

Why big business should enter the Victorian Premier's Sustainability Awards



Toyota's "Next Big Step" sustainability program scored the company a large business award.

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The Premier's Sustainability Awards recognise businesses of all sizes and from every sector that are engaged in sustainability efforts in Victoria.

The Awards' Large Business category is open to businesses employing 200 or more people and celebrates outstanding achievements in adopting and implementing sustainable practices.

Sustainability Victoria chief executive Stan Krpan encourages large businesses taking advantage of the opportunity to create sustainable products and markets to enter the awards.

"Businesses around the world understand that it makes good business sense to operate more sustainably. Not only can it boost their bottom line, but increasingly, customers are demanding good corporate social responsibility," Krpan says.

"And not just through one-off actions – ongoing sustainability for big business is key.

"It can help them attract and retain the best staff, because they want to work for organisations that care about environmental and sustainability issues.

"It can also reduce costs and increase productivity through more efficient use of materials and energy, creating new jobs and markets for products.

"Making business more sustainable is a win for the economy, as well as the environment."

The Premier's Sustainability Awards has featured a Large Business category since they began in 2002. Past winners include Victoria Carpets for their efforts to reduce environmental impact and drive cost

reductions, and Toyota Motor Corporation Australia for their “Next Big Step”, a cross-company sustainability program.

“The awards give these businesses the opportunity to demonstrate the best of sustainability practices across Victoria,” Krpan says.

It also offers a chance to connect with community organisations and support sustainability action more broadly.

The 2015 Premier’s Recognition Award winners, St Kilda Mums, Geelong Mums and Ballarat Mums, which recycle nursery equipment, attribute part of their success to great support from other large businesses.

“As an example, one of our volunteers made the introduction to Visy – the packaging, paper and recycling business,” chief executive Jessica Macpherson says.

“Visy sent out one of their really senior sales people to meet with us and they offered to provide three large bins for card recycling including the weekly pick-ups, completely free of charge.

“The impact of this support and service is tremendous.”

Krpan says that sustainability practices in businesses of all sizes encourage partnerships at every level.

“The Premier’s Sustainability Awards have always encouraged and promoted partnerships between governments, communities, businesses and individuals,” he says.

“I would encourage any large business to enter the Premier’s Sustainability Awards as a way of celebrating their hard work and having their stories heard.”

There are ten categories, all of which acknowledge the great sustainability work done every day by all kinds of people and organisations, right across Victoria.

Finalists will be announced in late August 2016, and winners announced at an awards ceremony on Thursday 20 October 2016.

Finalists and winners will be promoted in media and to the wider community.

Entries for the 2016 Premier’s Sustainability Awards close at 5pm on Monday 27 June.

For category criteria, profiles of past winners, to enter and more information go to www.sustainabilityawards.vic.gov.au

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