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# THE STATE OF VOLUNTEERING IN QUEENSLAND 2021 POLICY POSITION AND ADVOCACY PLAN

Volunteering Queensland

## Background

During National Volunteer Week 17 – 23 May 2021, Volunteering Queensland released the inaugural State of Volunteering in Queensland 2021 Report. It is a benchmark report that provides detail on the scope of volunteering in Queensland, its costs and its benefits to the community. The data collected from surveys of volunteer-involving organisations and individuals allows for detailed analysis of many facets of the volunteering landscape, including motivations, barriers, challenges, successes and potential actions to enhance volunteering in the future.

[The State of Volunteering in Queensland 2021 Report may be viewed here.](#)

## Methodology

A review has been conducted of the report, as well as further analysis of survey data, to uncover key issues, potential actions to support the sector and topics for future research. To identify potential links between behaviours and outcomes, answers to pairs of relevant questions in the survey were analysed. Trends were noted where enough people responded to both questions (400 – 600 responses) and associations were prominent. To maintain a valid sample size, responses for the question *“What are the top three things your organisation needs to better support your volunteer workforce? – Priority 1/2/3”* were grouped into eight broader categories, rather than the 15 categories identified in The State of Volunteering in Queensland 2021 Report (page 36). Some statistics may appear to vary as a result.

## Key issues overview

Additional and expanded findings have been clustered around several key themes:

- Recruitment and retention
- Training
- Other forms of volunteering (remote, intermittent and informal)
- Barriers to volunteering and red tape
- Funding
- Further research

## Advocacy plan overview

The findings described above identify several actions that would help address the needs of volunteers and volunteer-involving organisations, working to enhance volunteering outcomes and the sector as a whole.

These include actions that may be undertaken by Volunteering Queensland independently, as well as opportunities for collaboration and advocacy. Actions have been provided in detail at the end of this document.

## Contact

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# Key issues

## Recruitment and retention

Key issue – 1 of 6

### Importance as an issue

Volunteer recruitment and retention are perennial issues for volunteer-involving organisations in surveys and conversations, including in The State of Volunteering in Queensland 2021 Report. In like-for-like comparisons, formal volunteer participation (that is, volunteering through a recognised organisation) appears to be declining for the state and the nation as a whole.

Volunteer recruitment and retention are highly interlinked. If a volunteer-involving organisation has poor retention, they have a greater need to recruit new volunteers. If they have difficulty recruiting volunteers, this can place additional pressure on those who are currently in the team. Focusing only on one side of this challenge may provide inadequate solutions. For this reason, these issues are analysed together.

### What does the data say?

77% of volunteer-involving organisations described the issue of volunteer retention as ‘very important’ – the highest-ranking volunteer-related issue in the survey.

Recruitment also rated highly, tying for third place at 65%.

Volunteer-involving organisations say the number of hours people want to volunteer is less than three years ago. *Note that this applies to formal volunteering through an organisation.*

Volunteer-involving organisations say the number of people who want to volunteer is less than three years ago. *Note that this applies to formal volunteering through an organisation.*

63% of volunteers are motivated by helping others. This is by far the most popular motivation, with the second-ranked choice (‘social connection’) being selected by only 34% of volunteers.

### Non-volunteers

Approximately three-quarters of adult Queenslanders participated in some form of volunteering in 2020. There may be potential to recruit the one-quarter who did not volunteer by addressing the barriers that preventing them from getting involved. Some of these barriers may be overcome through effective messaging and outreach.

For example, a relatively large number of non-volunteers indicate that they are unaware of any enticing volunteer opportunities in their area, they haven’t been asked to volunteer, or they don’t know why they don’t volunteer. Additionally, about a third of non-volunteers don’t know how much volunteering they’ll be doing in the future. These present opportunities to connect to a non-volunteering audience, communicate the benefits of volunteering and make them aware of suitable opportunities to volunteer in their area that appeal to their skills and motivations.

**What does the data say?**

20.8% of non-volunteers say they're not interested in volunteering options in their area.

17.2% of non-volunteers say they have never been asked to volunteer, or they're not sure why they don't volunteer more often.

31.3% of non-volunteers are unsure how much volunteering they'll be doing in the future.

Only 10.6% of non-volunteers indicate with certainty that they will volunteer in the future.

Only 2.5% of non-volunteers don't participate due to a previous bad experience while volunteering.

**Recruitment and retention techniques**

In The State of Volunteering in Queensland survey, volunteer-involving organisations indicated the techniques they employ to recruit and retain volunteers. In each case, there was an option that was overwhelmingly popular: 'personally approaching participants, members and their networks (word of mouth)' to recruit volunteers and 'personal connections and relationship building' to retain them. Each technique was an outlier, being selected by approximately 50% more volunteer-involving organisations than the next most popular option.

'Word of mouth' and 'personal connections' offer similar benefits to volunteer-involving organisations: they are usually free, they may not require formal structures or processes, engagement by volunteers can add value to the organisation's reputation, and they may be used to build or reinforce an organisation's networks.

Popularity is not necessarily an indicator of effectiveness. Despite the widespread use of 'word of mouth' and 'personal connections', recruitment and retention were collectively highlighted as priority areas for improvement by one-third of responding volunteer-involving organisations. This indicates that there is an opportunity to inform and refine volunteer-involving organisations' use of these techniques, or to support the use of other, potentially more effective, means to recruit and retain volunteers. By comparing organisations' behaviours and self-identified priorities, inferences may be made about the success (or lack of success) of those behaviours.

**What does the data say?**

'Personally approaching participants, members and their networks (word of mouth)' is the most common recruitment strategy (83.6%), with the next highest being social media at 54.9%.

'Personal connections and relationship building' is the most common retention strategy (74.9%), with the next highest being 'out of hours gatherings, events, celebrations' at 46.1%.

Although popular, survey data does not indicate that word of mouth or personal connections perform better than other recruitment or retention techniques.

Collectively, volunteer recruitment and retention were priority areas for improvement for 34% of survey respondents.

Volunteer-involving organisations that say recruitment is very important were more likely to engage external groups or platforms to aid recruitment.

Volunteer-involving organisations that recruit through traditional and printed media were 60% more likely to say that recruitment is a priority area they need to improve, compared to those who never recruit through traditional media.

Those who recruit volunteers from the parents of program participants were 80% more likely to identify recruitment as a priority for improvement.

### **Techniques for recruiting non-volunteers**

The above information presents both the need and the opportunity to support volunteer-involving organisations to engage people who typically do not volunteer, tapping into the key motivations that have been uncovered through The State of Volunteering in Queensland research. Namely, the motivation of 'helping others', which was almost twice as popular as the next motivation on the list ('social connection').

A campaign is needed to break the mould and assist volunteer-involving organisations to reach beyond their 'word of mouth' networks to a new audience. This can include new means of reaching people, as well as increasing sector knowledge about other recruitment services that are available.

To better recruit volunteers, assistance can be provided to supplement or replace less effective means of recruitment (such as traditional media) with modern approaches and online solutions. To lessen attrition among newly-recruited volunteers, support can also be provided to improve retention - currently the most important volunteer-related issue for Queensland's volunteer-involving organisations.

# Volunteer management

Key issue – 2 of 6

## Importance as an issue

Effective volunteer management is a fundamental part of a volunteer-involving organisation's success and its ability to engage teams. Survey respondents highlighted its significance, with volunteer management being rated as the third most important volunteer-related issue facing volunteer-involving organisations.

Among the categories used in The State of Volunteering in Queensland 2021 Report, volunteer management was the top-ranked priority for organisations and their volunteer programs after applying priority weightings. In the broader categories used in this paper (see 'Methodology'), over 56% of organisations included training or volunteer management among their priorities to better support volunteers in the future.

### What does the data say?

64.7% of volunteer-involving organisations described the issue of volunteer management as 'very important', the third highest ranking volunteer-related issue by importance.

After weighting priorities according to ranking (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup>), volunteer management was the most commonly cited priority, with 38.8% of volunteer-involving organisations including it in their response.

56% of responding volunteer-involving organisations included training or volunteer management among their priorities to better support volunteers in the future.

## Training as a priority to improve volunteering outcomes

Within volunteer-involving organisations that list training among their future priorities, there are two clusters: organisations that deliver training internally to their teams, and organisations that recruit and work with volunteers from vulnerable groups (particularly JobActive / Centrelink mutual obligation volunteers).

In both cases, volunteer-involving organisations have cited the need to improve their training to enhance volunteering outcomes. This suggests that the provision of training resources and support may lead to better volunteer management, engagement and outcomes. For organisations that already deliver training internally, this may take the form of a 'train the trainer' program. A need for specialised training focusing on volunteer management has been identified in parallel studies released contemporaneously, such as in the Volunteering Tasmania / University of Tasmania paper 'Leading and Managing in Tasmania's Volunteer Sector', which reads "[volunteer coordinators reported] a lack of specialised training opportunities for leaders and managers of volunteers".

Volunteer-involving organisations who already deliver training were 56% more likely to include training as a future priority, indicating that there may be an opportunity to refine their existing programs. Those who engage with mutual obligation volunteers from Centrelink or culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds were 30 – 40% more likely to list training as

a priority than organisations that do not. This highlights the extra consideration and needs that may be associated with these groups, or in regions where these volunteers are more prevalent. This training may be related to 'volunteer readiness', or specific training required relating to the role the volunteer will be undertaking.

#### What does the data say?

34.8% of organisations reported an increase in the need for volunteer training across the last three years.

39% of volunteer-involving organisations identified training as a priority to improve for the future. This was the second-highest ranking priority, falling just behind funding.

Volunteer-involving organisations that deliver their own training were likely to cite training as something they need to prioritise for the future. Those with non-accredited training programs were 56% more likely to list training as a priority for better outcomes, while organisations that have dedicated volunteer management training were 60% more likely to include it in their priorities.

Those who work with JobActive / Centrelink mutual obligation volunteers were 40% more likely to list training as a priority for improvement.

Volunteer-involving organisations that engage culturally and linguistically diverse volunteers were 31% more likely to list training as a priority for improvement.



# Other forms of volunteering (remote, intermittent and informal)

Key issue – 3 of 6

## Overview

Volunteering is increasingly being acknowledged as existing outside of the stereotypical mould of a volunteer routinely doing shifts on-premises through an organisation. Workplaces are accommodating remote work and the COVID-19 pandemic has drastically hastened this trend. Additionally, volunteer-involving organisations have observed an increased demand for roles that offer flexible and intermittent schedules. The State of Volunteering in Queensland 2021 Report makes particular note of volunteering that takes place outside of organisational structures (informal volunteering) and its impact.

## Remote volunteering

While remote (also referred to as online or virtual) volunteering has been increasing, some volunteer-involving organisations don't have the skills, technology or capacity to incorporate suitable online activities for volunteers. Only 10.2% of volunteer-involving organisations reported that they engaged remote / virtual / online volunteers, but 28.5% of volunteers reported that they volunteered remotely / virtually / online. This indicates one (or a combination) of the below:

- A small number of tech-savvy volunteer-involving organisations are engaging a relatively large share of online volunteers.
- Volunteers are using the internet to transcend geographical boundaries and are assisting organisations outside Queensland.
- A large proportion of remote volunteering is taking place informally – that is, outside of the structure of an organisations.

In each case, there is room for Queensland volunteer-involving organisations to grow in terms of their capacity to engage volunteers in this way. State of Volunteering in Queensland data also indicates that volunteer-involving organisations that engage remote volunteers have a heightened awareness of volunteer management as a priority for their organisation. This may reflect the changing circumstances of 2020 and 2021, with some organisations facing challenges as they adapt to new methods to engage and manage their teams.

### What does the data say?

10.2% of volunteer-involving organisations said they engaged remote / virtual / online volunteers.

28.5% of volunteers reported that they volunteered remotely / virtually / online.

24.2% of volunteer-involving organisations say there has been an increase in the amount of volunteering done online or from home.

Volunteer-involving organisations that work with remote volunteers were 74% more likely to list volunteer management as a priority to improve for the future.

## Intermittent volunteering

Overall, there is an increasing need to cater to volunteers who want to work on a flexible schedule. This may include an overlap between online volunteering and intermittent volunteering (also known as episodic volunteering), with some online tasks being completed on a flexible schedule.

Volunteer-involving organisations report that there has been an increase in volunteers wanting to participate with irregular or flexible schedules. Also, that this trend is stronger now compared to three years ago.

While organisations are increasingly feeling that volunteers want flexibility, only 28.5% say they offer flexible work arrangements. This presents a gap, with some organisations identifying that volunteers want flexibility, but not having the structure or capacity to offer it themselves. There is an opportunity to support volunteer-involving organisations to adapt suitable roles to accommodate intermittent, flexible and remote volunteering.

### What does the data say?

30.2% of volunteer-involving organisations say that more people want “to volunteer occasional, as opposed to regular, hours”. This is almost three times the number of volunteer-involving organisations who say they felt it was increasing three years ago (10.3%).

20.1% of volunteer-involving organisations say that more volunteers want flexible hours than three years ago. Only 9.6% report that fewer volunteers want flexible hours.

Only 28.5% of surveyed organisations cite offering ‘flexible work arrangements’ as a way to attract volunteers.

## Informal volunteering

Existing support mechanisms for volunteers are largely designed to be provided through organisations. This support may not be available to informal volunteers, who assist the community directly or in ad-hoc collectives that have less oversight. Resources or programs could be developed to provide information and support to informal volunteers, without requiring them to conform to a formal volunteer structure.

More research is required to gain a thorough understanding of informal volunteering, its impact upon the sector and how it may be used to enhance volunteering outcomes. By definition, informal volunteers resist being captured in sector surveys, consultations and structures. This also has an overlap with varying cultural values, with informal volunteering sometimes not being regarded as ‘volunteering’ at all.

### What does the data say?

Approximately 85.8% of Queensland’s three million volunteers participated in some form of informal volunteering in 2020. This represents approximately 64.4% of adult Queenslanders.

When asked how they volunteered in 2019 compared to 2020, survey respondents indicated they were more likely to have volunteered informally in 2020, with a 5.7% increase in the rate of informal volunteering.

## Barriers to volunteering and red tape

Key issue – 4 of 6

### Overview

The State of Volunteering in Queensland Report and dataset highlight several barriers that may exist for volunteers, potential volunteers and volunteer-involving organisations, including incurred costs, accessibility limits, cultural or linguistic differences and bureaucratic processes associated with volunteering.

### Financial barriers

Many volunteers and non-volunteers alike cite the cost of volunteering as a barrier. The expense incurred by a volunteer in the pursuit of volunteering is high: \$1,600 per volunteer per year, on average. Presently, some volunteers and potential volunteers may feel a tension between their ability to volunteer and other costs incurred in their day-to-day life.

Unlike paid employment, standard tax deductions are not available for volunteering activity, with the Australian Tax Office writing “*the income tax law contains no specific deductions for voluntary work expenses*”. The average reimbursement given by an organisation to a volunteer was \$182, only covering 11.4% of the average cost of volunteering.

#### What does the data say?

27% of volunteers cited costs as a barrier to them volunteering more, the third most popular response behind ‘no time’ and ‘health’.

20.7% of non-volunteers cited costs as a barrier to volunteering.

On average, volunteers incur costs of \$1,600 per year.

The average reimbursement given was \$182, only covering 11.4% of the above costs.

On average, volunteer-involving organisations only spent 2.1% of their volunteer-related expenses on reimbursing volunteers for costs incurred.

### Bureaucracy and red tape

While comments made by volunteer-involving organisations on other topics came in many forms, there was consistency in how organisations spoke of legislative requirements: they want less red tape. Specifically, volunteer-involving organisations spoke of wanting the process for Working with Children Checks (Blue Cards) and Criminal History Checks (Police Checks) to be smoother, require less duplicated efforts, and only applied when necessary.

# Funding

Key issue – 5 of 6

## Importance as an issue

The State of Volunteering in Queensland survey results reinforce a message that is often communicated anecdotally: that volunteer-involving organisations have diminished capacity due to a lack of adequate funding. While some face limitations due to a lack of funds, for others this presents an existential threat.

### What does the data say?

40.3% of volunteer-involving organisations included funding as a priority to improve their volunteer programs in the future - the most common priority described in the survey.

## Identifying funding targets

In order for funds to be spent efficiently, they should be allocated to address the most significant bottlenecks in an organisation's operation. Grants or funding are more likely to be provided if needs, outcomes and benefits can be easily identified and clearly articulated.

With state-wide data available, we are able to identify the expenses incurred to support volunteering by:

- Queensland volunteer-involving organisations on average.
- Specific groups volunteer-involving organisations within the dataset.

Volunteer-involving organisations have the ability to strengthen pitches and grant applications by comparing their input costs, outputs and outcome benefits against State of Volunteering in Queensland data.

Volunteer-involving organisations may compare their performance and budget allocation to the state as a whole or, with additional research, to organisations grouped by sector, scale or region. Using this data, targeted support or funding could be provided to those whose potential is diminished due to an identifiable area where they are falling behind similar groups.

## What does the data say?

Expenses incurred by volunteer-involving organisations to deliver their volunteer programs had this budget, on average:

o	Wages and salaries (related to volunteer management)	45.2%
o	Materials, tools and equipment	10.7%
o	Administration	9.4%
o	Insurances	5.6%
o	Catering (food and beverages)	4.7%
o	Induction, education and training	4.0%
o	Motor vehicle, transport and fuel	3.8%
o	Marketing and promotion	2.1%
o	Volunteer reimbursements	2.1%
o	Volunteer recognition (eg awards, merchandise)	1.1%
o	Accommodation	0.5%
o	Other expenses	10.9%

Note that these allocations are sourced from volunteer-involving organisations that describe having insufficient funding. In some cases, organisation staff may have had difficulty accurately sourcing this data. Budget allocations for organisations with sufficient funding may differ.

## Further research

Key issue – 6 of 6

### Iterative data collection

The State of Volunteering in Queensland 2021 Report serves as a benchmark dataset. A single report represents one moment in time. While volunteer-involving organisations were asked to recollect statistics from the past and anticipate what volunteering may be like in the future, this falls short of the benefits afforded by collecting and analysing objective data multiple times. The State of Volunteering in Queensland Report can only realise its full potential when iterated across years, allowing for more detailed comparisons to be made and for trends to be identified.

### Further research

Opportunities exist to expand upon the data that has been collected with further analysis and/or further data collection. For some topics (for example, investigation into specific demographics), there isn't enough data to allow for detailed analysis without introducing unacceptable margins of error. If further research is conducted, it could target incomplete findings that currently do not have enough data to be stated with confidence.

Additionally, data collected in Queensland may be combined with data collected in previous State of Volunteering reports where like-for-like methodologies and questions have been used. This may present an opportunity to combine Queensland data with findings from Tasmania, Victoria, Western Australia and, in the future, New South Wales, to identify additional trends, challenges and successes.

If further analysis is not conducted, many of the benefits provided by The State of Volunteering in Queensland Report will remain latent and unrealised.

### What does the data say?

- The State of Volunteering in Queensland 2021 Report highlights these topics for further research:
- o Data collected by Australian Bureau of Statistics, who have recently incorporated aspects of informal volunteering into their questions.
  - o Informal volunteering
  - o Volunteering in regional and rural areas
  - o Volunteer patterns among diverse groups
  - o The opportunity cost / lost value of vacant volunteering roles
  - o Volunteering diversity
  - o Volunteering during the COVID-19 pandemic
  - o Volunteer sector-specific research (eg disasters, sport, aged care, etc)
  - o Value not measured, such as the health benefits of volunteering

# Advocacy action plan

## Short-term actions

To be completed by June 2022

### Topic and description

### Actions and relevant key issues

#### Training

Volunteer-involving organisations described the need to improve their internal training programs. Data analysis revealed that some groups of volunteers (Centrelink / JobActive volunteers, and culturally and linguistically diverse volunteers) may also have additional training needs.

#### Actions

- Further research training needs through surveys or consultation with volunteer-involving organisations
- Deliver two training sessions in line with sector research

#### Key issues that inform this action

- Volunteer management

#### Volunteer expos

The number of non-volunteers who are unaware of volunteering roles in their area presents an opportunity for better engagement. While survey data provides no comment on the efficacy of expos specifically, 44.7% of volunteering taking place in the local community, which indicates that place-based volunteer outreach can help forge local connections.

#### Actions

- Deliver two volunteering expos in collaboration with local groups across the state

#### Key issues that inform this action

- Recruitment and retention

#### Promotion of volunteer roles online

As described above, the number of non-volunteers who are unaware of volunteering roles in their area presents an opportunity for better engagement. Survey data highlights that organisations that say recruitment is very important are more likely to list roles online.

#### Actions

- Increase the frequency and / or audience of volunteer opportunities promoted by Volunteering Queensland

#### Key issues that inform this action

- Recruitment and retention
- Other forms of volunteering (remote, intermittent and informal)

#### Volunteer recruitment campaign

Survey results indicate that hundreds of thousands of Queenslanders say that they have never been asked or invited to volunteer. A large, state-wide campaign can help reach these groups, communicating the benefits associated with volunteering and how to get involved.

#### Actions

- Advocate for funding for a state-wide campaign promoting volunteering
- If successful, use findings from survey data to inform the campaign's design

#### Key issues informing this action

- Recruitment and retention

## Topic and description

## Actions and relevant key issues

### Supporting remote volunteering

While remote or virtual / online volunteering has been increasing, some volunteer-involving organisations don't have the skills, technology or capacity to incorporate suitable online activities for volunteers. Only 10.2% of volunteer-involving organisations reported that they engaged remote / virtual /online volunteers, while 28.5% of volunteers reported that they volunteered remotely/online.

#### Actions

- Deliver a workshop or resource on adapting volunteer roles to accommodate remote / virtual /online volunteers

#### Key issues that inform this action

- Volunteer management
- Other forms of volunteering (remote, intermittent and informal)

### Supporting volunteer recruitment

Recruitment is a key issue for volunteer-involving organisations. Some organisations described using techniques that are associated with inadequate recruitment outcomes, such as print media and recruiting parents of program participants. Many organisations use word of mouth, but the data does not find success proportionate with its popularity.

#### Actions

- Deliver a workshop or resource on techniques to recruit volunteers, outside of word of mouth

#### Key issues that inform this action

- Recruitment and retention

### Further research using existing data

Other states and territories have undertaken State of Volunteering surveys and reports. There is an opportunity to merge existing datasets where methodologies and questions are aligned, expanding the data available for further analysis. Importantly, this may be completed without the need to conduct further surveys, which requires additional time and funding.

#### Actions

- Collaborate with other state and territory volunteering peak bodies to share State of Volunteering data
- Use this data to analyse rural and regional volunteering (first priority) and informal volunteering (second priority)

#### Key issues that inform this action

- Further research
- Other forms of volunteering (remote, intermittent and informal)

### Further research using additional survey data

The data collected for The State of Volunteering in Queensland 2021 Report allows for robust analysis of state-wide trends and certain sub-groups, but analysis into other demographics is limited by the number of surveys conducted. With funding allocated for additional surveys and analysis, there can be further research into several key topics.

#### Actions

- Develop a proposal and seek funding to determine the Volunteering Vacancy Rate across the state and quantify the missed value / opportunity cost of vacant volunteering roles

#### Key issues informing this action

- Further research



## Topic and description

## Actions and relevant key issues

### Volunteer expenses / benefits calculators

An interactive resource can be developed to help volunteer-involving organisations apply State of Volunteering in Queensland findings to their internal processes, long-term strategy and applications for funding. Using this resource, organisations could compare their input costs and output benefits to the state averages uncovered in the report findings, identifying specific areas where they over- or under-perform relative to the state.

#### Actions

- Develop and launch an interactive tool that enables volunteer-involving organisations to compare their data to state-wide data

#### Key issues that inform this action

- Volunteer management
- Funding

### State of Volunteering in Queensland workshop

The State of Volunteering in Queensland 2021 Report provides a wealth of state-level data, but it can be difficult to extract findings and benefits that apply at the organisational level. To further enable the sector to benefit from the report, a workshop may assist managers of volunteers with their advocacy, processes and volunteer coordination.

#### Actions

- Host a workshop for volunteer-involving organisations, teaching them how to apply The State of Volunteering in Queensland 2021 Report to their organisation

#### Key issues that inform this action

- Volunteer management

### Consolidated checks

There is an opportunity to improve efficiency and remove barriers for volunteering by consolidating the various checks that occur at a state and federal level. For example, making the Working with Children (Blue Card) process less onerous, communicating clearly when blue cards are or are not necessary, or creating a 'Volunteer Check Card' that can combine several checks into one record that is accessible by organisations as required.

#### Actions

- Advocate for state and federal governments to create a consolidated volunteer check that combines Working with Children and Criminal History Checks, among others

#### Key issues informing this action

- Barriers to volunteering and red tape

### Remove financial barriers to volunteering

Volunteers in Queensland faced an average cost of \$1600 to volunteer in 2020. Reimbursements for out of pocket expenses were low, only representing 11% of this total. The State of Volunteering in Queensland 2021 Report found that, in effect, volunteers pay approximately \$4 per hour to volunteer. For many, this presents a barrier that precludes or limits their ability to volunteer.

#### Actions

- Advocate for volunteer expenses to be subsidised by the government, possibly through targeted grants
- Through Volunteering Australia, advocate for standard tax deductions to apply to volunteering, as they do to paid work

#### Key issues that inform this action

- Funding
- Barriers to volunteering and red tape

## Medium / long-term actions

To be completed after June 2022

### Topic and description

### Actions and relevant key issues

#### Improve outreach to non-volunteers

The State of Volunteering in Queensland 2021 Report has taken the first step in identifying non-volunteers and why they do not participate. This information can be used to better support volunteer-involving organisations in their outreach to non-volunteers when recruiting. Further investigation may also be undertaken, with findings informing the creation of training and resources on this topic.

#### Actions

- Further investigate the underlying causes of non-volunteering
- Develop resources and / or training to assist volunteer-involving organisations appeal to non-volunteers

#### Key issues informing this action

- Recruitment and retention

#### Support informal volunteering

Support mechanisms for volunteers are typically offered through recognised organisations. Informal volunteering takes place outside of organisations and informal volunteers may not have access to the same level of support and information. A resource may be developed to assist informal volunteers to better understand the rights, responsibilities, privacy, health and safety, and other important information and legislation that applies to both themselves and to those they help.

#### Actions

- Pending further research into informal volunteering, develop a resource or suite of resources designed to support informal volunteers

#### Key issues informing this action

- Other forms of volunteering (remote, intermittent and informal)

#### Targeted funding

State of Volunteering in Queensland data can be used to support volunteer-involving organisations in their applications for grants, by enabling them to clearly articulate their costs and benefits relative to the state average.

#### Actions

- Advocate for volunteer grants
- Host workshops or create a resource that supports volunteer-involving organisations using data as they apply for grants

#### Key issues informing this action

- Funding

#### Recurring State of Volunteering reports

The State of Volunteering in Queensland Report serves as a benchmark dataset. It can only realise its full potential when iterated across years, allowing for in-depth comparisons to be made and for trends and impact to be accurately identified.

#### Actions

- Advocate for funding for future and regular State of Volunteering in Queensland reports (for example, every four to five years)

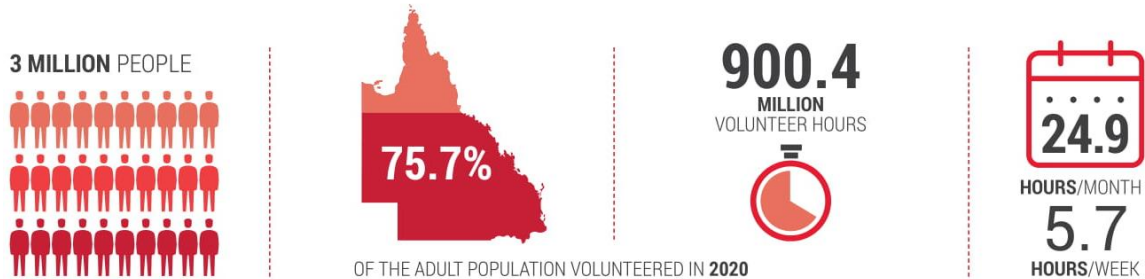
#### Key issues informing this action

- Further research

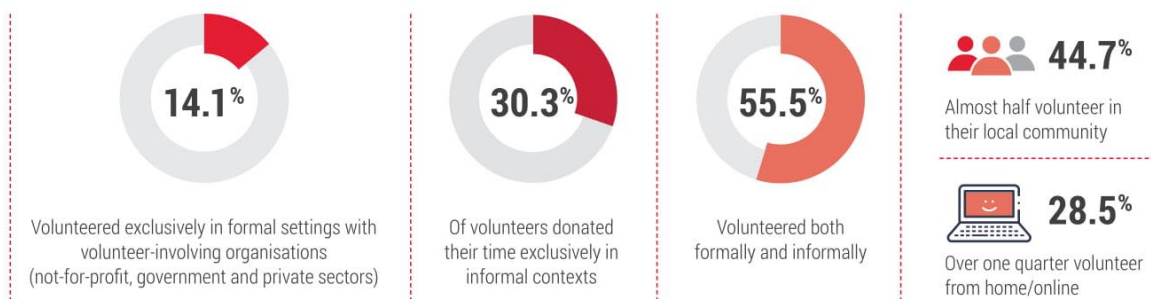
# Appendix

## The State of Volunteering in Queensland Report 2021 Key Findings

### Characteristics of volunteering in Queensland in 2020



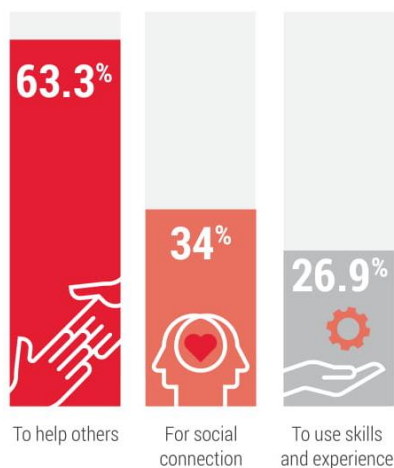
AMONG **QUEENSLAND VOLUNTEERS**, IT WAS FOUND THAT:



MORE PEOPLE **VOLUNTEERED** IN 2020 COMPARED TO 2019:



**QUEENSLANDERS WERE MOTIVATED TO VOLUNTEER IN 2020:**



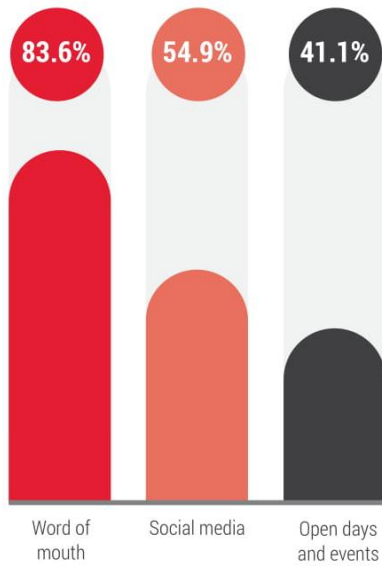
**BARRIERS TO VOLUNTEERING IN 2020 INCLUDED:**



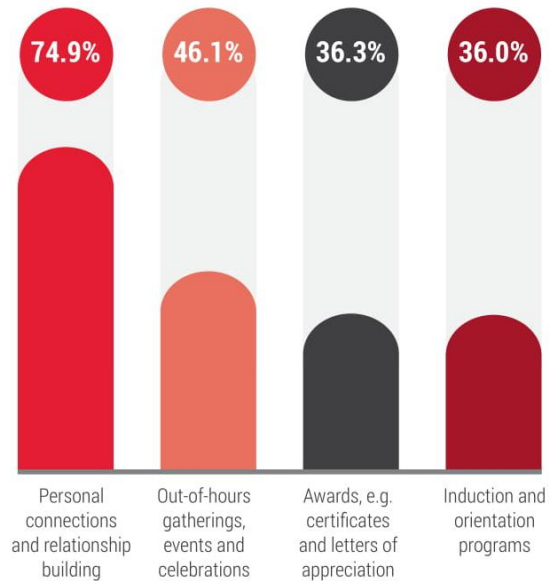
**Volunteer-involving organisations were supported by a wide variety of volunteers**



The most frequently cited strategies organisations used to **recruit volunteers** was to personally approach participants, members and their networks.



Key motivational factors associated to **volunteer retention**



**30.3%**

Of organisations indicated they used reimbursement of volunteers' expenses to **motivate or retain volunteers**

**27.4%**

Saw a drop in the level of **volunteers claiming expenses** across the last three years



**\$84 BILLION**



The **cost benefit ratio** for volunteering in Queensland in 2020 was 4.1:1. For every dollar invested approximately \$4.10 is returned.



**\$1,600**

Individual volunteers report spending approximately **\$1,600 on their volunteering** in 2020...



**11.4%**

... with only **11.4% reimbursed** an average of **\$182.16**.

**\$37.1 BILLION IN 2020**

The cost to replace the labour of **Queensland's volunteers** in 2020 would have been approximately **\$37.1 billion**



Of organisations have seen an **increase** in the need for **volunteer training** across the last three years



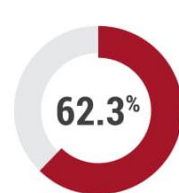
Organisations have seen an **increase** in the **desire of people to volunteer** occasional, as opposed to regular, hours across the last three years



Of organisations have seen a **decrease** in companies wanting to **volunteer employees' time and skill** across the last three years



Of organisations have seen a **decrease** in the number of **people who want to volunteer**



Of organisations predicted they would have the **same or more volunteers** in three years' time