

# Waste 2 Art 2026

## Shrink Your Footprint

### *Education Pack*

Information for Students - Teachers - Community  
Groups and Artists



**NetWaste**  
A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH



# Waste 2 Art

## Our Aim



Waste 2 Art is a community art exhibition and competition open to residents in the NetWaste region. It engages the community and showcases creative works made from reused and recyclable waste materials.

Waste 2 Art's aim is to challenge peoples' perceptions about 'rubbish' and to celebrate the reuse and recycling of waste through arts and crafts.

Waste 2 Art provides an innovative approach to waste education, invites schools and community groups to take up the challenge and create a new life for materials that would otherwise have been thrown away.

# How Waste 2 Art Works

## **1. The first step is the Local Competition and Exhibition held in each participating Council area -**

Each Council that is taking part holds a Local Exhibition. The date for the exhibition will be determined by the local coordinator and entry forms will be available from your local coordinators and/or Council.

Entries may be submitted by a group of students, a class, the whole school or individuals. If your school isn't involved the students can still enter through your local coordinator.

## **2. The second step is the Regional Showcase and Finals –**

If your artwork wins its category at your local competition , it will progress to the Regional Showcase, your work must fit into a shoe box for transport to Broken Hill (more on this later) The 2026 Regional Showcase will be hosted by Broken Hill City Council at the Albert Kersten Mining and Minerals Museum (GeoCentre), Corner Crystal and Bromide Streets, Broken Hill, NSW 2880. The Opening event will be held and winners will be announced at 11am on Saturday 15th August 2026.

# Entering Waste 2 Art

As part of the first step in taking part in Waste 2 Art make sure it is running in your Local Council Area



Hopefully, you received this information from your Local Council or Waste 2 Art Coordinator, so you know that Waste 2 Art is running in your area again in 2026.

If you received this presentation from another source and are unsure if your Council is running Waste 2 Art, please get in touch with NetWaste.

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OR

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# Entering Waste 2 Art

This year we have a 'size limit' for all entries in Waste 2 Art.

This size limit will allow us to transport all the winners from our local competitions to Broken Hill for the Regional Showcase and Finals so all entries must fit into a shoebox in 2026.

They should not be made from the shoebox itself, rather they should be made from any material you choose as part of our theme 'Shrink Your Footprint'.

Please include directions on how to set up your works as they can fold / disassemble / pack down in creative ways to fit into the shoebox.



# Entering Waste 2 Art

Next you need to think about a category.

We have new categories that will win you prizes at the Regional Showcase and Finals on the next page.

These are bonus prizes to aim for at the 2026 Regional Showcase and Final.

The Competition will include the following categories:

(Please note some Councils have Preschool and ELC Categories)

## Primary School

- 2 Dimensional
- 3 Dimensional
- Functional – furniture, craftworks & wearable items made from recycled materials

## Secondary School

- 2 Dimensional
- 3 Dimensional
- Functional – furniture, craftworks & wearable items made from recycled materials

Community – *this category is open to anyone who is not a previous winner or professional artist, this category allows anyone to enter knowing they are not competing with professional artists or previous winners.*

- 2 Dimensional
- 3 Dimensional
- Functional – furniture, craftworks & wearable items made from recycled materials

Open – *this category is for previous winners and professional artists.*

- 2 Dimensional
- 3 Dimensional
- Functional – furniture, craftworks & wearable items made from recycled materials

Annual Waste Theme 2026 – A work that best reflects the theme ‘Shrink Your Footprint’

# Bonus Prize Categories at the Regional Showcase and Final

Here is a list of the bonus categories that will win additional prizes of \$500 at the Regional Showcase and Final

Our Bonus Prize Categories have been established to get you thinking about materials you might use for your entries this year. The bonus prize categories are based on hard to recycle items at the moment and have been some of our past 'theme wastes'...

- *Soft Plastic*
- *Textiles*
- *Toys*
- *Problematic packaging (Think takeaway coffee cups, bailing twine or polystyrene)*
- *Non recyclable stationary (dry pens, short pencils, envelope windows etc)*

# Metal Prizes

Our biggest Prize is our Scrap Metal Prize thanks to our Sponsor Access Metal Recycling.

We will have one main prize of \$1500 and three 'mini metal' awards this year for \$500 each.

If students are working with metal, please keep all projects safely supervised by a teacher or adult, use all the right safety equipment and avoid sharp edges.



# Our theme this year is

## SHRINK YOUR FOOTPRINT



*Look at this amazing past entry that used bottle lids and a kinder surprise eggs to create a visually striking work.*

- How will your entry reflect this theme?
- You might research a problem waste that is adding to your waste footprint and make your work from this waste material.
- Look carefully at the waste you are putting into the bin at home to see what items make up the biggest amounts of waste you are generating.
- Think about packaging you use everyday, single use items, soft plastics and materials like textiles that have been past theme wastes for Waste 2 Art.

# Videos to help you plan your entry

Now you have started thinking about your entries take a moment to watch our videos from 2025 to get an even better idea of what you can create.



**The 2026 theme announcement 'Shrink Your Footprint'**

<https://youtu.be/FWc22XOYlww>

**We also have these additional videos for you -**

**Our Year of Toys recap**

<https://youtu.be/ejI4UxlpAao>

**And the Interviews of the staff at the Western Plains Cultural Centre who curated and hosted our Regional Showcase and Finals in 2025**

<https://youtu.be/xVGDKmHhI04> -

# Waste 2 Art – safe work practices

- Make sure you don't submit any 240-volt appliances like lamps or lights, these are not accepted in Waste 2 Art.
- No works should have sharp edges.
- All entries made in schools should still adhere to all ELC, Preschool and School policies for materials to be used in education settings.
- Make sure the materials used are appropriate for the age of the entrant.
- Hot glue and other joining methods need strict supervision when working with younger entrants.
- Waste 2 Art should be a safe and fun activity so always use materials you are comfortable with.



# Waste 2 Art – keeping to our values

Please don't purchase new materials for your works

- Don't buy any new materials other than materials to put your work together (like pins or glue) when making your Waste 2 artwork.
- Instead of buying craft materials we want you to think about things that are already going to landfill and use them instead.
- We want to 'Shrink our Footprint' in 2026 so let's research materials that are hard to recycle or could be replaced with better alternatives and collect them up, make them into works of art and tell a story about how you will 'Shrink your Footprint' in 2026!



# Waste 2 Art – Artists Statement

Let everyone know what you have learned while creating your artwork and where you sourced your materials

Every work that is entered in Waste 2 Art needs an artist's statement explaining your artwork.

The artist's statements help the judge to determine a winner so make sure you take some time to write down what you are trying to say to the audience through your artwork. Make sure we know where you sourced your materials and how you are 'Shrinking Your Footprint' in 2026.

Why did you choose the materials, colours, textures and/or the subject matter that makes your work unique? What are you trying to get your audience to think about? The more information you can provide the better, but one detailed paragraph will be enough to let the judges and the audience get a better understanding of your artwork. We ask that you keep your artist's statement under 200 words.

# Now it's time to plan your Artwork

Here is one example of a material you could collect –

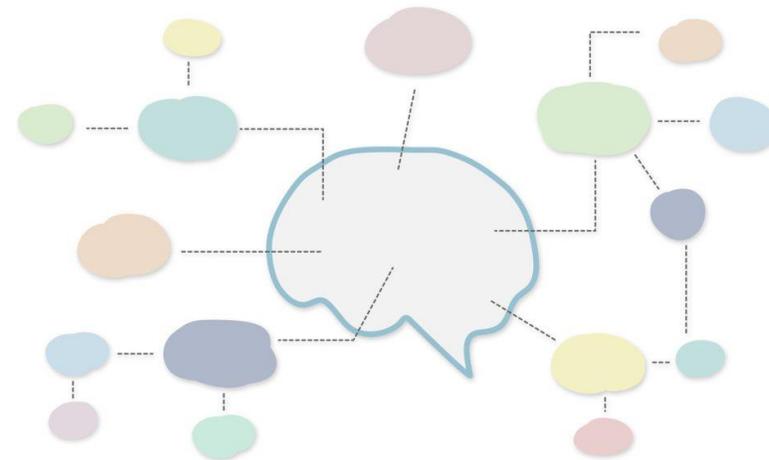
Bread tags are just one example of an item your school could collect and use for your work.

Have a look at the **bread tag project** - <https://7news.com.au/the-morning-show/meet-aussie-mum-artist-and-teacher-shani-nottingham-recycling-millions-of-plastic-bread-tags-into-works-of-art--c-5391870>



# Brainstorm lots of ideas

What is your Waste Footprint? How much waste do you make everyday and what are the main things you throw away? Why not start to get ideas by brainstorming all the types of waste that make up your 'Waste Footprint'



# There are many more examples of items you could collect and use



# A past example



Artist: Abigail McLaughlin

Title: *Bed Sheet Boys*

Category: Community 3D

Date: 2023 - NetWaste Waste 2 Art - The Year of Fast Fashion

The artwork above uses old bedsheets that have been ripped up into strips.

The bodies are made from plastic water bottles and takeaways containers.

All the materials were already used, cleaned by the artist and turned into the artwork.

If you want to use wrappers from school lunchboxes, say chip packets, you need to clean them and think of the best way to use them. This might mean cutting, twisting, rearranging etc, not just sticking them straight into place, the more you can modify and use the materials to make a really polished artwork, the better.

# Coffee Cup Example



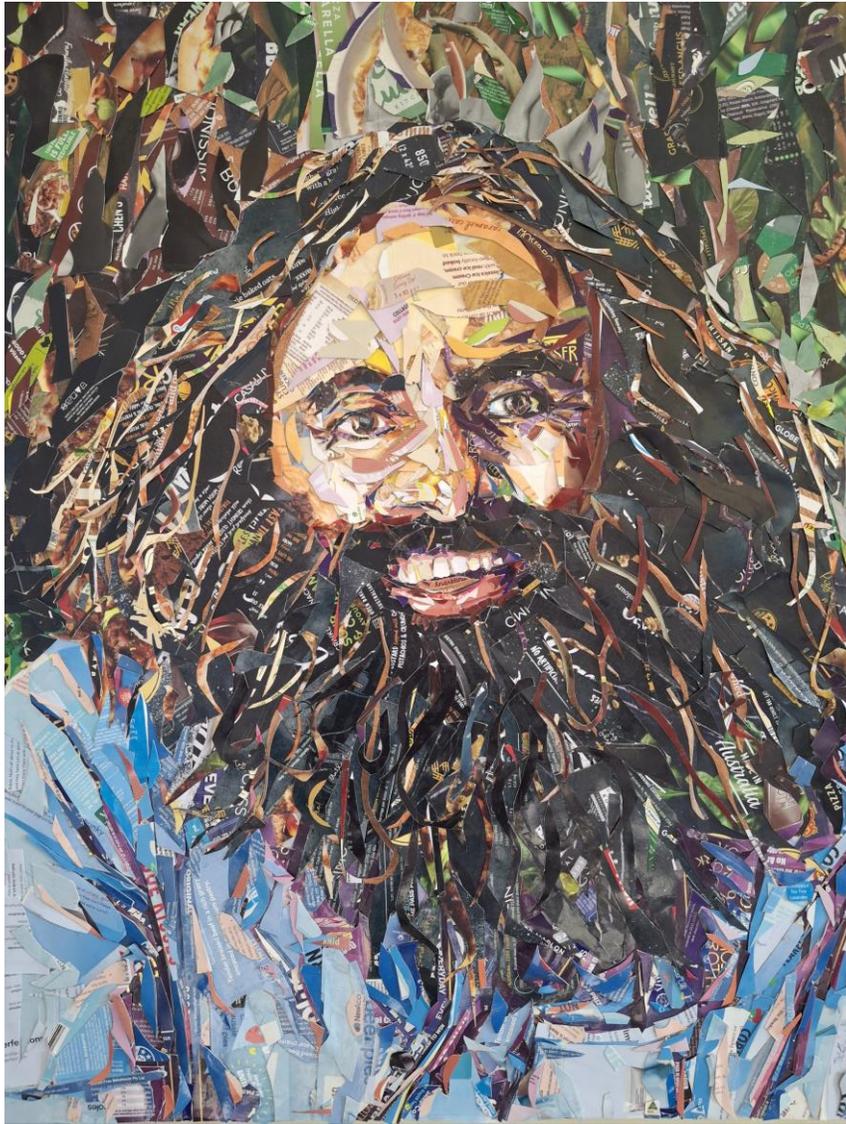
## Takeaway coffee cups can't go in the yellow lid recycling bin

Most single-use coffee cups have a plastic lining made of Polyethylene which makes them waterproof. So even though the cups also have a paper layer, they can't be recycled in your recycling bin at home, because the materials can't be separated in the regular recycling system.

Aussies throw away 2.7 million coffee cups a day so a special program has started to collect coffee cups so they can be collected and taken to a specialist recycling program. 7-Eleven runs a special program and so does Simply Cups. [We could 'Shrink our Footprint' buy swapping to keep cups!](#)



Learn more at Simply Cups... <https://www.simplycups.com.au/education>



# Use your materials creatively

- This artwork is made from cut up magazine pieces.
- ‘Sparkling Costa’ uses everyday materials in a creative way.
- By cutting up and working with waste materials you can make works that look nothing like the original materials used.



# Good Luck!

We can't wait to see how you

## 'Shrink Your Footprint'

In 2026, and we might even see you in Broken Hill!