

# CoCup Deposit and Return Scheme Dublin City Council

BACKGROUND

200 million single use coffee cups enter the Irish waste stream every year with the vast majority of these not recyclable in Ireland and at best incinerated for energy recovery.



Studies have shown that the major contaminant for recycling bins is non-recyclable coffee cups.



Compostable cups only work effectively in a controlled environment where they can be composted after use. These cups are still single use and require raw materials for their production.



Even though reusable coffee cups have become popular, 200 million single use coffee cups are wasted in Ireland every year. To address this, Dublin City Council, Dublin City University and Trinity College Dublin came together to investigate alternatives.



DELIVERY



## The CoCup initiative

In April 2019 the CoCup initiative was launched at three locations - Dublin City Council's main restaurant, and cafes in DCU and TCD.

The purpose of the pilot was to test the social acceptability of a deposit and return scheme for reusable cups.

## DEPOSIT AND RETURN SCHEME

- 1 ORDER A COFFEE TO GO
- 2 PAY €1 DEPOSIT FOR YOUR COCUP
- 3 ENJOY YOUR COFFEE
- 4 RETURN YOUR COCUP AND RECEIVE YOUR €1 BACK

IT'S SIMPLE!

## How it works

When purchasing a tea/coffee, there is initially an additional deposit charge of €1 for the cup. The cup can be used in the café or taken off-site.

- Once finished, the customer has two choices:
- a) return the cup (to any participating café) and get their €1 back
  - b) Swap it for a fresh beverage in a clean cup at no additional cup charge



## Convenience without waste



Customers can swap cups at any of the participating locations providing them with the convenience of a disposable cup but the impact of a reusable cup.

In addition customers can purchase their own lid outright (€1) – this is theirs to keep – it is not returned with the cup.

RESULTS AND FEEDBACK

At first, engagement with the scheme varied from location to location. After the launch (which saw a significant take-up of the service), overall engagement grew by approx. 10% per month. As the roll out matures and the understanding of the model increases it is expected that the percent returns will increase.

Some key feedback received from both customers and business operators are listed here.

	Positives	Concerns
<b>Operators</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relatively easy system to deliver</li> <li>• Positive feedback from customers</li> <li>• Reduced single use disposables</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional work needed to explain the scheme</li> <li>• Some difficulty with deposit in self-service areas</li> <li>• Additional work needed to collect and wash cups</li> </ul>
<b>Customers</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Texture - nice to drink out of</li> <li>• Colour - very appealing</li> <li>• Branding - simple is good</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Too much heat retention</li> <li>• Too much heat transferring to lid</li> <li>• Difficulty with lid opening and closing</li> </ul>

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