

Impact Strategy

2024-2027



Foreword by the Chair

Professor Michael E. Drew



With immense pride and anticipation, I introduce Volunteering Australia's Impact Strategy for the next three years. Aptly named, this strategy is designed to amplify our impact to support and enliven Australia's volunteering ecosystem. In short, impact is at the core of everything we do.

We have harnessed the collective wisdom of thousands of Australians in developing our vision. Through the creation of the National Strategy for Volunteering, extensive collaboration has shaped a vision where volunteering is woven into the very fabric of our society. Imagine a future where more people volunteer more often, where every volunteer feels valued and knows their efforts make a profound difference. Picture a landscape where volunteering is integral to policy, service design, and strategic investment, and where the rich diversity of our communities is celebrated and supported through volunteerism. What better vision for Volunteering Australia than one shared with other members of the volunteering ecosystem?

Our strategy is driven by the belief that volunteering empowers individuals and strengthens communities. We are committed to advancing this vision by promoting and advocating for volunteerism and providing national leadership. Guided by our core values, we are poised to make a lasting impact. These principles are the foundation of our dedication to enhancing volunteering across Australia.

The journey ahead is filled with promise and potential. With the support of our dedicated staff, volunteers, partners, stakeholders, and foundation members, we are confident that our collective efforts will transform our vision into reality. Together, we will create a vibrant and impactful future for volunteering in Australia, ensuring that volunteering remains integral to our national identity and fosters stronger community cohesion.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'M E Drew'.

Professor Michael E. Drew
Chair

Foreword by the CEO

Mark Pearce



Our vision is to make volunteering the heart of every community, with more people volunteering more often, and their contributions deeply respected. This vision, shaped by thousands of Australians, reflects a national consensus.

We believe that volunteering empowers individuals and strengthens communities, fostering inclusion and societal wellbeing. Our mission is to advocate for volunteering nationally and provide leadership to ensure its growth and sustainability.

Our guiding principles are equity, collaboration, evidence-based action, and the pursuit of excellence. We strive to amplify diverse voices, break down barriers to inclusion, and combine passion with research and expert advice. We are committed to continuous improvement and doing what is right, even in challenging times.

The next three years will see Volunteering Australia elevate our already extensive policy and advocacy activities, in addition to enhancing communications and engagement, domestically and internationally. We will lead national research and knowledge sharing to better inform volunteering practice, and shape national volunteering policy.

This strategy is firmly focussed on creating a better future for volunteering in Australia. We are committed to enacting it sustainably, driven by collaboration, effective leadership, and accountability. Our refreshed Theory of Change will guide us in tracking progress and measuring impact.

I invite you to join us on this journey. Together, we can unlock the full potential of volunteering to create resilient and thriving communities across Australia.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mark Pearce', written in a cursive style.

Mark Pearce
Chief Executive Officer

Acknowledgement of Country

Volunteering Australia acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea, and community. We pay our respect to Elders past and present. We strive to raise awareness of the many forms that volunteering can take which includes recognising and uplifting First Nations' practices of community giving.

I. Vision

This is what we would like to happen in the world – the desired endpoint.

Volunteering is the heart of Australian communities.

- **Where more people volunteer more often.**
- **Where volunteers feel respected and know their contribution makes a difference.**
- **Where volunteering is valued and properly considered in policy settings, service design, and strategic investment.**
- **Where diversity in volunteering is recognised, celebrated, and supported.**
- **Where people individually and collectively realise their potential for creating thriving communities.**

We share this vision with other members of the volunteering ecosystem.

This vision was co-designed with thousands of people from across Australia during the development of the National Strategy for Volunteering.

II. Purpose

This is the why, what is our motivation for the vision.

We believe volunteering empowers people to make a positive impact and leads to more inclusive and flourishing communities.

III. Mission

This is how we will contribute to the vision.

We support a thriving volunteering ecosystem in Australia by promoting and advocating for volunteering and providing leadership at a national level.

IV. Principles

These are the principles that guide everything we do at Volunteering Australia.

Courageously pursue excellence

We are committed to courageously pursuing change, even when it is hard or unpopular. We act with integrity: striving to do what is right, not simply what is easy. A commitment to continuous improvement and the pursuit of excellence energises everything we do.

Combine passion with evidence

We are passionate about volunteering and the benefits it has for people, places, and the planet. Everything we do combines this passion with evidence: research, lived experience, and expert advice.

Inspire collaboration

We believe that we are better together. We collaborate with others so that we can collectively harness our potential for a brighter future.

Prioritise equity

We strive to take an intersectional approach, through a commitment to amplifying diverse voices and breaking down systemic barriers to inclusion.

V. Our Activities and Strategic Directions

Our strategic directions build on our existing strengths and provide a framework to move Volunteering Australia towards a future state where we are maximising our impact. Our strategic directions are designed to complement the work of other members of the volunteering ecosystem, including our foundation members (the state and territory Volunteering Peak Bodies), so that we can collectively achieve a better future for volunteering.



Policy development and advocacy

We undertake policy analysis and development so that our advocacy promotes practical, evidence-based and innovative proposals for change.

Strategic Direction 1: We will strengthen our policy and advocacy capacity to provide guidance and promote change across the full breadth of policy issues relevant to volunteering.

Strategic Direction 2: We will develop and nurture relationships with our global peers so that we can share learning and collaborate internationally.



Communications and engagement

We represent volunteering in Australia at the national level, striving to ensure volunteering is comprehensively valued.

Strategic Direction 3: We will develop further strategic alliances and partnerships to amplify our voice at the national level and strengthen our policy and advocacy impact.

Strategic Direction 4: We will innovate in our communications and marketing strategies to enhance our reach and influence.



Ecosystem support and infrastructure

We support the volunteering ecosystem through our subject matter expertise and the provision of frameworks, tools, and resources that enhance volunteer engagement, organisational capacity, and overall societal impact.

Strategic Direction 5: We will target support through advancing key pieces of national infrastructure (for example, the National Strategy for Volunteering, the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement, and the Volunteering Gateway).



Research and knowledge sharing

We are leaders and demonstrate excellence in research and data analysis that informs volunteering policy and practice.

Strategic Direction 6: We will build upon existing research infrastructure (for example, the National Volunteering Research Network) and enhance our knowledge translation function to meet the information needs of the volunteering ecosystem.

VI. Enacting the Strategy

We are committed to achieving our purpose in the most effective and financially sustainable way.

Everything we do is enabled by a collaborative and supportive culture, effective leadership and governance, and a diverse and thriving team.

We hold ourselves accountable to the implementation of our strategy and to tracking our impact. Our refreshed Theory of Change will guide this commitment.

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