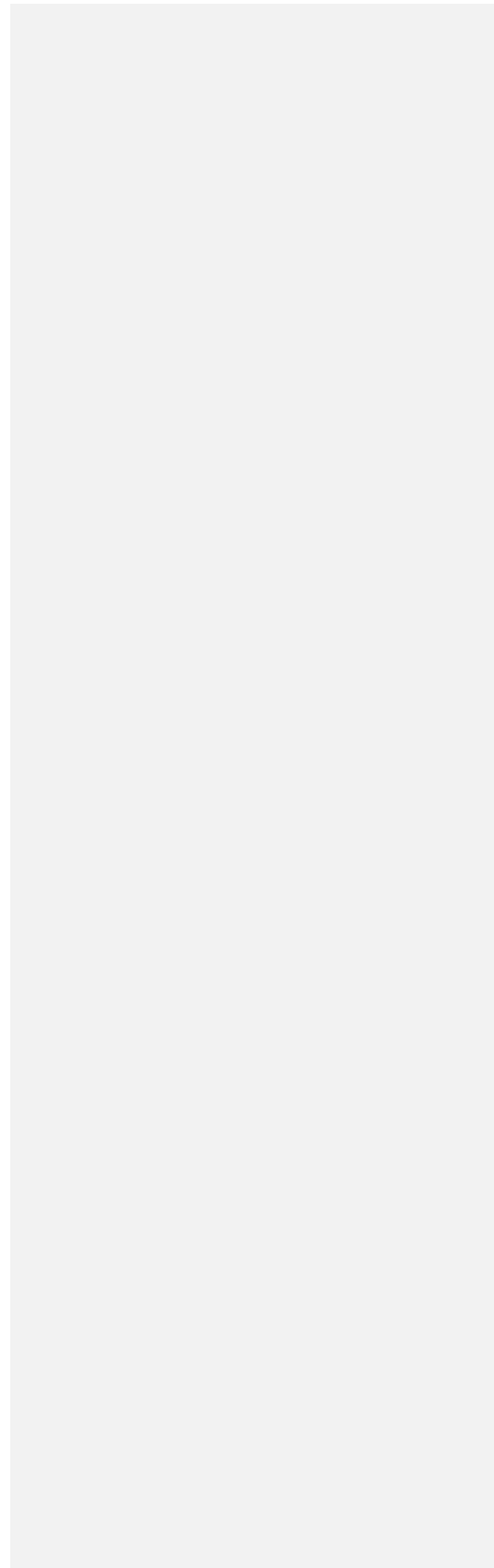




# ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23

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## Vision & Mission

Zero Waste Victoria's mission is to empower Victorians to downsize their waste through everyday choices, while advocating for meaningful change. We shift mindsets, facilitate action and spotlight solutions to reduce waste. Our impact is to amplify the community voice and connect people, inspiring and enabling them to reach their zero waste goals.

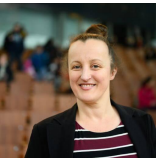
**Commented [1]:** I know this has been copied for the website/official docs but it feels a bit wordy and repetitive to me. Would be good to look at updating - I think another strategic meeting is needed!

**Commented [2R1]:** We talked about mission/vision in the last one (that wasn't related to Free the Fruit) but never got around to making any changes

**Commented [3R1]:** this is true - lets put this on the agenda for early next year..

# Our Team

## Management Committee 2023



President Kirsty Bishop-Fox



Vice President Petra Staiger



Secretary Serena Jackel



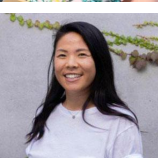
Treasurer Tamara Russell



General Member Kirsteen Macleod



General Member Katrina Naish



General Member MJ Li

## President's Report

The past year has been a time of regrouping and defining direction for ZWV. We gained 4 new committee members at the last AGM, which has helped to give clarity and shape action pathways moving forward.

This time last year, an announcement was made that soft plastics collection was going to be paused. This gained significant media attention, which in many ways was good because it created awareness around the issues of soft plastics. But on the other hand it was out of proportion because about 6% of soft plastics were collected by RECycle, or other agencies, so the significant majority of soft plastics were still going to landfill. Yet the media sensationalised this and focused on everything except the root cause.

This situation also highlighted a level of complacency within some of the zero waste community, because when people dropped off their soft plastics, they felt good about it. We had members, supporters and the general public express frustration and even devastation over this. The suspension of soft plastic collection spotlighted that waste avoidance wasn't always considered in instances where it could have been.

We need manufacturers, retailers, the packaging industry and government to take accountability and be transparent by acknowledging that soft plastic is problematic and to admit that we need to look for solutions to reduce the amount of plastic that is created and used. Soft plastic packaging doesn't become plastic bags again; it may be remanufactured into something else like park benches, bollards, shopping trolleys or road bases. But this has limited application.

Currently there are trials of pyrolysis which turn the plastics into an oil which can be used to make more plastic. It is marketed as the solution of managing plastic waste. But pyrolysis needs high temperatures, which requires high energy input, and pyrolysis is not emissions free. So it's not without an environmental cost, and we need to remember that at this stage, it is only a trial.

The first priority needs to be around the overall reduction of plastic, where unnecessary and avoidable plastics can be phased out. We need for everyone to switch from single-use to avoid or reuse, wherever they practically can.

The soft plastics highlight systemic problems as most of the burden falls onto consumers to refuse and avoid plastics and waste, but this has limitations. Businesses and government need to do better, as there is still no real incentive to reduce the use of single-use plastic. We urgently need to change the way plastics are used so that avoidable waste is not created in the first place.

With input from our members and the community, Zero Waste Victoria has focused on education and advocacy to empower people to ditch single-use produce bags.

Single-use plastic produce bags are a small but significant form of waste that can be easily avoided if we choose not to use them. Our aim is to encourage Victorians to avoid single-use produce bags by:

- Showcasing alternatives to single-use produce bags in
- Reinforcing the problem with single-use packaging
- Normalising environmentally-friendly actions

We piloted the Reuse instead campaign, which was subsequently named "Free the Fruit", at Queen Vic Market, distributing reusable produce bags made by Second Stitch. We also taught people how to make their own produce bags by hand with reclaimed materials. We continued these activities at Pentridge Shopping centre, Caulfield community market, Mulgrave community market.

As for other areas in waste, food waste is a serious global problem and Australia is no exception. We collaborated with students from Swinburne Uni who prepared a report investigating what was being done to tackle food waste in Australia and internationally.

Research has shown that Australians are confused by the date labelling system which leads to a significant amount of food being wasted. In addition to the environmental impacts of food waste, we are in a time when the cost of living is increasing and food insecurity is becoming a reality for many. We need to reduce avoidable food waste as a high priority. An outcome which would make a significant difference is to change the date stamp system to avoid confusion. This could be a powerful campaign if we collaborate with food rescue groups, universities and others who have an interest in reducing food waste from local through to a national level.

Our year started off with an opportunity to collaborate with Nina Gbor from Clothes Swap & Style to organise a clothes swap, to be featured on ABC's War on Waste. We collaborated with Central Ringwood Community Centre and Maroondah Council to make this event happen. The event was supported by 30 volunteers, with over 150 people attending.

On average, people brought 5 items and took 4 items. An estimated 10% of items were brand new, barely worn or designer labels. Surplus clothes were kept by Central Ringwood Community Centre (CRCC) for another clothes swap at their Sustainability Fair, held later in March.

Special thanks goes to Serena Jackel who was instrumental in coordinating the volunteers to support this event, and Jess Ness from CRCC who was also a major support.

We'd like to express gratitude to Fed Square who offered us the use of the venue for the second year and special thanks to Sustainability Victoria for supporting the festival.

I'd also like to acknowledge Serena Jackel for volunteer coordination, MJ Li for social and promotions and Tamara Russell who organised the repair and mending activations. Katrina Naish for supporting the fashion panel discussion and kids activities. They all gave a significant amount of time as a voluntary contribution along with myself for the programming. A special thanks to Kate Luckins who came on as a panel moderator and facilitated a food waste discussion panel. Thanks also to John Macliver who was employed to support the festival administration and operations.

Of course a very big thanks goes to all the speakers, exhibitors, volunteers, repairers and participants who came together to make the event an informative and inspirational day.

As for our wonderful committee, I'd like to acknowledge Tamara Russell who has been involved with Zero Waste Victoria since 2019. She participated in the Zero Waste Festival at St Kilda Town Hall as a volunteer. She joined the online festival planning team in 2020. Later that year, at our 2<sup>nd</sup> AGM she joined the committee and became treasurer in September 2021. She took great delight in coordinating the repair café at our festival and popup events, as well as taking the lead on teaching the community how to make produce bags from reclaimed fabric. Her contribution has been significant and I'd like to acknowledge her support and contribution to Zero Waste Victoria over the past 5 years; it has been greatly appreciated.

I'd also like to thank Katrina Naish who has been on the committee for 12 months. She has been involved with the festival for the last 2 years, as a panel moderator and has also

supported the festival with coordinating activations, panel discussions and childrens activities. She will focus just on the festival, moving forwards.

While acknowledging past committee members, I'd also like to acknowledge our current and continuing committee members. Petra Staiger who came on board in the role of Vice-President and has been a strong supporter of our activations, especially Free the Fruit. MJ for support with social media and communications and a significant festival contributor. Serena Jackel who took the lead on our clothes swap and supports us greatly with administration, socials and promotions, festival and volunteer coordination and many of the random things needed to support smooth operations. Kirsteen Macleod who always is a great sounding board and big supporter as a whole.

Moving forwards, we're looking forward to continuing building Zero Waste Victoria from the grass roots up to advocate, inform and influence legislation change to remove avoidable food waste and single-use plastics. As well as educating and empowering the community to take personal action to reduce their own waste.

## Treasurer's Report

This year Zero Waste Victoria again received an offer from Fed Square to hold our 2023 Zero Waste Victoria Festival in the Atrium and The Edge theater. The Festival was held on Saturday 2 September with speakers, kids activities, exhibitors, a clothes swap, a repair cafe and mending circle. It was a fantastic day and even the weather was great.

The festival was well attended with an estimated 2000 people attending. The Festival raised \$4999 in sponsorship, \$8253.67 in stallholder fees and \$1341.97 in donations which along with many hours put in by the Festival Committee. The Festival ran at a loss of \$1,344.97.

This financial year we have had regular donations through our GiveNow platform and yearly memberships. Our September membership drive was very successful taking us to the 50 member requirement for DGR status.

Tamara Russell

*Treasurer*

<b>ZERO WASTE VICTORIA</b>		
<b>Financial Statement for the period ended 30 June 2022</b>		
<b>Income</b>		
	Reuse Instead & Information stall	\$1,550.00
	Festival Clothes Swap	\$605.00
	Festival Stalls & Sponsor Fees	\$11,065.00
	Grants / Event Funding	\$800.00
	Donations	\$2,366.71
	Memberships/Donations	\$760.85
	Interest Received	\$155.00
	<b>Total Income for the Period</b>	<b>\$17,302.56</b>
<b>Less Expenses</b>		
	Festival Fees	\$7,873.64
	Festival Workshop Presenters	\$450.00
	Workshop Costs	\$9,977.66
	Insurance	\$1,110.00
	Internet Fees - Domian, Hosting, Zoom & SendInBlue	\$891.67
	Wages & Superannuation	\$8,828.29
	Recruitment Fees	\$154.00
	Miscellaneous	\$3,612.32
	Training/Industry seminars	\$0.00
	<b>Total Expenses for the Period</b>	<b>\$32,897.58</b>
<b>Surplus/Deficit for the Year</b>		<b>-\$15,595.02</b>
Bank Balance at 30 June 2022	\$24,618.03	
Donations Bank Balance at 30 June 2022	\$11,869.45	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$36,487.48</b>	
Bank Balance at 30 June 2023	\$6,583.81	
Donations Bank Balance at 30 June 2023	\$13,964.34	
Community Access Debit Card balance at 30 June 2023	\$418.86	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$20,548.15</b>	
<b>Treasurer Comments:</b>		
This financial year we received no new grants but did receive a contribution to running a clothes swap as part of the War on Waste programming. We also received payments for holding our Reuse Instead activations. The 2022 festival took place in Fed Square with them as partners for their Sustainable September programming. Without a grant to assist and with a great deal of volunteer time we managed to run a very successful Festival while only making a loss of \$2235.83 which included staff costs.		

For the current financial year to 30 September 2023:

Income - \$17,646.99

Expenditure - \$14,347.85

Income has been through the Festival, donations and memberships. Our expenditure has been Festival outgoings.

## Highlights



## Zero Waste Festival 2023



The Zero Waste Festival took place on Saturday 2 September at Fed Square in the Atrium and The Edge.

The Zero Waste festival's aim is to reconnect the community and provide festival goers with inspiration to rethink waste. The day was jam packed with panel sessions in The Edge with topics aiming to empower, share stories and information about reducing waste and shifting towards a circular economy.

10.00 am – Can we recycle our way out of it?

11:30 am – Confronting the Fashion Waste Crisis

12:30 pm – Reducing waste as a climate action

2:00 pm – Fixing a forked food system

3:00 pm – Community Innovation in the Circular Economy

4.00 pm – Zero Waste Solution: Your Containers, Your Rights, Your Planet

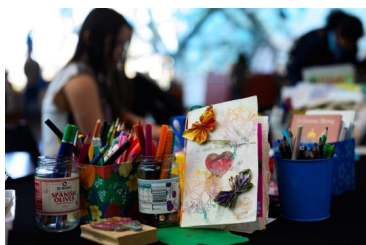
4:30 pm The Endangered Generation (Film screening, followed by a Q&A)



## Zero Waste Festival Activities



We hosted a Clothes Swaps, along with a Repair Café with the menders from St Kilda Repair Café and Brunswick Tool Library combining their skills to repair a great variety of items. We also held a Mending Circle with the theme 'Stitch It, Don't Ditch It'. We had some fantastic volunteers come together to help festival goers repair their clothes.



### **Clothes Swap**

Bring along up to 5 items of your top quality unwanted clothes shoes, clothes or accessories in great condition to add to the swap collection pool. Then go shopping and refresh your wardrobe.

### **Repair café – with volunteers from St Kilda Repair Café and Brunswick Tool Library**

Have something that needs repair? Don't throw it out! From small electricals, children's toys, bikes and more. Come along to have skilled volunteers repair your items! Please make sure your items are clean/hygienic.

### **Mending Circle – 'Stitch it, Don't Ditch it' – With an amazing group of volunteers**

Come along to our mending circle and learn how easy mending is to do yourself. Menders will be there repairing their items to show you how to make simple repairs. Bring anything that needs a stitch such as clothing, textiles or toys and learn how to mend them. Please make sure your items are clean/hygienic.

### **Reclaimed Football Workshop**

Join the kids and have fun making an indoor, soft football with reclaimed fabrics. Teach the little ones the basics of stitching on their own soft football to kick around at home!

### **DIY Celebration Cards**

Get the kids involved in a DIY Card for Dad for Father's Day. Why not reuse bits and bobs to make a crazy card for dad!

### Recycling Centre

Many items are recyclable, as long as they are collected and processed separately. Recycle your hard-to-recycle items with our dedicated Recycling Centre!



### Reuse Instead Activations



We have run activations encouraging people to make their own reusable produce bags. This project encourages the local community to reduce unnecessary plastic by switching out plastic produce bags with reusable fabric bags, similar to the way we already reuse our shopping bags.

A cost-effective way to reduce single-use plastic is to avoid unnecessary use of it. A simple switch people can make to reduce soft plastics is to use reusable produce bags with loose fruit and vegetables. The Reuse Instead campaign was piloted at Queen Vic Markets and Pentridge Shopping Centre with a positive response. We have also worked with Maroondah, Monash and Whitehorse City Councils.

## Shifting to Zero Waste workshops



**Shifting to Zero Waste Workshops**

- DIY Plastic free produce bags
- Mend your clothes
- Creative ways to reduce food waste
- Cooking up compost

**Free Sustainable Living workshops**



Throughout June we held a series of workshops which are being funded by a grant from Yarra Ranges Council

The workshops covered topics including food waste, composting, clothing repair, zero waste kids cooking and bicycle maintenance.

## Clothes Swap



Zero Waste Victoria, worked with Clothes Swap & Style, Central Ringwood Community Centre and Maroondah Council hold a clothes swap for fashionistas who love great clothes but hate fashion waste.

The clothes swap was extra special as it was filmed as part of ABC's War on Waste. The event also had a team of upcycling sewers on hand for simple clothing alterations.

## Mend It, Fix it @ Fed Square



As part of the Sustainable Living Festival 2023 in February 2023 we held a '*Mendit, Fixit*' session in The Atrium, Fed Square on Saturday 25 February where people could bring along items that are in need of repair.

Following the great success of our event as part of the Zero Waste Festival held in September 2022, we again had a Repair Café and Mending Circle showing how mending items is a great activity to undertake. The theme will be '*Stitch It, Don't Ditch It*' following the success of events around the globe.

## Acknowledgements

### Our Sponsors



### Festival 2023 Team

- Lauren Arthur
- Kirsty Bishop-Fox
- Tamara Russell
- MJ Li
- Serena Jackel
- John Mavliver
- Katrina Naish

### Festival 2023 Speakers

- Bill Verhagen
- Elisha Nettleton
- Dr Deborah Lau
- Scott Douglas
- Erin Quin
- Sarah Knop
- Roxy Uzureau Zhu
- Renee Robbins
- Joanne Rockwell
- Alice Zaslavsky
- Tamara DiMattina
- Tish King
- Simone Carson
- Antony DiMase

- Dr Kate Luckins
- Anna Matilda
- Jade Miles
- Belinda Goldman
- Tobie Puttock
- Candyce Presland
- Professor Usha Iyer-Raniga
- Vanessa Nitsos Chan
- Paul Bird
- Jean Darling
- Dr Rebekah Henry
- John Bradley
- Mahla Bird
- Bianca Cottle
- Kirsty Bishop-Fox