

# Is Disruption Always a Disaster? Rethinking Volunteering during Tough Times

Workshop at the VWA State Conference 2023

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Acknowledgement -



- **Project Title:** University Students' Volunteering During the COVID-19 Pandemic
- **Supported by:** Volunteering WA
- **Link -** [20230420-vwa-usv-project-report-final.pdf \(volunteeringwa.org.au\)](https://www.volunteeringwa.org.au/20230420-vwa-usv-project-report-final.pdf)
- **Method:** → Three WA Universities
  - Qualitative followed by quantitative

# Findings

- **Operational challenges during the pandemic**

Operational Challenges due to COVID-19	WA Universities		
	U1	U2	U3
Reduction in volunteering opportunities	√	√	√
Changes in priorities		√	√
Reduction in availability of students	√	√	√
Hesitancy in trying new things	√		
Trimming down resources		√	√
Government policy changes and impacts	√	√	√

# Findings

- **Effects of the pandemic**

Adverse Effects of COVID-19	WA Universities		
	U1	U2	U3
Loss of interest	√	√	√
Lack belongingness towards university	√	√	
Lack of feeling safe	√	√	
Remained resilient (student volunteers)	√	√	
Future volunteering intention	√		√

# Findings

- **Volunteering trends during the pandemic**
  - Emergency health care volunteering
  - Informal volunteering
  - Online volunteering and digital matching platforms
  - Micro volunteering
- **Recommendations**

Differences in  
Approach in  
Recruitment and  
Operation

Word-of-mouth and  
sense-of-community

Collaborate and work  
with community  
organisations

A renewed push to  
engage with students

Training and support  
student volunteers

# Role of Word-of-Mouth (WOM) and Passing the Baton

- WOM and Passing the baton
  - Two popular volunteer recruitment strategies
- Adverse impact of COVID-19 on these recruitment strategies
- But these are in the university context.
- What about in other volunteering contexts?

# Purpose of the Workshop

- Sense checking
- What happened in other volunteering contexts?

# Workshop Activities – Time is tight

- Six questions to discuss... Ethics approved (HRE2022-0428).
- Discussion on each question will be timed
- Please **write down your views** (to the point using bullet points) in the given piece of paper.
- We will invite **maximum two participants to discuss** their views for each question due to time constraint.
- Information sheet and Consent form (please sign in)



# Workshop Discussion Questions

**Q1:** Please describe the volunteer recruitment process and tools used at your organization prior to COVID-19 (i.e., prior to 2020).

→ Steps of the recruitment process

→ Tools / mechanism used for recruitment

**Discussion time – 7 minutes [3 minutes to list down and 4 minutes to discuss]**

# Workshop Discussion Questions

**Q2:** Are the recruitment process/steps different now during the post-COVID era? Please specify how.

**Discussion time – 7 minutes [3 minutes to list down and 4 minutes to discuss]**

# Workshop Discussion Questions

**Q3:** What role does word of mouth (WOM) play in recruiting volunteers to your organisations?

**Discussion time – 6 minutes [2 minutes to list down and 4 minutes to discuss]**

# Workshop Discussion Questions

**Q4:** How did 'passing the baton' style word of mouth recruitment suffer an interruption during the COVID-19 pandemic?

**Discussion time – 6 minutes [2 minutes to list down and 4 minutes to discuss]**

# Workshop Discussion Questions

**Q5:** What have you done to overcome the recruitment problems (relating to WOM, passing the baton, etc.) and revitalise the volunteer life-cycle process?

→ Please write down **two most important strategies** adopted

→ Briefly discuss the **topmost strategy**.

**Discussion time – 10 minutes (4 minutes to list down and 6 minutes to discuss)**

# Workshop Discussion Questions

**Q6:** What are the trends of volunteering that your organisation have been experiencing during post COVID-19?

Discussion time – 4 minutes (2 minutes to list down and 2 minutes to discuss)

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**Thank you!**

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