



## Involving volunteers from migrant backgrounds

Volunteering allows newly arrived migrants to participate in the social and economic life of their broader community. This has many benefits to the individual, as well as to the community.

This tip sheet gives information to support Volunteer Involving Organisations (VIOs) be more accessible and inclusive when engaging volunteers from migrant backgrounds.

### **Barriers faced by volunteers from a migrant background include:**

- Poor understanding of the meaning and benefits of volunteering in Tasmania.
- Uncertainty about how to start volunteering.
- Inaccessible and non-inclusive volunteering programs.
- Low levels of digital literacy and English language.
- Lack of resources and supports in languages other than English.
- Overly complicated administrative processes.
- Regulatory requirements e.g. Australian drivers licence, Working with Vulnerable People registration and Police Check.

### **Barriers for a VIO engaging with volunteers from a migrant background include:**

- Language and communication challenges.
- Not feeling confident with cultural awareness and competency
- Supporting resources unavailable e.g. interpreter services, translated documents.
- Unconscious bias or discrimination.
- Additional time and resources required for onboarding, ongoing support etc.

### **Tips for reducing barriers to volunteering:**

Increasing diversity within a Volunteer Involving Organisation by engaging volunteers from migrant backgrounds can have a positive impact on the culture within an organisation. You might want to:

- Review your policies with a diversity, equity and inclusion lens.
- Review all documentation for plain English, consider including images to assist communication.
- Be flexible with the types and times of volunteering opportunities you offer.
- Minimise administration and paperwork.
- Provide a welcoming, well-supported and easy first experience.
- Ensure promotional images used by your organisation are diverse and representative of the community.
- Undertake cultural awareness training, there are many online options or engage with organisations like Migrant Resource Centres or Citizen Tasmania.
- Learn from other VIOs who have successfully engaged with migrant volunteers.



- Provide a buddy, perhaps an existing volunteer from same culture or just to enable more one-on-one support.
- Engage directly with multicultural community groups to promote your volunteering opportunities.
- Be clear and transparent about your organisation's needs, and allow a safe space for your volunteers to also express their needs.

## Where can VIOs get more information?

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View our **Let's talk Cultural Inclusion in Volunteering** videos and discussion guide [here](#).

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