



**BOOMERANG BAGS**  
COMMUNITY

# THE HOW-TO GUIDE



How to make a Boomerang Bag.

- 1 Cut fabric from a template 
- 2 Sew top of calico square 
- 3 Sew other 3 sides to front of bag to create pocket. 
- 4 Sew/overlock sides of the bag. 
- 5 Sew in base of the bag 
- 6 Iron and sew handles into straps 
- 7 Attach handles to bag and hem the top of bag. 





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I know I know, you've heard it all before—plastic is filling up our oceans, choking our wildlife and the planet as we know it is headed for certain destruction. **All right, now we've got that part out of the way, it's time to loosen your shoulders, clear your head and get ready for some action.**

Everyday each of us make a choice—we choose to succumb to the ever prevalent throw-away convenience lifestyle swimming with take-away coffee cups, plastic straws, bags and bottles, OR, we choose to step back and think consciously about how the truth behind these 'convenience' items and about what they really mean for our world.

We've been duped by clever marketing campaigns and have undoubtedly found ourselves purchasing convenience items we probably don't need. But can we really keep pretending that when these items end up in our bin, the garbage truck takes them 'away' to a place where they are wholesomely recycled, up-cycled and re-used?

We all know what really happens to our waste, and despite having only used it for a few minutes, the plastic is going to hang around for our children's, children's, children to deal with. Those short-term conveniences actually pose a very long-term inconvenience for the future of our planet.

So it's time to start working together—one community, needle and thread at a time, to reduce the amount of single-use plastic ending up in our landfills and oceans. Through **Boomerang Bags** we can start conversations, build community, make friends, up-cycle materials and work towards shifting society's 'throw-away' mentality, to a more sustainable revolution of re-use! (\*raucous hoorah\*).

*Everyday*  
**EACH OF US  
 MAKE A CHOICE.**





**Boomerang Bags** is a not-for-profit, community initiative aimed at reducing the use of plastic bags by engaging local communities in the development of a free, sustainable alternative.

The initiative involves the installation of bag-share, or Boomerang Bag Boxes throughout a target business district. Each box is stocked with re-useable Boomerang Bags for customers to borrow if they have forgotten their own and return on subsequent visits. The availability of free, re-useable bags reduces the need for single-use plastic bags, and the encouragement to 'Borrow and Bring Back' works to foster the sustainable mentality of re-use, thereby reducing plastic bag consumption.

Each Boomerang Bag is hand-made by volunteers from the local community using donated second-hand materials, keeping the initiative local and sustainable.

Regular Boomerang Bags 'working bees' provide a platform to engage all demographics of the community in a positive environmental initiative, educating on issues of sustainability as well as promoting and encouraging community connectedness and socialisation. They also provide

a hands-on learning environment allowing volunteers, community groups, and school students to gain practical skills, giving them independence and benefiting the community in the long term.





Burleigh  
Heads

## Boomerang Bags Pilot Burleigh Heads

Connecting  
AND EXCITING  
THE COMMUNITY.



In 2014, the Boomerang Bags initiative was piloted in the community of Burleigh Heads on the Gold Coast, in collaboration with Gold Coast City Council who provided start-up funding and support. The initiative was well-received by local businesses and involved a huge level of community support with participation from five schools, seven community organisations and over 250 volunteers.

The pilot demonstrated the effectiveness of the Boomerang Bags initiative in connecting and exciting the local community, increasing consumer awareness, fostering sustainable behaviour, educating and up-skilling students/volunteers, as well as assisting the Burleigh Heads business district in cultivating an eco-friendly, sustainable identity.

## Environmental & Community Outcomes

Builds a greater 'sense of community' by providing an opportunity to work collectively in driving positive environmental change within the local area.

Provides a platform for community members from all demographics to participate in a practical and innovative solution to plastic pollution, creating a means for the community to connect to, and address broader sustainability issues.

Improved community awareness and consumer perceptions about the impacts of plastic pollution and the importance of re-use, ultimately leading to improved environmental sustainability of the local area.

A hands-on learning environment allowing volunteers, community groups and students to gain practical skills which will give them independence and benefit the community in the long term.

Innovative means of up-cycling and giving a second-life to used fabrics, thereby preventing further landfill waste.

Reduced financial cost (to ratepayers) associated with waste management and pollution clean-ups.

Improvement of public open spaces, oceans and natural areas due to a reduction in plastic pollution.

Less consumption of fossil fuels and reduced emissions associated with manufacture and disposal of plastic bags.

Reduced risk of injury or death of wildlife through ingestion of, and entanglement in, plastic bags.





## The Boomerang Bags Way (our manifesto)

In order to maintain the integrity of Boomerang Bags and ensure its long-term effectiveness, Boomerang Bags communities need to stick together. We've listed a few pointers on what's expected to uphold Boomerang Bags credo:

- » A key part of the Boomerang Bags concept is that materials are **sourced second-hand or by donation**, effectively up-cycling materials which would otherwise end up in landfill.
- » Facebook - In order to keep the Boomerang Bags brand strong and ensure the success of the organisation, we need to put all our 'Likes' in one bag. We're maintaining just the one 'parent' Facebook page for Boomerang Bags Australia. Start a public group for your local community (e.g. Boomerang Bags Avalon). In addition to managing your local group, send us any important updates that you want to share with everyone and we will post it on the main Facebook page.
- » Logos and branding - get creative in the production of your Boomerang Bags, just be sure to include the Boomerang Bags logo on all the collateral. Keep the logo consistent (i.e. no alterations or modifications to design or colour).
- » As part of your membership, we'll include your community's story on the Boomerang Bags website. Send us some information about who you are, how you're progressing and some photos.





## Becoming a Boomerang Bags Community

### The How

**Congratulations on coming this far along the road to action!**

Below is a brief overview of additional things you'll need throughout the project, and the subsequent sections provide easy to follow steps and tips on how to get your hands on these materials, engage your community, build partnerships and make bags!

#### What you'll need

- » Second-hand/donated materials
- » Volunteers
- » A venue to make bags from
- » Sewing equipment
- » Boomerang Bag box(es)

#### First step – a little preliminary research

Get a feel for your target area, as well as the resources, capacity and networks you might already have to draw upon.

We suggest considering the following:

- » How many shops/businesses are there in your target area, and of these, how many are using plastic/paper bags? (this will give you an idea of how many boomerang bags you should plan to make)
- » What kinds of businesses are they? (this may help to gauge how likely they are to support the project)
- » What is the general demographic of the area—age, size, locals, tourists/transient, etc.
- » What networks can you reach out to in the following areas:
  - Other not-for-profit groups (networks and contacts, rallying volunteers and support)
  - Local council (funding, events, community organising)
  - Local media (to spread the word)
  - Local schools (particularly home economics or community service days)
  - Clubs such as Country Women's Association and Mens Shed Association (sewing bags and building boxes)
  - Potential venues to hold community working bees/events
  - Businesses/groups who could provide in-kind support (e.g. materials and sewing equipment)

Click to find out more ↪



Engaging the Community



Making Boomerang Bags



Building Partnerships



Fundraising Ideas





# Engaging the Community

## Ways to recruit volunteers and promote your community

HOW	THE GOOD	THE NOT SO GOOD	RECOMMENDATIONS
<p><b>Host a community Bag-it screening and information night.</b> We can provide you with photos and materials from the Burleigh Heads Pilot to help explain the initiative and inspire people to get involved.</p>	<p>Provides an opportunity to create awareness about single-use plastics and inspire people to take action.</p>		<p>Start with the Bag-It screening (45minutes), and follow with a description of Boomerang Bags, how it will benefit the community and their environment and how they can get involved.</p> <p>Make it clear, concise and fun!</p>
<p><b>Put a call out for volunteers</b> through flyers, media releases, school newsletters, etc.</p> <p>The groups listed below are also a good place to reach out for volunteers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Country Women's Association</li> <li>» Schools</li> <li>» Disabled care</li> <li>» Retirement villages</li> <li>» Volunteering groups</li> <li>» Sewing groups</li> </ul>	<p>Large reach with relatively minimal input (examples of Media Releases provided - Appendix C).</p>		<p>Be prepared for the phone calls and emails you may receive!</p> <p>Be sure you're ready to take on volunteers before putting the call out.</p> <p>Needs and volunteer roles may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Donations of fabric and equipment (scissors, machines, irons, calico)</li> <li>» Venue to hold working bees</li> <li>» Volunteers to cut, iron, pin, stamp and sew at working bees</li> <li>» Volunteers to start their own sewing groups or sew from home</li> <li>» Financial support</li> </ul>
<p><b>Social media</b> – start an open Facebook group for your Boomerang Bags community (E.g. Boomerang Bags Avalon)</p> <p>A 'parent' Facebook page for Boomerang Bags Australia is being maintained to ensure the widest exposure for the Boomerang Bags brand, and therefore the overall success of the organisation as a whole. Boomerang Bags Facebook page has followers from all over Australia, which will also help with finding volunteers and support for your local area.</p>	<p>Allows you to communicate specifically to the audience involved in your Boomerang Bags community.</p> <p>Group members are notified of anything posted in the group.</p>		<p>Let us know of any major news or updates about your community so we can share it on the Boomerang Bags Facebook page.</p>





## Engaging the Community

Ways to recruit volunteers and promote your community

HOW	THE GOOD	THE NOT SO GOOD	RECOMMENDATIONS
<p><b>Website</b>  <a href="http://www.boomerangbags.org">www.boomerangbags.org</a></p> <p>Send us a blurb about your community and how you're progressing so we can include you on the Boomerang Bags website.</p>	<p>Wide target audience.</p> <p>Online forum allows you to communicate, ask questions, share ideas, etc. with other Boomerang Bags communities around Australia.</p>		
<p><b>Launch</b> – once you are ready, launch Boomerang Bags into your community!</p>	<p>Great platform to raise awareness about the initiative, spread the message, and answer questions from the community.</p>	<p>Can take a little organising, depending on your event.</p>	<p>Liaise with your local council if having a public event. They may also be able to provide support such as equipment and entertainment.</p> <p>Put out a media release a few weeks prior to the event.</p>



# Making Boomerang Bags

## Steps to get started

STEPS	HOW	THE GOOD	THE NOT SO GOOD	RECOMMENDATIONS
Find a venue	Community halls or spaces	Free Public	Setting up and packing down materials and equipment for each session can be timely, and must fit in with availability of room hire.	
	Volunteers' homes	May require less set-up and pack-down time if materials and equipment are stored at the house.  Friendships are formed due to the personalised environment. Sharing of a meal often accompanies these get togethers.	Can be intimidating to new volunteers going to a private home.  Numbers are limited.	
	Individuals who can't make it to group sewing bees may like to sew from their homes. Only need to supply the materials.	Volunteers can work at their own pace in their own time.	Pick up and delivery of bags to each home can be timely.	A central pickup and delivery location is recommended.
Finding Materials	Op shops	Pick and choose your own colours and patterns.	Costs can add up. Material usually requires washing.	Great place to start gathering material until donations are received.
	Donations from the local community.	Free - Put a call out for second-hand materials through social media, local newspapers, flyers, information nights, school newsletters.	Sorting through what can and can't be used for bags.  Some require washing.	Accept only sheets, doona covers and pillowcases in very good condition.
	New material donations (fabric offcuts/end of rolls).	No washing Free		Approach local dressmakers or fabric stores.



# Making Boomerang Bags

## Steps to get started

STEPS	HOW	THE GOOD	THE NOT SO GOOD	RECOMMENDATIONS
<b>Thread</b>	Funds permitted, buy thread from fabric stores such as Spotlight or Lincraft.	Can choose colours needed Good quality	Good quality thread can be costly! Cheap thread breaks.	Only use thread that has printing on the spool. Blank spools are usually cheap thread that will break.
	Donations from local community and/or fabric stores.	No cost	Might not get the variety of colours needed. Strength can be compromised with old thread.	Include thread in your call out for donations of materials. Encourage local schools or Scouts to run a thread drive. Check thread for strength before using.
<b>Cutting bags and handles</b>	Templates are provided (Appendix A)	Variety of bag sizes Good jobs for volunteers who don't sew.	Poor cutting can lead to materials being wasted. Ironing handles can be time consuming.	Use one or two excellent cutters and very good scissors. A cutting pad and roller results in straight edges and uniform sizes (if desired).
<b>Pockets</b>	Cut rolls of calico in uniform squares. Volunteers iron hems for sewing. Pinking shears can also be used. Stamp pockets using rubber stamps and fabric paint.	Uniform squares make for easy cutting and minimal waste. Pinking shears will allow you to do away with ironing. Stamping is a fun and simple job.	Ironing hems can be time consuming. Stamping can be time consuming as fabric paint needs to be heat set to ensure it is waterproof.	Precut and iron the pockets for as many bags as you plan to sew. That way, you know when you reach your target. It's easier to stamp the pocket prior to sewing onto bags.





# Making Boomerang Bags

## Steps to get started

STEPS	HOW	THE GOOD	THE NOT SO GOOD	RECOMMENDATIONS
<b>Sewing of bags</b>	<p>Set up stations for each stage of the production line, and delegate jobs for volunteers based on their skill levels/ preferences.</p> <p>Templates are available as part of the Starter Kit, however create your own designs, just keep the 'Borrow and Bring Back' stamp on every bag.</p>	<p>It creates a fun and positive environment for community members to connect and socialise as well as learn new skills.</p>	<p>Keeping each station with work needs to be watched and managed well to keep production streamlined.</p>	<p>Try to find a few good sewers to ensure the quality of bags is maintained.</p> <p>Keep matching handles with bags to prevent them getting lost in the production line.</p>
<b>Construction of Boomerang Bag boxes</b>	<p>The Boomerang Box design is included in Appendix B. If you have a Men's Shed Association in your local area, they may be keen to get involved and help with the construction of your Boomerang Bags Box.</p>	<p>Platform to involve another arm of the community (if using Men's Shed).</p> <p>Provides another activity for volunteers to get amongst!</p>		<p>If using Men's Shed, allow four to six weeks prior to launch to have the boxes built.</p>





## Building Partnerships

### How to gain support

HOW	THE GOOD	THE NOT SO GOOD	RECOMMENDATIONS
<p><b>Local Council</b> – talk to your Local Council during the planning stages of the project.</p>	<p>Local Council may be able to provide you with ongoing support in the way of either funding, resources, venues or advice.</p>	<p>Approvals may be required to place Boomerang Bag Boxes on Council property and can take some time.</p>	<p>Start early with enquiries.</p>
<p><b>Gaining local businesses support</b></p>	<p>There are many reasons why businesses will want to support the initiative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» No cost to them (it may even save them money in buying plastic bags)</li> <li>» Free marketing and media exposure</li> <li>» An interesting point of difference for their business/ the business precinct</li> </ul>	<p>Explaining the why and how of the initiative can sometimes be tricky.</p>	<p>Talk to businesses about what you aim to achieve, benefits to them and the community. Direct them to the Boomerang Bags Facebook page so they can see the positive impacts and benefits!</p> <p>If you have support from your local council member, ask them to write a letter of support/reference to display to businesses.</p>
<p><b>Volunteers</b> – Keep your volunteers informed of what you're up to through regular emails or through the Facebook group.</p>			<p>Let your volunteers know how much their help is appreciated— we encourage tea breaks and shared lunches during sewing bees!</p>



## Fundraising Ideas

### Ways to raise funds

HOW	THE GOOD	THE NOT SO GOOD	RECOMMENDATIONS
<b>Council Support</b>	Great to have the local Council on board. They may be able to provide ongoing support and advice throughout the project.	It may take some time to find the right contacts within Council.	<p>Find a relevant contact within Council such as a Community Development or Community Engagement Officer and arrange a meeting to discuss the concept. Be organised before talking to/meeting with Council.</p> <p>Use the example '<b>Proposal for funding</b>' provided in the Starter Kit. Adjust as appropriate to your local area and be sure of what you're asking for (how much funding/what kind of support you need).</p>
<b>Grants</b>	Given that Boomerang Bags has both community and environmental outcomes, it is suitable for a range of different grants.	Grants can be competitive and sometimes involve lengthy application forms and acquittal processes.	Grant timeframes may not always meet your timelines and goals. Allow plenty of time to search and apply for grants before you require the funds.
<b>Fundraising Events</b>	Events are fun! They provide a great platform to involve and connect with your community, raise awareness, recruit volunteers and support for the initiative.	Requires a little time and planning.	Raffle prizes are a great way to raise money at events. Gather donations of ethical merchandise from local businesses. Invite and promote businesses who donate merchandise.
<b>Selling Bags</b>	The more people who have re-useable bags, the better! Selling bags also provides an opportunity to talk to your community and gain support for the initiative.	All good! They are popular bags.	<p>We will supply you with a number of Bought to Support Bags with the Starter Kit, and more on request at cost price.</p> <p>Market stalls and events are a good place to sell merchandise. Local businesses might also be interested in selling re-useable bags in their stores on your behalf.</p>
<b>Business Support</b>	Once you have support from one or two businesses, others are more likely to follow suit.	Sometimes the value of the initiative is not obvious to businesses straight away.	Seek partnerships with like-minded people/businesses/organisations. <b>Spread the word</b> , have conversations with many people—networking is key to a successful initiative .



# APPENDICES



- APPENDIX A - Boomerang Bag Instructions
- APPENDIX B – Boomerang Bag Box Design
- APPENDIX C – Media Release Examples
- APPENDIX D – Template Proposal for Funding
- APPENDIX E – Letters of Support
- APPENDIX F – Volunteer Form



# Appendix A Boomerang Bag Instructions



**DIMENSIONS FOR BAG**  
2 handles min 24cm x 4cm  
Bag approximately 40cm x 90 cm  
Calico square: 22cm x 22cm



**SEW HANDLES**  
Fold and iron in half. Open and fold each side to middle crease. Iron closed ensuring edges together.



**SEWING HANDLES**  
Sew sides of handles.



**CALICO SQUARE**  
Fold three sides over 1cm and iron. Fold fourth side over twice and iron.



**SEW TOP OF CALICO SQUARE (POCKET)**  
Right (stamped) side down, sew, wrong side up across top of pocket (where it has been folded over twice).



**POCKET**  
Pocket should look like this prior to pinning on bag.

# Appendix A Boomerang Bag Instructions



**PINNING POCKET**  
Pin pocket, centred vertically on bag and slightly lower than the horizontal centre to allow for the the top of bag to be folded over for handles.



**SEW POCKET**  
Sew pocket to bag prior to overlocking. Ensure the pocket is reinforced at the top.



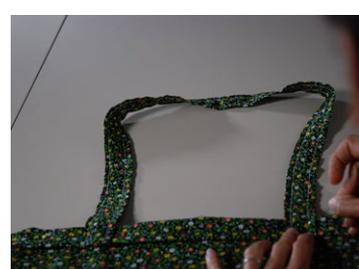
**SIDES OF BAG**  
Turn the bag inside out. Overlock and follow up with a straight stitch for reinforcement.



**BASE OF BAG**  
Use a template to sew corners of the bag.



**BASE OF BAG**  
Pin and sew across, reinforcing at each end.



**PINNING OF HANDLES**  
With the bag still inside out, turn the top of the bag over twice making sure the folds are the same width as the handles. Tuck handles under and pin using the centred pocket as a guide for handle placement.

# Appendix A

## Boomerang Bag Instructions

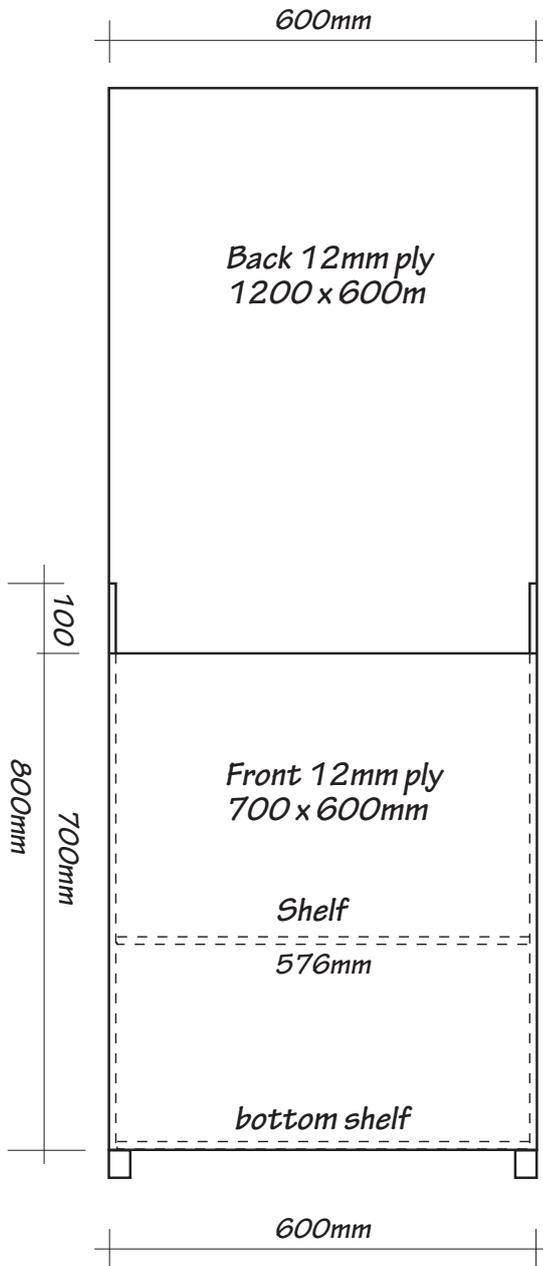


**SEWING HANDLES**  
Attach the handles by sewing twice around the bag, once at the bottom of the fold and once at the very top of the bag.



**BOOMERANG BAG!**  
Check for loose threads and turn right way around. Our pocket is a little high but this bag is ready for the Boomerang Box!

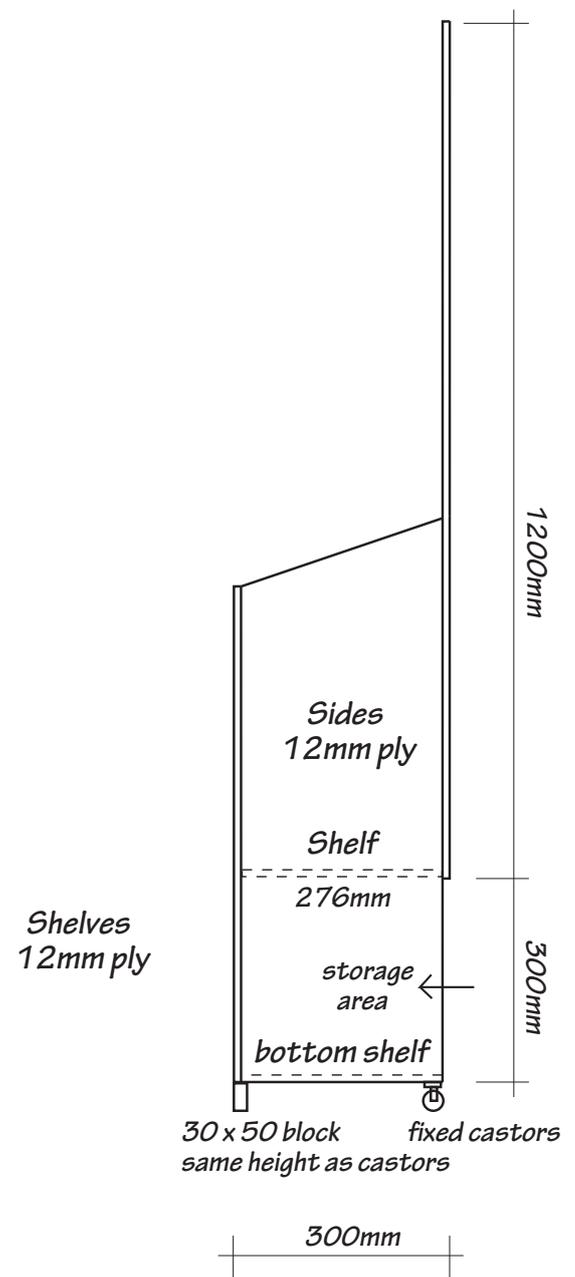
# Appendix B Boomerang Bag Box Design



**FRONT VIEW**



**TOP VIEW**



**SIDE VIEW**

# Appendix C

## Media Release Examples

### MEDIA RELEASE [1]

## Bag-It Screening/Community Call Out

Founders of Boomerang Bags are hosting a screening of the award-winning environmental documentary 'Bag It' at Burleigh Heads at 6:00pm tonight.

'Bag It' follows "everyman" Jeb Berrier as he tries to make sense of our dependence on plastic bags. Although his quest starts out small, Jeb soon learns that the problem extends past landfills to oceans, waterways and ultimately human health.

"Living on the Gold Coast, where our lifestyles are dependent on waterways, beaches and the ocean, this is a must see film about plastics, where it comes from and where it goes," said Tania Potts from Yeskandoo.

"After seeing Bag It a few years ago, we were inspired to start community action on single-use plastics."

Jordyn de Boer from Surfrider Foundation has also been driving awareness about the use of single-use plastics a little closer to her home in Burleigh Heads. "As a surfer and environmental scientist, and after talking with local business and community organisations, we realised we needed to lead a proactive project to kick start the concept of a plastic bag free zone in Burleigh Heads".

Boomerang Bags have become an answer to the issue, where in an effort to rise above plastics in Burleigh Heads, bag-share or 'Boomerang Bag Boxes' will soon be stocked with re-useable bags which have been hand-made by local community groups and volunteers using recycled fabrics.

The availability of free, re-useable bags reduces our reliance on plastic, builds community connectedness in their creation, and encourages a mentality of re-use among the local community.

"This is a free-to-business approach and it is encouraging to see the uptake of the project already".

The Boomerang Bag project has support from local businesses, schools, community and environmental groups and organisations, as well as the City of Gold Coast.

"In the next 100 days, we will be counting down to the launch where we will have 2000 Boomerang Bags available to use in Burleigh Heads," said Tania. "If you care for waterways, beaches, the ocean and human health, we encourage you to come along to see the Bag It movie and be inspired to lead an action to reduce the use of single-use plastics."

The screening will take place at Fradgley Hall, Burleigh Heads, tonight at 6pm.

# Appendix C

## Media Release Examples

### MEDIA RELEASE [2]

## Bikinis, Boardshorts, Boomerang Bags?

First it was bikinis, then boardshorts and now Boomerang Bags are sewing waves of awareness ready to be launched on the Gold Coast.

So, what's a Boomerang Bag? Hand-stamped with 'Borrow and Bring Back', Boomerang Bags are re-useable bags, hand-made by volunteers from the local community using recycled materials. The re-useable Boomerang Bags will be placed in the Burleigh Heads business district, providing a free, sustainable alternative to plastic bags for community members who may have forgotten their own re-useable bags.

Tania Potts and Jordyn de Boer, the creative co-founders of Boomerang Bags have been leading the cause, with support from local businesses, local council, schools and largely the community who have kindly donated their time to source material and sew bags. A dynamic group of volunteers, young and old, have been attending weekly sewing bee's and have collectively sewn 2000 Boomerang Bags ready to distribute into Burleigh Heads.

"The program offers the opportunity for a wide and diverse range of Gold Coasters to volunteer their time, energy and respective skills to fostering a better, cleaner and greener Gold Coast for all of us to enjoy." (Peta Fielding – CEO, Burleigh Brewing Co.)

"Through their sewing bees, the volunteers learn much about the problems we face and we, as volunteers, gain a great deal of satisfaction to be offered the opportunity to be proactive." (Judy Brodie – Volunteer)

Although the initiative hasn't been officially launched, it is certainly getting kudos from environmental leaders. Simon Warner, CEO of SEQ Catchments who recently acknowledged the initiative as a great way for the community to lead sustainable choices for the environment.

"These bags allow the community to take the lead on reducing waste and pollution. It's a great idea and hopefully will spread across the country".

Everyone is encouraged to get along to the launch on Saturday 31st May in James Street, Burleigh Heads to 'borrow and bring back' a Boomerang Bag. The launch will kick off at 11am, with the placement of Boomerang Bag Boxes, full of re-useable Boomerang Bags into the shopping district, followed by music, food and a chance to meet and mingle with the wonderful volunteers and groups behind the initiative!

For more information please visit [boomerangbags.org](http://boomerangbags.org) or check us out on Facebook [www.facebook.com/boomerangbags](http://www.facebook.com/boomerangbags).

## Appendix C

# Media Release Examples

### MEDIA RELEASE [3]

## Boomerang Bags making good progress

The Boomerang Bags initiative has been up and running for 10 days now, and the founders of the project are more optimistic than ever. The Burleigh Heads scheme aims to reduce plastic bag use in the local area. More broadly, the group is implementing a sustainable alternative to single-use plastic bags.

Boomerang Bags have set themselves an almighty task of making 2,000 re-useable bags for the community of Burleigh Heads. To accomplish this goal, the group has recruited a small army of locals who have contributed their time and sewing abilities. The current volunteers come from all walks of life, with ages ranging from 11 to 81.

Voice Of Burleigh had a chat with Jordyn de Boer (co-founder), who said "the initiative has received a great response from the community". As of today, the group have completed 200 bags and the project is only gaining more momentum.

Once the group has hit its 2,000 bag goal, a number of bag-share or 'Boomerang Boxes' will be stocked full of re-useable Boomerang Bags and placed throughout the Burleigh Heads shopping area. The idea is that local shoppers who have forgotten to bring their own re-useable bags, can simply borrow from the 'Boomerang Box' for free, meaning they don't need to turn to plastic.

If you'd like to be involved, the group are making bags between 10am – 2pm on Thursdays; however for those who aren't available between these times, there are flexible take-home options available. If sewing isn't your forte, Boomerang Bags are also looking for donations of material and cotton thread.

To volunteer for Boomerang Bags no sewing experience is required and all training is provided free of charge. Get in touch with Jordyn on 0425 345 066, or visit their Facebook page [www.facebook.com/boomerangbags](http://www.facebook.com/boomerangbags) and website [www.boomerangbags.org](http://www.boomerangbags.org) for more information.

## Appendix D

# Template Proposal for Funding



# Boomerang Bags About the Initiative



## The Need

In recent years, an increasing number of areas around the world have taken action to reduce their reliance upon plastic bags. Our 'throw-away' consumer mentality means that a large amount of plastic waste has been rapidly filling up our landfills, clogging our waterways and polluting our oceans for decades.

With the aim of reducing the distribution and use of disposable plastic shopping bags, a number of community organisations have collaborated to implement a plastic bag reduction initiative called **Boomerang Bags**.

Boomerang Bags provides a free, sustainable alternative to plastic bags, in a way which connects and engages with local communities, and fosters the sustainable behaviour of re-use.

Plastic bag reductions in many Australian jurisdictions have been well received by consumers, with a significant increase in the number of consumers taking their own re-useable bags to shops. This has led to declines in plastic bag material entering landfills, as well as far fewer plastic bags recorded in the litter stream.

## The Answer - **Boomerang Bags**

Boomerang Bags is a not-for-profit, community initiative aimed at reducing the use of plastic bags by engaging local communities in the development of a free, sustainable alternative.

The initiative involves the installation of bag-share, or Boomerang Bag Boxes throughout a target business district. Each box is stocked with re-useable Boomerang Bags for customers to borrow if they have forgotten their own, and return on subsequent visits. The availability of free, re-useable bags reduces the need for single-use plastic bags, and the encouragement to 'Borrow and Bring Back' works to foster the sustainable mentality of re-use, thereby reducing plastic bag consumption.

Each Boomerang Bag is hand-made by volunteers from the local community, using donated second-hand materials, keeping the initiative 100% local and sustainable. Regular Boomerang Bag 'working bees' provide a platform to engage and connect all demographics of the community in a positive environmental initiative, whilst promoting and encouraging community connectedness and socialisation. They also provide a hands-on learning environment allowing volunteers, community groups, and school students to gain practical skills which will give them independence and benefit the community in the long term.





# Boomerang Bags About the Initiative



## Boomerang Bags Pilot Program - **Burleigh Heads**

In 2014, the Boomerang Bags initiative was piloted in the community of Burleigh Heads on the Gold Coast, in collaboration with Gold Coast City Council who provided start-up funding and support. The initiative was well-received by local businesses, and involved a huge level of community support with participation from four schools, seven community organisations, a women's correctional facility, and over 200 active volunteers.

The pilot demonstrated the effectiveness of the Boomerang Bags initiative in connecting and exciting the local community, increasing consumer awareness, fostering sustainable behaviour, educating and up-skilling students and volunteers, as well as assisting the Burleigh Heads business district in cultivating an eco-friendly, sustainable identity.

## Outcomes + Benefits

### Community Outcomes

- » Reduced financial cost associated with waste management and pollution clean-ups.
- » Improvement of public open spaces, oceans and natural areas due to a reduction in plastic pollution.
- » An improved 'green' image for the local area, creating a trend for the community to connect to the wider environmental issues of waste management and re-use.
- » Increased 'sense of community', opportunities for community members from all demographics to participate in a positive environmental initiative, socialise and connect with their community.
- » Increased community awareness and consumer perceptions about the impact and necessity of disposable plastic bags.
- » Opportunities for the community to learn new skills through volunteering.
- » Reduced risk of exposure to toxic substances contained in plastic bags.



# Boomerang Bags About the Initiative



## Outcomes + Benefits

### Environmental Outcomes

- » Cleaner parks, beaches and other natural areas.
- » Reduced risk of injury or death of wildlife through ingestion of, and entanglement in, plastic bags.
- » Less consumption of fossil fuels, and reduced emissions associated with manufacture and disposal of plastic bags.
- » Reduced risk of toxins leaching into ecosystems.

### Business Outcomes

- » Reduced financial cost to businesses - supplying plastic bags is a business expense with no financial return. Changes in consumer habits to 're-use' (with assistance of Boomerang Bags) will relieve businesses of the expectation to supply free bags to customers.
- » Improved customer loyalty - consumers are becoming increasingly aware of the adverse impacts of plastic bags, and often choose to support businesses that are doing their bit to protect the environment.
- » Improved business identity - the overall image of the business precinct as being green, eco-friendly, and sustainable will be recognised by community members, tourists and visitors.
- » Publicity - supporting businesses will be recognised through coverage via local media sources, as well as national recognition through the Boomerang Bags website and social media. Participating businesses will also be supplied with window signage recognising and promoting their commitment to reducing plastic.

# Boomerang Bags About the Initiative



## Getting Started - Costs

Item	Cost
Thread and sewing materials (depending on qty of bags)	\$
Venue hire (if required)	\$
Community information night (venue hire/catering)	\$
Boomerang boxes and signage	\$
Printing/marketing	\$
Boomerang Bags Starter Kit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Membership</li> <li>• How-To Guide</li> <li>• Brand TM and logos</li> <li>• Bag patterns and designs</li> <li>• Promotion through website and social media platforms</li> <li>• Ongoing support</li> </ul>	\$ 500
Sewing machine maintenance	\$
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$</b>

## Appendix E

# Letters of Support



24 March 2014

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this letter of support for Boomerang Bag's recent City of Gold Coast community grant application.

Boomerang Bags recently approached Burleigh Brewing in regards to recycling our grain bags to make reusable bags as well as a part of their involvement with 'Clean up Australia Day'. It is a pleasure to discover there are organisations tackling the serious issue of single use plastic and its devastating impact on the environment. An especially important issue when we live in one of the most beautiful and diverse eco systems in Australia. We're passionate about keeping our beaches beautiful too. The program also offers the opportunity for a wide and diverse range of Gold Coasters to volunteer their time, energy and respective skills to fostering a better, cleaner and greener Gold Coast for all of us to enjoy.

As a business that sells things to our local community, we struggle with the balance of providing 'carrying options' for our customers, yet not adding to plastic bag pollution in the process. Our solution to date has been to offer NO bags – and find creative ways to make do – like helping customers to their cars and carrying half their 'loot'! The Boomerang Bags concept can add another dimension to our 'no plastic bags' policy, by providing another alternative for our customers. It truly is a bag option with a difference and we really support the idea. The Boomerang Bags concept aligns perfectly with the Burleigh Brewing spirit of approaching things creatively and has the potential to allow us to recycle some of our own brewery 'rubbish' into a useful item that benefits the community – and the world!

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peta Fielding', is written over a light grey rectangular background.

Peta Fielding  
CEO

ABN 66 120 165 522  
PO Box 410 West Burleigh QLD 4219  
17A Ern Harley Drive Burleigh Heads QLD 4220



## Appendix E

# Letters of Support

Judy Brodie  
32 Sir Bruce Small Boulevard  
BENOWA WATERS QLD 4217

Boomerang Bags  
Burleigh Heads

Dear Jordyn,

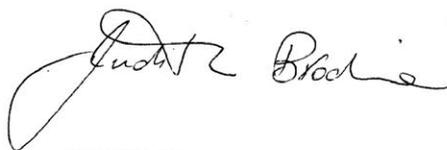
Through my daughter Sheridan, I have been fortunate to join the Boomerang Bags sewing group a few months ago, to help with the sewing of bags. This is a dynamic group of people, young and old, who are very passionate about reducing plastic bag pollution.

I have been impressed with the commitment the organizers show towards their volunteers, making sure every person has a job within their capability and they clearly value each person's input to the project.

Wishing them every success with their funding, as Boomerang Bags has the potential to negate the use of plastic bags Australia wide. Through their sewing bees, the volunteers learn much about the problems we face and we, as volunteers, gain a great deal of satisfaction to be offered the opportunity to be proactive.

I wish them every success with the Boomerang Bags project.

Yours sincerely,



Judy Brodie

# Appendix E

## Letters of Support



24 March 2014

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

**RE: BOOMERANG BAGS PROJECT**

Currumbin RSL is proud to support community projects under its Community Benefit Fund. Project support can be financial or in kind. Projects must fulfil some necessary criteria including (but not limited to) beneficial to the community, sustainable over time, recognise a need, support underprivileged, aid diversity and other contributors to community life.

The Boomerang Bags project, passionately led and managed by Tania Potts, Jordyn de Boer and their team, fills many of these criteria and Currumbin RSL are proud to support the project. Our assistance to the Boomerang Bags project has been in the form of in kind gifting of venue space for the production of the bags over some months now.

We are thrilled that we could add to this projects viability and outcomes. We applaud the environmental objectives the project aims for and have watched as the project is rolled out in an organised and successful method.

We wish Jordyn, Tania and their team all the best for future furthering of the project and would be happy to be counted on her list of supporters for same.

Yours faithfully,

Kerry Shepherd  
Community Relationships Manager

P: 07 5534 7999  
F: 07 5534 7831

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Currumbin Q 4223

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ABN: 34 116 049 336



## Appendix F **Volunteer Form**



## HOW TO GET INVOLVED

<b>Name</b>		
<b>Phone (optional)</b>		
<b>Email Address</b>		
<b>Please indicate your interest in Boomerang Bags and how you'd like to support the initiative</b>	<b>Would you like to receive our monthly e-newsletter updates? (yes / no)</b>	
	<b>By donating (tick)</b>	<b>Volunteering to (tick)</b>
	Thread <input type="checkbox"/>	Make bags at home <input type="checkbox"/>
	Material / Sheets etc <input type="checkbox"/>	Join an existing sewing group <input type="checkbox"/>
	Financially <input type="checkbox"/>	Set up a sewing group <input type="checkbox"/>
	Collect material donations <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Fundraise <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Assist with marketing and promotion <input type="checkbox"/>	
	<b>Other (please specify)</b>	
<b>Please indicate your level of skill in any area you wish to contribute (training available)</b>		

**THANKS FOR YOUR INTEREST IN BOOMERANG BAGS!**

We'll be in touch soon with further information. In the meantime, check out our Facebook page [www.facebook.com/boomerangbags](http://www.facebook.com/boomerangbags) and website [www.boomerangbags.org](http://www.boomerangbags.org) for updates.



# SEWING SEEDS OF CHANGE

Contact us on 0425 345 066  
or [info@boomerangbags.org](mailto:info@boomerangbags.org)  
for more information.

[www.boomerangbags.org](http://www.boomerangbags.org)

KINDLY SUPPORTED BY

