



ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24

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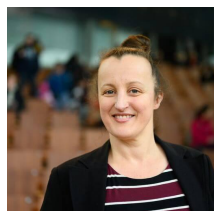
Vision & Mission

We **envision** a future where everyone uses the planet's resources responsibly and together we minimise waste.

Our **mission** is to catalyse change among communities, businesses and governments to make responsible resource use and waste avoidance a part of everyday life.

Our Team

Management Committee 2024



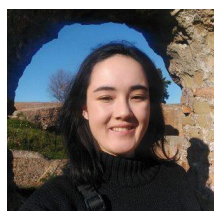
President

Kirsty Bishop-Fox



Vice President

Petra Staiger



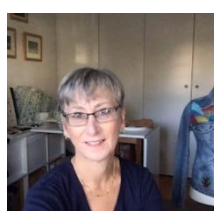
Secretary

Serena Jackel



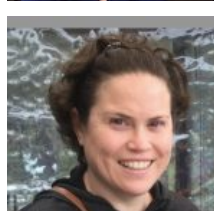
Treasurer – 1 January – 31 August 2024

MJ Li



Treasurer – 1 September – 31 December 2024

Tamara Russell



General Member

Kirsteen Macleod

General Member

Chelsea Hayes

General Member

Zippi Bryan

President's Report

This past year has been one of reconsolidation and renewed focus for Zero Waste Victoria. As we gather for our 6th AGM, we find ourselves in a unique position as we continue to adapt to the changes brought about by the lockdown period. While restrictions helped expand our online audience, we faced the challenge of re-establishing in-person engagement and habits around sustainability. Increased plastic packaging, a surge in online shopping, and diminished reusable habits have created fresh challenges, reminding us why our mission is more crucial than ever.

A defining ongoing issue this year has been the ongoing crisis surrounding the cessation of soft plastics recycling. When the suspension of soft plastics collections was announced in 2022, it brought heightened media attention and a widespread expectation that a quick solution would follow. Though trials are underway, a long-term strategy remains elusive. The reality is that single-use plastics, such as soft plastic bags, are not recycled into new bags. There are limited applications for the recycled medium, like park benches or roads and there are limited end markets and insufficient demand for these materials. The overuse of these ineffectively-recycled materials highlights the need to prioritise plastic reduction, avoiding these products wherever possible.

This crisis spotlights the deeper issue: manufacturers produce single-use plastics without taking responsibility for their end-of-life impact. This emphasises the importance of following the waste hierarchy: avoid, minimise, reuse, and only then consider recycling. Our advocacy at ZWV is committed to promoting true sustainability with circularity, focusing on systems of reuse and refill over merely just recycling.

As we stated in last year's report, we urgently need manufacturers, retailers, and policymakers to take responsibility, be transparent, and reduce plastic production. Our *Free the Fruit* campaign aligns with this goal, advocating for the reduction of single-use produce bags and promoting sustainable reuse or avoidance alternatives.

In launching *Free the Fruit*, we recognised the importance of research to deepen our impact. Through community focused behaviour change sessions with Sustainability Victoria, we had an aha moment in understanding the factors that drive consumers choices in fresh produce shopping. This data will inform our campaign and may support future funding opportunities. We began collecting survey data at the recent Zero Waste Festival and aim to broaden this research by collaborating with Victorian councils and other organisations.

Our Zero Waste social media broadcasts have also taken off, with Halloween as our first theme, where we highlighted the waste and actions we can take. We'll continue with Christmas and, in 2025, showcase voices and projects in the zero-waste space. This initiative extends our reach beyond the festival and gives a platform to speakers and stories that we may not have room for in our festival program.

On the advocacy front, we're pushing for an extended producer responsibility scheme for packaging, with consultations with the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment, and Water (DCCEE). We're also making a submission to the Productivity Commission's Inquiry into opportunities in Australia's circular economy, urging that we focus on strategies and economic modelling that prioritises avoiding, minimising, reusing, and repairing before recycling. This work seeks to hold manufacturers and retailers accountable, urging a shift to a life-cycle approach that includes repair and reuse.

Our festival this year would not have been possible without generous support. Special thanks to Fed Square for hosting us, City of Melbourne for their funding through the Event Partnership Program, as well as Beer Deluxe and Result Group for their sponsorship. We are incredibly grateful

to our dedicated team of volunteers and organisers, including Serena Jackel for volunteer and activities coordination; Tamara Russell for organising the Repair Café and Mending Circle; Chelsea for managing social media and EDM's; Petra for handling signage (and dressing up in a banana costume for Free the Fruit); and Kirsteen for hands-on work with DIY produce bags. Our thanks also go to John Macliver for festival administration and operations and Jess Ness for curating a dynamic lineup of speakers and an engaging eco-networking session.

Special recognition goes to MJ, who established the festival's recycling centre and reinitiated this effort before stepping back. Fortunately, we welcomed Tamara back, who resumed her role as treasurer at just the right time. The dedication of our committee members has been invaluable: Petra Staiger, our Vice President and advocate for Free the Fruit; Serena, our secretary and volunteer coordinator; Chelsea for social media and communications; and Kirsteen Macleod, a constant source of support and insight, along with Zippi, whose enthusiasm and energy are boundless.

I would like to thank Chelsea and Zippi for their valuable contributions on the committee over the past 12 months. Zippi has brought boundless enthusiasm, supporting us and the festival behind the scenes, even as her work commitments shifted. Chelsea, with her level-headed enthusiasm, has been an absolute superstar, managing our social media and EDMs brilliantly throughout the year.

I would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to Serena Jackel, who has served as our dedicated secretary for the past two years. During this time, Serena has gone above and beyond, helping to coordinate the clothes swap featured on *War on Waste* in 2023, initiating a toy swap, and providing invaluable support with administration, social media, promotions, festival organisation, and volunteer coordination. Her attention to detail, boundless enthusiasm, and willingness to take on the countless tasks that keep our operations running smoothly have been a tremendous asset. While she is stepping down from her role, she has suggested she will still be here in a volunteer capacity, which we are truly grateful for. Thank you Serena, for all you have contributed.

Looking ahead to 2025, we're keen to build on advocacy, research, and community education through campaigns like Free the Fruit. By empowering the community to reduce waste and advocating for policy change, we're committed to a future of sustainability and waste reduction. We're also seeking to recruit more volunteers to support additional initiatives that promote research, education, and advocacy for a waste-free world, extending our capacity and reach.

Treasurer's Report

This year Zero Waste Victoria again received an offer from Fed Square to hold our 2024 Zero Waste Victoria Festival in the Atrium and The Edge. The Festival was held on Saturday 14 September with speakers, kids activities, exhibitors, a clothes swap, a repair cafe and mending circle. It was a fantastic day even though the weather was poor.

The festival was well attended with an estimated 5500 people attending. This year we received a \$15,000 grant from the City of Melbourne to stage the Festival. The Festival raised \$3000.00 in sponsorship, \$8450.00 in stallholder fees and \$165.00 in donations which along with many hours put in by the Festival Committee.

This financial year we have had regular donations through our GiveNow platform and yearly memberships.

Tamara Russell

Treasurer – 1 September – 31 December 2024

Financial Statement for the period ended 30 June 2024

Income		
	INTEREST RECEIVED	\$192.76
	DONATIONS/MEMBERSHIP	\$4,430.11
	FESTIVAL STALLS / SPONSORSHIP	\$14,652.67
	FESTIVAL CLOTHES SWAP	
	INFORMATION STALL	
	REUSE INSTEAD ACTIVATIONS	\$3,050.00
	EVENT FUNDING / GRANTS	
	MISCELLANEOUS	\$1,318.00
	Total Income for the Period	\$23,643.54
Less Expenses		
	FESTIVAL FEES	\$7,144.85
	FESTIVAL ADVERTISING	\$765.81
	FESTIVAL WORKSHOP PRESENTER FEES	
	WORKSHOP COSTS	
	INSURANCE	\$1,170.00
	INTERNET FEES - Domain, Hosting, Zoom, Brevo (SendInBlue)	\$927.24
	STAFF PAY	\$12,190.70
	RECRUITMENT	
	MISCELLANEOUS	\$1,141.30
	Total Expenses for the Period	\$23,339.90
	Surplus/Deficit for the Year	\$303.64
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	
TOTAL	\$20,548.15	
Bank Balance at 30 June 2024	\$3,069.90	
Donations Bank Balance at 30 June 2024	\$17,627.50	
Community Access Debit Card balance at 30 June 2024	\$329.30	
TOTAL	\$21,026.70	

Treasurer Comments:

Compared to FY22-23, FY23-24 saw increases in community donations, festival-related income (however, this includes a \$5,000 sponsorship for ZWF 2024) and activations. We held fewer Information Stalls in this reporting period however we have shifted our focus to run more 'Free The Fruit' activations. Grants and donations have been instrumental in being able to engage Australians to live lives with less waste, particularly the \$5,000 Sustainability Victoria grant which is assisting in expanding the Zero Waste Festival.

For the current financial year to 14 October 2024:

Income - \$18,161

Expenditure - \$21,715.00

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

Highlights



Zero Waste Festival 2024



The Zero Waste Festival took place on Saturday 14 September at Fed Square in the Atrium and The Edge.

Attendees were invited to dive into sustainable living at the Zero Waste Festival with our program jam packed with fun, inspiration and action for a greener future. Visitors were invited to discover practical zero waste options, including innovative new ideas and the revival of older practices like repair and mending, all contributing to a revolution in sustainable living.



Speaker Program overview

10:00 am: Urban Evolution: Designing a Zero Waste Future

11:15 am: From Personal Practice to Policy: Sustainability Leaders in Action

12:30 pm: Breaking Down Waste: The New Frontier in Recycling

1:45 pm: Fashionable Innovations turning: Trash into Trendsetting

3.00 pm: From Plate to Policy: Tackling Food Waste Solutions plus Live cooking Demo

4:30pm: Eco-Networking Forum: Turning Ideas into Impact

Our Speaker line up included researchers, entrepreneurs, fashion designers, innovators and educators. Speakers engaged in panel discussions, live cooking demonstrations and interactive networking activities.

Adam Slater: Zero Waste Plastics Australia

Alicja Kuzmycz: PhD candidate in Fashion and Textiles

Andrew Swann: Circular Resources Australia

Anna Matilda: The Urban Nanna

Antoinette Pitt: Recycle Wise

Caitlin Philips-Peddlesden: RMIT Activator

Chris Buntine: Biophilic bungalow and Altier Ten

Dr Liz Hu: Doctors for the Environment

Fleur Baker: Real Success

Frankie Cox: Green-On

Georgia McCorkill: Senior Lecturer School of Fashion and Textiles

Gilbert Rochecouste: The Village Well

Julia English: PhD Candidate

Kate Stewart: Every Bit Counts

Kirsty Bishop-Fox: Sustainability Pathways and Zero Waste Victoria

Councilor Lindsay Miles: Treading my own path

Lucy Best: Let Me Be Frank

Lucas Parker: Associate Professor

Mario Mendez: Ratio's Circular Economy Team

Marty Rowell: Circular Economy Victoria

Michael Dossor: Result Group

Miriam Borchardt: Kin Studios

Nayran Tabiei: Flavours of Syria

Petra Creed: Zero Waste Victoria

Tarun Grover: PhD Candidate

Toby Cummings: Sustainability Victoria

Tracy Bartram: Comedian, Broadcaster and Keynote speaker

Xuan Wang: City Compost Network

Zachary Sequoia: Huum Bio

Free the Fruit Campaign

A highlight this year was our *Free the Fruit* campaign which raises awareness about reducing plastic produce bag use and promotes sustainable alternatives such as cloth bags, boxes, and baskets. Many community members enthusiastically joined us to make produce bags from repurposed lace curtains. We also conducted a survey to understand the barriers and motivators around switching to plastic-free options. And a memorable moment was our vice president dressing up as a banana!



Zero Waste Festival Activities

We hosted a Clothes Swap, along with a Repair Café with St Kilda Repair Café using their skills to repair a great variety of items. We also held a Mending Circle with the theme 'Stitch It, Don't Ditch It' with a fantastic group of mending volunteers coming together to help festival goers repair their clothes.

Clothes Swap

The clothes swap which enabled people to update their wardrobe and swap clothes, shoes and accessories. People were asked to bring up to six items to swap. This event was inclusive of all adults.

Book Swap

We held a book swap for the first time. People were told that they could give or take a book! People were asked to bring up to two books to swap. Children's books were also welcome. This event was successful with no books left at the end of the day!

Repair Café & Mending Circle

Skilled volunteers were there to help repair clothes, toys, bikes, small electronics, and more. The mending circle demonstrated how easy mending is for people to do themselves. Menders were there repairing and mentoring guests on how to make simple repairs themselves.

Recycling Centre

Many items are recyclable, as long as they are collected and processed separately. 10 Recycling partners were engaged to offer guests options to drop off their hard-to-recycle items at the dedicated Recycling Centre. From textile waste and plastic lids, to blister packs and golf balls.

See our extended [recycling options here](#)



Zero Waste Hands on Fun

Kids or adults alike got crafty and innovative being able to entertain the children while listening to the speaker program or wandering the exhibitor stalls

- DIY produce bags to reduce unnecessary plastic waste with fruit and veggie
- Make Functional fridge magnets out of recycled materials
- Join our Zero Waste Treasure hunt to win some low-waste prizes

Mini Spring Clean the City

Once the exhibitors pack up, volunteers teamed up with fellow eco-warriors with Beach Patrol to collect, sort, and document litter along the riverbank. Not only did they help beautify our city, but volunteers also contributed to a powerful cause.

Eco-Networking Forum Turning Ideas into Impact

This was the first year that we ran an eco-networking forum. It was a great success with three organisations pitching their ecofriendly projects. It started with our very own ZeroWaste campaign - Free the Fruit. Suggestions like linking in with other similar projects and speaking to council were among some of the many helpful suggestions made by the panel. The second pitch was a business

focused on rescuing white goods from going into landfill and repairing them. Some of the challenges were about how to enhance consumer confidence in purchasing second hand white goods as well as developing stronger links to councils to redirect these goods from going into landfill. Suggestions included connecting with manufacturers or setting up a system that would endorse the white goods as being reliable and safe. The final pitch was Back to Earth Compost Champion. Some suggestions from the expert panel included launching the larger project in smaller stages, increasing the viability of obtaining funding and gradually building exposure before scaling up.

It was a lively, interactive session where businesses/organisations had a unique opportunity to elevate their eco-journey, connect with like-minded individuals, and gain the tools and inspiration to drive real change.

Acknowledgements

Our Sponsors:



Festival 2024 Team

- Lauren Arthur (Fed Square)
- Kirsty Bishop-Fox
- Tamara Russell
- MJ Li
- Serena Jackel
- John Macliver
- Jess Ness
- Petra Creed
- Kirsteen Macleod