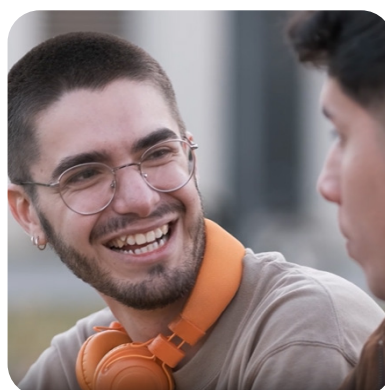


ANNUAL REPORT

2024-25





Her Excellency the Honourable Sam Mostyn AC
Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia

Volunteering Australia Annual Report

As Patron of Volunteering Australia, I am delighted to celebrate the work and achievements reflected in this annual report.

When I was sworn-in as your Governor-General, I promised to put care, kindness and respect at the centre of everything I do. Over the past 15 months, I have seen the power of care, kindness and respect wherever I have travelled in Australia. In the work of Volunteering Australia, we recognise the place of care and kindness as central to our sense of belonging, and celebrate modern, optimistic Australia that has belonging at its heart.

In National Volunteer Week in May this year, it was a joy to welcome volunteers from across the country to Government House. We came together to celebrate volunteers in our communities. It was a beautiful night of sharing, learning, reflecting and storytelling. It reaffirmed my conviction that volunteers are fundamental to how we care for one another and for modern Australia.

Across our country, we estimate that around 6 million people volunteer through organisations. Millions more volunteer informally in their local communities – caring for neighbours, showing kindness to strangers, and helping in times of disaster or crisis. Many people do both.

The research shows that more than half of Australians – almost 60 per cent – volunteer in one way or another. More than 25 per cent of volunteers in formal and informal settings are people with disabilities. Half of all our charities are staffed solely by volunteers, and the charity sector broadly relies on the voluntary support of over 3 million people. This is a nation-wide enterprise, with real, measurable benefits for all of us – social, cultural and economic.

As I travel around the nation, I find volunteers everywhere. Adding an extra dimension of care in hospitals, answering phones in mental health services, running the stalls at agricultural shows, coaching or refereeing at the local oval, reading with young children in the local school – and so much more. They are always cheerful, generous, and dedicated. They embody the values that I have put at the centre of my term as Governor-General: care, kindness, and respect.

Congratulations to Volunteering Australia on everything you do to support and sustain our volunteering ecosystem. Your work, and the work of volunteers everywhere, is essential to our nation's success and strength.

FOREWORD FROM THE ASSISTANT MINISTER

The Hon Ged Kearney MP
Assistant Minister for Social Services



All across Australia, volunteers continue to demonstrate a deep commitment to caring for others and their communities. Their generosity and dedication enrich our local communities, foster a strong sense of belonging and unite people through shared purpose.

Volunteers and community organisations are facing challenges associated with the pressures of cost-of-living, growing demands on our time and the frequency of natural disasters.

The Australian Government is committed to supporting the critical role of volunteers in communities across Australia. We recognise and appreciate the profound impact of volunteers in enhancing social outcomes for all Australians, improving the health and wellbeing of individuals and families, and fostering a sense of connection that is essential for community cohesion.

This government is investing over \$85 million to support volunteers and volunteering programs from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2026. This includes supporting Volunteering Australia to deliver the Volunteering Gateway, and to support

the development of the National Strategy for Volunteering and its first three-year Action Plan.

The National Strategy for Volunteering and its first three-year Action Plan continue to guide our efforts. The progress made through the National Strategy to support volunteering underscores a shared commitment to recognising the important contributions of volunteers and making volunteering more enjoyable for everyone.

I would like to acknowledge the significant work of Volunteering Australia in supporting volunteers and organisations. I commend their ongoing leadership in building a strong and resilient volunteering sector.

To every volunteer, volunteer manager and organisation that supports them – thank you. Your service strengthens our communities, deepens our social connections and inspires us all to make a positive difference.

I look forward to working alongside you in the year ahead to build a volunteering sector that is more resilient, inclusive and sustainable.

CHAIR'S REPORT



Professor Michael E. Drew Chair

This has been a year defined by collaboration, innovation, and the enduring spirit of volunteering that sustains our nation's social fabric. Guided by our **Impact Strategy 2024-2027**, Volunteering Australia has focused on amplifying our national impact, strengthening the volunteering ecosystem, and ensuring that every volunteer is valued and supported.

A defining highlight was the launch of the **first Action Plan (2024-2027)** under the **National Strategy for Volunteering**. This milestone brought together volunteer leaders, researchers, and policymakers in Adelaide and online, with special guest the Minister for Social Services, the Hon Amanda Rishworth MP. Co-designed through more than 1,600 suggested

actions, the Action Plan sets out 22 shared commitments across government, peak bodies, and research partners. It marks a new phase in our collective journey to ensure volunteering in Australia continues to thrive.

National Volunteer Week 2025 was another defining moment, celebrating the power of volunteering under the theme 'Connecting Communities'. Our event at Government House, hosted by Her Excellency the Honourable Sam Mostyn AC, Governor-General of Australia, brought together more than 70 volunteers and leaders from across the ecosystem. The evening was filled with inspiring stories and heartfelt reflections – a vivid reminder that volunteering connects, strengthens, and heals communities

across Australia. Our national media campaign broke records, with over 2,000 items of coverage and more than 93 million impressions nationwide, a testament to the visibility and value of volunteering.

Throughout the year, Volunteering Australia has continued to advocate powerfully for volunteering – achieving official recognition of **Volunteer Coordinator** as an occupation, influencing policy reforms, and amplifying the voice of volunteers nationally and internationally. Our partnerships, research, and digital infrastructure projects – including the **Volunteering Gateway** – are building the foundations for a modern, connected, and resilient volunteering ecosystem.

Volunteering remains one of the nation's greatest collective strengths. Across Australia, around six million people volunteer formally each year, contributing over 500 million hours of service and its estimated hundreds of billions of dollars in economic and social value. As the national peak body, Volunteering Australia's work ensures that this immense contribution is recognised, supported, and sustained – connecting communities, strengthening organisations, and advancing a more inclusive and compassionate society.

This report reflects our shared achievements and our unwavering commitment to a resilient, inclusive, and thriving volunteering ecosystem. I extend my deepest gratitude to every volunteer, manager, and supporter. Thank you to our members, the state and territory Volunteering Peak Bodies: The Centre for Volunteering (NSW); VolunteeringACT; Volunteering Queensland; Volunteering SA&NT (South Australia and Northern Territory); Volunteering Tasmania; Volunteering Victoria; and Volunteering WA for your incredible work and contribution to the volunteering ecosystem. Thanks to my Board for their strategic leadership, to our CEO Mark Pearce for his vision and dedication, and to our team for their professionalism and commitment.

Most of all, I thank the volunteers whose generosity and compassion define the best of Australia. Together, we are shaping a future where volunteering remains at the heart of every community.



Professor Michael E. Drew
Chair

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT



Mark Pearce Chief Executive Officer

This past year has been one of momentum, impact, and shared purpose. As Volunteering Australia continues to lead and support a thriving volunteering ecosystem, I am proud of the collective progress we've made in advancing our mission and deepening the recognition of volunteering as a vital force in Australian society.

Our work has been guided by the **Impact Strategy 2024-2027**, which has helped us focus our efforts on strengthening national infrastructure, amplifying the voices of volunteers, and building strategic partnerships. Indeed, recognising the significant shifts in the way people volunteer and participate in community, increasingly in direct and

informal ways, presents both a challenge, but also an extraordinary opportunity.

The launch of **Volunteering Gateway** stands out as a transformative initiative providing a centralised, accessible platform for Volunteer Managers and organisations to connect, learn, and grow. Its recognition as a finalist in the Australian Not-for-Profit Technology Awards reflects its value to the ecosystem.

We've continued to advocate for volunteering across key policy domains – from aged care and disability to climate action and philanthropy. Our contributions to the **Not-for-Profit Sector Development Blueprint**, the

Measuring What Matters framework, and the **Productivity Commission's philanthropy inquiry** have ensured volunteering is recognised as a strategic enabler of wellbeing, inclusion, and resilience.

Internationally, we've strengthened our engagement ahead of the **International Year for Volunteers for Sustainable Development (IVY 2026)**, positioning Australia as a global leader in volunteering innovation. The growth of the **National Volunteering Research Network**, now over 100 members strong, and our expanding data partnerships continue to inform evidence-based policy and practice.

I want to acknowledge the extraordinary work of our Foundation Members –the state and territory Volunteering Peak Bodies – whose collaboration and leadership are central to our shared

success. I also thank our Board, led by Emeritus Professor Michael Drew, for their strategic guidance, and our dedicated staff for their professionalism and commitment.

To every volunteer and volunteer involving organisation, thank you. Your generosity, resilience, and compassion are the heartbeat of our communities. Together, we are building a future where volunteering is valued and supported as a defining strength of our nation.



Mark Pearce
Chief Executive Officer

ABOUT VOLUNTEERING AUSTRALIA

Volunteering Australia is the national peak body for volunteering.

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

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

Our vision is for a future where volunteering is the heart of Australian communities. This vision was co-designed during the development of the National Strategy for Volunteering and is shared with the Australian volunteering ecosystem.

At Volunteering Australia, we courageously pursue excellence, combine passion with evidence, inspire collaboration and prioritise equity.

Volunteering Australia's Impact Strategy 2024-2027 began on 1 July 2024 as we look to amplify our impact to support and enliven Australia's volunteering ecosystem. Our Strategic Directions build on our existing strengths and complement the work of other members of the volunteering ecosystem.

Annual Report 2024-25 reviews our impact under each of our Activities and Strategic Directions as we focus on creating a better future for volunteering in Australia.

SHARE YOUR STORY

The stories throughout this Annual Report are from Volunteering Australia's Share Your Story initiative.

Share Your Story highlights the vast array of volunteering roles available across Australia; celebrate the dedication and impact of volunteers; and inspire others to find their volunteering passion.

Through these stories we celebrate the diverse passions and talents that everyone brings to volunteering, recognising the breadth of volunteer stories and the positive impact volunteers have in our communities.

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.

‘Volunteer Coordinator’ recognised as an official occupation

‘Volunteer Coordinator’ was officially recognised in the first edition of the Occupation Standard Classification for Australia (OSCA).

This achievement, driven by Volunteering Australia and the state and territory Volunteering Peak Bodies, highlights the critical skills and leadership volunteer managers bring to empowering volunteers across all sectors.

Recognising the importance of volunteer management is a strategic objective in the National Strategy for Volunteering and being included in OSCA will give better visibility to this critical role.

OUR IMPACT

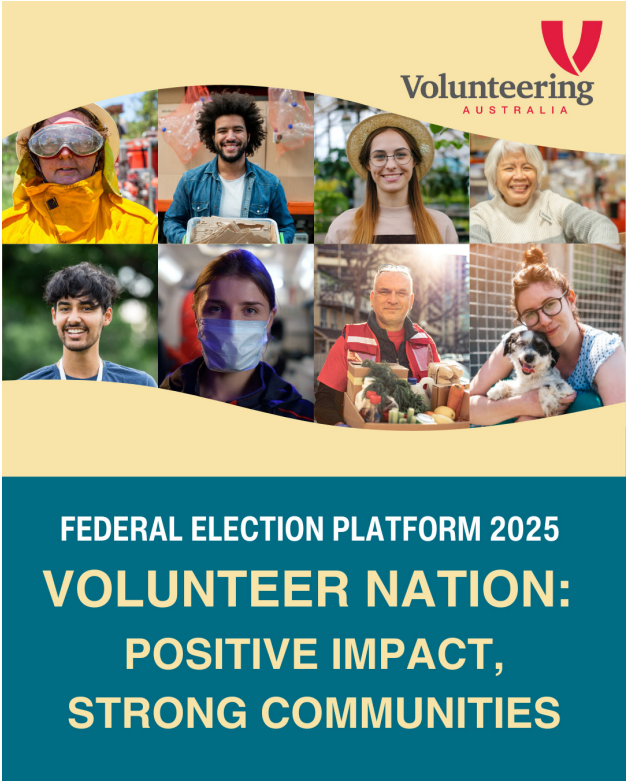
Official recognition of ‘Volunteer Coordinator’ recognised as an occupation

2025-26 Federal Budget

Volunteering is essential to the fabric of Australian society. However, volunteering was overlooked in the 2025-26 Federal Budget with no new measures for the volunteering ecosystem.

Our Pre-Budget Submission called for targeted, strategic investment in volunteering to enable the Australian Government to meet key priorities and progress the co-designed National Strategy for Volunteering. We recommended a suite of initiatives to make volunteering sustainable into the future.

We again represented the volunteering ecosystem at the Budget lock-up. We welcomed the continuation of the Volunteering and Community Connectedness funding stream, including the ongoing Volunteer Management Activity and Strong and Resilient Communities (SARC) grants, as well as measures to address cost-of-living pressures for everyone in Australia.



Federal Election Platform 2025

Our Federal Election Platform called on all political parties and candidates to invest in volunteering for stronger, more connected communities.

Volunteer Nation: Positive Impact, Strong Communities highlighted volunteering’s strong foundations, the progress so far, what is at risk, the challenges faced, and the way forward.

We called on all political parties and candidates to commit to:

- Implement the National Strategy for Volunteering
- Provide cost-of-living relief to volunteers
- Increase funding for the Volunteer Management Activity
- Reform Volunteer Insurance
- Develop a National Volunteer Passport

We undertook a political advocacy campaign targeting all parties, underpinned by tailored engagement and amplification through our communications channels. We invited members of the volunteering ecosystem to support a thriving volunteer nation by contacting candidates, sharing our Election Platform and telling their volunteering story on local media.

On Election Day we recognised the thousands of volunteers supporting democracy throughout the election campaign.

Incoming Government Brief

Our Incoming Government Brief provided a comprehensive overview of volunteering in Australia and ecosystem level considerations for the returned Government, while outlining key policy and advocacy areas and challenges. It also highlighted some of Volunteering Australia’s current engagement across Australian Government portfolios.

The brief was drafted by Volunteering Australia in collaboration with our Foundation Members, the state and territory Volunteering Peak Bodies. The Incoming Government Brief was provided to all relevant Ministers and agencies with face-to-face follow-up meetings where appropriate.

OUR IMPACT

Recognition of volunteering in policy consultations and reports

Volunteering recognised in philanthropy Inquiry

Volunteering (the giving of time) featured strongly in the final report of the Productivity Commission's inquiry into philanthropy. The volunteering-related recommendations in the Future Foundations for Giving report are testament to the collaborative advocacy of Volunteering Australia and the state and territory Volunteering Peak Bodies.

Collectively and individually, we engaged with the inquiry through submissions, public hearings and a roundtable hosted by Volunteering WA.

Engagement on climate and environmental volunteering

We're dedicated to raising the profile of environmental and climate change volunteers. We're advocating for careful consideration of unintended consequences to the volunteering ecosystem particularly from proposed initiatives such as the National Volunteer Incentive Scheme (Climate Army). Any such program would need to be fit-for-purpose, designed in collaboration with the volunteering ecosystem and help strengthen the current disaster response environment rather than duplicate it.

Our Policy Director, Cindy West attended the launch of ACOSS's Blueprint Framework for Fair, Fast, and Inclusive Climate Change Action and was part of a delegation to Australian Parliament House. Our attendance ensures volunteers and their roles are visible,

OUR IMPACT

Invited to participate in policy inquiries and processes

considered in policy settings and acknowledged as key to mitigation and response.

Volunteering Australia is a member of the COP31 Collaboration Group supporting the Australia-Pacific bid to co-host COP31 in 2026, with our Policy Director Cindy West, attending multiple fora to bring the ecosystems' voice to the table, including a briefing with Minister for Climate Change and Energy, the Hon. Chris Bowen MP. We also engaged with the Department of Climate Change, Energy and Water on this issue. In addition, we joined sector innovators, policymakers and community leaders at the Better Futures Forum in Canberra, Australia's largest multi-sectoral forum on climate.

Supporting the Not-for-profit sector

The Not-for-profit Sector Development Blueprint presented to the Federal Government demonstrated the enormous role the Not-for-profit (NFP) sector performs across Australia.

The Blueprint sets out a 10-year vision for the future of the sector and was developed by representatives and experts from the NFP Sector, including our CEO Mark Pearce. The Blueprint draws on the National Strategy for Volunteering,

recognising that the charitable sector engages 3.2 million volunteers, and more than half of Australia's charities are run entirely by volunteers.

Our Advocacy

Volunteering Australia has been active in several policy initiatives, including contributing to submissions and reports and campaigns. We work closely with the state and territory Volunteering Peak Bodies to improve public policy settings and highlight its impact on volunteers and the organisations to which they offer their time.

We've been advocating to the review of Australia's Disability Strategy for better recognition of the volunteer workforce, and the important role volunteering can play in the lives of people with disability, as well as unintended consequences of proposed policy settings in this space for the wider volunteering ecosystem. This is particularly important in the lead up to proposed Disability Discrimination Act reforms on which we will engage.

The new Aged Care Act makes complex reforms to the Aged Care system and includes significant changes proposed

by Volunteering Australia. This was a significant achievement after 18 months of advocacy. We will continue our engagement with the Department of Health and Aged Care, as we stay across implementation and the subordinate regulations to ensure a risk-proportionate approach to involving volunteers when the scheme comes into force in November 2025.

OUR IMPACT

Successfully advocating for changes to the new Aged Care Bill

We continue to engage closely with the National Office of Child Safety and through the Child Safe Sectors Leadership Group on the high-profile issue of child safety where relevant to volunteering.

We also maintain our strong partnership with the Department of Social Services who have the lead on volunteering policy for the Federal Government and key deliverables in the National Strategy for Volunteering with regular dialogue throughout the year.

MEET RUBY

"I am proud to be part of a program that brings joy and support to those who need it. The volunteering experience not only enriched my professional experience but also strengthened my social connections and provided great support to my mental health. As an international student away from home, volunteering offers a social opportunity to connect with people."



POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND ADVOCACY

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

International Year for Volunteers for Sustainable Development

As we look ahead to the International Year for Volunteers for Sustainable Development (IVY 2026), we have an incredible opportunity to highlight and strengthen the role of volunteering in shaping a better future.

Through IVY 2026 and the National Strategy for Volunteering, there are opportunities for all of us to take action and position Australia as a global leader in volunteering innovation.

Shaping the global agenda

We hosted a global dialogue as part of the Call to Action for the Future of Volunteering led by the International Association for Volunteer Effort (IAVE). We explored how to better recognise and support volunteering, who holds the

power to create change, and Australia's role in shaping what comes next.

We had a great turnout, and the insights will help influence the global agenda in the lead up to the International Year for Volunteers for Sustainable Development (IVY 2026).

27th IAVE World Volunteer Conference

Sarah Wilson represented Volunteering Australia at the 27th IAVE World Volunteer Conference in Busan, Korea. Sarah spoke at a forum on enabling self-orientated volunteering and civic activism,

OUR IMPACT

Invited to host a Global Dialogue event by IAVE



Image: Sarah Wilson at the 27th IAVE World Volunteer Conference

which focused on the importance of building community leadership through volunteering.

Sarah also presented to the IAVE Global Corporate Volunteer Council on opportunities and challenges facing corporate volunteering managers and how to better facilitate and capture the value of employee volunteering.

OUR IMPACT

Representing Australia at the World Volunteer Conference

Visit from South Korea

Professor Jin-Kyung Jung visited Volunteering Australia from the Kwangwoon University in Seoul, Korea for research project, 'A Comparative Study of Volunteer Activities and Policy in Korea and Major Countries'.

Professor Jung was particularly interested in gaining a deeper insight into Australia's volunteering systems, policies and management practices.



Image: Sarah Wilson and Professor Jin-Kyung Jung

OUR IMPACT

Hosting global peers to share learning and collaborate

Hosting Volunteering Taiwan

During National Student Volunteer Week, we hosted a delegation from Volunteering Taiwan for a lunch and cultural session.

The visit featured 12 young participants from the Hakka Youth International Affairs Mission, an overseas goodwill program. This initiative aims to increase Hakka youth involvement in volunteer activities and cultural diplomacy through international visits, interactions, and experience-sharing. The timing of the event provided an excellent opportunity to learn about strategies for engaging youth in volunteering.



Image: The visiting delegation from Volunteering Taiwan

OUR IMPACT

International recognition of Australia's leadership in volunteering

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.

Working together to support volunteering

Volunteering Australia is proud to partner with members of the wider volunteering ecosystem to ensure volunteering is recognised as a valued and integral part of society.

‘Hanging out to help out’ was a government campaign aimed at raising awareness of volunteering among young people ages 15-18 by the Department of Social Services. The digital campaign showcased the diverse range of volunteering options, that it can be fun, done with friends and the personal development that results. This campaign supported the National Strategy for Volunteering’s Action Plan 2024-2027

as we collectively take action to make volunteering the heart of Australian communities.

Aon Australia has been supporting Volunteering Australia for over 30 years. As our approved insurance broker, Aon is committed to supporting Australian not-for-profit organisations. By working closely together Aon has developed an understanding of the risks not-for-profits face and helped design cover that caters to these risks.

The Australian Workplace Giving Awards celebrate outstanding workplace giving programs across the country with Volunteering Australia CEO, Mark Pearce a member of the independent judging panel.

OUR IMPACT

Government campaign aimed at raising awareness of volunteering

We celebrated Loneliness Awareness Week as a member of Ending Loneliness Together promoting volunteering as a powerful way to combat loneliness.



MEET LEONARD

“We are now 86, and that is no deterrent to volunteering. It keeps us fit, and we enjoy the friendship of our clients. The welcome from the dogs and their owners is priceless, and we shall continue volunteering as long as we can.”

“To be a volunteer is a nice feeling; you are doing something for others that does not get a reward in money. The feeling of goodwill and friendship is something you cannot put a price on.”

As a ‘Very Neighbourly Organisation’ we support Relationships Australia’s Neighbours Every Day campaign and are committed to create belonging, connection and inclusion through the power of volunteering.

We continue to work together with the Community Broadcasting Association of Australia (CBA) to promote the crucial role of volunteering in community broadcasting.

Our successful partnership with the Australian Sports Commission (ASC) continues, as we work together to grow and enhance the sport volunteer workforce and implement the Sport Volunteer Coalition Action Plan.

OUR IMPACT

Partnerships and alliances across the volunteering ecosystem

Collaborating with Justice Connect enhances our ability to support the volunteering ecosystem and advocate for volunteers. Justice Connect signed onto an identified action in Action Plan 2024-2027 to increase volunteer involving organisations’ understanding of their legal obligations to volunteers.

We partnered with Invictus Australia to support the wellbeing of veterans and their families through volunteering. By aligning our efforts, we hope to enable more opportunities for veterans and their families to contribute their unique skills and experience to building more inclusive communities and enhancing their own wellbeing.

Growing the sport volunteer workforce together

Our partnership with the Australian Sports Commission (ASC) continues, as we work together to grow and enhance the sport volunteer workforce. We are proud to have supported the Sport

Volunteer Coalition Action Plan activities including the 3 Cheers for Volunteers campaign, Volunteering In-Focus Webinars and presenting the Sport Volunteer of the Year Award.

The Year Three Sport Volunteer Coalition Annual Report highlighted a significant increase in both the number of entries and breadth of sports nominating volunteers for the Sport Volunteer of the Year Award.

Aligning with the Celebrate pillar of the Sport Volunteer Coalition Action Plan, the ASC's 3 Cheers for Volunteers campaign in 2025 extended to include an interactive digital Volunteer Map. Australians could nominate and share stories of volunteers on the map, highlighting their diversity, reach and the story behind the individual. The reimagination of the National Volunteer Week marketing campaign, resulting in the largest and most impactful campaign to date.

OUR IMPACT

Presenting the Sport Volunteer of the Year Award

Sharing our expertise

As the national peak body for volunteering, we're committed to sharing our expertise and contributing to the ongoing dialogue about the future of volunteering and the not-for-profit sector.

CEO, Mark Pearce spoke at the Queensland Volunteering Conference. Mark's session explored how we can turn the National Strategy into action, ensuring a thriving, impactful, and sustainable volunteering ecosystem.

We facilitated the Volunteering in Focus Webinar – Connecting Communities hosted by the Australian Sports

Image: Sport Volunteer of the Year recipient Julie Keillor with Olympian Jessica Fox



PERFORMANCE AWARDS



OUR IMPACT

Invited to share our expertise at events and in conversation on podcasts

Commission. Our National Strategy Director presented at the South Australian State Conference held during National Volunteer Week.

Volunteering Australia also discussed volunteerism in Australia with Tobi Johnson on the Volunteer Nation Podcast. They shared the significance of the National Strategy for Volunteering and emphasised the importance of a cohesive approach, involving all stakeholders, backed by comprehensive research.

Mark Pearce was invited to take part in the Conversations with The Smith Family podcast. Mark spoke with The

Smith Family CEO, Doug Taylor about the changing nature of volunteering and efforts to revitalise volunteering for the future.

Mark Pearce attended Third Sector Live 2024, a comprehensive three-day forum dedicated to addressing the challenges currently facing the not-for-profit sector. Mark spoke about the 'Peak body's perspective: Revitalising your volunteer engagement strategy to meet the sector need'.



Image: National Strategy Director at the South Australian State Conference



MEET SADIE

"I find the whole experience of volunteering extremely rewarding. I'm challenged at every session and learn something new every week. Getting help with even the simplest of things can send our clients off with a smile on their face, feeling that their problem isn't quite so overwhelming."

"Don't hesitate to volunteer your time! We can all make a difference in a world that is increasingly complex."

COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

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

National Volunteer Week

National Volunteer Week 2025 celebrated the power of volunteering to bring people together with the theme Connecting Communities. The online campaign saw strong engagement across all social media platforms as we highlighted that volunteering creates lasting relationships, enriching lives and strengthening communities. We also introduced a special series as we shined the spotlight on the diversity of volunteering and the incredible volunteers building thriving and inclusive communities.

“The 2025 design is exceptional!”

We provided a suite of resources to support the volunteering ecosystem to recognise the efforts of volunteers. The suite of resources has grown over the years based on stakeholder feedback.

OUR IMPACT

National Volunteer Week media campaign breaks record with 2,091 items of coverage across Australia

For the first time, we provided translated resources including two poster designs, a social media tile and accompanying text in 15 languages.

“I thought all the resources provided were excellent this year! It saves the Volunteer Managers so much time when promoting NVW, to be able to use these and have it look so professional and fun.”

Our survey found 68% of respondents held an event to thank volunteers, 57% posted, shared and liked content on social media, 40% encouraged others to celebrate by sharing information, 37% gave gifts to volunteers, 35% put posters up around the workplace, 15% attended the online events and 31% celebrated in other ways.

The National Volunteer Week media campaign secured 2,091 items of coverage with more than 93.4 million impressions across all states and territories, and an Advertising Value Equivalent (AVE) of over \$3 million. This coverage was made up of 46 print and 223 online pieces, 39 TV segments, and 1,783 radio items.

As media interest in National Volunteer Week has increased, we've seen more volunteer involving organisations across the country pitch their own stories alongside the National Volunteer Week media campaign. The total number of media mentions for National Volunteer Week 2025 was a record breaking 6,227 items of coverage.

“Thank you for all your time, efforts, guidance and support and getting us thinking of the volunteer space – really appreciate all the resources.”

During the week, we gathered at Government House for a special celebration, hosted by the Governor-General of Australia, Her Excellency the Honourable Sam Mostyn AC. Over 70 volunteers and leaders from across the volunteering ecosystem came together to reflect on the impact of volunteering and the connections it creates in communities nationwide.



Image: Professor Michael Drew, the Governor-General and Mark Pearce

Speakers for the evening included the Governor-General, Volunteering Australia Chair, Professor Michael Drew, St Vincent De Paul Society National Council CEO Toby oConnor, and Lifeline ACT volunteer Shelagh Whittleston. It was a night of shared stories, heartfelt insights, and a powerful reminder of the vital role volunteers play.

Image: Guests at Government House for National Volunteer Week



OUR IMPACT

Bringing volunteers and leaders from across the volunteering ecosystem together to celebrate, network and reflect on the impact of volunteering during National Volunteer Week

“For many years, our company’s main volunteer appreciation event has been at the end of the year, with a smaller event during National Volunteer Week. This year, for the first time, we switched the main event to NVW and made that our only appreciation event. It felt better, as though we were a part of the national momentum.”

Over 100 people attended this year’s online event Connecting Communities: A National Volunteer Week Celebration. Speakers included Derek Turner, Director of Aon Charitable Foundation, Geraldine Muriritirwa, Campaign Manager, Volunteering Awareness campaign – Hanging out to help out, Scott Tutton, Program Manager, Australian Sports Commission and Damien Johnston, Deputy Commissioner, NSW State Emergency Service.

We collaborated with the Volunteering Peak Bodies, event sponsors Aon Australia and the Department of Social Services as well as the Australian Sports Commission and the State Emergency Service (SES).

“Great initiative. Was a wonderful opportunity for us to thank volunteers, share our / their impact and celebrate with partner organisations.”

Our Online Shop offered thank you gifts for sale, with over 500 organisations purchasing gifts to recognise the efforts of close to 40,000 volunteers.

As the national peak body for volunteering, it’s an honour to lead this shared celebration with the state and territory Volunteering Peak Bodies, whose collaboration and leadership are vital in supporting and spotlighting volunteers all year round.

We thank our sponsor Aon Australia for their ongoing support of National Volunteer Week. We also acknowledge the continued support of the Department of Social Services. Your commitment helps strengthen the volunteering ecosystem.



National Student Volunteer Week

National Student Volunteer Week 2024 celebrated our nation's young changemakers, driving positive change through volunteering. The theme, Generation Impact, reflected the powerful influence of student volunteers across Australia. Throughout the week, we showcased how young people are transforming communities through their volunteer efforts.

Students, schools, tertiary institutions and volunteer involving organisations across Australia took part to recognise the invaluable contributions of student volunteers, while encouraging young people to get involved in volunteering.

National Student Volunteer Week is a nationwide initiative led by Volunteering Queensland, with support from Volunteering Australia and state and territory Volunteering Peak Bodies.

Image: National Student Volunteer Week



Celebrating volunteer leadership

For 25 years International Volunteer Managers Day has celebrated the profession of volunteer leadership. Behind every great volunteer program stands dedicated Managers, Coordinators and Leaders who make it all possible.

In the lead up to International Volunteer Managers Day, we explored the theme "What's our future normal?". We believe the role of Volunteer Managers has never been more important. The dedication of Volunteer Managers continues to shape the future of volunteering in Australia, ensuring volunteers are empowered and engaged.

International Volunteer Day

On International Volunteer Day we celebrated the incredible contributions of volunteers across Australia and beyond. CEO, Mark Pearce shared a special video message to say thank you to volunteers for creating a better world.

"Each act of kindness and dedication creates meaningful connections and reminds us of what's possible when we come together to make a difference."

OUR IMPACT

Official supporter of International Volunteer Managers Day



Introducing Volunteering Pulse

In May, we launched our refreshed newsletter packed with insights and updates shaping the future of volunteering in Australia. We reimagined the way we connect with you because volunteering is evolving and so are we.

From National Volunteer Week updates to research and policy news, Volunteering Pulse aims to keep members of the volunteering ecosystem informed, inspired and connected.

Online events

Our program of online forums aims to bring people together to explore topics relevant to the volunteering ecosystem including Connecting Communities: A National Volunteer Week celebration, Enhance the volunteer experience with Rosterfy and Seek Volunteer, Taking Action for Volunteering and Presenting Action Plan 2024-2027. All public events are recorded and available on our YouTube Channel.

In the news

Media outlets across Australia continue to seek our opinion including requests for data, fact checking and interviews. CEO, Mark Pearce was invited to join ABC Nightlife and Radio National Breakfast

to discuss the future for volunteering in Australia

The Community Advocate covered the launch of the National Strategy for Volunteering Action Plan 2024-2027 and volunteering's inclusion in the Measuring What Matters Framework. The weekly newsletter covering community sector news also published an opinion piece from Mark Pearce for National Volunteer Week titled 'A Gateway to connecting communities'.

OUR IMPACT

A trusted source for media outlets covering stories on volunteering

Highlighting the power of volunteering

Throughout the year we shine a spotlight on the power of volunteering via our social media platforms and news posts on our website while supporting national events.

We're committed to amplifying First Nations voices and learning from Indigenous knowledge and practices of community giving. Throughout the year we support NAIDOC Week, National Reconciliation Week and National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day. In 2025, National Volunteer Week concluded as National Reconciliation Week began. A special moment in time to honour and support First Nations-led ways of giving, leading and connecting communities.

We regularly highlight the growing evidence that volunteering can support our mental health and wellbeing. We supported Mental Health Australia's campaign for World Mental Health Day, Meaningful Connections Matter, by highlighting the power of volunteering to create meaningful connections. On World Suicide Prevention Day, we highlighted the contribution of volunteers as an integral part of the mental health workforce.



We shone a spotlight on the remarkable global team of volunteers critical to the success of the Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Over 45,000 volunteers, representing 150 countries formed a dynamic and diverse team that embodied the spirit of the Games and showcased volunteering on an international stage.

Stakeholder Feedback

As the national peak body for volunteering, we rely on feedback from our stakeholders to shape our future initiatives and better serve the volunteering ecosystem. We sought views on our advocacy, communications and engagement, as well as our research, development and promotion of policy solutions in our annual Stakeholder Survey. The results help us make informed decisions and drive positive change.

MEET CURTIN UNIVERSITY MEDIA STUDENTS

“Tasked with creating a short video, the students delivered a creative and deeply personal project that exceeded all expectations, both in quality and impact.”

“Over six weeks, a group of Curtin University media students worked closely with 18 aged care clients. The team built trust, shared laughter, and captured reflections that honour the lives and experiences of every participant. The clients loved sharing their stories, and the result is a moving tribute to joy, resilience, and human connection.”



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).

A new solution to empower volunteer management

We launched Volunteering Gateway, a centralised and curated platform designed to support people who manage volunteers by providing a comprehensive range of resources, relevant technology solutions, and nation-wide training opportunities.

Volunteer Managers are often navigating a sea of scattered resources on their own. This simple and accessible online space empowers them with the best available tools to effectively engage and lead volunteers, helping volunteering to thrive.

OUR IMPACT

Volunteering Gateway recognised as a Technology for Community Impact finalist at the 2025 Australian Not-For-Profit Technology Awards

One of Volunteering Gateway's strengths lies in its collaborative approach. Developed in partnership with key stakeholders across the volunteering ecosystem, it is informed by the needs of Volunteer Managers and strengthened by the collective expertise of leading volunteer involving organisations.



Empowering
Volunteer Management

Explore Volunteering Gateway



Since its launch, Volunteering Gateway has registered over 850 user accounts with more than 40,000 views. It introduced tailored search capabilities for youth and student resources during National Student Volunteer Week and launched a communications strategy to broaden reach and impact. Extensive user and stakeholder engagement has continued to shape its evolution, ensuring it remains responsive, adaptive and accessible.

In recognition of its impact, Volunteering Gateway was named a finalist in the Infoboxchange Australian Not-for-Profit Technology for Community Impact Awards.



Image: Andrew Richards at the Australian Not-for-Profit Technology Awards

National Strategy in Action

The first three-year Action Plan for the National Strategy for Volunteering

OUR IMPACT

Action Plan 2024-2027 brings together 22 commitments from the across the volunteering ecosystem

OUR IMPACT

Minister helps launch the National Strategy for Volunteering's first Action Plan

was unveiled in August 2024. We were delighted to have the Minister for Social Services, the Hon Amanda Rishworth MP, join us together with volunteer leaders and volunteers in Adelaide and online to celebrate this important milestone. The launch celebration was supported by Volunteering SA&NT.

Co-designed from over 1,600 suggested actions, Action Plan 2024-2027 includes 22 commitments from the volunteering ecosystem including government departments and agencies, peak bodies, researchers and more.

Action Plan 2024-2027 was developed with input from the volunteering ecosystem and contains key priorities that will shape this next phase of the



Image: Minister Rishworth launching the National Strategy for Volunteering's Action Plan 2024-2027

National Strategy for Volunteering. There are opportunities for everyone in the volunteering ecosystem to participate and work together for a better future for volunteering.

Coalition of Support

The National Strategy for Volunteering's Coalition of Support allows stakeholders to demonstrate their commitment to making volunteering the heart of Australian communities by signing up as official supporters. Since its launch the Coalition of Support has over 200 members and brings together groups from across Australia and the volunteering ecosystem, including peak bodies, governments, researchers and volunteer involving organisations.

OUR IMPACT

Over 200 official supporters of the National Strategy for Volunteering

National Standards for Volunteer Involvement

The National Standards for Volunteer Involvement refresh project continued with the introduction of new guidance. The National Standards are a best practice framework to guide volunteer involvement that can be used flexibly, recognising that volunteering takes place in highly diverse settings and ways. We continue to promote and highlight the refreshed National Standards and their accompanying resources.

Continuing Professional Development Program

The Continuing Professional Development Program for Professional Leaders of Volunteers (CPD PLV) is a formal avenue to improve knowledge, skills and future employability. The CPD PLV program is delivered by the state and territory Volunteering Peak Bodies and endorsed by Volunteering Australia.



MEET KAREN

“I find volunteering to be an enriching experience... Being from another country, it has allowed me to enhance my communication skills and improve my proficiency in a second language.”

“What inspires me the most is the opportunity to help people who might feel a bit lonely, especially older adults, and to contribute to their enjoyment and sense of support.”

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.

Ensuring robust national data on volunteering

We welcomed the announcement that the Federal Government will deliver an expanded and refreshed General Social Survey, for release in 2026. This is a crucial source of national data on volunteering in Australia, and participation in volunteering. The expanded time series dataset was the result of extensive consultation between Volunteering Australia and the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

In partnership with the state and territory Volunteering Peak Bodies we also advocated for the inclusion of volunteering in the Measuring What Matters framework and are delighted that

the Federal Government has recognised the importance of volunteering to social cohesion.

National Volunteer Research Network

Established in 2021, the National Volunteering Research Network now has over 100 members across the country. The network is led by Co-Chairs Megan Paull and Rachel Winterton and facilitates sharing of information and knowledge between researchers and members of the wider volunteering ecosystem.

OUR IMPACT

Volunteering to help gauge national wellbeing

OUR IMPACT

National Volunteering Research Network is now 100 members strong

Data analysis

Our data factsheets aim to interpret and synthesise volunteering data and research for use in our policy and

OUR IMPACT

A trusted source of insight on volunteering data

advocacy work and to inform the work of the wider volunteering ecosystem. To celebrate National Student Volunteer Week, we released an updated Youth Volunteering Key Statistics Factsheet showcasing the remarkable impact of youth volunteering in Australia.

Research and data leadership

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare requested updated volunteering data for inclusion in the 2025 edition of Australia's Welfare report, showcasing our continued role as a trusted source.

We were granted early access to new national data on volunteering collected by the ANU Centre for Social Research and Methods, providing a critical evidence base to shape future policy and

advocacy. It includes data on formal and informal volunteering and is comparable to other data collected annually since late-2019. This important longitudinal data complements other data collected by the ABS and the sector. This data is not yet published.

External research partners

We continue to engage with industry partners on two Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage projects and through external presentations and dialogues.

We were involved in the development of a Care Economy Cooperative Research Centre (CRC). The program was initiated after several years of work and a significant funding announcement allowing dollar for dollar matching with investors and researchers. We will stay on in an informal role to bring the volunteering ecosystem's voice and issues to the table on this important national research initiative.

MEET GANIKA

"I am inspired by the belief that small actions can create meaningful change. Volunteering has allowed me to connect with diverse communities, learn from their stories, and contribute to causes close to my heart. Knowing that my efforts, whether tutoring a refugee child, planting trees, or supporting health campaigns, can make someone's life a little brighter motivates me to keep giving back."



ENACTING OUR 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.

Pursuing Operational Excellence

A comprehensive Operational Plan for 2024-27 guides the delivery of our Impact Strategy alongside staff work plans to ensure clear alignment with our Strategic Directions. Each team member's goals and key deliverables are now directly mapped to our Operational Plan, fostering a shared sense of purpose and accountability across the organisation.

Strengthening our Governance

We conducted governance audits and improved documentation by centralising oversight on a dedicated Board and Committee SharePoint intranet site. We also streamlined a renewed focus of our Committees to Finance, Risk and Audit, and Governance, People and Nominations.

Efforts to advance diversity and inclusion were embedded within our Board and Committee recruitment processes, further supporting our commitment to representation and equity.

Supporting our people

We implemented a suite of updated human resources policies encompassing recruitment, performance management, and workplace health and safety (WHS).

We improved the onboarding process for new staff and strengthened mental health initiatives, including access to an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and flexible working arrangements. To support employee retention, we used insights from exit interviews and staff feedback surveys to refine our retention strategies. Succession planning was completed for key leadership roles, ensuring organisational stability and continuity.

Enabling staff and volunteers through effective Information Technology

We proactively examined the responsible implementation of Artificial Intelligence, prioritising organisational data readiness, robust governance frameworks, and

effective permission management to ensure secure and ethical adoption of emerging technologies.

Our commitment to cyber security was further reinforced through the enhancement of security protocols and the development of a comprehensive data breach response plan, strengthening

our ability to manage and mitigate potential risks.

Document accessibility, security and collaboration were improved through the migration and optimisation of SharePoint and intranet sites for the Board and staff members.

MEET SUSAN AND DENIS

“I enjoy spending time throughout my volunteering days with the residents. I like seeing them smile, and I enjoy being useful to the Lifestyle Team by assisting residents to and from lifestyle activities daily.” – Susan



“I volunteer as it gives me a sense of purpose and meaning to my life, I enjoy the friendships I have formed with the staff and residents at The Views. – Denis

Their words of encouragement for future volunteers: Denis says, “You will receive more from volunteering than what you give.” Susan adds, “Do it, you have nothing to lose.”

CELEBRATING OUR TEAM AND GOVERNANCE

Volunteering together

To celebrate the end of another year, we came together for a meaningful employee volunteering session with Roundabout Canberra, recipient of the ACT Volunteer Team of the Year Award 2024.

We helped to restore prams and highchairs to near new, sorted baby clothes, and put together toys and games ready to become Christmas presents for children who might otherwise go without. It was a great insight into what it feels like to assist 61 children and their families.



Image: Volunteering Australia's team with Roundabout Canberra

Learning together

Volunteering Australia staff came together in Canberra for a Strategy and Culture Workshop to end the financial

year. It was wonderful to spend time collaborating and we were inspired by a cultural learning session to help us better understand, acknowledge and recognise our First Nations people. We look forward to continuing our Reconciliation Action Plan journey.

OUR IMPACT

Operations Director, Andrew Richards was awarded the National Emergency Medal and clasp for his extended service during the NSW 2019-2020 bushfires

Volunteering Australia Board

Volunteering Australia is governed by a diverse, skilled, and purpose-driven Board. Each Board meeting begins with a volunteer story, supporting our advocacy and creating a meaningful and uplifting start to the Board's discussions.

At our Annual General Meeting the Board elected Kim Hughes, Amy Williams, and Dr Claudine Lombard for their second term. Brianna Casey AM, formerly a casual member, was elected as a member for a further two years.

OUR IMPACT

Board Member, Brianna Casey AM was appointed as a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in the General Division recognising Brianna's significant service to social welfare, environmental conservation, and the community

We received 65 applications for three non-executive director roles with a strong pool of candidates and an extensive interview process. As a result, new Board Members Travis Ingram, Roseanne Brand, and Quentin Hooper were elected.

We take this opportunity to thank our Chair, Professor Michael Drew, Kim Hughes (Deputy Chair), Kerry Harris (Treasurer) Amy Williams (Secretary), Dr Claudine Lombard, Brianna Casey AM for their ongoing commitment.

We pay tribute to retiring director Esme Bowen for her dedication and leadership and thank Con O'Brien for his valued work on the Risk and Governance Committee.

OUR IMPACT

Board Chair, Professor Michael Drew, was conferred the title of Professor Emeritus at Griffith University, for his outstanding contribution to scholarship in the fields of finance and economics

Foundation Members

Volunteering Australia works collectively with our Foundation Members, the seven state and territory Volunteering Peak Bodies to support volunteers across Australia. By advocating for volunteering in our respective jurisdictions and working together we amplify our impact and ensure a thriving volunteering ecosystem.

Patron

In November 2024, we welcomed Her Excellency the Honourable Ms Sam Mostyn AC, Governor-General of Australia of the Commonwealth of Australia, as our new Patron. We thank the Governor-General, for hosting a special National Volunteer Week celebration at Government House, as we work together to strengthen and celebrate volunteering across the nation.



Image: Her Excellency the Honourable Ms Sam Mostyn AC, Governor-General of Australia of the Commonwealth of Australia

OUR SUPPORTERS AND PEOPLE

Patron

Her Excellency the Honourable Ms Sam Mostyn AC Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia.

Our Members

As a membership organisation, Volunteering Australia draws on the expertise of our members and partners to inform policy submissions and strengthen the impact of our advocacy work.

Foundation Members

VolunteeringACT
The Centre for Volunteering (NSW)
Volunteering Queensland
Volunteering SA&NT
Volunteering Tasmania
Volunteering Victoria
Volunteering WA

Associate Members

Associate Members are organisations or individuals who are current members of their state or territory Volunteering Peak Body. We were delighted to represent 1,823 Associate Members at a national level during 2024-25.

Accord Partners

Australian Sports Commission
Community Broadcasting Association of Australia
Justice Connect
Relationships Australia

Our Supporters

Australian Government Department of Social Services
SEEK
Aon
Hall & Wilcox

Our Board as at 30 June 2025

Professor Michael Drew, Chair
Kim Hughes, Deputy Chair
Kerry Harris, Treasurer
Amy Williams, Secretary
Dr Claudine Lombard
Brianna Casey AM
Travis Ingram
Roseanne Brand
Quentin Hooper

FINANCIALS

The overall 2025 financial year result shows a total profit totalling \$17,886. There is a significant decrease compared to a total profit of \$382,362 for the year 2024. This is due to capitalisation of expenses incurred in development of intangible asset (Volunteering Gateway) of \$370,250 in 2024.

Total income for the 2025 financial year of \$1,921,961 represented a decrease of 33% as compared to 2024 year of \$2,872,954. Total expenditure for the year of \$1,904,075 represented a decrease of 24% as compared to 2024 year total of \$2,490,592. The decrease is mainly due to lower employee costs and consultancy costs.

Statement of Financial Position as at 30 June 2025

	2025	2024	2023
ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	1,644,887	2,550,616	4,024,262
Trade and other receivables	-	-	157
Inventories	11,881	8,579	25,485
Other assets	45,154	50,606	79,997
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	1,701,921	2,609,801	4,129,901
Property, plant and equipment	-	687	
Right of use assets	93,231	136,263	179,295
Intangibles	333,250	370,250	
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS	426,481	507,200	179,295
TOTAL ASSETS	2,128,402	3,117,001	4,309,196
LIABILITIES			
Accounts payable	119,239	244,073	130,419
Employee benefits	71,400	150,783	113,613
Lease liability	46,923	43,695	40,631
Income in Advance	757,864	1,516,437	3,201,187
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	995,426	1,954,989	3,485,850
Lease liability	61,589	108,512	152,207
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES	61,589	108,512	152,207
TOTAL LIABILITIES	1,057,015	2,063,501	3,638,057
NET ASSETS	1,071,387	1,053,501	671,139
EQUITY			
Retained earnings	1,071,387	1,053,501	671,139
TOTAL EQUITY	1,071,387	1,053,501	671,139

Supporting Volunteering Australia and its Members for Over 30 Years



Aon are committed to supporting Australian not-for-profit organisations in helping to empower and enrich the broader community with your service

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Volunteering Australia

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