

MEDIA RELEASE



EMBARGOED UNTIL: 7.00am Monday 1 November 2021

The National Strategy for Volunteering to provide a blueprint for a reimagined future for volunteering in Australia

Volunteering Australia is leading the development of the National Strategy for Volunteering, which will be designed and owned by the volunteering ecosystem and provide a blueprint for a reimagined future for volunteering in Australia.

The funding of the development of the National Strategy for Volunteering by the Australian Department of Social Services recognises the vital contribution of volunteers to the nation's wellbeing.

Volunteering Australia CEO Mark Pearce said, "Volunteering is widespread and diverse with millions of people volunteering every year to support communities across the country. In the face of declining rates of people volunteering through organisations and the pervasive effects of COVID-19, this is a critically important and unique opportunity to redesign an optimistic future for volunteering in Australia."

"Reinvigorating volunteering will require all elements of the volunteering ecosystem to adapt and play their part, guided by the National Strategy for Volunteering. The project will seek engagement with all stakeholders in the volunteering ecosystem with a focus on diversity and inclusion," Mr Pearce said.

The volunteering ecosystem is a network of relationships between volunteers, Volunteer Involving Organisations, Volunteering Support Services, Volunteering Australia, State and Territory Volunteering Peak Bodies, national peak bodies, community organisations, philanthropy, business, and Governments, all working for the collective viability and recognition of volunteering in Australia.

Mark Pearce said, "We are incredibly proud to be leading Australia's first National Strategy for Volunteering in ten years, but we can't do it alone. We need the entire volunteering ecosystem to come on this journey and engage with us as we reimagine the future of volunteering. The National Strategy for Volunteering will provide strategic direction for the volunteering ecosystem and enable volunteering across Australia to be effective, inclusive, and sustainable," Mr Pearce said.

Minister for Families and Social Services Anne Ruston said that the new National Strategy for Volunteering would ensure Australia's millions of volunteers were given the best opportunity to deliver vital services to vulnerable Australians - now and into the future.

"It has been a tough year for many Australians and the work of volunteers cannot be understated. That's why the Morrison Government is proud to provide \$600,000 to help develop an effective, inclusive and forward looking National Strategy that would reinvigorate volunteering in Australia and support all the local champions selflessly giving their time to help their community thrive," Minister Ruston said.

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To ensure the development of the National Strategy is evidence-based, Volunteering Australia will also produce a *Volunteering in Australia* report, which will provide a comprehensive understanding of the landscape of volunteering in Australia, map current trends, and provide insight into how volunteering may evolve into the future.

For more information and to get involved please visit the Volunteering Australia website, volunteeringaustralia.org

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