

Quick Guide: Building a sustainability team

The sustainability team reports to school governance bodies and ideally represents the whole school community including staff, students, parents, community members and organisations that have a stake in the school's success.

Creating a team will ensure sustainability is embedded into the culture of the school. It links to Core action C1.2.

This guide will take you through the considerations required to build a sustainability team. You might also like to refer to the Quick Guide: Creating a student action team.

Gather support

A sustainability team will be most successful with the following support:

- endorsement from your school principal.
- support from office staff to assist with RSS work such as gathering bills
- collaboration with school leaders such as curriculum, wellbeing and other team leaders.

Consider team membership

When thinking about **staff** who might be on the sustainability team aim to:

- have diverse skill sets and consider the roles that will help you succeed
- include staff who already have an interest or passion for sustainable living and climate action
- include teachers from environmental science, and similar learning areas
- include staff who manage the school grounds
- include a curriculum leader to ensure the Sustainability Cross-Curriculum Priority is being embedded
- include staff implementing other programs such as River Detectives, OZ Harvest FEAST, and the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program etc.

When thinking about **students** who might be on the sustainability team aim to:

- provide leadership opportunities for students

- create a team structure that provides opportunities for individual collective voice
- plan for succession; and encourage students to mentor newcomers and step into a more senior team role each year.

When thinking about **parents/carers/community members** who might be on the sustainability team aim to:

- invite people who already have an interest or passion for sustainable living and climate action
- invite local businesses (or parents who work for them) that already take a sustainable approach to their work
- invite representatives from community organisations or sustainability groups to increase the impact of the school's RSS work.

Roles and responsibilities

A roles and responsibility table or matrix can organise the sustainability related actions that need to be achieved. Begin by brainstorming what has to be done, who will work on the task, when it will be accomplished and what RSS action the task aligns to.

When you allocate responsibilities to team members consider their strengths, interests and capacity and ensure the workload is shared equitably.

The table below is an example of a Roles and Responsibility matrix.

WHAT	WHO	WHEN	RSS Online Action
Sustainability team agendas etc	Sustainability team leader	Twice per term	Core C1.2; Resource Modules C2. actions
Entering bills into RSS Online	Admin office staff	End of each quarter	Core A1.3, A1.7 Waste, Energy, Water A1.2

Curriculum documentation - keep updates, staff informed	Curriculum team leader	As required - at least once per year	Review – Core B1.1 Resource modules B actions
Promotion and celebration– newsletter/website/socials	Teacher AA	At least twice per term	Resource modules C actions
Plan biodiversity improvements	Grounds staff Sustainability leader Student action team	As required	Various actions in Biodiversity and Waste
Coordinating participation in special events etc. (Ride2School day etc.)	Teacher BB Student action team Parent/community volunteers	As required	Resource modules C actions

Celebrate and build momentum

- Celebrate the steps you make towards larger projects with your community. Don't wait until the project is completed to celebrate your achievements
- Build on your work and the momentum it creates
- Promote your sustainability work widely using a range of channels. Refer to the Quick guide to promoting RSS progress.

Reach out for assistance

RSS Facilitators can help you:

- plan or promote your program

- locate additional resources that will assist you to participate in the program
- conduct audits with students
- organise activities for your student action team
- find networks of like-minded staff and students to support your work
- progress your RSS module completion and certification.

To connect with your local facilitator email schools@sustainability.vic.gov.au

For support with RSS Online email help@resourcesmartschools.vic.gov.au

ResourceSmart Schools is a free program offered by Sustainability Victoria that supports Victorian schools to embed sustainability across the school facilities, community and curriculum, while saving resources and money for the school.

To register to become a ResourceSmart School, visit:

<https://my.resourcesmartschools.vic.gov.au/>

or email schools@sustainability.vic.gov.au