

MEDIA RELEASE

Monday 21 May 2018



‘Give a little. Change a lot.’ by volunteering in your community

Volunteering Australia encourages all Australians to get involved in volunteering this National Volunteer Week (21-27 May 2018). National Volunteer Week is an opportunity for all Australians to celebrate and acknowledge the generous contributions volunteers make across all sectors of our society.

As the national peak body for volunteering, Volunteering Australia was pleased to host an event at Parliament House in Canberra, in celebration of Australia’s almost 6 million volunteers. Joining us was the Minister for Social Services the Hon Dan Tehan MP, Shadow Minister for Charities and Not-for-profits the Hon Dr Andrew Leigh MP, members and stakeholders, and volunteers from Roundabout Canberra, Ronald McDonald House Canberra, MEGA (Mums Exercise Group Australia), RSPCA ACT, Conservation Volunteers Australia, ACT SES, and students from St Claire’s College.

Volunteering Australia CEO Adrienne Picone said, “One in three Australians volunteer in formal settings through organisations and institutions. This figure does not account for the millions of other Australians who informally give their time to volunteer through other activities and initiatives.”

"With a decline in the number of people volunteering, particularly in the sectors with highest unmet demand, such as disability support, aged care and community mental health, Volunteering Australia is encouraging people to start volunteering in their local communities, as even short-term volunteerism can make a significant impact on society," said Ms Picone.

This year's National Volunteer Week theme emphasises the incredible effect that volunteers make in our communities through giving just a little of their time, with research demonstrating that volunteering yields a 450% return for every dollar invested. Nationally, this is an estimated annual economic and social contribution of \$290 billion.

There is also an inextricable link between the support volunteers provide and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the local and global level. In fact, the [2030 Agenda](#) recognises that volunteers are “essential stakeholders to achieving and supporting all 17 SDGs. Volunteers effectively facilitate all Sustainable Development Goals by raising awareness, inspiring or engaging in grassroots efforts.”ⁱ

"National Volunteer Week is a key moment to celebrate the important contributions volunteers make across all sectors of the community, and how this impact is indispensable socially, culturally and economically across the country," said Ms Picone.

For anyone interested in volunteering please visit www.govolunteer.com.au, Volunteering Australia’s national database of volunteering opportunities. Alternatively, visit your [State/Territory peak body](#) to connect with your local Volunteering Support Service and find a suitable volunteering opportunity.

ⁱ UNVolunteers (2018), Volunteerism and the Global Goals, <https://www.unv.org/volunteerism/volunteerism-and-global-goals>

MEDIA ENQUIRIES:

Lavanya Kala, Volunteering Australia

E: media@volunteeringaustralia.org

P: 02 6251 4060

M: 0420 632 360