

# Small Steps, Big Impact



A guide to setting up a successful campaign  
to reduce your business's travel emissions

# Contents

How this guide can help your business	2
Introduction	4
Step-by-step guide	6
Appendix A: Challenge ideas	9
Appendix B: Email template	14
Appendix C: Survey sample questions	16

# How this guide can help your business

This guide aims to help your business run a successful campaign called ‘Small Steps, Big Impact’, to reduce your scope 3 travel emissions, encourage your employees to get active and creative, and foster a culture of environmental responsibility throughout your business.

This guide provides basic resources needed to set up, run, and wrap up your own campaign, including:

- **Detailed steps-by-step** recommendations
- **Two challenge ideas** — to run in a week and motivate employees with each challenge offering different and inclusive ways to travel sustainably.
- **Email templates** — to help you introduce the campaign. It is also helpful to provide weekly updates about the challenge, share tips for sustainable travel, and celebrate participant success through your work channels.
- **Poster (print-out and digital)** — we have prepared a poster for you to display in high-traffic areas around the physical and digital workplace to serve as constant reminders of the campaigns goals.

## Did you know...



**A full bus** load of passengers can take more than **50 cars** off the road.



Switching from car to **public transport** for commuting could save a person around **\$5,500 a year**.



**3.2%** of Australians cycle or walk to work, a **significant decline** from 8.4% in 1976<sup>1</sup>



**More than half** of employed Australians still take a **private** car to work<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (2022). [Australia's journey to work](#).

# Introduction

‘Small Steps, Big Impact’ (“the campaign”) is a week-long green commute campaign that aims to encourage employees to adopt sustainable travel options, such as walking, cycling, carpooling, or using public transport, to reduce carbon emissions and promote a healthier lifestyle. This campaign involves a combination of challenges, visual reminders and email to connect with employees and influence behaviour.

The campaign is designed to be flexible, allowing businesses to shape the campaign structure to best align with their unique culture and operational environment. Every business has its own values, traditions, and styles of engagement, so it is encouraged to adapt the challenge(s), communications materials and campaign duration to resonate with your employees.

For instance, companies with a collaborative culture might focus on team-based challenges, while companies with employees that work across different time zones could prioritise individual activities. Similarly, visuals can be tailored to reflect the business's branding, and communications can be adjusted for tone — whether formal, casual, or motivational. The goal is to create an encouraging, inclusive experience that guides sustainable commuting behaviours while demonstrating how your business lives by its values by, quite literally, “walking the talk” on sustainability.

## Campaign steps



### 1. Planning and preparation

- Know your baseline
- Set goals
- Design tracking system
- Prepare incentives



### 2. Launch with posters and initial email

- Distribute posters
- Send kick-off email
- Spread the word



### 3. Conduct information session or release campaign brochure

- Host a virtual or in-person meeting



### 4. Run challenges and weekly email updates

- Select challenge
- Set up a digital channel and dashboard
- Post or email a daily update



### 5. Mid-campaign engagement boost

- Introduce surprise double points week
- Conduct mid-campaign survey
- Share environmental impact statistics
- Post employee highlights



### 6. Campaign close and celebration

- Final wrap-up email
- Reward ceremony
- Encourage ongoing sustainable commutes

# Step-by-step campaign guide



## Step 1: Planning and preparation

- **Know your baseline:** Based on existing data, if available, or an initial survey (see Appendix C: Survey sample questions) establish your baseline. This data can be as simple as knowing how many employees drive, take public transport or walk to work each week. If you want to obtain a quantitative data, there are free tools online that do this including:
  - **Carbon Footprint Calculator** (Carbon Positive Australia) — This free carbon footprint calculator helps participants calculate their carbon footprint in tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO<sub>2</sub>e) across several categories including travel and transport.
  - **Ecological Footprint Quiz** (Global Footprint Network) — This free, comprehensive quiz helps participants calculate their ecological footprint and consumption by global hectares (gha) across several categories including mobility. Though a category breakdown is provided, this quiz requires participants to answer questions across all categories.
- **Set goals:** Define measurable goals, like reducing number of employees driving or an increase in sustainable commuting by a set amount during the campaign or even reporting year. Ensure goals are realistic and inspiring to keep employees motivated!
- **Design tracking system:** Use a Google Form or equivalent for employees to log their past commute routines as well as ongoing routine throughout the campaign. Make sure tracking is made simple and mobile-friendly. Each participant should be able to track their own points for individual or team challenges.
- **Prepare incentives:** Arrange meaningful prizes for challenge winners, such as gift cards, eco-friendly products, or a fun experience, which can help boost motivation.



## Step 2: Launch with posters and initial email

- **Distribute posters:** We have prepared a poster for you to put up in areas like lobbies, kitchens, near elevators and break rooms, as well as online in your digital workspace such as Teams or Slack. The posters can be edited with branding and are crafted to inspire lasting behavioural change, extending their influence well beyond the campaign week to maximise both their impact and long-term benefits!
- **Send kick-off email:** we have prepared an email template (see Appendix A) to help you introduce the campaign.
- **Spread the word:** Promote the campaign in team meetings by reaching out to team leaders and managers ahead of the campaign.



## Step 3: Conduct information session or release campaign brochure (optional)

- **Host a virtual or in-person meeting:** Provide employees with insights into sustainable commuting, details about the campaign challenges, and resources to make it easy to participate.

### Recommended agenda for the information session

- **Introduction to the campaign:** Overview of “Small Steps, Big Impact” and how it fits into our business’s environmental goals.
- **Understanding scope 3 emissions:** Quick breakdown of emissions, why they matter, and how commuting habits impact them.
- **Challenges overview:**
  - **Step challenge:** Get active with a goal to walk or bike to reduce emissions.
  - **Photo scavenger hunt:** Capture moments from your green commute.
- **Resources for sustainable commuting:** Overview of the tools and support available, like public transport routes, bike-share info, and carpool arrangements.
- **Q&A:** Open floor for questions about the campaign, sustainable commuting options, and resources.





## Step 4: Run challenges and weekly email updates

- **Select challenge:** We have provided two challenge ideas in Appendix B, select one or both challenges.
- **Set up a digital channel and dashboard:** Participants can keep track of other individuals and/or teams' progress, as well as connect and exchange ideas.
- **Post or email a daily update:** Share leaderboard results for the step challenge and "green commute tips of the week".



## Step 5: Mid-campaign engagement boost (optional but recommended for campaigns longer than one week)

- **Introduce surprise double points week:** Select a day when points for the challenges are double to encourage more participation.
- **Conduct mid-campaign survey:** Collect data to understand how participants' commute routines have changed and calculate the impact they have made to help your business reduce its travel emissions.
- **Share environmental impact statistics:** Show the impact participants have made so far, such as total tCO<sub>2</sub>e saved, or cars taken off the road, reinforcing the importance of individual efforts.
- **Post employee highlights:** Feature stories from participants, sharing experiences and advice on green commutes.



## Step 6: Campaign close and celebration

- **Final wrap-up email:** Congratulate winners and announce the final results for each challenge, share total reductions in emissions achieved (for example, CO<sub>2</sub>, vehicles removed from the road).
- **Reward ceremony:** Organise a virtual or in-person celebration such as a morning tea or lunch where winners receive their prizes, and everyone is acknowledged for their contributions.
- **Encourage ongoing sustainable commutes:** Invite employees to continue their green commutes, offering tips and business resources that can help.



## Appendix A:

# Challenge ideas

As part of the ‘Small Steps, Big Impact’ campaign guide resources, we have outlined 2 engaging challenges designed to inspire a more active, green commute: the step challenge and the photo scavenger hunt. These activities not only encourage physical fitness and environmental consciousness but also foster teamwork, creativity, and a bit of friendly competition among colleagues.

Both challenges offer an enjoyable way to connect with coworkers, improve health, and contribute to a greener workplace. Let's get moving, tap into creativity, and work together toward a healthier, more sustainable future!

## Additional Benefits

- **Boosts productivity** — engaging in an active and structured morning routine can enhance productivity and focus throughout the day.
- **Increases energy levels** — morning activities, especially physical exercise, can elevate energy levels. Exercise releases neurotransmitters like serotonin and norepinephrine that help improve mental wellbeing and reduces stress.
- **Fosters creativity** — engage in creative activities in the morning stimulates the brain and enhances creative thinking that may lead to better problem-solving skills and innovative ideas during work hours.

**Side quest:** add optional questions in your campaign survey to test how these challenges have also had an impact on employee wellbeing.

# The step challenge

A step challenge is a fitness activity where participating employees aim to achieve a certain number of steps for the duration of the campaign. It can be an individual or team-based challenge, encouraging employees to track their daily steps using fitness trackers, smartphones, or pedometers. It can be a fantastic way to promote physical wellbeing, teamwork and a little friendly challenge to reach daily or total step goals.



The main objectives are to encourage active commuting where possible, whilst promoting physical activity and enhancing well-being. Here are some considerations for your step challenge:

## Define the scope of the challenge

- **Decide if participants will compete individually or in teams.** For a team-based approach, define what a team looks like. For example, it could consist of a department or a group of colleagues from different departments.
- **Set challenge duration:** Determine the length of the challenge. It could be a week-long event or extend over a month to allow more participants to join in. Select a timeframe that aligns with the business's resources and objectives.

## Create a submission and tracking system

- **Choose a submission platform:** Set up a platform where participating employees can submit and track their steps. Options include:
  - **Google Sheets or Excel (Sharepoint):** Ideal for simpler challenges where you can create charts and visualisations.
  - **Challenge App:** Platforms like Strava, Fitbit Challenges, or dedicated step-tracking software can offer real-time tracking and built-in dashboard. Not all employees will have the same fitness trackers.
- **Custom dashboard tools:** If you have development support, platforms like Power BI or Tableau can create dynamic and visually interesting dashboard.

## Establish rules and criteria

- **Set clear submission guidelines:** For example, submitting data daily or weekly.

The step challenge motivates employees to incorporate more movement into their day, whether through walking, cycling, or taking public transport.





# Photo scavenger hunt

An artistic approach that encourages employees to use eco-friendly travel methods and capture photos along their journey. The challenge can be individual or team-based, inspiring employees to adopt sustainable commuting by walking, biking, carpooling, or using public transport. Encourage employees to submit photos that showcase their sustainable commute and the positive aspects of their journey, contributing to a fun, visual activity that promotes environmental responsibility.



The main objectives are to reduce carbon emissions associated with commuting, raise awareness of sustainable travel options, and foster community spirit within the organisation. Below are key considerations for organising a sustainable commute photo scavenger hunt:

## Define the scope of the challenge

- **Determine team or individual participation:** Decide if participants will compete individually or in teams. For a team-based approach, define what a team looks like; for example, it could consist of a department or a group of colleagues from different departments.
- **Set challenge duration:** Determine the length of the challenge. It could be a week-long event or extend over a month to allow more participants to join in. Select a timeframe that aligns with the business's resources and objectives.

## Create a submission and tracking System

- **Choose a submission platform:** Set up a platform where participants can upload photos and track their participation. Options include:
  - **Digital workplace:** Consider using the business or team's main platform for communication, such as an internal platform, like Microsoft Teams, Slack or Yammer, where participants can post photos and interact with each other.
  - **Business's intranet:** Create a section on your intranet where employees can post and share their routes and offer recommendations.
  - **Custom dashboard tools:** If available, use tools like Power BI or Tableau to create a visually engaging display of submissions, showing photos and tracking participant progress.

## Establish rules and criteria

- **Define what a sustainable commute looks like:** For example, walking, cycling or taking public transport.
- **Set clear submission guidelines:** Define how and when participants should submit photos: daily or at the end of the week. Provide guidelines on acceptable photo content and ensure submissions are safe and respectful.
- **Scoring and criteria:** Set criteria for awarding points or rewards based on creativity, relevance to sustainable commuting, or effort shown. Examples of categories might include:
  - Most creative photo
  - Best team spirit
  - Most unique sustainable commute option
  - Daily or weekly top participants

The photo scavenger hunt takes an artistic approach, challenging participants to capture and share photos that celebrate their sustainable commute choices.



## Appendix B:

# Email templates

## Kick-off email template

Subject: Join Our “Small Steps, Big Impact” Sustainable Commute Campaign!

Hi <firstname>

Guess how much carbon you could save with one small change? Read to the end of this email to find out! 🚲

Here's a surprising fact: while we often focus on the emissions we produce on-site (scope 1) or from energy we purchase (scope 2), the biggest slice of our carbon footprint actually comes from our scope 3 emissions – the indirect emissions generated across our value chain. And that includes how we get to and from work every day!

That's why **BUSINESS** is launching *Small Steps, Big Impact*, a new initiative to support sustainable commuting – because every choice we make, like walking, cycling, carpooling, or hopping on public transport, brings us closer to net-zero emissions! 🌱

📢 Here's what's happening:

- From **DATE** to **DATE**, you'll notice some posters pop up around the office about this initiative.
- A fun and rewarding sustainable commute challenge – where you can turn small actions into big environmental wins!
- Join our sustainable commute information session on **DATE** to give you more information about travel emissions and the challenge.

### 🌟 Challenge details 🌟

**CHALLENGE DETAILS** (see Appendix A)

🚗 Since you started reading this email...

Across the world, approximately 6,700 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> was emitted into our atmosphere from passenger cars alone. That's the equivalent of filling 1,494 Olympic swimming pools, or powering 6,716 homes for 5 years!

By opting for more sustainable commuting options, we can transform our daily habits into something truly impactful. Are you ready to take the first step?

Join us on this **#SmallStepsBigImpact** journey! If you want to know more, have a read of our **SUSTAINABILITY REPORT** (link).

Best regards,

**SIGN OFF**

## Wrap-up email template


Subject: **Thank You for Participating in Our “Small Steps, Big Impact” Sustainable Commute Campaign!**

Hi <firstname>

As our Step Challenge and Photo Scavenger Hunt come to a close, we want to extend a huge thank you to everyone who participated and helped make these challenges a success! Together, we've taken thousands of steps, shared inspiring photos, and contributed to a more sustainable, active workplace.

Here's a quick recap of our accomplishments:

 **Collective impact:** Through active commuting and sustainable travel choices, we've made meaningful strides in reducing our carbon footprint while promoting health and well-being.

 **Photo highlights:** We saw some incredible photos that captured creative, sustainable commuting options and moments of teamwork. These images really brought our commitment to sustainability to life!

 **Top achievers:** We're thrilled to recognise our top steppers and photographers:

- **Step challenge winners:** Congratulations to [Names/Teams] for their dedication and daily steps that helped us reach new heights!
- **Photo scavenger hunt standouts:** Thank you to [Names/Teams] for your inspiring photos that highlighted the beauty and impact of sustainable commuting.

### What's next?

We're putting together a visual recap featuring all of the amazing photos and stats from these challenges, which we'll share soon. We also encourage everyone to continue incorporating sustainable practices into their daily routines — whether through active commuting, carpooling, or using public transport.

Thank you once again for your enthusiasm and effort! Together, we're fostering a healthier and more sustainable workplace. If you have any feedback on these challenges or ideas for future events, please feel free to share. If you want to keep tabs on our continued, collective efforts, make sure to read of our [SUSTAINABILITY REPORT \(link\)](#).

Best regards,

**SIGN OFF**



## Appendix C:

# Survey sample questions

These surveys will provide insight into employees commuting routines, as well as provide your business with a baseline, any shifts in habits mid-campaign, and their final perspectives on sustainable commuting and well-being.

# Initial survey:

## Baseline commuting habits and preferences

**Objective:** Capture baseline data on current commuting habits, awareness of sustainable options, and initial well-being levels.

- 1. How do you usually commute to work? (Select all that apply)**
  - ☐ Car (Hybrid)
  - ☐ Car (Combustion)
  - ☐ Car (EV)
  - ☐ Carpool
  - ☐ Public transportation
  - ☐ Walking
  - ☐ Cycling
  - ☐ E-bike
  - ☐ Scooter
  - ☐ Remote work
- 2. On average, how long does your one-way commute take?**
  - ☐ Less than 15 minutes
  - ☐ 15–30 minutes
  - ☐ 30–60 minutes
  - ☐ More than 60 minutes
- 3. How important is sustainability in your commute choices?**
  - ☐ Very important
  - ☐ Somewhat important
  - ☐ Neutral
  - ☐ Somewhat unimportant
  - ☐ Not at all important
- 4. What sustainable commuting options are you open to trying? (Select all that apply)**
  - ☐ Carpooling
  - ☐ Public transportation
  - ☐ Walking
  - ☐ Cycling
  - ☐ Remote work
  - ☐ Other (please specify)
- 5. What are your main barriers to using a sustainable commute option? (Select all that apply)**
  - ☐ Time constraints
  - ☐ Lack of public transport options
  - ☐ Distance from home to office
  - ☐ Physical limitations
  - ☐ Comfort and convenience
  - ☐ Other (please specify)
- 6. On a scale of 1-5, how would you rate your current level of physical activity?**
  - ☐ 1 (Very low) to 5 (Very high)
- 7. How does your commute impact your wellbeing?**
  - ☐ 1 (Very negatively) to 5 (Very positively)
- 8. What do you hope to gain from participating in this campaign? (Select all that apply)**
  - ☐ Improved physical health
  - ☐ Environmental impact reduction
  - ☐ Cost savings
  - ☐ Social connections with coworkers
  - ☐ Stress reduction
  - ☐ Other (please specify)

# Mid-campaign survey:

## Tracking progress and adjustments

**Objective:** Assess any initial changes in commuting routines, obstacles faced, and check in on well-being.

**1. Have you tried any new sustainable commute options since the campaign began?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

**2. If yes, which new options have you tried? (Select all that apply)**

- ☐ Carpooling
- ☐ Public transportation
- ☐ Walking
- ☐ Cycling
- ☐ Other (please specify)

**3. How often are you now using a sustainable commute option?**

- ☐ Everyday
- ☐ 3–4 times a week
- ☐ 1–2 times a week
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Not at all

**4. What changes have you noticed in your commute routine or preferences so far? (Select all that apply)**

- ☐ Reduced driving alone
- ☐ Increased use of public transport
- ☐ Walking or cycling more often
- ☐ Choosing routes with more green spaces
- ☐ No significant changes yet

**5. What challenges have you faced in adopting sustainable commute options? (Select all that apply)**

- ☐ Time constraints
- ☐ Convenience issues
- ☐ Distance to work
- ☐ Lack of transport/bike access
- ☐ Weather conditions
- ☐ Other (please specify)

**6. On a scale of 1-5, how would you rate your physical activity since the start of the campaign?**

- ☐ 1 (Very low) to 5 (Very high)

**7. How would you rate your mood and energy levels since adjusting your commute habits?**

- ☐ Improved significantly
- ☐ Improved slightly
- ☐ No change
- ☐ Declined slightly
- ☐ Declined significantly

**8. Is there anything you'd like more support with to encourage sustainable commuting? (Open response)**

# Wrap-up survey:

## Final reflections and impact

**Objective:** Gather final data on commuting changes, benefits of sustainable commuting, and feedback on the campaign.

- 1. How frequently do you now use sustainable commute options compared to before the campaign?**
    - ☐ Much more frequently
    - ☐ Slightly more frequently
    - ☐ About the same
    - ☐ Slightly less frequently
    - ☐ Not at all
  - 2. What sustainable commuting options have you incorporated into your routine? (Select all that apply)**
    - ☐ Car (Hybrid)
    - ☐ Car (EV)
    - ☐ Carpool
    - ☐ Public transportation
    - ☐ Walking
    - ☐ Cycling
    - ☐ E-bike
    - ☐ Scooter
    - ☐ Remote work
  - 3. What benefits have you noticed from using sustainable commute options? (Select all that apply)**
    - ☐ Reduced commute time
    - ☐ Improved physical health
    - ☐ Reduced stress
    - ☐ Better mood and energy levels
    - ☐ Increased social connections
    - ☐ I feel better about doing something positive for the environment
    - ☐ Cost savings
    - ☐ Other (please specify)
  - 4. On a scale of 1-5, how would you rate your level of physical activity after the campaign?**
    - ☐ 1 (very low) to 5 (very high)
  - 5. How would you describe the impact of this campaign on your well-being?**
    - ☐ Very positive
    - ☐ Somewhat positive
    - ☐ Neutral
    - ☐ Somewhat negative
    - ☐ Very negative
  - 6. How motivated are you to continue using sustainable commuting options after this campaign?**
    - ☐ Very motivated
    - ☐ Somewhat motivated
    - ☐ Neutral
    - ☐ Somewhat unmotivated
    - ☐ Not at all motivated
  - 7. What would make it easier for you to continue sustainable commuting? (Select all that apply)**
    - ☐ More transport options
    - ☐ Business-sponsored incentives or support
    - ☐ Access to shower/locker facilities
    - ☐ Flexibility in work hours
    - ☐ Carpool program support
    - ☐ Other (please specify)
  - 8. How did you feel about the support and resources provided during this campaign?**
    - ☐ Very helpful
    - ☐ Somewhat helpful
    - ☐ Neutral
    - ☐ Somewhat unhelpful
    - ☐ Not helpful at all
- Any additional feedback or suggestions for future sustainability campaigns? (Open response)**



**Thanks for caring about our  
environment, climate action  
and our community.**

If you have any questions, get in touch with us  
by emailing [cityswitch@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au](mailto:cityswitch@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au)

