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New national resource hub for volunteer managers

Volunteering Australia has launched an online [Volunteering Resource Hub](#) to help anyone who helps manage, lead or coordinate Australia's almost six million volunteers.

The Volunteering Resource Hub is an initiative of Volunteering Australia, funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services. It brings together useful, evidence-based and current best practice resources to support effective volunteer management across Australia.

This Resource Hub is coming at a critical time, as the volunteering sector is still struggling with the impact of COVID-19.ⁱ Volunteering Australia's *'Re-engaging Volunteers and COVID-19'* research shows that nearly three quarters (72%) of volunteer programs are not fully operational.ⁱⁱ Out of the 600 respondents to this survey, over half (56%) said their organisations needed more volunteers, with four out of ten (41%) finding it difficult to re-engage or recruit volunteers.

Volunteering Australia CEO, Mark Pearce, said it was evident that volunteering needs extra support if it is to be reinvigorated in the wake of COVID-19. "Volunteers are needed more than ever to ensure economic recovery and social stability. Although volunteering is time freely given, enabling volunteering is not free. Volunteers need managers to induct, train, lead, guide, recognise and support them to continue their invaluable contribution to Australian communities. This Resource Hub will help volunteer leaders carry out this vital work."

The Resource Hub includes over 350 relevant, useful and accessible resources including policies, procedures, tools, videos, templates, guides, research and factsheets. These resources will help volunteer managers, experienced or new, embrace the *National Standards of Volunteer Involvement* in their everyday practice. The standards, recognised as best practice in Australia, are designed to help benchmark practice; better attract, manage, recognise and retain volunteers; manage risk and safety; and improve the overall volunteer experience.

A working group of representatives from across the volunteering sector in Australia helped guide the Resource Hub's design, and over 20 volunteer management professionals reviewed, checked and tested its design, functionality and usability. This Resource Hub has been designed for the sector by the sector.

The resources cover topics such as volunteer support, development and recognition. Resources on topics relevant to the current environment volunteering is facing are also included – topics such as re-engaging volunteers during COVID-19, managing the mental health and wellbeing of volunteers and recruiting younger volunteers. The *'Re-engaging Volunteers and COVID-19'* research showed that these are some of the barriers that volunteer involving organisations face in re-invigorating the sector.

"It is vital for all of us to work together, share our collective knowledge and re-imagine how we can better support Australia's diverse, dedicated and invaluable volunteers. This Resource Hub will be one step towards helping achieve that," Mr Pearce said.

The Volunteering Resource Hub can be accessed at www.volunteeringhub.org.au.

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MEDIA RELEASE



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About Volunteering Australia

Volunteering Australia is the national peak body for volunteering, working to advance volunteering in the Australian community. Volunteering Australia's vision is to promote strong, connected communities through volunteering. Our mission is to lead, strengthen, promote and celebrate volunteering in Australia.

About the Volunteering Resource Hub

An initiative of Volunteering Australia and funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services, the Volunteering Resource Hub brings together over 350 useful, evidence-based and current best practice resources to support effective volunteer management across Australia. The resources cover topics such as volunteer leadership and management, volunteer safety and wellbeing, volunteer recruitment, as well as volunteer support, development and recognition. There is a Quick Guide for a useful introduction to some of the resources included. Resources are assessed to ensure they align with the [National Standards of Volunteer Involvement](#) and meet best-practice in volunteer management. We welcome feedback and further suggested resources.

Visit the Resource Hub here - www.volunteeringhub.org.au.

About the Re-engaging Volunteers and COVID-19 Survey

Over December 2020 and January 2021, Volunteering Australia asked the volunteering community about their experiences re-engaging volunteers and COVID-19. We received 584 responses mainly from volunteer involving organisations but also volunteers and other individuals or organisations with an interest in volunteering. In 2020 Volunteering Australia commissioned the ANU Centre for Social Research and Methods at the Australian National University to undertake an analysis of the experience of volunteers during the lockdown period in April and May. This survey was a follow-up to this 2020 research, to see how the sector was re-engaging volunteers and is part of Volunteering Australia's [Reinvigorating Volunteering](#) campaign.

See the ['Re-engaging Volunteers and COVID-19'](#) report.

What the volunteer managers who tested the Resource Hub say?

'A fantastic initiative. I love how clear and easy it is to use. It will be great for people even with a very limited understanding of volunteer management. I look forward to using it.'

Kerry Burns, Manager Volunteer Services, RSL Victoria

'This Hub will build confidence in the management of volunteer teams for so many volunteer involving organisations! It will really help those struggling to come back to life.'

Tarryn Firman, Volunteer Development Coordinator, City of Wodonga

'I think this looks great! There's lots of information and resources that seem to be easy to find and collated well.'

Barbara Mifsud, Regional Membership Officer, Rotary International

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'Being new to the management side of volunteering, I have found a range of resources which have perfectly addressed my concerns or areas I was not confident.'

William Edmonds, Support Worker, Casey North Community Information and Support Service

'A fantastic tool to assist community organisations with legal requirements, volunteer management and resources.'

Marisel Lassalle, Community Development Project Officer, Mornington Peninsula Shire

'It's brilliant to have this on the way and that it is national.'

Mel White, Executive Officer, Southern Volunteering SA Inc

'It's looking good. It's modern, 'clean', eye-catching and well laid out for clarity – really value having it available.'

Samantha Ellison, Community Volunteer Coordinator, City of Casey

ⁱ The Australian National University, ANU Centre for Social Research and Methods (commissioned by Volunteering Australia), May 2020, [The Experience of Volunteers during COVID-19](#). During the height of the COVID pandemic in 2020, two out of three volunteers (65.9%) stopped volunteering, equating to an estimated loss of 12.2 million hours per week.

ⁱⁱ Volunteering Australia, February 2021, ['Re-engaging Volunteers and COVID-19'](#). A survey of 584 volunteer involving organisations on their experience engaging volunteers in the wake of COVID-19.