**Waste 2024 Conference Abstract Submission**

**(for face-to-face Conference which includes live broadcast)**

*Small Acts, Big Impact:* Engaging communities in the circular economy

*My presentation is relevant to the following topic area(s).*

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| ☐ | **Aboriginal community waste management** (projects, results, planning, what else to be done) | ☐ | **National waste policies & programs** (new schemes, opportunities & recent results) |
| ☐ | **CDS** (new schemes, new containers, innovations) | ☐ | **Organics** (food only vs FOGO, implementation strategies, new services) |
| ✓ | **Circular economy** (case studies, right to repair, trials, new materials targeted) | ☐ | **Plastics** (plastics recycling, plastics recovery schemes, small and large scale plastics projects) |
| ☐ | **Climate change** (new innovations, strategies & policies) | ☐ | **Problem & hazardous waste** (asbestos, clinical & medical, illegally dumped hazardous waste, systems for managing hazardous materials) |
| ☐ | **Collections** (innovations, new systems, vehicles, challenges) | ☐ | **Procurement** (recent process developments, case studies, planning) |
| ☐ | **Disaster waste management** (bushfires, floods, pandemic) | ☐ | **Project Planning** (projects currently planned, challenges and barriers, planning controls and conditions, project management) |
| ☐ | **Economics** (business cases, data gathering, planning for financial impacts, reviews & analyses) | ☐ | **Product stewardship & extended producer responsibility** (current & planned schemes, new materials to be captured by schemes, local schemes for recovery) |
| ✓ | **Education** (behaviour change, community engagement, social media, planning FOGO education) | ☐ | **Recycling & resource recovery** (post China Sword, and export bans, market insights & updates) |
| ☐ | **Energy from Waste** (projects, case studies) | ☐ | **Regional issues** (regional responses to waste settings, collaboration, joint projects) |
| ✓ | **Grants** (major waste grants, outcomes & processes) | ☐ | **Social enterprise** (new entrants, recent endeavours, case studies) |
| ☐ | **Infrastructure & planning** (FOGO capacity, new material recovery planning) | ✓ | **State based issues** (policies, strategies, responses & challenges, border transitions) |
| ☐ | **Innovative projects** (sustainability innovations, artificial intelligence, case studies) | ☐ | **Strategic waste planning & policy** (stakeholder engagement, strategy development, waste policy impacts and opportunities) |
| ☐ | **Landfill & facility management** (facility operations management, strategic planning, facility budgeting) | ☐ | **Technology** (innovations, must haves, how technology will improve or assist with waste responsibilities, AI) |
| ☐ | **Legislation, regulations & levies** (major updates, monitoring & enforcement, response to changes in regulations) | ☐ | **Tenders & contracts** (planning, implementation, contract management, innovations, systems & approaches) |
| ☐ | **Litter & illegal dumping** (prevention, new management systems & innovative & smart initiatives, surveillance) | ☐ | **Waste projects** (planned waste infrastructure, how to plan & scope, budgeting, understanding what is required, governance & process planning, case studies) |
|  |  | ☐ | **Other** |

☐ **Proposed Panel Discussion** -Proposed topic & participants suitable for key issues that may be addressed by a Panel of presenters. For this category suggest your topic & who you will arrange to attend and present (maximum of 5 panel members).

**Presenter information**

**Presenter name:** Rayna Mishra

**Presenter position:** Team Leader – Outreach and Activation

**Presenter organisation:** Sustainability Victoria

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**Presenter phone number:** 03 8626 8858

**Biography**

Rayna has worked to engage and educate communities for over a decade. She has led on strategic communications for road projects as well national consumer rights campaigns, finding ways to engage audiences and tell them what they need to know, in the way they want to hear it. Her passion for social good and the natural environment has intersected with her degrees in Journalism and Psychology – she currently leads engagement and outreach for Victoria’s circular economy education and behaviour change campaign at Sustainability Victoria.

**Abstract Summary**

State and local governments and industry alike share the challenge of helping the public adapt to significant changes in recycling systems and towards more sustainable behaviours that will drive a circular economy. Sustainability Victoria’s *Small Acts, Big Impact* campaign provides a framework for delivering consistent messaging at all levels and across circular economy topics. After its first three years it has achieved significant results, with promising signs for helping bring the community along towards a circular economy.

**Abstract**

Since the launch of the *Recycling Victoria: A New Economy* policy in 2019, Sustainability Victoria (SV) has worked closely with Victorian councils and industry to engage and educate the Victorian community as a new 4-stream kerbside recycling system is rolled out.

Helping the Victorian public adapt to the most significant changes to kerbside waste and recycling systems in a generation has thrown up many challenges – multiple new behaviours needed, changes in accepted items, persistent and newly emerging contaminants and multiple major changes being rolled out progressively and differently across 80+ councils and alpine resorts over the span of 10 years. All this whilst seeking to establish strong foundations for the circular economy that Victoria, and Australia, aims to become.

To respond to this challenge, SV launched the *Small Acts, Big Impact* campaign – a behavioural insights-led campaign framework that can communicate circular economy topics and be delivered by all parties – the Victorian Government, Victorian councils, industry and community organisations – over the coming decade.

To date, the campaign has covered topics including new glass and food and garden organics kerbside and drop-off streams, contamination reduction, food and plastic waste minimisation, drop-off recycling of e-waste and batteries and over time will expand to other circular economy topics for households and businesses. Topics that previously would have been covered by multiple separate campaigns, delivered by multiple organisations, can now be addressed by the one campaign, enabling greater cut-through to the public.

So far, the campaign has included state-wide advertising and promotions, a tailored multicultural strategy and 3000+ fully editable campaign materials for councils and other organisations to use.

Creating consistency in waste, recycling and circular economy communications is a persistent challenge with multiple jurisdictions and parties involved however having a modular and adaptable campaign has meant over 80% of Victorian councils have now committed to use the *Small Acts, Big Impact* campaign in their local area supported by our Circular Economy Household Education Fund.

The campaign messaging that Victorians see on their TVs and in their local newspaper is the same as they receive in the mail from their council and see at their local transfer station.

A survey of over 200 residents from one council that recently started a glass kerbside service said the materials were “Easy to understand” (82%), “Providing all the information required” (80%) and “Relevant to people like me” (77%).

At the statewide level, the campaign has targeted issues relevant across all councils, such as reducing bagged recycling contamination. After seeing ad campaigns in 2022 and 2023, over 150,000 Victorians put their recycling in the bin loose for the first time – enabling 150,000 bags of recycling to be reprocessed into recycled products instead of going to landfill. As a repeat behaviour, every time that happens, 104 tonnes of recycling is kept out of landfill and 134 tonnes of Co2 emissions are abated.

As well as driving behaviour change, the campaign has changed minds and attitudes – in 2023, those who saw the campaign are more aware of changes happening to the recycling system (68% vs 42%) and more supportive of the upcoming changes (71% vs 59%).

This illustrates the enormous opportunity a consistent, holistic campaign like *Small Acts, Big Impact* has to support the community on its journey to a circular economy.