

National Strategy for Volunteering

2023–2033



Monitoring and Evaluation Framework



Overview

The Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (the Framework) is a guide to measuring progress of the National Strategy for Volunteering (2023-2033) and the Three-Year Action Plans. It consists of an Outcomes Framework, which outlines how progress of each outcome will be measured, and guidance for monitoring and reporting on the inputs, outputs, and processes associated with implementation. The Framework takes a participatory approach to monitoring and evaluation. As such, it also outlines how responsibility for monitoring and evaluation is shared by members of the volunteering ecosystem.

The Framework is designed to support the evaluation of the Three-Year Action Plans and the National Strategy as a whole. It may also be used by any member of the volunteering ecosystem to assess the outcomes of their activities and consider their contribution to the Strategic Objectives of the National Strategy for Volunteering.

The National Strategy for Volunteering (2023–2033)¹ is a ten-year blueprint for a reimagined future for volunteering in Australia. It is the first National Strategy for Volunteering in a decade, providing a strategic framework for enabling safe, supported, and sustainable volunteering. The National Strategy for Volunteering was developed through a 12-month co-design process with members of the volunteering ecosystem. As the National Strategy is implemented over its ten-year lifespan there will be a need to learn from progress and adapt to changing circumstances. This includes the need to re-consider the approach to monitoring and evaluation to ensure it is fit-for-purpose and is meeting the needs of the volunteering ecosystem.

1 <https://volunteeringstrategy.org.au/the-strategy/>

The Outcomes Framework

The Outcomes Framework aims to guide the selection and analysis of data that can be used to track the progress of the National Strategy for Volunteering and evaluate the results of aligned actions. To achieve this, it identifies indicators of each outcome of the National Strategy and suggests measures of each indicator. The measures listed in the Outcomes Framework provide a basis for benchmarking, to which changes over time can be compared. The Outcomes Framework is designed to be adaptable as new data sources are identified in the future to better monitor and evaluate outcomes.

The data identified in the Outcomes Framework may be collected from multiple sources, including national surveys of the general population, national surveys of volunteer involving organisations, administrative data, analysis of publications, and qualitative insights from members of the volunteering ecosystem. The measures included in the Outcomes Framework were selected to be rigorous and suitable measures of the outcomes of the National Strategy for Volunteering. The Outcomes Framework also includes a mix of quantitative and qualitative measures to ensure outcomes can be assessed accurately and comprehensively. The measures identified in the Framework are designed to be accessible, high quality, and appropriate to assess progress towards each outcome. They are measurable implications of the indicators identified in the Framework and are not intended to prescribe particular actions or processes.

Inputs, Outputs, and Processes

While the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework centres outcomes (the results of actions related to the National Strategy) as the main indicators of success, it also includes guidance on the measurement of inputs, outputs and processes.

Introduction

The Monitoring and Evaluation Framework is a guide to measuring progress of the National Strategy for Volunteering and the Three-Year Action Plans. As a participatory monitoring and evaluation framework, it can be used to track and report on changes within volunteering at a national level, as well as actions undertaken by any member of the volunteering ecosystem. The Framework also outlines how responsibility for monitoring and evaluation is shared by members of the volunteering ecosystem.

Monitoring and Evaluation of the National Strategy for Volunteering

Responsibility for the monitoring and evaluation of the National Strategy for Volunteering is shared by the volunteering ecosystem. This means that successful monitoring and evaluation requires collaboration between members of the ecosystem to collect data, report on progress, evaluate outcomes, and facilitate learning to inform future action.

The organisation with responsibility for coordination of the National Strategy for Volunteering is responsible for leading the monitoring and evaluation of the Three-Year Action Plans and the National Strategy as a whole. This includes:

- Evaluating the progress of all outcomes of the National Strategy for Volunteering against the Outcomes Framework.
- Evaluating each Three-Year Action Plan against the Outcomes Framework.
- Monitoring the outputs of each Three-Year Action Plan.
- Monitoring the inputs of Action Plan initiatives provided by those responsible for leading on each action.
- Evaluating processes associated with the implementation of the National Strategy for Volunteering.

Members of the ecosystem that have designated responsibility for actions in a Three-Year Action Plan may use the Framework to measure the outcomes of these actions at their discretion. This may be done through existing internal processes. Leading stakeholders are expected to share information on the inputs, outputs, and outcomes of actions to facilitate learning and continuous improvement.

Any member of the ecosystem may use the Outcomes Framework to guide monitoring and evaluation of their own initiatives. This may be done to demonstrate the outcomes of actions and their contribution to the objectives of the National Strategy for Volunteering, or to facilitate learning to improve policies and programs.

More information on how members of the volunteering ecosystem share accountability for the implementation of the National Strategy is available in the Model for Shared Accountability.

Approach to Monitoring and Evaluation

The Monitoring and Evaluation Framework is designed to jointly promote accountability and learning. To achieve this, the Framework sets out guidance to monitor inputs, outputs, and processes, and to evaluate the outcomes of the National Strategy for Volunteering. This is a participatory monitoring and evaluation framework, meaning it is designed to support active involvement from stakeholders in monitoring and evaluation activities.

In alignment with the National Strategy's commitment to co-design and co-ownership, the Framework is designed to be accessible and practical for all members of the volunteering ecosystem to evaluate their own commitments to the National Strategy for Volunteering.

Principles of the National Strategy for Volunteering

The Monitoring and Evaluation Framework was developed in line with the principles of the National Strategy for Volunteering. Our approach to the Framework prioritises robust evidence, a commitment to co-design, investment in collaboration, courage to be experimental and adaptable, and investment in continuous improvement. The Framework's alignment with each principle is outlined below.

1. Evidence-Based Approach

The National Strategy for Volunteering is underpinned by a robust evidence-base. This includes data and findings from research, insights from lived experience, and the incorporation of knowledge and expertise from individuals, communities, and organisations. The Monitoring and Evaluation Framework prioritises robust and high-quality data. It combines research evidence, lived experience, and expertise to guide the evaluation of activities associated with the National Strategy for Volunteering.

2. Commitment to Co-Design

The National Strategy for Volunteering is co-designed and co-owned by the volunteering ecosystem. An ongoing dialogue with the volunteering ecosystem will ensure that the National Strategy for Volunteering is intersectional, shaped by diverse perspectives, and its actions are inclusive and relevant in different contexts. The Monitoring and Evaluation Framework takes a participatory approach which encourages involvement from all members of the ecosystem to support accountability and facilitate learning.

3. Investment in Collaboration

The Monitoring and Evaluation Framework requires the involvement of many different members of the volunteering ecosystem. Responsibility for monitoring these initiatives and evaluation their success will also be shared by the ecosystem. This means the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework must be accessible and applicable to a broad range of stakeholders and enable them to be involved collaboratively to measure progress towards a common vision.

4. Courage to be Experimental and Adaptable

Many of the actions that flow from the National Strategy for Volunteering will be experimental by nature as new collaboration and ideas are explored and tested. An openness to experimenting, learning, and adapting will enable the adoption of new practices, which will ensure relevance over time in an ever-changing world. To support this, the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework must be adaptable to new information and approaches to evaluation as actions associated with the National Strategy are adapted and refined in the future.

5. Investment in Continuous Improvement

A commitment to continuous learning and improvement will facilitate proactive reflection and adaptation. This will require strong monitoring and evaluation, a willingness to reflect honestly on progress, and stopping or adjusting when things are not working for volunteers or intended beneficiaries, or not meeting agreed objectives. The Monitoring and Evaluation Framework serves as the backbone of this principle by providing a structured approach to track progress, measure outcomes, and identify areas for improvement. Facilitating learning and improvement is a primary purpose of the Framework.

Outcomes Framework

The Outcomes Framework identifies indicators of each outcome of the National Strategy for Volunteering and suggests measures of each indicator.

The Outcomes Framework includes both quantitative and qualitative measures. Where available, nationally-representative quantitative measures are listed first. These measures are designed to represent an entire population (for example, all people in Australia, all volunteers in Australia, all volunteer involving organisations in Australia, or all national strategies produced by the Australian Government) and are intended to track overall progress towards the vision of the National Strategy for Volunteering. These are complemented by qualitative measures, which may be collected through case studies or other methods, to provide additional detail and deeper insight into the underlying indicators.

Measures in the Outcomes Framework are intended to be assessed together to measure progress towards the outcomes of the National Strategy for Volunteering. They are chosen to be measurable and aligned with the indicators and outcomes. As such, they may not apply to all individual actions aligned with the National Strategy for Volunteering.²

2 In addition to the 11 Strategic Objectives, the National Strategy for Volunteering details three overall indicators of success: <https://volunteeringstrategy.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/National-Strategy-for-Volunteering-2023-2033.pdf>, 40

FOCUS AREA	OUTCOMES	INDICATORS	MEASURES
1 Individual Potential and the Volunteer Experience	1.1 Volunteers have a meaningful and enriching experience, feel valued, and know how their contribution makes a difference.	Increased volunteer satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of volunteers who report that they are satisfied or very satisfied with their experience volunteering • Examples of organisations involving volunteers in ways that meet their motivations and interests
		Improved quality of volunteering experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of volunteers who describe positive experiences of volunteering • Proportion of people who report that they stopped volunteering due to negative experiences • Examples of improved volunteering experience
		Increased alignment between volunteering roles and volunteer motivations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of volunteers that report their volunteering roles meet their motivations to volunteer • Proportion of organisations that involve volunteers in event-specific, short-term, microvolunteering, and online roles • Examples of volunteers experiencing greater alignment between their roles and motivations

FOCUS AREA	OUTCOMES	INDICATORS	MEASURES
1 Individual Potential and the Volunteer Experience	1.2 Volunteering is inclusive and accessible to everyone on their terms.	Increased sense of belonging in volunteering roles/ organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of volunteers reporting positive experiences of diversity and inclusion • Diversity of volunteers who report that they are satisfied or very satisfied with their volunteering experience • Examples of volunteer experiences of diversity and inclusion
		Reduced barriers to participation in volunteering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of people who report barriers to volunteering • Examples of volunteer experiences of inclusion or barriers to volunteering
		Greater accessibility of volunteer involving organisations, groups, and community initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of organisations that have a diversity and inclusion strategy • Proportion of organisations that report they face barriers to being inclusive • Proportion of organisations that adopt the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement to some extent

FOCUS AREA	OUTCOMES	INDICATORS	MEASURES
1 Individual Potential and the Volunteer Experience	1.3 Volunteers are engaged safely and ethically, with supports in place to protect their safety, interests, and wellbeing.	Increased volunteer safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of volunteers that report they feel safe while volunteering • Examples of experiences of exploitation in volunteering
		Increased accessibility and effectiveness of supports available to volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of volunteers that report they are aware of available supports in case of negative volunteering experiences • Proportion of volunteers that report available supports are effective • Proportion of organisations that offer insurance to their volunteers • Proportion of organisations that adopt the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement to some extent • Examples of access to and effectiveness of supports available to volunteers
		Reduced experiences of exploitation, burnout, role overload, and fatigue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of volunteers that report experiences of exploitation in volunteering • Examples of experiences of burnout, role overload, and stress in volunteering roles • Examples of the effect of volunteering on wellbeing

FOCUS AREA	OUTCOMES	INDICATORS	MEASURES
2 Community and Social Impact	2.1 Volunteering is respected and supported in all its forms through an expanded understanding of different cultural interpretations and expressions.	Increased public recognition of different cultural interpretations and expressions of volunteering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of research publications on volunteering in culturally and/or linguistically diverse and First Nations communities • Examples of changes in public perceptions of volunteering, people who volunteer, and volunteer involving organisations
		Increased government recognition of different cultural interpretations and expressions of volunteering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of government policies that reference different cultural interpretations and expressions of volunteering • Number of government policies that reference volunteering undertaken outside formal organisations • Amount of funding for informal volunteering and community-led initiatives • Examples of recognition, or lack of recognition, of different cultural interpretations of volunteering in government policy and programs
		Increased diversity of volunteer groups/ organisations/ activities supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversity of organisations that receive government funding to support their volunteering programs • Diversity of organisations that engage employee volunteers

FOCUS AREA	OUTCOMES	INDICATORS	MEASURES
2 Community and Social Impact	2.2 A comprehensive understanding of volunteering is embedded in Australia's public consciousness.	Increased public awareness of the scale and breadth volunteering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of people who identify that they benefit from a service delivered/supported by volunteers • Proportion of people who identify that they do not volunteer because there are no suitable opportunities • Examples of new perspectives on volunteering shared by volunteers, volunteer involving organisations, and researchers
		Increased public awareness of the diversity of volunteering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of people aware of volunteering opportunities, activities, and activities/groups in their community • Examples of public communications from volunteer involving organisations, volunteer resource centres, peak bodies, or government that profile diverse volunteering roles • Examples of celebration of volunteering which is not formalised, role-based, or service-focused

FOCUS AREA	OUTCOMES	INDICATORS	MEASURES
2 Community and Social Impact	2.3 Volunteering is recognised and supported as an activity with inherent value and for its role in facilitating individual and community outcomes.	Greater recognition of the value of volunteering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of official data collection initiatives that collect data on volunteering • Number of employers with employee volunteering programs • Number of employers that offer volunteering leave • Examples of recognition of volunteering and volunteers by volunteer involving organisations, peak bodies, government, and other members of the community
		Greater recognition of diverse benefits of volunteering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of organisations measuring outcomes of volunteering • Examples of volunteer involving organisations measuring benefits of volunteering to the volunteer • Examples of volunteer involving organisations measuring the benefits of volunteering to communities

FOCUS AREA	OUTCOMES	INDICATORS	MEASURES
2 Community and Social Impact	2.4 Communities are the primary drivers of how volunteering influences their future.	Increased consultation and co-design of volunteering programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value of resourcing provided to volunteer involving organisations, peak bodies, and other relevant members of the volunteering ecosystem to inform policy processes • Proportion of volunteer involving organisations that report that they have a say on policy that affects volunteering • Examples of involvement of volunteers and volunteer involving organisations in policy and funding programs relevant to volunteering • Examples of input from volunteers and volunteer involving organisations informing policy and program design • Examples of involvement of volunteers and volunteer involving organisations in research
		Increased flexibility of funding arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of government grant arrangements for volunteer involving organisations • Examples of funding arrangements for volunteer involving organisations
		Increased diversity of volunteer involving organisations involved in program design and delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples of community leadership of volunteering programs • Examples of volunteer involvement in community-led initiatives

FOCUS AREA	OUTCOMES	INDICATORS	MEASURES
3 Conditions for Volunteering to Thrive	3.1 Governments are consistently considering the needs of volunteers and supporting volunteering through comprehensive policy settings and investment.	Clearer articulation of responsibilities for volunteering at all levels of government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of responsibility for volunteering in Commonwealth, state/territory, and local governments • Analysis of mechanisms for engagement between Commonwealth, state/territory, and local governments
		Increased consideration of volunteering across government portfolios	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of departments/agencies that resource volunteering • Number of departments/agencies that mention volunteering in strategic policy • Number of government policies aligned with the National Strategy for Volunteering • Analysis of consistency of government policy on volunteering across portfolios • Analysis of mechanisms for cross-portfolio engagement
		Improved policy settings that better support volunteering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of appropriateness of policy consideration of volunteering across government • Examples of fit-for-purpose policy that supports volunteers • Examples of fit-for-purpose policy that supports the community impact of volunteering

FOCUS AREA	OUTCOMES	INDICATORS	MEASURES
3 Conditions for Volunteering to Thrive	3.2 Volunteering is advanced through a common agenda, underpinned by strong leadership, shared accountability, and genuine collaboration.	Stronger leadership in the volunteering ecosystem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of organisations that agree the ecosystem is supported by strong leadership in government • Proportion of organisations that agree the ecosystem is supported by strong ecosystem-led leadership (through peak bodies, volunteer involving organisations, and other non-government organisations) • Proportion of organisations with internal strategies for volunteering • Examples of effective sector leadership
		Increased collaboration between members of the volunteering ecosystem, including volunteer involving organisations, governments, employers, and peak bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of organisations involved with networks, forums, and other groups focused on volunteering • Examples of effective collaboration between members of the volunteering ecosystem • Examples of mechanisms that facilitate collaboration between members of the volunteering ecosystem (e.g., national networks, forums, and other groups established to facilitate cooperation between volunteer involving organisations, peak bodies employers, governments, and other members of the volunteering ecosystem)
		Progress towards a common agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of organisations that support the National Strategy for Volunteering by sector, size of organisation, state/territory, and type of organisation (e.g., charity, government, private business, informal group, etc.) • Proportion of organisations that adopt the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement to some extent

FOCUS AREA	OUTCOMES	INDICATORS	MEASURES
3 Conditions for Volunteering to Thrive	3.3 Volunteering is supported across Australia by common infrastructure and continuous strategic investment.	Increased funding for common infrastructure to support volunteering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total amount of Commonwealth funding for volunteering • Amount of funding for common infrastructure to support volunteering (including tools and resources, research and data, referral services, education and training, marketing and awareness raising, fast and accessible screening processes, fit-for-purpose policy and regulation, platforms for recruiting and managing volunteers, accessible funding mechanisms, insurance and work health and safety protocols, processes for evaluation, and celebration and recognition) • Analysis of funding streams that support volunteering • Examples of funding for supportive volunteering infrastructure
		Greater funding for the costs of volunteering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of relevant programs/policies that specify funding for functions that support volunteering • Proportion of organisations reporting that their volunteering programs are adequately resourced by current funding • Proportion of volunteers that incur out-of-pocket expenses for their volunteering activities • Proportion of volunteers that are reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses for their volunteering activities
		Greater consideration of total resourcing for volunteering in national funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of funding that supports volunteering • Analysis of quantity and quality of data on volunteering

FOCUS AREA	OUTCOMES	INDICATORS	MEASURES
3 Conditions for Volunteering to Thrive	3.4 Strong volunteer engagement practices and the role of Leaders of Volunteers are acknowledged as critical and appropriately supported.	Increased resourcing of volunteer management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of government grants/initiatives that support volunteer management • Total national resourcing for volunteer management
		Increased prioritisation of volunteer management by organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of volunteer involving organisations with dedicated volunteer managers • Proportion of volunteer managers who report they have the necessary time to effectively manage volunteers • Proportion of organisations that adopt the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement to some extent • Examples of volunteer managers being supported by their organisation • Examples of improved data collection on volunteer management • Examples of experiences of volunteer managers in their role and support from their organisation
		Increased opportunities for recognition and development of skills of volunteer managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of volunteer managers that have received a formal qualification for volunteer management • Number of tertiary institutions offering courses in volunteer management • Examples of development pathways for volunteer managers • Examples of recognition of volunteer managers and their qualifications and experience

FOCUS AREA	INDICATORS	MEASURES
Whole-of-strategy	1. The volunteer experience has been improved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of volunteers who report that they are satisfied or very satisfied with their experience volunteering
	2. Volunteering is comprehensively valued	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of organisations that measure volunteer satisfaction, volunteer wellbeing, and social impact of volunteering • Examples of national measurement of volunteering (including economic value, proportion of people participating in volunteering, volunteer satisfaction, and benefits of volunteering to wellbeing)
	3. There is an increase in the number of volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of people who volunteer for an organisation or group • Proportion of people who volunteer informally • Hours spent volunteering formally • Hours spent volunteering informally

Inputs, Outputs, and Processes

In addition to measuring and reporting on the outcomes of Three-Year Action Plans and the National Strategy for Volunteering as a whole, data should be collected on the inputs, outputs, and processes associated with actions to support the National Strategy.

Inputs

Inputs of each initiative will be monitored and reported by the organisations responsible, either under a Three-Year Action Plan or as independent actors. This should include, at minimum:

- Financial resources dedicated to an initiative.
- Human resources dedicated to an initiative, including the time of paid staff and volunteers.

Outputs

Progress on each initiative in a Three-Year Action Plan will be published by the organisation with responsibility for coordination of the National Strategy for Volunteering. Organisations with

designated responsibility in a Three-Year Action Plan are expected to communicate with the coordinating body to share information about the outputs of these actions. At minimum, this will include information on whether each initiative is completed, in progress, or has not started.

Outputs of initiatives aligned with the National Strategy for Volunteering for which responsibility is not assigned in a Three-Year Action Plan may be reported by any member of the volunteering ecosystem.

Processes

The process for developing the Three-Year Action Plans, the National Strategy for Volunteering governance arrangements, and coordination functions related to the National Strategy should be reviewed and evaluated regularly. At minimum, a review should be conducted prior to the development of each subsequent Three-Year Action Plan to ensure relevant changes can be made if needed.

Evaluation Methods

The Outcomes Framework is designed to provide guidance on the measurement of each outcome of the National Strategy for Volunteering. It does this by identifying indicators of each outcome, and a series of suggested measures of each indicator. However, it is intended that these indicators and measures allow

for a variety of evaluation methods, depending on the level of detail and resourcing available to those conducting an evaluation. It is also designed to support both the evaluation of the National Strategy as a whole and the Three-Year Action Plans individually.

Roles and Responsibilities

The organisation with responsibility for coordination of the National Strategy for Volunteering has primary responsibility for leading the monitoring and evaluation of the Three-Year Action Plans and the National Strategy as a whole. Members of the ecosystem that have designated responsibility for actions in a Three-Year Action Plan may use the Outcomes Framework to measure the outcomes of these actions at their discretion. This may be done through existing internal processes. Action Plan Leads are expected to share information on the inputs, outputs, and outcomes of actions to facilitate learning and continuous improvement.

Any member of the ecosystem may use the Outcomes Framework to guide monitoring and evaluation of their own initiatives. This may be done to demonstrate the outcomes of actions and their contribution to the objectives of the National Strategy for Volunteering, or to facilitate learning to improve policies and programs.

More information on how members of the volunteering ecosystem share accountability for the implementation of the National Strategy is available in the Model for Shared Accountability.

Appendix: Theory of change

The Outcomes Framework is underpinned by a theory of change. The theory of change explains how and why we expect change to occur that helps us achieve the outcomes of the National Strategy for Volunteering in accordance with its principles.

Vision	<p>Volunteering is the heart of Australian communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Where more people volunteer more often.• Where volunteers feel respected and know their contribution makes a difference.• Where volunteering is valued and properly considered in policy settings, service design, and strategic investment.• Where diversity in volunteering is recognised, celebrated, and supported.• Where people individually and collectively realise their potential to creating thriving communities.
Context	<p>Volunteering has always been a constant in Australian society, but it has never achieved its full potential. Overall, more than half of adult Australians volunteered formally through an organisation or informally in the community in the period leading up to April 2022.³ However, the rate of formal volunteering has been declining for decades. Access to volunteering remains unequal and there is an increasing and unsustainable reliance on an unpaid workforce to deliver essential services and programs in the community. The National Strategy for Volunteering identifies an ambitious yet achievable future state for volunteering where individual and collective potential is harnessed for the common good.</p>

3 <https://volunteeringstrategy.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Volunteering-in-Australia-2022-The-Volunteer-Perspective.pdf>

Assumptions

- Most volunteers want to volunteer.
- Volunteering may be formal, through an organisation or group, or informal in the community. Neither form of volunteering is superior to the other.
- Volunteering is a spectrum of activity, some of which may not always be identified as volunteering by the participants or beneficiaries.
- Improvement to the volunteering experience will promote increased participation in volunteering.
- Volunteering is a key enabler of creating healthy, happy, connected, and resilient people and places.
- Increased participation in volunteering is not always positive (for example, if the experience of volunteering is negative or if volunteers are engaged in an unsustainable or unethical way).
- Improvements in the volunteering experience may result in a reduction in the rate of volunteering or hours spent volunteering. For example, the streamlining of administrative requirements could save time for volunteers and reduce time spent volunteering.
- Volunteering could happen more often, and with greater impact, if the right conditions are established and sustained.
- All people should have equal access to volunteering opportunities.
- Although volunteers freely give their time for the common good, volunteering itself is not without cost (financial, time and opportunity costs).
- Barriers to volunteering exist with differing levels of visibility.

Outcomes	<p>1. Individual Potential and the Volunteer Experience Volunteering is safe, inclusive, accessible, meaningful, and not exploitative.</p>	<p>1.1 Volunteers have a meaningful and enriching experience, feel valued, and know how their contribution makes a difference.</p> <p>1.2 Volunteering is inclusive and accessible to everyone on their terms.</p> <p>1.3 Volunteers are engaged safely and ethically, with supports in place to protect their safety, interests, and wellbeing.</p>
	<p>2. Community and Social Impact The diversity and impact of volunteering is articulated and celebrated.</p>	<p>2.1 Volunteering is respected and supported in all its forms through an expanded understanding of different cultural interpretations and expressions.</p> <p>2.2 A comprehensive understanding of volunteering is embedded in Australia's public consciousness.</p> <p>2.3 Volunteering is recognised and supported as an activity with inherent value and for its role in facilitating individual and community outcomes.</p> <p>2.4 Communities are the primary drivers of how volunteering influences their future.</p>
	<p>3. Conditions for Volunteering to Thrive The right conditions are in place for volunteering to be effective and sustainable.</p>	<p>3.1 Governments are consistently considering the needs of volunteers and supporting volunteering through comprehensive policy settings and investment.</p> <p>3.2 Volunteering is advanced through a common agenda, underpinned by strong leadership, shared accountability, and genuine collaboration.</p> <p>3.3 Volunteering is supported across Australia by common infrastructure and continuous strategic investment.</p> <p>3.4 Strong volunteer engagement practices and the role of Leaders of Volunteers are acknowledged as critical and appropriately supported.</p>

