



Volunteering Strategy for South Australia YEAR IN REVIEW

2020–2021 highlights www.savolunteeringstrategy.org.au

About the Volunteering Strategy for South Australia

Volunteers come from all walks of life and share a common objective: to give something back. They freely donate their time and contribute approximately \$5 billion to the South Australian economy every year.

The Volunteering Strategy for South Australia is a 'world first' partnership agreement that was collaboratively developed by Volunteering SA&NT, Business SA, the Local Government Association of South Australia, and the Government of South Australia in 2014.

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. The strategy aims to slow this decline and improve the volunteering experience for all South Australians.

I wish to thank all the working group members who volunteered to implement the strategy in 2020-21, as well as the previous Independent Chair, Ms Janet Stone. Their skill, professionalism and dedication to the strategy saw great things happen for volunteering in South Australia.

Dr Christel Mex
Independent Chair

Vision

Healthy, resilient communities built on the passion and skills of volunteers

Goal

Grow volunteer participation in South Australia through collaborative action.

2020-2021 Highlights

The first strategy was completed in December 2020. Volunteers across four working groups successfully delivered a range of initiatives across the state. A full list of achievements is available on the [strategy website](#).

To build on the first strategy's success and to shape the future of volunteering in South Australia, the strategy partners recommitted to supporting the partnership for the second stage from 2021 to 2027.



Dr Christel Mex, Independent Chair, Ms Evelyn O'Loughlin, (former) CEO Volunteering SA-NT, Hon Michelle Lensink, Minister for Human Services, Mr Matt Pinnegar, (former) CEO LGA and Mr Martin Haese, CEO Business SA (date of photo: 17 May 2021)

National Volunteer Week 2021 Highlight:

On 17 May 2021, the strategy partners proudly kicked off National Volunteer Week with the launch of the new [Volunteering Strategy for South Australia 2021-27](#) in front of a 700-strong crowd at the opening event in Victoria Square.

Increasing the participation of young people, building the capacity of organisations to upskill and retain volunteers and encouraging more people to enjoy the rewarding experience of giving their time are key focus areas of the state's new volunteering strategy.

Projects & Initiatives 2020-21

Resources to encourage volunteering by young people

A 12-member working group was established to strengthen and promote volunteering amongst young South Australians. Key outcomes included:

- [training](#) for volunteer involving organisations to help involve young volunteers (scroll to Resources for Trainers)
- [webpage](#) content to promote awards and recognition programs acknowledging the efforts of young volunteers
- free [information sessions](#) on implementing student volunteering programs in schools.

Volunteering Strategy Project Hub

A new [project hub](#) showcasing the range of multi-stakeholder initiatives helping to contribute to achieve strategy outcomes was developed.

The project hub highlights examples of sectors working together in a collaborative way by pooling resources, knowledge and expertise.

V.Y.P.I. Working Group Established

V.Y.P.I. (Volunteering. Youth. Participation. Impact.) is a group of like-minded people from all backgrounds who come together to create impact by sharing knowledge and taking action to help young South Australians to participate in meaningful volunteering.

Established February 2021, the group was a merging of the existing student volunteering working group under the first strategy and the student volunteer champions network, led by the Department for Education.

V.Y.P.I. provides an important forum for identifying state-wide issues and opportunities around how young people can connect with and participate in the community, as well as encouraging young people to give their time freely and feel supported and valued for their contributions.

The group is currently progressing three projects:

- Best practice showcase
- Social impact assessment
- Young changemakers

Creating a positive and safe volunteer experience

The South Australian Government committed to working with the volunteering sector to determine how best to manage volunteer disputes, including investigating whether governance training, resourcing and potential changes to legislation were required.

A working group was established to explore mechanisms which will help to prevent and resolve conflict – ensuring that people have a positive and safe experience while volunteering.

A range of actions which could be pursued to enhance the volunteering experience for everyone have been developed.

Collective Viability – refreshed governance structure

Partnerships

Cross-sector partnerships that involve state and local government, business and not-for-profit organisations are essential to achieving strategy outcomes. The strategy encourages innovative ways of working, coordinates expertise and resources, creates shared accountability, and generates shared value. Each sector has a key role to play, and through collaboration, genuine transformation happens.

Signing Partners

- Hon Michelle Lensink MLC, Minister for Human Services (representing the Government of South Australia)
- Evelyn O'Loughlin, (former) Chief Executive Officer, Volunteering SA&NT (representing volunteers and volunteer-involving organisations)
- Matt Pinnegar, (former) Chief Executive Officer, Local Government Association of SA (representing local councils)
- Martin Haese, Chief Executive Officer, Business SA (representing business and industry in South Australia).

Partnership Board Members

The Partnership Board comprises representatives from each partner body and is led by an independent chair who oversees the implementation of the Strategy:

- Katherine Hawkins, Executive Director, Strategic Policy & Reform, Department of Human Services
- Tracey Fox, A/CEO, Volunteering SA&NT
- Lisa Teburea, Executive Director, Public Affairs, Local Government Association of SA
- Karen van Gorp, Senior Policy Advisor, Business SA.

Partnership Board representatives are supported by a state-wide network of cross-sector representatives that resolve identified issues and barriers to the growth of volunteering in South Australia and focus areas of the strategy.

Networks

A wide range of networks play a key role in achieving the overall aims of the Volunteering Strategy.

Each partner has a supporting network whose contribution and feedback will be accessed through the partnership:

- Public Sector Volunteer Policy Network
- Local Government Volunteer Managers Network
- Regional and metro Volunteer Managers Networks
- Business SA

Quarterly meetings with these networks will help identify future working group members to respond to issues and challenges as they emerge.

Secretariat

A secretariat (funded by the Department of Human Services) supports the independent chair partnership board, networks and working groups to:

- connect partnership board members and stakeholders to work together
- achieve practical results aligned to strategy goals and objectives.

Effective Communication & Stakeholder Engagement

Communication

The strategy has embraced new ways in which to connect with the sector:

- 'like' us on [Facebook](#) and stay up-to-date with what's happening
- Want to know more about the Volunteering Strategy for South Australia? Visit our [website](#)
- Interested in joining the [LinkedIn](#) group?

Events

National Volunteering Conference 2020

A presentation at the online National Volunteering Conference 2020 showcased how working collaboratively and innovatively across sector boundaries is creating better outcomes for South Australian volunteers.

Stakeholder Engagement

Developing the second Volunteering Strategy

A three-stage consultation process to produce the second Volunteering Strategy:

- The first two stages of the consultation process included a range of online surveys and focus groups.
- Feedback from key stakeholders was collated in stage three. An online consultation process followed in February and March 2021.

More than 600 people from across local and state government, business and not-for-profit sectors contributed to the consultation.

Action plan workshop

To support the implementation of the strategy, a half day workshop was held on 29 June 2021 to develop an action plan to help achieve the strategy's key focus area priorities.

Over 60 volunteer professionals from across local and state government, business and not for profit sector came together to inform the range of actions that the partnership will take forward to improve outcomes for volunteers.

"The best part of the workshop was the diversity of participants and energy, ideas flowed and enthusiasm to build, progress and improve. Well done, roll on the next stage!"

Workshop participant

Network meetings

Participation in volunteer manager network meetings to contribute to sharing ideas, current trends, issues, information and best practice around volunteering.

Acknowledgements

Working Groups

We acknowledge the wide range of stakeholders in voluntary, public and private sectors who contributed across four working groups and who played a key role in achieving the overall aims of the strategy in 2020-21.

Over the life of the first Volunteering Strategy (2014-2020) we acknowledge the contribution of the following people who acted as working group chairs:

1. Invest in the foundations of volunteering

- Jan Sutherland OAM, (former) Sport SA
- Janet Stone, University of Adelaide
- Michael Feszczak, HR Business Partner – Volunteer Management, City of Onkaparinga
- Katerina Eleutheriou, (former) Director, Engagement & Wellbeing, Department for Education

2. Communicate the benefits of volunteering

- Nicholas Begakis AO, (former) Business SA

3. Implement leading practice and high-quality standards

- Erma Ranieri, Commissioner for Public Sector Employment

4. Continuous improvement

- Professor Melanie Oppenheimer, Flinders University
- Tim Jackson, (former) Volunteering SA&NT

About the partners

Volunteering SA&NT (VSA&NT)

VSA&NT looks forward to continuing supporting this 'world first' partnership agreement.

The organisation works with individuals, organisations, businesses and communities to lead, advance, grow, promote and celebrate volunteering.

Over the past 12 months VSA&NT has successfully linked 14,000 individuals to volunteering opportunities, support 2,000 volunteer involving organisations, over 500 members with combined volunteer effort of over 80,000 volunteers.

VSA&NT ensure that its strategic directions align to the Volunteering Strategy.

Over the next six years, VSA&NT look forward to strengthening, building and sustaining the volunteer sector in South Australia, through the Volunteering Strategy for SA.

The Government of South Australia

The Government understands volunteering plays an important role in delivering change acknowledging the significant difference that it can make to people's lives, both from the volunteer's perspective and from the individuals and organisations that they support.

It's backing the efforts of South Australian volunteers and supporting organisations through shared responsibility for delivering the Volunteering Strategy, resourcing to achieve this, in addition to funding for services to continue providing support to the community.

Close to 110,000 volunteers work directly with our public sector agencies to deliver a range of government services to support the community which we are grateful for and continue to support.

Government looks forward to helping deliver the second Volunteering Strategy to ensure volunteering remains strong and vibrant in South Australia.

Local Government Association of SA (LGA)

Local government is the closest tier of government to communities and on behalf of councils is excited to be working collaboratively with Volunteering Strategy partners. The strategy is key to supporting and enhancing the experience of 11,000 volunteers who contribute to council projects and programs across South Australia and improve wellbeing of local communities.

LGA looks forward to supporting younger generations to be actively involved and interested in volunteering and see the strategy as a vehicle to do great things in our State.

Business SA

Business SA supports small business in South Australia. Their involvement as a Volunteering Strategy Partner is an extension of this, encouraging South Australians of all ages to become involved in volunteering.

The organisation represents 5,000 businesses across 17 different sectors (75% metropolitan area, 25% regional and rural)

Collectively, members employ 92,5000 employees, estimating approx. 50,000 of those employees are volunteering in some capacity.

Business SA see their role being communicator/aggregator – they speak to approx. 35,000 people per week.

Volunteering makes a significant contribution to the economy, can progress personal and professional development, and can be a pathway to employment.

For more information on the Volunteering Strategy for South Australia visit:

www.savolunteeringstrategy.org.au

Or contact the Secretariat:

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