reuse.constantvzw.org/) → <https://reuse.constantvzw.org/> taking place in Brussels in May 2024. For Revisit Reuse, 19 prompts from a range of people invested in imaginaries and practices of reuse were invited to support the revisiting process.

The rethinking and rewriting of CC4r was carried out by a number of people from different backgrounds and fields who engaged with these prompts.

The draft version of CC2r emerged out of that process and has been collectively edited in five sessions in May 2025 into the version you are reading now. In the [process log](https://reuse.constantvzw.org/index.php?title=Process_log) → [https://reuse.constantvzw.org/index.php?title=Process\\_log](https://reuse.constantvzw.org/index.php?title=Process_log) you can find more info and context.

Both the gathering Revisit Reuse and the collective editing sessions were organised and funded as part of [Ecologies of Dissemination](https://parsejournal.com/journal/ecologies-of-dissemination) → <https://parsejournal.com/journal/ecologies-of-dissemination> supported by the Swedish Research Council and PARSE Journal.

You are invited to reformulate this commitment to reuse and make new versions under a different name. You can, of course, also make reproductions and distribute - that is, reuse - this document verbatim (without any changes). As noted above, we perpetually yearn for future reusers, and multiple communities of future reusers, to tinker with it and to form (potentially transformative) relationships.

## To Go Further

To revisit the prompts and cases that have shaped the collective process of writing CC2r, have a look at the forthcoming issue (Ecologies of Dissemination → <https://parsejournal.com/journal/#ecologies-of-dissemination>), *PARSE Journal*, Platform for Artistic Research Sweden (2025).

Find out about (Committing to decolonial feminist practices of reuse → [https://culturemachine.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/CM23\\_Snelting\\_Weinmayr\\_Reuse.pdf](https://culturemachine.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/CM23_Snelting_Weinmayr_Reuse.pdf)) and some of the reasonings behind CC2r in *Culture Machine* (2024).

You can find *Collective Conditions for Reuse* (CC4r) (2020) (here → <https://constantvzw.org/wefts/cc4r.en.html>) and can read about the context of CC4r in (Collectively Setting Conditions for Re-Use → <https://march.international/collectively-setting-conditions-for-re-use/>) in *March Magazine* (2020).

# Glossary

**CC4r** collective conditions for re-use (an attempt at proposing not-a-licence)

**CC2r** collective commitment to reuse (iterative practice of commitment)

**DECOLONIAL** Decolonial refers to the material practice of delinking from Euro-centric onto-epistemologies. Intellectual property law and conventional copyright are based on colonial logics of owning and possessing. They normalise individual authorship and the violent settler-colonial claim of originality. Both CC4r and CC2r stand in opposition to this normalisation. {decolonial}

**EXTRACTIVISM** the term was commonly used to describe the mechanism of exploitation by industrial capitalism of natural resources and biodiversity, particularly in the ongoing context of colonial expansion and exploitation. In the context of culture and knowledge production (what can be understood as cognitive colonial and racist platform capitalism), using the term extractivism acknowledges the expansion of raw materials and resources to artistic and intellectual production, and even to life itself. This can be reduced in its very essence to data understood as the\* new\* source of value for current capitalism. Intellectual work and other human activities are extracted for value production by a small number of platforms and institutions, who are not only making profit without sharing the revenue of their exploitation but who are also profiting from previous processes of extractivism and exploitation by the cultural industry. For that reason, CC2r asserts that extractivism is everywhere. The condition of extractivism depends on the symmetry or asymmetry of the exchange which includes context, power relations, economic and contractual links, scales, consent or lack thereof. Even if practised within a close community of values, reuse always has consequences.

**REUSE** CC4r opted to add the prefix “RE” to “USE” to disrupt and refuse the time-space linearity of the original, or originality. REUSE is thought of as a collective practice of non-linearity which operates through multiple pasts, presents and futures. CC2r continues its commitment to REUSE; the text is not meant for one moment, such as the point of release; it is something that accompanies a process.

**REUSER** refers to the person, collective, or other cultural entity involved in the practice of reproduction, distribution and transformation of cultural work.

**SITUATED** CC2r insists that knowledge should always be situated and that practising situatedness is not a universal practice but one that always requires contextual consideration. For similar reasons the CC2r also offers an alternative to “situated knowledge”, recognising that this term – much like those of “intersectionality” and “decoloniality” – has been detached from the particular contexts in which it originally held meaning, and has become a fashionable floating signifier in much of the current social science and humanities discourse. Just as openness should not be held as a universal principle, so the idea that knowledge should always be situated should itself always be situated and not applied universally.

**OPENNESS** Both CC4r and CC2r move away from universalist understandings of openness. Both acknowledge that universal openness is “safe” only for some privileged. Both account for power imbalances within the conditions of and commitment to creation.

**RADICAL TINKERING** a definition found in the Pirate Care book → <https://www.plutobooks.com/9780745349800/pirate-care/>. Annemarie Mol and her co-authors understand tinkering as a fundamental component of “good care” practices within and outside of institution, a mix of experimenting and improvising which has the capacity of “holding together that which does not necessarily hold together.”

**TRANS\*FEMINIST** “is a denomination which convokes all necessary intersectional and intrasectional aspects around that star (\*). In non-Anglo-Saxon cultures, it provides a more grounded notion than the English term “queer,” which usually remains untranslated. Siding with trans-gender struggles and against trans-exclusionary forces, the star provokes a halt for the reader, to start a conversation about the distribution of privileges and oppressions in which a specific situation or case is implicated (thank you Jack Halberstam for saying that). The star is a powerful element for thickening complexity in the diverse and mutating experiences of needily plural feminisms, walking side-by-side with anti-racism, anti-colonialism, anti-classism, anti-capitalism, anti-specism, anti-ableism, and anti-ageism.” (thank you Jane Prophet and Helen V. Pritchard → <https://www.bloomsburycollections.com/monograph?docid=b-9781350351042>)).

<https://cc2r.net>