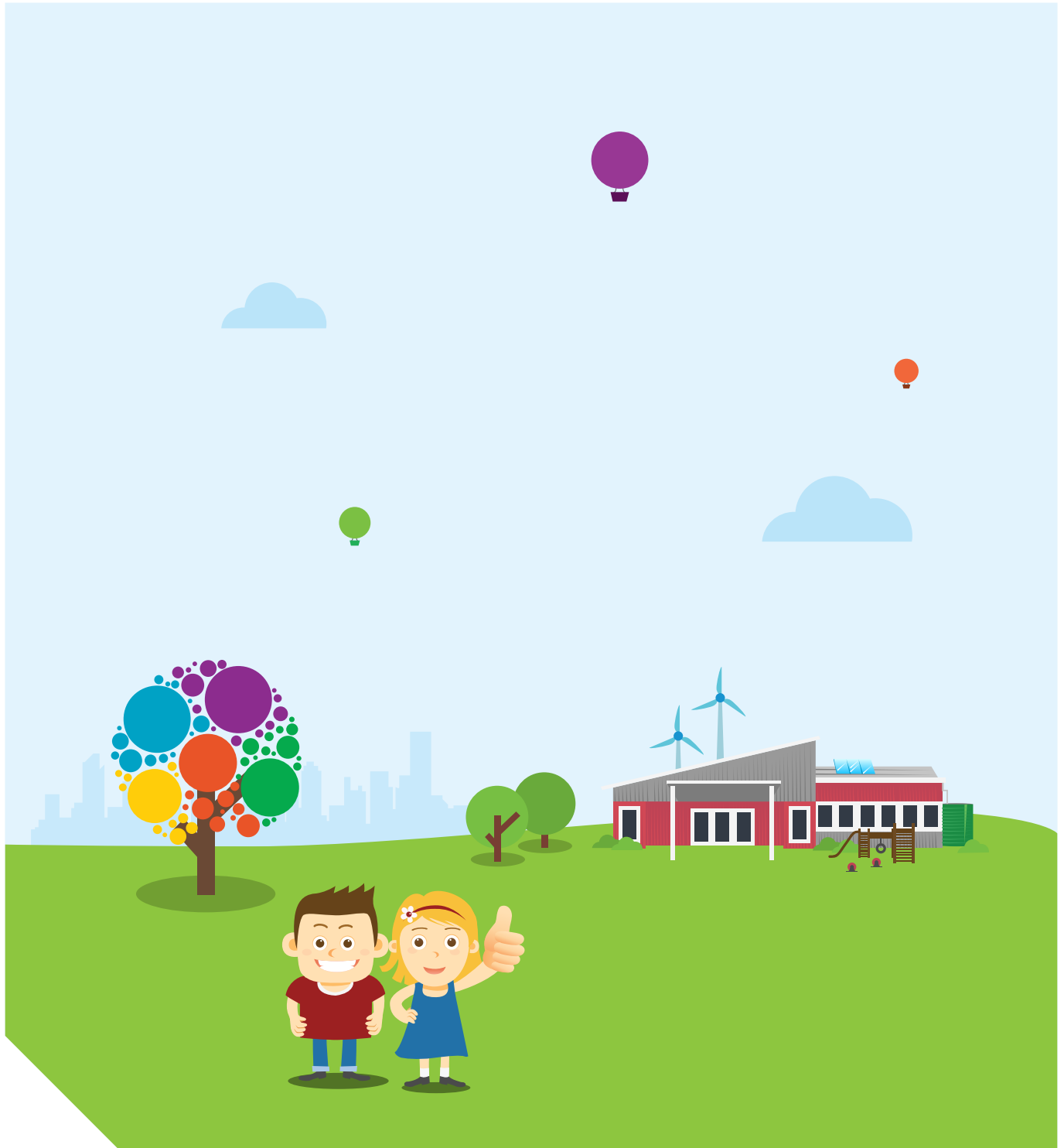




## GUIDELINES

---

# ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic



Australian  
**Sustainable Schools Initiative**  
A Partnership of the Australian Government, the States & Territories





## Contents

Glossary	iv
<b>1. About ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 What is ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic?	1
1.2 History	1
1.3 Who can participate?	1
1.4 Who's involved?	1
1.5 Why participate?	3
1.6 Reward and recognition	3
1.7 Supporting the curriculum	3
1.8 Professional learning	4
1.9 Using the online system	4
1.10 How to participate	4
<b>2. How does it work?</b>	<b>5</b>
2.1 Sustainability Certification	5
2.2 Sustainability Certification process – including module completion and star progression	6
<b>3. Completing modules</b>	<b>7</b>
3.1 Core Module	7
3.2 Biodiversity Module	7
3.3 Energy Module	8
3.4 Waste Module	8
3.5 Water Module	8
3.6 Module benchmarks	9
<b>4. Star progression</b>	<b>10</b>
4.1 Requirements	11
<b>5. Becoming a 5 Star school</b>	<b>12</b>
5.1 Characteristics of a 5 Star school	12
<b>6. Support and contact information</b>	<b>13</b>
6.1 Working with other schools	13
6.2 Funding	13
6.3 School awards	13
6.4 Contact information	13
<b>More information</b>	<b>13</b>

## Glossary

<b>5 Star school</b>	A 5 Star school has completed all five modules and stars, embedding sustainability in everything they do, with ongoing and proven results. Five stars is the pinnacle of ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic.
<b>Aspirational targets</b>	Modules have aspirational targets that measure reduction of resource usage from baseline data. These targets are optional and not required for module completion or star progression. Aspirational targets encourage schools to go beyond average performance and demonstrate true leadership.
<b>Assessor</b>	Reviews school performance to verify a school has completed a module or star, ready for Sustainability Certification by Sustainability Victoria.
<b>Australian Sustainable Schools Initiative (AuSSI)</b>	AuSSI is a partnership of the Australian Government, the States and Territories that supports schools to work towards a sustainable future.
<b>AusVELS</b>	AusVELS incorporates the Australian Curriculum Foundation to Year 10 (F to 10) for English, Mathematics, History and Science within the curriculum framework first developed for the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS).
<b>Baseline data</b>	Provides a starting point to measure a school's resource usage (electricity, gas, water, waste) and improvements in biodiversity.
<b>Benchmarks</b>	The waste, water and energy modules have specific benchmarks calculated as a per student target. Schools do not need to meet benchmarks to complete a module, but they do need to meet and maintain benchmarks to be recognised as a 3, 4 or 5 Star school.
<b>Biodiversity</b>	The variety of all life forms including animals, plants and microorganisms, and the ecosystems of which they form a part. We rely on ecosystems for food, water, clean air and materials.
<b>Biodiversity Module</b>	This module helps schools protect and improve the land (school grounds and surrounds), the local ecosystem, and plant and animal habitats.
<b>Consortia</b>	Regional networks of sustainability experts in Victoria that deliver ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic. The main contact for each consortium is a regional coordinator.
<b>Core Module</b>	This foundation module helps identify the sustainability actions, achievements, plans and policies a school has and the opportunities to improve. This module requires completion first before commencing the other modules.
<b>Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD)</b>	Sustainability Victoria works in partnership with DEECD to deliver ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic. DEECD manages Energy Efficiency Grants.
<b>Energy Module</b>	This module helps schools reduce energy use and save on bills. Schools work on energy conservation, energy efficiency, reducing greenhouse gases and improving air quality.
<b>Facilitator</b>	Helps schools implement ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic. They put schools in touch with people, resources and information, and help with completing modules and Sustainability Certification.
<b>Module completion</b>	ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic has five modules – core, biodiversity, energy, waste and water. To complete a module a school must complete a required number of actions. To progress through Sustainability Certification a school must complete modules.

<b>Online system</b>	ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic has a purpose-built online data management system ( <a href="http://www.resourcesmartschools.vic.gov.au">www.resourcesmartschools.vic.gov.au</a> ) designed to help schools track their progress. Schools use the online system to enter billing details and check off completed module actions. The online system tracks school progress, calculates savings and indicates when modules and stars are ready for Sustainability Certification by Sustainability Victoria.
<b>Regional coordinator</b>	The main contact for each consortium is a regional coordinator. Their role is to coordinate the delivery of ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic in their region.
<b>ResourceSmart School Awards</b>	Held annually by Sustainability Victoria, the awards are a great opportunity for schools to boost their profile, network with other Victorian schools and celebrate their achievements. Prizes are up for grabs.
<b>Star schools</b>	Schools are allocated stars (1 to 5) based on how far they have progressed through Sustainability Certification.
<b>Star progression</b>	Schools are awarded stars in recognition of their progress as they continue on their sustainability journey – starting at 1 star and working their way up to 5 stars. Star progression shows that a school has completed modules, continues to demonstrate and track progress, meets and maintains specific benchmarks over time.
<b>Sustainability Certification</b>	ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic recognises and rewards the hard work and performance of schools through Sustainability Certification. Certification has two parts: module completion and star progression (ranging from 1 to 5 stars).
<b>Sustainability Victoria</b>	The Victorian Government agency responsible for managing ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic.
<b>Teacher Environment Network (TEN)</b>	TENs are developed and run locally enabling teachers to share skills, knowledge and ideas on education for sustainability.
<b>Waste Module</b>	This module helps schools work on implementing a planned approach to waste management to maximise reuse of materials and minimise waste sent to landfill.
<b>Water Module</b>	This module helps schools use water more wisely within school grounds and also in the local community through river health, waterway protection and coastal care.

# 1. About ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic

## 1.1 What is ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic?

ResourceSmart Australian Sustainable Schools Initiative Victoria (AuSSI Vic) is a Victorian Government initiative that helps schools benefit from embedding sustainability in everything they do. It helps schools reduce costs while giving students the opportunity to learn about sustainability in a tangible and realistic environment. More than 1000 Victorian primary and secondary schools are now involved in the initiative.

Schools take action to minimise waste, save energy and water, promote biodiversity and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Using the ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic online system – [www.resourcesmartschools.vic.gov.au](http://www.resourcesmartschools.vic.gov.au) – schools track their sustainability journey and identify savings made. The online system has an inbuilt certification feature that measures and rewards school progression. It also allows schools to share their success with their community and other schools. Five stars are awarded to schools by Sustainability Victoria that live and breathe sustainability.

Sustainability Victoria manages ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic in partnership with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. Sustainability Victoria has set up a network of sustainability experts across Victoria (called consortia) to help schools on their sustainability journey.

### Key features and benefits

**Support:** Sustainability experts support the school on their sustainability journey and schools track and measure their progress using the online system.

**Recognition:** Sustainability Certification and the ResourceSmart Schools Awards recognise and reward school activity.

**Savings:** Save on energy, water and waste bills – and greenhouse gas emissions.

**Adaptable:** Schools create a unique environmental management system and can work with any sustainability program or organisation within the ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic framework.

**Learning:** Students learn take-home lessons about sustainable action as required by the Australian Curriculum.

**Sustainable schools:** Schools learn to operate more sustainably, reducing costs and minimising their impact on the environment through efficient resource use.

**Community:** Practical support for schools and communities to live and work more sustainably and to support other schools and environmental partners along the way.

## 1.2 History

ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic is Victoria's approach to the Australian Sustainable Schools Initiative (AuSSI). More than 1000 schools in Victoria have signed up since the pilot in 2003.

In 2011 the Victorian Government committed \$8.305 million over four years to build on the ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic framework.

In 2003 Victoria and New South Wales concluded pilots that resulted in the start of the Sustainable Schools Initiative. These pilots were co-funded by the federal and state governments. The Victorian pilot was managed by two service providers: the Centre for Education and Research in Environmental Strategies (CERES) and the Gould League.

The success of the pilot led to the launch of AuSSI across Australia in 2005. Under AuSSI, the federal government and state and territory jurisdictions offered practical support to schools and their communities to live and work more sustainably.

Initially, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) was responsible for rolling out AuSSI in Victoria.

Following the establishment of Sustainability Victoria in 2006, DEECD formed a partnership with Sustainability Victoria to deliver AuSSI under the name of ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic in 2008.

In keeping with its responsibility to develop community education on sustainability, Sustainability Victoria was keen to set up ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic as an 'umbrella framework' capable of encompassing the many existing environmental educational programs. In other words, schools could participate in any environmental program or initiative and receive recognition through ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic.

## 1.3 Who can participate?

ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic is available to all government, Catholic and independent primary and secondary schools in Victoria. To be eligible, schools need a Victorian schools registration number. Approximately 400,000 primary and secondary students across Victoria are currently involved in ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic – that's nearly half of all Victorian school students!

## 1.4 Who's involved?

Sustainability Victoria manages Sustainability Certification and the ResourceSmart Schools Awards. Sustainability Victoria funds a network of regional consortia to deliver ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic across Victoria.



The nine regional consortia are:

- › Barwon South West
- › Gippsland
- › Grampians
- › Hume
- › Loddon Mallee
- › Eastern Metropolitan
- › Northern Metropolitan
- › Southern Metropolitan
- › Western Metropolitan

This place-based approach allows sustainability experts to provide hands on and practical support to schools. In some regions one person may cover multiple consortium member roles (Figure 1).

ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic schools can find consortium contact details at the bottom of their dashboard when they login to their account at [www.resourcesmartschools.vic.gov.au](http://www.resourcesmartschools.vic.gov.au).

To find your local consortium email  
[info@resourcesmartschools.vic.gov.au](mailto:info@resourcesmartschools.vic.gov.au).

#### 1.4.1 Other schools and networks

Schools participating in ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic share stories and lesson plans to teach and inspire other schools. Some regions have local networks in place to provide support and ideas, including Teacher Environment Networks (TENs).

Lesson plans and TEN contact details are available from the login area at [www.resourcesmartschools.vic.gov.au/home/resources](http://www.resourcesmartschools.vic.gov.au/home/resources).

Figure 1: ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic consortium members

Regional coordinator	Facilitator	Assessor	Resource experts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› The main contact for each consortium</li> <li>› Coordinates delivery of ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic in their region</li> <li>› Registers schools and sets them up with a facilitator.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Helps schools implement ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic</li> <li>› Puts schools in touch with people, resources and information</li> <li>› Supports Sustainability Certification.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Reviews school performance to verify a school has completed a module or star, ready for Sustainability Certification by Sustainability Victoria.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Biodiversity, water, waste and energy experts help address resource usage in schools.</li> </ul>

## 1.5 Why participate?

ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic is designed to help schools reduce costs and build sustainability into their curriculum. The framework gives students practical skills and experience they need to excel in life and it embeds a culture of sustainability in our communities.

Sustainability is about taking what we need to live now, while ensuring that future generations have the resources they need to survive and thrive. ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic helps schools work towards a more sustainable way of life for the school, its students and community.

Involving students and teachers in real-life learning influences sustainable behaviour now and in the future. It helps schools embed sustainability across all teaching areas as required by the Australian Curriculum. Students can work on projects with tangible results and develop leadership, problem-solving and interpersonal skills.

ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic also has practical benefits such as cost savings. ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic schools have collectively saved over \$5.2 million in energy costs in six years (2008-13) – averaging \$1.3 million a year<sup>1</sup>.

## 1.6 Reward and recognition

ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic recognises and rewards the hard work and performance of schools through Sustainability Certification. Each school receives a sign for their school gate to promote their star status.

Schools can also enter the ResourceSmart Schools Awards held annually by Sustainability Victoria.

The awards are a great opportunity for schools to boost their profile, network with other sustainable schools and celebrate with their whole community.

For more information about the awards visit [www.sustainability.vic.gov.au/schoolsawards](http://www.sustainability.vic.gov.au/schoolsawards).

## 1.7 Supporting the curriculum

The ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic initiative can help schools implement the cross-curriculum priority area of sustainability. Many ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic schools have accessed support to help them implement and understand the sustainability priority.

ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic coordinators and facilitators are on hand to provide advice (see 1.3 'Who's involved'). Schools can also access lesson plans and other resources via the online system to help them implement sustainability across their curriculum.

ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic provides opportunities for students to work on real-life projects, involving project management, data analysis and many other practical skills.

The cross-curriculum priority area of sustainability has been mapped across the following discipline based areas – English, History, Science, Geography and Mathematics.

To read more about sustainability and the curriculum visit <http://ausvels.vcaa.vic.edu.au>.

### Sustainability and AusVELS

Sustainability is one of three cross-curriculum priorities in the Australian Curriculum in Victoria (AusVELS). These priorities are not treated as separate areas of learning but are integrated across all subjects to help students connect their learning with important issues in contemporary society. Education for sustainability develops the knowledge, skills, values and world views necessary for students to act in ways that contribute to more sustainable patterns of living.

### Case study: Sustainability pays off with proven savings

St Therese Primary School in Torquay has approximately 300 students and has saved more than \$20,000 since joining ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic in 2009. The school's sustainability coordinator closely manages the environmental data to quantify dollar savings and environmental impact. This data justifies creating a leadership position in the school and demonstrates the impact of sustainable behaviour to the wider school community.

Monitoring water, gas and electricity bills has other unexpected advantages. When the data showed a \$12,000 increase in their electricity bill from one year to the next, the school contacted their energy supplier and discovered they had been placed on an incorrect rate.

St Therese has saved money through a series of sustainable actions. For example, reducing waste sent to landfill by more than 80% thanks to recycling, composting, minimising use of paper and promoting a rubbish free lunch program to encourage students to bring food without packaging to school on Fridays.

As part of the rubbish free lunch program, students weigh their own classroom bins and use Excel to graph their findings. Each classroom teacher is given a copy of the results so they can see how students in their year level perform against others in the school. Results are displayed around the school with awards for the best performing year levels and classrooms. By comparing the weight of the bins on a normal lunch day and on a rubbish free lunch day, students discovered that they could potentially save 27.5 kg of rubbish per week and 110 kg of rubbish per month.

To read the full case study visit [www.resourcesmartschools.vic.gov.au](http://www.resourcesmartschools.vic.gov.au).

<sup>1</sup> Source: Review of ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic 2008-2013 energy data conducted by Pitt & Sherry, October 2013.



## 1.8 Professional learning

Sustainability Victoria, DEECD and the Victorian Association for Environmental Education (VAEE) are working in partnership to support a community of practice to familiarise EFS service providers, principals and teachers with the ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic framework. This professional learning approach enables EFS service providers, principals and teachers to better deliver ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic in everything schools do – operations, infrastructure, curriculum and community partnerships.

At the beginning of the ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic initiative, Sustainability Victoria conducted research to develop a series of aspirational 'capability statements' to provide a snapshot and benchmark of what the success of the initiative looks like. The capability statements fall into three simple areas – what this group know, what they value and what they do.

The capability statements for service providers and schools are available at Sustainability Victoria's website: [www.sustainability.vic.gov.au/services-and-advice/schools/professional-learning](http://www.sustainability.vic.gov.au/services-and-advice/schools/professional-learning)

Information about ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic facilitation and assessor training and community of practice events is available at [www.vaee.vic.edu.au](http://www.vaee.vic.edu.au)

Information about professional development for teachers is available at [www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/profdev/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/profdev/Pages/default.aspx)

### Further resources:

Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT):  
[www.vit.vic.edu.au/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/Pages/default.aspx)

Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority:  
[www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/Pages/default.aspx)

## 1.9 Using the online system

ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic has a purpose-built online data management system – [www.resourcesmartschools.vic.gov.au](http://www.resourcesmartschools.vic.gov.au) – designed to help schools keep track of their sustainability progress. Each school has a unique online account that can be updated by teachers and students. Schools use the online system to enter billing details, upload and share documents and check off completed module actions. The system tracks school progress, calculates savings and indicates when modules and stars are ready for Sustainability Certification by Sustainability Victoria.

## 1.10 How to participate

Visit [www.resourcesmartschools.vic.gov.au](http://www.resourcesmartschools.vic.gov.au) to find out more and to register your interest.

Once registered, your regional coordinator will contact you to provide more information and to finalise your registration. Once your registration is finalised, your regional coordinator will set up your school's online account and send you your login details.

Your regional coordinator also puts you in touch with a facilitator to help you manage the day-to-day aspects of ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic.

The Victorian Government's Energy Efficiency Grants program provides an incentive for new schools to get involved. A total of 400 grants of up to \$10,000 will be awarded by June 2015 to schools new to ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic.

Visit [www.education.vic.gov.au](http://www.education.vic.gov.au) to find out more.

### Top five tips to get started

1. Make the most of your local regional coordinator and facilitator to gather information, resources and contacts.
2. If possible, assign a dedicated resource in your school to oversee ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic – even an hour or two a week can make a difference.
3. Make contact with other ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic schools and environmental networks in your area for help, ideas and support.
4. Get the whole school on board – teachers, students, parents and the wider school community.
5. Read school stories in the online system for ideas and inspiration.

For more information visit  
[www.resourcesmartschools.vic.gov.au](http://www.resourcesmartschools.vic.gov.au).

### Case study: Looking at sustainability differently

Elwood Primary School is working hard to integrate sustainability into its curriculum. The teachers are broadening their view of sustainability beyond topics like waste, water and biodiversity, so that they can weave it into the curriculum more widely. For example, an economics unit could introduce sustainability by discussing the effects of consumerism, the fair trade movement and the impact of purchases made by people in advanced countries on developing countries.

The school's Kitchen Garden program informs much of what happens in the grade three and four classrooms. These students grow, harvest, share and prepare healthy food, developing awareness of the environment, sustainability and plant diversity. Much of their maths is linked to the kitchen garden, including measuring and weighing food. They discuss and explore concepts like food miles and what happens to waste using the garden's compost system as a tool of exploration.

According to the school's sustainability coordinator, they try to identify links between sustainability and curriculum areas. As a 1 Star school, they work closely with their ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic facilitator, who provides expert knowledge and a background in teaching and organising sustainability activities for hundreds of students across all year levels. The facilitator meets bimonthly with the school to brainstorm new ideas.

Several teachers also attend the Teacher Environment Network meetings hosted by the Port Philip Eco Centre, a not-for-profit, community-managed, environment group that provides a base for a number of affiliate groups involved in activities that promote biodiversity, environmental sustainability and community action. These meetings focus on embedding sustainability into the curriculum, with a focus on practical hands-on activities.

To read the full case study  
visit [www.resourcesmartschools.vic.gov.au](http://www.resourcesmartschools.vic.gov.au).

2. How does it work?

Through ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic, schools take a planned approach to environmental management. Each school implements actions from five modules under a continual cycle of sustainability practice. As schools become increasingly sustainable, we reward their activity with Sustainability Certification (1 to 5 stars) and schools can enter the ResourceSmart Schools Awards.

Schools have access to a consortium of sustainability experts to help them implement ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic.

**Six simple steps to ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic**

1. Sign up at [www.resourcesmartschools.vic.gov.au](http://www.resourcesmartschools.vic.gov.au)
2. Plan your approach to sustainability
3. Audit your current energy, biodiversity, water and waste practices
4. Work through the modules
5. Review and manage your ongoing sustainability
6. Continue and reap the rewards.

2.1 Sustainability Certification

ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic recognises and rewards the hard work and performance of schools through Sustainability Certification including module completion and star progression:

Module completion	Star progression
<p>Complete one of five modules (core, biodiversity, energy, waste, water) and receive a certificate valid for three years.</p> <p>To complete a module schools must complete a set number of actions. To progress through Sustainability Certification schools must complete more actions and more modules.</p>	<p>Meet requirements for 1 to 5 stars to gain recognition of your school's progress. Stars are valid for three years.</p> <p>Star progression shows that a school has completed modules, continues to demonstrate and track progress, and meets and maintains specific benchmarks over time.</p>

Read more about what it takes to become a 5 Star school on page 12.

**What's the difference between module completion and star progression?**

When a school is awarded a certificate for completing a module, it shows that it has carried out enough actions to complete that module.

Star progression shows that not only has a school completed enough modules and actions but that it continues to demonstrate and track progress, meeting and maintaining specific benchmarks for certain modules.

The ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic online system includes an inbuilt Sustainability Certification feature. Schools enter billing details, check off completed actions, upload evidence and enter comments on an ongoing basis. The online system tracks school progress, calculates savings and indicates when modules and stars are ready for certification.

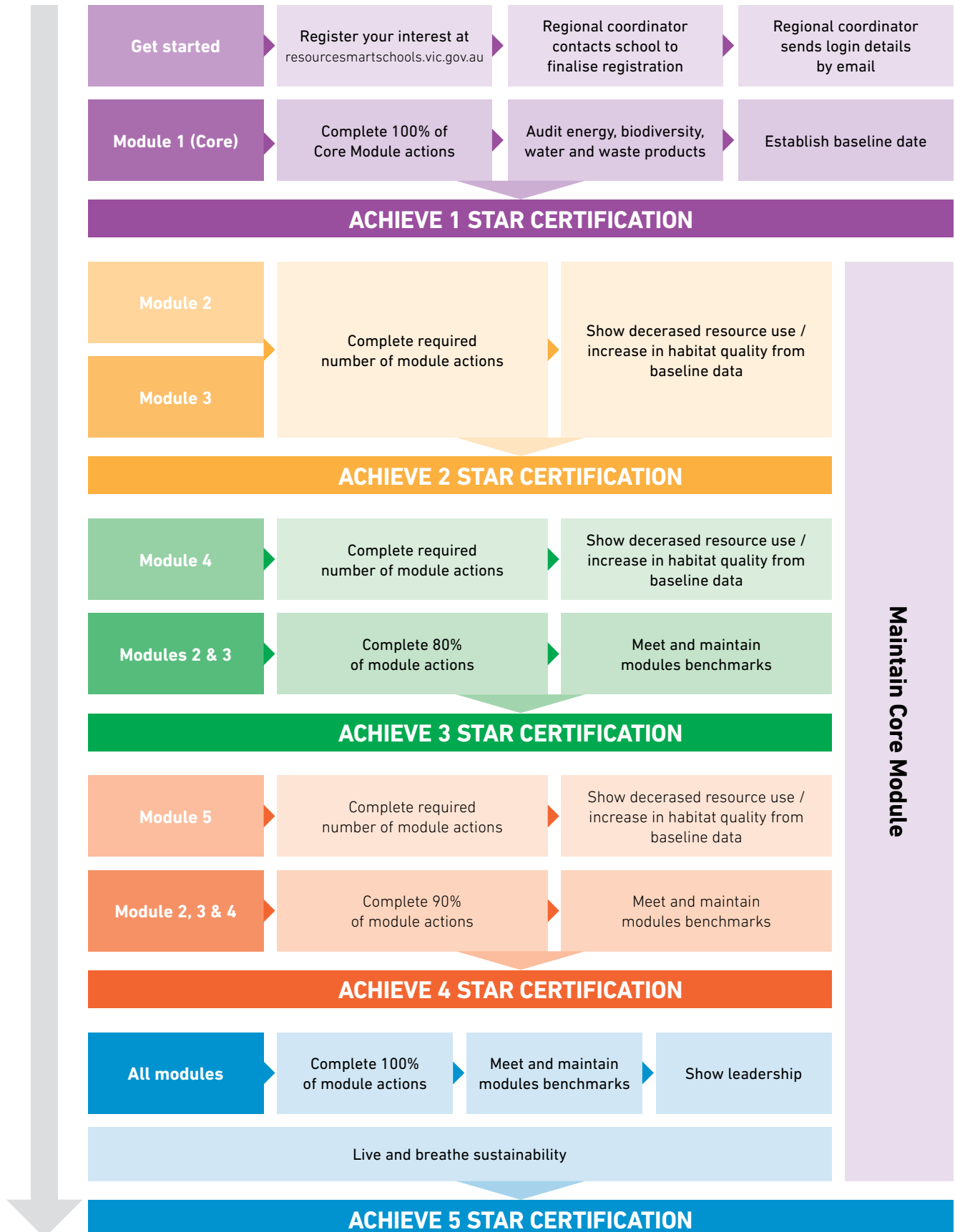
Sustainability Certification is a three-step process:

1. Complete actions, upload evidence and submit for verification;
2. Assessor reviews data to ensure it meets standard requirements; and
3. Sustainability Victoria reviews and confirms certification if all correct.



In March 2014, Frayne College students hold their 5 Star ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic school sign along with the college principal and teachers and ResourceSmart Hume Region Consortia members.

## 2.2 Sustainability Certification process – including module completion and star progression



### 3. Completing modules

ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic has five modules – core, biodiversity, energy, waste and water. Core is the foundation module and must be completed first. Schools can complete the other four modules in any order, or even simultaneously.

Each module includes a range of actions. To complete a module, schools undertake at least the minimum number of actions (or more) as required for that module (see Table 1). Once Sustainability Victoria certifies the module actions, the school receives a certificate valid for three years.

Table 1: Module descriptions and minimum actions required for completion

Module	Description	Minimum actions required
Core	Evaluate where you are, where you want to get to, and how you will get there.	24 of 24
Biodiversity	Protect and improve the land (school grounds and surrounds), the local ecosystem, and plant and animal habitats.	34 of 48
Energy	Work on energy conservation, energy efficiency, reducing greenhouse gases and improving air quality.	26 of 65
Waste	Implement a planned approach to waste management to maximise reuse of materials and minimise waste sent to landfill.	46 of 62
Water	Improve water usage in the school grounds and the community through river health, waterway protection and coastal care.	32 of 57

For modules to contribute towards star progression, schools continue to work through further actions, while also showing a reduction in resource usage to meet benchmarks and improved biodiversity.

#### Module checklists

To see a full list of actions under each module, download the module checklists from [www.resourcesmartschools.vic.gov.au/checklists](http://www.resourcesmartschools.vic.gov.au/checklists). Module checklists can be used as an audit tool to track your progress.

#### 3.1 Core Module



The Core Module identifies the sustainability actions, achievements, plans and policies that a school has in place and opportunities for improvement. It helps schools evaluate where they are, where they want to get to, and how they will get there.

It involves three key areas:

- Workplace and operational: Create a snapshot of how your school is approaching sustainability by gathering baseline data, reviewing curriculum, infrastructure and daily operations and recognising prior achievements and opportunities for improvement. Use this data to plan how you will embed sustainability principles throughout the school and to set up a framework to track your school's progress and achievements.
- Learning and teaching: Create a plan to build sustainability into teaching and learning and support teachers to embed sustainability into the curriculum.
- Whole school community engagement: Tell the whole school community about the fantastic work you are doing and share your learning to demonstrate leadership in sustainability.

#### 3.2 Biodiversity Module



The Biodiversity Module helps your school to protect and improve the land (school grounds and surrounds), the local ecosystem, and plant and animal habitats.

It involves three key areas:

- Workplace and operational: Assess the way your school uses its natural resources through a biodiversity audit, create a biodiversity improvement plan and manage habitats in your grounds.
- Learning and teaching: Explore curriculum activities that engage students in learning and taking action to conserve and increase biodiversity in schools and the local environment.
- Whole school community engagement: Encourage the whole school to work on biodiversity by engaging teachers, students, parents and the wider community.

### 3.3 Energy Module



The Energy Module helps your school reduce energy use and save on bills. Schools work on energy conservation, energy efficiency, reducing greenhouse gases and improving air quality.

It involves three key areas:

- A. Workplace and operational: Audit your energy use, create an energy plan and manage energy use in the school grounds through retrofitting, new technology and maintenance.
- B. Learning and teaching: Explore curriculum activities that engage students in learning how to be more sustainable users of energy.
- C. Whole school community engagement: Engage the whole school in energy smart behaviour and liaise with your community, government, energy networks and/or other schools.

### 3.4 Waste Module



The Waste Module helps your school minimise waste sent to landfill through the operational practices of 'reduce, reuse, recycle', and save on bills.

It involves three key areas:

- A. Workplace and operational: Assess how waste is managed in your school using audits and litter assessments. Create a waste and litter reduction plan, learn to manage litter in your grounds and school yard (e.g. food and garden waste) and improve management of recyclables.
- B. Learning and teaching: Explore curriculum activities that engage students in learning to manage waste and resources more effectively.
- C. Whole school community engagement: Encourage the whole school to work on waste by engaging teachers, students, parents and the wider community.

### 3.5 Water Module



The Water Module helps your school reduce water use and save on bills. Your school will improve water use in the school grounds and the community through river health, waterway protection and coastal care.

It involves three key areas:

- A. Workplace and operational: Save water by assessing the way water is used in your school through audits, creating a water plan, managing water usage in your grounds and school yard, retrofitting and new technology as well as maintenance.
- B. Learning and teaching: Explore curriculum activities that engage students in learning to be more sustainable users of water.
- C. Whole school community engagement: Embed sustainability and being water smart into the life of your school and wider community.

#### Case study: Support is crucial to module success at Campbellfield Heights Primary

In December 2011, Campbellfield Heights Primary School received 1 Star - the first benchmark in ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic Sustainability Certification. Before joining up, the school had already been recycling and started a vegetable garden. ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic gave the school a framework and support to expand its sustainability focus.

While all schools need to complete the Core Module first, it's up to individual schools to decide their next focus. They may choose a module based on their interests, their strengths, or the area that they feel needs addressing most urgently.

Campbellfield Heights chose to complete one module a year based on advice from their ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic facilitator. "It means you can usefully direct your energy," said Carly-Marie Clark, the school's Sustainability Coordinator. "I think making sure something's done properly before you move on to the next thing is really important."

Campbellfield Heights completed its Core Module in 2011, its Waste Module in 2012 and its Energy Module in 2013.

Support has been crucial to the school's success. "I've felt lucky to work with our ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic Facilitator for the northern region, Carolyn Shurey," Carly-Marie said. "Carolyn's been really good at coming out to the school and supporting me and she provides two whole school professional development sessions a year, where she introduces the modules to all staff." Carly-Marie said that principal Jo Howard has made these sessions a priority, timetabling them into the school's calendar.

To read the full case study visit [www.resourcesmartschools.vic.gov.au](http://www.resourcesmartschools.vic.gov.au).

### 3.6 Module benchmarks

To progress beyond 2 stars, schools must meet and maintain specific benchmarks (see Table 2).

The waste, water and energy modules have specific benchmarks calculated as a per student target. Schools do not need to meet benchmarks to complete a module, but they do need to meet and maintain benchmarks to be recognised as a 3, 4 or 5 Star school.

Modules also have aspirational targets for resource usage from baseline data. These targets are optional and not required for module completion or star progression. Aspirational targets encourage schools to go beyond average performance and demonstrate true leadership.

Table 2: Module benchmarks and aspirational targets

Module	Benchmark	Aspirational target
Core	None	None
Biodiversity	<b>None</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; 50% habitat improvement from baseline year</li> <li>&gt; 60% weeds reduction from baseline year</li> </ul>
Waste	<b>Maximum waste to landfill level per student per year:</b>  Primary or secondary school = 0.3 m <sup>3</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; 70% reduction in waste to landfill from baseline year</li> </ul>
Water	<b>Maximum mains water usage level per student per year:</b>  Primary or secondary school = 4 kilolitres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; 40% reduction in mains water use per student from baseline year</li> </ul>
Energy	<b>Maximum energy usage level per student per year:</b>  Primary school = 250 kilowatt-hours, 0.4 tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> , and 0.9 gigajoules  Secondary school = 400 kilowatt-hours, 0.6 tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> , and 1.4 gigajoules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; 50% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from baseline year</li> <li>&gt; 80% reduction over the longer term.</li> </ul>

## 4. Star progression

Stars chart a school's progress as they continue on their sustainability journey. Star progression shows that not only has a school completed modules and actions but that they continue to demonstrate and track progress, meeting and maintaining specific benchmarks over time.

Schools work their way up to 5 Stars – the pinnacle of ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic (Figure 2).

<b>1 Star: Awakening</b>	Plan and build your foundations to bring everyone along on your sustainability journey.
<b>2 Star: Discovering</b>	Discover your local habitat and investigate how you can reduce your resource use.
<b>3 Star: Transforming</b>	Review and improve the way you do things day-to-day and build your profile.
<b>4 Star: Sustaining</b>	Keep up the good work and become a steward of your environment, habitat and community.
<b>5 Star: Leadership</b>	Become a role model for your wider community and mentor for other schools.

### Case study:

#### 5 Star status helps Chatham Primary School stand out and attract opportunities

Chatham Primary School, located in the Melbourne eastern suburb of Surrey Hills, has become a community leader in sustainability, thanks to the combined efforts of its teachers, parents, students and the wider community.

Chatham signed up to ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic in 2009 and in 2013 became a 5 Star school. Chatham's 5 Star status helps to differentiate it from the many other primary schools in the area. The suburb of Surrey Hills is popular with young families and parents have a wide range of choices when deciding on a school for their child. Chatham's 5 Star status also attracts invitations and opportunities by signalling that the school is serious about sustainability – for example, Greening Australia comes to the school and takes a class on revegetation activities each year.

The school's sustainability focus began with a vegetable garden in 2004, initially set up as part of a life skills program for the school's special needs students. Since then, they have installed solar panels, put in water tanks for the oval, instituted rubbish free lunches, and planted a series of gardens to create biodiversity.

By getting involved in ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic, the school was able to formalise their sustainability activities by gaining structure. The initiative also provided the opportunity to analyse results, learn from other schools and recognise and celebrate successes. A band of passionate staff and parents started the Sustainability and Environment Committee, which reports to the whole school about its sustainability actions via the school council.

To read the full case study visit [www.resourcesmartschools.vic.gov.au](http://www.resourcesmartschools.vic.gov.au).



## 4.1 Requirements

Star progression requires schools to complete more than the minimum number of module actions. It also requires schools to show results in the form of resource reduction, or an increase in habitat quality. Table 2 outlines the requirements for each star level.

Table 3: Sustainability Certification requirements by star

	Complete modules	Reduce use of resources	Meet and maintain module benchmarks*	Complete additional module actions**
1Star: Awakening	1 (core)	N/A	N/A	N/A
2Star: Discovering	3 (core + 2)	✓	No	No
3Star: Transforming	4 (core + 3)	✓	✓	Yes (80% of actions)
4Star: Sustaining	5 (core + 4)	✓	✓	Yes (90% of actions)
5Star: Leadership	5 (core + 4)	✓	✓	Yes (100% of actions)

\* For all modules completed under previous star levels (except core as it has no benchmarks).

\*\* To complete a module schools are required to complete a minimum number of actions. To progress to 3, 4 or 5 stars, schools are required to complete further actions, with 100% of all actions completed in all modules to become a 5 Star school.

As part of the Core Module, schools enter a minimum of two years of billing data to the ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic online system for energy, water and waste usage. This data is used to calculate a school's annual resource costs and resource consumption per student and to establish baseline data.

As schools continue to add billing data, the online system automatically calculates progress in:

- › reducing resource use compared to baseline data, and
- › meeting and maintaining module benchmarks.

To read more about the actions required under each star login to your account at [www.resourcesmartschools.vic.gov.au](http://www.resourcesmartschools.vic.gov.au).

### What is baseline data?

Baseline data provides a starting point to measure reductions in your school's resource usage (electricity, gas, waste, water) and improvements in biodiversity.

### What are module benchmarks?

The waste, water and energy modules have specific benchmarks calculated as a per student target. Schools do not need to meet benchmarks to complete a module, but they do need to meet and maintain benchmarks to be recognised as a 3, 4 or 5 Star school.

### What are aspirational targets?

Modules also have aspirational targets which measure reduction of resource usage from your baseline data. These targets are optional and not required for module completion or star progression. Aspirational targets encourage schools to go beyond average performance and demonstrate true leadership.



## 5. Becoming a 5 Star school

Becoming a 5 Star school is the pinnacle of ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic. Five stars are awarded to schools that have fully embedded sustainability in everything they do, with ongoing, proven results.

To become a 5 Star school, the school must complete 100% of actions in each of the five modules and meet specific reductions in energy, waste and water usage and increase biodiversity.

5 Star schools demonstrate leadership in the school and education community: mentoring, sharing stories, attending conferences, hosting teacher network meetings and engaging with other environmental groups.

It is not enough to simply tick the boxes on the 5 Star checklist. A 5 Star school lives and breathes sustainability. They may have revegetation and recycling programs, they may use wind and solar energy, and they apply sustainable design principles when developing new school buildings.

### 5.1 Characteristics of a 5 Star school

The journey to becoming a 5 Star school looks different for every school. Each school follows a unique path suited to their school, the school's environment and the wider community. While there is no magic formula for becoming a 5 Star school, there are some common characteristics:

- Strong links with community encompassing the school community, the broader local community and local community groups.
- Use of school grounds as outdoor classrooms.
- Environmental sustainability is embedded in the school culture and not just an extra activity – it is at the core of the school's values, beliefs and persona.
- Mentoring is key – mentoring other schools, students mentoring students, teachers mentoring teachers, teachers mentoring students and in some cases students mentoring teachers.
- Often at the forefront of sustainable technology and other environment initiatives.
- They are recognised by other schools as being outstanding in the area of environmental sustainability.
- Sustainability is incorporated into the school's curriculum across all learning areas and year levels.

Ultimately, the 5 Star journey needs to be owned by the whole school. Look to other schools for inspiration but set your own path. Read the top 10 tips from schools.

From the moment you sign up with ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic you have already taken your first step towards becoming a 5 Star school.

Good luck and enjoy the journey!

#### Top 10 tips for becoming a 5 Star school

1. **Early involvement and commitment:** Get the whole school community on board early on – ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic works best when everyone understands the benefits and commits to becoming a 5 Star school from the outset.
2. **Know the checklists:** Familiarise yourself with the actions required under the five modules and stars.
3. **Tell your story:** You might be surprised at what your school is already doing that can help you reach 5 stars.
4. **Share the load:** Spread activities across all staff and incorporate actions into the school's daily life.
5. **Get parents involved:** Parents can provide additional time and support to implement actions. It also helps spread the messages around sustainability to the wider community and can positively influence student engagement (parental involvement in school life is a key indicator of educational success).
6. **Use your consortium:** Consortia members have considerable knowledge and experience to help schools implement sustainable actions and integrate sustainability into the curriculum. They can also connect you with networks, groups and funding opportunities.
7. **Students as leaders:** Give students leadership roles to help them develop public speaking skills and confidence in their ability to make a difference. Involving students also improves results as students have a vested interest in peer relationships and are more likely to take advice from peers than from teachers and parents.
8. **Network:** Networking with other schools helps build your knowledge base faster. Networking with local community groups and environmental partners can provide funding and support to accelerate your progress. Find out if there is a Teachers Environment Network operating in your area.
9. **Promote your involvement:** Use your involvement in RSAV as a promotional tool. It can help you stand out from other schools in your area and attract funding and partnerships from with your local council and other environmental partners.
10. **Share your success:** Celebrate your achievements throughout your journey to maintain enthusiasm. Highlight your savings to the school community, especially parents. Financial savings can convince those who might otherwise be sceptical about the amount of effort that the school invests in sustainability.

## 6. Support and contact information

### 6.1 Working with other schools

We encourage all schools to network with other schools as part of ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic, particularly as they achieve more stars. Active leadership and mentoring other schools is a requirement for becoming a 5 Star school.

### 6.2 Funding

Your school's facilitator and other schools may know of a range of funding programs that could help you on your sustainability journey. Building local networks with parents, community groups and environmental organisations could also lead to more funding opportunities.

The Victorian Government's Energy Efficiency Grants program is a great incentive to encourage even more Victorian schools to join ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic. A total of 400 grants of up to \$10,000 will be awarded by June 2015 to schools new to ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic.

Visit [www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/infrastructure/Pages/energygrant.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/infrastructure/Pages/energygrant.aspx) to find out more about Energy Efficiency Grants.

### 6.3 School awards

For more information about the ResourceSmart Schools Awards visit [www.sustainability.vic.gov.au/schoolsawards](http://www.sustainability.vic.gov.au/schoolsawards).

### 6.4 Contact information

ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic schools can find consortium contact details at the bottom of their dashboard when they login to their account.

For other questions email [info@resourcesmartschools.vic.gov.au](mailto:info@resourcesmartschools.vic.gov.au).

## More information

More information about ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic is available on our website at [www.resourcesmartschools.vic.gov.au](http://www.resourcesmartschools.vic.gov.au).



**Disclaimer**

Information in this document is current as at February 2014. While all professional care has been taken in preparing this document, Sustainability Victoria accepts no liability for loss or damages incurred as a result of reliance placed upon its content.

---

Sustainability Victoria  
Level 28, Urban Workshop,  
50 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne VIC 3000  
Phone (03) 8626 8700  
[sustainability.vic.gov.au](http://sustainability.vic.gov.au)

Published by Sustainability Victoria.  
ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic Guidelines  
© Copyright Sustainability Victoria, March 2014 (ENG009)

