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| **Campus Infrastructure and Operations School of the Year**  This category celebrates schools that have been making significant improvements to their school campus through infrastructure improvements or changes to everyday operations and processes. Informed by data and research, best practice schools work together with their school community and beyond the school gate to achieve their sustainability goals.  *Please note: this sample entry was inspired by several entries submitted by different schools. The examples here showcase the wide range of sustainability initiatives being undertaken by schools* | | | |
| **Question 1- Scope of Improvements:** Tell us about the environmental sustainability improvements your school has made to your campus infrastructure and/or school operations. E.g. How the project came about? What did you do? Who was involved? Etc. **300 words** | | | |
| *SAMPLE ENTRY*  This year our school focused on the infrastructure and operations of the school canteen.  Through collaboration with the student body, school council, canteen staff and waste contractors, we have reduced the amount of energy and water used by the canteen and the amount of waste going to landfill by nearly 75%.  Resource audits in the canteen showed some areas needed upgrades, we started with fixing leaking pipes and installing low flow taps to conserve water.  We installed a water bottle drink tap out the front of the canteen with the same low-flow features.  The decision to upgrade our dishwasher to a higher energy and water rating has also made an impact on our billing data.  (The old dishwasher was bought by a parent and is having a second life in a family home!)  The lighting was replaced by LED down lights with motion sensors so that extra power isn’t used if someone has forgotten to turn off the lights.  The hot water service was replaced by a solar water heater, and panels were installed on the top of the canteen.  Most significantly, the amount of waste going to landfill has reduced by 75%.   The waste coming from the canteen has been reduce and there is a is transition from highly processed foods to including more supplies from a local farm. The canteen manager is training parent volunteers who assist in creating some more lunch items for the students including salads and soups. Students eat their lunch out of a bowl, and this is brought back and washed by the volunteers.  In cases where packaging can’t be avoided, the student action team have launched a campaign ‘Small Acts, Big Impact’ with great bin signage helping our school community to know which bin our waste goes in. | | | |
| **Scoring rubric- see judging guide for details** | | | |
| **1 Point** | **2 Points** | **3 Points** | **4 Points** |
| **Question 2- Use of Data or Research:** Tell us how data and/or research was used to inform these changes. e.g. did you use audits, research, surveys etc.?  **300 words** | | | |
| SAMPLE ENTRY  Our first data set came from a February waste audit which showed us that majority of the items in our bins were coming from the school canteen. A lot of these items, such as tetra packs and soft plastic wraps couldn’t be recycled.  The student action team planned to reduce our waste to landfill, and it was clear the focus should be on the school canteen.  When it came to the water and energy audits, students paid careful attention to the infrastructure in the canteen.  They noticed that a lot of the appliances were old and could be replaced by other appliances with higher ratings which might have an impact on energy and water.  On the energy bill, it was identified that the gas water heater was extremely expensive to run.  The student action team presented to school council that getting a solar water heater would be a worthwhile investment.   They also recommended having a plumber inspect the pipes, fix the leaks and to suggest options for water saving taps.  Since 2024, whole school energy bills are down by 20% and the water bills have been reduced by 15% respectively as a result of the changes in the canteen.  When teaching the Year 9 geography coursework on ‘Biomes and Food Security’, staff organised some local farmers to speak to students about supply chains.  One of the speakers, Gail, expressed an interest in supplying the canteen with local produce. With research suggesting a negative correlation between highly processed foods and mental health, the school council supported the change.  We completed a waste audit again at the start of term 4 and had a reduction in landfill volume by 75%. The increase in signage and knowledge about what goes where as well as the changes to the menu are showing that the efforts of the student team this year have been worthwhile. | | | |
| **Scoring rubric- see judging guide for details** | | | |
| **1 Point** | **2 Points** | **3 Points** | **4 Points** |
| **Question 3- Impact of Working Together:** Tell us about how the school has worked with the student body and/or the broader community on these campus infrastructure and school operations improvements. Please highlight the impact of working together. **300 words** | | | |
| SAMPLE ENTRY   The success of the canteen project is the result of solid collaboration between students, staff, parents and school council.   The students conducted audits, researched alternatives and made recommendations to school council.  School council employed local plumbers and electricians to upgrade the infrastructure.  Staff helped by including some links in the curriculum, which in turn brought about a change to the food systems promoted via the school canteen.   These partnerships included Gail who owns a local farm and Emma a council waste officer who talked to the students about how waste is processed at the nearby transfer station. These experiences combined with the data from the resource audits convinced the student body that Changes to the canteen infrastructure and food sources was a great way to reduce waste.  Our canteen model has promoted our school as a leader in sustainability and healthy menu.  Our ResourceSmart School Facilitator invited us to talk about our canteen project with other schools, via hosting canteen tours on Teacher Environment Network days and applying for grants and awards programs.  Our school was featured in the media promotion for a statewide food festival for children.  The amount of waste, energy and water our school has saved through this project is often a feature on our school’s social media channels.  Furthermore, the parent volunteer model has helped to embed the school in the heart of the local community.  Parents meet each other through volunteering in the canteen. | | | |
| **Scoring rubric- see judging guide for details** | | | |
| **1 Point** | **2 Points** | **3 Points** | **4 Points** |
| **Summary of Impact:** In 50 words or less, please summarise how the improvements made to your infrastructure or school operations have impacted your school in their sustainability goals.  Please submit at least ONE media ready photography with signed consent form/s. | | | |
| SAMPLE ENTRY  We have made significant improvements to our school canteen. Investing in appliance upgrades have reduced our energy and water bills. The commitment to increasing fresh food and a focus on improving our waste management has helped to reduce waste to landfill fees. | | | |
| **Scoring rubric- see judging guide for details** | | | |
| **1 Point**  COMPLETE ENTRY with photo and consent form | | **No Points**  INCOMPLETE ENTRY Either consent form or media ready photo not submitted | |