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Innovation Centre businesses on track to become ecoBiz partners

The University of the Sunshine Coast's Innovation Centre has teamed up with USC graduate and sustainability consultant Ben Everingham to offer its businesses the opportunity to reduce their water, waste and energy use through the Queensland Government's ecoBiz partnership.

Innovation Centre CEO Colin Graham said the centre and 16 of its businesses had signed up to the 8 month eco-efficiency improvement process to create sustainability outcomes.

In February of this year Ben Everingham secured a Queensland Government ClimateSmart Business Cluster grant to assist the Innovation Centre and its businesses in attaining their ecoBiz accreditation.

Whilst completing a BA in Health Promotion (Sustainability) at the University of the Sunshine Coast, Ben was an active participant in the Entrepreneurship program run by the Innovation Centre and was one of the student delegates at the Enterprisers course run on the USC campus with the University of Cambridge.

To return all of the support received as a young entrepreneur from the Innovation Centre Ben said this was an excellent opportunity to assist the businesses right on the USC campus.

"The businesses received a water, waste and energy audit of their facilities to measure and report their consumption" Ben said.

"I've since met one-on-one with each of them to give them a personalised action plan for energy savings"

"By turning off the lights, appliances and air conditioning when they are not in use, implementing a recycling system, purchasing some very affordable water efficient tap fittings and waterless urinal cubes, along with educating staff members on a range of simple and cost effective behaviours, businesses may be surprised at just how cost effective going green can be." Ben said.

Colin Graham said that the Innovation Centre has already implemented a water efficiency plan with all taps fitted with aerators that will save the Centre approx 374400L per year.

Through the ecoBiz process the businesses are involved in a behavioural and cultural transformation to create long-term wins for a sustainable culture at the Innovation Centre.

"The key is to align your vision, mission, policies and procedures, with the business and sustainability outcomes you desire, while systematically building a culture of continuous

improvement and personal responsibility.” Ben said.

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