

# Volunteering Strategy for South Australia 2021–2027



..... partnering to deliver the  
**Volunteering Strategy**  
for South Australia .....



Front cover image courtesy of Disaster Relief Australia (formerly Team Rubicon)

## **Acknowledgement of Country**

We acknowledge and respect Aboriginal people as the State's first people and recognise their traditional relationship with Country.

We acknowledge that the spiritual, social, cultural and economic practices of Aboriginal people come from their traditional lands and waters, and that the cultural and heritage beliefs, languages and laws are still of importance today.

Please note that the term 'Aboriginal' in this document refers to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and that this term is used as First Nations peoples in South Australia are predominantly Aboriginal peoples.

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# Message

## Volunteering Strategy for South Australia signing partners

Building on the success of the Volunteering Strategy for South Australia 2014-2020, we are proud to deliver a second Volunteering Strategy for our state from 2021 to 2027.

Volunteers come from all walks of life and share a common objective: to give something back. Whether in aged care, the arts, community welfare, disability, education, emergency services, environment, health or recreation and sport, volunteering must be well supported, managed and valued.

The almost one million volunteers in South Australia provide invaluable support to all volunteer involving organisations. Their time, skills and passion form the foundations to sustainable and vibrant communities.

To make volunteering better and stronger in our state, we need to understand why people volunteer. We need to increase the promotion of the personal and professional benefits of volunteering and make sure there are meaningful volunteering opportunities available to people wanting to engage with their community.

We need to support volunteer involving organisations as they look at new ways to promote volunteering, find new ways to engage and support volunteers, and create more diverse workplaces, to make sure the volunteering sector will be well prepared for the future. Over recent years, shifts in economic, social, environmental and cultural drivers have been contributing factors to a decline in volunteering.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics General Social Survey results indicate that since 2010, there has been a decline in the rate of formal volunteering participation and group involvement.

This strategy sets out our volunteering goals and commitments for the next six years. It outlines how we will keep improving the volunteering experience for South Australians. There will be many opportunities to do this, particularly as society changes alongside the volunteering behaviours of a growing population.

We are focused on strengthening cross-sector collaboration. When we all connect through diverse networks, we make volunteering stronger, more inclusive and more sustainable. As partners, we know that volunteering is integrated across all levels of government, business and not-for-profit sectors. This new strategy will implement effective ways to collaborate, participate and set measurable ways to record our achievements.

We look forward to continuing our work with the sector, recognising and supporting everyone who volunteers and making sure volunteering continues to be at the heart of our community.



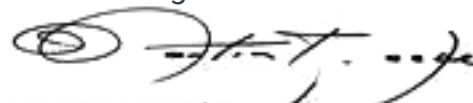
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# Our vision

In 2027, we have healthy, resilient communities built on the passion and skills of volunteers.

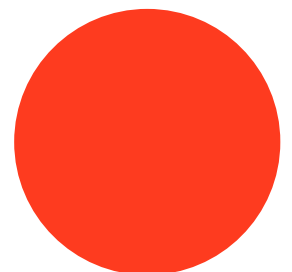
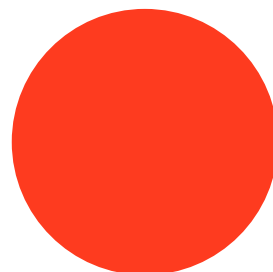
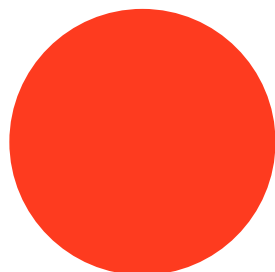
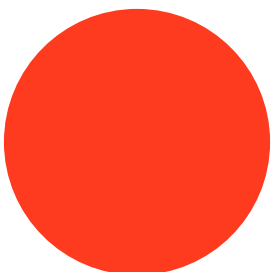
# Our goal

To grow volunteer participation in South Australia through collaborative action.

# Definition of volunteering

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

Volunteering Australia



# Why volunteering is important

Volunteering is an important part of an inclusive society in which all South Australians have the opportunity for meaningful participation. Volunteering connects us, strengthens our sense of belonging and creates positive relationships that build stronger local communities.

South Australia has a long history of volunteering and the value of volunteering contributes directly to the health and wellbeing of individuals, our communities and the economy of our state.

Volunteering keeps our communities and organisations working together. It maintains the quality of life in our communities by meeting critical, local needs and enables individuals, families and community groups to offer essential support and enhance their future potential.

**“ Volunteering is important to the health and wellbeing of volunteers and to the economy ”**

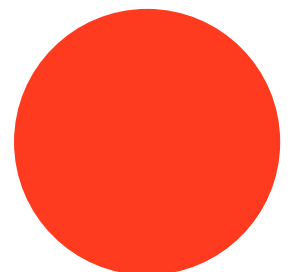
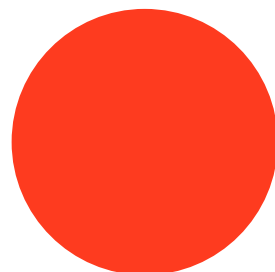
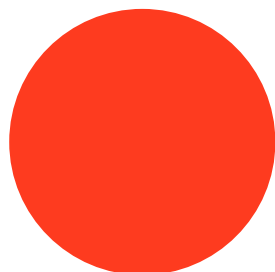
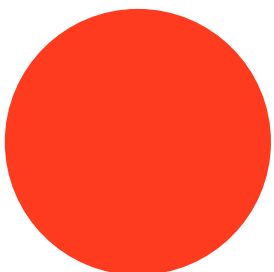
Australian Institute of Health and Welfare<sup>1</sup>.

Volunteers enhance an organisation's brand and image and can help improve performance by bringing new people and ideas into the organisation.

**“ Volunteers broaden their social networks and professional skills through volunteering ”**

Volunteering Australia and PricewaterhouseCoopers Australia<sup>2</sup>

Through volunteering, we are committed to working towards the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.





Photographer: Bryan Charlton  
Courtesy Office for Ageing Well, SA Health



# Volunteering in South Australia at a glance<sup>3</sup>

OVER  
**900,000**  
SOUTH AUSTRALIANS  
VOLUNTEER (FORMAL AND INFORMAL)

**\$5 BILLION**  
ESTIMATED  
ECONOMIC IMPACT

**173**  
**MILLION**  
VOLUNTEER HOURS  
PER WEEK

**45%** ENGAGE  
IN  
**FORMAL**  
VOLUNTEERING

## BREAKDOWN FORMAL VOLUNTEERING

**42% AGED 15-34**  
**51% AGED 35-51**  
**43% AGED OVER 55**

## COMMON REASONS FOR VOLUNTEERING

HELPING OTHERS IN THE COMMUNITY  
TO GIVE SOMETHING BACK  
SHARE SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

## COMMON BENEFITS FROM VOLUNTEERING

PERSONAL SATISFACTION  
FRIENDSHIP  
FEELING PART OF THE COMMUNITY

HIGHER % OF VOLUNTEERS IN

## RURAL

THAN VOLUNTEERS IN

## METRO REGIONS

## WOMEN

ARE MORE LIKELY TO VOLUNTEER THAN MEN  
BUT THE 2% GAP IS CLOSING

## GROUPS AUSTRALIAN-BORN

ARE MORE LIKELY TO  
VOLUNTEER

## THAN OVERSEAS-BORN

Infographs indicate: Over 900,000 South Australians volunteer formally and informally; estimated economic impact of \$5 billion; 173,000,000 volunteer hours per week; 45% engage in formal volunteering; 42% are aged 15-34; 51% aged 35-51; 43% aged over 55; more volunteers in rural regions than volunteers in metro regions; women are more likely to volunteer than men (but the 2% gap is closing); Australian-born groups are more likely to volunteer than overseas-born groups. Common reasons to volunteer include: to help others in the community; to give something back; share skills and experience. Common benefits from volunteering include: personal satisfaction; friendship; feeling part of the community.

# Focus areas

To help us realise our shared vision for volunteering, we will focus on the following four focus areas over the next six years and work to progress the priorities.

## 1 Invest in the foundations of volunteering

This area will focus on the value and benefits of volunteering to the individual, the local community and across South Australia.

### Aim

Build the capability of volunteer involving organisations to inclusively engage, train and support volunteers.

### Priorities

- 1.1 Promote how volunteering improves health and wellbeing and benefits the individual, community and the environment.
- 1.2 Encourage organisations to connect with the community and engage with a diverse range of volunteers regardless of ability, age, gender, ethnicity or sexuality.
- 1.3 Support organisations to find new ways to keep and encourage regional and metropolitan volunteers, as well as targeting young people.

## 2 Communicate the benefits of volunteering

This area will focus on continuing to advocate for volunteering and raising the awareness of the range of volunteering activities available.

### Aim

Raise the profile of volunteering in the community to encourage greater participation.

### Priorities

- 2.1 Make sure volunteers and their managers know about different ways to communicate and interact, so that:
  - volunteers can communicate well with each other
  - the community knows how volunteers help them
  - people who want to volunteer know what their options are.
- 2.2 Make sure that people can choose volunteer activities that suit them and help achieve personal goals.

Do this by having flexible ways of finding volunteers and a wide range of volunteer positions to choose from.

### **3 Implement leading practice and high quality standards**

This area will focus on organisations having high management standards to make sure that volunteers have the resources and support to do their work to the best of their ability.

#### **Aim**

Organisations have access to relevant information, resources and networks to establish effective management practices.

#### **Priorities**

- 3.1 Help volunteer involving organisations to develop good volunteer management practices, appropriate structure and governance, and relevant training opportunities for volunteers.
- 3.2 Increase the understanding of compliance and risk management to make sure that clients, volunteers and staff are protected and safe.

### **4 Continuous improvement**

This area will focus on helping government, business and not-for-profit organisations and groups improve how they build the community through volunteering.

#### **Aim**

Continue to build relationships, networks and partnerships to maintain the impact of volunteering on our communities.

#### **Priorities**

- 4.1 Encourage partnerships and collaboration between different sectors to promote and sustain volunteering.
- 4.2 Encourage continuous improvement in volunteer management and engagement.
- 4.3 Support research on the impact and growth of volunteering.

# How we will reach focus area priorities

Cross-sector partnerships that involve state and local government, business and not-for-profit organisations are essential to achieving real social impact. This strategy will open up innovative ways of working, organise expertise and resources, create shared accountability, and generate shared value. Each sector has a key role to play, and through collaboration, real transformation will happen.

Organising the collaborative effort takes work, so we will use a collective impact approach to reach our goals<sup>4</sup>.

We will:

**Make sure that shared goals and outcomes are met** – to support all parties to work together to achieve shared objectives.

**Ensure accountability** – by documenting and analysing results, and sharing evidence and lessons with stakeholders.

**Build strong relationships and partnerships** – by establishing long-term, mutually respectful and valued cross-sector partnerships.

**Support good governance** – by having a partnership board that drives the achievement of our shared goals.

**Establish a supporting team** – to support the partnership board and coordinate the work. This will be known as the secretariat.

**Design effective place-based approaches** – by encouraging locally driven projects that respond to local needs.

**Support capacity development** – by developing and strengthening skills, abilities, and resources for organisations and communities.

**Communicate better** – by encouraging open communication to improve knowledge and resource sharing.

**Support co-design** – by bringing people and professionals together to share expertise and make decisions together.

# Cross-sector partnership model

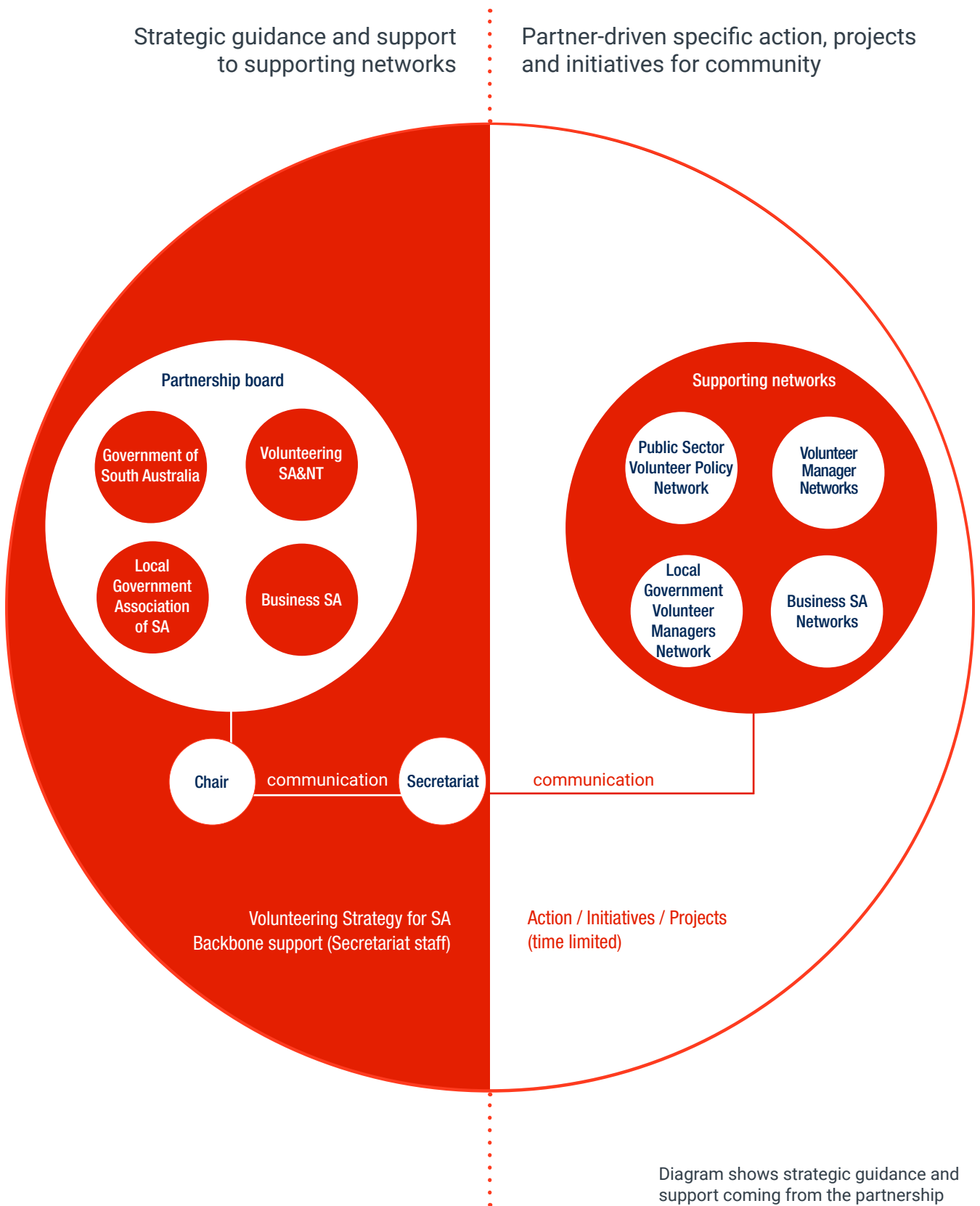


Diagram shows strategic guidance and support coming from the partnership board, and how that support flows in a two way direction with community partners via partner-driven action.

# Roadmap

## Delivering on outcomes

Using a collaborative impact approach to achieve focus area priorities, we will create an action plan with specific targets.

The action plan will support the establishment of topic-driven working groups across local and state government and non-government agencies.

Working groups will:

- make decisions about the scope of projects and find possible partners
- work out priorities, resources and timelines
- oversee the actions to deliver the projects
- measure the success of the projects.

## Demonstrating the impact

We will measure and report on the strategy by:

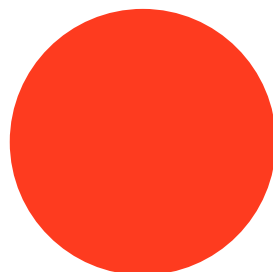
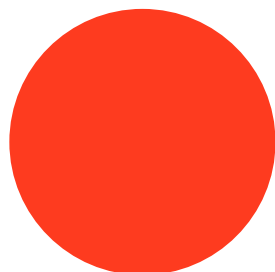
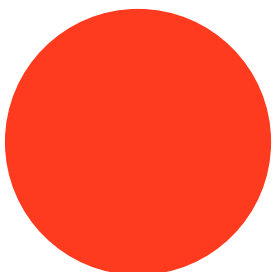
- developing and delivering on two-year action plans that include new and ongoing actions identified through sector consultation
- providing a progress report to be published annually on the Volunteering Strategy website.

The strategy will be flexible so that it can respond to new developments in volunteering.

## Looking to the future

The cross-sector partnership will make sure that the strategy meets the needs of the volunteering sector, as well as keep up-to-date with changes in research, technology and best practice volunteering.

We will review our progress and have clear ways to improve the volunteering experience for everyone.





# Shaping this strategy

Community members, volunteers, and the volunteering sector have contributed to this strategy through a range of public and stakeholder consultations (April 2020 to February 2021).

“ Recognition of volunteering as a state agenda that is active and doesn't just sit in the Volunteering Strategy ”

Feedback from a volunteer involving organisation

## Who we heard from

**240** school students and young people

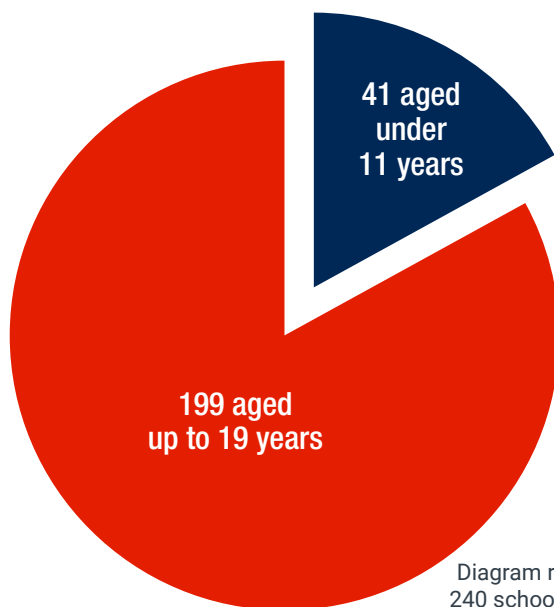


Diagram represents 240 school students and young people: 41 people aged under 11 years and 199 people aged up to 19 years.

**OVER 400** volunteers, volunteer involving organisations and members of the community

## REPRESENTED GROUPS

- Aboriginal peoples
- Business
- Culturally diverse groups of people
- Young and older people
- People with disability
- Recreation and sporting clubs
- Regional and emergency services
- Volunteer resource centres
- Volunteer involving organisations
- Public sector
- Local government



## Who was involved

**5** ONLINE FOCUS GROUPS INVOLVING **69** PARTICIPANTS

**6** INDEPENDENT SUBMISSIONS

**537** ONLINE SURVEY RESULTS

### What they spoke about

- clear language
- innovation
- better ways to connect
- volunteering is for all
- volunteering for different groups of people
- education
- new ways to engage
- recognition
- expanding roles

Diagram (left top) indicates who was involved:

- 5 online focus groups involving 69 participants
- 6 independent submissions
- 537 online survey responses



# Leave no one behind

## Children and young people

Through volunteering, children and young people can make a positive contribution to their communities and become more confident learners.

These benefits can be realised through well-structured in-school and university volunteering programs. This can help build connections between education settings and the wider community by sharing knowledge and experiences, and by making links across generations and cultures<sup>5</sup>.

## Older South Australians

Older South Australians have a lot of life experience, skills and knowledge that they can share through volunteering. Research shows a link between volunteering and mental and physical health benefits for older people<sup>6</sup>.

## People with disability

Volunteering provides opportunities for people with disability to increase their social connections within their local communities.

Supporting access and inclusion for people with disability plays an important role in improving their health and general wellbeing, as well as bringing benefit to the organisations, their clients and the broader community.

## Aboriginal peoples

Aboriginal peoples have unique skills, knowledge and experience that can help contribute to meaningful change in communities. Aboriginal peoples have always had a strong commitment to community – the obligation to contribute for the benefit of the community as a whole is a strength of Aboriginal cultures.

## People from non-English speaking backgrounds

Volunteering among people from diverse backgrounds brings benefit to both the volunteers and the organisations engaging with volunteers. For new arrivals, volunteering can help to make new friends, improve their English, and gain local work experience.

## LGBTIQA+

People who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer, questioning, asexual, ally, pansexual (LGBTIQA+) bring an abundance of life experience and resilience that contributes to organisational culture and the community. Additionally, volunteers from the LGBTIQA+ community can benefit from the confidence, skills and networks that they get through volunteering to support them in becoming leaders in their own communities<sup>7</sup>.

# Strategic alignments

This strategy combines with other plans to make a broader impact including, but not limited to:

- Strong Futures: SA Youth Action Plan 2021–2022
- South Australia’s Plan For Ageing Well 2020–2025
- Game On: Getting South Australia Moving
- The State Disability Inclusion Plan 2019–2023
- Volunteering SA&NT Strategic Framework 2020–2023
- LGA25 Strategic Plan 2021–2025
- Healthy Parks Healthy People SA 2021–2026

## More information

[www.savolunteeringstrategy.org.au](http://www.savolunteeringstrategy.org.au)

## References




- 1 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Australia’s welfare 2017, Canberra, 2017.
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- 7 W Leonard, M Pitts, et al, *Private lives 2: The second national survey of the health and wellbeing of gay, lesbian, bisexual (GLBT) Australians*, Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, Melbourne, 2012.





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