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IN COLOMBIA, RECYCLED PLASTIC EXCHANGED FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORT CREDIT

 TELECOMMUNICATIONS

In Medellín, a Colombian enterprise is encouraging low wage earning travellers to recycle by offering top ups on their travelcard in exchange for their waste plastic.

Across the world, over 300 million tonnes of plastic are produced every year, and Springwise has already covered a number of innovative solutions to try and reduce the amount headed to landfill. Regular readers may recall the [Canadian enterprise that offered fair wages to employ litter pickers collecting waste plastics](#), and we've also seen transport companies lend a helping hand with metal waste, by [offering free travel in exchange for recyclable beer cans](#). Now looking to apply a similar model to plastics, our [Springspotters](#) have recently unearthed Ciclo.

The Colombian enterprise works by offering the opportunity for people to exchange recyclable materials for top ups on their public transport travelcards. Users of the service are incentivised because of the opportunity to save money on their travel. As Medellín-based cofounders, Miguel Uribe and Luis Felip Restrepo explain, "A person who earns a minimum wage spends at least 15 percent of their income on transport." The idea is that Ciclo drop-off points will be placed in various locations and stations across Medellín.

PET plastic (Polyethylene Terephthalate) is commonly used to make plastic bottles. In Colombia, 180 tonnes of PET are used annually, and only 25 percent is recycled. Could other cities follow suit with a similar system?

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