



volunteering
TASMANIA
Be Connected

budget priority statement



**2020
2021**

www.volunteeringtas.org.au

our values

be informed
be inspired
be connected
make a difference

our mission:

that every Tasmanian enjoys
the benefits of volunteering

introduction

As the peak body for volunteering in Tasmania, Volunteering Tasmania aims to support volunteers, volunteer-involving organisations, and the Tasmanian Government as we work together to ensure a vibrant and active volunteer sector for all of us. Through our members we represent over 50,000 Tasmanians who give their time to volunteering.



Tasmanians are great volunteers. 297,000 (68%) of them volunteer and they give over 4 hours every week to volunteering.



Volunteering contributes to the economy. The value of volunteering is \$4 billion - \$3 billion to replace volunteer labour and \$1 billion in commercial and civic benefits.

But there are some warning signs for Government and volunteer-involving organisations.



Being able to meet future needs will be challenging without a strategic investment in volunteering in Tasmania.

Volunteers are integral to every community and every part of our society. Volunteering is vital for the success of many organisations and our communities are dependent on volunteering activities and programs in areas such as the arts, education, emergency services, sport, environment, health, aged care, disability support, tourism, and community welfare. We know that without volunteers many of these things wouldn't get done.

Volunteers make a significant contribution to the Tasmanian economy with the value of volunteering at \$4 billion dollars per year. This includes the \$3 billion it would cost to replace the labour that volunteers contribute to our state, as well as \$1 billion in commercial and civic benefits contributed through volunteering. As a workforce, volunteering is nearly three times larger than the Tasmanian government sector and 14% larger than the private sector.

As the Tasmanian Government acknowledges in its 2017 'Plan for a Brighter Future', the need for volunteers will grow as we take on more activities through increased visitor engagement, arts and culture, tourism and hospitality, active ageing, and sport and recreation.

Being able to meet these future needs will be a challenge if things keep going the way they are. Volunteer numbers are declining as our population ages, especially in our regions. The way people choose to volunteer is changing as we work longer hours. Expectations on volunteers are higher than ever before, and volunteers are less satisfied in their volunteering. It is vital that Volunteering Tasmania, government and communities plan for change and work collaboratively to support and protect volunteering across Tasmania.



We are asking for a strategic investment from the State Government so that we can:



- Prepare a Tasmanian Volunteer Strategy 2021-2025 with actions that will meet the needs of Government, volunteers, organisations and local communities into the future;
- Ensure responsibility for this statewide strategic approach is taken at the highest level with the appointment of a Minister responsible for volunteering;
- Engage with volunteers to understand the causes of their dissatisfaction so we can take action to reverse the decline; and
- Support small volunteer-involving organisations with a five-year program that helps them recruit and manage volunteers in this fast-changing environment.

Volunteering is vital to the Tasmanian way of life.

Tasmanians need more support to be able to volunteer in the way they choose to do it.

Organisations need more support to engage volunteers in a meaningful way that creates positive experiences for everyone. Our State needs to invest in volunteering to ensure that the sector can continue to make its vital contribution to our economy, society and cultural wellbeing into the future.



Dr Lisa Schimanski,

CEO, Volunteering Tasmania



“Volunteering isn’t free! There needs to be more appropriate funding for recruiting and managing volunteers.”

Volunteering Tasmania Member

the challenges

- We are increasingly reliant on volunteers in a range of areas across the State including tourism, sport, arts and culture, environment, community services and emergency management.
- Numbers of volunteers are declining.
- Satisfaction in volunteering has dropped, expectations are higher, and the way people want to volunteer is changing.
- Organisations do not have enough funding and resources to recruit and support volunteers in this changing environment.



While Tasmanians are generous volunteers, there are warning signs that things may not continue in this way. There has been an 11.2% drop in volunteering participation from 2014 to 2019, from 79.8% in 2014 to 68.6%¹. This is part of a national trend where the proportion of people aged over 18 years who were volunteering fell from 36 per cent in 2010 to 31 per cent in 2014.²

This decline has also impacted the total number of hours Tasmanian's volunteer from a total of 71 million hours in 2014 to around 68 million in 2019 (4% decline).



If this trend continues, and as our population ages, we will be reliant on the support of fewer people in the workforce who are available to volunteer, especially in our regions.

Satisfaction with volunteering has also declined.

When volunteers were asked if volunteering positively or negatively impacted on the productivity of their working life, 47% said that it had a positive impact. However, the size of that positive impact has dropped from an average of 48% in 2014 to only 16% in 2019.

Volunteers were more positive in 2014 with only 5% saying that volunteering had a negative impact on their working lives, through things like days off and lost productivity. In 2019 this figure had risen to 22% of people saying that volunteering had a negative impact. This a worrying trend; without greater understanding of why this is occurring there are significant dangers to the future of volunteering.

The financial cost of volunteering is also a challenge. It costs volunteers nearly \$1000 a year in expenses like fuel, food, transport and accommodation, and they are reimbursed only 7% of these costs. Sometimes volunteers do not want to be reimbursed, but it is also the case that many organisations can't afford to reimburse their volunteers. Additionally, there are Tasmanians who simply can't afford to volunteer.

¹ The State of Volunteering Report Tasmania 2019 (Both informal and formal volunteering)

² ABS (2014) General Social Survey (Formal volunteering only)

The way people volunteer is changing with people being increasingly time-poor, and younger people in particular wanting more flexibility and higher-impact commitments. Volunteer-involving organisations risk being out of step without significant changes to the way they manage volunteers.

The expectations on the act of volunteering and volunteers themselves are higher than ever before.

We expect them to be available, reliable and professional as they navigate more stringent regulations and management procedures.

As a society we are increasingly reliant on volunteering as a way to reduce inequality, tackle the epidemic of loneliness, and build community resilience. Volunteering is also becoming a way for people to become job ready by giving them new skills, training opportunities, networks and confidence in themselves.

Volunteers are vital for our community and our economy. To ensure that we maintain our levels of volunteering into the future we need to take a statewide, strategic approach now.



"Reduce red-tape for volunteers."

Volunteering Tasmania Member



"Promote volunteering among young people, especially in rural areas, and use volunteering to connect younger and older generations."

Volunteering Tasmania Member



"More professional development, support and resources for volunteer managers."

Volunteering Tasmania Member

The solutions

1. Tasmanian Volunteer Strategy 2021-2025 with actions that will meet the needs of Government, volunteers, organisations and local communities into the future.
2. Minister with a specific responsibility for volunteering.
3. Volunteer Engagement Project to understand the causes of volunteer dissatisfaction so we can take action to reverse the decline.
4. Volunteer Support Program for small, volunteer-involving organisations to help them recruit and manage volunteers.



1. Tasmanian Volunteering Strategy 2021-2025

Tasmania is one of only three States in Australia that does not have a volunteering strategy (Queensland and Northern Territory being the other two). With the challenges currently being faced by the sector it is important that we now have a strategic approach that identifies gaps, challenges, opportunities and solutions.

The aim of the Tasmanian Volunteering Strategy 2021-2025 is to achieve sustainability in volunteering as a vital part of our way of life. The Strategy would set out a coordinated, strategic approach to address the emerging gap between demand and supply in volunteering. It would set clear objectives across the State, across sectors, for communities, organisations and volunteers themselves. It would articulate priorities for action that can be achieved within the five years of the Strategy. Actions may include a grants program that provides funding for volunteer-involving organisations to improve their operations and IT systems, reimburse volunteers and provide training.

The Strategy would build on the research conducted for the State of Volunteering Report 2019, and explore best practice strategies from interstate and overseas. It would be developed through consulting with the broad range of individuals and organisations engaged in volunteering.



“More sustainable and less onerous funding contracts.”

Volunteering Tasmania Member

2. Minister for Volunteering

Within Government, while volunteering is administered from Communities Tasmania, there is no coordinated focus on volunteering policy and strategy. Implementing the actions in the Tasmanian Volunteering Strategy requires clear accountability within Government. A Minister responsible for volunteering will deliver that accountability and provide a focus for the thousands of Tasmanians who volunteer.



Volunteering aligns with the strategic focus of Government in employment, wellbeing and adult learning. By appointing a Minister responsible for volunteering Tasmania will join Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia that also have Ministers.

3. Volunteer Engagement Project



The State of Volunteering Report 2019 revealed that satisfaction with participation in volunteering has declined in Tasmania. It is vital that we understand in more detail the reasons for this dissatisfaction, and the barriers to volunteering, so that we can take action to ensure our volunteers have a positive experience of volunteering.

In general, we know that the main barriers to volunteering are similar for those who do and those who don't volunteer, with survey respondents saying it is limited time, as well as work and family commitments that get in the way of volunteering. This indicates that people don't necessarily have time to volunteer, they make time to volunteer.

Younger generations of volunteers want more flexible arrangements, higher-impact commitments and ways to use technology. The financial cost of volunteering is also an ongoing barrier, as are the requirements to professionalise volunteers.

Through the Volunteer Engagement Project, we will have conversations with people who currently or have previously participated in volunteering. We will reach volunteers across the state and across our diverse sectors to understand more deeply the causes of satisfaction and dissatisfaction and the barriers they face. We will develop a range of actions that can be undertaken to lift satisfaction levels so that we can sustain our volunteer levels into the future. The results of this project will also inform the development of the Tasmanian Volunteering Strategy.



4. Volunteer Support Program

The sustainability of small, volunteering-involving organisations is under threat due to the changes that are impacting on volunteering. Organisations across the spectrum in Tasmania, in sport, emergency services, tourism, arts and heritage, are reporting difficulty in recruiting volunteers to meet demand. The barriers to volunteering have a particular impact on regional communities where the need is high, and the pool of available volunteers is smaller.

In Tasmania 50% of all volunteers are managed by organisations that have either no paid staff or only two to three staff.

Therefore, a significant number of Tasmanian volunteer organisations are either completely or predominantly volunteer-run. Thus, they operate and run activities outside normal business hours, and this means they do not always have access to available supports. Neither do they have the necessary systems, processes and resources to respond to the changing needs of volunteers in an increasingly complex environment. There needs to be a more sustainable approach. Volunteering Tasmania must change its approach to better support these organisations.

The Volunteer Support Program will help volunteer-run organisations take a strategic approach to the recruitment and retention of volunteers. Many would benefit from a closer alignment with the Australian National Standards for Volunteer Involvement. The Standards provide a framework for organisations to consider the role of volunteers within the organisation and the impact effective volunteer involvement can have on achieving the strategic goals and aims of the organisation.³

The new Program will be developed through a co-design process with organisations and volunteers. It may include specific professional development training and support for volunteers and staff. It will involve a simplified approach to the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement and volunteer management, including learnings from a new program Volunteering Victoria is currently implementing (VolPol) that focuses the attention of small organisations on volunteer safety, satisfaction and sustainability. It is anticipated that the program will include elements such as face to face training out of hours and on weekends as well as podcasts, webinars and other digital resources to support learning and implementation for volunteers and organisations that cannot access support and training in business hours.



“Support volunteer-involving organisations to reimburse out-of-pocket expenses, including fuel, parking, travel and the Working With Vulnerable People Check.”

Volunteering Tasmania Member

³ Volunteering Australia (2015), *The National Standards for Volunteer Involvement*, P3

Investment



A strategic investment over five years by the State Government would contribute to much needed sustainability in the sector and make sure we have enough volunteers in the right places into the future.

Activity	Investment
<p>Tasmanian Volunteering Strategy 2021-25</p> <p><i>Year 1: Hold statewide consultations and develop the strategy.</i></p> <p><u>Key deliverables:</u></p> <p>Evidence base of best practice volunteer frameworks, nationally and internationally.</p> <p>Comprehensive consultation across all Tasmanian volunteer sectors including government.</p> <p>A state-wide Volunteer Strategy and Action Plan.</p> <p>Year 2: Implementation of Action Plan</p> <p><u>Key deliverables:</u></p> <p>Immediate delivery of actions from the Volunteer Strategy.</p> <p><i>Further funding will be sought for Years 2-5 of the Strategy</i></p>	<p><u>\$200,000 over 2 years</u></p> <p>July 2020-June 2021 \$112,000</p> <p>This includes a Project Officer, travel and accommodation and other consultation costs, print, design and promotion, and on-costs and administrative overheads.</p> <p>July 2021-June 2022 \$88,000</p> <p>Implementation of Actions Year 1. This could include grants, salaries, consultancy, infrastructure – dependent on the priorities in the strategy.</p>
<p>Volunteer Engagement Project 2020- 2021</p> <p>Hold statewide consultations through surveys, focus groups and interviews to better understand volunteer satisfaction and barriers. Consolidate findings to inform the Volunteer Strategy and subsequent Action Plan.</p> <p><u>Key deliverables:</u></p> <p>The volunteer voice within the Volunteer Strategy with an emphasis on volunteer satisfaction</p>	<p><u>\$100,000 over 1 year</u></p> <p>This includes a Project Officer, travel and accommodation and other consultation costs (including volunteer reimbursements), promotion, on-costs and administrative overheads</p>
<p>Volunteer Support Program</p> <p>June – Dec 2020 consultation with small grassroots volunteer organisations across all sectors and co-design of the Volunteer Support Program.</p> <p><u>Key deliverables:</u></p> <p>Evidence base of best practice grass roots Volunteer Support programs including Volunteer Victoria’s VolPol Program.</p> <p>Design bespoke program for the needs of small volunteer run organisations.</p> <p>Jan 2021-June 2024 Implement Volunteer Support Program.</p> <p><u>Key deliverables:</u></p> <p>Implement bespoke Volunteer Support Program for small volunteer run organisations.</p> <p>Evaluate program – process and outcome evaluation including a ripple effect methodology to capture program impact</p>	<p><u>\$500,000 over 5 years</u></p> <p>This includes a Project Officer, travel and accommodation and other consultation costs in the co-design phase. Budget for podcasts, webinars, digital assets and equipment. As well as face to face training and workshops out of hours and on weekends as required to reach the target organisations and volunteers. On-costs and administrative overheads are included.</p>

\$800,000 over 5 years



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