



# taking that extra step

starting, growing and maintaining an inclusive volunteer program



Inclusion Designlab is Inclusion Melbourne’s engine room for research, innovation, communications and policy.

Our vision is to bring together people with a disability, community organisations, and the world’s leading disability researchers to develop cutting-edge models of practice, choice and citizenship that shatter glass ceilings and promote a more inclusive Australia.

We do this by developing, trialling, and implementing new systems of support and communicating our insights through a range of publications and media. We are also significant contributors to public policy and government inquiries.

The products and services created by Inclusion Designlab contribute to the continuous development of the disability sector through evidence based practice, accessible materials, and training for families and collegiate organisations.

Visit [inclusiondesignlab.org.au](http://inclusiondesignlab.org.au) for more about our work.

Our Vision: Equal education and employment outcomes for all young people.

The Bayside Glen Eira Kingston Local Learning & Employment Network (BGKLEN) is an incorporated organisation that takes on contracts and funding that allows us to support young people in our community through strategic partnership brokering.

At the BGKLEN we:

- Create and facilitate connections between local agencies, communities and young people in the Bayside, Glen Eira and Kingston municipalities
- Advocate for education to become more accessible and engaging for marginalised young people so they can progress on their chosen pathway
- Build and disseminate knowledge that empowers young people for the future world of work
- Facilitate meaningful partnerships by forming and nurturing authentic relationships that invest in young people

Visit [bgkllen.org.au](http://bgkllen.org.au) for more about our work.

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The first edition of this publication was produced by the Unite group of volunteer organisations:



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# 1 introduction

## Foreword

Volunteering in the community supports social empowerment, confidence, skill development and engagement for people in all stages of life. Volunteering is a way in which community members can participate in activities within their area of interest, obtain valuable work experience and build on their talents. With one in five Australians living with disability, an ageing population, the rise of corporate volunteering, and more young people volunteering as a stepping stone to successful careers, the need for volunteer programs that are inclusive of diversity is increasing.

To meet this need, community organisations must adapt by making existing volunteer programs more accessible to the community, particularly for people with a disability. This Volunteer Manual aims to support community groups to enhance existing volunteer programs or develop and maintain a new program that will be inclusive of people with a disability. It contains useful and practical standard policies, procedures and guidelines that can be easily and readily adapted to assist organisations.

– Inclusion Melbourne and BGKLLLEN

Over **6 million** Australians make a difference in their local community by volunteering each year, completing many tasks for a wide range of community organisations. That's the same as the entire population of Victoria, three Brisbanes, four Adelaides, or one and a half New Zealands!

This figure includes an increasing number of people with a disability who are looking at ways to engage with their local communities and become more socially active.

State and Federal governments and peak bodies are increasingly promoting policies and practices that favour an inclusive culture in which diversity is embraced and celebrated, in which every citizen has the same opportunities to participate in the life of the community and the same responsibilities towards society as all other citizens.

## How to use this manual

This Volunteer Manual has been produced to build the capacity of community organisations and to guide them through the design, implementation, management and evaluation of volunteer programs that inclusive.



This manual is for:

Businesses and organisations looking to include volunteers with intellectual disability in their operations.

Disability support organisations looking to build a volunteer program.

Often making small changes to a volunteer program – or a volunteer position within an organisation – can make a significant difference to the accessibility of the program. Many barriers to involving volunteers with a disability can be overcome with simple, practical and cost-effective solutions.

The Manual provides flexible forms, model documents, templates and other material to assist in the development of specific policies and procedures; recruitment processes; promotion; training and support.

Organisations can use the resources in this Manual when developing volunteer positions that reflect the diversity among their current and potential volunteers.

# 2 what is volunteering?

Volunteering Australia defines volunteering as “time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain”.

Volunteering is a way in which individuals can participate in activities in their community and it is a vehicle for individuals or groups to address human, environmental and social needs.

Volunteering is more than just doing things for free – it is also about doing things freely and for the benefit of others. Some volunteering advocates see volunteering as the very core of community development. Any business, organisation or community group that creates a space for volunteering – and volunteering that is diverse and inclusive – will reap the tremendous benefits of a powerful yet often neglected resource.

As a rule, volunteers receive no financial payments, though some volunteers receive a stipend or reimbursement for incurred costs. As it involves work or tasks that are freely chosen, volunteering is highly valued. Volunteering has many faces, motivations and functions. Some volunteers want to learn new skills, meet new people, make a valuable contribution to the community and build their self-confidence in an inclusive environment.

Volunteering can be a formally managed activity, as is the case with Inclusion Melbourne's decades old volunteer program. It can also be informal and self-directed by individuals. It therefore includes reciprocal exchange arrangements, participation in the sharing economy, and activism.

Volunteering is not a substitute for paid work and should not replace paid workers.

“I like the opportunity to meet new people and share my interests and knowledge with other people. I find the help that Avalon has given me quite beneficial and at the same time allows me to help them and give something back.”

Peter – Avalon Centre



### 3 benefits of an inclusive volunteer program



#### The benefits of an inclusive volunteer program

Volunteering respects the rights, dignity and culture of others. It promotes human rights and equality and allows people to use and develop their knowledge and skills.

People of all abilities share the same reasons to volunteer. This includes learning new skills, meeting new people, making a valuable contribution to the community, and building on their self-confidence and self-worth.

The benefits of developing an inclusive volunteer program that supports volunteers with a disability include:

- Access to a larger pool of volunteers
- A more diverse group of volunteers that will offer a wider range of skills, expertise and motivation
- Access to new and highly specialised skills that are often particular to people with disability
- A volunteer program with a greater reflection of the diversity of the larger community
- Increased opportunities to develop partnerships; and
- Improved understanding of diversity and inclusive practice among staff

One of the key barriers that individuals face when looking to engage in voluntary work is a lack of awareness of disability-related issues in the broader community, which can result in stereotyping. It's important for organisations to realise that people with a disability have knowledge and skills that can enhance an organisation, and to focus on the individual's ability and not any supposed impairments.

It is important that community organisations know how to adapt when involving volunteers with a disability. Organisations are encouraged to learn from the simple, practical and cost-effective solutions that other organisations have used during the adaptation process.

An inclusive volunteer program is an opportunity to refresh and reinvigorate a community organisation, target a greater reach of community members and provide a more positive and productive contribution to the community.

By establishing programs that encourage, value and support the involvement of volunteers of all ages, ability and availability, community organisations are not only providing benefits to those individuals, but also to the organisations themselves, their clients and the broader community.

#### So what does volunteering look like?

- A university student needing to develop experience in their chosen field finds a volunteer position in a firm and accrues hundreds of hours of work experience. For some young people, this type of volunteering is a vital step to starting a career
- A secondary school has an arrangement with a local non-profit that monitors and protects sea life at the beach on summer evenings when tourist numbers are high. A group of students take turns working in administration support in the organisation's office. Each week, two students are also supervised by the organisation to assist on site at the beach. The organisation provides written references for each student
- A natural disaster strikes and neighbours mobilise themselves to save personal belongings in each other's homes
- A woman spends half a day each week helping at an aged care residence. The carer is a volunteer and is not affected by staffing changes, thus adding an element of stability to the lives of the elderly people for whom she is visiting
- A retired accountant gets involved with a local not-for-profit organisation providing valuable mentoring in management, marketing and accounting to the younger staff. Enjoying not having to work for a full day, the flexible conditions around the volunteer position mean that the retiree can add tremendous value to the organisation and get a strong sense of fulfilment
- The owner of a gardening business decides to take on some extra help. A volunteer with an intellectual disability is chosen to do some basic tasks. The volunteer works one day each week and is trained from scratch in basic gardening skills. This may lead to a paid position or be linked to an apprenticeship or other training
- A young lady with a disability delivers library books to elderly people's houses once a fortnight. Her voluntary work leads to wonderful relationships with some of the recipients of the service. She is supported by a paid support worker who helps make things run smoothly
- Every year, thousands of Australians hand out flyers for political parties on election days. They do this work because they believe in the party's cause and care about their community
- A professional office worker with a young family and a 9-5 well paid job has a strong desire to give back to the local community. He signs up as a Leisure Buddy volunteer at the disability organisation near his home and spends one Saturday morning each month with a young man with autism. They play games, go to movies, and have brunch together at trendy cafés
- A primary school organises a working bee for children's parents one Saturday



- A footy team decides to give blood at the Red Cross Blood Bank as part of their team building process. They go to the blood bank together
- A disability organisation runs an op-shop in a country town. The organisation has a training service to skill-up young adults with a disability in retail. The op-shop has a paid manager and is staffed by the young adults who volunteer in order to gain work experience and complete the practical aspect of their training

Research has shown that being socially active can increase happiness to the same degree as doubling one's income or obtaining a college degree!<sup>1</sup> Personalised support organisations like Inclusion Melbourne employ an approach that supports people with an intellectual disability to build meaningful lives in their local communities. Through training, relationship building, careful planning, and strong and accountable support networks, the people we support are able to break through the imposed societal limitations of the past and ensure they take their place as equal members in their communities.

People with a disability are a tremendous resource, yet this is often untapped due to unhelpful stereotypes, a lack of knowledge about their presence in local communities or ineffective communication about their desire to get involved.

Having an inclusive approach to volunteering is an effective way for local businesses and organisations to get the ball rolling. This approach can include offering fixed term internships or regular work experience opportunities to people with a disability who will help support their business. This opportunity will also allow them to get involved in their community, learn new skills, build a CV and gain social connections.

<sup>1</sup> The Daily Stat, Harvard Business Review, June 5, 2012.

## 4 overcoming barriers to participation

It is important to understand the nature of the barriers faced by volunteers with a disability.

It would be beneficial to consider how you might work with the potential volunteer to minimise barriers.

Barriers to participation may include:

- **Attitudinal barriers** – a general lack of understanding and awareness of what people with a disability can and cannot contribute to volunteering
- **Fear and misconceptions** – concerns that people with a disability may be less reliable than other personnel
- **Lack of reasonable adjustments** – a lack of physical access in the work setting, as well as inflexibility in working arrangements and provision of equipment
- **Financial barriers** – for example, failure to meet additional travel costs for people with a disability where a public transport option is not available
- **Communication** – some people with a disability may be dissuaded from applying if they cannot access the recruitment process due to a lack of alternative formats e.g. Braille, large print and easy English

People with a disability may not always have the same opportunities or choices available to them as others do. To overcome barriers for people with a disability to volunteer in your organisation, some things to consider are:

- Talking to your volunteers about their needs and requirements
- Adjusting the workplace setting, to improve accessibility or technology
- Discussing changes with other staff members, addressing inclusive policies and expectations regarding workplace interaction
- Recruiting external specialists / advisors if necessary; and
- Always involving the person in any decision making and discussions

### Some points to consider:

#### For businesses:

- Becoming more inclusive can lead to greater visibility in the community, particularly through increased social interaction and accolades or awards for inclusive businesses
- One in five Australians has a disability. Involving people with a disability and their unique (and often highly specialised) skills has the potential to grow new markets and create new business opportunities

#### For not for profit organisations with volunteer programs:

- A body of volunteers that reflects the diversity of the larger community will always be more attractive to that community and potentially offer a broader set of skills, expertise and life experience

#### For all:

- Becoming more inclusive can lead to positive outcomes for staff and volunteers at any organisation, for example, through learning new forms of communication and developing advocacy skills
- People with a disability have knowledge and skills – often highly specialised and unique skills – that enhance organisations and businesses
- There are many resources available – in addition to this Manual – that can help organisations develop a flexible and cost-effective volunteering strategy that will allow organisations to include supported volunteers

New opportunities for volunteering are emerging all the time with a vast range of activities available. Activities involving community groups have long been a field in which volunteering is critical, although these opportunities have not always been perceived as volunteering. Internships, work experience positions and volunteer roles can include:

- Planning events or fundraising
- Stocktake
- Reception and administration
- Gardening
- Roles in sporting clubs and organisations
- Giving guided tours
- Starting or maintaining a blog or other social networking website for your organisation
- Completing those large or small jobs that no one else has the time to get to
- Hosting a stall at a community event

## 5 rights and responsibilities

Volunteers have a range of rights and responsibilities as part of their volunteer work.

#### Volunteers have a right to:

- Obtain information about the organisation
- Obtain a clearly written duty statement and/or position description and volunteer agreement
- Be recognised as a valued team member
- Be supported and supervised
- Be made aware of the complaint procedure within the organisation
- Orientation and training
- Withdraw from the mentoring partnership in consultation with the facilitator
- Be treated with respect, politeness and honesty in a non-discriminatory environment
- Work in a safe environment and be covered by insurance and
- Expect that confidentiality and privacy will be maintained

#### Volunteers have a responsibility to:

- Be committed to the program with which they are associated
- Be punctual and reliable
- Notify the organisation of changes to their availability
- Accept responsibilities for their own actions and behaviour
- Notify the organisation if they become aware of potential hazards or dangerous situations

- Abide by the organisation's policy and procedures on volunteering
- Deal with complaints in the correct manner
- Respect the rights of others
- Carry out the duties as listed in their position description
- Undertake training as requested
- Ask for support when needed and
- Give notice before they leave the organisation

### National Volunteering Standards

Organisations that involve volunteers are guided by National Volunteering Standards (refer to [www.volunteeringaustralia.org](http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org)). These standards have been developed to ensure that the rights of volunteers are maintained and include:

- Management responsibilities
- Recruitment
- Policies and procedures
- Training and development
- Service delivery
- Documentation and records and
- Continuous improvement

Your organisation should consider providing volunteers with a statement of rights and responsibilities.

For more information about the rights of volunteers in Victoria, visit: [volunteer.vic.gov.au/information-for-volunteers](http://volunteer.vic.gov.au/information-for-volunteers)



## a case study

### Extended Families: A life lived with friendship is a life fully lived

Extended Families believes friendship and support are cornerstones of a meaningful and fulfilling life. Our Volunteer Match Program has a 40 year history steeped in the building of friendships and creating connections within community.

#### Families tell us:

"My child is very happy. He feels like he has a friend and enjoys participating in activities with his volunteer."

"Our match is perfect. It has provided a true extended family for all of us."

"By helping to integrate our two children with a disability in the community, the organisation has extended our children and brought real joy to their lives. It has also helped our family manage the challenges of disability."

Volunteers (18+) are assessed, screened, and complete training before being accredited and then carefully matched to a child and their family. Individual volunteers visit on a regular basis spending time in the family home or the community to provide regular support. Volunteers engage in a genuine friendship, providing practical assistance and mentoring support to a child or young person, helping them develop life skills and supporting participation in community and social activities.

Volunteers tell us the match is as much beneficial for them as it is for the child with whom they are matched. They describe the significance of becoming part of the child's life, watching them grow and develop, learn new skills and often do new activities they wouldn't usually experience.

Each match is unique due to the essential element of relationship that underpins all matches. Some are long term, where lifelong friendships develop, while others are more focused on goals that are realised in a short time frame. Many are medium term (2-4 years) where the support provided by the volunteer stands them in good stead when the match ends.

Over the last 5 years, Lesley has volunteered in the Volunteer Match Program with a young boy with Autism.

"We catch up for a few hours every fortnight and do all sorts of fun things – rock climbing, mini golf, cycling, tennis, playing in the park and just hanging out. We've developed a great bond and we both really look forward to spending time together."

She described "...being pushed out of my comfort zone – whether it is abseiling from the top of a wall or coming up with games to play, I've grown in confidence and get such a buzz from each visit. I'm treated like part of the family and share photos, emails and texts about the important things in our lives. It is a very special and fulfilling relationship and one I would not change for the world!"

## Extended Families

Support people aged 0-30 and their families in Melbourne and the Mornington Peninsula to build friendships and connect with their community.

Extended Families Australia is as diverse as you. They pride themselves on their capacity to support people from a diversity of cultural backgrounds.

No matter who you are or where you're from, there's room for you and your family within Extended Families Australia.



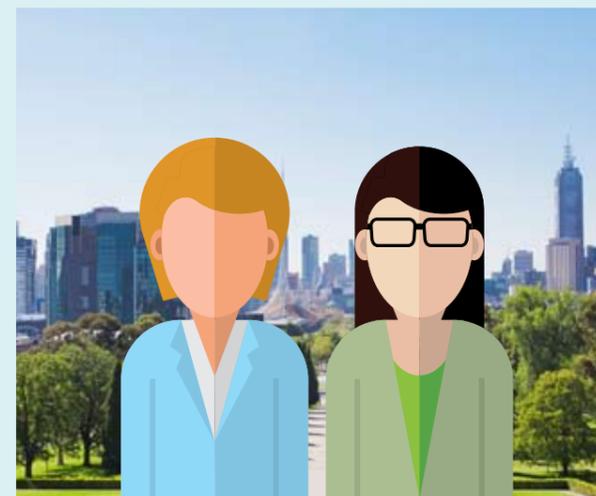
Central Office:  
Suite 1, 95 Bell Street  
Coburg VIC 3058  
**03 9355 8848**  
[www.extendedfamilies.org.au](http://www.extendedfamilies.org.au)

## a case study

### Leisure Buddies

Inclusion Melbourne's Leisure Buddies program links a volunteer to an adult with an intellectual disability so that they can share interests and activities and develop a real friendship.

This program was originally developed as an innovative respite initiative, as an alternative to traditional respite programs. That is, carers and family members receive respite while the person for whom they usually care has a day out with their leisure buddy. Buddies are matched according to several factors such as where they live and shared interests. Volunteers must be aged 18+, are carefully screened and receive training and supervision. The buddy receives ongoing support.



#### Judith and Louise

Judith and her volunteer Louise met 3 years ago through the buddy program. They are both in their 30s, live nearby and share a love for dogs, going to festivals and keeping active. Judith has activities during the week but is reliant on her mother for company on evenings and weekends. While Judith was reserved initially, it didn't take long before she was sharing all her news and her cares with Louise. They enjoy regular outings and celebrate birthdays together. Louise has told us how much she enjoys watching Judith's confidence grow and learning to understand Judith's unique communication style. Judith's mum has said that the friendship has been "an unexpected gift" for both her and Judith. Judith's mum says that the buddy outings give her a break from her carer role and, more importantly, mean that her daughter has a genuine friend.



#### Max and Darren

Max and his volunteer Darren met several years ago through the Leisure Buddies program. They are both in their 20s, live nearby and share a love of watching footy. Max has a busy weekday program but longed to have a friend that he could meet up with in the evening. These buddies meet regularly to watch a game at a local pub or for movies or karaoke. Darren has met Max's family who say that they "adore" him. Max told us that he and Darren always have a good laugh and that Darren is his mate. Darren has told us that he appreciates the flexibility of volunteering on evenings and weekends and that he has learned a lot about disability through Max who has mobility and personal care needs. Darren says that he enjoys building a strong friendship with Max and seeing him happy.

## a success story

### Kingston Toy Library and Beyond the School Gates, Hands Up! Student Volunteer Program

Since June 2015, as part of the Beyond the School Gates, Hands Up! Student volunteer program, an initiative funded through the DHS Engage! Program, students from Berendale School have had the opportunity to participate in weekly volunteer sessions at Kingston Toy Library.

When BTSG approached Kingston Toy Library in regards to a new student volunteer program we had developed, they were very responsive and open to the idea of having students from Berendale School volunteer with them on a regular basis. With the support of a staff member from Berendale School, 3-4 students at a time visit the Kingston Toy Library on a Monday morning and participate in 2 hours of volunteering.

During the students' time at Kingston Toy Library they have so far been involved in: cataloguing, photographing of toys, putting away returned toys and ensuring that they are in the correct place, fixing of bookshelves/cabinets and counting of toy parts.

Staff from Berendale School feel that this opportunity with the Kingston Toy Library is very beneficial to the students as it provides an opportunity for them to try new things. It also exposes the students to other volunteers within the community and assists with the development of workplace etiquette and skills. Berendale staff have also communicated that by having the opportunity to rotate students throughout the term is helpful and beneficial as they are able to share the opportunities among other students and provide volunteer opportunities to a number of students rather than a select few. By rotating the students, staff have expressed that they have also been able to identify new skill areas that the students have eg; photography, identify students interest areas as well as areas that students need to improve on that otherwise may have not been picked up in the school environment.

During a discussion in September 2015 that included students who have participated in the Kingston Toy Library volunteering sessions, students' expressed that they wanted to volunteer at Kingston Toy library to; "try something new, to help the community and to help make the people's jobs easier that work there". These students also felt that these opportunities will help them in the future as it has "provided them with a taste of the real world, expanded their learning and helped them learn about what a workplace is like, helped them to communicate better, be more organised, and follow instructions better".



One student highlighted that during a volunteer session they were working in one particular area the whole time, this student identified that he would prefer to move around and change tasks from time to time but also acknowledged that in a workplace you do not get to choose tasks and may have to do the same task over and over. This was a good insight into how this particular student is using this experience to practice and develop skills that could be used in a future workplace.

Some of the students were asked what their favourite part about volunteering at Kingston Toy Library was. Their responses were:

1. "I leave feeling good as I have not done it for money but to help people"
2. "I get satisfaction for helping out"
3. "I get to try something new"
4. "Sorting out the toys challenges me"
5. "Putting away the toys feels helpful"
6. "Helping putting away the toys"

The Coordinator of Kingston Toy Library, Catherine, has provided the following feedback and comments relating to the students' involvement with the organisation:

"The students have been a wonderful benefit to us. They have been working on a few areas; on a long term project of building a photo catalogue of our collection, assisting with general day to day tasks, and completing minor repairs. All these tasks assist with the general upkeep of the toy library as well as assisting with improving our service.

The first stage of our long term project is getting photos of 1500+ items while making sure the image is focused, on a good angle, and well lit. Other tasks have included keeping up our standards of maintaining a well presented library by making sure everything is in the correct place, checking toys are complete and cleaning toys.

The students can follow the instructions and rarely ask for follow up assistance. I have been impressed by the quality and speed by which students complete tasks assigned. Great job everyone".

## more success stories

### Michael

is an active man in his forties who loves to work. Michael has two work experience positions, one at a mechanic's workshop and one in a café/minimart. Through his work experience positions, Michael has become well known in his local community and has developed a strong sense of self-esteem. People at his local gym once commented "I know you – you work at that place on Hawthorn Road!". He replied with a beaming grin "Yeah that's right, that's me, yeah I do".



Robyn, Michael's support coordinator\*, says:

Michael thoroughly enjoys being 'One of the blokes' at the mechanic's workshop – he had an interest in cars and his support person mentioned that Michael helped him clean the car. I thought that Michael may have further interests than just cleaning cars and asked him if he would like to get his hands dirty and work at a garage. Michael enthusiastically said 'Yes!'

Robyn set about finding a garage for Michael to gain some experience. In no time at all, he was hands on changing tyres, checking the oil, charging batteries and loving it. At the beginning of each work experience position, Robyn offered to support Michael, however both businesses chose to teach Michael the work tasks themselves.

\* Support coordinators are responsible for ensuring a person with a disability is connected with the various supports needed to live a fully included life in the community.

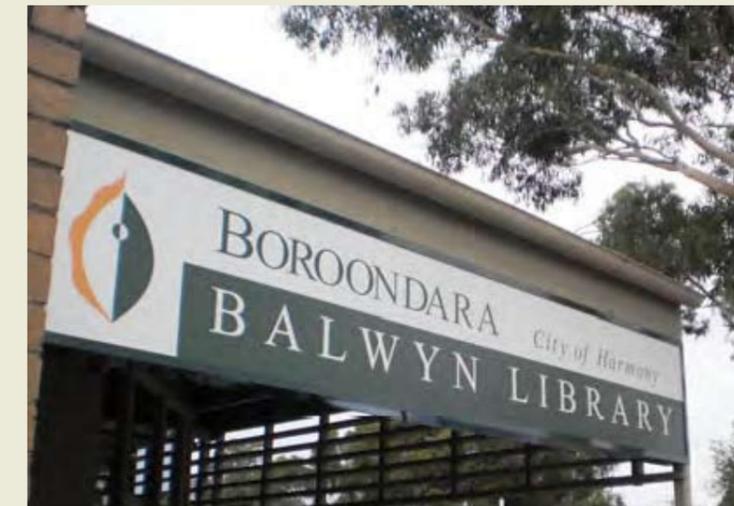
### Laura

is a staff member at Boroondara Libraries. Laura coordinates the delivery of library books to local community members and is assisted by a team of volunteers, including a person with a disability supported by Inclusion Melbourne.

Boroondara's volunteer policy includes the clauses:

**Boroondara Council has a volunteer policy intended to encourage and support the involvement of volunteers in the development and delivery of Council's social, environmental and community services.**

**Volunteers have the same rights in relation to equal opportunity as paid workers.**



Laura writes:

The help provided by the volunteers for the home library service is invaluable to council and is greatly appreciated by the recipients of the service as well. It is hoped that the program will also be of great benefit to the volunteers involved in terms of developing networks, social interaction and sharing in the development of the local community.

The libraries' commitment to an inclusive ethos allows people with a disability to participate and use their skills in the valued role of linking the library with the community. More than simply delivering books, the volunteers represent the public face of the libraries to the people they visit.

## more success stories

### Toby

is a young man who loves playing cricket and getting fit.

Toby has several volunteer roles, one of which would make any Melbourne sports fan green with envy! He is a volunteer tour guide at the Melbourne Cricket Ground.



Rebecca, a support coordinator at Inclusion Melbourne, explains the background:

Toby started at the MCG in January 2009. The connection was made by looking into Toby's wants, dreams and hopes for the future and his passions, one being sport and, as he says, 'giving back to others'.

Rebecca approached Peter, the Tourism Volunteer Program Co-ordinator at the Melbourne Cricket Club. Toby started fortnightly with support until he was established in the role and the organisation. He soon felt that he could attend independently and this has since grown to a weekly opportunity.

Following on from his work at the MCG, Toby began volunteering at a primary school assisting the Physical Education teacher. Toby attended this school and is known by many teachers. The principal was very welcoming. To help establish Toby, a paid support professional provided occasional coaching and advice for several months until he was confident in the role.



## a case study

### Community Visitors Scheme - Inclusion Melbourne

The Community Visitors Scheme (CVS) sees volunteers making regular visits to people who are socially isolated or are at risk of social isolation or loneliness. CVS provides friendship and companionship by matching aged care recipients with volunteer visitors. Inclusion Melbourne is funded to provide one-on-one visits to home care package recipients. Any care recipient whose quality of life could be improved by the companionship of a regular community visitor can be referred to the CVS by:

- Their aged care provider
- A family member
- A friend or
- Themselves



#### Julia and Sharon

Julia and Sharon met about a year ago. Julia lives alone and has Schizophrenia. She is very cautious in her approach to new people. Sharon is a speech pathologist and is in her 20s. She has been extremely successful in creating a bond with Julia and they enjoy a variety of activities together including baking, cooking and going out for coffees. Sharon also utilises mindful colouring which the pair seem to enjoy as an activity. Aged care provider that referred Julia has contacted Inclusion Melbourne multiple times to give compliments on how well Sharon has been able to communicate and build a relationship with Julia.



#### Anka and Svetlana

Anka is a 79 year old lady from Serbia. Previously Anka has had issues with her regular home care workers both due to poor English and cultural differences. Anka's family live quite far from her so she is isolated most of the time and spends most of her time alone at home due to mobility issues. Svetlana is from Serbia, studies and works in Melbourne and lives with her aunt. From the first visit, Anka and Svetlana became close. They enjoy having a chat to with each other and Anka enjoys having a regular visitor every week. Anka has been invited over to Svetlana's place and has been introduced to her family. Svetlana is new to Australia and feels Anka is like a grandmother to her. Anka also feels very close to Svetlana and calls her "my angel".

## 6 creating volunteer opportunities

The first step is to consider where or how someone can add benefit to your organisation, workplace or community group.

- What does your business, organisation or charity need that could be of interest to the broader community? What people-oriented tasks need attention?
- Do current volunteers have the range of skills needed to cover all tasks? Could one of your organisation's needs be met by a person who needs some work experience?
- Does your business or organisation have extra resources or goods that could be connected to people in need in the local community? Do you need a volunteer to help with distribution?

If your organisation needs advice, contact your local disability support organisation.

### Developing a role

Volunteers deserve a valued role and this depends on the expectations and aspirations of the individual. For example, some people (including those with a disability) enjoy basic repetitive tasks while others prefer lots of contact with people. Though your organisation may require a specific outcome from a volunteer, it may be possible to negotiate the fine details once someone has been recruited and their personal preferences have been determined. Research has shown that small businesses often experience difficulty in recognising how volunteers can help. For further information, please contact your local Volunteer Resource Centre.

Volunteers will also receive different titles depending on the type of organisation. Cultural institutions, community groups, not for profit organisations, charities, businesses, local services such as libraries and large corporates will use a variety of terms: work experience staff member, intern, project officer, volunteer, community advocate, or team member.



### Abilities, not disabilities

Don't assume that volunteers with a disability will fit any stereotype you may have regarding physical, intellectual or behavioural limitations. Appearances can be deceiving! Sometimes, a person may need extra help learning a task but will excel at performing it once it has been explained and demonstrated clearly. The person's support network can be involved in helping the person settle into the role.

There are many quick and cost-effective methods of opening up positions in your business or organisation to volunteers with a disability, even volunteers with profound physical or intellectual limitations. Most of these methods can be put into action when a volunteer first joins your organisation. Often, it is the ethos of the organisation and the communication around a position that needs to be modified, rather than the core tasks. Of course, for some organisations this may require a culture shift, but it is one that is being made across Australia.

### Preparing your organisation or group

Businesses and organisations need not fear a long process of tedious adjustment and retraining when seeking to be more inclusive of people with a disability. New volunteers and their host organisations usually work together to reach agreements naturally. Here are some things to consider:

- **Training** – Is your staff and volunteer training flexible enough to include any support workers who may accompany your new volunteer? Your local council can provide disability training for your staff members if required. Please contact the MetroAccess worker in your local area
- **Costs** – Volunteers may not receive a wage, but they still require occasional support, training and supervision. You may also choose to offer recognition gifts as a way to say thank you
- **Insurance** – If your volunteer is supported by an organisation such as Inclusion Melbourne, the volunteer will already be covered by insurance. Most community organisations also have Public Liability and Personal Accident insurance coverage in place
- **Flexibility** – a 'one size fits all' approach is not helpful when developing roles for people with a disability. As new volunteers settle in, new boundaries are usually established naturally

## 7 assessing a volunteer program



### Assess the current program

Assessment of your current volunteer program will help you identify strengths and weaknesses and any gaps that need to be filled. It will give you the necessary material to plan for recruitment.

A profile of the volunteers in your organisation will identify, in broad terms, who volunteers for your organisation and whether you are using the skills of your volunteers effectively.

If you are a volunteer coordinator and would like to review your program, consider the following questions:

- Who volunteers for the organisation? Is there a dominance of a particular gender or age group? Why?
- What motivates people to volunteer with your organisation?
- What do volunteers gain from their involvement with your organisation? (e.g. social contact, skill development, networking, career kick-start, steps to paid roles in your organisation or elsewhere)
- How often do volunteers give their time for the organisation? (e.g. one day per week, four hours per week)
- Are volunteers flexible as a group? Are they willing to fill in during emergencies?
- Are volunteers willing to attend training? Do they request training?
- Are position descriptions written according to skill requirements? How flexible are your positions?
- Are all volunteer positions filled? If not, which roles are difficult to recruit for?
- Do unfilled positions need volunteers with high or low skill levels?
- Are volunteers asked to do tasks that paid staff don't like doing?
- What individual characteristics do current volunteers have?



- Do volunteers appear to enjoy their work? Do they get on well with other volunteers and paid staff?
- Are volunteers provided with variety in their work? Can they change roles if they wish?
- Is there a career path in the organisation for volunteers?
- Can the organisation accommodate volunteers with skills that exceed requirements?

### Assess the support systems

Your assessment should also look at the support systems in place for your volunteer program.

- Has an adequate budget been set aside to support a successful volunteer program?
- Does the budget include reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses?
- Is there a training plan for volunteers that incorporates orientation, pre-placement training and provision for ongoing development?
- Is the volunteer policy current and up to date?
- Are the procedures to support the implementation of the policy written up?
- Is management fully supportive of the volunteer program?
- Are volunteers well supported, including support for volunteers with a disability?
- Does the organisation have adequate and appropriate insurance coverage?
- How are the terms of the insurance conveyed to volunteers?
- Does the organisation provide a safe and healthy work environment in which volunteers' privacy and wellbeing are ensured?
- Do volunteers have access to relevant and intelligible organisational policies and procedures?
- If your volunteers work with people, are they provided with a full set of preparatory documents, such as codes of conduct and consistent approaches?

## 8 promoting volunteer opportunities



This section outlines possible processes for developing a recruitment campaign, including ongoing recruitment of volunteers, screening of volunteers and promoting opportunities for volunteers.

### Recruitment campaign

Being proactive is the cornerstone of any effective recruitment strategy. Your organisation should consider a range of approaches and methods to encourage people of all abilities and backgrounds to consider volunteering in your organisation.

A successful recruitment campaign is dependent on a combination of **planning**, **targeting** your audience, **assessing** and **inducting** applicants, then **evaluating** the process for future improvement.

In promoting volunteer opportunities, your strategy should adopt the use of different approaches. Your approaches and methods should ensure that someone with an impairment or long-term health condition is not prevented from finding out about or applying for a volunteer opportunity.

Consider placing advertisements in the following locations:

- Local newspaper
- Volunteer newsletter
- Disability Organisations
- Universities
- Libraries
- Organisation Web page
- Community groups ( tennis clubs, bowls clubs )
- Religious Organisations
- Schools
- Internally
- Community radio
- Local Council – Volunteer Resource Centre
- [www.volunteeringvictoria.org.au](http://www.volunteeringvictoria.org.au)
- [www.govolunteer.com.au](http://www.govolunteer.com.au)



### Make recruitment accessible

Volunteer Coordinators should consider:

- Discussing opportunities informally and providing additional information to volunteers when required
- Clearly outlining the training and support that will be available to prospective volunteers
- Preparing and providing additional support to address any concerns and ensure continuing development. (e.g. liaising with staff at Centrelink in relation to benefit rules and compliance)
- Offering the volunteer a mentor buddy, especially during the induction stage
- Discussing potential barriers which might exist and jointly developing adjustments to address them

### Other considerations

Ensure your organisation has identified clear, concise volunteer duties that will be rewarding to the volunteer and of benefit to the organisation.

It is important to match the volunteer's skills and abilities to the specific tasks involved in a position. This will provide a rewarding outcome for the volunteer and a productive result for the organisation.

It is important to promote a positive organisational culture and supportive attitudes among staff members in order to encourage inclusive volunteering.

## 9 assessing volunteers

### Proof of identity

Organisations should sight original documentary evidence of identity such as birth certificate, current passport or driver license.

At least 2 documents must be sighted and the particulars crosschecked.

### Interviews

Organisations and businesses should interview volunteers using similar processes to those used for prospective staff interviews. However, interview structure and methods can be modified to cater for the needs of the person involved. Using online video technology for remote applicants, inviting supportive third persons, using non-verbal interview techniques, and other creative face to face options are all worth of consideration.

Some organisations ask prospective volunteers to complete Criminal Records Check forms (see below) when they arrive for their interview. Other organisations ask volunteers to bring a portfolio of work to showcase their skills.

### Referee checks

As with paid employment, organisations should obtain details of two professional referees (not friends or family) to call once a preferred candidate has been identified. Referees can be asked questions about the person's suitability for the volunteer role, past experience in similar workplaces, and questions about reliability, interpersonal skills and any relevant concerns. Use standardised referee check forms to ensure consistency.

### Police checks

Police checks can be conducted directly by Victoria Police or through CrimCheck. This process checks for information recorded against an individual, including all criminal offences and any outstanding warrants within Victoria or interstate. Prior to any offer of a position, the applicant must complete a police check. The applicant must consent to the police check being completed by signing a Consent to Criminal Records Check form and be made aware that the check will only be conducted if s/he is to be offered a volunteer position.

There are three options for obtaining a police check:

- 1 Apply direct to Victoria Police for a National Police Certificate by completing a form and submitting copies of the volunteer's identification along with the application fee (unless eligible for reduced fees – see below). The application and results will be returned directly to the volunteer for privacy reasons. For information please visit [www.police.vic.gov.au](http://www.police.vic.gov.au)

- 2 Community organisations can obtain police checks for their volunteers at a reduced rate. You must first apply to Victoria Police for a Community Volunteer Fee (CVF) number – an application form is available on the [www.police.vic.gov.au](http://www.police.vic.gov.au)

- 3 CrimCheck is an automated police checking service available for not-for-profit organisations. It may be a faster and easier service to use for your organisation. For more information about CrimCheck please visit [www.crimcheck.org.au](http://www.crimcheck.org.au)

Organisations wishing to register for CrimCheck should apply for a CVF number beforehand. Organisations generally bear the cost of the police check, not volunteers.

### Working with Children Checks

All organisations must be aware of their obligations under the Working with Children Act 2005 and ensure volunteers have a current Working with Children Check if required. Those that don't are breaking the law and face serious penalties.

Volunteers need to complete an application and lodge it at a participating Australia Post retail outlet within Victoria, with identification and a passport photo. There is no fee for volunteers to obtain a Working with Children Check.

For more information or to apply for an application form, please visit: [www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au](http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au)

Any environment in which services are delivered to minors will require volunteers to have a Working with Children Check. There are several exemptions that allow volunteers to work in the presence of minors without Working with Children Checks, such as in a workplace with colleagues or other employees who are minors. However, it is incumbent upon volunteer coordinators and volunteers to examine the legislation and take all necessary steps to find out whether a volunteer is covered by an exemption.

Details about the legislation can be found at: [www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/home/resources/legislation/](http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/home/resources/legislation/)

### Keep it to yourself

In most circumstances the law prohibits you from sharing information about a Volunteer's Working with Children Check. If you believe it is important to disclose what you know about a volunteer, it is recommended you get legal advice first.

Criminal records are subject to privacy laws. Organisations that involve volunteers are bound by these laws according to several factors – for more information visit Fast Facts: Protecting the Privacy of Volunteers at: [www.volunteeringvictoria.org.au](http://www.volunteeringvictoria.org.au)

## 10 supporting volunteers

Providing induction, orientation, mentoring and training for volunteers is essential to support them in their role.

### Induction

Induction is one of the most important steps in the recruitment process of new volunteers. It provides volunteers with a general picture of the organisation, its staff, and the work it does. Induction should also include discussion on how the volunteer's role fits into the organisation.

#### Preparation required

It is important to prepare for the arrival of new volunteers well in advance and ensure that other staff in the organisation are informed. Plan for an induction session for new volunteers. This might be a regularly occurring formal event if several volunteers are starting at the same time, such as a classroom training session, or a less formal process if there are only one or two new volunteers.

#### Conducting an induction session

An orientation session should cover a number of important points, including:

- An expression of appreciation for the volunteer's decision to join the organisation
- An introduction to the organisation's volunteer policy
- Information on relevant procedures
- Emergency procedures and grievance procedures
- Details of the organisation's operating hours and public holidays
- A copy of the volunteer's Position Description
- A statement of the volunteer's rights and responsibilities
- Instructions for reporting critical incidents, injuries or accidents; and
- A copy of insurance information (if appropriate)

### Orientation

Orientation is vital in ensuring a successful match with your organisation. Volunteers with a disability need to know that they are as important to the organisation or business as any other staff member or volunteer.

Some people with a disability require assistance in the community, while others have unique methods of learning and communication. Learn each person's style and adapt where possible. If you are unsure, ask one of the person's friends, family or support staff for advice.

Some information you might like to share during orientation includes:

- An outline of operating hours and public holidays
- A clear explanation of workplace rules. (Volunteers with a disability are subject to the same rules as every other staff member. There is no excuse for bad behaviour, particularly if support is provided for the volunteer. Being lax about conduct may seem acceptable in some circumstances, however it may not help volunteers learn and grow)
- The organisation's safety and emergency procedures (if relevant)
- Clear step-by-step procedures for tasks in multiple forms – visual, spoken, demonstrated
- Thorough explanation of responsibilities and information about who to go to when the volunteer needs help!

Please consider the following helpful tips when demonstrating tasks to volunteers with a disability:

- Ask questions!
- Encourage the volunteer to ask questions
- Offer assistance if it appears necessary, but don't assume that a person with a disability needs or wants it
- Ensure that tasks and instructions are clear and specific
- When explaining a new task or concept, use open questions to check understanding. Go slow if necessary. Solid explanations save time later!
- Use concrete examples
- Provide as much 'hands on' experience as possible
- Remember that some people require time to process information
- Consider providing handouts or simple written or illustrated directions to reinforce steps in instructions
- Provide enough time for volunteers to communicate
- Use plain language
- Break tasks down into small achievable segments
- Give praise often and when deserved
- If the person has a support worker, speak to the volunteer, not to the support worker

### Feedback

Feedback interviews are a good way of regularly gauging how volunteers with a disability are faring in their volunteer experience. If a volunteer is being supported by a staff member or another volunteer, or the volunteer has a support coordinator at another location, involvement of the support person may be helpful too.



### Mentoring

Mentoring is a reciprocal relationship which involves a more experienced person helping a less experienced person to achieve their goals. A mentor is a person who will listen, provide advice and guidance to volunteer mentees when requested.

#### The mentoring partnership

A successful mentoring partnership is an experience to be enjoyed. There is no formula for how often a volunteer/mentor pair makes contact. The parties may choose to meet regularly, or they may prefer to meet when there is the need to focus on a particular issue. The parties may agree on a set time for each meeting, or they may be more comfortable with a less formal arrangement. These and other issues must be worked out by individual mentorship pairs.

A written mentoring agreement can help clarify roles and expectations. This agreement sets out the duration of the relationship, the areas it will focus on, the likely frequency of meetings and the maximum length of each meeting.

#### What kind of person is a mentor?

Volunteer mentors should have the following attributes:

- Ability to understand and empathise with the volunteer
- Be comfortable with themselves and with who they are
- Be able to see the volunteer as a separate person with different needs and goals, and must be comfortable with those differences
- Be honest, committed and respectful of their volunteer
- Be able to set standards of performance, and have the ability to give the volunteer the assistance and confidence to reach them
- Be trusted by the volunteer
- Respect privacy and ensure all information remains confidential
- Have a personal style that is compatible with the volunteer's needs; and
- Be a person who will enjoy helping the volunteer develop skills and knowledge and be able to share knowledge and experience openly and honestly



### Evaluating the mentor program

It is necessary to ensure that the mentoring program remains relevant. Issues to consider include; changes in organisational needs, new directions or goals, and roles of participants etc.

Evaluation of volunteer and volunteer mentoring partnerships is also important. Feedback from those involved gives information that can be used to adjust some components of orientation, the partnership, and determine its success or lack of success.

Feedback can provide valuable information for this partnership and potential future partnerships. It can be obtained either verbally or through a questionnaire.

Themes or questions that can be useful to include in the questionnaire include:

- How do you rate the volunteer orientation session?
- Is the partnership achieving its goals?
- Are conflicts resolved?
- In what ways can the participants contribute? (for example, volunteer work, meetings, feedback, suggestions)
- How could the partnership improve?

Evaluation also allows you to assess your own performance as a trainer. As a trainer you should always be seeking to improve your skills and knowledge. Effective feedback on your performance is crucial to that learning process.

This information can be obtained from the volunteer, the volunteer agency and a volunteer mentor. Feedback information can provide valuable information for this partnership and potential future mentor partnerships.

Taken from Sustainable Volunteers for people with a Disability Steering Committee, 2011

## Training and development

Training and development is critical in ensuring that volunteers have the skills to perform their role and to also ensure they remain interested and involved.

### Types of training

Each individual's training and development needs should be assessed both in terms of effective performance in the role, and their development and retention ability. As with employees, training helps volunteers feel valued and gives them confidence that they can undertake the role.

The types of training that may be relevant for all volunteers as well as staff may include:

### Induction / orientation

- Transport, driving and/or use of the organisation's vehicles
- Organisation's structure and processes
- Customer service

### Occupational Health and Safety (OHS)

- Fire drills/emergency evacuation
- First aid
- Infection control
- Manual handling
- Personal hygiene
- Incident reporting
- Medications
- Introduction to the OHS staff member

### Role specific / site specific

- Administration processes
- Fundraising
- Maintenance
- Committee/ Board of management

### Other

- Communication
- Privacy
- Duty of care
- Equipment (client specific)

## Training Organisations

Staff may be required to undertake training to increase knowledge and awareness of disability and build their capacity to demonstrate inclusive behaviours. Training will provide staff with skills, resources and ongoing support, to enable taking on volunteers with a disability in the workplace.

### Disability Awareness (for other staff)

- Intellectual disability
- Physical disabilities
- Vision or hearing impairment
- Communication or speech impairment
- Cognitive disability
- Mental health wellbeing
- Personal space and conduct

## Working with people with a disability

People with a disability come from all sectors of the community and reflect a diverse range of ages and cultural backgrounds. People with a disability do not want their impairments, diagnosis or disability to become the defining aspect of their life. The most appropriate terminology, 'person with a disability' puts the emphasis on the person, not the limitation or disability.

The most effective strategy is to treat all people in the same way as you would wish to be treated yourself – with respect, politeness and consideration.

### Learning styles

There are a number of different learning styles, including visual, auditory and kinaesthetic. Some people will learn by a mixture of learning styles. It is important to determine a volunteers' learning style so you can help them learn new skills in their position.

### Helpful hints

- Use concrete examples
- Ensure that tasks and instructions are clear and specific
- Provide as much 'hands on' experiences as possible
- Provide logical, clear instructions
- Slow down the pace when necessary
- Complete one step at a time before moving to the next step

- Consider providing handouts or simple written instructions to reinforce steps in instructions
- Provide enough time for volunteers to communicate
- Be prepared to explore alternative methods of communication
- Encourage volunteers to ask questions
- Provide information in small amounts
- Use plain English
- Break tasks into small achievable concepts and
- Give praise often and genuinely

### Courtesies

When meeting, speaking or socialising with people with a disability, the following are helpful hints to put everyone at ease:

- Look and speak directly with the person with a disability, even if a support person accompanies them
- If the person with a disability offers to shake your hand, respond accordingly
- If you know the person's name, address the person by their name
- Ask the person with a disability the best way to communicate if you are unsure
- Offer assistance if it appears necessary, but don't assume that a person with a disability needs or will accept it. Wait for acceptance and instruction before proceeding

### Terminology

In terms of preferred terminology, the following phrases are offered:

- Person with a disability
- Person with a physical disability
- Person who uses a wheelchair
- Person with cerebral palsy
- Accessible parking and toilets
- Person with a vision impairment

It is OK to say "deaf", as this is a term that is often preferred by the deaf community. However, it can be helpful to ask a person first!

## Reviewing a volunteering program

A review or evaluation system allows for formal and informal assessment of the volunteer program. This review should take into account the requirements of the volunteer, the organisation and what the volunteering opportunity is intended to achieve.

Methods of reviewing a volunteer program may include:

### One-to-one sessions

Regular one-to-one sessions with the supervisor or manager will provide an opportunity to monitor performance effectively, to discuss what's working and if there are any additional development needs or problems that may have arisen.

### Survey questionnaire

A survey questionnaire is a form used to record information directly from volunteers. It may be used as an interview tool, in which the person reads it and records their responses. Alternatively, the volunteer can read the survey questionnaire and record their responses on the survey questionnaire form.

### Focus groups

A focus group is a group discussion with volunteers focusing on a particular topic of interest, for example, reviewing volunteer experiences at an organisation. A focus group interview enables the facilitator of the group to gain an understanding of any issues, explore individual's attitudes, knowledge, satisfaction and interest.

## Policies and procedures

Organisations need to develop policies and procedures that encourage and enable people with a disability to contribute as volunteers.

Volunteering policy and procedures usually sit among the organisations' broader policy and procedures documents and will need to include references to occupational health and safety and code of conduct.

Policy and procedure documents usually demonstrate a clear and logical process, and should demonstrate compliance with various standards.

Volunteering policy and procedure documents can contain references (or online links) to the forms used in a volunteering program, for example, consent forms and induction checklists.

This manual also provides examples of organisational Policies and Procedures for volunteering. Organisations can amend them for use in their context.



## Privacy and confidentiality

It is important to remember that all people have the right to privacy. People coming in contact with other people will hear and see many things while completing their designated duties – whether in paid or volunteer work.

It is important to ensure that:

- The dignity and privacy of each person is protected at all times
- Details of clients and their families, including name, address, telephone number and all aspects of the person's financial, medical, physical and mental status are not spoken about to anyone
- Always ask permission before revealing information about a person you work with, during the course of your duties
- All care is taken when receiving information that the information is not accidentally disclosed to other people who may be present at the time

Privacy rights include:

- Only directly relevant personal information will be collected
- When collecting personal information the person involved will be informed:
  - As soon as possible
  - Of the purpose for the collection of the information
  - Whether the information is required by law and
  - Of anyone to whom the information will be given
- Only relevant, up to date and complete personal information will be kept
- Information records will be protected against loss, unauthorised access, modification or disclosure
- Personal information no longer relevant will be destroyed

Taken from Sustainable Volunteers for people with a Disability Steering Committee, 2011

## Discrimination and harassment

It is against the law to discriminate against a person on the grounds of their ethnic background, age, gender, sexuality, religious belief, and health or disability issues related to the task at hand.

Discrimination takes two forms: direct and indirect. Both are against the law. Direct discrimination is treatment that is obviously unfair. Indirect discrimination is rules, policies or practices that are the 'same' for everyone but has an unfair effect on a particular group.

### Harassment

Harassment is a form of discrimination and is defined as unwelcome or unreciprocated behaviour that makes an employee, volunteer or customer feel belittled, intimidated, offended or apprehensive. It is against the law to discriminate in relation to voluntary employment, paid employment and delivery of services.

### Disability discrimination

Disability discrimination is unfair treatment or harassment of:

- A person who has a disability
- A person who is perceived to have disability
- A person who is associated with a person with a disability

Disability includes physical, intellectual and psychiatric disabilities, learning and emotional disorders and illnesses that cause significant mid-long term impairment.

It may not be unlawful to discriminate on the ground of disability if the person, (due to his or her disability), would be unable to carry out allocated requirements of the particular job. For example:

- Direct discrimination: refusing to employ a person on the basis that they have an intellectual disability and cannot read, when reading is not an essential part of the job
- Indirect discrimination: to require all employees to have a level of physical fitness/ability that is not necessary to do the particular job

## Reimbursement of expenses

It is important for organisations to have a policy on the reimbursement of volunteers' out-of-pocket expenses. More than any other issue, out-of-pocket expenses can be a source of conflict or concern in volunteer programs. These problems can arise when organisations fail to have a clear policy on the matter and fail to communicate that policy to their volunteers.

Your organisation's policy on out-of-pocket expenses will depend on the circumstances of your volunteer program. For some agencies, your budget will be limited, however as a guiding principle, it's important to stress that volunteers shouldn't have to incur costs in order to volunteer. The following is an example of a policy statement on out-of-pocket expenses.

### Example of Policy Statement:

- Volunteers will be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses incurred when undertaking authorised activities on behalf of the organisation
- Volunteers may be reimbursed for the use of public transport to or from approved activities, such as meetings and training
- The use of private vehicles for approved activities will be reimbursed at the rate of \$ \_\_\_\_ per kilometre
- Reimbursement will be made only where prior approval has been given and where relevant receipts and/or other documentation are produced

As with all areas of volunteer policy, the success of your policy on out-of-pocket expenses will depend largely on how well you make volunteers aware of it, along with the procedures and guidelines they need to follow in order to claim reimbursement.

Like all policies, it's important to revise and update your policy on reimbursement regularly, including any specific rates of reimbursement for things like distance travelled.

The Australian Tax Office produces a guide, Volunteers and Tax, to help individuals and not-for-profit (NFP) organisations that deal with volunteers. The guide explains the tax treatment of transactions that commonly occur between NFP's and their volunteers. For more information visit:

[www.ato.gov.au/nonprofit/Your-workers/Volunteers](http://www.ato.gov.au/nonprofit/Your-workers/Volunteers)

Volunteering Australia  
Australian Taxation Office

## Insurance

As volunteers are not paid employees, they are not covered by Work Cover. Volunteering Australia recommends that volunteers are appropriately insured by the not-for-profit organisation to undertake work required of them.

For more information about the rights of volunteers in Victoria, visit: [volunteer.vic.gov.au/information-for-volunteers](http://volunteer.vic.gov.au/information-for-volunteers)

The most common types of insurance cover are:

### Public liability

To cover an organisation for its legal liability to third parties for personal injury or property damage caused by an occurrence in connection with the insured organisations business activities.

### Personal accident insurance

To cover volunteers for any out of pocket expenses following accidental injury, disability or death while carrying out their work on behalf of the organisation. The type of insurance would usually cover loss of income.

### Professional indemnity insurance

To compensate the organisation for loss incurred through a claim made against the organisation for breach of professional duty arising from negligence, errors, omissions, defamation, loss of records or documents, dishonest acts etc. by volunteer or paid staff.

### Motor vehicle comprehensive insurance

To cover vehicles owned or driven by volunteers, for loss or damage to the vehicle or third party property.

Volunteering Australia



## Volunteering and diversity

"Around 6.3 million Australians over the age of 18 volunteer, which equates to around 35% of the total population. A National Survey of culturally diverse volunteers in 2004-2005 shows that while the rate of formal volunteering in mainstream not-for-profits by people of diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds is lower than this, at around 23%, 56% of volunteers of CALD background volunteer in both their own communities AND the broader community."

Volunteering Australia, Involving Volunteers from Diverse Cultural and Language Backgrounds in your Organisation, Melbourne, 2007, p 4.

Although Australia has become a vibrant, diverse and inclusive country in which to work and volunteer, people from CALD (culturally and linguistically diverse) backgrounds, LGBTI (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex) people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people living with mental illness, older Australians and people with disability often require support to ensure that they have equal access to opportunities in the community. Inclusion is about providing non-patronising support and removing barriers to participation.

The following organisations and agencies have helpful resources for volunteer coordinators wishing to improve access for all:

### Volunteering Australia

Visit [www.volunteeringaustralia.org/research-and-advocacy/publications](http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/research-and-advocacy/publications) for material relating to culturally and linguistically diverse volunteering.

**Action on Disability within Ethnic Communities (ADEC)**  
Phone: 1800 626 078 | [www.adec.org.au](http://www.adec.org.au)

**Adult Multicultural Education Services (AMES)**  
Service for newly arrived refugees and migrants. The organisation also has many volunteer opportunities. AMES has developed a guide to Engaging CALD communities in volunteering in Victoria:  
[www.volunteer.vic.gov.au/engaging-cald-communities-in-volunteering-in-victoria-a-guide-for-volunteer-organisations/](http://www.volunteer.vic.gov.au/engaging-cald-communities-in-volunteering-in-victoria-a-guide-for-volunteer-organisations/)  
Phone: 13 26 37 | [www.ames.net.au](http://www.ames.net.au)

**Centre for Multicultural Youth (CMY)**  
Victorian not-for-profit organisation supporting young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds to build better lives in Australia.  
Phone: (03) 9340 3700 | [www.cmy.net.au](http://www.cmy.net.au)

**Victorian Multicultural Commission (VMC)**  
[www.multicultural.vic.gov.au](http://www.multicultural.vic.gov.au)

**Gay and Lesbian Health Victoria (GLHV)**  
A Victorian LGBTI health and wellbeing policy and resource unit focussing on sexual health, ageing, LGBTI youth and inclusive practice.  
[www.glhv.org.au/lgbti-inclusive-practice](http://www.glhv.org.au/lgbti-inclusive-practice)

**Victorian Equal Opportunity & Human Rights Commission (VEOHRC)**  
The Commission has a dedicated online guide to making a complaint: [www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au/index.php/making-a-complaint](http://www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au/index.php/making-a-complaint)

**SANE**  
An independent NGO based in Melbourne that conducts research, training and education around mental health and stigma. For accessible resources, visit: [www.sane.org/mental-health-and-illness/facts-and-guidelines](http://www.sane.org/mental-health-and-illness/facts-and-guidelines)  
Ph: (03) 9682 5933 | [www.sane.org.au](http://www.sane.org.au)

**beyondblue**  
A leading national mental health organisation with high quality resources and fact sheets:  
[www.beyondblue.org.au/resources](http://www.beyondblue.org.au/resources)

## Gaining additional assistance

Support for people with a disability is individually funded by the National Disability Insurance Scheme. This ensures that people with a disability have choice and control in designing their supports to help them participate and give back to the community. The personalised support model used by organisations like Inclusion Melbourne allows people with a disability to receive direct one-to-one support from a paid worker or volunteer for a portion of their week.

Volunteers who are supported by services such as Inclusion Melbourne will usually come with a strong support network including professional staff, support coordination and volunteers. This support means that local businesses and organisations that take on volunteers with a disability will have access to assistance from the support service if concerns arise. Support services can also organise training, transport and other practical arrangements for volunteers with a disability to make the transition to a new volunteer role in the community smoother.



# 11 rights and practice toolkit

## More about disability and inclusion

The question "What is disability?" once had a set of predictable and concrete answers drawn from a medical perspective. Disability was often viewed in terms of experienced limitation caused by physical, psychological or mental impairment acquired genetically, in the womb, at birth or at a later point. These answers gave rise to a system of institutions, doctors and patients, treatment and seclusion. Some Australians went to schools where people with a disability were integrated into regular classes, though it was still very clear who had a disability and who did not. For others, disability is about wheelchair signs, ramps and translators. Some people who receive a disability pension in Australia often relate to the notions above, while others do not. For many, disability is experienced as an inability to work or function in the midst of difficult circumstances.

The British social model, established in the 1970s, answers the question in a different way. A British disability advocacy group expresses its view about physical disability in the following extract:

"... In our view, it is society which disables... people [with a disability]. Disability is something imposed on top of our impairments by the way we are unnecessarily isolated and excluded from full participation in society. ...We define... disability as the disadvantage or restriction of activity caused by a contemporary social organisation which takes little or no account of people who have... impairments and thus excludes them from participation in the mainstream of social activities." (UPIAS statement, reproduced in Oliver, M. [1996]. Understanding disability: from theory to practice. Basingstoke: Macmillan, p. 22.)

In other words, viewing disability as a set of limitations requiring labelling is an out-dated approach. This is emphasised by Australian and Victorian legislation and disability planning that mandates the building of an inclusive society in which acceptance, support and equal access are provided to all people so that they can reach their full potential.

In addition, disability services such as Inclusion Melbourne are compelled (under the Disability Act 2006) to play a key role in the inclusion of people with a disability. The Disability Act states that "persons with a disability have the same rights and responsibilities as other members of the community and should be empowered to exercise those rights and responsibilities." These include the right to:

- Respect for their human worth and dignity as individuals
- Live free from abuse, neglect or exploitation
- Realise their individual capacity for physical, social, emotional and intellectual development
- Exercise control over their own lives

The Act also states that disability services (like Inclusion Melbourne) should:

- Advance the inclusion and participation in the community of persons with a disability with the aim of achieving their individual aspirations
- Be flexible and responsive to the individual needs of persons with a disability
- Maximise the choice and independence of persons with a disability

and that:

- Persons with an intellectual disability have the right to opportunities to develop and maintain skills and to participate in activities that enable them to achieve valued roles in the community
- Services for persons with an intellectual disability should be designed and provided in a manner that ensures developmental opportunities exist to enable the realisation of their individual capacities

The chart below sets out some of the practices and techniques that are available to volunteer, disability support professionals and support organisations. The next few pages will outline those practices that may be employed by staff and volunteers in the disability sector. Organisations that would like to know more about these are encouraged to contact Inclusion Melbourne directly.



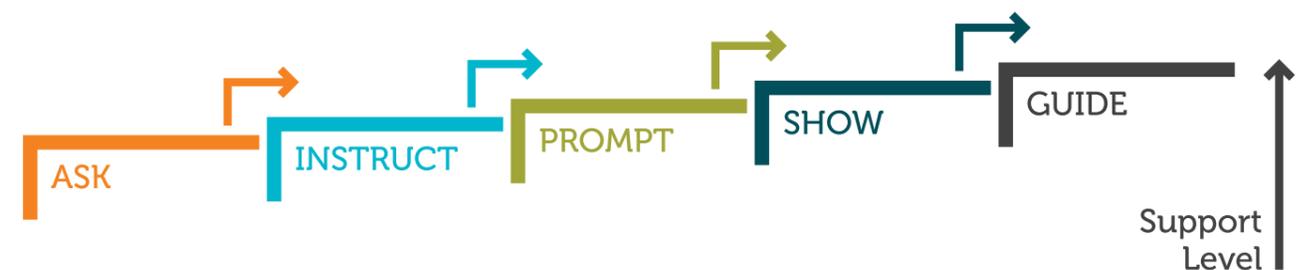
## Person centred active support

Person Centred Active Support is one of the most important evidence based practice models available to disability support organisations at the current time. It is a model that places the person at the centre of organisational planning, organisational processes, staff training, scheduling, and interpersonal relationships. "Every moment has potential" is a central theme of Active Support, ensuring that people with intellectual disability are supported to experience genuine engagement and capacity building in all activities – from household activities, to social recreation, in employment and education, and in accessing the community. The principles of Active Support allow a person with intellectual disability – whether mild or profound – to grow their skills and build stronger relationships.

Graduated support – or graded assistance – is one small element of Person Centred Active Support. It is employed when supporting people to develop and use skills for

daily life, for example, in verbally prompting a person to make dinner or guiding the person with hand-on-hand support while preparing dinner. However, it also applies to using transport, shopping, education, and even voting, relationships and other areas of citizenship. Broadly, Active Support is a person centred practice model that stands apart from other forms of practice, such as those models that instead place staff, carers or resources at the centre of practice. Support organisations that employ Person Centred Active Support will be more likely to view the people they support as citizens of their local community with legal rights and responsibilities.

If you want more information visit the Every Moment has Potential website [www.activesupportresource.net.au](http://www.activesupportresource.net.au) to access online modules developed by Greystanes Disability Services and La Trobe University.



## Practice coaching and culture

Person Centred Active Support is best embedded in an organisation through strong practice leadership. This requires management and senior staff of disability support organisations to actively promote good practice and a person centred culture through coaching, communication and regular review. It is through this systematic approach to good practice that political citizenship can become a central value of organisations that support people with intellectual disability. The hallmarks of successful practice coaching and positive organisational culture are below:

- Power holders reflect the values of the organisation
- People supported by the organisation are included as equal citizens within their supported environments. This might look like staff eating meals alongside the people being supported and talking together as peers. The only focus on disability and impairment is for the purpose of providing better support
- Work practices that centre on the person
- Work practices that focus on supporting the choices of the person
- Open and discursive culture between staff with a focus on how to provide the best support
- Practices that prioritise community inclusion as led by the choices of the supported person
- Staff become leaders to the outside world so that people in the community can learn about inclusion and person-centred support
- All staff understand the everyday, lifestyle and lifelong choices of the person being supported and seek to help the person achieve and action these

## Support for choice

For most of us, decision making skills are developed from our earliest years, through childhood, adolescence, school life and then throughout our personal and professional lives as adults. Inclusion Melbourne, RMIT and a group of advocacy organisations produced the It's My Choice! toolkit in 2013 to train people in decision making and choice for people with intellectual disability.

There are 9 principles of choice and you can read more about them at [www.inclusiondesignlab.org.au/choice](http://www.inclusiondesignlab.org.au/choice). Principles 5 and 6 are particularly relevant to people with intellectual disability who need to build stronger awareness of their legal rights and responsibilities and actively participate in legal decision making. Person Centred Active Support and Circles of Support both embody these principles:

### Principle 5

*My choices are likely to be greater and more 'expansive' where I have more knowledge and experience to inform my choices. Building knowledge and experience is important to making choices informed by past experience.*

### Principle 6

*My personal experiences may be limited by money, experience or what is possible. Nobody is completely free to choose and pursue any choice they wish. What is important is whether the limitations I experience are reasonable or not.*

Together, these two principles tell us that people can make better and more complex decisions when they are supported to have new experiences and to distinguish between new options. This principle suggests that the experience of being involved making decisions, even in situations where a guardian is appointed, can help build decision making capacity.

Principles 6 also tells us that some of the barriers that prevent people from having new experiences and making new choices are unacceptable. It is our job as supporters and advocates to challenge these barriers.



# appendices

1. Volunteer position description
2. Volunteer referee check
3. Volunteer application checklist
4. Volunteer personal details form
5. Code of conduct for volunteers
6. Volunteer induction form
7. Driver declaration – private vehicles
8. Volunteer introduction form
9. Volunteer evaluation resource
10. Volunteer program evaluation
11. Easy English Volunteer Registration Form
12. Volunteer acceptance letter
13. FAQ's (Frequently Asked Questions) for volunteers
14. The Department of Human Services Standards
15. The National Standards for Volunteer Involvement
16. Volunteer acceptance letter

Position Title: Volunteer

Department/Program: Volunteering & Development

Report to: The volunteer program is overseen by the Manager, Volunteers in conjunction with the Volunteer Management Team. Volunteers report to a designated staff supervisor relevant to their role.

Location: Inclusion Melbourne sites and Community settings.

Issued: / /20

Code: .....

I have read, understand and accept this position description. I agree to notify my supervisor immediately of any change in my capacity to meet the requirements. I also agree to inform my supervisor if any of the following requirements change:- drivers license status (if applicable); police check status or the capacity to fulfil the inherent requirements of the role.

Volunteer's Signature

Date: / /20

Volunteer Manager's Signature

Date: / /20

### Primary objective:

This position is a volunteer role. The Inclusion Melbourne Volunteer position includes the following roles:-

- Administration Volunteer
- Art Mentor
- Community Connector
- Counsellor
- Driver
- Friendly Visitor
- Leisure Buddy
- Tutor

The role of volunteers is to support the vision and values of Inclusion Melbourne in order to increase life opportunities for people with a disability, and to develop positive relationships while promoting inclusiveness in the community.

## Key Responsibilities & Duties

### General

- Attend all relevant induction and training
- Be punctual and reliable
- Inform staff of any changes in availability
- Complete required documentation
- Contribute to the maintenance of a safe and healthy work environment
- Take responsibility for your own actions
- Contact your supervisor on a monthly basis

### Administration Volunteer

Assist with a range of administration tasks including those associated with accounts, events, volunteer management, personal support and reception.

### Art Mentor

Support and encourage the goals and work of artists with a disability, focussing on creating an environment for artists to express themselves in their own style.

### Community Connector

Assist individual and small group service users to participate in community activities.

### Counselling

Support an individual with the objectives of confidence enhancing, self-esteem building, better coping skills, talking about concerns.

### Friendly Visitor

Providing companionship to an elderly person who lives in their own home where they may have limited access to community settings.

### Leisure Buddies

Develop a reciprocal and enduring friendship with an individual service user through shared and mutually agreed upon activities.

### Project Volunteer

Focus on particular projects which enhance, support and improve Inclusion Melbourne's work, for example in Circles of Support, NDIS, market research, statistical analysis and other projects which occur periodically.

### Tutor

Support learners with a disability on a one to one basis either in a classroom setting, a community setting, or their home setting.

### Other Requirements

- To present for volunteering in a neat, clean, well groomed and suitably dressed manner;
- Smoking on Inclusion Melbourne premises is not permitted. When volunteers are supporting service users they are not to smoke in their presence;
- Volunteers are required to attend mandatory Induction Training within three months of commencement;
- Thereafter volunteers are encouraged to attend Refresher Training and any other training and events offered by Inclusion Melbourne. Volunteers may also be asked to complete feedback surveys relating to their volunteering experience

### Other Conditions

- Volunteer appointment is subject to a 3 month probation period;
- Volunteering may not commence until after the satisfactory completion of a police check and reference checks;
- Volunteers will commit to and sign the Inclusion Melbourne Code of Conduct for Volunteers;
- Inclusion Melbourne is committed to Occupational Health and Safety in the workplace; Volunteer opportunities are subject to availability, and volunteers may be able to negotiate hours;
- Volunteers are required to inform staff of any changes including:-
  - availability;
  - commitment;
  - contact details etc.
- Volunteers will be contacted by Inclusion Melbourne staff frequently on commencement of their position, and thereafter on a regular basis;
- Volunteers are strongly encouraged to give monthly feedback to their supervisor and be proactive in maintaining regular contact;
- Inclusion Melbourne's Public Liability and Personal Accident policies cover all volunteers subject to policy terms and conditions while engaging in authorised activities;
- Volunteers who provide transport in their own vehicle must:-

- Have a valid driver's licence;
- Ensure a pleasant environment including a clean vehicle interior;
- Ensure there is ample fuel for the trip;
- Ensure the vehicle is roadworthy and serviced on a regular basis;
- Ensure the vehicle has either comprehensive or third party insurance.

**Note:** Volunteers will be covered under their own insurance policy, not Inclusion Melbourne's.

- Volunteers who transport service users will take all due care when driving any motor vehicle;
- Traffic or parking offences incurred whilst volunteering with Inclusion Melbourne are the responsibility of the driver in charge of the vehicle;
- Volunteers should provide as much notice as possible if they are intending to conclude their volunteer role.

## Qualifications

Not applicable (see separate Volunteer Counsellor Position Description)

## Key selection criteria

### Essential

- A willingness to commit time and energy to the support of people with disabilities
- Enthusiasm for improving the lives of people with disabilities
- Reliability and a mature outlook on life
- Good communication skills
- Awareness of and sensitivity towards people with disabilities
- Ethical behaviour
- Respectful of confidential information
- Flexibility

### Desirable

- A minimum of 6 months commitment for all roles, except Leisure Buddies, Friendly Visitor and Counsellors which require a minimum of 12 months commitment
- Previous experience of working with people with a disability
- Victorian Driver's Licence

## 2. Volunteer personal details

Please tick the appropriate box  Volunteer  Student

### Part A – Personal details

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Suburb \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Landline \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_ Date of birth \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred method of communications  Email  Mobile  Landline  Text message  Postal service (please circle)

Do you identify as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander? \_\_\_\_\_

### Part B – Emergency Contact Details (for use in the event of illness or accident)

Name (1) \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Home \_\_\_\_\_ Business \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile \_\_\_\_\_

Name (2) \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Home \_\_\_\_\_ Business \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile \_\_\_\_\_

### Part C – Student Course Details (only for students completing placement / internship)

School / Facility:Address \_\_\_\_\_

Course Name \_\_\_\_\_

Course Contact \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Date commenced \_\_\_\_\_

Hours to complete \_\_\_\_\_

Description of placement / specific support requirements \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### Part D – Disclosure of previous injury

In accordance with the Accident Compensation Act 1985 (Vic) and successor legislation you are required to disclose any or all pre-existing injuries, illnesses or diseases/ conditions (pre-existing conditions) suffered by you which could be accelerated, exacerbated, aggravated or caused to recur or deteriorate by you performing the responsibilities associated with the employment for which you are applying with Inclusion Melbourne.

Please note that, if you fail to disclose this information or if you provide false and misleading information in relation to this issue, you may not be entitled to any form of workers' compensation.

Please also note that the giving of false information in relation to your application for employment with Inclusion Melbourne may constitute grounds for disciplinary action or dismissal.

#### Declaration:

I, \_\_\_\_\_ declare that I have been advised as to the nature of the tasks that I am required to perform and I have been given a copy of the position description.

Are you required to take regular medication which may:

Affect Work Performance?	Yes	No
Affect your attendance at work?	Yes	No

If yes specify

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any knowledge of a pre-existing medical condition or injury?

No, I do not have any pre-existing injuries or diseases that might be affected by the nature of the proposed employment  
 Yes, I have the following pre-existing injuries or diseases that might be affected by the nature of the proposed employment

Please list details of all pre-existing conditions:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Provide details of management strategies and/or medication for existing conditions / allergies:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please give details of any Work Cover claims made in the last five years:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Witness Name (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_

Witness Signature

Date: ...../...../20.....

### 3. Volunteer application checklist

Name of prospective volunteer \_\_\_\_\_

**1. Receive volunteer enquiry:** Date / /

- Put details in database as an enquiry volunteer, & on the list of recruitments spreadsheet
- Ask them in straight away for an information session

**2. Present volunteer information session:** Date / / (refer to Running an Information Session Checklist)

- Give volunteer information pack (refer to Volunteer Information Pack Checklist)
- Remind them to bring original identification documents worth 100 points, plus names & phone numbers of 2 professional referees when they attend interview
- Update volunteer's status in database to show he/she is now at Prospective stage

**3. Interview** Date / /

- Ensure Police Check Form is correctly completed, sight identification documents, & sign
- or sight appropriate & valid original Police Check, & make copy for file
- Confirm volunteer has read, understood, accepted & signed the Position Description
- Confirm volunteer has read, understood, accepted & signed the Code of Conduct
- Make copies of signed Position Description & Code of Conduct & give these to the volunteer
- Ensure volunteer reads, understands, completes & signs the Personal Details Form
- Ensure volunteer reads, understands, completes & signs the Publications Consent Form
- Check Application Form, confirming & clarifying all details, including choice of role & availability
- Ask volunteer the questions on the Volunteer Interview Form & record the answers in the spaces provided
- Provide the volunteer with flyers for Induction & other training
- Explain next steps & thank the volunteer for attending the interview

**4. After interview:**

- File application & interview forms in in plastic pocket in 'Prospective volunteers' folder
- Police check Ref No \_\_\_\_\_ Date lodged: / /
- Police check date resolved / /
- Referee check 1:- Date / /
- Referee check 2:- Date / /
- Issue the Volunteer Confirmation Letter/Rejection Letter Date sent: / /
- Telephone call to volunteer re commencement. Date: / /

**5. Preparation for placement of volunteer:**

- Role/Position/Job
- Discuss with relevant IM staff. Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date / /
- Discuss with house staff/family/carer
- Arrangements made for introduction/induction to service user/group/site

**6. Commencement:**

- Start date: / /
- Service user/group/site: \_\_\_\_\_
- Supervisor/s: \_\_\_\_\_
- Induction/Introduction completed
- Ensure the volunteer receives appropriate information about the service user/s

**7. Administration** (refer to admin/data entry checklist)

- Update volunteer's status in database to show he/she is now at Active stage
- Update all other relevant details in databases/spreadsheets/tables/Outlook
- Establish volunteer personal file/folder
- Police check paperwork filed in relevant folder in front office
- If service user has existing leisure buddy let them know new buddy also found
- Note details of the match on Volunteer Request Form & file this in completed requests folder

## 4. Volunteer referee check

This form is to be completed by the Manager of Volunteers or Coordinator of Volunteers

Reference For \_\_\_\_\_

Reference provided by: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Details: \_\_\_\_\_

What is your relationship to the volunteer applicant? \_\_\_\_\_

Explain the role to the referee eg LB/CC etc, prior to proceeding with the referee check.

1. How long have you known the applicant? \_\_\_\_\_

2. What would you say are his/her strengths? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Is there any particular area you think he/she may need support in? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Is the person reliable & confident enough to work on a one-on-one basis with an adult who has an intellectual disability? \_\_\_\_\_

5. In your opinion if any difficulties arise will the person be able to speak up and ask for advice? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Do you have any additional comments? \_\_\_\_\_

7. Would you recommend him/her for a volunteer role with Inclusion Melbourne? Yes / No \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer's Name (Print)

Volunteer's Signature

Date: ...../...../20.....

## 5. Code of conduct for volunteers

### Scope and purpose

This Code of Conduct applies to all volunteers of Inclusion Melbourne and sets out the expected standards of behaviour for all volunteers. It forms part of the contract of volunteering and reflects the basic requirements of professionalism, integrity and courtesy needed to ensure that a quality service is provided to the people we support and all other stakeholders. It ensures that a pleasant, professional and safe working environment exists for all volunteers and that Inclusion Melbourne's organisational values are upheld.

### Guiding values

Inclusion Melbourne's values guide the conduct of volunteers as they provide support to the people served by the organisation. All volunteers, staff and service users have shared expectations that all parties will uphold the organisation's values and seek to provide exceptional service.

**Integrity:** Performing responsibilities and duties honestly and efficiently, respecting the rights of the people we support, colleagues and all other stakeholders, including members of the community.

**Potential:** Ensuring that we provide the people we support with opportunities to build skills and live inclusively and independently.

**Individuality:** Recognising and understanding the unique attributes and abilities of the people we support to ensure the service provided to them meets their individual wants and needs.

**Relationships:** Developing and maintaining a mutually positive and professional relationship with the people we support, all staff and volunteers, and the wider community.

### Responsibilities and expectations

Inclusion Melbourne expects all volunteers to:

- Responsibly represent Inclusion Melbourne by working with honesty, integrity and accordance with the law.
- Comply with all of Inclusion Melbourne's policies and procedures and duties stated in the Position Description.
- Diligently seek to provide a high quality service to the people we support, stakeholders and colleagues that reflect best practise and respectful relationships.
- Respect and represent the rights and welfare of the people we support, colleagues and stakeholders.

- Ensure that the safety, health and wellbeing of the people we support is upheld to a high standard, in accordance with Inclusion Melbourne's policies and procedures.
- Ensure that any information regarding your role is effectively communicated with your line supervisor.
- Utilise the training opportunities provided by Inclusion Melbourne and proactively seek information to support you in your role.

### Obligations of Inclusion Melbourne to volunteers

Inclusion Melbourne has an obligation to behave in a fair and reasonable manner towards its volunteers. As such; the organisation is committed to meeting the following expectations:

- Equal opportunities for volunteers
- Impartial and open selection and appointment procedures
- Up-to-date position descriptions that provide clear statements of duties and expectations
- Adequate training and equipment to complete duties
- Regular and appropriate feedback on voluntary work performance
- Effective communication of information
- Pleasant and safe working conditions
- Freedom from harassment or discrimination while volunteering at Inclusion Melbourne
- Appropriate procedure for feedback, complaints and disciplinary procedures

### Appropriate relationships with the people we support

All volunteers should recognise the sensitivity of working with vulnerable people and show respect for, and protect, their dignity.

- Volunteers have a professional relationship with the people they support. As such, volunteers must not have a sexual, family or financial relationship with the people they support.
- All volunteers must inform their supervisor if they begin to volunteer with any person to whom they are related or with whom they have previously had a personal or financial relationship.

## Respect for the Rights of Others

While volunteering with Inclusion Melbourne, volunteers have a duty to treat all the people we support, colleagues, stakeholders and the public with respect and professionalism.

At all times, volunteers are to conduct themselves in a manner that will not jeopardise or undermine the reputation or privacy of Inclusion Melbourne. This applies to all activities, comments, posts or discussions in the public arena, such as social media websites, industry meetings, public presentations, media interviews, etc. This Code of Conduct does allow volunteers to act in a private capacity to positively influence public opinion, or promote issues of interest. However, volunteers should still ensure that their conduct is consistent with the responsibilities described above.

## Conflicts of Interest and Integrity

Volunteers are expected to be honest, fair and impartial when carrying out their duties. This means that:

- Volunteers will inform their supervisor if they have a personal or financial interest or commitment that could be seen as a conflict of interest
- Volunteers will treat all individuals and organisations equally
- Volunteers are not to lend to, borrow from, or otherwise enter into any financial arrangement with a person we support
- Volunteers may not seek any form of reward (including gifts, favours, prizes or fees) for performing their duties

Volunteers should speak to their line supervisor if they are unsure whether or not a particular situation is, or could be seen as, a conflict of interest.

## Privacy, Security and Confidentiality

Inclusion Melbourne is committed to protecting all personal and health information that we collect, hold and use in accordance with the Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988, which includes the 13 Australian Privacy Principles. Volunteers will be expected to:

- Ensure information held regarding the people we support, employees and volunteers is stored securely
- Use or disclose personal information only for the purpose for which it was collected

- Take reasonable steps to protect personal information from misuse, loss and unauthorised access, modification and disclosure
- Take reasonable steps to make sure that the personal information collected, used or disclosed is accurate, complete and up-to-date.
- Take reasonable steps to destroy or de-identify personal information that is no longer required for the purpose it was held

Inclusion Melbourne is committed to ensuring that the privacy and confidentiality of all people we support, staff, volunteers and business information is maintained by all associated with Inclusion Melbourne.

**I understand that any breach of this Code of Conduct will be subject to disciplinary action as outlined in the Inclusion Melbourne disciplinary procedure policy and that my relationship with Inclusion Melbourne may be terminated.**

**I acknowledge that I have read and agree to abide by the conditions set out in this Code of Conduct for Volunteers.**

Name of volunteer

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of volunteer

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

**Please note this document forms part of the contract of volunteering.**

This form is to be placed on the volunteer's file once completed. Therefore, please return to the Volunteer Management Team as soon as possible.

Name of volunteer

\_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer Position

\_\_\_\_\_

Name/s of Supervisor/s

\_\_\_\_\_

Commencement Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Location of office, classroom, or other area where volunteering

\_\_\_\_\_

Some of the items listed below will not be applicable for all volunteers. The staff supervisor needs to indicate what is required by inserting ✓ (applicable) or NA (not applicable) in the column next to the topic/item. When the induction/orientation/introductions have taken place both the new volunteer and the staff supervisor undertaking the induction process will sign the document.

**The following Induction/Orientation is to be undertaken for new volunteers within the first two volunteering sessions with Inclusion Melbourne**

Topic / item	NA or ✓
Introduce service users/students, staff, volunteers, and others who are present	
Introduce site OH&S representative, First Aid personnel, and/or Fire Warden	
Show the location of workplace facilities e.g. toilets, accessible bathroom, tea & coffee making facilities, computers, stationery, photocopier, art supplies	
Provide details of computer access/password	
Advise volunteer on use of any equipment where required	
Discuss the emergency evacuation procedures, including evacuation plan, emergency exits and evacuation assembly point	
Provide copy of Duress Guidelines, & advise of location and position of duress buttons	
Advise of location of First Aid box and fire extinguishers	
Discuss duties and goals as provided in the Community Participation Outline	
Provide relevant service user documentation, including service user profiles and consistent approaches, and discuss privacy, confidentiality, and expand on any details as necessary	
Communication contact details of relevant staff e.g. mobile phone numbers, email addresses	
Confirm line management and reporting structure details and responsibilities	
Location of Stakeholder Feedback Forms	
Advise of mobile phone guidelines whilst volunteering	
Ask volunteer if he/she has any questions re the volunteer role & its duties	

I confirm that I have been briefed on all of the aspects listed above, with the exception of those marked NA (not applicable) and provided with any supporting documentation. I understand the intent and what is required of me, and agree to abide by the policies and procedures of Inclusion Melbourne.

Signed (volunteer)

\_\_\_\_\_ Date

Signed (employee)

\_\_\_\_\_ Date

## 7. Driver Declaration – Personal Vehicles

All employees and volunteers must read the Transport & Vehicles policy & procedure prior to completing this form. This form is to be completed by employees and volunteers authorised to use a private vehicle to conduct Inclusion Melbourne business.

Employees and volunteers using a privately owned vehicle for Inclusion Melbourne related purposes are required to meet the following requirements:-

- a) The employee or volunteer must have a current valid licence;
- b) The vehicle must be maintained in a roadworthy state; must be registered and insured;
- c) The employee or volunteer **must** advise their supervisor immediately if any of the above requirements change.

Employees and volunteers are strongly encouraged to check with their insurer regarding any restrictions that the insurer may impose on work related usage. It is also strongly recommended that employees investigate obtaining comprehensive insurance.

**Note: Comprehensive insurance** includes insurance against legal liability for damage caused by your vehicle to the property of other people. **Under no circumstances** is anyone authorised to undertake work related activities in an uninsured or unsafe vehicle.

This authority remains current until such time as the licensing, insurance or registration details are altered, suspended or revoked. **It is the employee's responsibility to advise their supervisor immediately if any of the following details change.**

### Driver details:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Role \_\_\_\_\_ Employee  Volunteer

Valid licence Yes  Full  Probationary  Licence No: \_\_\_\_\_

Conditions (e.g. Spectacles, probation conditions) \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### Vehicle details:

Vehicle type / model \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

Registration No \_\_\_\_\_

Vehicle is roadworthy Yes  Vehicle is registered Yes

Insurance details (name / company) \_\_\_\_\_

Type of insurance (e.g. 3rd party / comprehensive) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Expiry date \_\_\_\_\_

### Declaration for driving privately owned vehicles

I confirm that I have read and understand the Transport & Vehicles policy. I give authority for the use of my vehicle for conducting Inclusion Melbourne business and confirm that I am the only driver for these purposes.

#### I acknowledge that:

- at all times whilst driving my vehicle for conducting Inclusion Melbourne business I will adhere to the requirements of the Transport & Vehicles policy;
- the information provided on this form is correct;
- my vehicle is safe, in a roadworthy condition and the vehicle interior is clean;
- any changes to my circumstances that affect driver authorisation and competency I must disclose immediately to Inclusion Melbourne.

### Employee \ volunteer declaration

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

Date: ...../...../20.....

### Organisational authorisation

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

Date: ...../...../20.....

(CEO, Manager, Manager, Personalised Supports or Volunteer Manager – required for volunteers)

### Office use only

- Copy of current Victorian driver licence validated:Registration No
- Policy & Procedure read and acknowledged
- Driver's Licence details added to HR3

\_\_\_\_\_

## 8. Volunteer introduction form

This form is to be used when introducing a volunteer to a person supported by Inclusion Melbourne.

Once completed, this form is to be given to the volunteer co-ordinator/manager and a copy placed in the service user's file, if required.

Name of volunteer \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Service user \_\_\_\_\_

Name/s of Staff Supervisor/s \_\_\_\_\_

Commencement Date \_\_\_\_\_

Some of the items listed below will not be applicable. The staff supervisor needs to indicate what is required by inserting ✓ (applicable) or NA (not applicable) in the column next to the topic/item. When the induction/orientation/introduction has taken place, the staff supervisor undertaking the induction process will sign the document.

**The following Introduction/Orientation is to be undertaken with the volunteer**

Topic / item	NA or ✓
Introduce staff, volunteer, service user and others (where applicable) who are present	
Provide any relevant documentation, including service user profiles and consistent approaches, or seizure management plan (where necessary, with explanation)	
Provide communication contact details of the service user's home, relevant staff e.g. mobile phone numbers, landline numbers, email addresses	
Ensure volunteer is aware of how to identify and report back on environments and situations that are potentially unsafe/hazardous and inappropriate	
Explain line management and reporting structure details	
Advise volunteer on use of any equipment (where required)	
Advise options for Stakeholder Feedback via "your feedback" brochure and Inclusion Melbourne website	
Ask if the volunteer has any questions and explain next steps	

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of staff supervisor (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Staff supervisor's Signature

Date: ...../...../20.....

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of volunteer (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Volunteer's Signature

Date: ...../...../20.....

## 9. Volunteer evaluation resource

### Volunteer Training Feedback

How do you feel about the volunteer training?

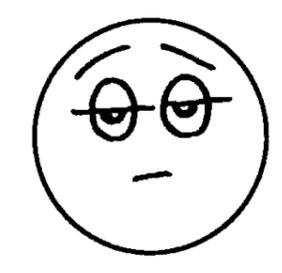
Circle the face that shows how you feel...



Bored



Exhausted



Don't Care



Happy



Disappointed



Interested

Do you want to say anything about the training?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How do you rate the volunteer orientation session?

Either

	Yes	No
• I was made to feel welcome	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• I was introduced to all relevant staff members	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• My orientation seemed well planned and delivered	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• The Volunteer Policy was thoroughly explained	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• I understand the organisation's philosophy and mission	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• I was sufficiently informed about the organisation to enable me to work within its mission	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• I was given a tour of the organisation where I will be volunteering	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• All procedures were satisfactorily explained to me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• I was able to review my job description with a staff member	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• I was given sufficient information about the structure of the organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• I was provided with adequate material and resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• The emergency procedures were explained to me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• The grievance and disciplinary policy was explained to me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• I was sufficiently informed about the confidentiality and duty of care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please answer the following questions:

Would you like more information?

---



---



---



---

Do you have any concerns?

---



---



---



---

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (Print) (Anonymous will be accepted)

Program Evaluation Checklist - Questions to Ask

- What are the aims of the activity to be evaluated? (eg. volunteer activity level, event participant satisfaction/knowledge etc.)
- What will the evaluation achieve? (what outcomes are wanted/expected from the evaluation?)
- Who will be involved in the evaluation process?
- How much time is needed to implement the evaluation process?
- How will volunteers be informed of the outcome of the evaluations?
- What resources are required to undertake the evaluation?
- Which evaluation methods will be used? (interviews, group discussion, appraisal forms, questionnaires)
- How easy or complicated is the evaluation process?
- Which evaluation process(es) will be most suitable to determine the activities effectiveness?
- Will the volunteers involved be happy with these processes?
- Does it provide adequate recognition of the work they have been doing?
- How will the evaluation information be utilised?
- Who will be interested in the outcomes of this evaluation?

Evaluation Approaches

What to evaluate:

- Planning: to be strategic and include the program's rationale, operations and finances
- Work Environment or culture: includes relationships, teamwork, communication, consultation, satisfaction, met/unmet needs of stakeholders
- Administration and reporting across the volunteer program
- Work: roles, job descriptions, allocation of work, work performance, feedback
- Recruitment: information available, established process
- Matching, screening and selection of volunteers for the program
- The transition process: including agreements, and orientation of volunteers
- Development and training
- Volunteer leadership: includes all people who have responsibility for working with volunteers in the areas of delegation and involvement
- Support and supervision for volunteers in the program
- Feedback and involvement
- Valuing and recognising volunteers and their involvement
- Exit practices: resignation (or dismissal) of volunteers

Questions to consider in review of the volunteer program may include:

- Are there a variety of approaches available?
- Are they accessible?
- Are processes consistent and consistently utilised?
- Are they fair and equitable?
- Are they appropriate?
- Are they relevant and effective?
- Are they practical and realistic?

## Evaluation Quick Scan - National Standards

Following are the eight National Standards for Involving Volunteers. Consider how your volunteer program is doing against each standard.

### Policies and Procedures

An organisation that involves volunteers shall define and document its policies and procedures for volunteer involvement and ensure that these are understood, implemented and maintained at all levels of the organisation where volunteers are involved.

- My program is strong in this area?
- My program requires some work in this area?
- My program requires significant work in this area?

Comments:

---

---

### Management Responsibilities

An organisation that involves volunteers shall ensure that volunteers are managed within a defined system and by capable personnel with the authority and resources to achieve the organisation's policy goals.

- My program is strong in this area?
- My program requires some work in this area?
- My program requires significant work in this area?

Comments:

---

---

### Recruitment, Selection and Orientation

An organisation that involves volunteers shall plan and have clearly documented volunteer recruitment, selection, and orientation policies and procedures that are consistent with non-discriminatory practices and guidelines.

- My program is strong in this area?
- My program requires some work in this area?
- My program requires significant work in this area?

Comments:

---

---

### Work and the Workplace

An organisation that involves volunteers shall clearly specify and control the work of volunteers and ensure that their place of work is conducive to preserving their health, safety and general well being.

- My program is strong in this area?
- My program requires some work in this area?
- My program requires significant work in this area?

Comments:

---

---

## Training and Development

An organisation that involves volunteers shall ensure that volunteers obtain the knowledge, skills, feedback on work, and the recognition needed to effectively carry out their responsibilities.

- My program is strong in this area?
- My program requires some work in this area?
- My program requires significant work in this area?

Comments:

---

---

### Service Delivery

An organisation that involves volunteers shall ensure that appropriate processes and procedures are established and followed for the effective planning, control, and review of all activities relating to the delivery of services by volunteers.

- My program is strong in this area?
- My program requires some work in this area?
- My program requires significant work in this area?

Comments:

---

---

### Documentation and Records

An organisation that involves volunteers shall establish a system and have defined procedures to control all documentation and personnel records that relate to the management of volunteers.

- My program is strong in this area?
- My program requires some work in this area?
- My program requires significant work in this area?

Comments:

---

---

### Continuous Improvement

An organisation that involves volunteers shall plan and continually review its volunteer management system to ensure that opportunities to improve the quality of the system are identified and actively pursued.

- My program is strong in this area?
- My program requires some work in this area?
- My program requires significant work in this area?

Comments:

---

---

Interview/Focus group with: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of participants: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Program name: \_\_\_\_\_

Select the questions you will use before the interview/focus group. Add your own as well. As an indication, it takes about one hour to cover 10 questions well – the time will vary depending on the size of the group and the participants involved.

- What was the experience like for participants?
- What was the experience like for other stakeholders (eg: clients)?
- What was the experience like for the community?

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Focus Group Questions

- Were the volunteer program objectives achieved? How were they achieved?
- Were they achieved for all involved?
- What were the outstanding achievements of the volunteer program?
- What have been the key strengths of the volunteer program?
- What have been the key weaknesses of the volunteer program?
- How well has the program been managed?
- How well have the program volunteer management processes been managed (eg. recruitment, selection, training, support, recognition of volunteers)?
- How well have the program processes been managed (eg. promotion, organisation, delivery of events)?
- What were the impacts for the participants?
- What were the impacts for the community?
- How has the program made a difference for individuals?
- How has the program made a difference for partnership organisations?
- How has the program made a difference for the community?
- What unanticipated outcomes occurred (positive or negative)?
- What lessons have been learnt?

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



## Volunteer Registration Form

You can volunteer at (Insert name of organisation).

Fill out this form.

How to answer the questions.

There are 2 ways to answer the questions.

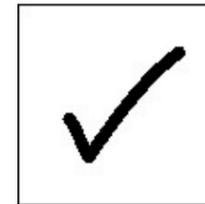
1 Tick the right box. Follow the instructions. Some questions say

- tick 1 box only

or

- tick more than 1 box.

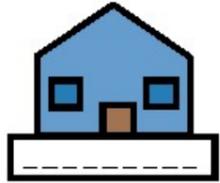
2 Write your answer on the line





1. What is your name?

---



2. What is your address?

---



3. What is your email address?

---



4. What is your phone number?



At home

---



At work

---



Mobile

---



5. What is your birthday?

---



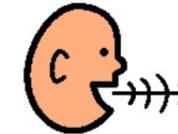
6. What country were you born in?

---



7. What is the language you speak most at home?

---



8. Do you speak any other languages?

Yes

No

If you said yes, write what other languages you speak.

---



9. Are you Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?

Yes

No

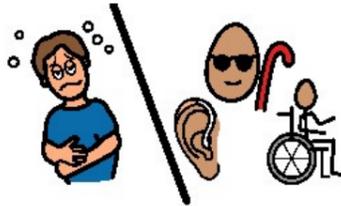
If you said yes, is your job

Full time

Part time

Casual

Tick 1 box only



10. Do you have a long term illness or a disability?

Yes

No

If you said no, are you a

Student

At home

Retired

On Work Cover

On sick leave

Tick 1 box only

If you said yes, we want to know what help

you need. Is your long term illness or disability

Hearing or vision impairment

Physical

Intellectual

Mental illness

You can tick more than 1 box



11. Do you have a job?

Yes

No



12. Do you get Centrelink benefits?

Yes

No



13. Have you done volunteer work before?

Yes

No

If yes, where did you work?

---



14. Have you done a course or training?

Yes

No

If yes, write the name of the course or training you did.

---



15. Write your hobbies and interests

---

---



16. We need to know more about you. For example, are you a good worker and check the information on this form.

We want to speak to your friend or a person you work with.



Write the

- name
- address
- and
- phone number

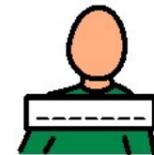
of 2 people we can call or email.



Person 1

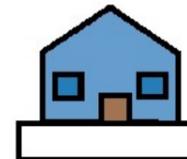
Name

---



Address

---



Phone



---

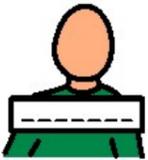


Email

---



Person 2



Name

---



Address

---



Phone

---



Email

---



17. What work would you like to do?

You can tick more than 1 box



Art and Craft



Work with people. For example,

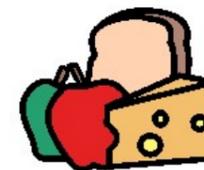
Old people

People with a disability

Kids

Visit people

Help people study



Food. You can

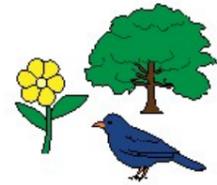
Cook

Serve food



**Sport. You can**

- Help people with exercise
- Help with sport events
- Coach
- Umpire



**Work outside. You can**

- Garden
- Work with animals



**Work inside. For example,**

- Office work
- Writing
- Computers
- In a library
- A shop
- Raise money
- Get government to make changes



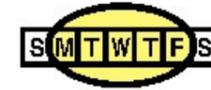
**Emergency work**



- Drive a bus or car



- Work at a Visitor Information Centre



**18. What day do you want to work?**

- Monday
- Tuesday
- Wednesday
- Thursday
- Friday
- Saturday
- Sunday

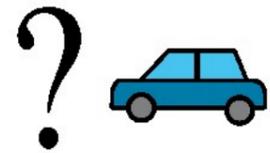
You can tick more than 1 box



19. Do you want to work in the

- Morning
- Afternoon
- Evening

You can tick more than 1 box



20. Do you have a car?

- Yes
- No

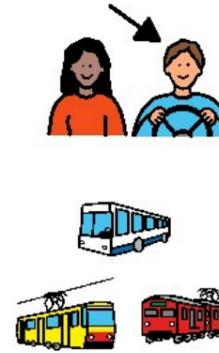


21. Do you have your full driver's licence?

- Yes
- No

If yes, write your licence number

---



22. Can you get to places by yourself?

For example,

- you can drive
  - someone else can drive you
- or
- you get public transport

- Yes
- No



23. Do you have a bus driver's licence?

- Yes
- No

If yes, write your licence number

---



24. Who can we call if there is an emergency?

Next of kin

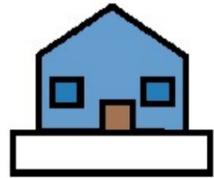


What is their name?

---

How do you know them?

---



What is their address?

---



What is their phone number?



At home

---



Mobile

---



25. How did you find out about Glen Eira volunteers?

The internet. For example,

- SEEK Volunteer / Go Volunteer
- ProBono Australia
- Gumtree
- The newspaper or TV
- Your library
- Your university
- Someone told you
- An information display
- Volunteer Resource Centre
- A brochure
- Corporate volunteers

Other - Write your answer on the line below.

---

You can tick more than 1 box



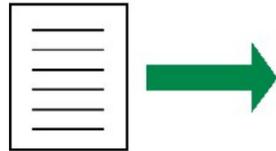
**Sign your name here**

---



**Write the date**

---



**Give your form to your Volunteer Coordinator**

**This part is for the volunteer manager to sign.**

**You do not need to write here.**

**Manager signature**

---

**Date**

---

Developed by Scope Communication and Inclusion Resource Centre for Inclusion Melbourne.

XX September 2017

Volunteers Name  
123 Street Address,  
SUBURB VIC POSTCODE

Dear.....,

**Welcome to Inclusion Melbourne's volunteer program!** All Inclusion Melbourne volunteers make a positive difference to the lives of people with a disability.

A Support Co-ordinator will be in contact with you shortly to arrange your start date; then you will meet with the artist who you'll be supporting in your **Art Mentor** volunteer role.

As a volunteer you will be provided with support to fulfil your new volunteer role. If you ever have any queries or problems please speak to the staff member directly supervising you, or contact me directly on the numbers listed below. As with all new things there is a learning curve and relationships take time to be established. Please notify me anytime you feel the role is not a satisfying one for you as we may be able to find another role that works better for you.

All our staff including volunteers are invited to join us on a probationary basis. This means that after you have been volunteering for **three months** we will discuss how things are going. If it is not working out for some reason, both you as the volunteer and Inclusion Melbourne have the opportunity to conclude your involvement.

We ask that once you have commenced duties you let either your service user's supervisor or me know if you are unable to undertake your volunteer duties on any particular day, for example if you are unwell. **Please speak directly to one of us or our receptionist**, as a message left on an answering machine, a text message, or an email may not be checked in time, and we will need to discuss alternative arrangements with the person you support.

Thank you for taking the time to help make a difference. We hope your volunteer experience with our organisation will be an enjoyable and enriching one!

Yours sincerely,

**Volunteer Manager**  
on behalf of  
Volunteer Management Team

## 13. FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) for volunteers

Volunteers may ask questions about their potential role and about the agency they are volunteering for. The following FAQ's can be given to interested volunteers.

### 1. What is a not-for-profit organisation?

There are a number of features that identify not-for-profit organisations and differentiate them from 'for profit' businesses.

Features of a-not-for profit organisation include:

- It has a constitution and a set of rules, and a life separate from the people who initiated the organisation.
- It is not subjected to government control even though it may be influenced by government funding.
- Any surplus or profit cannot be distributed to members or shareholders, and must be put back into the organisation.
- If a not-for-profit organisation is wound up, its assets and remaining funds must be distributed in accord with its aims or distributed to similar organisations.
- The involvement of volunteers. It is estimated that the majority of not-for-profit organisations in Australia rely entirely on volunteers.
- Not-for-profit organisations commonly have complex finances, relying on a variety of funding streams such as government funding, membership fees, donations, sponsorships etc.

### 2. I want to volunteer, where do I go?

Ever thought about volunteering but not sure where to look? Here are some options to help you in finding the best volunteer positions for you.

#### Online

Some recruitment agencies have mobile apps. Go Volunteer has an app volunteers can use to find matches.

Log onto Seek Volunteers. This online tool enables you to search for available volunteer positions. All positions advertised are with not for profit organisations and you can search for opportunities by location, organisation type and position.

If you are interested in a specific cause look online for organisations that address or respond to issues related to that cause.

If you are interested in volunteering in a specific sector, for instance:

- Health – phone a local hospital or community health centre

- Education – enquire at schools, kindergartens, universities etc.
- Sport and recreation – enquire at your local council for a list of local sporting clubs, visit state sporting organisation websites
- Arts/culture – enquire at local museums, libraries and galleries.

Contact your local council. Many local councils produce community directories that include volunteer involving organisations, and may also include details of volunteer opportunities on their website. You could also speak to someone in the council's community services department as they may be able to direct you to local not-for-profit organisations involving volunteers.

#### Local Paper

Look in your local paper. Often there are articles in the newspapers about volunteering and calls for volunteers. Available opportunities may be featured in community services advertisements.

#### Local Disability Service

Contact your local disability services. Often services that cater for various needs may have opportunities for volunteers who have a physical, mental, hearing, visual or intellectual impairment to volunteer in some capacity in the organisation.

#### Neighbourhood and Community Houses

Contact your local Neighbourhood House or community centre and ask for information about their volunteer opportunities or information about other organisations in the area.

### 3. Is there an age limit for volunteers?

There is no limit that dictates the ages of volunteers. However, organisations should consider a number of issues when developing volunteer roles, to help in deciding whether it is appropriate to include age limits for specific volunteer roles.

Areas of consideration include:

- Risk - some volunteer options will have a certain levels of risk attached to them, which may make them inappropriate for very young volunteers.
- Insurance – there may be an age limit specified in the organisation's volunteer insurance policies.

- Supervision – there may need to be adequate supervision and support available for the position to be appropriate for youth volunteers.
- Government funding – the government funding contract may stipulate that volunteers are within a certain age bracket.

In line with the principles of equity, Volunteering Australia recommends that recruitment of volunteers be in accord with the Age Discrimination Act 2004. For more information visit the Australia Human Rights Commission [website: www.humanrights.org.au](http://www.humanrights.org.au)

### 4. How much time do I need to commit?

The time and commitment required to be a volunteer varies from agency to agency and will depend on the volunteer position you choose. The commitment could be as little as one hour a week or as much as two days a week depending on the needs of the agency and on the availability of the volunteer.

### 5. Are there some special requirements?

All volunteers may be asked to undergo a police check for a criminal record. You would be informed of any legal or training requirements during or prior to an interview. Prospective volunteers may need to provide the name of a 'professional' referee who we contact with a list of questions for them to answer as opposed to a reference from a family member or friend.

### 6. Am I covered by insurance?

It is important to ask an organisation if they have insurance to cover you in case of accident or injury as Volunteers are not paid employees and therefore not covered by WorkCover. You should ask your organisation if they have both Public Liability (the policy must mention volunteers) and personal accident insurance for volunteers. Personal Accident and injury insurance cover should provide protection in the event of an accident whilst performing volunteer work.

### 7. Is training required?

Training and skill requirements vary amongst organisations. Some positions require little formal training and specialist skills, whilst others have greater requirements. Training is generally provided by the agency. Volunteers should not be required to incur any expense for the training they undertake.

### 8. Will I need to be interviewed?

Once you have selected and contacted the organisation of your choice, you will probably be invited to attend an interview. Organisations conduct interviews so people can find out more about the volunteer job and the organisation can find the right volunteer for the job.

In the interview you should be ready to answer questions about your previous work experience, both paid and voluntary, discuss your skills and qualifications and provide the names of referees.

## 14. The Department of Human Services Standards

Standard	Criteria
<b>1 Empowerment</b> People's rights are promoted and upheld.	1.1 People understand their rights and responsibilities
	1.2 People exercise their rights and responsibilities.
<b>2 Access and Engagement</b> People's right to access transparent, equitable and integrated services is promoted and upheld.	2.1 Services have a clear and accessible point of contact.
	2.2 Services are delivered in a fair, equitable and transparent manner.
	2.3 People access services most appropriate to their needs through timely, responsive service integration and referral.
<b>3 Wellbeing</b> People's right to wellbeing and safety is promoted and upheld.	3.1 Services adopt a strengths-based and early intervention approach to service delivery that enhances people's wellbeing.
	3.2 People actively participate in an assessment of their strengths, risks, wants and needs.
	3.3 All people have a goal-oriented plan documented and implemented. This plan includes strategies to achieve stated goals.
	3.4 Each person's assessments and plans are regularly reviewed, evaluated and updated. Exit/transition planning occurs as appropriate.
	3.5 Services are provided in a safe environment for all people, free from abuse, neglect, violence and/or preventable injury.
<b>4 Participation</b> People's right to choice, decision making and to actively participate as a valued member of their chosen community is promoted and upheld.	4.1 People exercise choice and control in service delivery and life decisions.
	4.2 People actively participate in their community by identifying goals and pursuing opportunities including those related to health, education, training and employment.
	4.3 People maintain connections with family and friends, as appropriate.
	4.4 People maintain and strengthen connection to their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and community.
	4.5 People maintain and strengthen their cultural, spiritual, and language connections.
	4.6 People develop independent life skills.

For more information about the standards, required evidence and information about governance and management standards, visit [www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documentsand-resources/policies,-guidelines-and-legislation/human-services-standards](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documentsand-resources/policies,-guidelines-and-legislation/human-services-standards)

## 15. The National Standards for Volunteer Involvement

Volunteering Australia's new National Standards for Volunteer Involvement were launched on Monday 11 May 2015 to mark the beginning of National Volunteer Week 2015 (11-17 May). The new Standards incorporate significant changes to the original standards in order to reflect best practice in volunteer management in Australia's current work environment.

The Standards provide a sound framework for supporting the volunteer sector in Australia. The Standards are much easier to follow and are adaptable to different organisation types and different forms of volunteering which reflect the diversity of this growing sector.

### Direct benefits to organisations:

- They provide good practice guidance and benchmarks to help organisations attract, manage and retain volunteers, and
- Help manage risk and safety in their work with volunteers.

### Direct benefits to volunteers:

- They help improve the volunteer experience.

### Implementing the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement

The National Standards for Volunteer Involvement contain benchmarks specifically designed to help organisations attract, manage, recognise and retain volunteers, and to manage risk and safety with respect to volunteers. If you coordinate or manage volunteers or have management or governance responsibility in organisations that work with volunteers, the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement will be a useful tool for your organisation. There are a number of ways to prepare and plan for the implementation of the National Standards and self-assess your progress.

#### 1. State/ Territory Peak Bodies

State and Territory Peak Bodies are established in each State and Territory in Australia. Among their many functions is the key role they play in promoting excellence in volunteer management. Should you want help with implementing the National Standards you may contact your State/Territory Peak Body for more information on the services they provide.

#### 2. National Standards Workshop

This four hour workshop will assist organisations to prepare and plan for their implementation of the Standards with the

guidance of our experienced facilitators and with support from the sector. Workshop objectives include:

- Gain an understanding of the benefits of implementation
- Assess the gaps of your organisation
- Manage the necessary change
- Begin an action plan

To find out more about a National Standards Workshop being held in your area, contact your State/Territory Peak Body.

### 3. Implementing the National Standards Guide and Workbook

This Guide and Workbook is designed as a systematic and 'user friendly' method for implementing the National Standards in your organisation. It contains a comprehensive set of instructions and resources to guide you task-by-task through the implementation process.

This resource is suitable for anyone who wants to implement the National Standards or whose job it is to involve volunteers. When used in conjunction with the National Standards, the Workbook will help you to determine where you need to make improvements in your system for managing volunteer involvement. Importantly, it will also enable you to identify your strengths – what you are currently doing well.

To obtain a copy of the Implementing the National Standards Guide and Workbook, contact your State/Territory Peak Body.

### 4. The National Standards for Volunteer Involvement Online Self-Assessment Tool

The National Standards for Volunteer Involvement Online Self-Assessment Tool provides organisations across Australia with an easy-to-use online self-assessment tool to work towards meeting the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement. The National Standards for Volunteer Involvement Tool is a tailored version of Standards & Performance Pathways (SPP), a leading Australian online service for the completion of service and quality standards, compliance activities, and for managing risk and quality performance.

Additionally, Volunteering Australia will be developing a flexible, tiered voluntary certification, or 'Quality Mark' system to enable organisations to check how they are tracking in implementing the Standards.

## Review Process

The development of the new Standards has been an inclusive project led by the CEOs of Volunteering SA&NT, Volunteering Tasmania and Volunteering WA. Following the establishment of this working group, and a sector wide reference group comprising representatives from all states and territories, a draft document was prepared and presented to the sector for feedback via a survey and series of consultations across Australia.

From that process a set of revised Standards was created that were easier to understand and use, contained clear criteria and relevant content, and had wide applicability to different types of organisations and volunteer situations.

## History

The first Australian National Standards were developed for Volunteering Australia by Volunteering Victoria in 1996. Sector consultation took place in 1996 and 1997 and the Standards were formally adopted in February 1998.

Following that time Volunteering Australia actively sought feedback on the functionality of the first set of Standards and as a result of feedback Volunteering Australia developed a new second set of standards that truly embraced the full diversity of volunteer-involving organisations and of volunteering.

This second set of standards was launched in 2001, the International Year of Volunteers, and remained in use until today.

### Standard 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.

- 1.1 Responsibilities for leading and managing volunteer involvement are defined and supported.
- 1.2 Policies and procedures applying to volunteers are communicated, understood, and implemented by all relevant staff across the organisation.
- 1.3 The organisation's risk management processes are applied to the organisation's volunteer involvement.
- 1.4 Volunteer involvement records are maintained.
- 1.5 Processes are in place to manage relationships with partner agencies in collaborative volunteer activities. (This criteria only applies to organisations working with other organisations in a collaborative activity involving volunteers and/or sharing responsibility for particular volunteers).

### Standard 2: Commitment to volunteer involvement

Commitment to volunteer involvement is set out through vision, planning and resourcing, and supports the organisation's strategic direction.

- 2.1 The organisation publicly declares its intent, purpose and commitment to involving volunteers.
- 2.2 Volunteer involvement is planned and designed to contribute directly to the organisation purpose, goals and objectives.
- 2.3 Resources (including time, funds, equipment and technology) are allocated for volunteer involvement.

### Standard 3: Volunteer roles

Volunteers are engaged in meaningful roles which contribute to the organisation's purpose, goals and objectives.

- 3.1 Volunteer roles are designed to contribute to the organisation's purpose, goals and objectives.
- 3.2 Volunteer roles are appropriate for the community, service user or stakeholder groups with which the organisation works.
- 3.3 Volunteer roles are defined, documented and communicated.
- 3.4 Volunteer roles are reviewed with input from volunteers and employees.

### Standard 4: Recruitment and selection

Volunteer recruitment and selection strategies are planned, consistent and meet the needs of the organisation and volunteers.

- 4.1 If the organisation recruits volunteers, it uses planned approaches to attract volunteers with relevant interests, knowledge, skills or attributes.
- 4.2 Potential volunteers are provided with relevant information about the organisation, the volunteer role and the recruitment and selection process.
- 4.3 Volunteers are selected based on interest, knowledge, and skills or attributes relevant to the role, and consistent with anti-discrimination legislation.
- 4.4 Screening processes are applied to volunteer roles that help maintain the safety and security of service users, employees, volunteers and the organisation.

### Standard 5: Support and development

Volunteers understand their roles and gain the knowledge, skills and feedback needed to safely and effectively carry out their duties.

- 5.1 Volunteers are provided with orientation relevant to their role and responsibility.
- 5.2 Volunteers knowledge and skills are reviewed to identify support and development needs.
- 5.3 Volunteers knowledge and skill needs relevant to their roles are identified, and training and development opportunities are provided to meet these needs.
- 5.4 Volunteers are provided with supervision and support that enables them to undertake their roles and responsibilities.
- 5.5 Changes to the involvement of a volunteer are undertaken fairly and consistently.

### Standard 6: workplace safety and wellbeing

The health, safety and wellbeing of volunteers is protected in the workplace.

- 6.1 Effective working relationships with employees, and between volunteers, are facilitated by the organisation.
- 6.2 Processes are in place to protect the health and safety of volunteers in their capacity as volunteers.
- 6.3 Volunteers have access to complaints and grievance procedures.

### Standard 7: Volunteer recognition

Volunteer contribution, value and impact is understood, appreciated and acknowledged.

- 7.1 The governing body and employees understand how volunteers benefit the organisation, service users and the community.
- 7.2 Volunteers are informed about how their contributions benefit the organisation, service users and the community.
- 7.3 The organisation regularly acknowledges contributions made by volunteers and the positive impact on the organisation, service users and the community.
- 7.4 Volunteer acknowledgement is appropriate to the volunteer role and respectful of cultural values and perspectives.

### Standard 8: Quality management and continuous improvement

Effective volunteer involvement results from a system of good practice, review and continuous improvement.

- 8.1 Policies and procedures are implemented to effectively guide all aspects of volunteer involvement.
- 8.2 Volunteer involvement is regularly reviewed in line with the organisation's evaluation and quality management frameworks.
- 8.3 The organisation's performance with volunteer involvement is monitored and reported to the governing body, employees, volunteers and stakeholders.
- 8.4 Opportunities are available for volunteers to provide feedback on the organisation's volunteer involvement and relevant areas of the organisation's work.





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[inclusiondesignlab.org.au/volmanual](http://inclusiondesignlab.org.au/volmanual)