

Waste 2 Art 2026

Shrink Your Footprint

Education Pack

- BROKEN HILL

Information for Students -Teachers -Community Groups and Artists



waste2artbh.com



Waste 2 Art 2026 – Broken Hill Local Competition



Waste 2 Art is an annual community art exhibition and competition that challenges participants to transform waste and recycled materials into creative and thought-provoking artworks.

Presented locally by Broken Hill City Art Gallery, the exhibition celebrates innovation, sustainability and artistic expression across all ages and skill levels. Entries are open to primary and secondary students, community members and professional artists.

Entries open: 1 April 2026

Entries close: 8 May 2026

The Broken Hill exhibition will be held at the Albert Kersten Mining and Minerals Museum (GeoCentre), with key dates as follows:

- Artwork delivery: 19–22 May
- Judging: 29 May
- Opening: 30 May
- Exhibition dates: 30 May – 17 July
- Collection of works: 28–31 July

Waste 2 Art 2026 – Broken Hill Local Competition



This year's theme, "Shrink Your Footprint," encourages participants to think about waste, sustainability and the impact we have on the environment.

In 2026, all entries must also meet the creative challenge of fitting within a standard shoebox, inspiring inventive use of materials and scale.

Selected works from the local exhibition may progress to the Waste 2 Art Regional Showcase, which will also be held in Broken Hill in 2026 - a special opportunity to see outstanding works from across the NetWaste region.

Whether you're an experienced artist or entering for the first time, Waste 2 Art is a chance to turn everyday materials into something unexpected, meaningful and uniquely your own.



**For full details, entry requirements and to download an entry form, please visit: waste2artbh.com
Printed entry forms are also available to collect in person from Broken Hill City Art Gallery and the GeoCentre.**

INFORMATION PACK FROM NETWASTE

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 Our Aim



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.



INFORMATION PACK FROM NETWASTE

How Waste 2 Art Works

Waste 2 Art is delivered in two stages: a local competition and exhibition, followed by a regional showcase and finals.

1. Local Competition and Exhibition

The first stage takes place within each participating Council area, including Broken Hill.

Artists can enter as individuals or as part of a group — including school classes or whole school submissions. If your school is not participating, students can still enter individually through the local coordinator.

Each Council hosts its own local exhibition, with dates and entry details managed locally. In Broken Hill, entry forms are available from the Broken Hill City Art Gallery and the GeoCentre, or can be downloaded online at waste2artbh.com

2. Regional Showcase and Finals

Winning artworks from each local competition progress to the Waste 2 Art Regional Showcase and Finals.

In 2026, the Regional Showcase will be hosted in Broken Hill at the Albert Kersten Mining and Minerals Museum (GeoCentre), Corner of Crystal and Bromide Streets.

All selected works must be able to fit inside a standard shoebox for transport to the regional exhibition.

The Regional Showcase Opening and Awards Presentation will take place at 11am on Saturday 15 August 2026, where category winners from across the region will be announced.

INFORMATION PACK FROM NETWASTE

Our theme this year is SHRINK YOUR FOOTPRINT

This year's theme, Shrink Your Footprint, invites you to think about the impact of waste in your everyday life.

How will your artwork respond to this theme?

You might begin by identifying a type of waste that contributes to your own footprint, then use those materials to create your work.

- Look closely at what you throw away at home — what materials make up most of your waste?
- Consider everyday packaging, single-use items and soft plastics
- Think about materials like textiles and other difficult-to-recycle items that have been explored in past Waste 2 Art themes

Your artwork is an opportunity to rethink these materials and give them a new purpose.



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



In 2026, all Waste 2 Art entries must meet a shoebox size requirement.

Your artwork must fit inside the shoebox for delivery, but it *should not be attached to or made from the shoebox itself*. The box is for transport only, as artworks will be removed and displayed during the exhibition.

You are encouraged to think creatively — your work can fold, disassemble or pack down to fit inside the box, then be reassembled for display. If required, please include clear instructions for installation or setup.

All artworks should respond to this year's theme, "Shrink Your Footprint," using recycled or reused materials.

To enter, please:

- Download and complete the official entry form
- Create your artwork so that it fits inside a standard shoebox
- Deliver your completed entry form in person, along with your artwork packed inside a shoebox to the GeoCentre before the closing date - 8 May 2026

2026 CATEGORIES

When entering Waste 2 Art, you will need to choose a category for your artwork. Categories are based on age and experience level, with a range of prizes awarded at both the local exhibition and the Regional Showcase and Finals.

In addition to the standard categories, there is also an ***Annual Theme Award for 2026, recognising a work that best responds to the theme "Shrink Your Footprint."***

CATEGORIES

Primary School

- 2D (two-dimensional works)
- 3D (three-dimensional works)
- Functional (furniture, craftworks or wearable items made from recycled materials)

Secondary School

- 2D
- 3D
- Functional (furniture, craftworks or wearable items made from recycled materials)

Community

Open to anyone who is not a previous winner or professional artist. This category allows participants to enter on an even playing field.

- 2D
- 3D
- Functional (furniture, craftworks or wearable items made from recycled materials)

Open

For professional artists and previous winners.

- 2D
- 3D
- Functional (furniture, craftworks or wearable items made from recycled materials)

Annual Theme Award – 2026

Awarded to the work that best reflects the theme "Shrink Your Footprint."

Bonus Prize Categories

Regional Showcase and Finals

In addition to the main awards, a series of Bonus Prize Categories will be awarded at the **Regional Showcase** and Finals. Each bonus category carries an additional \$500 prize.

These categories are designed to encourage creative thinking around materials that are often difficult to recycle.

Many of these have been featured as past Waste 2 Art themes and highlight everyday items that commonly end up as waste.



2026 Bonus Prize Categories

- Soft Plastics
- Textiles
- Toys
- Problematic Packaging (e.g. takeaway coffee cups, baling twine, polystyrene)
- Non-recyclable Stationery (e.g. dry pens, short pencils, envelope windows)



Consider incorporating one or more of these materials into your artwork for the chance to be eligible for an additional prize at the Regional Showcase.

Bonus Prize Categories

Regional Showcase and Finals - Metals

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.



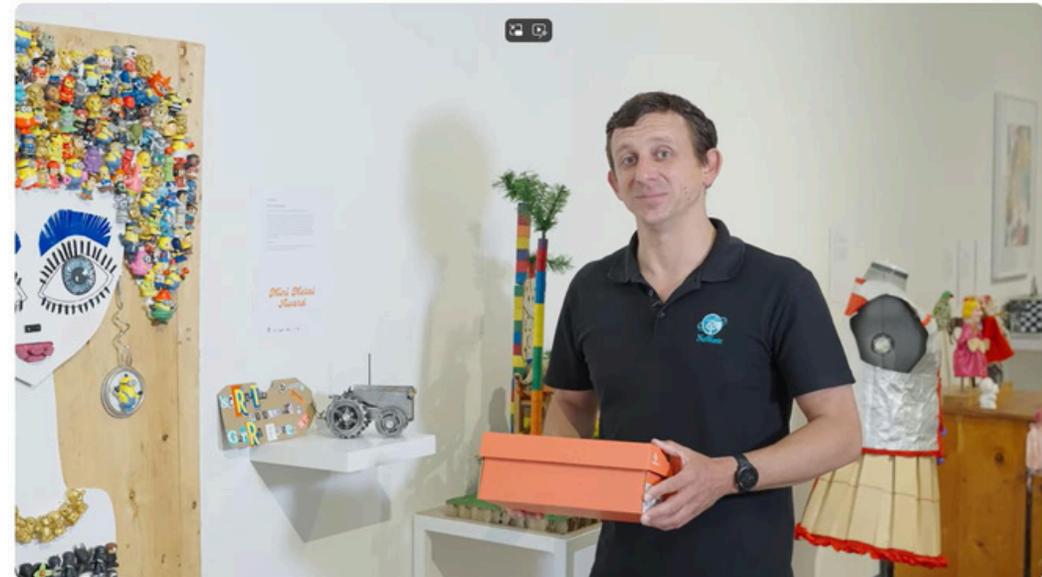
Phone 1300 2 RECYCLE
accessrecycling.com.au

INFORMATION PACK FROM NETWASTE

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/ej14UxlpAao>
- 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/xVGDKmHh104>



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Safe work practices

- Do not submit any 240-volt appliances (such as lamps or lights). These are not accepted in Waste 2 Art.
- Ensure all artworks are free from sharp edges.
- All entries created in schools must follow relevant school policies and guidelines for materials used in educational settings.
- Make sure all materials are appropriate for the age of the participant.
- Hot glue and other joining methods should be used with strict supervision when working with younger participants.
- Waste 2 Art should be a safe and enjoyable activity — always use materials and processes you are comfortable with.



INFORMATION PACK FROM NETWASTE

keeping to our values



Please don't purchase new materials for your works

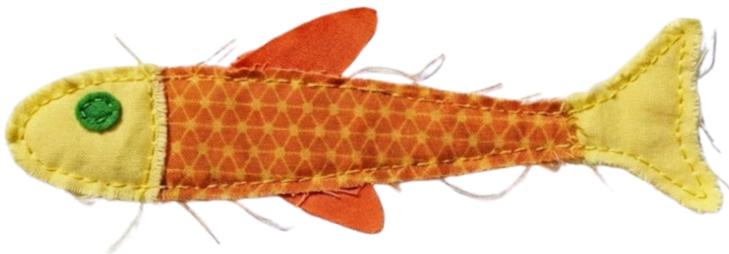
- The only items you may buy are basic materials needed to assemble your work (such as glue, pins or fasteners).
- Instead of buying craft supplies, think about items that are already going to landfill and use those in your artwork.
- Focus on materials that are hard to recycle or could be replaced with more sustainable alternatives.
- Collect, reuse and transform these materials into an artwork that tells a story about how you can “Shrink Your Footprint.”

Waste 2 Art is about rethinking waste and making more conscious choices — let your artwork reflect this in 2026.

Artists Statement

Every artwork entered into Waste 2 Art must include an artist's statement.

This is your chance to share what you learned while creating your work, where you sourced your materials, and what your artwork is about.



This is your chance to share what you learned while creating your work, where you sourced your materials, and what your artwork is about.

Your statement should explain:

- What makes your artwork unique
- What you want your audience to think about
- Why you chose your materials, colours, textures or subject matter
- How your work responds to the theme “Shrink Your Footprint”

Artist's statements play an important role in judging, so take the time to clearly express your ideas.

A single, well-written paragraph is enough — please keep your statement to under 200 words.

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Now it's time to plan your Artwork

Begin by thinking about the materials you could collect and reuse.



Begin by thinking about the materials you could collect and reuse. Look at the waste you see every day and consider how it could be transformed into something creative.

For inspiration, you might like to look at projects such as the Bread Tag Project, where thousands of small discarded items are collected and turned into artworks: <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>

Bread tags are just one example — your school, group or household could collect similar everyday waste materials and use them to create your entry.

Think creatively about what you can gather, reuse and transform.

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Brainstorm lots of ideas

What is your waste footprint?

Think about how much waste you create each day and what types of items you throw away most often.

A great way to start generating ideas is by brainstorming all the different types of waste that make up your personal waste footprint.

This can help you identify materials you could reuse and transform into your Waste 2 Art entry.



INFORMATION PACK FROM NETWASTE

A past example

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.



Artist: Abigail McLaughlin Title: *Bed Sheet Boys* Category: Community 3D Date: 2023 - NetWaste Waste 2 Art - The Year of Fast Fashion

INFORMATION PACK FROM NETWASTE

Coffee Cup Example



Learn more here:

<https://www.simplycups.com.au/education>

You can also help “Shrink Your Footprint” by switching to a reusable keep cup instead of single-use takeaway cups.

Did you know takeaway coffee cups cannot be placed in your yellow recycling bin?

Most single-use coffee cups contain a thin plastic lining (polyethylene) that makes them waterproof. While they appear to be made from paper, the mixed materials cannot be separated through standard recycling systems.

In Australia, an estimated 2.7 million coffee cups are thrown away every day.

To help reduce this waste, specialist recycling programs have been introduced. Initiatives such as Simply Cups and collection points at stores like 7-Eleven allow used cups to be properly recycled.

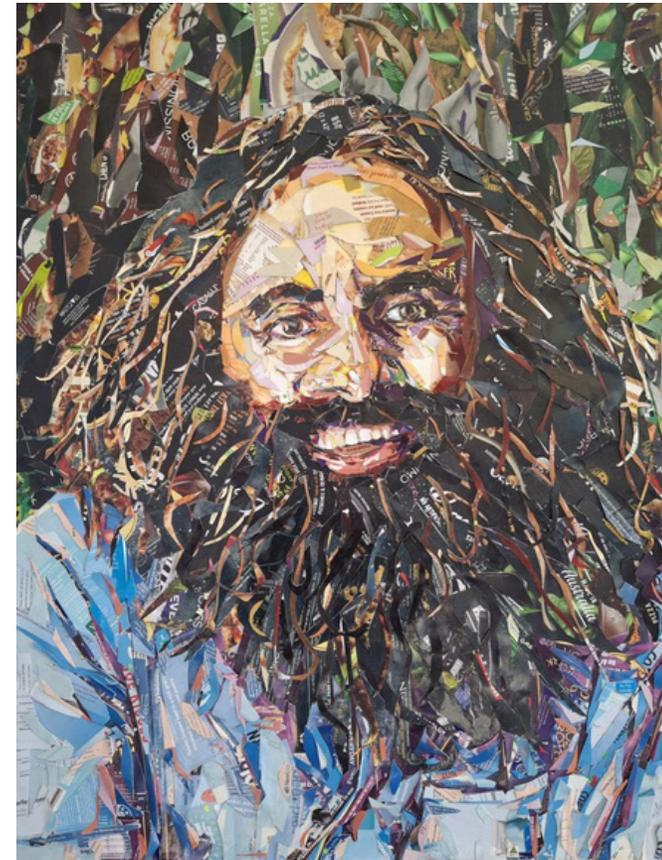
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Use your materials creatively

Think about how you can transform everyday waste into something completely new.

- This artwork, Sparkling Costa, is made from cut-up magazine pieces
- It shows how simple, everyday materials can be used in a creative way
- By cutting, layering and reworking waste materials, you can create artworks that look nothing like the original items

Don't be afraid to experiment — the more you transform your materials, the more surprising and unique your artwork can become.



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Good Luck!



We can't wait to see how you "Shrink Your Footprint" in 2026!

For local (Broken Hill) enquiries, please contact your local coordinator:

Priscilla Prince

artgallery@brokenhill.nsw.gov.au

If you have received this information from another source and are unsure whether your Council is participating, please contact NetWaste:

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waste2artbh.com

BROKEN HILL

CITY ART GALLERY

