

The Leaf Collective

Funded by the ACT Government



The Leaf Collective was first delivered by Social Marketing @ Griffith in 2021. Leaf Collective was co-designed with ACT residents and stakeholders. Leaf Collective aimed to prompt ACT households to collect leaves from gutters and drains, preserving waterway health. Initial pilots in 2021 and 2022 diverted over 345,000L of leaves from drains, showcasing positive outcomes. Evaluation post-Autumn 2021 and Summer 2022 pilots revealed respective 13% and 11% increases in reported leaf collection along with improved water quality awareness among participants.

Prompted awareness surged from 35% to 63% after each pilot, signaling increased community engagement. However, expanding awareness for more substantial action remained a priority. A three-arm field trial evaluated the effect of out-of-home advertising winning the *Australia New Zealand Marketing Academy Conference Best Overall Paper Award*. Key findings showed that areas which were treated to Out of Home advertising displayed a higher rate of Awareness and Interest, leading to more of the promoted behaviours (e.g. picking up leaves, adopting drains).

Evaluation of the three six-week pilots utilized pre-post and cross-sectional survey design. Results of the 2023 campaign highlighted increased rates of leaf/grass clippings collected by residents who were exposed to the Leaf Collective program. Notably, Lake Tuggeranong residents exhibited 38% higher leaf collection than control areas.

These findings highlight the need for continuous engagement strategies. Recommendations focus on leveraging communication-centric efforts, emphasizing social media's role, and proposing a year-round program with community events and tailored messaging to improve reach across different demographics. Collaborations with community groups, extending program duration, localized content, and agile administrative approaches are vital for community-driven impact.

Leaf Collective can be applied by local governments and any organisation seeking to reduce the amount of leaves entering waterways and foster a circular economy.



“The leaf bags have encouraged me to collect the leaves more often and use them in the compost and garden beds.

I absolutely love the idea of the leaf bags.”