



# STATE OF VOLUNTEERING IN AUSTRALIA

HELP CREATE HAPPINESS | APRIL 2016



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Our report has been limited to assessing the current state of the volunteering sector as at April 2016, based on results collected through a national survey. The findings of the report have been collaboratively developed by Volunteering Australia and PwC and are based on a literature review, survey responses and Volunteering Australia's industry knowledge. The broad nature of the analysis is such that the results are intended to be indicative only and do not reflect the opinion or views of PwC.

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STATE OF VOLUNTEERING  
IN AUSTRALIA

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Volunteering Australia works within a collaborative network, particularly with the State and Territory peak volunteering bodies listed above. We thank the staff of Volunteering ACT and all other State and Territory volunteering peak bodies for their assistance with this significant project.



We collectively also sincerely thank all *State of Volunteering* survey participants, including volunteers, volunteer involving organisations and corporates for their valuable feedback for this report.

Volunteering Australia also acknowledges and thanks PwC as principal consultant for this report which has been supported by the Prime Minister's Community Business Partnership, the Australian Government Department of Social Services and Volunteering Australia's principal corporate partner Beyond Bank Australia.



**The State of Volunteering in Australia report details the trends, demographics, challenges and successes in the volunteering sector in Australia. Volunteering Australia and PwC have conducted a survey to analyse the current state of volunteering in Australia, and to identify opportunities to maximise the potential of the volunteer workforce.**

The report investigates the following headline question:

- Are the current volunteer engagement and management practices appropriate for the future?
- Is there alignment between the types of roles volunteers want to undertake, the sectors they are interested in volunteering in, and the needs of volunteer involving organisations?
- What is the appropriate framework to support informal volunteering?
- What are the necessary steps that need to be taken to future proof volunteering?

# **VOLUNTEERING IS A CORE PART OF OUR COMMUNITY**

**99%**

**OF VOLUNTEERS WOULD  
CONTINUE TO ENGAGE IN  
VOLUNTEERING IN THE FUTURE**

**93%**

**OF VOLUNTEERS SAW POSITIVE  
CHANGES AS A RESULT OF  
THEIR VOLUNTEERING EFFORTS**

*'Appreciated by community, improved wellbeing of others, improved own sense of place in the world.'*

**67%**

**OF VOLUNTEER INVOLVING ORGANISATIONS  
STATED THAT VOLUNTEERS BRING NEW  
INSIGHTS INTO THEIR ORGANISATION**

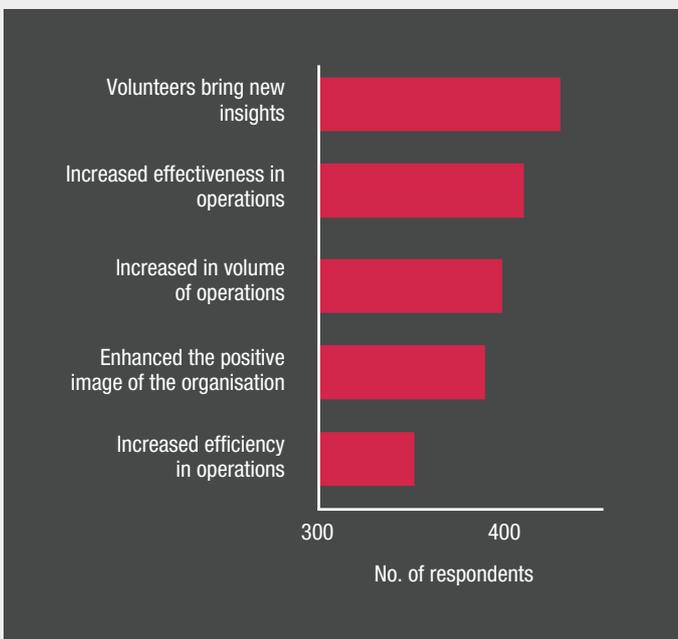
*64% also believed that engaging volunteers increased effectiveness in their operations*

**57%**

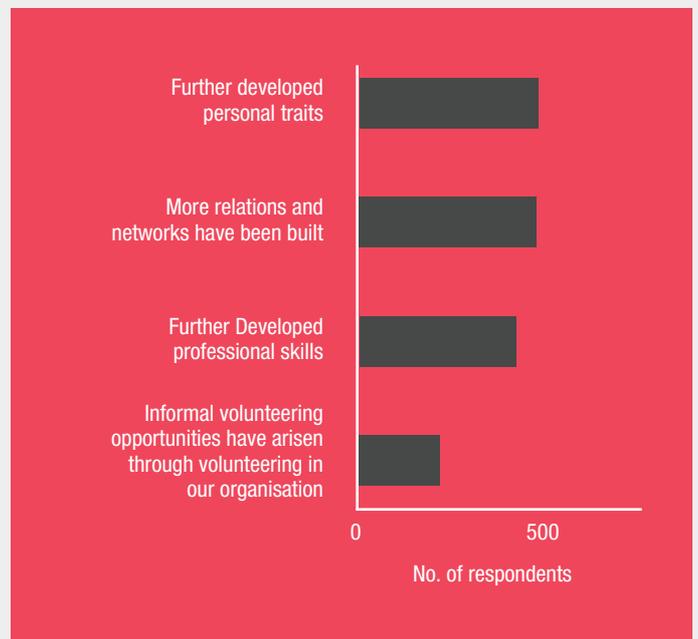
**OF STAFF IN VOLUNTEER  
INVOLVING ORGANISATIONS  
ARE VOLUNTEERS**

# 60%

**OF VOLUNTEERS IMPROVED  
THEIR PATIENCE SKILLS  
THROUGH VOLUNTEERING**



**Organisational benefits of volunteering**



**Benefits to volunteers as seen by organisations**

# MATCHING PEOPLE TO VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES

## KEY FINDING 1

**Responses suggest there is a disconnect between the volunteering roles that people are interested in and the roles that organisations are offering.**

Comments from volunteer involving organisations highlight that, generally, many involve volunteers as manpower as opposed to developing volunteer roles to suit individual skills and experience.

*'Lack of utilisation of volunteer skills is a big problem, possibly due to a store manager not being chosen for her expertise in management.'*

Moreover, several respondents to the survey for volunteers felt that volunteers were undervalued and their roles were not designed strategically to accommodate for skills and interests, especially relative to paid staff.

*'Despite rhetoric that the contribution of volunteers is valued equally with contributions of paid staff there are still many organisations who treat volunteers as individuals who will do all the tasks staff do not want to do.'*

*'In my experience, both complacency and ignorance of the enormous value volunteers contribute results in a lack of regard of volunteers as strategic assets.'*

## SOLUTION

- Promoting changes in human resource management strategies could result in a more efficient and effective use of available volunteer time.
- Utilising the *National Standards for Volunteer Involvement* resources and tools.

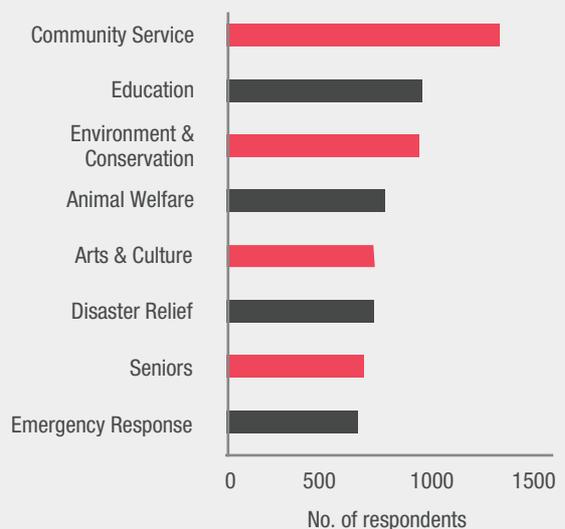
## KEY FINDING 2

**There is misalignment between the sectors volunteers are interested in and the sectors with the most positions advertised.**

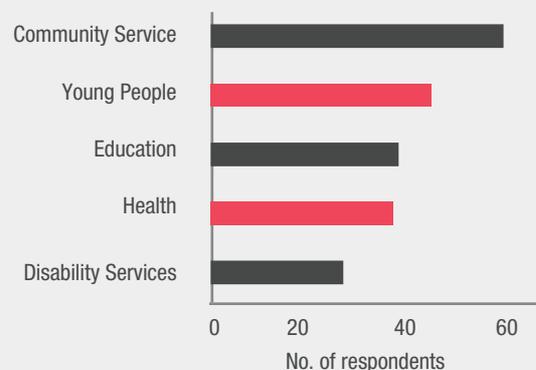
An analysis of the sectors volunteer would like to volunteer for in the future compared with the sectors that have the greatest shortages of volunteers suggested that there is an oversubscription to some sectors of volunteering whilst others are undersubscribed.

As shown in the below graphs, sectors including Animal Welfare and Arts and Culture are oversubscribed, while other areas including Disability Services, Young People and Health have a high number of volunteer vacancies needing to be filled.

TOP 8 SECTORS VOLUNTEERS WOULD BE MOST INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING FOR IN THE FUTURE



SECTORS THAT NEED 151+ MORE VOLUNTEERS



## SOLUTION

- To improve the balance of subscription of volunteers to different sectors of volunteering, the volunteering peak bodies, in collaboration with volunteer involving organisations, should support the development and delivery of targeted marketing and recruitment campaigns to promote volunteering in undersubscribed sectors.

# SUPPORT FOR INFORMAL VOLUNTEERING

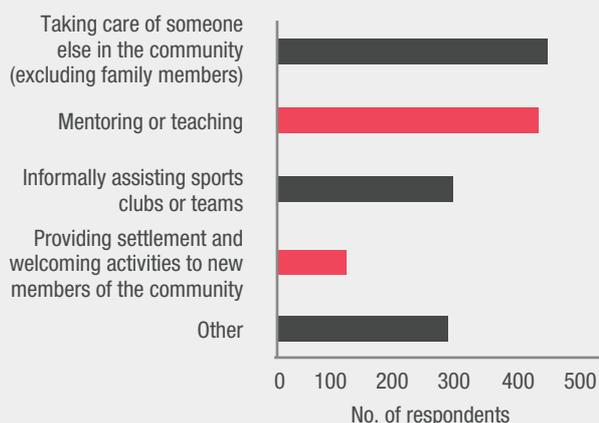
## KEY FINDING 3

**Informal volunteering is time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain, taking place outside the context of a formal organisation. The findings of this report suggest that informal volunteering is prevalent in society. Specifically, 46% of respondents participated in informal volunteering in the last 12 months.**

When asked what support volunteers would like for informal volunteering, 33 per cent would like help to find informal volunteering opportunities.

*'Knowing when opportunities to help come up. We don't always hear when they want help.'*

### WAYS RESPONDENTS INFORMALLY VOLUNTEER



**77%**

**OF INFORMAL VOLUNTEERS WERE MOTIVATED TO INFORMALLY VOLUNTEER TO SUPPORT THOSE IN THEIR COMMUNITY**

## SOLUTION

- Investigate options for a technical platform to connect informal volunteers with those that require assistance. This platform would play a role in making connections and, at the same time, outline the risks of engaging in informal volunteering without the structures of formal volunteering, such as insurance.

# NECESSARY FUTURE STEPS

## KEY FINDING 4

**Volunteers are deterred from volunteering because of lack of flexibility, personal expenses incurred, lack of reimbursement for out of pocket expenses, and burdensome administrative requirements.**

Volunteers were asked whether they would engage in volunteering in the future. 1 per cent (33 respondents) stated that they would not engage in volunteering in the future. The biggest barrier to people volunteering into the future is work commitments (27 per cent), and out of pocket expenses being overbearing (27 per cent).

Of the volunteer respondents, 60 per cent incurred out of pocket expenses through their volunteering role and of these, only 18 per cent requested reimbursement. Of these respondents, 49 per cent received reimbursement in full, 44 per cent received reimbursement in part, and 7 per cent did not receive any reimbursement.

Several respondents found that administrative requirements for volunteering have been a significant deterrent.

*'The ever-increasing red tape, e.g. police checks every time you volunteer for a different organisation, the restrictions in what volunteers can undertake, the ongoing surveillance, health and safety structures, all of these things do inhibit volunteers'*

## SOLUTION

- Volunteering peak bodies and volunteer involving organisations should further advocate for red tape reductions to reduce administrative burdens.
- Explore avenues of virtual volunteering (such as online volunteering tasks), to accommodate for flexibility needs, as well as to leverage services already paid for by volunteers (such as internet and phone) (see Key Finding 7 for more information).
- Encourage compliance with the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement, specifically with regards to reimbursement of out of pocket expenses.

## KEY FINDING 5

**Volunteer involving organisations generally lack resources, both human and financial, and this can inhibit their ability to engage volunteers with barriers (e.g. people with a disability, people with language barriers). Lack of resources may also reduce an organisation's ability to recognise their existing volunteer base, and engage with corporates through Employee Volunteering Programs.**

# 86%

## OF VOLUNTEER INVOLVING ORGANISATIONS NEED MORE VOLUNTEERS

Respondents suggest that the shortage of volunteers is driven by the following:

- 30 per cent of organisations were unable to engage their optimal amount of volunteers because there were not enough suitable candidates, or the organisation was unable to locate them. More common reasons include internal barriers such as time constraints, and limited funds to manage more volunteers (both 12 per cent)
- 28 per cent of volunteers stated that the organisation they volunteer for could improve their experience through recruiting more volunteers.

Of the volunteer involving organisation respondents, 46 per cent of respondents were unable to recruit or engage volunteers with barriers, most commonly stemming from organisations not having the requisite resources (51 per cent).

## SOLUTION

- More resources are required to enhance the capacity of volunteer involving organisations to engage volunteers with barriers and to engage with employee volunteering programs.
- Further advocacy needs to be undertaken with regards to the economic impact of the contribution of volunteering to enhance central funding opportunities. This includes additional funding to further resource and support volunteer involving organisations and volunteer recognition programs.

## KEY FINDING 6

**Volunteers are not getting responses from volunteer involving organisations about opportunities fast enough.**

Of the respondents to the volunteer survey, 6 per cent had not volunteered in the last 12 months. Several respondents noted that the reason they had not engaged in volunteering was a lack of response from organisations.

*'I tried to sign up for information about volunteering but wasn't contacted again'*

*'I am disappointed in that I have applied for a position and had to firstly send a request twice before I was acknowledged and then after I expressed my interest have not been contacted'*

## SOLUTION

- Volunteer involving organisations need to ensure a timely response to volunteer expressions of interest.
- Enhancements to the GoVolunteer platform could provide further tools to assist organisations with responding to prospective volunteers.

## KEY FINDING 7

**Online methods of recruitment and volunteering could complement the needs of future volunteers.**

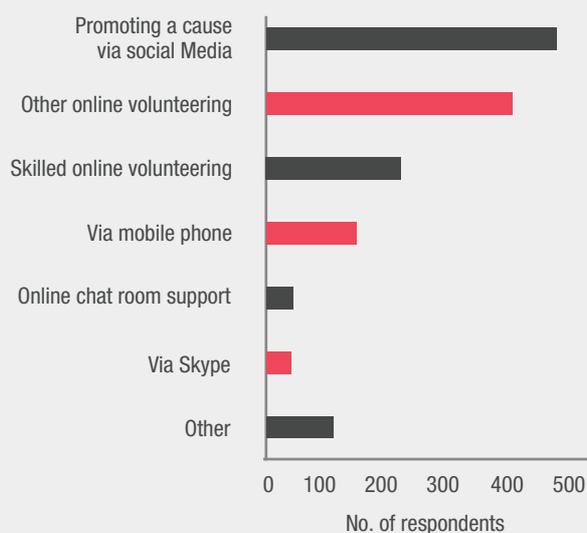
To address the misalignment in the types of roles people are looking for and the roles organisations are offering there is a call for volunteer involving organisations to adapt to technological change. This would be beneficial in two key areas: recruitment and virtual volunteering.

Volunteers under 24 years old used an online source (i.e. GoVolunteer or Seek Volunteer, or the volunteer involving organisation's website) to look for volunteering opportunities (28 per cent).

44 per cent of volunteers have engaged in virtual volunteering in the last 12 months, with 19 per cent interested in doing so in the future. This involves undertaking volunteering tasks online, such as managing social media.

To continue to engage a wide range of volunteers, employing online methods of recruitment and facilitating virtual volunteering is essential.

WAYS VOLUNTEERS HAVE PARTICIPATED IN VIRTUAL VOLUNTEERING



## SOLUTION

- There should be information and training for volunteer involving organisations on workforce planning, including how to adapt volunteering roles and how to change program policies.
- Provide technological platforms that organisations can use.
- Provide training on technologies that would assist VIOs with recruitment and the ability to provide flexible volunteering roles, such as virtual volunteering.

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# INTRODUCTION

Australians recognise volunteering as a valuable addition to their lives, with 5.8 million individuals over the age of 15 having formally volunteered in 2014.<sup>1</sup> Volunteering activities present identifiable benefits to the community, with formal volunteering contributing an estimated 743 million hours to the Australian economy in 2014.<sup>2</sup> Nationally, individuals aged 35-44 were most likely to be volunteers, and more females volunteered than males. Overall, there has been a reported decline in formal volunteering activities over the past 5 years.<sup>3</sup>

Two key policy changes in 2015/16 triggered calls for nationally coordinated approaches to volunteering;<sup>4</sup>

- The revised National Standards for Volunteer Involvement were released; a set of standards developed to provide guidance and benchmarking tools for volunteer involving organisations. The aim of the Standards is to assist with the attraction, management, recognition and retention of volunteers, and to manage risk and safety with respect to volunteers. Compliance with the Standards facilitates a better experience for both organisations and volunteers.
- The National Definition of Volunteering was reviewed and, amongst other elements, now recognises informal volunteering as a form of volunteering. The new definition states that:

*'Volunteering is time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain'*

Reviews of the volunteering sector were mostly captured in state-based reviews, with the exception of the 2011 National Survey of Volunteering Issues (see Appendix A). In line with encouraging a national approach, Volunteering Australia and PwC have developed the State of Volunteering in Australia report for the 2016 financial year<sup>5</sup>, which details the trends, demographics, successes and challenges in the volunteering sector nationally.

## Scope of this report

### Are the current volunteer engagement and management practices appropriate for the future?

Based on survey responses, this report investigates whether the current volunteer engagement and management practices are appropriate for the future. In doing so, we consider a number of key concepts that have arisen with the expansion of the scope of volunteering in a rapidly changing world:

- Is there alignment between the types of roles volunteers want to undertake, the sectors they are interested in volunteering in, and the needs of volunteer involving organisations?

- What is the appropriate framework to support informal volunteering?
- What are the necessary steps that need to be taken to future proof volunteering?

The report will investigate these key questions through a brief literature review, an analysis on data from a volunteer opportunity seeking website called GoVolunteer, and surveys to volunteers, volunteer involving organisations and corporate organisations. For more information on the methodology, please see Appendix C.

## Definitions

For the purposes of the survey and the report, the following definitions were used:

- **Formal Volunteering:** time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain, taking place within organisations (including institutions and agencies) in a structured way.
- **Informal Volunteering:** time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain, taking place outside the context of a formal organisation. This includes assisting people in the community, excluding one's own family members. For example, looking after children, property or pets; providing home or personal assistance; or giving someone professional advice.
- **Employee Volunteering Program:** a program where paid employees are given work time and/or payment by their employer to volunteer with another organisation such as a charity. The activities undertaken by Employee Volunteering Programs have been categorised into two main types:
  - **Skilled volunteering:** where individual employees, with professional qualifications and/or experience, offer their skills and expertise to volunteer involving organisations to implement particular projects to enhance community capacity (examples are: web design, development of risk management/business continuity plans, evaluation frameworks, marketing plans, financial management/account systems advice, landscaping).
  - **Short-term team volunteering:** where groups of employees volunteer together on a task to assist volunteer involving organisations; usually these tasks are physical in nature and short term (examples are: makeovers of buildings/gardens, environmental restoration, practical assistance with events).
- **Virtual Volunteering:** where a volunteer's tasks are completed online, such as managing social media.

1. Australian Bureau of Statistics, 4159.0 – General Social Survey: Summary Results, Australia, 2014, 17 September 2015.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. For more information on the revised definition and standards, please see 13.3.2 Appendix B.

5. Note that the survey results were finalised in December 2015.

# SURVEY FINDINGS

## Overall survey sample

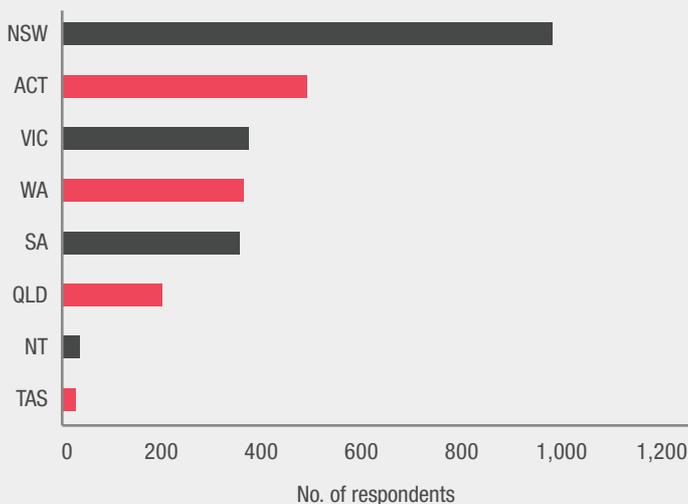
Throughout the three surveys, there was a strong response rate. The breakdown of responses by state is shown in the following figures. Throughout all surveys, respondents were not required to answer all questions. The figures throughout this report show the data for individual question populations, rather than the whole sample. Additionally, many questions allow the respondent to select multiple options, resulting in more data inputs than the population size. As such, the below survey sample sizes are indicative only for the survey sample population, rather than the individual survey response for each question.

For a more detailed breakdown of the survey sample, please refer to Appendix D.

## Volunteers survey

3,044 responses were received by volunteers, including 2,308 fully completed and 736 partially completed responses. The most responses were received in New South Wales (959 responses), while the least responses were received in Tasmania (28 responses).

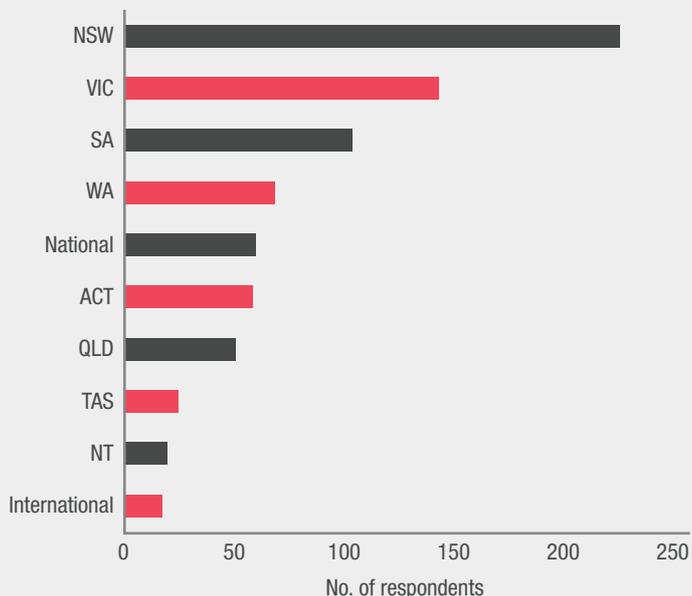
FIGURE 1. VOLUNTEERS SURVEY RESPONSES BY STATE



## Volunteer involving organisations survey

881 responses were received from volunteer involving organisations, including 557 fully completed and 324 partially completed responses. Many of the volunteer involving organisations surveyed operate in multiple jurisdictions. Volunteer involving organisation activity was most prevalent in New South Wales (34 per cent), followed by Victoria (21 per cent) and South Australia (15 per cent).

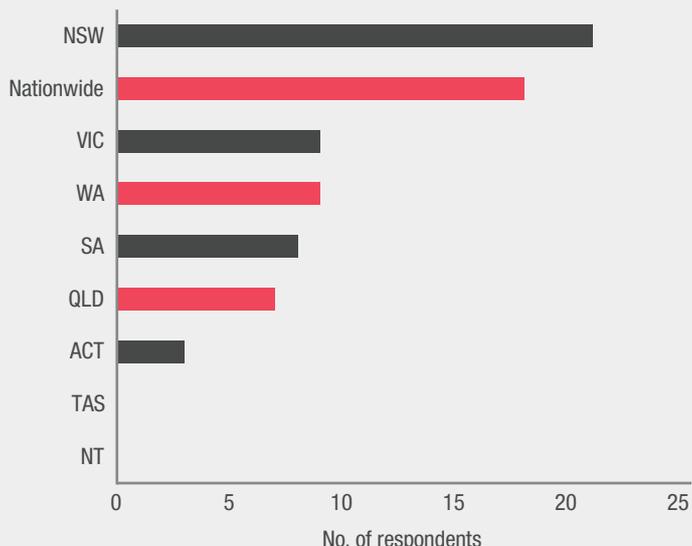
FIGURE 2. VOLUNTEER INVOLVING ORGANISATION SURVEY RESPONSES BY STATE



## Corporate organisations survey

68 responses were received by corporate organisations, including 33 fully completed responses and 35 partially completed responses. Many of the responses were from organisations that operate in multiple jurisdictions, including 18 responses from national organisations. The most responses were received in New South Wales (21 responses) while no responses were received in Tasmania or the Northern Territory.

FIGURE 3. CORPORATE ORGANISATION SURVEY RESPONSES BY STATE



# VOLUNTEERS

## Forms of volunteering undertaken

With the new definition of volunteering now including informal volunteering, respondents were asked to categorise their activities. Formal volunteering accounts for 48 per cent of activity, informal volunteering accounts for 6 per cent, and 40 per cent reported having undertaken both forms. In fact, individuals who volunteer through an organisation were also more likely to be providing informal support to others.<sup>6</sup> On a state basis, Western Australia had the highest proportion of formal volunteers (51 per cent), while Tasmania had the lowest (35 per cent). Of those that had undertaken some form of informal volunteering (including those that had done both formal and informal), Northern Territory had the highest proportion (65 per cent), while New South Wales had the lowest (44 per cent).

FIGURE 4. TYPES OF VOLUNTEERING UNDERTAKEN BY RESPONDENTS

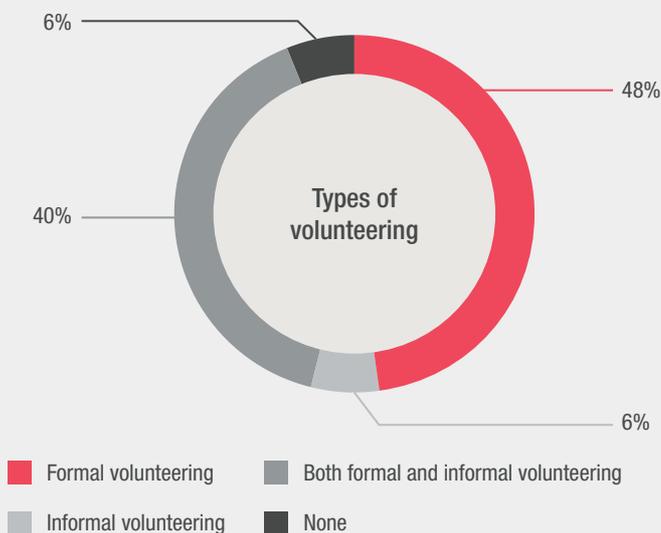
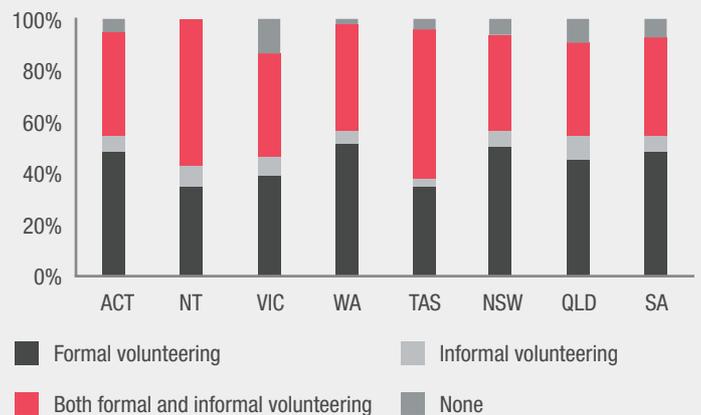


FIGURE 5. TYPES OF VOLUNTEERING UNDERTAKEN BY RESPONDENTS BY STATE



## Formal volunteering

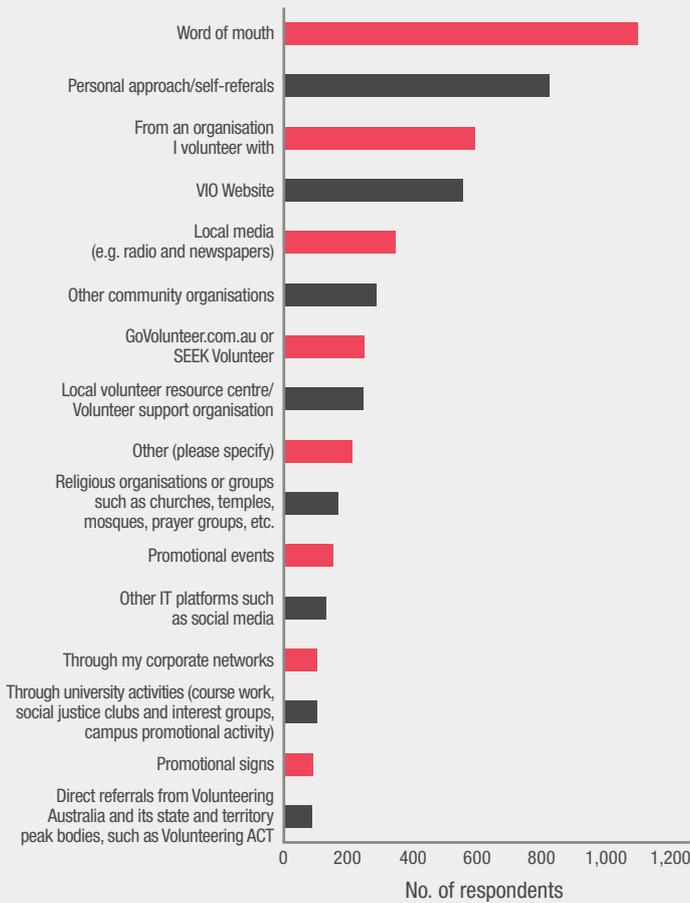
### Ways volunteers find out about volunteering opportunities

When respondents were asked to list all of the ways they learned about volunteering opportunities, the most common were word of mouth and through personally approaching or self-referring to the providers of the opportunity. Following this, volunteers were most likely to hear of opportunities through volunteer involving organisations' websites, organisations they already volunteer with or other community organisations.

Methods of getting involved with volunteering varied across the age spectrum of volunteers. Although word of mouth was the most common form of engagement for all age groups (consistent across the states), 26 per cent of those under 24 were more likely to use GoVolunteer.com.au or Seek.com.au, or volunteer involving organisations' websites (28 per cent), to find opportunities. For those in the age brackets between 25 and 64, and over 65, personal approaches or self-referrals were the second most common options after word of mouth. The results indicate that online sources are critical to engaging younger volunteers, but that continuing to ensure older volunteers are engaged through processes that are internal and organic to an organisation is also important.

6. Australian Bureau of Statistics (2014), '4159.0 - General Social Survey: Summary Results, Australia, 2014', 29 June 2015.

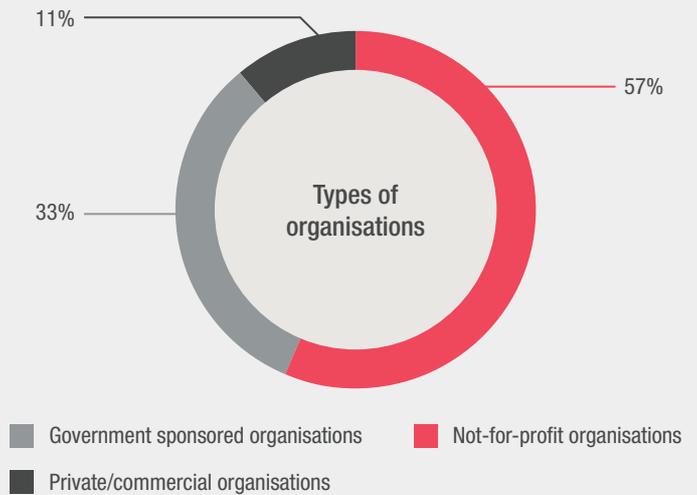
FIGURE 6. HOW DID YOU FIND OUT ABOUT VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES?



**Common types of organisations with whom people volunteer**

Not-for-profit organisations were the most common organisations for volunteers to be involved with (57 per cent), while private/commercial organisations were the least common (11 per cent).

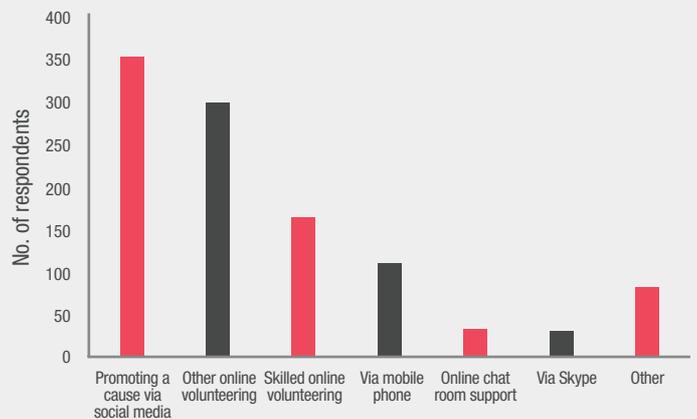
FIGURE 7. ORGANISATIONS VOLUNTEERING WERE INVOLVED IN



**Virtual volunteering in Australia**

Virtual volunteering is a type of engagement where volunteers' tasks are performed online. Over the past decade, a trend of virtual volunteering has emerged with 44 per cent of survey respondents having engaged in some virtual volunteering activity in the last 12 months. The most common virtual activities engaged in by these volunteers include promoting a cause online through fundraising, advocacy and skilled online volunteering. This included the provision of professional services such as legal advice.

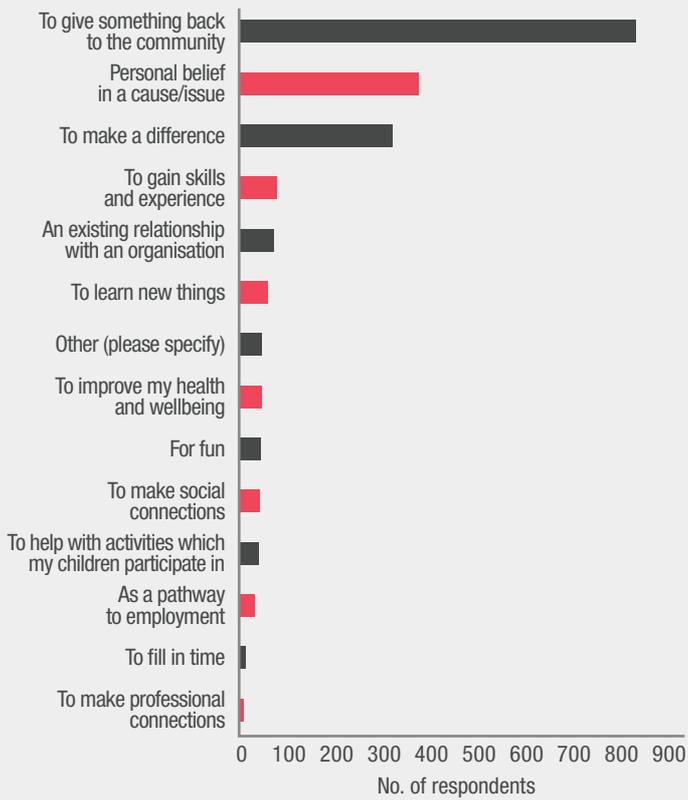
FIGURE 8. TYPES OF VIRTUAL VOLUNTEERING ENGAGED IN OVER THE PAST 12 MONTHS



## Volunteer experiences

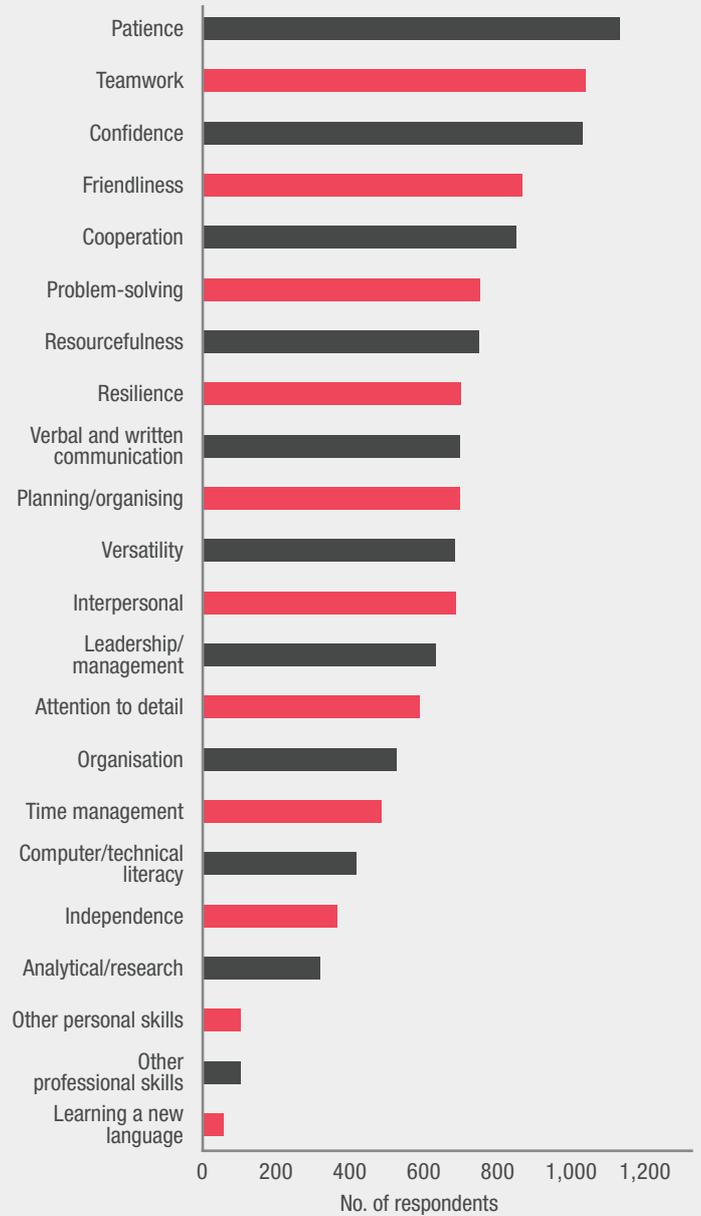
Volunteers are mostly motivated to be involved as volunteering allows them to give something back to the community (41 per cent of respondents chose this as their top reason). Volunteers are least motivated by a desire to make professional connections (0.4 per cent of respondents).

FIGURE 9. WHAT MOTIVATES YOU TO BE INVOLVED IN VOLUNTEERING?



The most commonly improved skill by volunteers is patience (60 per cent), followed by teamwork (55 per cent). Problem solving abilities have been highlighted as the most commonly improved professional skill (40 per cent).

FIGURE 10. HAVE YOU IMPROVED ON ANY PERSONAL TRAITS OR PROFESSIONAL SKILLS THROUGH YOUR VOLUNTEERING ROLE?



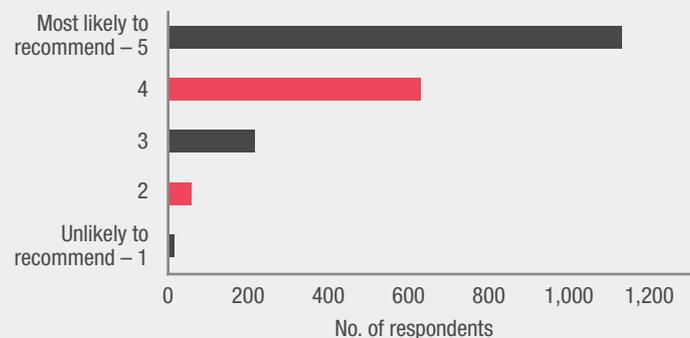
By age group, confidence was identified as the most commonly improved trait for under 24 year olds. For the age groups between 25 and 64, and over 65, patience was the most common response.

FIGURE 11. TYPES OF SKILLS IMPROVED ON THROUGH VOLUNTEERING BY AGE



Overall, a majority of respondents were most likely to recommend volunteering to their friends and family (55 per cent), with only 1 per cent of respondents unlikely to recommend volunteering.

FIGURE 12. HOW LIKELY ARE YOU TO RECOMMEND VOLUNTEERING TO YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY?



Of the respondents who indicated they were Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, over half identified improvement in learning a new language, followed by resourcefulness, attention to detail, and confidence.

Volunteers with a non-English speaking background found similar benefits in volunteering. Most commonly, 59 per cent of the respondents with a non-English speaking background felt that they had become more patient as a result of volunteering, followed by increased confidence (56 per cent), and learning a new language (54 per cent).

These findings align with the skills that volunteers desired to acquire from volunteering, with patience, confidence and cooperation identified as key areas for improvement of personal traits and professional skills.

### What positive changes have you seen as a result of your volunteering efforts?

- Children improving in their reading and becoming more confident.
- Have become more patient and learnt a lot about older people, have more empathy towards people, teamwork and the generosity of other volunteers giving of their time.
- Changes in students who were dealing with similar issues especially ones from non-English speaking backgrounds.
- In re-evaluation counselling I see people improve their lives, personal stability and connections with others.
- I am much more open to new ideas and inspired – the kids I volunteer with have developed greater confidence.
- Increased community connectedness. Girls growing into independent, responsible young women.
- Confidence in my abilities that I utilise.
- Appreciated by community, improved wellbeing of others, improved own sense of place in the world.
- I have helped to create happiness.
- It has kept my brain active and there are positive social aspects by working with a group.
- By seeing the look in my client's eyes when I visit her and the appreciation I get. It makes me feel happy to see her be happy.
- I have been much better equipped to deal with personal challenges in my life. I have used the interaction with the community as a safe haven from the dramas elsewhere.
- Seeing people empowered to allow personal change and growth in their lives.

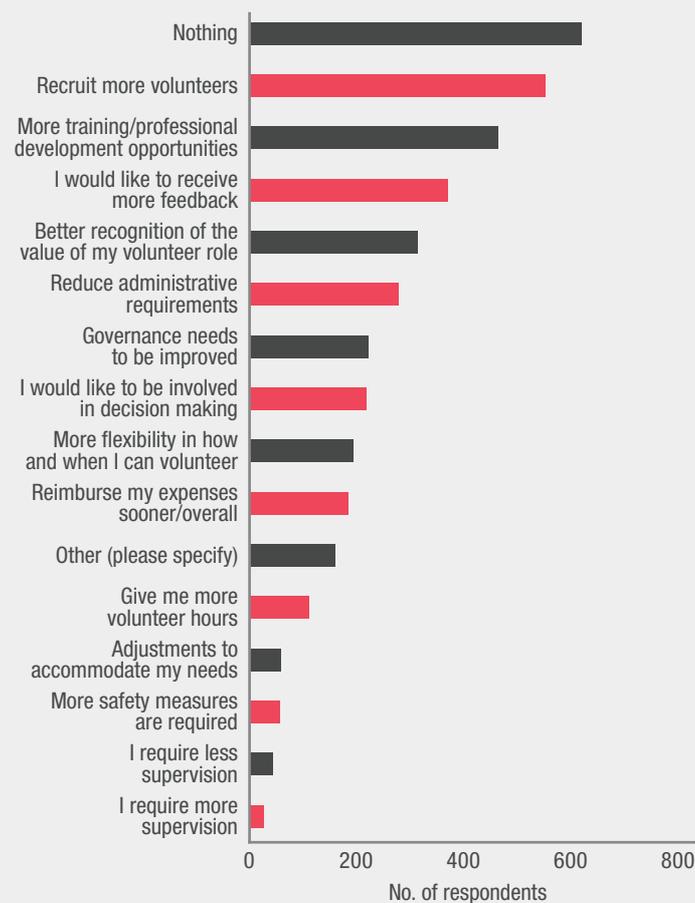
**93%**

**OF RESPONDENTS SAW POSITIVE CHANGES AS A RESULT OF THEIR VOLUNTEERING EFFORTS**

### Organisational experience

A volunteer's experience can depend greatly on a number of factors including the nature of their role, the organisation in which they volunteer, and their interaction with other volunteers and employees. Positively, 92 per cent of survey respondents felt that the organisation(s) they volunteered for provided them with the right opportunities to match their interests and needs. 31 per cent of volunteers could not pinpoint any ways in which their experience could be improved by their volunteering organisation (over 600 volunteers).

FIGURE 13. HOW CAN THE ORGANISATION YOU VOLUNTEER FOR IMPROVE YOUR EXPERIENCE?



Those who identified areas for improvement reiterated concerns raised in previous reports, such as the inflexibility of some volunteer roles and the burden of out of pocket expenses. Onerous administrative requirements were also identified as a key issue. Volunteers also envisaged a benefit in more training and professional development opportunities as well as feedback on performance.

A number of volunteers feel undervalued by the organisations they volunteer for and have called for recognition and increased involvement in decision-making. It was suggested that some volunteers feel burdened by their responsibilities, with close to 25 per cent of respondents calling for increased recruitment of volunteers.

The most common 'other' ways in which volunteers suggested an organisation could improve their volunteering experience included:

- improved social interaction between volunteers. A number of respondents felt isolated while carrying out volunteering activities
- implementation of measures to allow for claiming back on tax for out of pocket expenses or provision of car parking or fuel cards
- faster responses to expressions of interest for volunteering opportunities
- improved day-to-day organisation of volunteers.

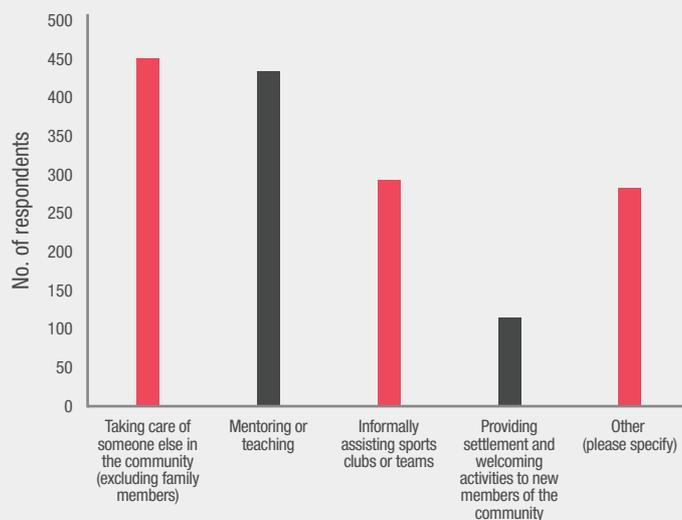
## Informal Volunteering

As outlined earlier in this report, the new National Definition of Volunteering adopted by Volunteering Australia in 2015 encompasses informal volunteering activities. When asked the manner in which they had informally volunteered, respondents indicated that the most common activities were taking care of non-family members in the community or mentoring or teaching another.

Over 250 volunteers listed 'other' informal activities in which they had engaged, with the most recurring roles including:

- providing professional services including assistance with job applications
- driving those without a car or who could not drive to appointments
- taking care of friends or neighbours property and animals
- running a private soup kitchen or providing food for the homeless.

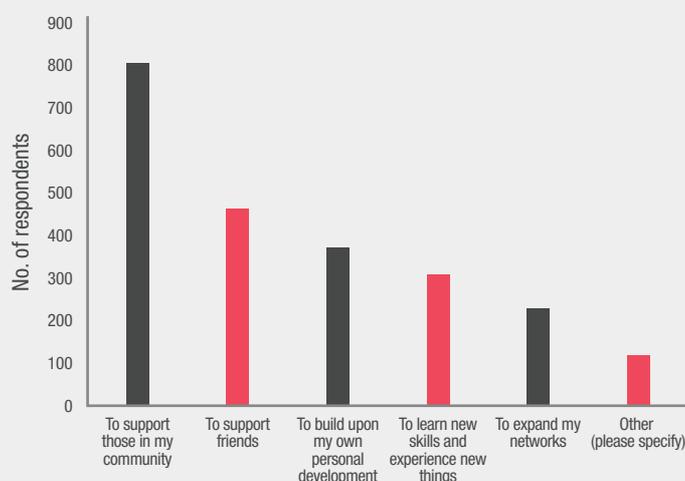
FIGURE 14. INFORMAL VOLUNTEERING ACTIVITIES OF RESPONDENTS



### Becoming an informal volunteer

With the Australian culture being one founded on a sense of community, it is no surprise that 35 per cent of volunteer respondents informally volunteer to support those in their communities and 20 per cent do so to support their friends.

FIGURE 15. WHAT ENCOURAGES YOU TO INFORMALLY VOLUNTEER?

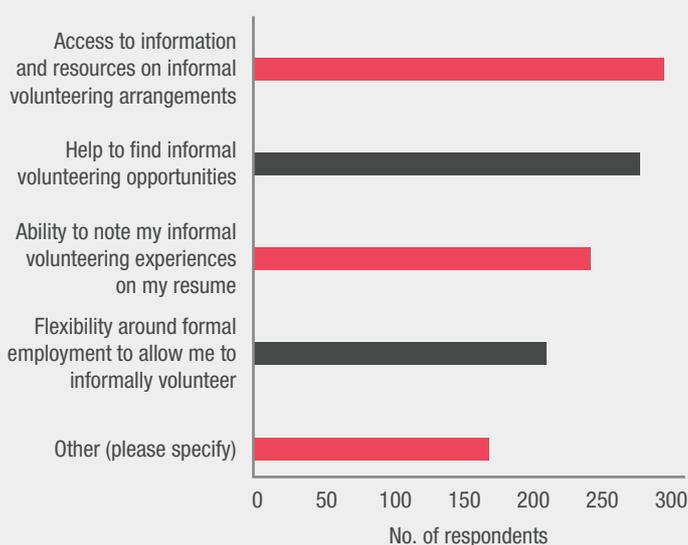


## Supporting Informal Volunteers

In asking our survey respondents how they could be supported as informal volunteers, we sought to identify key distinctions between the needs of formal and informal volunteers. 226 informal volunteers would like to be able to list their informal volunteering experiences on their resumes.

However, as with formal volunteers, the more pressing concerns for informal volunteers were the administrative issues surrounding informal volunteering. The volunteers called for help in finding informal opportunities and requested information and resources on informal volunteering arrangements. Another recurring issue was out of pocket expenses and the reimbursement of costs, tax-back measures or the provision of vouchers to reduce the financial burden on volunteers. Notably, informal volunteers also called for increased flexibility around formal employment to permit time for informal volunteering.

FIGURE 16. WHAT COULD BETTER SUPPORT YOU AS AN INFORMAL VOLUNTEER?

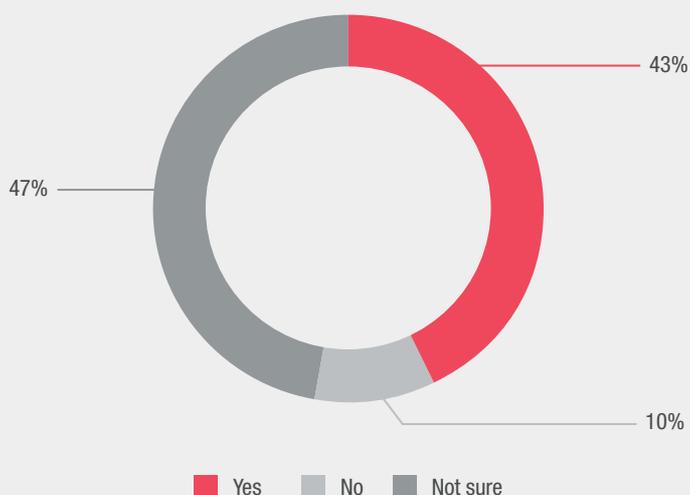


### Is there support for an informal volunteering platform?

With over 33 per cent of informal volunteers requesting assistance in finding volunteering opportunities, it is evident that these individuals are not deterred from informally volunteering where the recipient of their activities is not in their personal or social circles. This is supported by the finding that the most common reason to informally volunteer is 'to support those in my community'.

The introduction of a platform for informal volunteering opportunities is supported by 43 per cent of respondents, with only 10 per cent of survey respondents indicating their belief that the individuals they help would not appreciate assistance from someone outside their immediate personal network.

FIGURE 17. WOULD THE INDIVIDUALS YOU HELP APPRECIATE ASSISTANCE FROM SOMEONE OUTSIDE THEIR IMMEDIATE NETWORK?

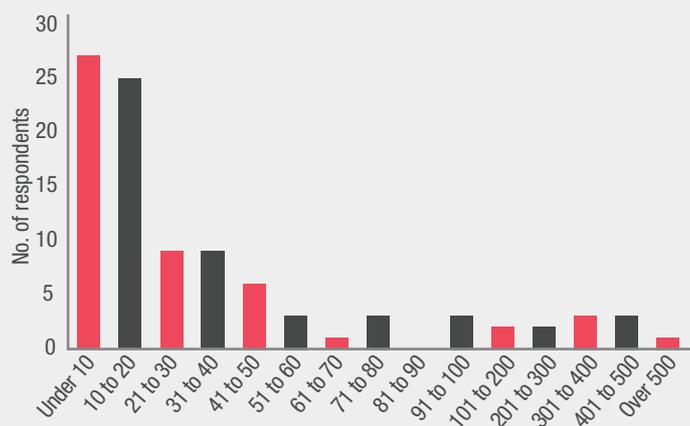


On the other hand, it is important to recognise that a number of respondents expressed distaste at the idea of an informal volunteering platform, pointing out that it would detract from the personal nature of informal volunteering. Despite these views, for those who require informal assistance and are willing to look past their personal networks, a platform for locating informal volunteers would be beneficial.

## Employee Volunteering Programs

Of the volunteers who responded to the survey, only 6 per cent had participated in an Employee Volunteering Program over the past 12 months. The number of hours contributed through such a program varied among the 97 respondents to the question, with the majority contributing up to 20 hours annually.

FIGURE 18. HOURS CONTRIBUTED TO EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING PROGRAMS



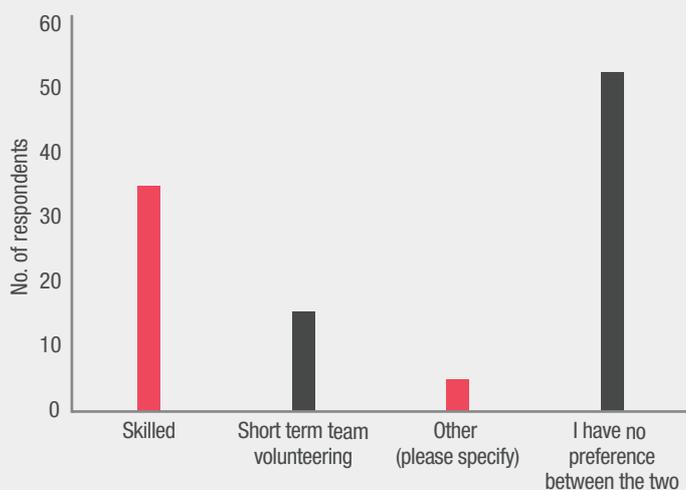
Volunteers had most commonly undertaken skilled volunteering (33 per cent), and 24 per cent of volunteers had engaged in both skilled and short-term volunteering.

FIGURE 19. TYPE OF VOLUNTEERING UNDERTAKEN THROUGH EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING PROGRAMS



A large percentage of volunteers do not have a preference when it comes to undertaking skilled or short term volunteering in Employee Volunteering Programs (49 per cent); however, if given the choice 32 per cent would prefer skilled volunteering roles.

FIGURE 20. WHAT TYPE OF VOLUNTEERING DO YOU PREFER?

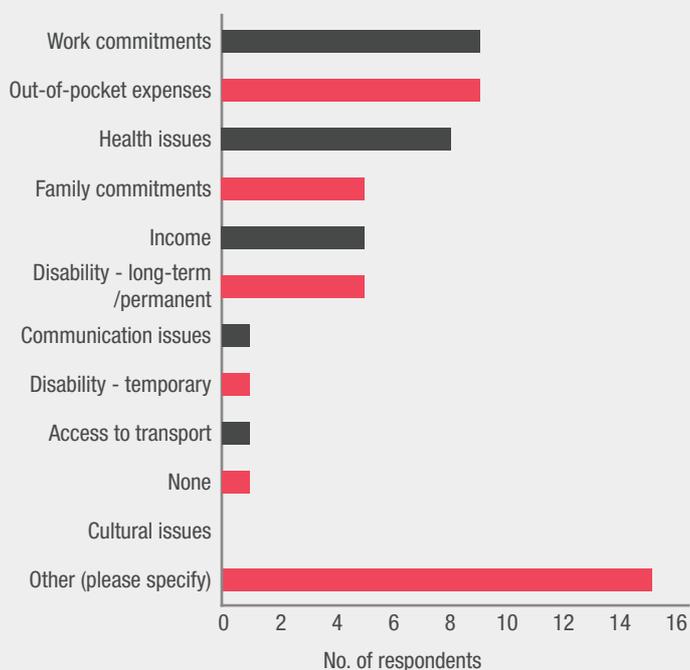


## Volunteering in the future

In assessing whether the current volunteer engagement and management practices are appropriate for the future, the behaviours and interests of volunteers were gauged. As such, volunteers were asked whether they would continue to engage in volunteering in the future. 99 per cent of volunteers stated that they would continue volunteering, while 1 per cent said they would not.

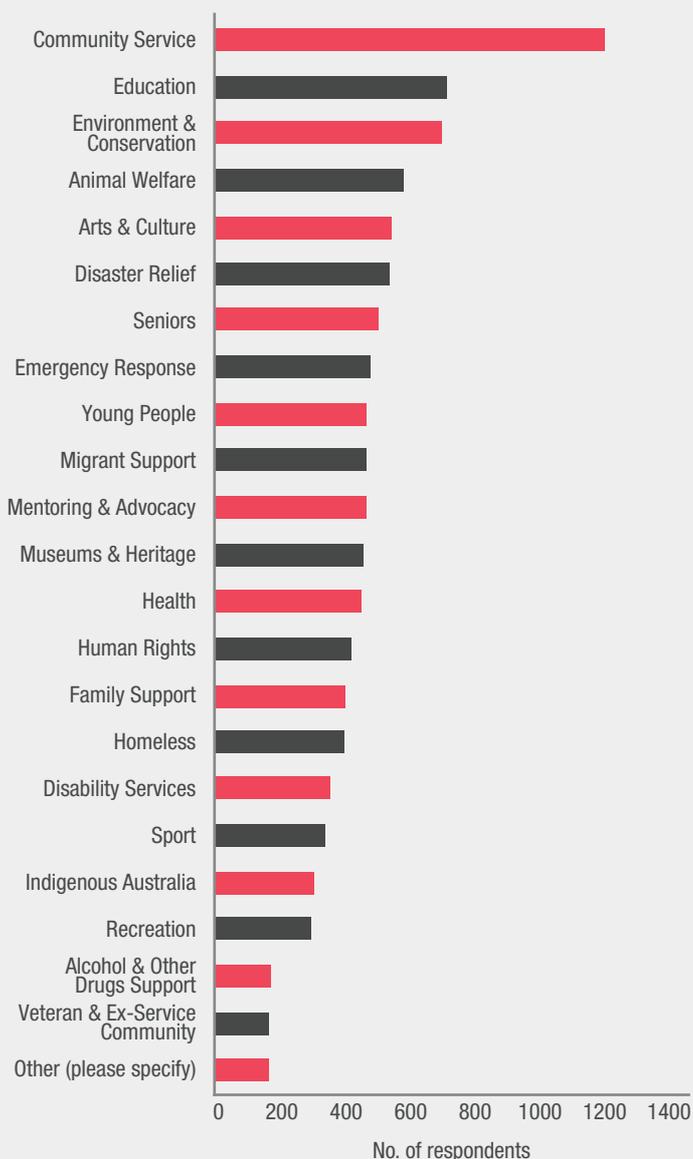
Of the volunteers that stated they would not volunteer in the future, the most common reason was 'other' (45 per cent), followed by work commitments (27 per cent) and out of pocket expenses (27 per cent). Other responses included that their financial circumstances limited their ability to volunteer, and management practices in the volunteer involving organisations in which they were involved were inadequate.

FIGURE 21. REASONS WHY RESPONDENTS WOULDN'T ENGAGE IN VOLUNTEERING IN THE FUTURE



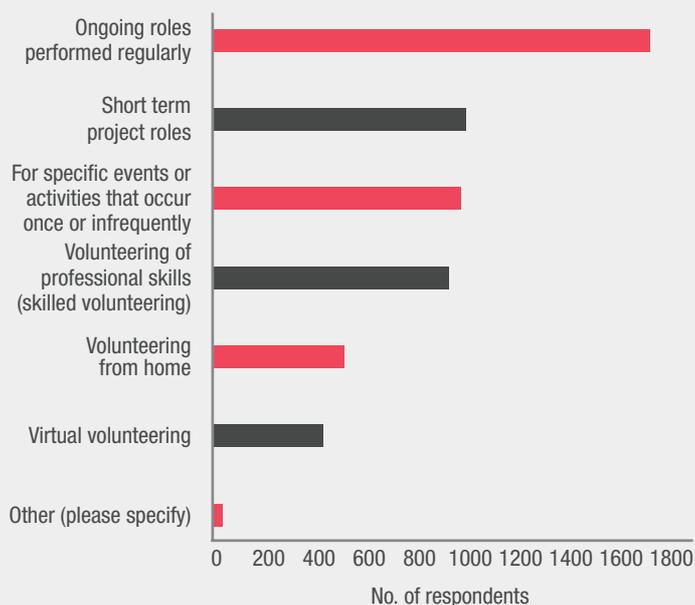
To gain insights into the future of volunteering, the survey asked volunteers what sector they would be most interested in volunteering for in the future. The most common response was in the Community Service sector (53 per cent), followed by the Education sector (32 per cent). Other responses included churches, volunteering with refugees, and gender equality initiatives among many others.

FIGURE 22. WHAT SECTOR WOULD YOU BE MOST INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING FOR IN THE FUTURE?



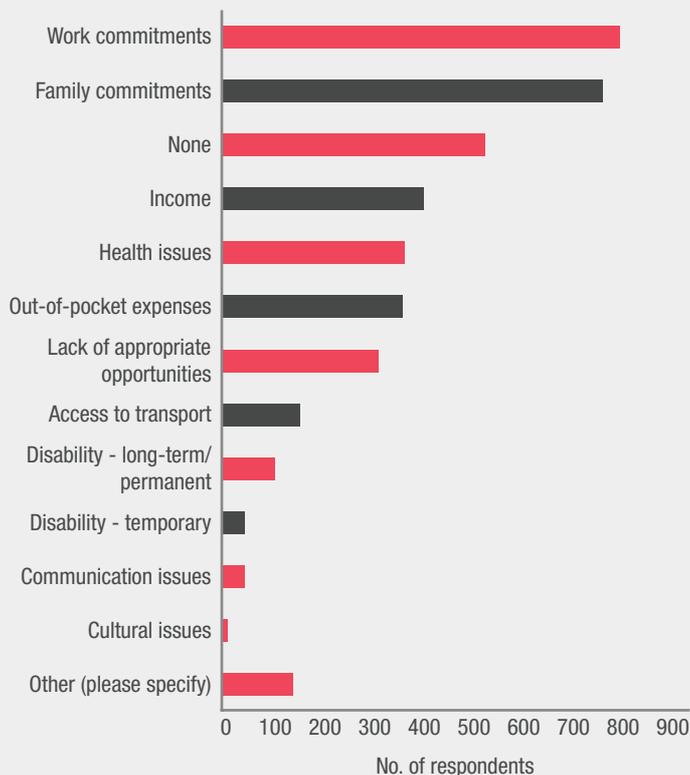
In relation to the types of volunteering arrangements suited to volunteers, a majority preferred ongoing roles performed regularly (76 per cent). Others called for more flexible roles, as well as a combination of the different types of roles. It is important to note that our sample of respondents consists of a large proportion of retirees who may have more time to volunteer. As such, it is likely that more flexible options are underrepresented.

FIGURE 23. WHAT SORT OF VOLUNTEERING ARRANGEMENTS WOULD BEST SUIT YOU IN THE FUTURE?



Similar to those not interested in engaging in volunteering in the future, respondents who will continue to engage in volunteering have highlighted that work commitments and family commitments are the main barriers (36 per cent and 34 per cent respectively). Others listed reasons including excessive red tape requirements, mandatory training, and studying among several other reasons.

FIGURE 24. BARRIERS TO VOLUNTEERING FOR THOSE THAT WILL CONTINUE TO VOLUNTEER



## GoVolunteer Analysis Snapshot

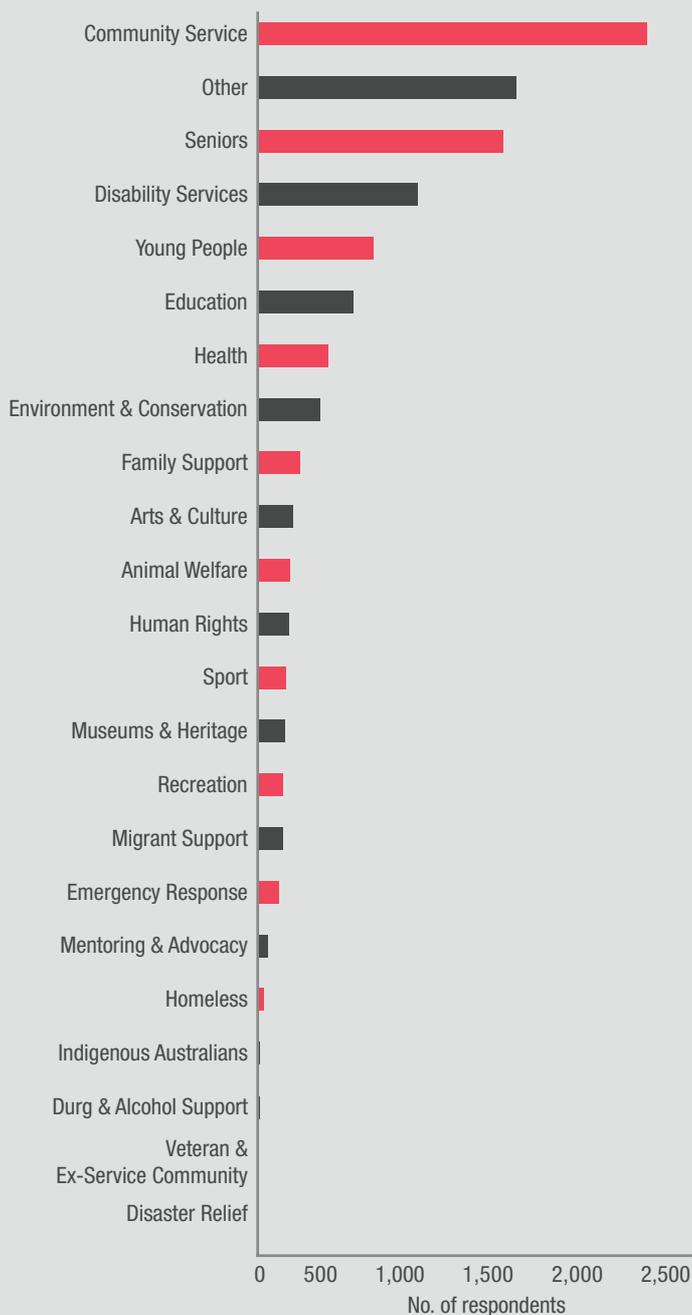
GoVolunteer is an online platform owned by Volunteering Australia that aims to match volunteers with appropriate volunteering opportunities. Volunteer involving organisations, volunteer resource centres and volunteering peak bodies advertise vacant volunteering positions on GoVolunteer. Individuals or groups who are interested in volunteering subsequently search for volunteering roles on GoVolunteer.

The analysis compared the volunteer profiles that were created and the positions that were advertised in the last 12 months. This included almost 200,000 profiles and over 10,000 positions. The positions listed on the GoVolunteer database most commonly fell into the Community Service category (23 per cent), Other (15 per cent) and Seniors (14 per cent).

Three key findings came out of the GoVolunteer analysis:

1. Most of the positions advertised are ongoing positions (92 per cent). Comparatively, 38 per cent of volunteer profiles identified full time work or study commitments, which may limit their capacity to volunteer in an ongoing capacity. There is a potential gap based on the availability of volunteers and the roles that organisations need filled.
2. The age cohort of the GoVolunteer profiles is much younger than the formal survey respondents, with the median age of profiles at 25 to 34 years old compared to the survey median age of 55 to 64 years old. Furthermore, 66 per cent of users found GoVolunteer on the internet. The greater tendency of the younger cohort using technological platforms, in conjunction with the flexibility that these volunteers often require, suggests that virtual volunteering is likely to better accommodate for this volunteering cohort in the future.
3. Only 33 per cent of positions advertised facilitated access for people with a physical disability

FIGURE 25. GOVOLUNTEER POSITIONS BY SECTOR



## What volunteers have to say

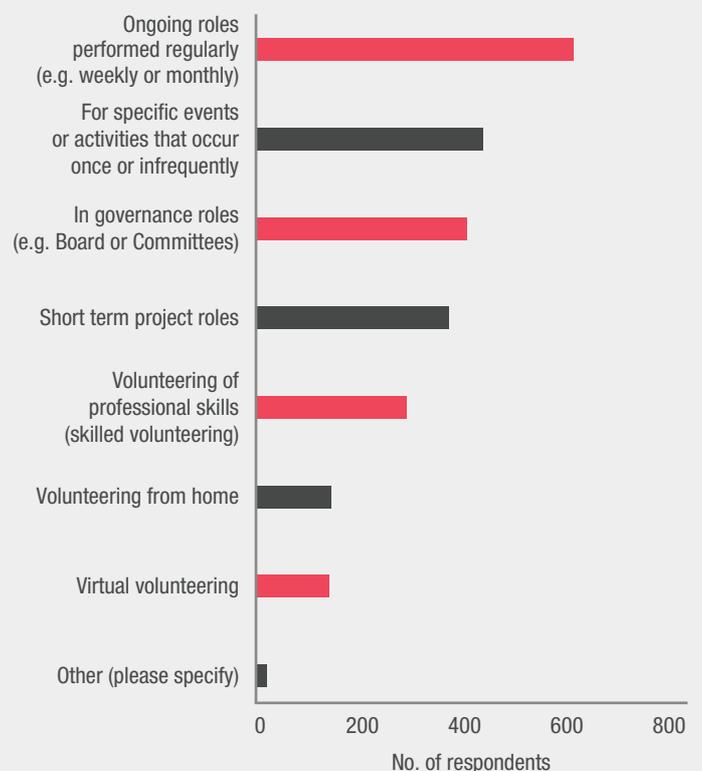
- *I really enjoy my volunteering role. It gives me purpose and a positive self-esteem and I highly recommend it.*
- *I enjoy volunteering and think it would suit a lot more people like myself who have retired, yet are fit and healthy and alert enough not to be limited to only the normal activities within the home.*
- *When you volunteer your time you get back so much more. Its two way street, the people you support do become friends and we walk their journey together.*
- *Volunteering is a good way to enjoy other people's company.*
- *I always maintain that the benefits of volunteering are two way. The charity gets my help for free, and I get the satisfaction of feeling valued and useful to society*
- *I have gained far more from volunteering than I have given. I would like to think it was altruistic to volunteer; however, the wellbeing I gain from it including the wonderful people I have met, clients and colleagues, provides satisfaction much greater than during my professional life.*
- *Volunteering is an ethic that Australians should be proud of – I am sure that they are one of the most generous volunteering nations in the world.*
- *Volunteering is one of the most enjoyable aspects of my lifestyle.*
- *Volunteering is one of the most humbling roles I have been a part of and I would strongly encourage it to others.*
- *Volunteering makes me feel good about myself. Both informal and formal. It's helped in my recovery after an accident and illness to stay connected with people and build my resilience to now work again.*

## VOLUNTEER INVOLVING ORGANISATIONS

Respondents were asked to identify the various ways in which their organisations involved volunteers. The majority of respondents (94 per cent) identified that their organisations incorporate volunteers in ongoing roles. A large proportion of those surveyed also took on volunteers for single events (67 per cent) or short term projects (57 per cent). There were also a significant number of respondents (62 per cent) whose organisations involved volunteers at the governance level.

Virtual volunteering was least common among volunteer involving organisation respondents, demonstrating that it is a newly emerging method of engaging volunteers.

FIGURE 26. HOW DOES YOUR ORGANISATION INVOLVE VOLUNTEERS?



Compared to the types of roles volunteers would like to undertake in the future, both volunteer involving organisations and volunteers prefer ongoing roles performed regularly (76 per cent of volunteers, and 94 per cent of volunteer involving organisations). Moreover, 45 per cent of organisations have involved skilled volunteers, compared to 41 per cent of volunteers interested in undertaking skilled volunteering in the future. Based on the higher number of options selected by volunteer involving organisations, organisations appear to be more open to involving volunteers in different ways, while volunteers have specific types of roles they'd like to undertake in the future, indicating that volunteers may be inflexible in arrangements they can undertake.

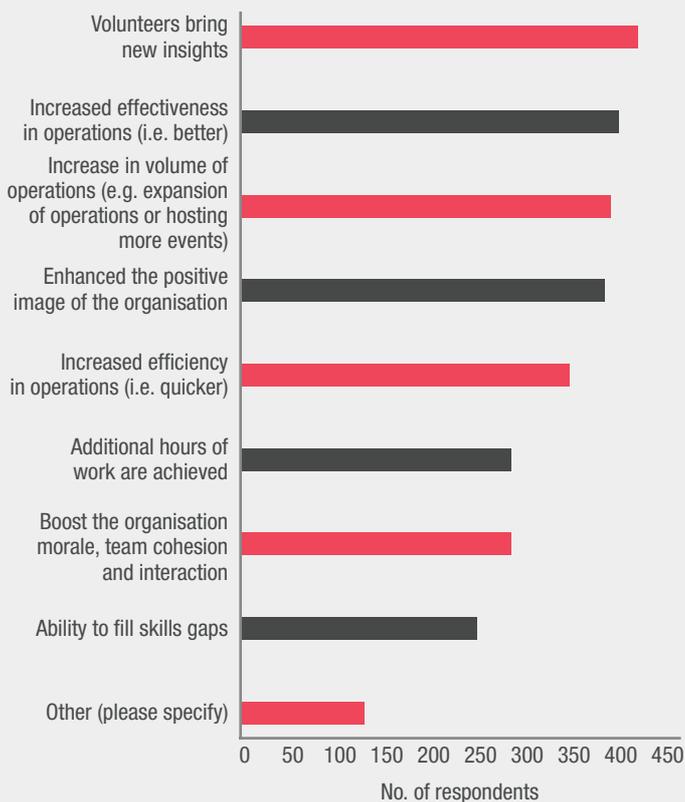
However, the survey sample median age is 55 to 64 years, compared to the Australian Bureau of Statistics median age of volunteers of 35 to 44 years<sup>7</sup>. The skewed sample age of respondents is likely to show different volunteering preferences to the wider volunteering population. The analysis from GoVolunteer suggests that the younger generation of volunteers may be more interested in less traditional and more flexible options, such as virtual volunteering.

## Benefits of volunteering

### Organisational benefits

Respondents were asked to identify the areas in which their organisation benefited through volunteering. Responses covered a wide spectrum of positive outcomes, with the most common answer being new insights brought by volunteers (67 per cent). Many also suggested that volunteers improved the effectiveness and volume of operations (64 per cent and 62 per cent respectively). Fewer respondents found that volunteers were able to fill skills gaps (39 per cent).

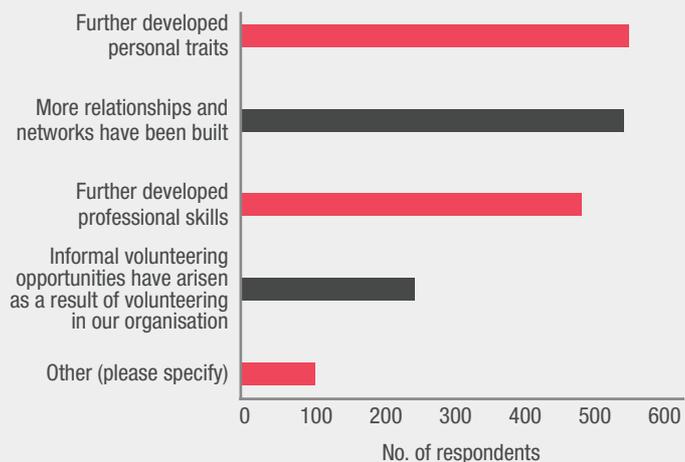
FIGURE 27. IN WHAT WAYS DOES YOUR ORGANISATION BENEFIT FROM ENGAGING VOLUNTEERS?



### Volunteer benefits

Volunteering is considered a highly reciprocal relationship. In addition to the benefits to organisations, respondents were asked to identify areas in which they had seen volunteers benefit from their experiences. The most common responses included the personal skills developed during the volunteering process (87 per cent) along with the establishment of new relationships (87 per cent) and enhanced professional skills (77 per cent).

FIGURE 28. IN WHAT WAYS HAVE YOU SEEN VOLUNTEERS IN YOUR ORGANISATION BENEFIT FROM VOLUNTEERING?



### Organisational experience

The survey sought to identify the impact of volunteering on organisational capability. 58 per cent of respondents agreed that their organisations had grown their operations as a result of volunteer involvement over the last 12 months, citing a wide range of areas where they had expanded their capabilities.

#### How has your organisation grown its operations as a result of volunteer involvement?

- More participant groups are being offered more regularly.
- Greater assistance with PR and media activities – as well as event organisation and attendance.
- We have opened our first OP Shop which is primarily staffed by volunteers.
- Volunteers have extended our service to socially and geographically isolated clients through visits and phone calls. Volunteers have assisted clients and residents to use social media to contact family overseas and interstate.
- We are able to offer more help to our hospital wards.
- Increased throughput of stock with more processing volunteers has enabled us to increase sales.
- We have been able to grow our weekend social activities for our clients.

7. PwC analysis; Australian Bureau of Statistics, 4159.0 General Social Survey, Summary Results, Australia, 2014

- We have utilised skilled volunteers to grow leaders and strategic thinking.
- Volunteers have supported programs and added a level of understanding within new programs (e.g. CALD). Core business of the organisation is delivered by volunteers who have received training and supervision from paid staff, allowing other diverse activities to be achieved.

Respondents were also asked whether volunteer involvement had improved their organisations' positive impact on the community. Almost two thirds (66 per cent) agreed with the statement, while 28 per cent were unsure. Only 6 per cent indicated that they did not consider volunteer involvement to have increased positive impact.

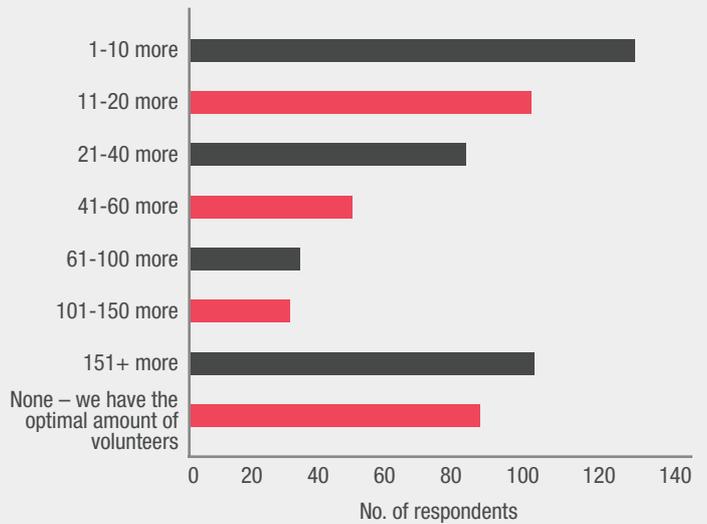
**How has your organisation made a greater community impact in the last 12 months as a result of volunteer involvement?**

- Providing opportunities for members of the community and corporate staff to serve and assist those who are isolated and marginalised.
- Involvement in our youth and community projects, increased development of new social advocacy initiatives, participation in new social enterprises.
- We have been able to reach out to different communities through our multilingual volunteers.
- Greater support networks for families who have children with disability.
- More people with a disability are heard and supported by a community member who is matched as a volunteer citizen advocate.
- Increased number of tours and an increase in connections with the local community.
- Market stall volunteers assist in spreading the message of our social enterprise.
- Volunteers are engaging their local communities more by involving them in what we do. This has a ripple effect and we can see some really positive change in supporters getting involved.
- Improved environmental conditions in parks and reserves, more connected community members that come from local areas and overseas volunteers, more trained, skilled volunteers in conservation.

**Future needs of organisations**

The survey sought to identify the ideal number of additional volunteers for respondents' organisations. Responses were highly varied, from small resources gaps of 1-10 volunteers (22 per cent) to very large unfulfilled requirements of 151+ volunteers (17 per cent). In total, 86 per cent of respondents identified that their organisations were in need of more volunteers. This is supported by volunteers, of which almost 25 per cent stated that recruiting more volunteers would improve their volunteering experience.

FIGURE 29. HOW MANY MORE VOLUNTEERS WOULD YOU IDEALLY LIKE AT YOUR ORGANISATION?



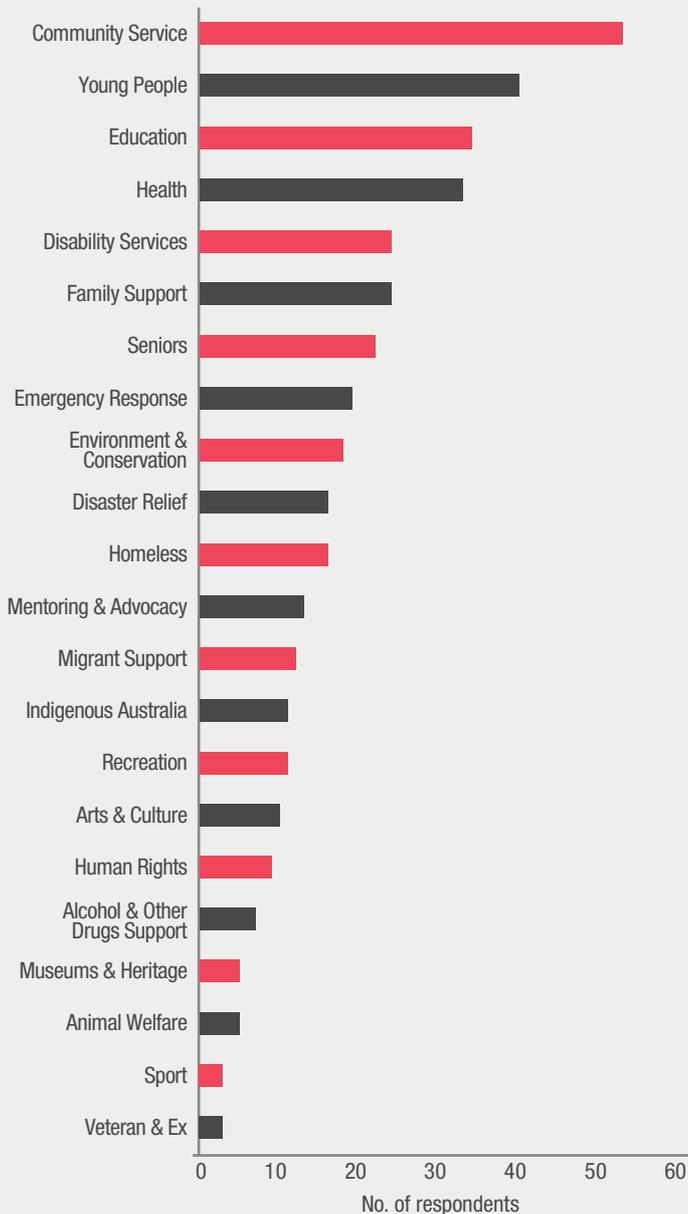
These trends were relatively consistent across the states, although volunteer involving organisations in Tasmania appeared to generally have a greater need of 151+ additional volunteers.

FIGURE 30. ADDITIONAL VOLUNTEERS REQUIRED BY STATE



The figure below shows the volunteer involving organisations with major volunteer shortages by sector. Organisations needing over 151 additional volunteers were most commonly organisations working in community service, with young people, and in education. Disability Services also required significantly more volunteers, consistent with the high number of positions advertised on GoVolunteer (see GoVolunteer Analysis Snapshot on page 13). Compared to the sectors volunteers said they would be interested in the future, there is a higher interest in Environment & Conservation, Animal Welfare, and Arts and Culture relative to the sectors of organisations with the greatest need for volunteers. Note that the sectors with the highest need for volunteers are similar to the sectors with the most survey respondents; therefore, there could be biases in the data. However, demand in health services and education aligns with broader economic trends, especially in consideration of the ageing population.

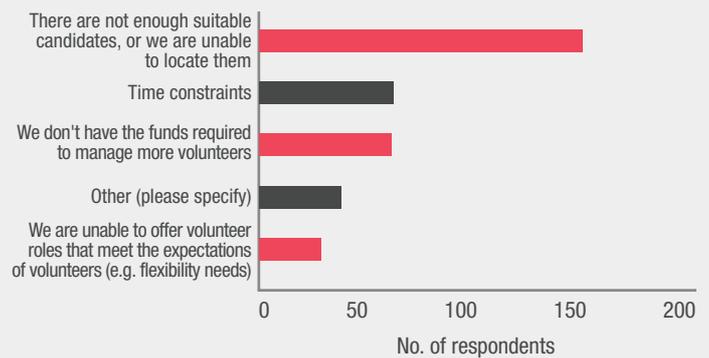
FIGURE 31. VOLUNTEER INVOLVING ORGANISATIONS IN NEED OF 151+ MORE VOLUNTEERS BY SECTOR



Respondents with volunteer shortages were asked to identify why they had been unable to engage the optimal number of volunteers. The primary problems appeared to be either a lack of suitable candidates or no means of locating them (30 per cent). There were also internal barriers such as time constraints (12 per cent), while most organisations also suggested some limitations stemming from an inadequate funding base (12 per cent). There was also a clear consensus across the states that a mismatch between desired and available candidates sustained suboptimal levels of volunteers.

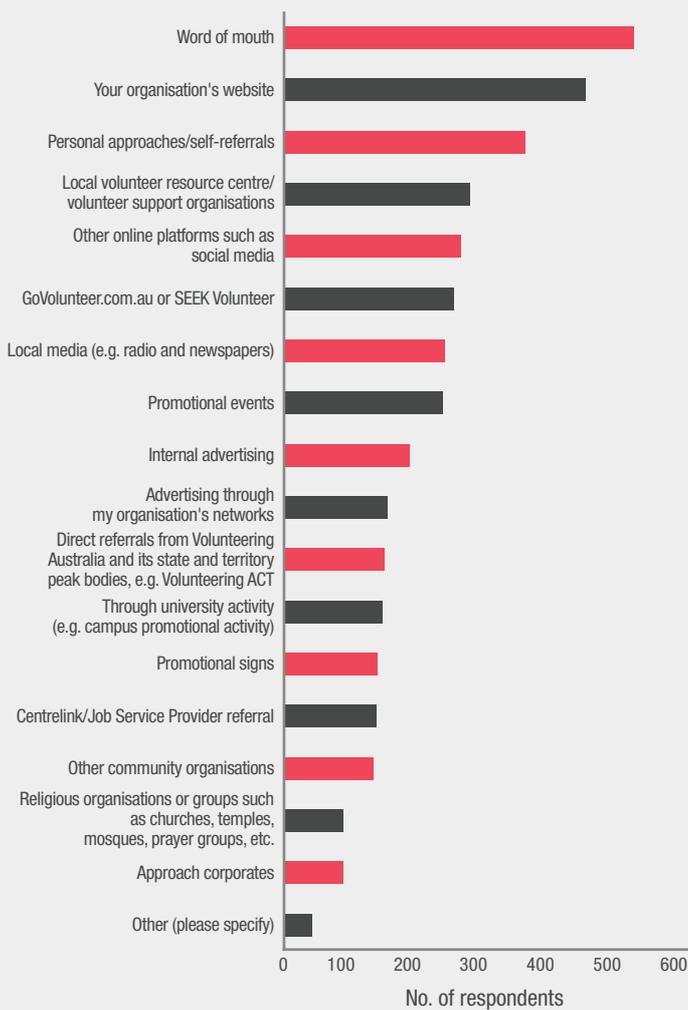
These results were cross-examined with responses from volunteers about which sectors they would be most interested in volunteering for in the future. The most commonly selected areas were Community Service (53 per cent) and Education (32 per cent), both sectors facing large shortages of volunteers. This indicates that these resource gaps may be improved through increased engagement of volunteer involving organisations from undersubscribed sectors with potential, willing candidates. High levels of interest also exist in the Environment & Conservation (31 per cent) and Animal Welfare (26 per cent) sectors, which are often better equipped to recruit sufficient volunteer numbers.

FIGURE 32. TOP 5 REASONS ORGANISATIONS WERE UNABLE TO ENGAGE THE OPTIMAL NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS



Organisations most commonly used word of mouth (90 per cent) and personal approaches or self-referrals (62 per cent) to recruit volunteers. Online sources were also common, including an organisation's website (78 per cent), other online platforms including social media (46 per cent) and GoVolunteer or SEEK Volunteer (44 per cent). Other methods including recruitment through their local volunteer resource centre or volunteer support organisations were also highly utilised (48 per cent).

FIGURE 33. HOW DO YOU RECRUIT VOLUNTEERS?

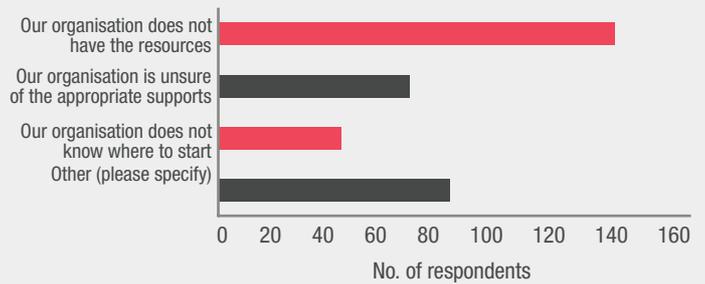


**Volunteers with barriers**

The survey sought to clarify whether organisations actively engaged volunteers who might have barriers (such as language difficulties, disability, etc). Responses were balanced with 54 per cent providing opportunities to volunteers with barriers. Means of involving these volunteers were varied, with some organisations working in partnership with employment companies that specialise in disability training. Many respondents noted the openness of their organisation and the willingness of staff to find suitable roles for those with barriers to volunteering.

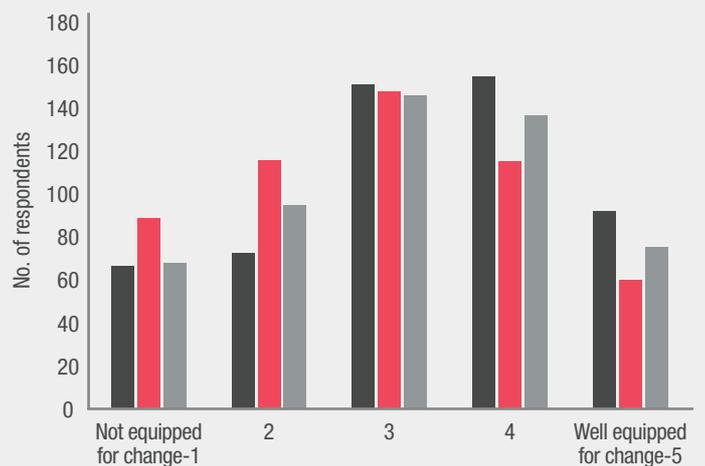
The most common challenges encountered in this type of recruitment were funding based, with 51 per cent of respondents identifying a lack of resources as a critical problem. Other responses noted that volunteers with barriers might be unable to fill available roles that required specialist skills or physical capabilities.

FIGURE 34. WHAT CHALLENGES TO RECRUITING AND ENGAGING VOLUNTEERS WITH BARRIERS DO YOU ENCOUNTER?



Respondents were asked how equipped their organisation were to accommodate change in a variety of areas relevant to their industries. Most respondents indicated that their organisation was moderately capable to adapt to change. The area for most concern appeared to be changes to the way volunteers are able to participate. Broadly, organisations stated that they were equipped for technological change.

FIGURE 35. HOW EQUIPPED IS YOUR ORGANISATION TO ACCOMMODATE CHANGE?



- Technological change (e.g. online recruitment platforms, social media, internal IT systems)
- Change in ways to volunteer (e.g. online, short-term roles, long-term roles etc.)
- Change in ways to engage volunteers (e.g. online, networks, universities etc.)

### What is the biggest barrier to your organisation in terms of volunteer involvement?

- *The sheer numbers we need to grow our program.*
- *Finding volunteers who are interested in doing the tasks we need, i.e. mostly customer service roles.*
- *Government regulations regarding criminal records checks, working with children checks and medicals for volunteers all take time and delay the recruitment process.*
- *Insufficient staff numbers to manage volunteer involvement.*
- *Getting support and buy-in from senior management for the ongoing support and growth of volunteering opportunities.*
- *Administration, bureaucracy and risk mitigation have taken precedence over intrinsic movements and people's altruistic value.*
- *Finding enough people with suitable skills who are available during school hours and are willing to undergo both a Working with Children Check and Department of Education Clearance.*
- *We have more volunteers than we have roles for them to fill, yet we do not want to discourage people from applying to work with us. We need time and knowledge in order to develop more roles for volunteers.*
- *The nature of our work is to build relationships and trust over time, thus long term volunteer roles are the core volunteer roles we have. How can we do this with short term roles?*

### What is your organisation's biggest opportunity in terms of volunteer involvement?

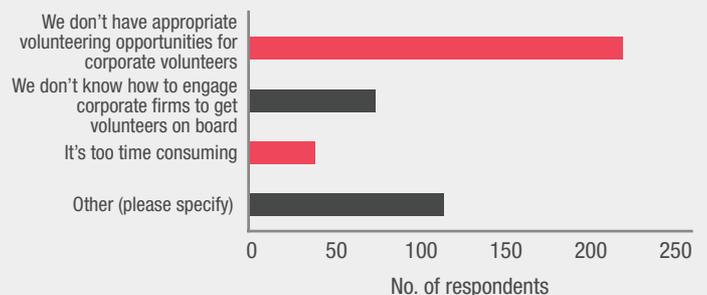
- *Strong reputation, attract highly skilled and passionate volunteers, are often approached by volunteers directly.*
- *Changing our facilities and work spaces to enable access for and to attract more volunteers.*
- *Fresh vibrant staff who can see the value in volunteer involvement and find exciting meaningful roles for them.*
- *We are changing the delivery times and hope this will make younger people more willing to assist.*
- *Engagement with the environment is strong – our program offers a very positive, healthy and social outdoors experience which many people are looking for.*
- *We work with a flexible formula that can offer local bodies the benefit of enthusiastic teams for a restricted period, who can bring a new profile to work in communities lacking in local resources. We also offer long term partnerships with community organisations – for instance, sending volunteers each year back to the project, allowing consolidation and stability, and over time cultural interaction between visitors and residents.*
- *We are able to provide people with interesting, fulfilling and community-relevant duties.*
- *To gain a hands on experience with people with a disability, to be able to form long term friendships, and to learn new communication skills.*

### Employee volunteering programs

Respondents were asked if their organisations involved employee volunteers with 35 per cent of respondents stated that they involved employee volunteers in some capacity.

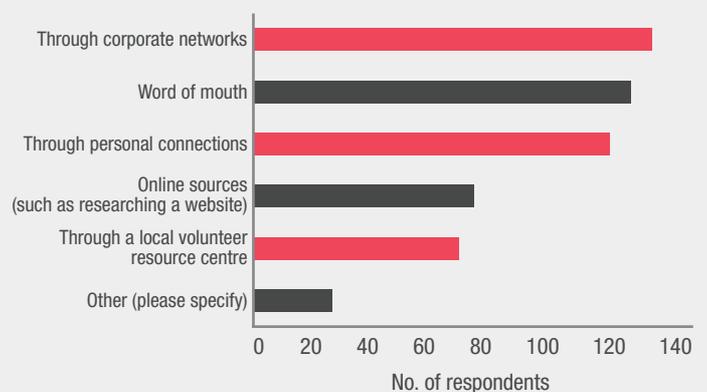
Respondents who did not involve employee volunteers stated that the main reason for the lack of engagement was that their organisation did not provide appropriate opportunities for employee volunteers (51 per cent). This corresponds with the high proportion of ongoing volunteering roles typically undertaken by volunteers. However, a significant number of respondents (18 per cent) also identified that the organisational capabilities necessary to engage corporate firms were not in place, therefore preventing them from facilitating Employee Volunteering Programs or relationships. A range of other responses suggested that there were legal or institutional barriers to this kind of volunteer involvement. Positively, many identified Employee Volunteering Programs as areas of interest for future consideration.

FIGURE 36. WHY DOESN'T YOUR ORGANISATION INVOLVE EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERS?



Respondents whose organisations involved employee volunteers were asked how they connected with relevant partners. Most respondents (60 per cent) identified corporate networks as a crucial means of interaction. Word of mouth (57 per cent) and personal connections (54 per cent) were also common, while secondary sources of contact such as online websites (32 per cent) or volunteer resource centres (30 per cent) were less likely.

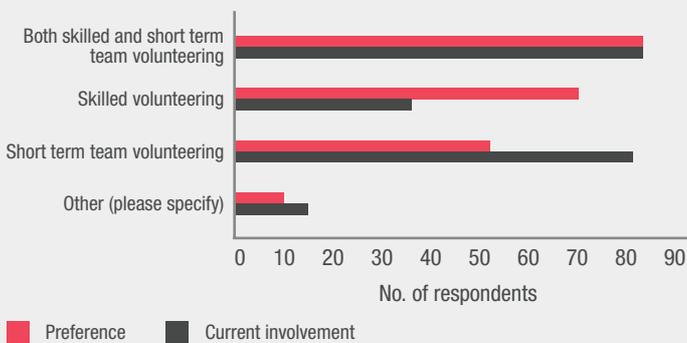
FIGURE 37. HOW DOES YOUR ORGANISATION CONNECT WITH EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERS?



39 per cent of respondents' organisations involved employee volunteers in both skilled and short term positions. 38 per cent stated that their opportunities were exclusively short term, and a small number involved employee volunteers only in skilled volunteering.

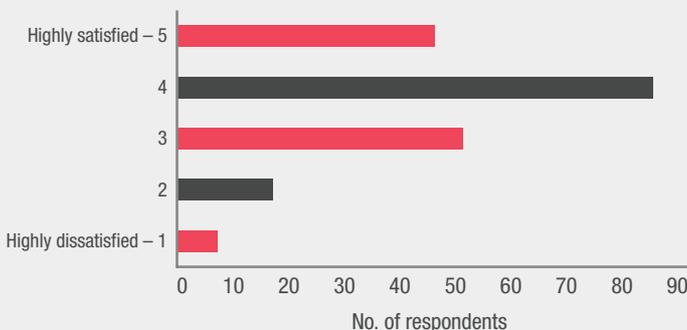
Survey responses suggested that preferences for skilled and short term volunteering were relatively balanced, with skilled work being partially preferred. Most respondents (39 per cent) valued the two forms of assistance equally, with skilled and short term work identified as more useful by 33 per cent and 24 per cent respectively. The current involvement of employee volunteers with the volunteer involving organisations' compared with organisational preferences demonstrates a shift away from short term, team volunteering towards skilled volunteering to better utilise volunteers' skills and align with their interests.

FIGURE 38. TYPES OF VOLUNTEERING MORE USEFUL TO THE ORGANISATION COMPARED TO TYPES OF VOLUNTEERING CURRENTLY USED TO INVOLVE VOLUNTEERS



Respondents were asked to rate their experience of involving employee volunteers out of 5. Responses were concentrated in the upper mid-range, with 41 per cent rating their satisfaction at 4, and 25 per cent at 3. A significant number (22 per cent) were also highly satisfied, rating their experience with employee volunteers '5 out of 5', while only a combined 12 per cent rated the experience at '1-2'.

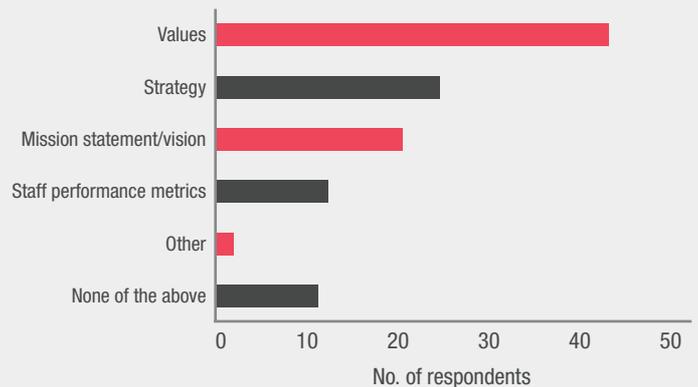
FIGURE 39. HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH YOUR EXPERIENCE INVOLVING EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERS?



## FINDINGS FROM CORPORATE ORGANISATIONS

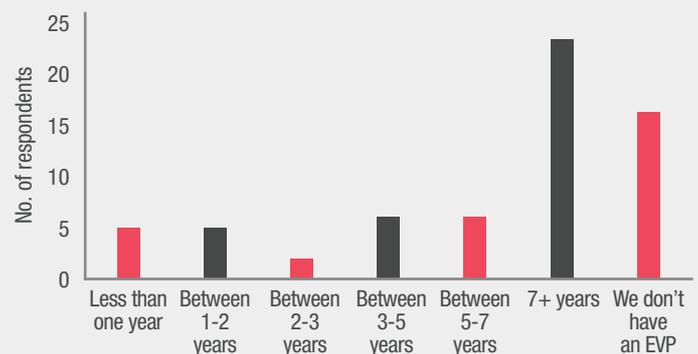
The drivers of voluntary activity in corporate organisations are the organisation's core values and commitment to corporate social responsibility. Others indicated that their strategy or mission statement are also key drivers. Based on the size of the organisation, organisations with 51-100 staff had the highest proportion of respondents with volunteering or corporate social responsibility in their values.

FIGURE 40. HOW DOES VOLUNTEERING OR CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY FIT INTO YOUR ORGANISATION?



Overall, 75 per cent of respondents had an Employee Volunteering Program. A higher percentage of larger organisations had an Employee Volunteering Program (88 per cent of organisations with 1,001+ employees) compared to smaller organisations (38 per cent of smaller organisations). Further, while the life of the Employee Volunteering Programs has varied amongst corporate respondents, 37 per cent indicated that their program had been running for over seven years.

FIGURE 41. HOW MANY YEARS HAS YOUR EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING PROGRAM BEEN RUNNING FOR?

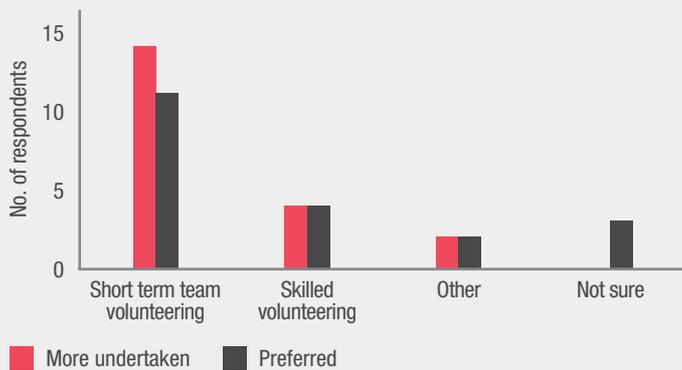


## Employee Volunteering Programs

### Types of volunteering undertaken

Short-term, team volunteering is the most common type of volunteering undertaken in Employee Volunteering Programs. The trends in types of volunteering preferred are similar, although several respondents were unsure of employee preferences. Comparing the types of volunteering undertaken with the types that employees prefer highlights that short-term, team volunteering is slightly more prevalent than employees would prefer. Volunteer involving organisations responded that both short-term, team volunteering and skilled volunteering were equally useful, although there was a slight preference towards skilled volunteering.

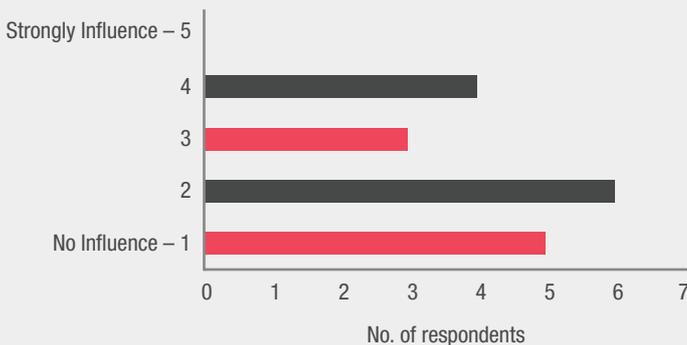
FIGURE 42. WHICH TYPE OF VOLUNTEERING IS MORE COMMONLY UNDERTAKEN, AND WHICH TYPE IS PREFERRED?



### Employee satisfaction

A majority of corporate organisation respondents saw no influence (28 per cent) or limited influence (33 per cent) of volunteering initiatives on recruitment and retention of employees.

FIGURE 43. HOW STRONGLY DO YOUR ORGANISATION'S VOLUNTEER INITIATIVES INFLUENCE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF EMPLOYEES?



While respondents highlighted that the effect of employee volunteer involvement on their organisation's recruitment and retention was immaterial, a majority of respondents (65 per cent) agreed that the program generated further benefits to the community as employees occasionally volunteered outside of work after participating in an

Employee Volunteering Program. Moreover, 26 per cent of respondents stated their employees were highly satisfied with their volunteering experience, 58 per cent were mostly satisfied and 16 per cent were neutral.

FIGURE 44. EMPLOYEES INVOLVED IN AN EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING PROGRAM WHO HAVE SUBSEQUENTLY BECOME INVOLVED IN OUTSIDE VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

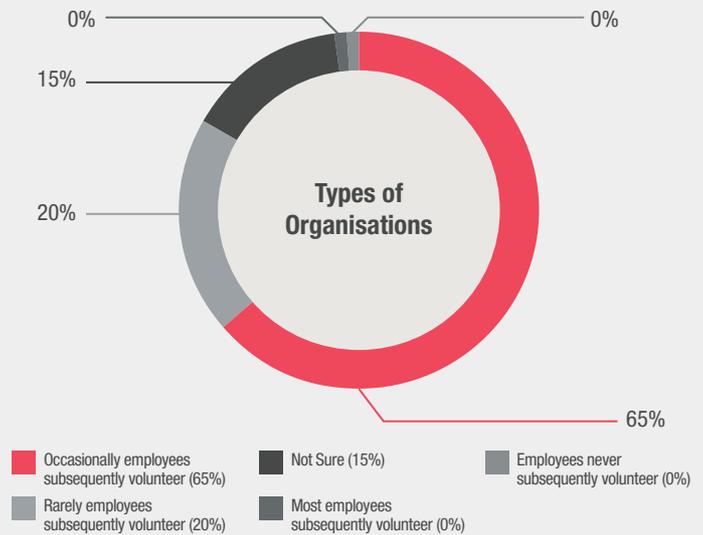
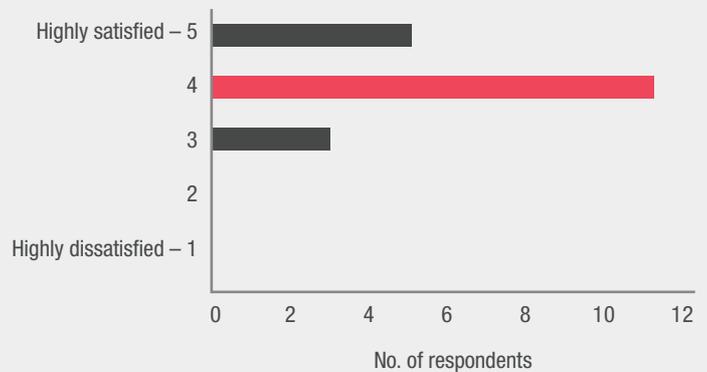


FIGURE 45. HOW SATISFIED WERE EMPLOYEES WITH THEIR EXPERIENCE VOLUNTEERING THROUGH YOUR EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING PROGRAM?



### Organisational experience

Out of the respondents who have an Employee Volunteering Program, most were motivated to establish the program as part of the organisation's corporate social responsibility (90 per cent), and because it provides employees with the opportunity to make a contribution to the community (90 per cent).

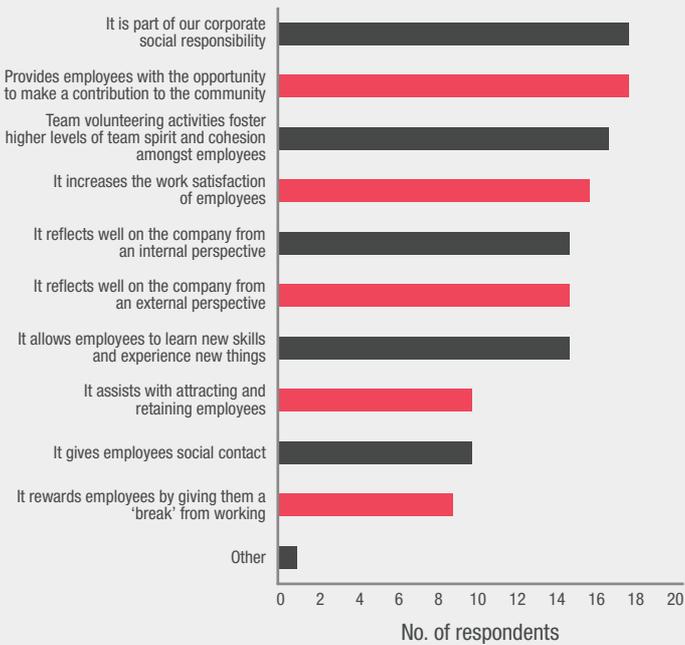
The largest organisations (1,001+ employees) identified the following motivations:

- the activities provide employees with the opportunity to make a contribution to the community (50 per cent of organisations with 1,001+ employees)

- *team volunteering activities foster higher levels of team spirit and cohesion amongst employees (50 per cent of organisations with 1,001+ employees)*

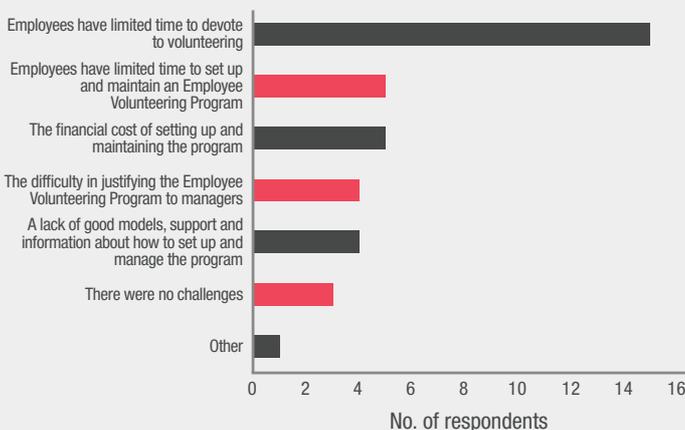
The smallest organisations (11-50 employees)<sup>8</sup> were most motivated by volunteering being a part of their organisation's corporate social responsibility (57 per cent)

FIGURE 46. WHAT MOTIVATES YOUR ORGANISATION TO PROVIDE AN EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING PROGRAM?



Of the respondents with an Employee Volunteering Program, the key challenge they faced when establishing their programs stemmed from employees having limited time to devote to volunteering (75 per cent). This was applicable to both large and small organisations (64 per cent and 100 per cent respectively). Fifteen per cent of respondents stated that they had faced no challenges in establishing an Employee Volunteering Program.

FIGURE 47. WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES YOU FACED IN ESTABLISHING AN EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING PROGRAM?



8. Note that we have used organisations with 11-50 employees to represent the smallest organisations because the data provided for organisations with 0-10 employees is not representative

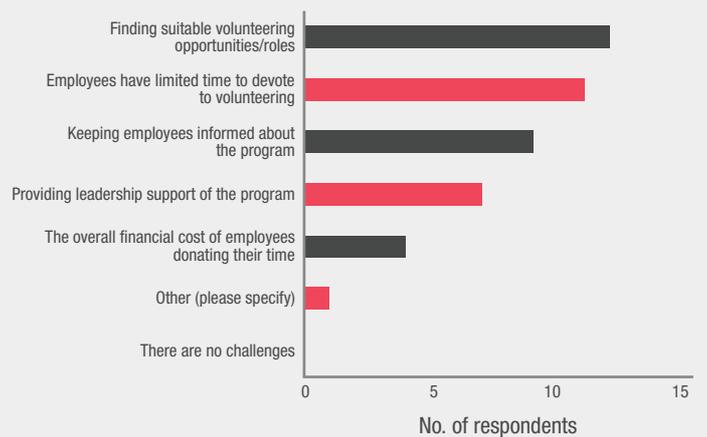
Organisations experienced several key challenges in relation to finding appropriate volunteering opportunities for their employees. Most commonly, organisations struggled to identify suitable and meaningful opportunities for their organisation's employees (65 per cent), followed by difficulty in finding opportunities that utilise the skills of their employees (60 per cent). These challenges were consistent among both small and large organisations.

FIGURE 48. WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES THAT YOU EXPERIENCED IN FINDING APPROPRIATE VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES FOR EMPLOYEES?



The challenges in engaging employees were consistent with those faced when finding appropriate volunteering opportunities for employees. Specifically, finding suitable volunteering opportunities/roles was the most common challenge as stated by 60 per cent of staff. Largest organisations most commonly found challenges with keeping employees informed about their program, while small organisations struggled in finding suitable volunteering opportunities/roles for employees who have limited time to devote to volunteering.

FIGURE 49. WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES THAT YOU EXPERIENCED IN ENGAGING EMPLOYEES IN YOUR EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING PROGRAM?



## Employee Volunteering Program Feedback

- Program is well received. Employees especially like the group volunteer activities and these also act as team building
- The feedback from those that have taken part is generally always positive. The team based volunteering is quite often viewed as a great way to undertake a team building activity outside of the office whilst doing 'good' at the same time.
- Very enjoyable, like the fact that they are contributing in some way. Also a fun activity for the group.
- Staff who have participated have enjoyed their experiences. Drive to encourage more staff to get involved in 2016
- The reasons volunteering is so well liked and heavily recommended are both emotional and memorable. The emotionally rewarding aspects of volunteering facilitates an effective climate for organisational bonding. A strong relationship exists between volunteering participation and likelihood to recommend us as a great place to work.
- Staff and volunteer organisations love this program.

## COMPLIANCE WITH THE NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT

In 2015, Volunteering Australia released the *National Standards for Volunteer Involvement*. The Standards were developed in consultation with the sector, and act as a good practice guide for volunteer involving organisations. The Standards provide volunteer involving organisations with a framework to ensure that the role of volunteers is considered and their impact is acknowledged as an important part of achieving organisational objectives. There are eight standards addressing the key areas of volunteer involvement:

1. Leadership and management
2. Commitment to volunteer involvement
3. Volunteer roles
4. Recruitment and selection
5. Support and development
6. Workplace safety and wellbeing
7. Volunteer recognition
8. Quality management and continuous improvement

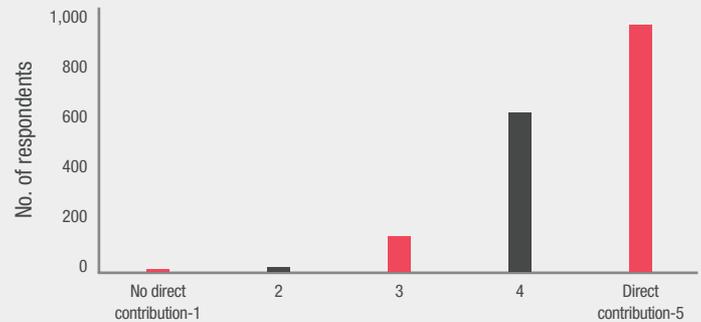
The surveys sought to ascertain how well volunteers and volunteer involving organisations felt that organisations were complying with the Standards, and provided respondents with the opportunity to make suggestions for continuous improvement.

### From the Perspective of Australian Volunteers

Standard 2: Commitment to volunteer involvement was developed to encourage increased involvement of volunteers in the planning and designing of their roles, and overall contribution to the organisation's

purpose, goals and objectives. Survey responses suggest that the majority of volunteers felt they had a direct contribution to organisation activities. 82 per cent of respondents rated their contribution at either 4 or 5 out of 5 when asked about their input to the purpose, goals and objectives of their organisation.

FIGURE 50. VOLUNTEER'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE ORGANISATION'S PURPOSE, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES



### Management of other volunteers

Volunteers were asked whether they managed other volunteers as part of their ongoing responsibilities. A combined 58 per cent of respondents indicated either occasional or consistent management of other volunteers, speaking to the reformed Standards, which call for meaningful volunteer roles.

The reformed Standards also demonstrate the need for volunteers to understand their roles and gain the knowledge, skills and feedback needed to safely and effectively carry out their duties. As such, the survey asked respondents how clearly they understood their roles and responsibilities. The question yielded a widely positive response with 90 per cent of volunteers surveyed rating their understanding at either 4 or 5 out of 5. This also indicated that, as per the requirements of the reformed Standards for leadership and management, responsibilities for managing volunteers are clearly defined and communicated.

FIGURE 51. DO YOU MANAGE OTHER VOLUNTEERS AS PART OF YOUR ONGOING RESPONSIBILITY?

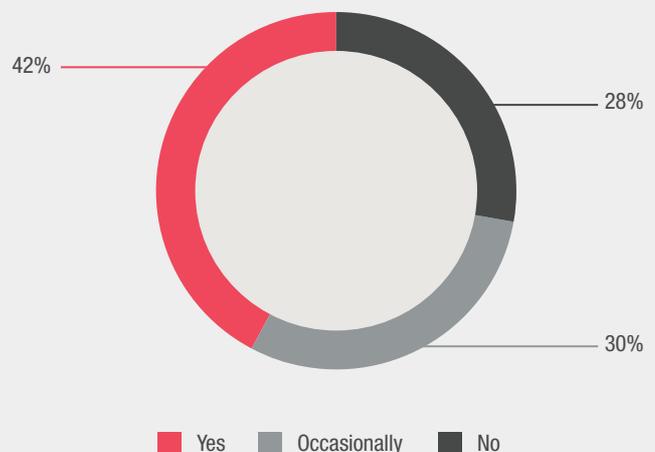
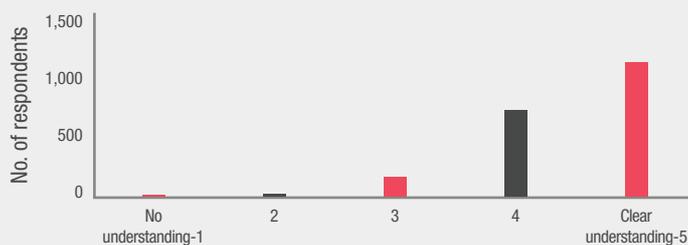


FIGURE 52. HOW CLEARLY DO YOU UNDERSTAND YOUR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES?

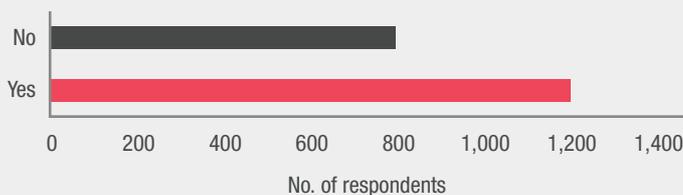


### Out of pocket expenses

The Standards also establish the need for sufficient resources to be allocated to volunteer involvement. As such, the survey sought to establish whether volunteers' out of pocket expenses are dealt with appropriately by their organisations.

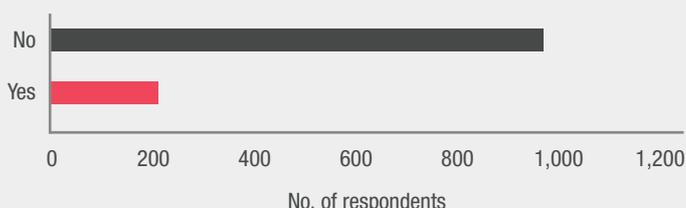
Firstly, respondents were asked whether their volunteer work incurred out of pocket expenses such as for uniform and clothing, fuel and motor vehicle expenses. 60 per cent of respondents said that they incurred these costs.

FIGURE 53. ARE OUT OF POCKET EXPENSES INCURRED THROUGH YOUR VOLUNTEERING ROLE? E.G. UNIFORM AND CLOTHING, FUEL AND MOTOR VEHICLE EXPENSES



Despite the majority of respondents incurring these costs, 82 per cent identified that they did not request reimbursement from the organisation. This may indicate that the current Standards for volunteering are yet to be met by many organisations where they have not fully considered the issue of out of pocket expenses for their volunteers. These findings are consistent with the restrictive funding bases identified in the volunteer involving organisation survey, which may reduce organisational capacity to commit financial resources to volunteering programs.

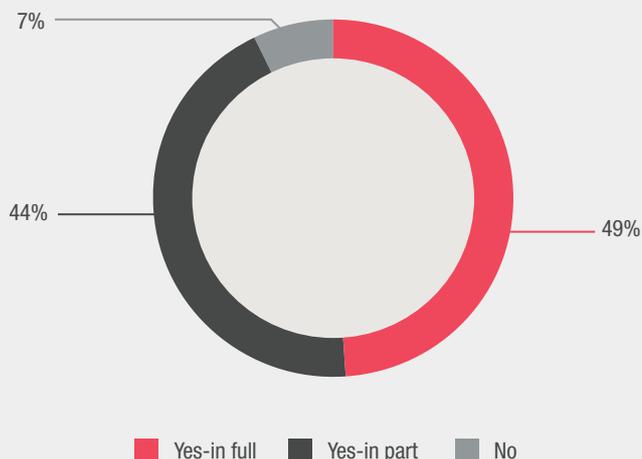
FIGURE 54. DO YOU REQUEST REIMBURSEMENT OF YOUR OUT OF POCKET EXPENSES?



Respondents who had requested reimbursement were asked whether they had received the repayment of their out of pocket expenses. Slightly under half (49 per cent) of respondents had been reimbursed in full, with a further 44 per cent indicating that they had received partial repayment. Only 7 per cent had not received any reimbursement.

Moreover, of the volunteers that stated they would not volunteer in the future, 27 per cent felt that the out of pocket expenses incurred was a key limitation. Overall, the results indicate further opportunities for organisations to fully align with the reformed Standards and allocate sufficient resources to engage volunteers.

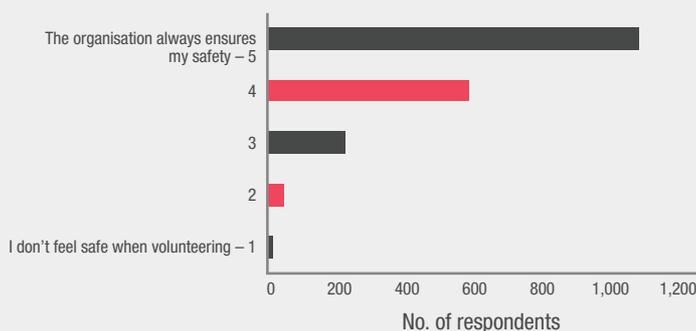
FIGURE 55. HAVE YOU RECEIVED REIMBURSEMENT OF OUT-OF-POCKET EXPENSES?



### Safety of Volunteers when Volunteering

The reformed Standards seek to ensure that comprehensive measures are in place to secure the safety and wellbeing of volunteers. Respondents were asked to what extent they felt that their safety was considered within the organisation they volunteered for. Most respondents identified that they were confident that their safety was ensured by the organisation. A combined 15 per cent rated their feeling of safety at 3 or under. Organisations should be happy with their approach, but note there is room for some improvement.

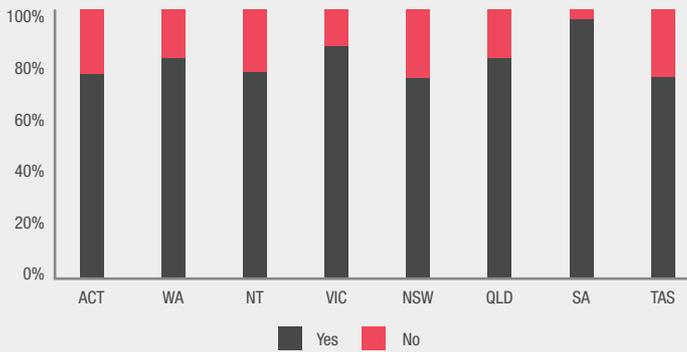
FIGURE 56. TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU FEEL THAT YOUR SAFETY IS CONSIDERED WITHIN THE ORGANISATION YOU VOLUNTEER FOR?



### Volunteer Involving Organisations

Only 17 per cent of volunteer involving organisations responded that their organisation was not familiar with the Standards (75 respondents). In addition, 18 per cent of organisations had not identified volunteers in their corporate Risk Management Plan. This highlights the challenges faced by volunteer involving organisations in finding support to assist with their corporate planning and volunteer management.

FIGURE 57. IS YOUR ORGANISATION FAMILIAR WITH THE NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT?



### Resources for Volunteer Involving Organisations

Standard 2 refers to an organisation’s commitment to volunteer involvement, including reference to the importance of organisations ensuring that resources (including time, funds, equipment and technology) are allocated for volunteer involvement.

FIGURE 58. ARE THERE CURRENTLY ADEQUATE RESOURCES ALLOCATED FOR VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT?



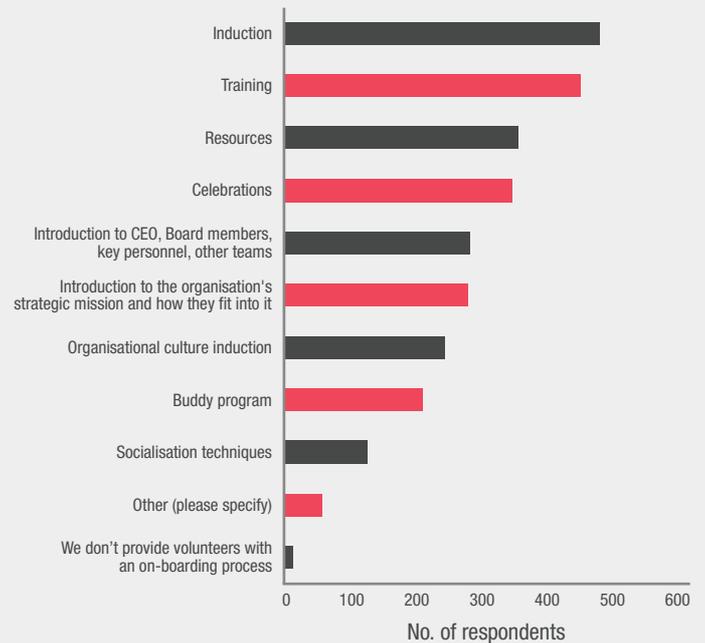
The survey results showed that respondents from volunteer involving organisations were divided about whether their organisation allocated sufficient resources for volunteer involvement (52 per cent found that there were adequate resources). These results likely indicate the varying capacities between organisations to allocate more funds to under-resourced aspects of their operations.

On a state basis, Northern Territory had the highest number of respondents who felt that they did not have adequate resources allocated for volunteer involvement (77 per cent), while Western Australia and New South Wales both had the lowest (both 46 per cent).

### How do volunteer involving organisations support their volunteers?

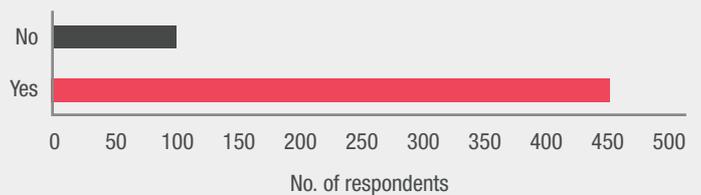
In order to gauge the quality of support provided to volunteers, respondents were asked what their organisations provided to new volunteers during the on-boarding process. The majority of respondents (87 per cent) identified some form of induction, with additional provisions such as training (82 per cent) or other resources (65 per cent) to assist in the transition.

FIGURE 59. WHAT DO YOU PROVIDE TO NEW VOLUNTEERS DURING YOUR ORGANISATION’S ON-BOARDING PROCESS?



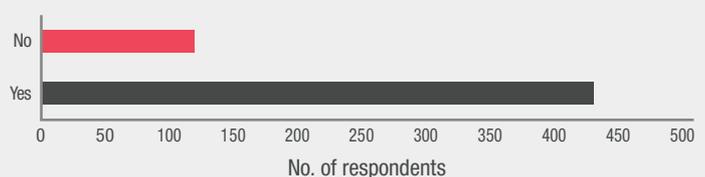
The reformed Standards also seek to ensure that volunteer roles are continually developed with input from the governing body, management and paid staff, as well as through volunteer feedback. Most respondents (82 per cent) said that their organisation had adopted this inclusive approach, with a small number (18 per cent) indicating that this was not yet the case.

FIGURE 60. DO OTHER EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS HAVE INPUT INTO ROLE DESCRIPTIONS?



The Standards also seek to establish precedents for volunteer involving organisations to provide appropriate complaints and grievance procedures. Of the respondents surveyed, 78 per cent said that such mechanisms were in place and available for volunteers should they need to access them. 22 per cent said that volunteers in their organisations did not have access to these services, indicating further improvement could be made to protect the wellbeing of volunteers in the workplace, and further encourage volunteer contribution.

FIGURE 61. DO VOLUNTEERS IN YOUR ORGANISATION HAVE ACCESS TO COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES?



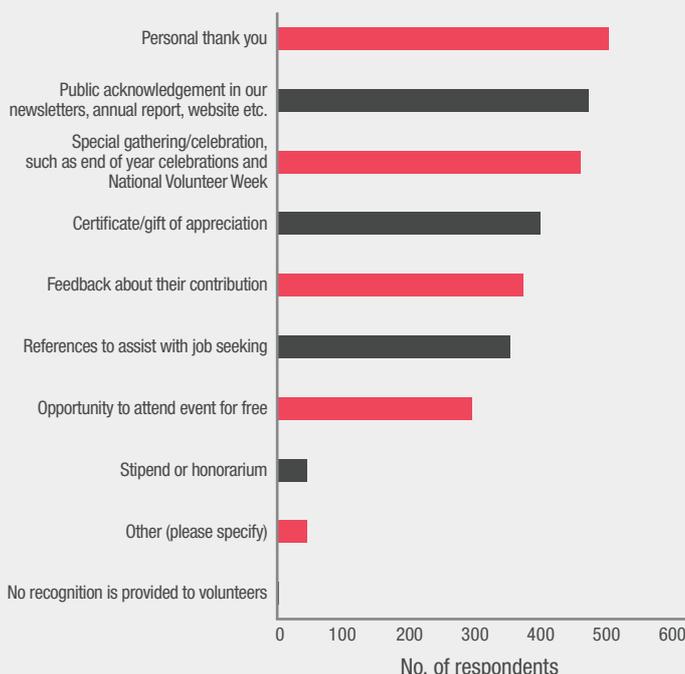
Respondents were also asked whether their organisation offered volunteers reimbursement for out of pocket expenses in order to establish whether sufficient resources are allocated to volunteer involvement. 22 per cent responded that reimbursement was always granted, while 51 per cent of respondents said that reimbursement was granted with pre-approval. A significant number of organisations either only occasionally (16 per cent) or never (11 per cent) reimbursed their volunteers.

FIGURE 62. DO YOU OFFER VOLUNTEERS REIMBURSEMENT OF OUT OF POCKET EXPENSES?



Respondents were also asked what forms of recognition were provided to volunteers. The overwhelming majority (91 per cent) said that their organisation provided personal thanks to volunteers for their work, with public acknowledgements through the volunteer involving organisation websites and newsletters also common forms of recognition (85 per cent).

FIGURE 63. WHAT FORMS OF RECOGNITION DOES YOUR ORGANISATION PROVIDE TO VOLUNTEERS?

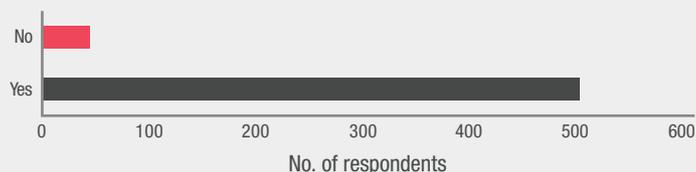


However, 16 per cent of volunteers felt that their experience in their volunteering role could be improved through better recognition of their contribution. Volunteer comments supported this, suggesting that volunteers would benefit from recognition of the value they provide. Furthermore, several volunteer involving organisations have expressed that they are aware they haven't provided enough recognition for their volunteers, but are restricted by the organisation's finances.

### Volunteer feedback

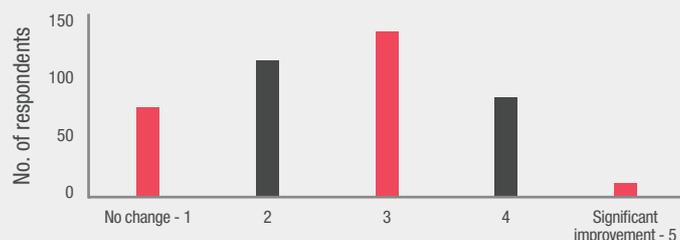
Finally, the survey sought to establish whether volunteer feedback was requested or utilised by volunteer involving organisations, in line with the reformed Standards quality management and continuous improvement. 92 per cent of respondents said that volunteers regularly provided feedback, illustrating that most volunteer involving organisations attempt to involve volunteers in continual service development and improvement.

FIGURE 64. DO VOLUNTEERS REGULARLY PROVIDE FEEDBACK ON THE ORGANISATION'S VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT AND RELEVANT AREAS OF THE ORGANISATION'S WORK?



Respondents were asked how much their organisation's volunteering program had improved over the last twelve months as a result of volunteer feedback. Responses were mixed and tended to indicate moderate improvement, with 33 per cent rating improvement at '3 out of 5'.

FIGURE 65. HOW MUCH HAS THE ORGANISATION'S VOLUNTEERING PROGRAM IMPROVED IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS AS A RESULT OF VOLUNTEER FEEDBACK?



# FUTURE-PROOFING THE VOLUNTEERING SECTOR

As discussed in the introduction, this report seeks to determine whether or not the current volunteer engagement and management practices are appropriate for the future. The report looked at three key questions:

- Is there alignment between the types of roles volunteers want to undertake, the sectors they are interested in volunteering in, and the needs of volunteer involving organisations?
- What is the appropriate framework to support informal volunteering?
- What are the necessary steps that need to be taken to futureproof volunteering?

The following sections identify key findings from the surveys that address these questions.

## Matching people to volunteering opportunities

Comments from volunteer involving organisations highlight that many involve volunteers as manpower as opposed to developing volunteer roles to suit individual skills and experience. Broadly, volunteer involving organisations are experiencing workforce planning challenges, including with regards to adapting volunteer involvement recruitment processes and ongoing management to the changing needs of the ways people are seeking to volunteer. This is most prevalent with regard to creating roles to engage skilled volunteers.

One volunteer involving organisation found that:

*‘Lack of utilisation of volunteer skills is a big problem, possibly due to a store manager not being chosen for her expertise in management.’*

Moreover, several respondents to the volunteer survey felt that volunteers were undervalued and their roles were not designed strategically to accommodate for skills and interests, especially relative to paid staff.

*‘Despite rhetoric that the contribution of volunteers is valued equally with contributions of paid staff there are still many organisations who treat volunteers as individuals who will do all the tasks staff do not want to do.’*

*‘In my experience, both complacency and ignorance of the enormous value volunteers contribute results in a lack of regard of volunteers as strategic assets.’*

Volunteer involving organisations can take the following actions to create suitable roles for individual volunteers:

- Promote changes in human resource management strategies. This could result in a more efficient and effective use of available volunteer time
- Utilise the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement, including its additional resources and tools.

The issue of failing to utilise skilled volunteers effectively also flows onto Employee Volunteering Programs. As many volunteer involving organisations currently involve volunteers for ongoing roles and do not sufficiently target volunteers’ skills, they are subsequently less able to provide appropriate opportunities for corporate organisations who are looking for skilled volunteering placements.

## KEY FINDING 1

Responses suggest there is a disconnect between the volunteering roles that people are interested in and the roles that organisations are offering.

Our analysis of the sectors volunteers are interested in volunteering for in the future compared to the sectors that need 151+ more volunteers suggests that there is an oversubscription to some sectors of volunteering whilst others are undersubscribed.

The following sectors generate significant interest from prospective volunteers with this interest often exceeding the recruitment requirements of organisations:

- Animal Welfare
- Arts & Culture
- Environment & Conservation

FIGURE 66. SECTORS THAT NEED 151+ MORE VOLUNTEERS

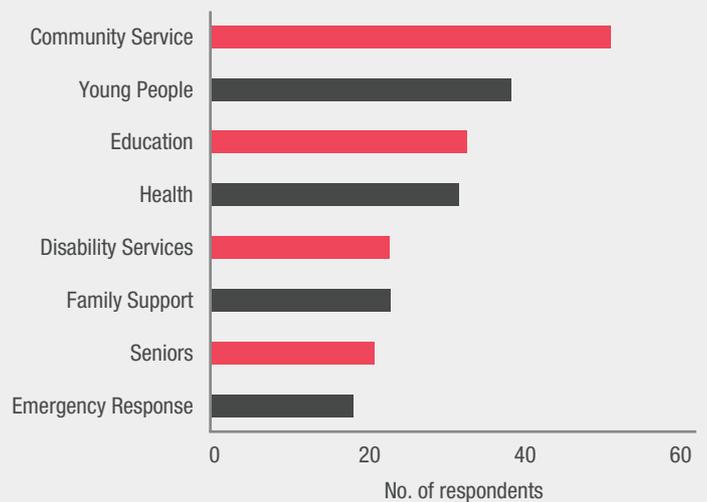
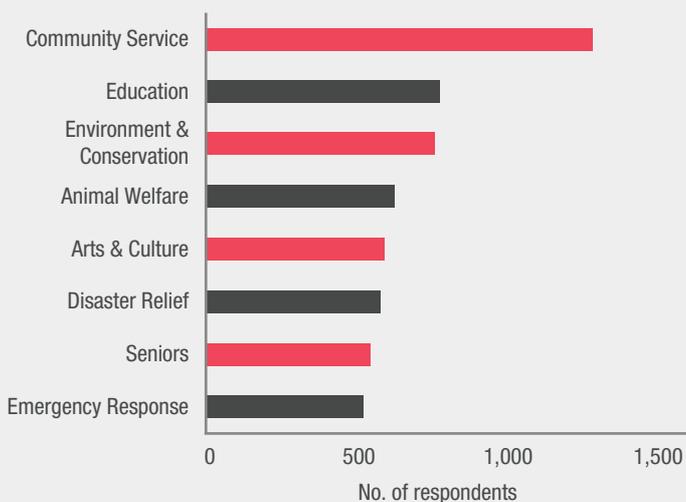


FIGURE 67. SECTORS VOLUNTEERS ARE INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING FOR IN THE FUTURE



Other areas, including Disability Services, Young People, and Health, have a high number of volunteer vacancies needing to be filled, but do not always generate enough interest from prospective volunteers.

To improve the balance of subscription of volunteers to different sectors of volunteering, the volunteering peak bodies, in collaboration with volunteer involving organisations, should support the development and delivery of targeted marketing and recruitment campaigns to promote volunteering in underrepresented sectors.

## KEY FINDING 2

There is misalignment between the sectors volunteers are interested in and the sectors with the most positions advertised.

## Support for informal volunteering

Of the respondents to the volunteer survey, 46 per cent had undertaken informal volunteering in the last 12 months (40 per cent undertook both formal and informal volunteering, 6 per cent only undertook informal volunteering). Of this, the most common activities included taking care of a non-family member in the community, or mentoring or teaching another.

When asked what support volunteers would like in relation to informal volunteering, 33 per cent would like help to find informal volunteering opportunities. One volunteer stated that they would like:

*'Knowing when opportunities to help come up. We don't always hear when they want help.'*

Of the respondents who had undertaken informal volunteering, 43 per cent believed that individuals they help would appreciate assistance from someone outside of their immediate network.

Overall, this highlights that based on volunteer responses, a key issue in the informal volunteering sector is the inability of volunteers to be able to help others in the community where a need exists

*'Recognition of volunteering as something as valuable as formal volunteering and paid employment; I do my volunteering with the same level of care and quality as I do my professional work.'*

To an extent, this also highlights a potential gap in the volunteering sector. Based on the survey responses, there is likely to be a disconnect between individuals in the community requiring assistance and their ability to connect with a volunteer involving organisation that can support them.

A solution could be to investigate options for a technical platform to connect informal volunteers with those that require assistance. This platform would essentially play a role in making connections and, at the same time, outline the risks of engaging in informal volunteering without the structures of formal volunteering, such as insurance.

This would also enable informal volunteers to record their informal volunteering experiences as a way to demonstrate their work (29 per cent of respondents would like to be able to do this). Being able to keep a formal record of their informal volunteering experiences will allow for recognition of their impact to society.

## KEY FINDING 3

There is support for the creation of an informal volunteering platform.

## Necessary future steps

### Key issues to be addressed

Volunteers were asked whether they would engage in volunteering in the future. One per cent (33 respondents) stated that they would not engage in volunteering in the future. Key reasons for this included work commitments (27 per cent), and out of pocket expenses being overbearing (27 per cent).

Among respondents who would volunteer in the future, the main barriers to volunteering include work commitments (36 per cent) and family commitments (34 per cent). Further, to accommodate for younger volunteers who are either studying or working, respondents have expressed a need for more flexible opportunities.

The issue of reimbursement of out of pocket expenses has been a recurring one over the years. Of the volunteer respondents, 60 per cent incurred out of pocket expenses through their volunteering role, yet of these only 18 per cent requested reimbursement. Of the respondents that requested reimbursement, 49 per cent received reimbursement in full, 44 per cent received reimbursement in part and 7 per cent did not receive any reimbursement. Several respondents also commented that they should be able to claim tax deductions for their out of pocket expenses.

Several respondents found that administrative requirements for volunteering have been a significant deterrent.

*'The ever-increasing red tape, e.g. police checks every time you volunteer for a different organisation, the restrictions in what volunteers can undertake, the ongoing surveillance, health and safety structures, all of these things do inhibit volunteers.'*

A key next step that could be taken includes further advocacy for red tape reductions to reduce administrative burdens. Moreover, organisations should explore avenues of virtual volunteering, to accommodate for flexibility needs, as well as to leverage services (such as the internet) already paid for by volunteers (see Key Finding 7). Actions should be further taken to encourage compliance with the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement, specifically with regards to reimbursement of out of pocket expenses.

## KEY FINDING 4

Volunteers are deterred from volunteering because of lack of flexibility, personal expenses incurred, lack of reimbursement for out of pocket expenses, and burdensome administrative requirements.

Based on the responses of volunteer involving organisations who participated in the survey, 48 per cent identified that they did not have adequate resources allocated for volunteer involvement. This has flow-on impacts on the experiences of both volunteers and volunteer involving organisations.

The issue of limited resources impacts the involvement of volunteers with barriers. Of the volunteer involving organisation respondents, 46 per cent of respondents were unable to recruit or engage volunteers with barriers. The most common reason for this stems from organisations not having the requisite resources (51 per cent). This includes resources and support such as funding, staff supervision time, and the necessary skills to involve volunteers with barriers.

As noted by one respondent:

*'Our organisation is entirely managed by volunteers and we don't have sufficient in-house skills and training to handle disadvantaged people well.'*

Studies have identified that there are many benefits of engaging individuals with barriers in volunteering, including:<sup>9</sup>

- the level of dedication these volunteers with disability had towards the roles they took on
- the ability of them to educate the agency and other volunteers on disability awareness
- the particular skills they bring, such as the ability to read Braille and easily identify and relate to some of the disadvantaged people they are assisting
- their potential to serve as role models to people who are accessing services, who might have a disability or be disadvantaged themselves
- as a contribution to the diversity of the agency.

Engaging volunteers with barriers generates benefits to the volunteer involving organisation, as well as to the volunteer through increased social participation, education and leisure pursuit.<sup>10</sup>

Based on the responses from the volunteer survey, 16 per cent of volunteers felt that their experience in their volunteering role could be improved through better recognition of their contribution. Several volunteers further commented that they would benefit from recognition of the value of all volunteers. Concurrently, several volunteer involving organisations have expressed that they are aware they haven't provided enough recognition for their volunteers, but are restricted by the organisation's finances.

*'We used to be able to buy our volunteers a Christmas present. We are no longer allowed to do this. We also used to pay for their coffee/cake when they were with their client – we no longer have the funds for this. We can only reimburse their travel costs.'*

Based on the survey results for volunteer involving organisations, 65 per cent of respondents do not involve employee volunteers in their organisation. Of these, many volunteer involving organisations commented that they lacked the resources and funding to facilitate employee volunteers. Moreover, most volunteer involving organisations that involve employee volunteers connected with corporate organisations through corporate networks (60 per cent), word of mouth (57 per cent) or through personal connections (54 per cent). These methods are significantly limited for smaller organisations that may not have large networks. However, several respondents commented that involving employee volunteers was an avenue that they were interested in exploring, suggesting that focusing on this area could expand the overall pool of volunteers.

Key steps that could be taken to improve outcomes include:

1. The provision of more resources to enhance the capacity of volunteer involving organisations to engage volunteers with barriers and employee volunteers
2. Undertaking further advocacy with regards to the economic impact of the contribution of volunteers as a way to enhance central funding opportunities to further resources and recognition programs.<sup>11</sup>

9. Suzanne Stroud, Kimberly D. Miller and Stuart J Schleien (2005), Engaging volunteers with disabilities: a qualitative study, *Journal of Volunteer Administration*, 23(4), 6-15

10. C. Douglas Simmons and Elizabeth Blesedell Crepeau (2009), *Volunteering: An Essential Component of Social Participation for People with Disabilities*, 2009 Annual Research Conference

11. A 2015 study assessing the volunteering activity in Western Australia found that the socio-economic and cultural value of volunteering to Western Australia in 2015 was conservatively estimated to be \$39.0 billion. Moreover, the people of Western Australia identified a personal well-being benefit of \$9.9 billion from volunteering in 2014. Source: *Volunteering WA, The Economic, Social and Cultural of Volunteering to Western Australia*, Institute of Project Management, 2015

## KEY FINDING 5

Some volunteer involving organisations lack resources, both human and financial, and this can inhibit their ability to engage volunteers with barriers (e.g. people with a disability, people with language barriers). Lack of resources may also reduce an organisation's ability to recognise their existing volunteer base, and engage with corporates through Employee Volunteering Programs.

Out of the respondents to the volunteer survey, six per cent had not volunteered in the last 12 months. While the key barriers for these respondents were family and work commitments, several respondents also noted:

*'I tried to sign up for information about volunteering but wasn't contacted again'*

*'I am disappointed in that I have applied for a position and had to firstly send a request twice before I was acknowledged and then after I expressed my interest have not been contacted'*

*'I have noticed that at some organisations, that when they look for volunteers, some do not get back to the applicant with a timely response as to their application's success. This has dented the enthusiasm of would-be volunteers, even stopping them from looking for other possible organisations. What a shame/waste of potential.'*

Less than optimal response times could be addressed to minimise the shortage of volunteers, through:

1. volunteer involving organisations ensuring a timely response to volunteer advertisements
2. enhancements to the GoVolunteer platform to provide additional tools to assist organisations with responding to prospective volunteers.

## KEY FINDING 6

Volunteers are not getting responses from volunteer involving organisations about opportunities fast enough.

### Future steps

To address the misalignment in the types of roles people are looking for and the roles organisations are offering, there is a call for volunteer involving organisations to adapt to technological change. This would be beneficial in two key areas: recruitment and virtual volunteering.

### Recruitment

Across all age groups, word of mouth was the most common method of finding out about opportunities. However, those under 24 years old were more likely to use GoVolunteer or SEEK Volunteer, or the volunteer involving organisation website (28 per cent). Further focusing on these platforms would continue to expand the pool of potential volunteers.

### Virtual volunteering

Based on the GoVolunteer dataset, it was found that most positions advertised are ongoing positions (92 per cent), compared to 38 per cent of volunteer profiles who are either working or studying. Based on the availability of volunteers, there is a potential for increased flexibility through online methods such as virtual volunteering.

The survey found that 630 respondents had undertaken virtual volunteering in the last 12 months. The most common type of virtual volunteering undertaken was in promoting a cause via social media (54 per cent). Considering volunteers' need for flexibility, virtual volunteering is a necessary step to take to ensure people who are working/studying or have family commitments are able to volunteer their time.

*'Organisations need to be more open to opportunities that technology can provide them with volunteering – virtual volunteering, connecting with volunteers via Skype and tapping into social media as a way to engage volunteers.'*

However, it needs to be noted that several volunteer involving organisations are aware of the need to adapt to technology to expand the pool of volunteers, but simply do not have the sufficient skills or funding to do so.

To address the need for technological change, three key actions could be undertaken:

1. A focus on training for volunteer involving organisations in workforce planning and changing volunteer policies and roles.
2. The provision of technological platforms that organisations can use
3. The provision of training on technologies that would assist volunteer involving organisations with designing flexible volunteering roles and recruitment.

## KEY FINDING 7

Online methods of recruitment and volunteering could complement the needs of future volunteers.

# APPENDICES

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# APPENDIX A

## PAST REVIEWS

### Volunteering Australia

Volunteering Australia's 2011 report on the National Survey of Volunteering Issues<sup>12</sup> surveyed 2,900 people with 2,167 fully completed surveys. The results highlighted that 90 per cent of respondents felt that there was a positive relationship between volunteers and employees at organisations. The findings also indicated that volunteers preferred 'regularly volunteering in the same organisation' as it presented an opportunity to develop relationships with other volunteers, employees and clients.

The report further drew attention to two key issues in the volunteering sector at the time:

- The first of these was the assertion by survey respondents that there was a lack of adequate training for volunteers and volunteer organisations, as 20 per cent of volunteers reported that they had difficulty accessing the training they needed to perform their role, potentially compromising their safety.
- The second concern raised related to the availability of volunteers. 59 per cent of volunteers reported that family commitments often left them short of time to participate in volunteering activities. Work commitments and health issues were also identified by 52 per cent and 14 per cent of respondents respectively.

The report called for increased flexibility in volunteering activities to accommodate the commitments of volunteers and measures to ensure the adequate training of volunteers, managers of volunteers and relevant employees of volunteer involving organisations.

### State Volunteering Peak Bodies

In recent years Volunteering ACT, Tasmania and WA have each looked at the State of Volunteering in their own jurisdictions. Using surveys, these states were able to identify some key achievements and areas for improvement across the volunteering sector.

With the breadth of volunteering activities increasing over time, there has been an increase in both formal volunteering and informal volunteering through the provision of counselling and helpline support. Volunteers have identified personal benefits including improved wellbeing and a community connection, and believe they have made a notable contribution to the common good.

Respondents from all three states and territories said that the most significant factors impacting their ability to volunteer were time pressures, personal and work commitments and the inflexibility of volunteering activities.

In Tasmania, where four out of five people volunteered in 2014, a significant barrier to volunteering was the distance individuals were required to travel in order to undertake their volunteering role. This is likely due to the cost of travel, with the results of the survey indicating that males and those who earned over \$110,000 annually were more likely to travel beyond the 50km mark to volunteer. Such economic issues were not only present in Tasmania, with volunteers in ACT and WA identifying the cost of fuel and parking as a deterrent for engaging in volunteering.

ACT survey results indicated that while a number of respondents had difficulty finding out about opportunities, organisations said they experienced problems recruiting enough volunteers. This highlights a need to reassess the avenues through which volunteering opportunities are advertised and the manner in which they are marketed.

Overall, the state of volunteering in these jurisdictions was positive. Feedback in the surveys provided a useful indication of the successes and challenges at the time, and provided opportunities to maximise volunteer participation and enjoyment in the future.

12. Volunteering Australia, 2011 National Survey of Volunteering Issues', 2011, available at: [http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/wp-content/files\\_mf/1377045635VANSVI2011.pdf](http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/wp-content/files_mf/1377045635VANSVI2011.pdf).

# APPENDIX B

## VOLUNTEERING DEFINITION AND STANDARDS

### National Definition of Volunteering

Underpinning the definition of volunteering developed by Volunteering Australia in 1996 was a set of principles that reflected the traditional, long-term nature of volunteering activities at the time. Due to changes in the nature of volunteering over time, and the subsequent growing irrelevance of the definition, a National Steering Committee initiated a review of the definition in late 2013. Following this review, recommendations were made to the Volunteering Australia Board for a significant change to the definition of volunteering in July 2015. This new National Definition of Volunteering was endorsed and officially launched by Volunteering Australia in 2015.

FIGURE 68. NATIONAL DEFINITION OF VOLUNTEERING

Volunteering is time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain

The revised definition acts as a reference point for volunteers, volunteer involving organisations and corporate organisations. The former definition confined the term 'volunteering' to activities undertaken within not-for-profit organisations; however, the revised definition reflects the broader scope of voluntary activities that contribute to the common good. The new definition provides several key distinctions, particularly the inclusion of Corporate Volunteering, Micro Volunteering and Virtual Volunteering as forms of 'formal volunteering'. An emphasis is also placed on the inclusion of 'informal volunteering' in the new definition, which comprises activities undertaken by individuals outside a formal organisational setting, or 'episodic and spontaneous volunteering'.<sup>13</sup>

For more information on the National Definition of Volunteering, see Volunteering Australia Project: The Review of the Definition of Volunteering, 27 July 2015.

### The National Standards for Volunteer Involvement

Volunteering Australia released the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement in May 2015. The reforms to the Standards reflect the changes to the definition of volunteering and recognition of a broader scope of voluntary activities. The following eight standards are to be used as a guide or benchmark by organisations. This report looks at the broad level of compliance with these guidelines within volunteering involving organisations.

1. Leadership and management: The governing body and senior employees lead and promote a positive culture towards volunteering and implement effective management systems to support volunteer involvement.
2. Commitment to volunteer involvement: Commitment to volunteer involvement is set out through vision, planning and resourcing, and supports the organisation's strategic direction.
3. Volunteer roles: Volunteers are engaged in meaningful roles which contribute to the organisation's purpose, goals and objectives.
4. Recruitment and selection: Volunteer recruitment and selection strategies are planned, consistent and meet the needs of the organisation and volunteers.
5. Support and development: Volunteers understand their roles and gain the knowledge, skills and feedback needed to safely and effectively carry out their duties.
6. Workplace safety and wellbeing: The health, safety and wellbeing of volunteers are protected in the workplace.
7. Volunteer recognition: Volunteer contribution, value and impact is understood, appreciated and acknowledged.
8. Quality management and continuous improvement: Effective volunteer involvement results from a system of good practice, review and continuous improvement.

The Standards provide a checklist of recommended actions that organisations should undertake to comply with these Standards in their volunteering practices.<sup>14</sup>

13. Volunteering Australia, Definition of Volunteering FAQ.  
<http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/wp-content/uploads/FAQs-Launch-of-Definition-280715.pdf>

14. Volunteering Australia, The National Standards for Volunteer Involvement 2015.  
[http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/wp-content/uploads/National-Standards-Documents-FINAL\\_Web.pdf](http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/wp-content/uploads/National-Standards-Documents-FINAL_Web.pdf)

# APPENDIX C

## APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

To assess the current state of the volunteering sector, analysis was performed based on three key information sources: a brief literature review, a national survey, and datasets from the GoVolunteer database. Each area of analysis is described in the following sections.

### Literature review

A brief literature review was undertaken to provide context on the historical performance of the sector and existing data available. Key sources utilised include:

- Australian Bureau of Statistics, 4159.0 – General Social Survey: Summary Results, Australia, 2014, 17 September 2015
- Volunteering Australia, 2011 National Survey of Volunteering Issues, 2011
- Various state-based sector reviews

### Survey

A five stage process was undertaken to build, distribute and analyse the survey.



1. **Designed survey strategy and framework:** The aim of the survey was clearly outlined and formulated to align with the objectives of the project.

Surveys were designed for:

- volunteers
- volunteer involving organisations
- corporate organisations.

The surveys were designed to provide an overview of the nature of various stakeholders, their different perspectives on issues, challenges and opportunities, and analysis based on the National Standards of Volunteer Involvement.

A key question to be investigated through the survey was developed based on the literature review, the revised Definition and National Standards, and the Volunteering Australia Strategic Plan. Specifically, the question explored throughout the report was:

*Are the current volunteer engagement and management practices appropriate for the future?*

2. **Developed questions:** The survey questions were developed taking into account the objectives and strategy outlined in the previous step, as well as ensuring that the questions were clear and unambiguous, succinct, and carefully worded in order to capture consistent and forthcoming responses. Draft questions were consulted with various key stakeholders before being finalised.
3. **Built survey:** An engaging and easy-to-use survey was built using an online survey tool, and thoroughly tested before distribution.
4. **Managed survey responses:** The survey was distributed through state and territory Volunteer Resource Centres, as well as through various online methods. The responses were effectively managed with consistent status updates, and ensured that response rates were as high as possible.
5. **Analysed the results:** The data attained from the survey was analysed, providing comparative analyses of the results, and reporting the data clearly to inform strategies, plans and activities.

### GoVolunteer.com.au

GoVolunteer is an online platform owned by Volunteering Australia that aims to match volunteers with appropriate volunteering opportunities. Volunteer involving organisations, volunteer resource centres and volunteering peak bodies advertise vacant volunteering positions on GoVolunteer. Individuals or groups who are interested in volunteering subsequently search for volunteering roles on GoVolunteer.

PwC collected data from GoVolunteer.com.au in order to compare the volunteer profiles created and the positions advertised in the last 12 months. This included almost 200,000 profiles and over 10,000 positions.

Data was provided by GoVolunteer for active volunteer position listings and volunteer profiles, including:

- the volunteering cause
- the type of volunteering
- the duration and frequency of volunteering positions
- who the role is suitable for
- availability
- location
- accessibility.

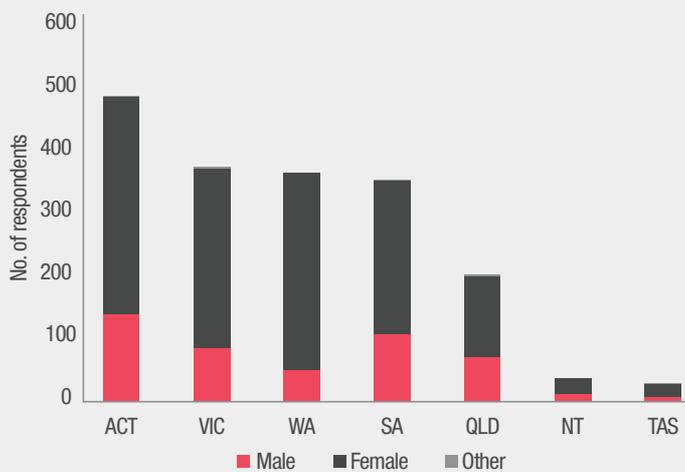
# APPENDIX D

## SURVEY SAMPLE

### Volunteer profile

The survey gathered demographic information about volunteers in Australia. Of the 2,304 respondents, 31 per cent were male, 68 per cent were female, and 0.3 per cent selected 'Other'. Of the states, Victoria had the highest proportion of female respondents (76 per cent), while QLD had the lowest (64 per cent).

FIGURE 69. NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS BY GENDER TYPE AND STATE



### Age and occupation of volunteers

A large proportion of Australian volunteers are in the 55 – 74 age bracket and 37 per cent were retired, which is consistent with the nation's ageing population. Despite 45 per cent of women and 36 per cent of men reporting that they are always or often rushed for time,<sup>15</sup> full-time and part-time employees were more likely to volunteer than casual employees or those currently not employed. This is likely to be linked to respondents who are studying.

FIGURE 70. NUMBER OF VOLUNTEER RESPONDENTS BY AGE

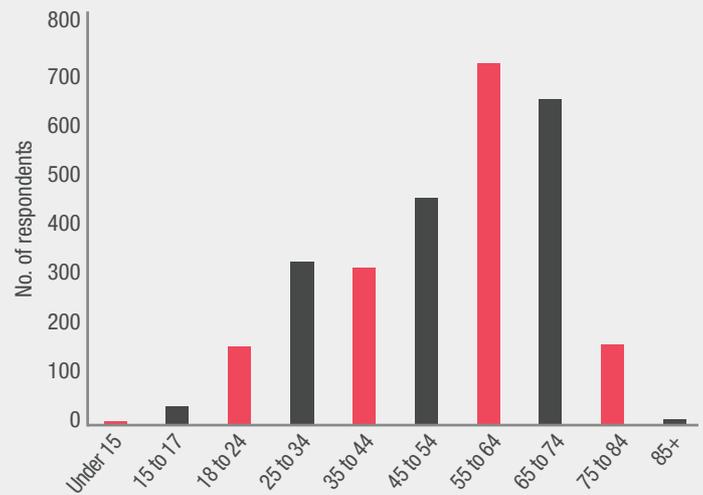
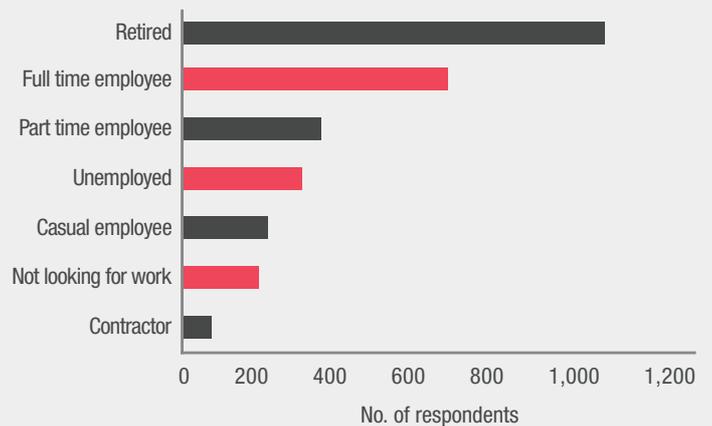


FIGURE 71. NUMBER OF VOLUNTEER RESPONDENTS BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS



### Background of Volunteers

Of the respondents, 70 per cent reside in metropolitan areas while only 30 per cent live in regional or remote areas. Further, 19 per cent of the volunteers came from a non-English speaking background and only 1 per cent identified themselves as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

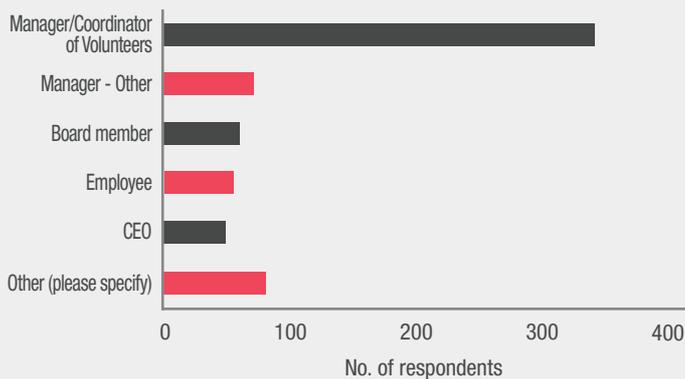
44 per cent of the respondents reported an annual household income of under \$70,000. 20 per cent indicated they received under \$30,000; however, a large proportion (38 per cent) of these volunteers includes those of a retired status.

15. Australian Bureau of Statistics (2014), '4159.0 – General Social Survey: Summary Results, Australia, 2014', 29 June 2015

## Volunteer involving organisations profile

The survey gathered information about the characteristics and operations of volunteer involving organisations. Of the 661 respondents, 52 per cent of respondents were managers responsible for coordinating volunteers. The remainder were 'other' (12 per cent), managers with alternative responsibilities (11 per cent), board members (9 per cent), employees (9 per cent) and CEOs (8 per cent).

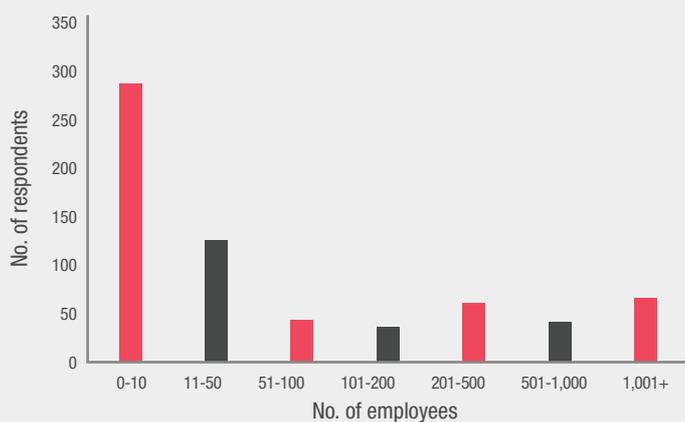
FIGURE 72. ORGANISATIONAL ROLE OF RESPONDENTS



### Organisation demographics

Most respondents worked in small organisations with less than 10 full time equivalent employees (43 per cent). Of these organisations, the most common sector was Community Service (48 per cent).

FIGURE 73. NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES AT YOUR ORGANISATION



The proportion of volunteers in the organisations was extremely varied, with most respondents (19 per cent) identifying that their organisations had 101-300 registered volunteers. This was followed by 18 per cent of respondents working for organisations with 11-30 volunteers. Volunteer involving organisations with less than 10 volunteers were the least common. On average, the proportion of activities in respondents' organisations delivered by volunteers was 57 per cent. 34 per cent of volunteer involving organisations had between 81%-100% volunteer delivered activities, while 22 per cent had up to 20 per cent of activities delivered by volunteers.

FIGURE 74. WHAT PROPORTION OF YOUR ACTIVITIES ARE VOLUNTEER DELIVERED?

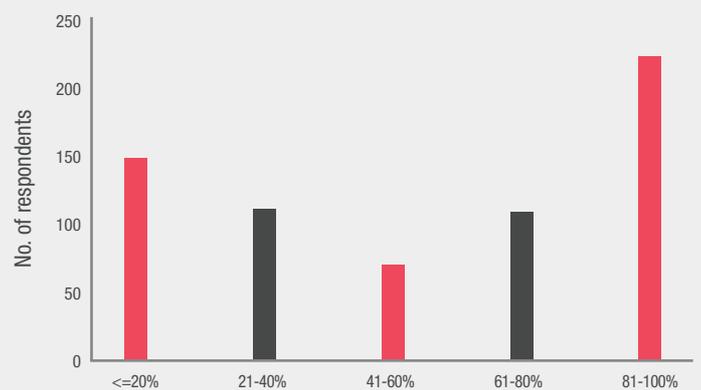
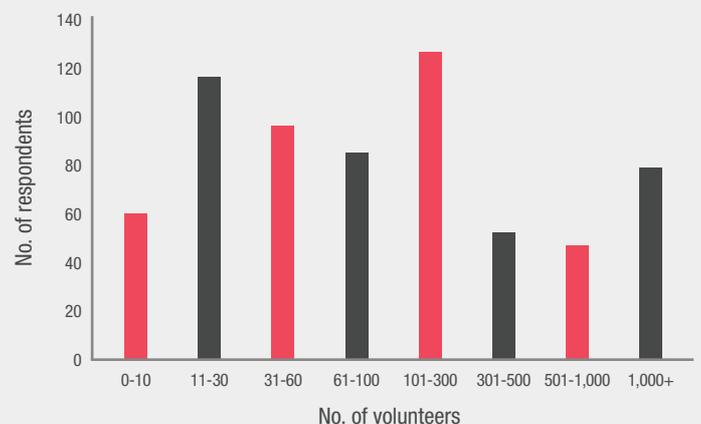


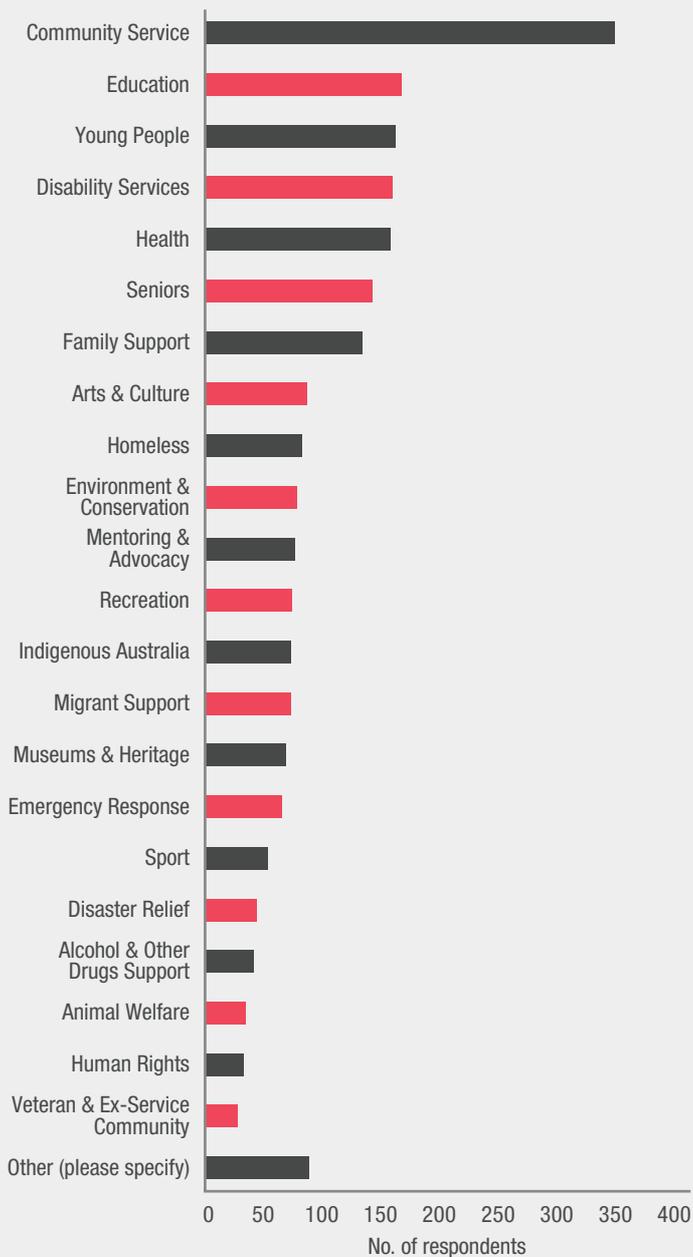
FIGURE 75. NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS AT YOUR ORGANISATION



Consistent with respondents to the volunteer survey, most volunteer involving organisations operate in the Community Service sector (53 per cent). Compared to findings from the 2011 survey<sup>16</sup>, the most common sectors are similar, although there has recently been a stronger focus on Young People, and a smaller focus on Sport and Recreation.

16. Volunteering Australia, 2011 National Survey of Volunteering Issues, p.8

FIGURE 76. SECTORS ORGANISATIONS OPERATE IN



## Corporate organisations profile

Corporate organisations were surveyed to determine whether they had an Employee Volunteering Program, how this Program was organised and coordinated, and what feedback they had received from their employees about the Program. 68 organisations responded to the survey, with the majority either national organisations or based in New South Wales. The large national presence of these corporations corresponds with the finding that the majority of organisations had a workforce of over 1,000 employees. No responses were received from organisations in the Northern Territory or Tasmania.

FIGURE 77. LOCATION OF CORPORATE ORGANISATIONS

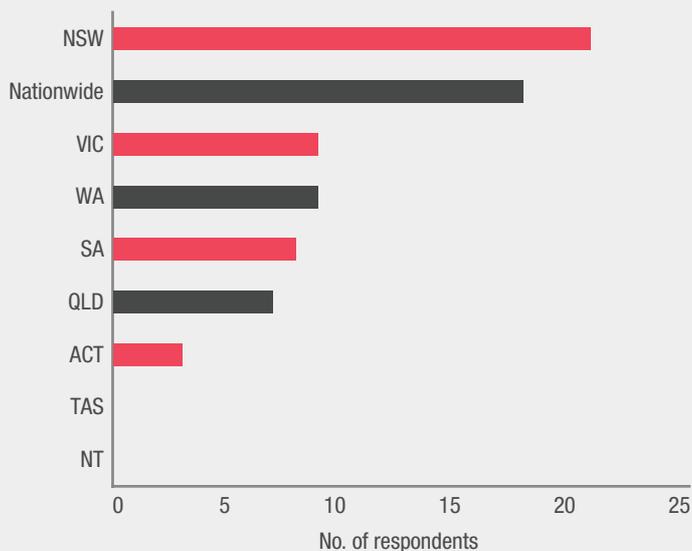
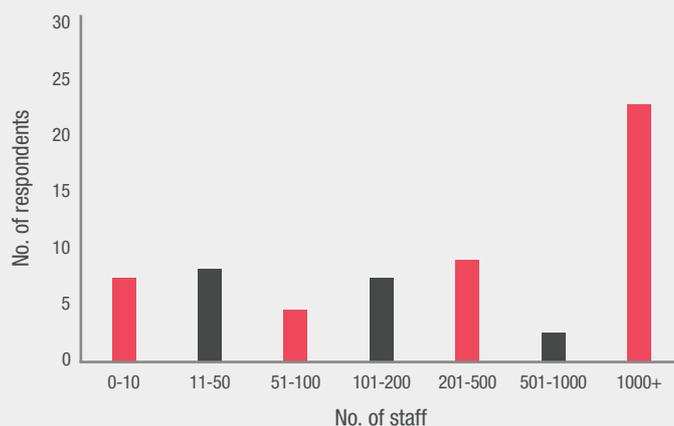
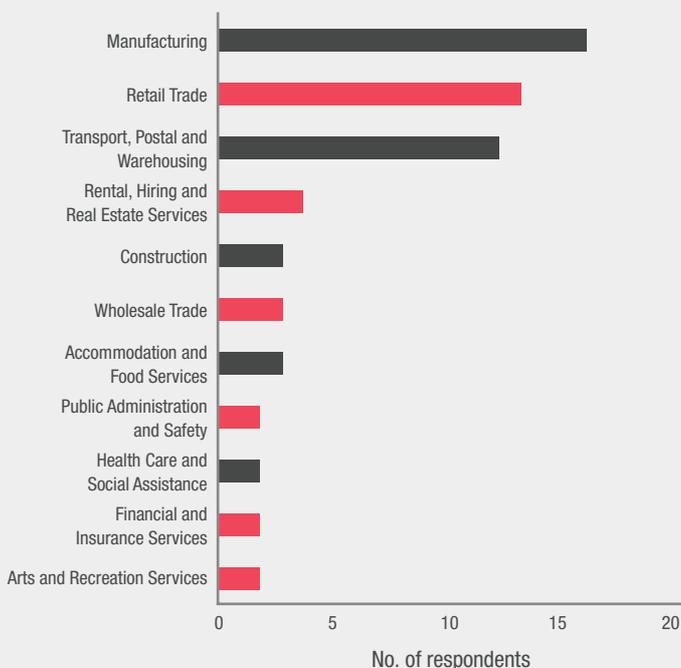


FIGURE 78. HOW MANY STAFF ARE IN YOUR ORGANISATION NATIONALLY?



The organisations were asked to identify the industry that they felt was most applicable to their services. The most common industries were Health Care and Social Assistance, and Financial and Insurance Services. 17 of the respondents also identified 'other' industries. The graph below excludes the industries not selected by respondents.

FIGURE 79. ORGANISATIONAL INDUSTRY CLASSIFICATION



The corporate organisation surveys provide the ability to compare survey results across a variety of perspectives on Employee Volunteering Programs and highlight any communication barriers or misalignments between corporate organisations, volunteer involving organisations and volunteers.

As shown in the chart, only 7 per cent of the respondents were solely participants in the program while 26 per cent were solely responsible for coordinating the program. The largest number of responses came from employees who both organised and participated in the volunteering activities (31 per cent). 17 organisations indicated that they did not have an Employee Volunteering Program.

FIGURE 80. ROLE OF CORPORATE ORGANISATION RESPONDENTS



# APPENDIX E

## ADDITIONAL SURVEY RESULTS

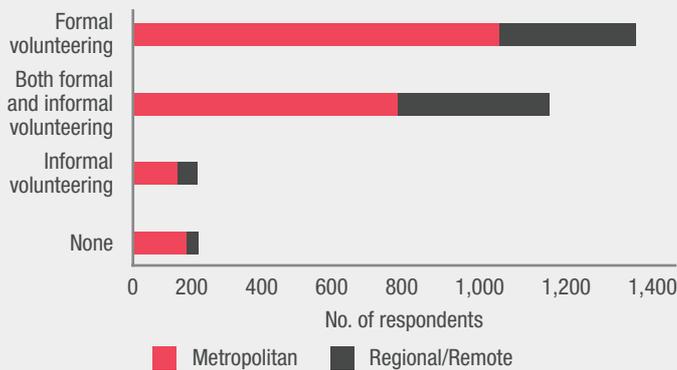
The following additional findings from each survey framed the context around the key findings in Section 4. They have been included in the appendix as they do not directly link to the key findings. Nevertheless, the results have been analysed and provide valuable insights in the volunteering sector.

### Volunteers additional findings

#### Types of volunteering undertaken

Broadly, the same proportion of formal and informal volunteers come from metropolitan areas (73 per cent and 72 per cent respectively are from metropolitan areas). Comparatively, a larger proportion of regional/remote respondents participated in both formal and informal volunteering (only 64 per cent are from metropolitan areas).

FIGURE 81. NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS BY TYPE OF VOLUNTEERING AND BY LOCATION



A majority of volunteers have been involved for over five years, consisting of mostly retired respondents. Again driven by the high volume of retired respondents, in the last 12 months a majority of respondents have been volunteering on a weekly basis. More frequent, ongoing roles were common relative to short-term, once-off or infrequent roles.

Most commonly, volunteer respondents participated on average in over 200 hours of volunteering individually in the last 12 months.

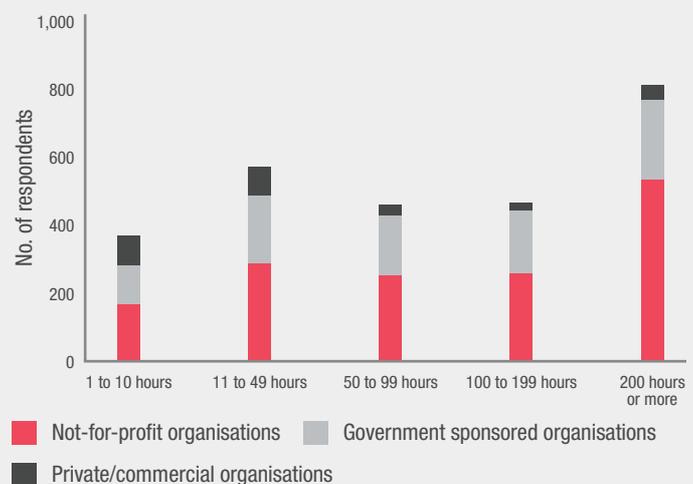
FIGURE 82. LENGTH OF VOLUNTEERING COMMITMENT



FIGURE 83. FREQUENCY OF VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT



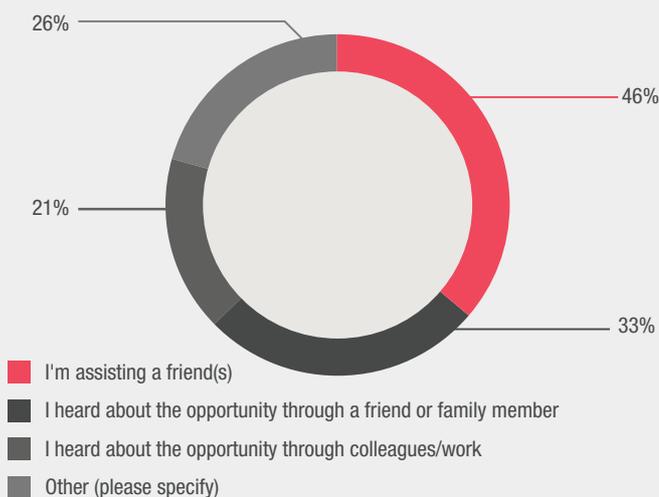
FIGURE 84. ESTIMATED NUMBER OF HOURS OF VOLUNTEERING IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS



## Informal volunteering

Informal volunteering activities are often perceived to be personal in nature, and this is supported by the fact that 46 per cent of the survey respondents indicated that they had become an informal volunteer when a friend required assistance. The volunteers who listed 'other' informal activities had most commonly assisted neighbours or had become aware of an opportunity and personally initiated the volunteering.

FIGURE 85. HOW DID YOU LEARN OF THE INFORMAL VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITY?

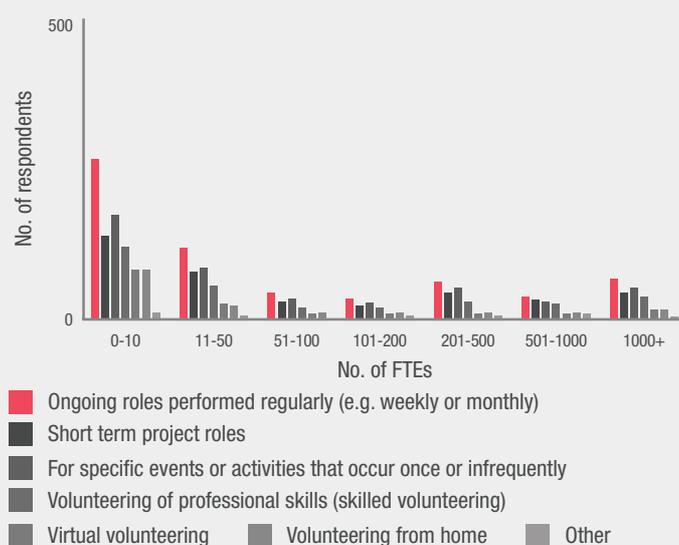


## Volunteer involving organisations additional findings

### Roles for volunteers

Although common to all organisations, the availability of regular volunteering roles was especially prevalent amongst the smallest volunteer involving organisations with 10 or fewer full time equivalent staff. Trends were relatively consistent across the spectrum of volunteer involving organisations, although volunteering from home was more consistently used to involve volunteers among smaller organisations relative to larger organisations.

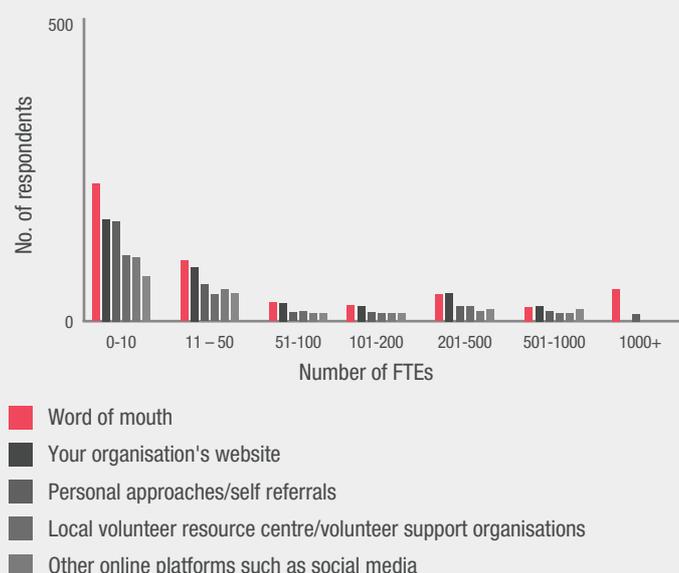
FIGURE 86. ROLES FOR VOLUNTEERS BY SIZE OF ORGANISATION<sup>17</sup>



### Recruitment methods

Recruitment methods were similar across organisations of different sizes. Word of mouth as a recruitment tool was common amongst the smallest volunteer involving organisations, although this trend was replicated by the majority of organisations. Online sources including GoVolunteer or SEEK Volunteer were less utilised by smaller organisations.

FIGURE 87. BREAKDOWN OF RECRUITMENT METHODS BY ORGANISATION SIZE

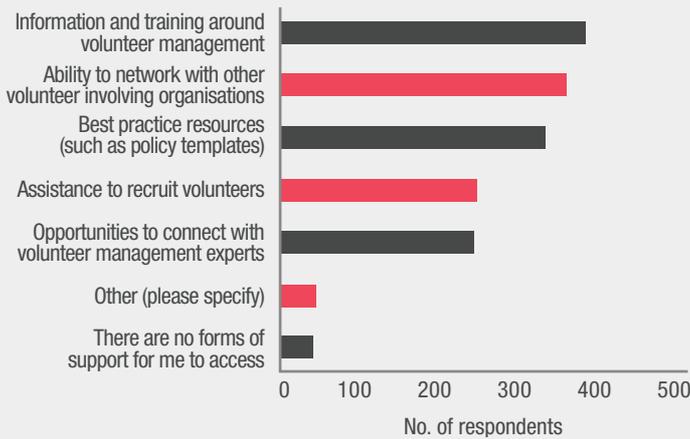


17. The number of FTEs was used to compare size with various other factors consistently across all comparisons hereafter.

## Support and resources for volunteer involving organisations

Most respondents used information and training around volunteer management as support to their organisation's practices (69 per cent). Many also valued their organisation's ability to network with other volunteer involving organisations (64 per cent). Seven per cent of respondents were unable to access any forms of support or resources. Other forms of support mentioned by respondents include local councils, the Local Government Volunteer Managers Network and internal support from more experienced volunteers.

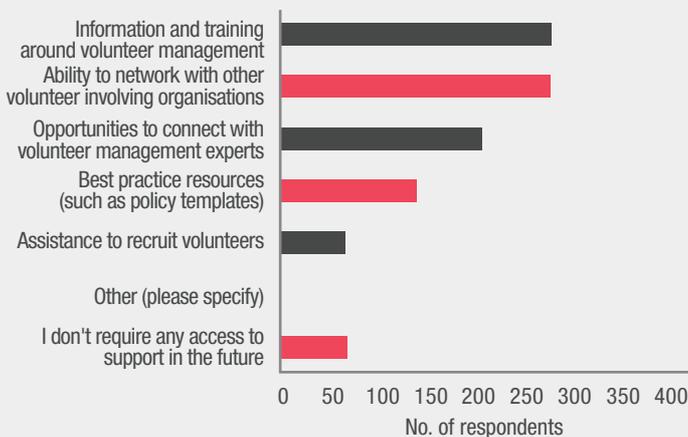
FIGURE 88. WHAT FORMS OF SUPPORT DO YOU CURRENTLY ACCESS?



Common barriers faced in accessing support revolved around limited resources and difficulties in funding volunteer training, as well as a lack of awareness of resources and support available. These issues were compounded by what some respondents identified as a lack of strategic direction or interest in improving service quality.

Respondents were also asked what forms of support were most important to access in the future. While responses were balanced across the spectrum of support areas, respondents identified additional areas as being crucial to the ongoing development and operation of their organisations. These often included access to funds, but extended to research and information on volunteering trends, and assistance with software and social media for recruitment purposes.

FIGURE 89. WHAT FORMS OF SUPPORT ARE MOST IMPORTANT FOR YOU TO ACCESS IN THE FUTURE?



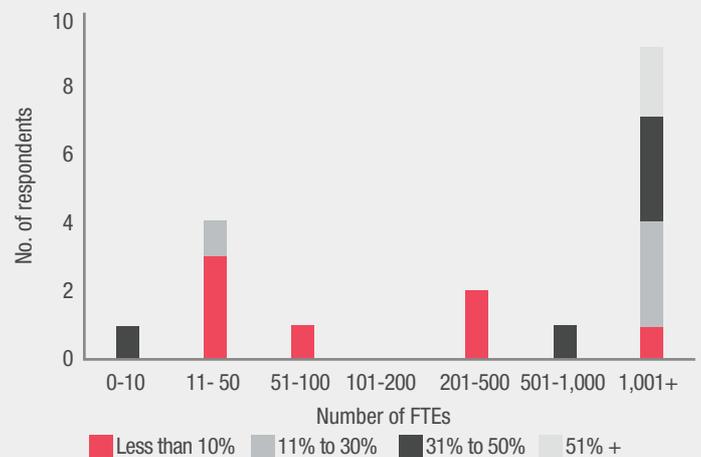
18. Note that this excludes organisations with 0-10, 501-1,000 staff as they have a small sample size of 1 response

## Corporate organisations additional findings

As a percentage of employees participating in the organisation's Employee Volunteering Program, there are no significant trends over the last three years. Broadly, based on the percentage of employees involved and the total number of hours, there appears to be a downward trend in employee volunteering in 2013/14 before recovering in 2014/15. In 2015, a majority of organisations (39 per cent) had less than 10 per cent participation of staff in their Employee Volunteering Program.

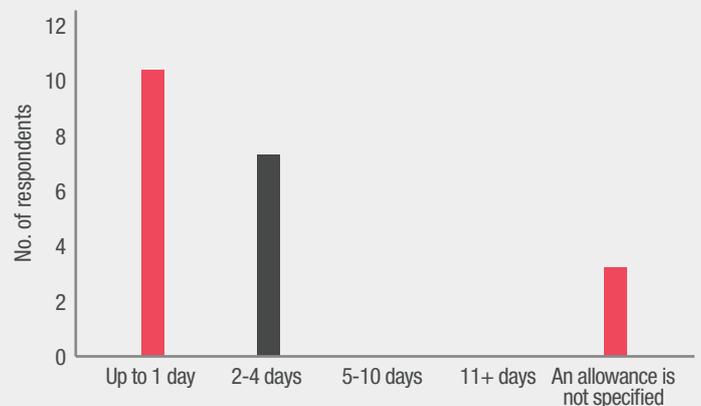
In 2015, broadly the larger organisations had a greater proportion of employees participating in volunteering activities.<sup>18</sup>

FIGURE 90. PERCENTAGE OF STAFF PARTICIPATING IN VOLUNTEERING BY SIZE OF ORGANISATION (2015)



The most common number of paid work days employees are entitled to spend volunteering is up to 1 day (50 per cent) followed by 2-4 days (35 per cent). It was generally more common for larger organisations to have up to 4 days of allowance, while the smaller organisations tended to not have an allowance.

FIGURE 91. NUMBER OF PAID WORK DAYS INDIVIDUAL EMPLOYEES ARE ENTITLED TO SPEND VOLUNTEERING

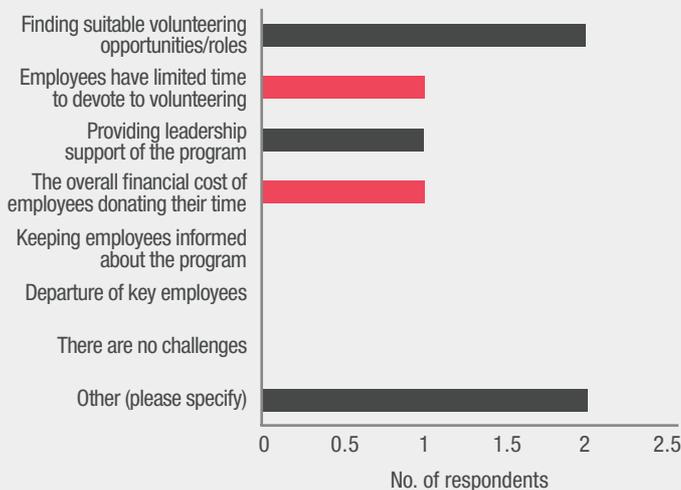


## Establishing an Employee Volunteering Program

Thirteen corporate organisations who responded to the survey do not currently have an Employee Volunteering Program. Only two of these organisations had attempted to establish an Employee Volunteering Program in the past. It is therefore important to read the results noting that the sample size is not significant.

The two organisations who attempted to establish formal Employee Volunteering Programs faced a number of challenges, including financial and administrative burdens of running the program, a time-poor workforce, and limitations in finding opportunities. One organisation also indicated that it struggled when establishing the Program due to a lack of guidance on how to support its employee volunteers with training and induction.

FIGURE 92. CHALLENGES FACED IN ESTABLISHING AN EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING PROGRAM



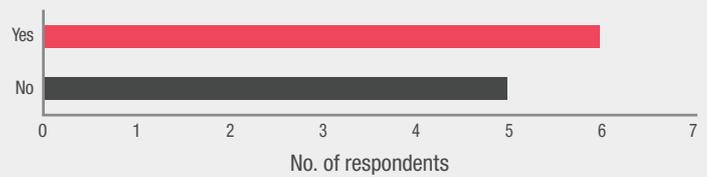
### Support in establishing an Employee Volunteering Program in the future

Of the eleven respondents who had not previously attempted to establish an Employee Volunteering Program, six indicated that they would consider establishing one with support.

Of the four organisations who would not consider establishing an Employee Volunteering Program in the future, the key deterrents included:

- employees have limited time to devote to an Employee Volunteering Program
- the organisation is a not-for-profit organisation
- the management of the firm does not have the time to organise an Employee Volunteering Program.

FIGURE 93. WOULD YOU CONSIDER ESTABLISHING AN EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING PROGRAM?

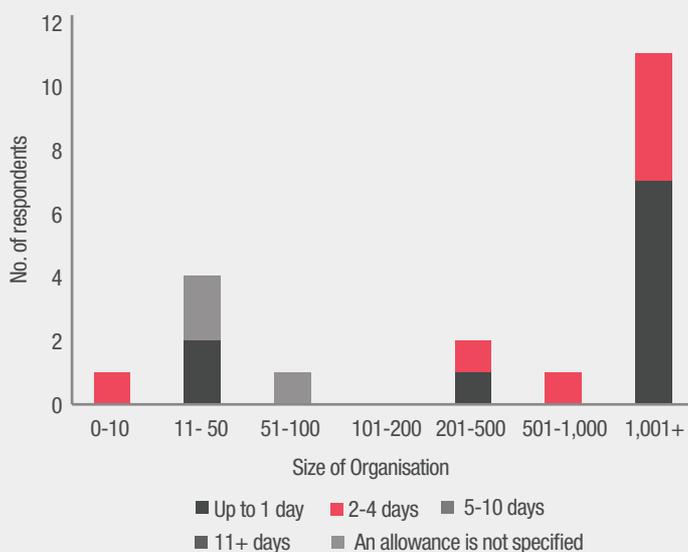


For organisations that would consider establishing an Employee Volunteering Program, 83 per cent would appreciate support in the form of information and training around establishing and managing a Program. One respondent who would consider establishing a Program said they would not require any support.

FIGURE 94. WHAT WOULD SUPPORT YOU IN ESTABLISHING AN EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING PROGRAM?

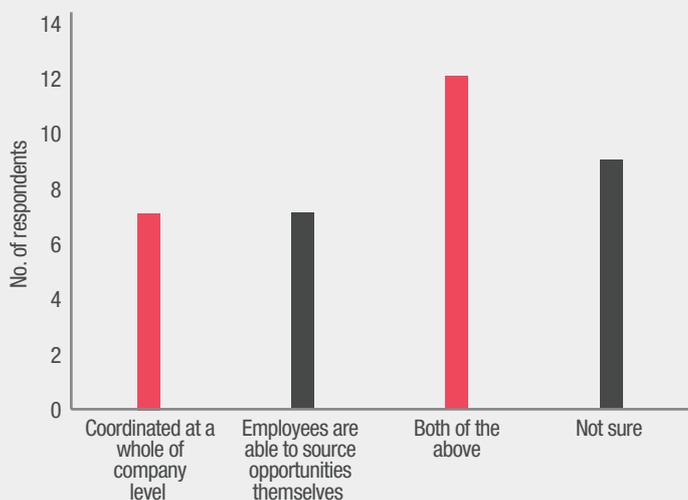


FIGURE 95. NUMBER OF PAID WORK DAYS INDIVIDUAL EMPLOYEES ARE ENTITLED TO SPEND VOLUNTEERING, BY SIZE OF ORGANISATION



A majority of organisations coordinate volunteer opportunities at a whole of company level (20 per cent), allow employees to source opportunities themselves (20 per cent), or both (34 per cent). Some organisations are unsure of the process for finding volunteering opportunities (26 per cent).

FIGURE 96. HOW DOES YOUR ORGANISATION COORDINATE VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES FOR EMPLOYEES?



The most commonly used form of support by corporate respondents was access to connect with volunteer management experts (47 per cent of respondents). Following this, respondents used information and training around volunteer management (42 per cent), and networking with other organisations that have an established Employee Volunteering Program (42 per cent).

Other resources mentioned include working with peak volunteering bodies, internal organisational expertise, and leveraging existing relationships with charities and volunteer involving organisations.

FIGURE 97. WHAT RESOURCES DO YOU USE TO SUPPORT YOUR EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING PROGRAM?





