**Waste 2017 Abstract Submission**

‘**Harnessing social enterprise to achieve better waste diversion**’

*My presentation is relevant to the following topic area(s).*

🞎 Circular economy 🞎 Overseas experiences

🞎 Collection (inc MUD’s, transient population areas) 🞎 Problem/Hazardous waste (inc asbestos, clinical &

🞎 Container Deposit Schemes medical, ocean plastics, paint, tyres etc)

🞎 Economics (inc business cases, data gathering, 🞎 Product Stewardship

monitoring performance) 🞎 Regional issues

X Education (inc community engagement) 🞎 Recycling (inc CRC’s, collection)

🞎 E-Waste 🞎 Regulations and levies

🞎 Grants (outcomes and processes) X Social enterprise

🞎 Infrastructure (inc major waste grants, EfW, organics) 🞎 State based issues (eg. Fit for the Future NSW)

🞎 Innovative projects (case studies preferred) 🞎 Technology

🞎 Landfill (inc operations, regulations) 🞎 Tenders and contracts

🞎 Litter and/or illegal dumping (inc litter initiatives) 🞎 Other 🞎 Organics (inc collection, processing)

**Presenter information**

**Presenter name:** Ms Dare Kavanagh

**Presenter position:** CEO

**Presenter organisation:** Reverse Garbage Co-op

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**Biography**

Dare Kavanagh brings considerable experience in managing not-for-profit and public services to her role as Chief Executive Officer at Reverse Garbage. Dare has specialised in leading large scale community engagement and public education programs seeking innovative approaches to wicked and intractable issues. Dare’s previous work has been recognised by National and International awards for innovation in public participation.

Since 2014, Dare has lead the Reverse Garbage team in a successful process of refocusing on core objectives of sustainability education and creative reuse of industrial discards. These efforts were recognised in December 2016 by the Inner West Council Award for Sustainable Innovation.

**Abstract Summary**

The creativity and innovation needed to make a social enterprise successful is the bedrock of what sets Reverse Garbage apart!

For more than 40 years Reverse Garbage has been taking a creative approach to diverting waste while demonstrating that social enterprise is an outstanding model for Reuse Centres and Community Recycling.

Innovation and renewal have been key themes in long story of Reverse Garbage.

This presentation will guide participants through the key learnings that have supported 40 years of successful waste diversion by one of Australia’s longest running social enterprises.

**Abstract**

For more than 40 years, Reverse Garbage has been taking a creative approach to diverting waste while demonstrating that social enterprise is an outstanding model for Reuse Centres and Community Recycling.

In 1974, when Reverse Garbage began there were limited options for diverting waste from landfill. Recycling was considered a fringe activity for hippies. A lot has changed in 40 years. The waste industry and community understanding about resource recovery and reuse has been transformed.

The creativity and innovation needed to make a social enterprise successful is the bedrock of what sets Reverse Garbage apart!

Both waste diversion and social enterprise management require creative thinking and innovation.

The model of social enterprise provides an open structure that balances business and purpose. This structure has been integral in the on-going success of Reverse Garbage. Reverse Garbage was initially established with a start up grant from the Whitman Government. Since 1991, Reverse Garbage has self-funded its operations and subsidised its community education program through its retail sales of industrial and commercial discards.

What has been the recipe for the Reverse Garbage success story?

* innovation and renewal
* business acumen and accountability to members
* volunteer contributions and reinvestment
* focus on core principles and flexibility in pursuit of outcomes

This presentation will guide participants through the key learnings that have supported 40 years of successful waste diversion by one of Australia’s longest running social enterprises.

The presentation will provide insights for those new to social enterprise as well as for experienced professionals in the sector.

The value of working with social enterprises for waste diversion and community engagement to both businesses and Councils will also be discussed.