



# AWARDS PRESENTATION



tasmanian volunteering

AWARDS

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FRIDAY 19 MAY, 2023  
GOVERNMENT HOUSE, TASMANIA

Artwork by Caleb Nichols-Mansell © 2023

Thank you for joining  
us for the eighth annual  
Tasmanian Volunteering  
Awards presentation.

This is our opportunity to  
showcase inspiring volunteer  
stories and recognise  
excellence in volunteering.

**Acknowledgement of country:**

Volunteering Tasmania acknowledges the palawa/pakana people as traditional custodians of the lands, seas, skies, and waterways throughout lutruwita/Tasmania. We pay respect to elders past and present and recognise their deep history and continuing connections with our shared country, culture, and community.

**Cover Art - Caleb Nichols-Mansell. Artist's Statement:**

The artwork represents the coming together of communities to build safer and stronger communities that support and uplift each other. The circular motifs represent the nine nations that called Tasmania home prior to invasion and colonisation.

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# Community Care and Health Volunteer Award

SUPPORTED BY:



## FINALISTS

### Sweta Sharma

MIGRANT RESOURCE  
CENTRE TASMANIA

Sweta is an exceptional volunteer who has consistently gone above and beyond to support others in her community. In her role, she has provided invaluable assistance to others, including housing, citizenship applications, and facilitating women's groups. Throughout her time volunteering, Sweta has demonstrated a deep commitment to helping others, always going the extra mile to ensure that everyone she works with receives the support and assistance they need. Her involvement in complex cases of domestic violence is admirable as she demonstrated an ability to link clients with appropriate services, and helped them find safe and suitable housing.

She is always eager to learn and grow both personally and professionally, and has proved to be an efficient and passionate team member. Sweta is an outstanding volunteer who sets an excellent example for her peers. Her selfless and positive attitude, combined with her unwavering commitment to help others is inspiring to everyone she meets.

### Tracey Pannell

GUIDE DOGS  
TASMANIA

Tracey has the unique distinction to be the inaugural puppy whelping volunteer for Guide Dogs Tasmania. She generously opened her home and took on an intensive 24/7 commitment, providing a space for brood dog Freda's puppies to be born and helped to raise the puppies to the age of eight weeks. Since 2017, she's raised nine puppies and provides a range of positive exposure opportunities before they enter formal training. She cares for new puppies in the intensive first two months, teaching toileting, walking on lead and good behaviour. Tracey is an inspiration to other potential volunteers, with her calm, matter of fact approach, sharing openly what is required as a puppy whelping volunteer and encouraging others to step into this vital role. Through her willingness to help, Tracey has helped to pave the way for other volunteers and ensure the sustainability of Guide Dogs Tasmania's guide and autism assistance dog training program. While at times exhausting, Tracey did not hesitate to help, knowing the incredible difference that these puppies may one day make for Tasmanians living with vision impairment or autism, supporting their confidence and safety, and playing an important companionship role.

### Christine Tilyard

LIONS CLUB  
OF CLARENCE

Christine is a true champion for her community. As an influential member and future president of the Lions Club of Clarence, Christine has dedicated her life to making a positive difference in the lives of those less advantaged. With a passion for serving others, she volunteers fortnightly with Meals on Wheels and visits local neighbourhood houses to ensure that pantries are well-stocked. She is also an active member of the St Vincent de Paul Society food van. Christine advocates for disability rights, having arranged for an access ramp to be installed for a local disabled child.

She also regularly supports the Cancer Council of Tasmania's annual Daffodil Day. As Lions Zone 11 chairperson, Christine plays a leading role in setting and delivering the Lions Club goals in Tasmania. Her tireless work and dedication to the cause have earned her the respect of her peers, who recognise her as someone who always puts in 110 per cent.



# Education, Science and Technology Volunteer Award

SUPPORTED BY:



## FINALISTS

### Peter D Jones

MIGRANT RESOURCE CENTRE TASMANIA

Peter is an exceptional volunteer who has donated countless hours to the Migrant Resource Centre Tasmania over the past five years. Peter's primary role is supporting the Citizenship Workshop, where he goes above and beyond to help learners achieve their goal of gaining Australian citizenship. He is also an invaluable mentor in the Migrant Resource Centre Tasmania's Driving Program, helping four learners per week for two hours each, and providing guidance and support to new drivers.

Peter's true passion lies in English conversation, where he creates a safe and welcoming environment for people to practice and improve their language skills.

His boundless patience and genuine desire to help others make him an outstanding example to others. Peter's dedication to supporting those in need is unparalleled, and his kindness and compassion have touched countless lives.

### Edwina Brown

THE SMITH FAMILY

Edwina is a dedicated volunteer who is committed to helping young people succeed. Twice a week, she spends around five hours leading a cooking club for Year 3-6 students. Her kindness and patience with students from all walks of life, including those experiencing challenges of poverty, disadvantage or abuse, are widely recognised. Edwina's work in the cooking club contributes to providing a safe environment for students while teaching them valuable skills such as cooking, social interaction, math and problem-solving. Her interactions empower students to apply these principles in their everyday lives, increasing their abilities to succeed and break the cycle of disadvantage. Edwina is known for always showcasing gracious professionalism and always having the well-being of young students in mind. Her warm approach and non-judgmental ways of communicating, educating, and empowering those around her are truly remarkable. Edwina is an exceptional volunteer who is highly valued by The Smith Family.

### Mavis Sayer

MIGRANT RESOURCE CENTRE TASMANIA

Mavis has tremendously impacted Tasmania's community by supporting migrants and refugees. Through her volunteering at the Migrant Resource Centre Tasmania, Mavis brings her attention to detail and exceptional organisational skills to help clients ensure applications and documents are complete and accurate. Mavis also helps clients improve their English language skills through her work with the English Conversational Club. Her patient and empathetic approach creates a supportive and welcoming environment that helps clients build their confidence to practice their English in a safe space. Mavis's commitment to volunteering is rooted in her personal values of community, compassion, and service. Through her tireless efforts, she sets an inspiring example of how volunteering can make a meaningful difference in the lives of individuals and the community. Thanks to Mavis's exceptional volunteer work at the Migrant Resource Centre Tasmania, she is helping to build a welcoming and inclusive community.



# Emergency Services Volunteer Award

SUPPORTED BY:



## FINALISTS

### Brylyn Craven

AMBULANCE TASMANIA  
DELORAINÉ AMBULANCE STATION

Brylyn is an experienced and devoted volunteer ambulance officer based in Deloraine. She can be seen driving the ambulance to attend emergency situations and call-outs to homes, helping people in their time of need.

She works closely with the paramedic on duty and is a committed and efficient addition to the team. Brylyn gives so effortlessly of her time. She opts for shifts which are difficult to fill such as night shifts and Christmas, where other volunteers have young children to care for. Her bright disposition is an asset which has a positive impact on those she cares for, as well as her team, and her commitment to helping others is exemplary.

Brylyn's ability to handle high stress situations and work well with people has earned her the respect and confidence of her community.

### David Sherriff

TASMANIA FIRE SERVICE  
DELORAINÉ BRIGADE

David has been a dedicated volunteer firefighter for the Deloraine Fire Brigade for the past 45 years. Since the age of 16, David has committed his time and skills to assist in various emergency situations. His role is diverse and can range from helping the SES rescue victims of car accidents to entering burning buildings to search for people inside.

He is a meticulous worker who is committed to completing tasks to the best of his ability. David has held various roles including Brigade Chief, but his passion lies in mentoring new members. His knowledge of pumps and their operations is an asset to the Tasmania Fire Service and is beneficial in training new recruits and refreshing the skills of existing members. David's commitment to perfection and his role as a mentor make him an excellent role model for other volunteers in the Tasmania Fire Service.

# Sport, Recreation and Service Groups Volunteer Award

SUPPORTED BY:



## FINALISTS

### Colin Pearson

HOCKEY  
TASMANIA

Colin Pearson is a name that resonates with excellence in the field of hockey. As a coach, manager, and umpire, Colin has worked tirelessly to develop less-experienced umpires, helping them achieve their local, state, national, and international goals. He has served as competitions administrator, organising rosters, and allocating umpires to matches.

In addition, he has been a player and President of the Launceston City Hockey Club. Colin has played an integral role in organising state-wide events such as the Festival of Indoor Hockey and the Junior Regional Challenge. His hard work, skill and dedication were recognised when he was selected as the umpire manager for the U15 National Hockey Championships and as an umpire coach for the senior national hockey league.

His decades of high-level service as a volunteer to the sport and his community culminated in his being awarded the 2022 Hockey Tasmania Volunteer of the Year Award. His tireless work has played a significant role in the revival of hockey participation in Launceston and the game's overall success in Tasmania.

### Melanie Beets

HOBART SPORTING  
CAR CLUB

Melanie is an invaluable contributor to Tasmania's motorsport industry. With years of experience under her belt, she has shown a remarkable dedication to upskilling her qualifications and expanding her skill set.

With four official licenses and an Event Command qualification, Melanie is equipped to perform the most critical role at a motorsport event as a 'Clerk of Course'. Her excellent management, communication, and delegation skills have seen her successfully perform this role at various state-level motorsport events, showcasing her expertise in the field.

As a Fire Marshall at the Australian Formula 1 Grand Prix, she has represented Tasmania's motorsport community with pride and distinction. She is an active Hobart Sporting Car Club member, serving as club secretary and state council delegate. Melanie's success in a historically male-dominated sport serves as an inspiration to many young females within the club.

### Rod Graham

GLENORCHY BASKETBALL  
ASSOCIATION

Rod has dedicated over 40 years to volunteering in basketball, starting as an umpire when he was just 13. Rod recently led the merger of five separate clubs to form the Glenorchy Basketball Association, which is now the largest basketball club in Southern Tasmania. He recognises the importance of volunteers and creating meaningful opportunities for their contribution. Rod built partnerships between Glenorchy Basketball Association and community groups such as ParaQuad Tasmania, Reclink, and the Queer Sporting Alliance. He also started the Stars Basketball Club, in which every player has a mental or physical disability. In 2021, Glenorchy Basketball Association was named Australia's Good Sports Club of the Year. Rod has served as volunteer president of the Bridgewater Policy and Community Youth Club for over a decade. Under his leadership, the club won two Tasmanian Telstra Business of the Year awards. He has secured over \$500,000 in funding for the Claremont College Community Gym through grant applications. Rod is known for his high moral compass and willingness to lend a hand to anyone in need.



# Arts, Heritage, Tourism and Events Volunteer Award

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:



## FINALISTS

### Michelle Williamson

FARM IT FORWARD  
TASMANIA

Michelle founded Farm It Forward Tasmania and helps maintain local community gardens across the North West Coast.

She organises around 40 ongoing and one-off events each month, finding skilled locals to share their knowledge and expertise and hosting many workshops herself. Michelle ensures that each event is accessible to all - regardless of skill level, age, or financial situation. Michelle has fostered an environment at the Vinnies Community Hub in Somerset that welcomes a broad range of locals and offers them a sense of place.

Her abundant kindness and interesting activities draw people in. She always has a smile on her face and is quick to offer a hot drink to all visitors. She is welcoming of everyone, open to new ideas, forward-thinking and excited for the future. Michelle responds with kindness and understanding. She does so much for others and asks nothing in return.

### Aeron Clark

EDGE  
RADIO

Aeron has been a champion for local music and community radio in Tasmania for over a decade. As music coordinator at Edge Radio and Music Tasmania, she ensures Tasmanian music remains at the station's core. Her contributions have enabled and supported local music in a challenging landscape, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. Aeron has curated local acts for festivals such as DARK MOFO and MONA FOMA, the Homebrewed stage at Falls Festival in Marion Bay, and Edge Radio fundraisers.

Her long-term support of emerging Tasmanian artists has resulted in substantial growth in the ability of local artists to be recognised by mainstream media. Aeron provides young people and volunteers with opportunities to share their passion for music and broadcast with value and impact. Young musicians and media makers see her dedication and drive to support the creative community as an inspiration for their own future careers in Tasmania.

### Julie Porter

SV RHONA H

Julie is the founder and director of Heritage Sailing Tasmania and the force behind the award-winning tourism experience onboard the oldest and smallest operating tall ship in Hobart, SV Rhona H. She manages all aspects of the ship's operations, sailing schedule, bookings, website, social media, and crew roster. Julie coordinates 34 volunteers from a wide variety of backgrounds. The SV Rhona sailing experience has been a finalist in the tourism awards four times since 2017, and is consistently and positively reviewed online.

Julie's values include achieving the best you can, helping others do their best, and making life better for someone every day. She is the mother of both the ship and crew and gives each guest a wonderful experience with her attention to detail, kindness, and zero tolerance for bad behaviour. Julie's mantra is to be firm but kind. Her nursing background shows daily as she brings the best to the ship and encourages others to do the same.





# Environment, Animal Care and Conservation Volunteer Award

SUPPORTED BY:



## FINALISTS

### Paul Doherty

JUST CATS  
TASMANIA

Paul loves to take Zander, a four-and-a-half-year-old Cornish Rex cat, to several residential aged care facilities to provide animal therapy for the residents. He visits residents in their rooms or in group settings, with Zander in tow, giving them an opportunity to interact with the cat. Zander has an outgoing personality and adventurous nature, which makes him ideal as a therapy animal. Paul's volunteering efforts makes a huge difference to the lives of the residents. Many of them have had to surrender their pets due to deteriorating health and are missing the love and touch of an animal companion. The residents also appreciate the human conversations and look forward to Paul's weekly visits. A day in the life of volunteering for Just Cats involves Paul jumping in his car, driving from Launceston to Longford to collect Zander at Just Cats, visiting and laughing with residents and then delivering Zander back again at the end of the day. Paul's dedication to helping others is admirable and he sets an inspiring example of how volunteering can make a meaningful impact on the lives of people in our communities.

### Leanne Andrew

NORTH EAST ANIMAL  
SANCTUARY TASMANIA

Leanne brings dedication, innovation and compassion to her role as a volunteer with the North East Animal Sanctuary Tasmania. The sanctuary provides a safe haven for abandoned and uncared animals in need of help and rehoming.

Located in the Herrick, east of Scottsdale, the sanctuary started in 2017 and accepts animals from local councils and public surrenders. All animals are cared for by foster carers before being re-homed. The organisation also educates owners and potential owners on animal health and the importance of de-sexing domestic pets.

Leanne brings a can-do attitude and a well-honed skill for upcycling to the sanctuary. Her drive and passion for improving the physical and mental health of the animals have enhanced the environment for the rescued animals. She is recognised for her organisational talent and ability to create systems that make the sanctuary a nicer environment for her fellow volunteers.





# Lifetime Achievement Volunteer Award

SUPPORTED BY:



## FINALISTS

### Trevor Flower

DELORAINÉ EX SERVICES  
AND CITIZENS CLUB

As an active member and club president of the Delorainé Ex Services and Citizens Club for an impressive 30 years or more, Trevor is a dynamic force within his community. He keeps busy promoting the services of the club far and wide, and on top of that, he supports the monthly gatherings of the Meander Valley charity singers.

During his extensive time with the club, Trevor has worn many hats, from social committee member to club president and no matter what he does, he does it with a smile and a laugh. He has been granted a life membership to the club and it is clear that he loves to help others.

Trevor provides guidance and support to the Delorainé community and is an active citizen throughout the Meander Valley. Trevor is a true inspiration to all who cross his path.

### Graeme Foale

MOTOR YACHT CLUB OF  
TASMANIA – M.L EGERIA

Graeme is a highly respected member of the Hobart maritime community, having dedicated much of his life to serving in various voluntary roles.

For over 25 years, Graeme has been a member of the Hobart Port Division Royal Australian Reserve, and was awarded the Reserve Force Decoration. Graeme is a life member of the Royal Hobart Regatta Association and the Lindisfarne Sailing Club. In 2000, Graeme joined the Motor Yacht Club of Tasmania. He has served as a board member, was made a life member in 2019 and was awarded Club Member of the Year in 2022. Since 2007, Graeme has overseen the restoration and maintenance of the historic vessel M.L. Egeria, a locally built wooden motor launch that has cruised the river since 1941. Graeme's leadership of a loyal and skilled group of volunteers who meticulously maintain the vessel has enabled the Motor Yacht Club of Tasmania to recover all costs incurred in preserving the heritage vessel.





IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:



# Youth Volunteer Award

## FINALISTS

### Alana Cornish

ST JOHN AMBULANCE  
TASMANIA

When Alana took on the role of leader for her local youth division at St John Ambulance in 2021, she brought with her the qualities of strength, empathy, and a positive attitude. Since then, she has supported members of her team to better themselves through learning first aid as well as gaining life-long skills including confidence, self-belief, and leadership.

As national team manager, Alana helped her team to train and compete in Victoria this year at the National Youth First Aid Competitions, where they won the prestigious National Spirit of St John award. Alana has been an inspiring leader for her local youth division and for her community.

She has contributed more than 1,000 hours through providing first aid support at local and interstate deployments and events. She role models leadership and advocacy, while undertaking her own studies in nursing, and is always there for her team.

### Gavin Quek

AUSTRALIAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION,  
TASMANIAN BRANCH

Gavin is a dentist and a dedicated Australian Dental Health Foundation volunteer. His passion for improving oral health outcomes for all Tasmanians is evident in his commitment to various initiatives and programs. As a Councillor and Secretary for the Australian Dental Association Tasmania, Gavin played a crucial role in Dental Health Week 2022 activities, where he spearheaded the donation of 500 oral health packs to welfare organisations. Gavin's personal values of compassion and social responsibility drive him to use his professional skills and expertise to help those in need. Under the Australian Dental Health Foundation, Gavin provides full dental care for patients who cannot afford complex treatment or have been victims of domestic abuse. He also chairs the Oral Health Promotion Committee, where he spearheads various initiatives to improve oral health outcomes for marginalised communities. Gavin's efforts are directly and indirectly improving oral health outcomes for Tasmanians.

### Lara Emmett

SURF LIFESAVING  
TASMANIA

Lara is a humble individual who has made a significant impact in her community through her volunteering work with Surf Lifesaving Tasmania. She is a dedicated member of her home club in Ulverstone and has served on various state committees, including the Surf Lifesaving Tasmania Youth Group and the Board of Surf Life Saving Tasmania.

Lara's primary focus is the development and education of young lifesavers. She has been involved in the management of Surf Lifesaving Tasmania's Youth Development Camp for multiple years, where she works to develop leadership and communication skills in the attendees.

Lara has also been involved in first-line rescue operations, including the search for a missing kayaker this past summer. While studying for a full-time degree in north Queensland for the past six years, she has always made time to attend meetings, patrols, and discussions. Lara has a unique capacity to inspire and motivate others, and her influence is widely spread.





# Best Practice in Volunteer Management Award

SUPPORTED BY:



## FINALISTS

### Kate Dostalek

MIGRANT RESOURCE CENTRE TASMANIA

Kate is a highly regarded volunteer coordinator who plays a vital role in supporting volunteers within her organisation. Her specialty lies in providing guidance and assistance to first-time volunteers, while also going above and beyond to support those in need. She deeply understands all the Migrant Resource Centre's processes and is always willing to help resolve complex issues.

Her people skills are exceptional, and she can build strong relationships with volunteers, making them feel valued and welcome. Her dedication to helping others is evident in her willingness to go the extra mile, such as cooking for volunteers during the week and guiding them to interact with other people. Her patience, kindness, and empathy make her an invaluable asset to the organisation.

### Michelle Howells

COMMUNITY TRANSPORT SERVICES TASMANIA

Michelle provides an exceptional volunteer experience and has shaped the Community Transport Services Tasmania volunteering program to be inclusive and beneficial for both volunteers and those using the service. From the moment a volunteer connects with Community Transport Services Tasmania, Michelle provides outstanding leadership and support throughout the onboarding process. She has developed a comprehensive recruitment process that includes a profiling tool to understand what's important to each volunteer. Michelle believes everyone can add value through their skills and experience and works proactively to identify ways for volunteers to contribute. She creates a welcoming environment and provides ongoing support, including a learning platform for continuous growth opportunities. Michelle is a true leader in volunteer management, and her dedication to creating a positive, engaging experience for all volunteers is truly admirable.

### Nicci Skerl

THE ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY

Nicci is a dedicated volunteer manager for the St Vincent de Paul Society. In her role, Nicci manages volunteers for the Vinnies Van, Dining with Friends, and the Community Hub.

She organises events, secures funding, provides emergency relief services, and manages staff and volunteers. She works tirelessly to keep the organisation running smoothly, often donating unpaid hours to ensure the volunteers are supported and understand the importance of the services they provide. She prioritises volunteer safety, personally checking new locations to ensure they are safe. Nicci covers the North West Coast in her role, often travelling for over an hour to attend meetings and working long days. Nicci ensures that the volunteers feel comfortable coming to her with any questions and concerns, and her strength of conviction and confidence in the cause is matched by her kindness and empathy for those around her.



# Volunteer Program or Group of the Year Award

SUPPORTED BY:



## FINALISTS

### Albert Street Gang

A love for the ocean and surfing led to the creation of the Albert Street Gang, a growing community where anyone, regardless of age, gender, or ability, can try surfing for free. Led by Natalie Potter, Emily Versluys and Matt Potter, the Albert Street Gang can be found most Sundays at Turners Beach on Tasmania's North West Coast. Wetsuits, boards, and hi-vis t-shirts are provided to ensure everyone's safety and inclusivity, and the music, encouragement, and laughter flow freely.

The Albert Street Gang was on the 2023 Women in Waves Day panel with Layne Beachley and featured in a Brand Tasmania award-winning film. While based on the North West Coast, the outreach of the gang is much wider, with more than 900 members across the gang's social media platforms. The trio say the true inspiration is in the faces of the young and old in the moment of elation when they are on their feet and dancing across the waves.

### Deloraine Community Garden

The Deloraine Community Garden volunteers are a group of dedicated individuals who come together every Wednesday to tend to their garden and share the fruits of their labour with their community. They work tirelessly to provide produce for Deloraine House and its food programs, including community dinners, a pantry, and budget freezer meals. The volunteer team brings together individuals with varying skill sets, from experienced gardeners to those who profess to be non-gardeners but contribute in other ways. Their efforts extend beyond the garden. The volunteers work hard to build a strong sense of community and belonging while promoting seasonal eating and the sharing of food.

With increasing pressures on families, the value of the Deloraine Community Garden has come to the forefront, inspiring others to grow their own produce and sustainably change their approach to food. Their commitment to sustainability, health, and community building is truly inspirational.

### Tassie Mums

Tassie Mums is a volunteer-based group that is passionate about providing essential items to babies and children in need. The state-wide service collects donations of new and pre-loved items including clothing, cots, prams, bottles, school bags, lunch boxes, toiletries, car seats and more.

The donated items are sorted and bundled according to gender and age. Tassie Mums is connected with more than 65 charities and government organisations that pass the bundles on to those in need. During this financial year Tassie Mums has been able to provide more than \$400,000 in donated goods. In the past 12 months, they have created over 3,200 bundles and reached over 1,000 children across 25 local government areas.

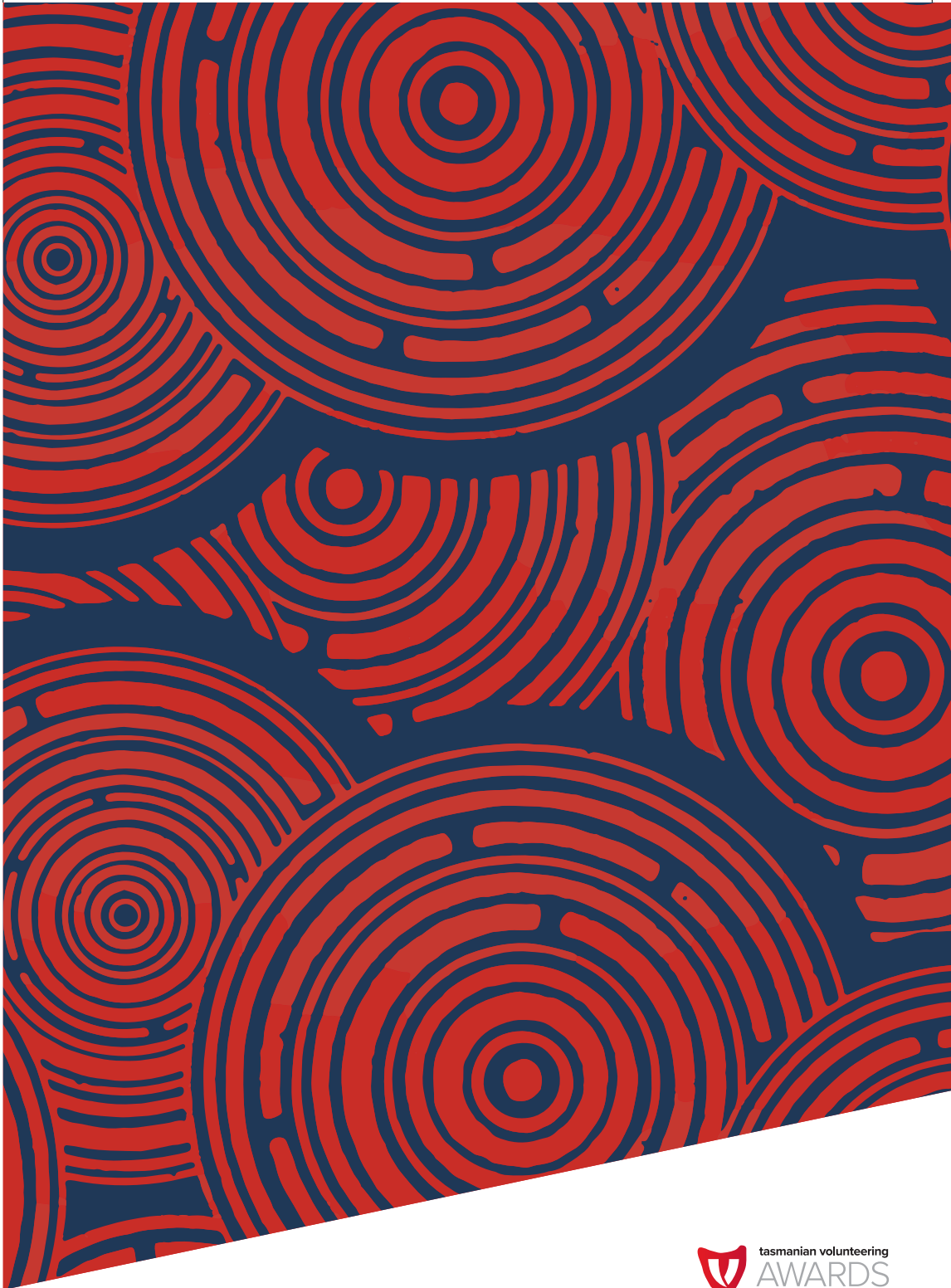
Tassie Mums is inspirational because they collaborate with other services and add value to holistically support Tasmanians, meeting the often-overlooked foundational needs of children and families.



# Who we are

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As the peak body for volunteering in Tasmania,  
**Volunteering Tasmania** creates an inclusive, thriving  
and celebrated culture of community participation.





[www.volunteeringtas.org.au](http://www.volunteeringtas.org.au)

team@volunteeringtas.org.au Tel: 03 6231 5550  
75 Federal Street, North Hobart, Tasmania 7000