

Involving young people

FOR VOLUNTEER INVOLVING ORGANISATIONS

This tip sheet provides information to support Volunteer Involving Organisations (VIOs) be more accessible and inclusive when engaging young people in volunteering.

Volunteering allows everyone 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. Increasing diversity by engaging young volunteers will have a positive impact on the culture and sustainability of your organisation, as they can bring new ideas, revitalise old programs, and assist with succession planning.

Why do young people want to volunteer?

- ✧ To make a difference, to have more meaning in life.
- ✧ To help others, which also feels really good!
- ✧ To help the planet, the environment, the world around them.
- ✧ For enjoyment and to have fun.
- ✧ To feel connected to their community and to give back to society.
- ✧ To meet people and make new friends.
- ✧ To gain experience, skills and networks to help with employment pathways.
- ✧ To explore new things.

“It’s good for the soul” – youth consultation

Key barriers to volunteering faced by young people include:

- ✧ Many competing priorities in life such as study, sports, hobbies, family and friends.
- ✧ Structural barriers e.g. minimum age requirements set by VIOs.
- ✧ Regulatory requirements e.g. working with vulnerable people registration only available from 16 years.
- ✧ Transport challenges e.g. poor public transport especially on weekends, cost of fuel.
- ✧ Cost of living pressures, it’s hard to give up time for no financial gain.
- ✧ Assumptions and attitudes.
- ✧ Not being sure how to go about finding volunteer roles and applying.
- ✧ Low confidence and self-esteem.

“Young people being rejected from volunteering roles due to lack of experience really damages their self-esteem and motivation.” – youth consultation

How can my organisation reduce barriers to volunteering for young people?

- ✧ Be flexible in how you offer volunteering opportunities, ask what works for them.
- ✧ Consider offering one-off or event-based volunteering, particularly for groups.
- ✧ Incorporate social occasions including food, invite people to come with friends.
- ✧ Promote the career related incentives you can offer such as qualifications, training, micro-credentials, skills and networks.
- ✧ Make it easy for young people to learn about volunteering with your organisation – go to where they are (schools, recreation centres).
- ✧ Consider partnering with a local school, develop an initial group volunteering opportunity – this might lead to new volunteers for your organisation!
- ✧ Consider what roles you might offer volunteers without any prior experience.
- ✧ Provide a welcoming, well-supported and easy first experience.
- ✧ Consider utilising social media channels that young people engage with to promote your volunteering opportunities – Instagram, TikTok, X (formally Twitter)
- ✧ Utilise QR codes to quickly direct people to a volunteer sign up page.

“Involving young people in meaningful roles will help your organisation in many ways and far into the future” – Evelyn, University Student

Aligning volunteer roles with the



Volunteering Tasmania and the University of Tasmania Sustainability Placement Experience Program, worked collaboratively on a project to explore how the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) can be used by VOIs to improve engagement with young people.

This led to the development of a series of fact sheets, with examples of volunteering roles aligned with each of the 17 SDGs. By aligning your volunteer roles with SDGs, you can demonstrate how small local actions are contributing to the global big picture. You may also improve relevance for younger volunteers whose values may resonate with these global goals and a desire to make impactful change in the world.

Visit <https://volunteeringtas.org.au/for-organisations/resources/> to access these resources.

Contact us for more information

t: (03) 6231 5550

e: team@volunteeringtas.org.au

w: www.volunteeringtas.org.au