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| **CDS Vic Excellence Award**This category celebrates schools using the Victoria’s Container Deposit Scheme (CDS Vic) to achieve sustainability goals. Through implementing CDS Vic at school, schools are encouraging creativity, innovation and leadership within their school and/or their local community. **Special eligibility: Schools entering this category must be signed up as a ‘donation partner’ with Victoria’s Container Deposit Scheme (CDS Vic) as well as be an active ResourceSmart School** |
| **Addressing the school’s sustainability goals:** Tell us how your school participated in Victoria’s Container Deposit Scheme (CDS Vic) and how it has supported your school to achieve its sustainability goals. **300words** |
| SAMPLE ENTRYAs the Eco Crew, we are responsible for driving sustainability initiatives in our school all year round. These initiatives range from anything between implementing composting in school, planting trees to building worm towers. To sustain these initiatives and execute more projects, we often require funds. We saw CDS Vic as not only as an opportunity for securing a steady source of income to fund our Eco Crew’s sustainability initiatives but also as a chance to educate our community on the benefits of recycling. To get started, we set up cardboard boxes as makeshift collection bins around the school campus to collect eligible drink containers. The bins had signage to help the school community know which drink containers were eligible. We also designed and put up posters around the campus to notify everyone of our participation and to encourage them to drop of eligible drink containers in the dedicated bins. The posters also highlighted the benefits of circular economy and recycling through CDS VicOur Eco Crew wrote an article in our school newsletter, explaining what the CDS is and how to use it which encouraged more families to get involved and to support the school via recycling their bottles. The CDS has opened a new way for families to support our school and for our Eco Crew to show leadership. Every Friday, volunteers of our Eco Crew then returned the collected drink containers at the nearest refund point to our school. In less than three months of our participation, we have collected $500 dollars that has helped us fund our sunflower beds for our next sustainability project.  |
| **Scoring criteria- see judging guide for details** |
| **1 Point** | **2 Points** | **3 Points** | **4 Points** |
| **Challenges and Innovations:** Tell us about any key challenges you experienced when implementing the scheme and the strategies you used to overcome them. Please highlight any innovation and creativity when explaining the strategies used. **300 words** |
| SAMPLE ENTRYOne of the key challenges when implementing CDS Vic in our school was the issue of bin contamination. Often when our Eco Crew were getting ready to take the collected drink containers to a refund point, we realised that the bins were contaminated with food waste or other types of containers that were not eligible for a 10-cent refund. While our Eco Crew manually sorted through bins to separate waste from eligible drink containers, we realised there was a need to educate our school community. To do this, we regularly used school assemblies as a forum for show and tell – demonstrating examples of eligible and ineligible drink containers. To make this engaging, our Eco Crew created a comedy skit and gave the characters names, the skit asked people to check for the 10c mark on the bottle before putting them in the CDS bin. The initial performance was successful in attracting attention to the cause. The skit inspired the campaign posters and subsequent ‘show and tell’ at school assemblies. Using the same characters to educate the school on CDS contamination issues. From trial and testing, we understood that boxes were not a great container to collect bottles and cans as it was much smaller than the bins, they were next to and placement was important. When the CDS Vic bin was next to yellow bin and red bin, people were less likely to dispose their rubbish or co-mingled waste in the CDS Vic bin. So, we made sure that every CDS Vic bin had clear signage and that it was placed next to the yellow bin and red bin in high foot traffic areas. After three weeks of implementing the solutions, we saw a clear difference in the contamination levels we received, making the return of drink containers easier for our Eco Crew.  |
| **Scoring criteria- see judging guide for details** |
| **1 Point** | **2 Points** | **3 Points** | **4 Points** |
| **Leadership:** Tell us how you have used CDS Vic to encourage or show leadership in your school and/or community. Please highlight examples. **300 words** |
| SAMPLE ENTRYBy implementing the CDS, our Eco Crew developed leadership skills within our school. The Eco Crew used data to design creative campaigns which involved presenting at school assemblies, and crafting posters, newsletter articles and placement of bins. Members of the Eco Crew oversaw bin audits, collecting the refund money, and working out how to spend the funds. The Eco Crew presented on the scheme at inter-school events and sustainability summits and used these events to collect drink containers and prompt other schools to use the CDS. These conversations fostered leadership skills within the Eco Crew, who were asked to give advice to other schools on what has worked, and the lessons they’ve learned in conducting a whole-school educational campaign. The school partnered with a local environmental organisation who conduct clean-up activities in our area. They donated eligible drink containers found during the clean-up. This further helped to boost the funds we were able to raise during the scheme. The funds raised by use of the CDS has empowered us to take on more sustainability initiatives such as our school garden. Due to the amount of money raised in the last year, we have been able to build new garden beds and plant sunflowers. We hope that our garden will continue to expand, and with it our school’s biodiversity score, and an increase of educational offerings in the garden.We often use social media to promote our work on the CDS and how these funds are helping us to improve our school garden and biodiversity score. One of our recent posts about our $500 milestone and the building of our sunflower beds was reshared by our local council and received over 50 interactions.  |
| **Scoring criteria- see judging guide for details** |
| **1 Point** | **2 Points** | **3 Points** | **4 Points** |
| **Summary of Impact:** In 50 words or less, please summarize the impact of CDS Vic on your school. Please submit at least ONE media ready photography with signed consent form/s. |
| **SAMPLE ENTRY** Participating in CDS Vic has helped our school raise important funds to undertake more sustainable initiatives throughout the year. It has inspired our community to recycle more consciously and prompted them to consider their role in the circular economy by considering what happens to things we purchase and their reuse.  |
| **1 Point**COMPLETE ENTRY with photo and consent form |  No **Points**INCOMPLETE ENTRY- either consent form or media ready photo not submitted |