



**ANNUAL REPORT**

**2021-2022**

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## Thank you to our generous supporters

Volunteer for Knox has been supported by a grant from the Knox Council Community Partnership Fund. Volunteer for Knox is governed by Knox Learning Alliance and is a member of Volunteering Victoria.



# ABOUT

## Purpose

Volunteer for Knox aims to place passionate and willing volunteers with local not-for-profit organisations in need. The Volunteer Resource Centre's purpose is to increase volunteering opportunities for organisations and individuals in Knox.

We work with other strategic partner organisations in Victoria to promote and build a vibrant, strong volunteering community that is inclusive, respected and sustainable.

We lead research, policy, professional development, hold sector-wide events and undertake innovative initiatives, in conjunction with volunteer peak bodies across Australia, to support the sector. A core part of our work is providing training for leaders of volunteers on the National Standards for Involving Volunteers. Our Continuing Professional Development Program recognises and encourages the professionalism of leaders of volunteers.

We define volunteering as "time willingly given without financial gain and for the common good". This broad definition encompasses diversity of organisational and informal means of civic participation.

Volunteering Victoria works alongside the Victorian Volunteer Support Network (VVSN) to support the volunteering sector. This place-based network of Volunteer Support Organisations (VSOs, otherwise known as Volunteer Resource Centres) facilitates volunteer placements, regional coordination and capacity building for leaders of volunteers.

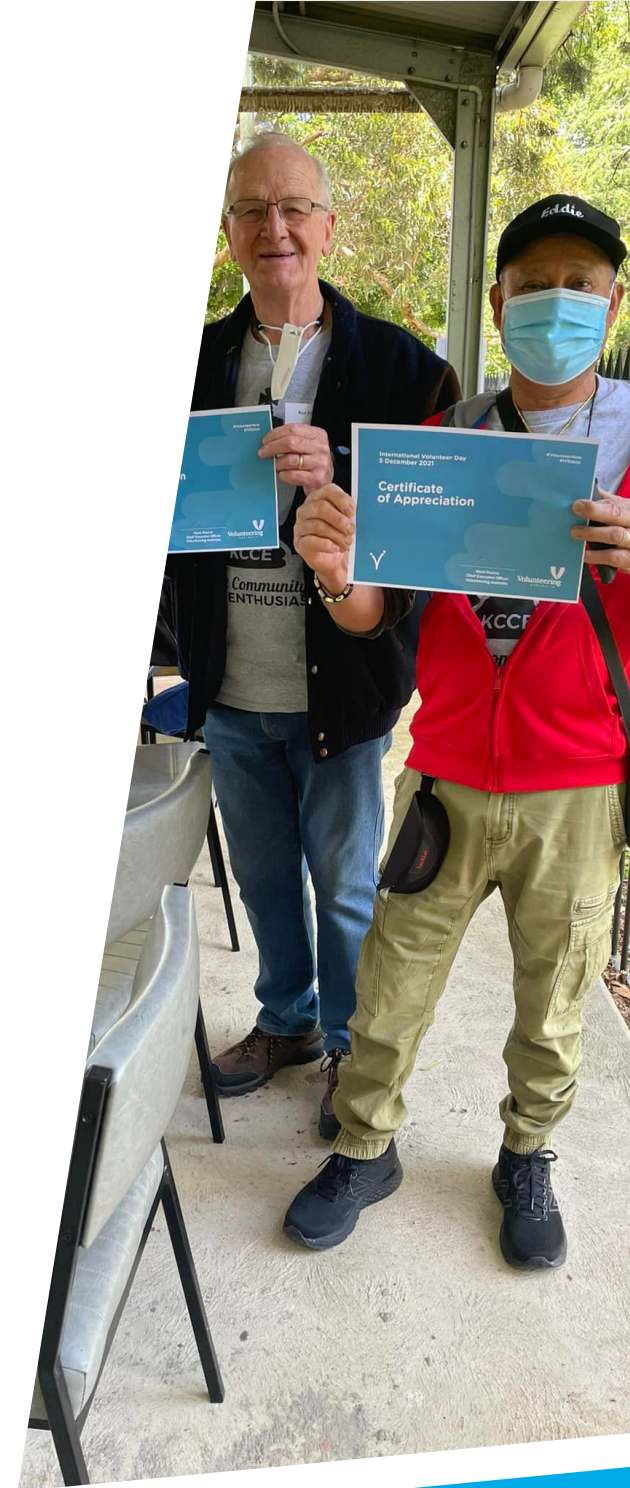
## About Volunteer for Knox

Volunteer for Knox is the Volunteer Resource Centre servicing the City of Knox and is located at Coonara Community House, 22 Willow Rd, Upper Ferntree Gully, Victoria.

Volunteer for Knox was funded by Knox City Council in 2014 and is jointly governed through a partnership between the five Knox Neighbourhood Houses – Coonara Community House, The Basin Community House, Rowville Neighbourhood Learning Centre, Mountain District Learning Centre and Orana Neighbourhood House.

## What we do

- ✓ Support community members find volunteer opportunities.
- ✓ Our strength is providing personalised guidance and support through a volunteer-for-volunteers model
- ✓ Providing training and support to coordinators and managers of volunteers, and to organisations that run volunteering programs
- ✓ Advancing volunteering leadership through research and evaluations



## Impact and Reach

**196** volunteers referred

**53%** born overseas

**48** different languages other than English with Mandarin, Cantonese and Hindi the top three

**75%** identify as female

**90%** aged 65 and under

**156**

### City of Knox non-profit organisations registered

We provide support and information via newsletters, a strong volunteer managers network, personal consultations and training

**1,200**

### Followers on Social Media

A combined total of 1,200 followers increasing the reach across our community

**1,312**

### Expressions of interest in V4K advertised positions

Friends of Koolunga Reserve advertisement for Conservation Assistants was the most popular position especially for young passionate people driven by their values and specific issues.

## Projects

### Reach Out and Connect

This project offered a range of social and recreational activities to support the Knox community in connecting and re-engaging during COVID-19 and promoted social inclusion and digital accessibility for all community members. We used the funding for our Volunteer Expo held at Coonara Community House on December 4 2021 with 400 attendees

### Linking Carers

Supporting carers to explore their employment, training and volunteering options. This is a Carers Employment Support Program funded by the Victoria Department of Families, Fairness and Housing and managed by CHAOS



### Accessible and affordable service

We provide a free service to non-profit communities and low cost training featuring more than 80 different courses and volunteer focused workshops annually



### Promoting and Advocating for Volunteering

National Volunteer Week and International Volunteer Day celebrations, guest speaker at numerous organisations annually, activities weekly promoting volunteerism at Westfield Knox community space, Knox Learning Alliance promoting volunteering through their individual kiosks



### Volunteers supporting Volunteerism

Our V4K ambassador team and volunteer administration team contribute meaningfully to support our work out in the community



### Value to the Knox Learning Alliance

Promotion of training and workshops, promotion of courses at Westfield Knox community space and access to volunteers

# MANAGERS' REPORT

In a year of significant societal disruption, Volunteer for Knox and our registered Volunteer Involving Organisations found new 'COVID safe' ways in which to participate in our community and lessen the challenges associated with living through a pandemic.



Volunteers and our community continued to support each other to find new and creative ways to keep volunteering alive which speaks to the remarkable resilience and generosity that Australians have always shown, in good times and bad.

Half our volunteers are aged under 35, many of our volunteers have degrees, they speak 35 different languages and more than 50% were born overseas.

Over the past 12 months our Knox volunteers contributed 61,152 hours to the City of Knox with the value of their volunteering worth more than \$2.56 million.

One of the priority areas of Volunteer for Knox is to support organisations to be more inclusive for people with disabilities. We initiated a relationship with Community Development and Capacity Building Co-ordinator Outer East Melbourne Local Area Co-ordination Service NDIS to work together to run training workshops for Volunteer Managers.

We also partnered with an employment mentor with Jobs Victoria to promote volunteerism to the long-term unemployed.

Volunteer for Knox was invited to be part of a reference group as part of the CHAOS Networks Linking Carers to Opportunity project. The State Government funded project supports unpaid

carers to take a break from their care role, and take time out either through volunteering or building their skills and secure carer friendly work.

In August 2021 Mandy Limb joined the team as a co-ordinator focusing on events and community engagement and she hit the ground running organising our fabulous Volunteer Expo in December 2021.

After a number of postponements due to Covid-19 our Volunteering Expo finally happened and it was a Sold-Out event. It was an afternoon of perfect weather with a festival atmosphere at Coonara Community House in Upper Ferntree Gully, the home of Volunteer for Knox.

The Expo welcomed 25 Volunteer Involving Organisations all offering wonderful opportunities to volunteer within our community. These included Cool Kids First Aid, Studfield Wantirna Community Newspaper, Auscamps, Rowville Lysterfield Community Newspaper, Australian Jazz Museum, Dandenong Ranges Music Council, Friends of Glenfern Wedge, McKillop Foster Care, Coonara Community House, Volunteer for Knox, Orana Community House, Bridges, Knox Toy library, Knox Environment Society, Meals on Wheels and Knox City Council Waste Education.

Volunteer for Knox opened the gates to over 400 guests who were all well and truly ready to be back together again in the community. We all enjoyed the sounds of African drumming and the wonderful music from the Australian Jazz Museum with an impromptu guest singer Anouk from the Knox Council Waste Education team. Beautiful voice! Myuna mobile ark, a giant bubble artist, belly dancing, kids craft, Quentin the Assistance dog, a nature treasure hunt, raffles and stalls kept everyone entertained all afternoon.

Finally, what an exciting and proud day at Government House for me in March at the Volunteering Awards 2021. The Awards recognise and celebrate the impact volunteers, volunteer leaders and volunteer programs have in building resilient communities, services and connections across Victoria. The awards are run by Volunteering Victoria with the support of the Victorian State Government through the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing.

I was nominated as a finalist in the category of Volunteering Partnership with five other organisations and individuals. Parks Victoria, Ames Australia and Sikh Partnership were the winners with their innovative thinking during Covid by producing a food garden for the community at Werribee Park at the height of Covid-19 restrictions and then I was announced as the Runner Up. I have managed the Community Space at Westfield Knox for the past eight years, an initiative for community groups to promote volunteering and what they do best. The space is provided rent free by Westfield and through this partnership the Volunteer for Knox Resource Centre has connected with over 300 Volunteer Involving Organisations and hosted around 2000 events. My dedication and passion to the Westfield Knox Community Space, Volunteerism and our Community was recognised in the most memorable way!



**Sally Dusing-Laird**  
Manager, Volunteer for Knox

# HOW TO BECOME A VOLUNTEER

## STEP 1 → STEP 2 → STEP 3 → STEP 4 → STEP 5 → STEP 6

Watch  
our online  
induction

Complete our  
online registration  
form

We'll contact  
you by phone  
or email

We'll refer you to  
relevant roles and the  
volunteer manager

Apply for the  
position you're  
interested in

Start your  
volunteer  
journey!



FOLLOW UP IS CARRIED OUT 3 MONTHS AFTER PLACEMENT

# ORGANISATION'S REGISTRATION PROCESS FOR NON-PROFITS IN KNOX

## STEP 1

Contact Volunteer for Knox to register your organisation. You will be required to provide a copy of your current Public Liability insurance.



## STEP 2

Provide details of your volunteer opportunity including position description, days/hours required and any other relevant information relating to the position.

**Volunteer for Knox will advertise the position via GoVolunteer and Seek Volunteer and will process expressions of interest.**



## STEP 3

Volunteer for Knox will match suitable applicants to the role and provide an induction session. The induction session includes general information around volunteering and Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities.



## STEP 4

Potential volunteers are provided with details of your volunteer opportunity and contact information. They are asked to contact you directly to arrange a suitable day/time for an interview. Please note it is the responsibility of each organization to conduct their own Police Checks should they require it. An induction/orientation should also be conducted for each new volunteer.



## STEP 5

Volunteer for Knox will check in with you within three months to see how things are going.



**ANNUAL SNAPSHOT**

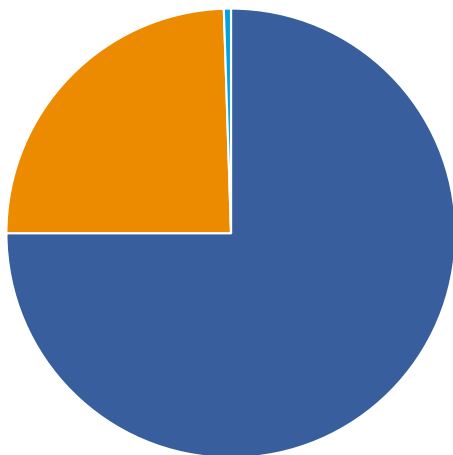
**– THE VALUE OF**

**VOLUNTEERING IN KNOX**

**1 JULY 2021 – 30 JUNE 2022**

# 196 VOLUNTEER REFERRALS

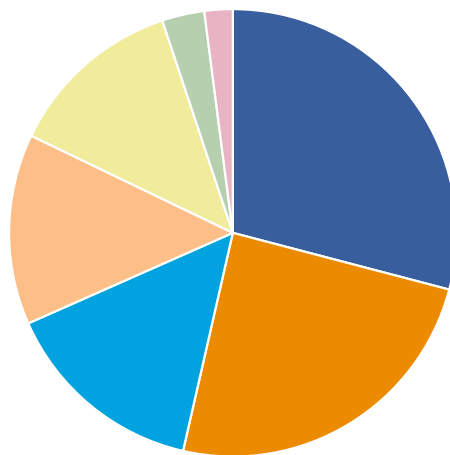
GENDER



■ Female ■ Male ■ Unspecified

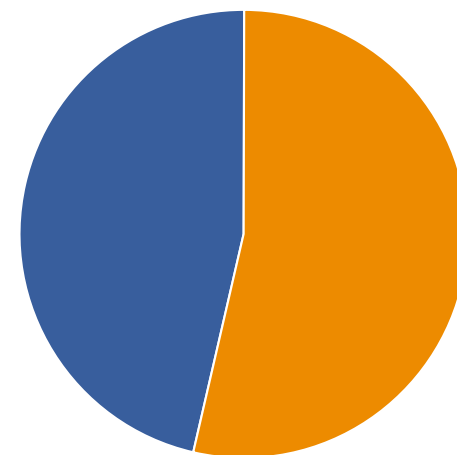
**75% FEMALE**

AGE



■ 25 and Under ■ 26 - 35 ■ 36 - 45 ■ 46 - 55 ■ 56 - 65 ■ 65 and Over ■ Unspecified

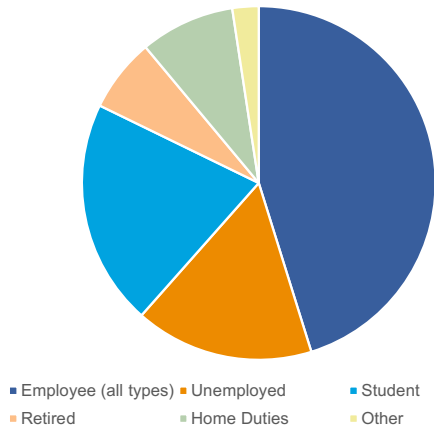
COUNTRY OF BIRTH



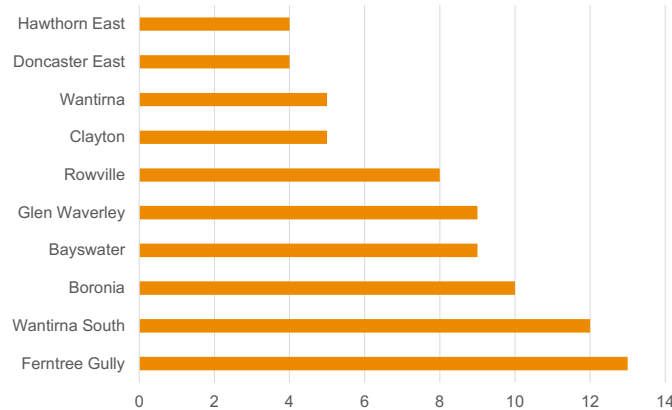
■ Australia ■ Overseas

**TOP 3: INDIA, CHINA & SRI LANKA**

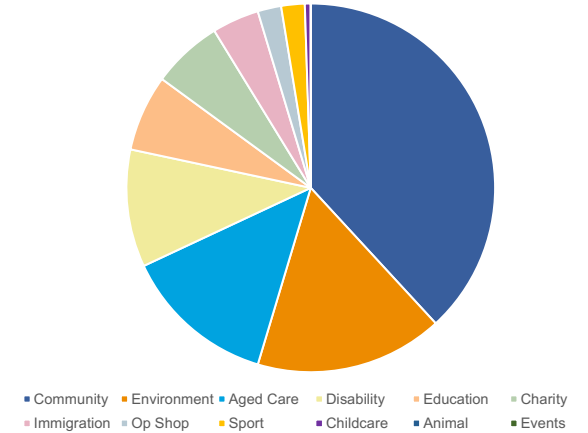
## CURRENT EMPLOYMENT STATUS



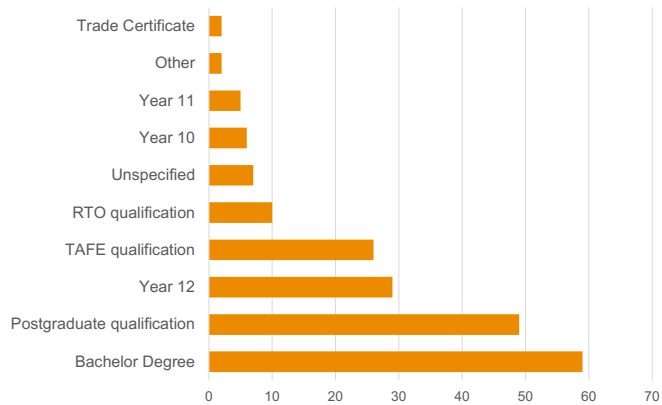
## SUBURB (TOP 10)



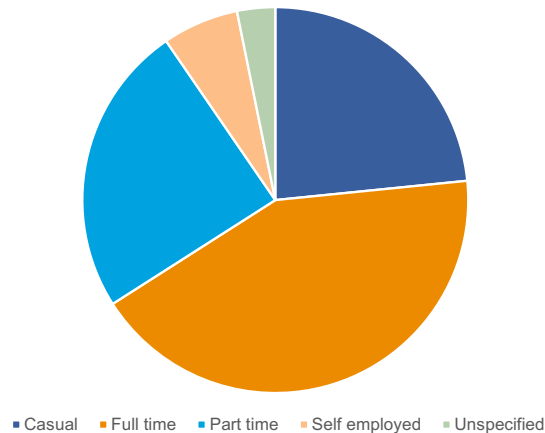
## REFERRALS (CATEGORY)



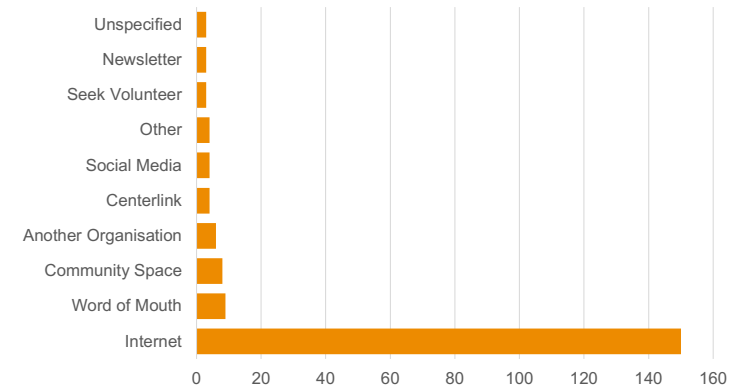
## EDUCATION



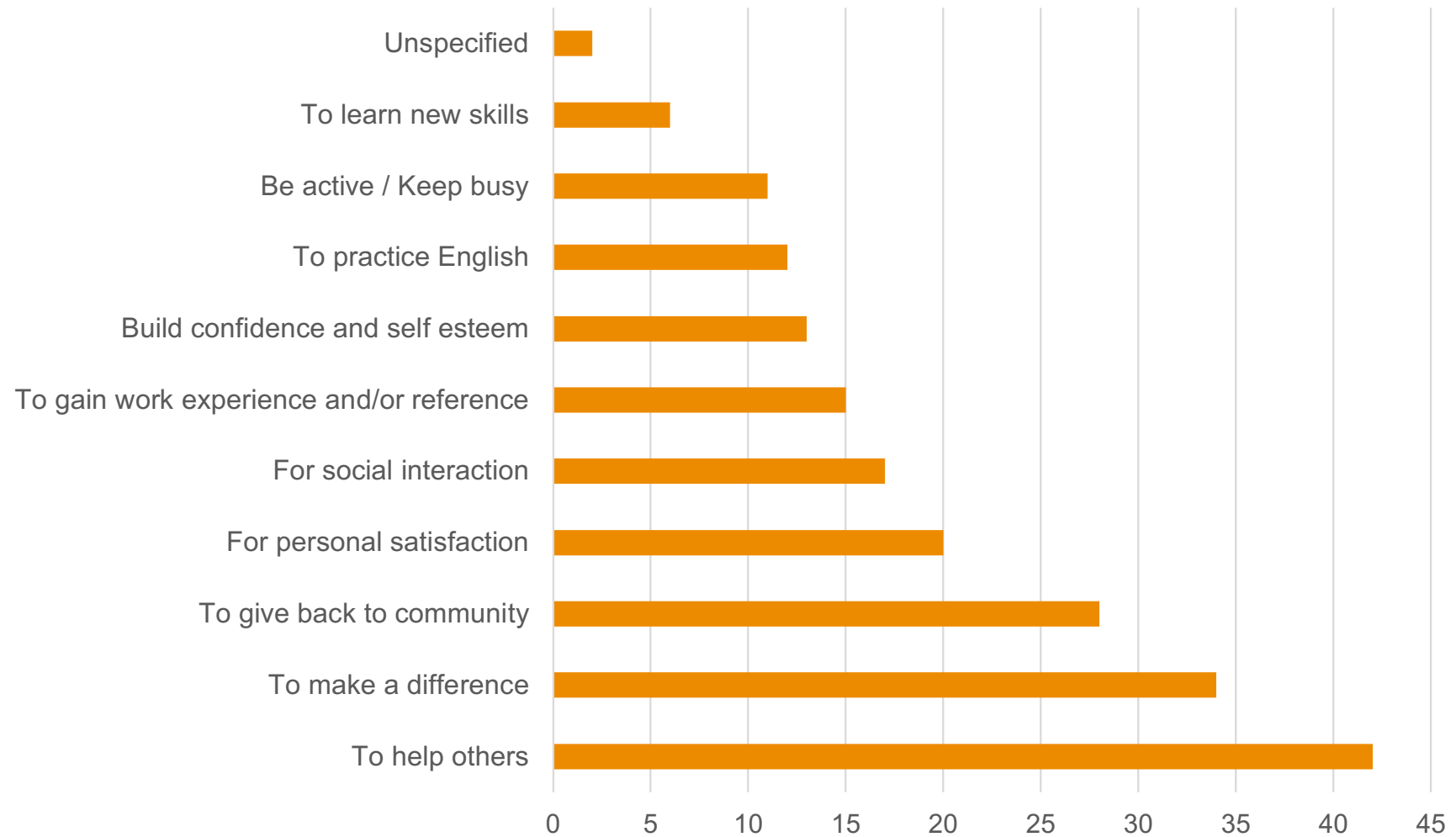
## EMPLOYEE TYPE



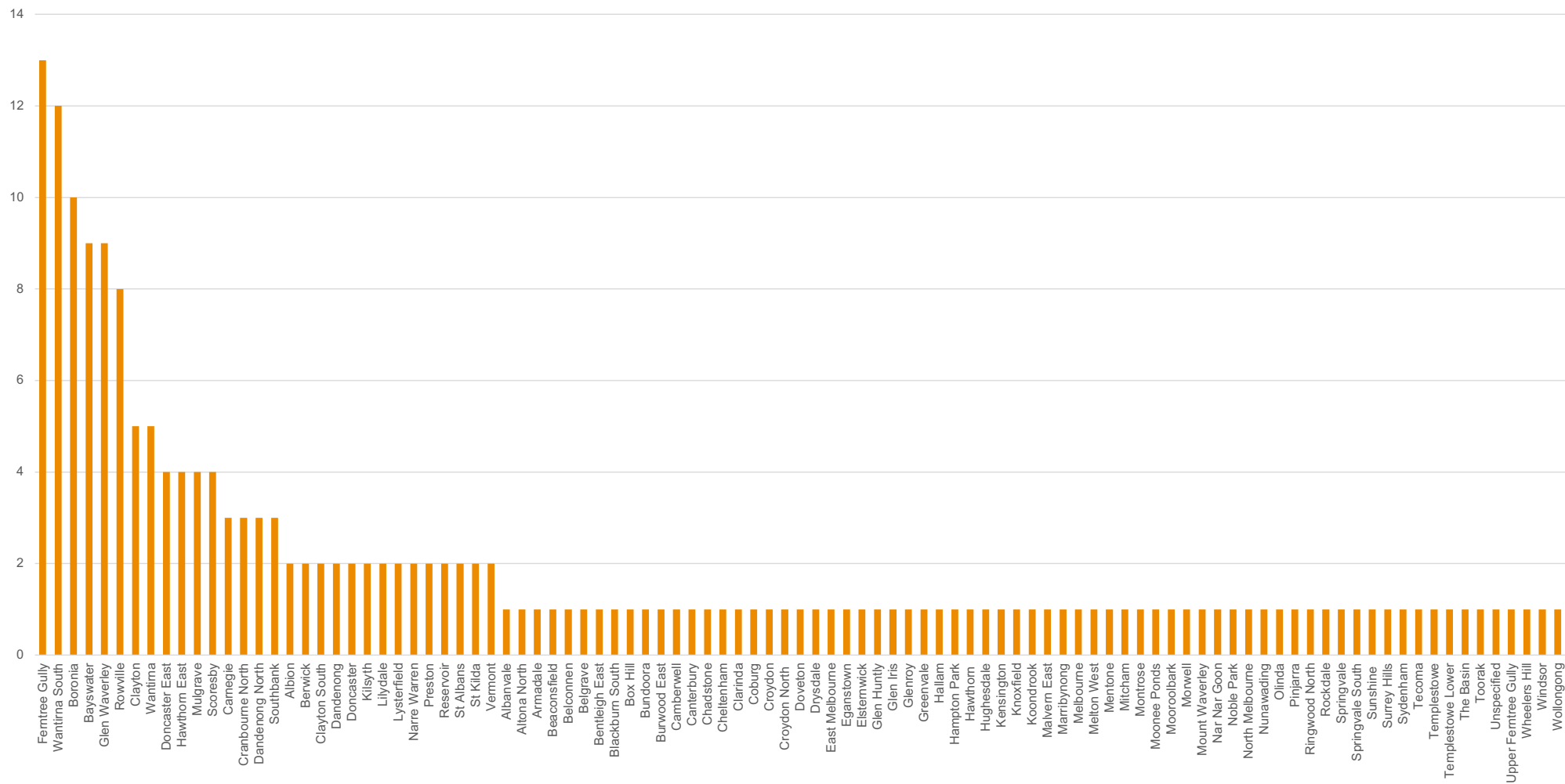
## HOW THEY HEARD ABOUT V4K



## REASON FOR VOLUNTEERING



# SUBURB



# VALUE

**HOURS REPORTED ANNUALLY** **61,152**

**ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION ANNUALLY** **\$2.56 MILLION**

Based on available data from the Volunteering Victoria State of Volunteering report. The calculator is fully compliant for organisations reporting the fair value of volunteering under the Australian Accounting Standard (AASB1058) Income of Not-for-Profit Entities

A photograph of two men in a modern office setting. The man on the left, with short brown hair and wearing a grey hoodie over an orange t-shirt, is looking down at a document. The man on the right, with dark curly hair and a beard, wearing a blue and white striped button-down shirt, is also looking at the document and pointing at it with his right hand. They are sitting at a wooden table. In the background, there are large windows, a wooden shelf with various items, and a black lamp. The overall atmosphere is professional and collaborative.

# **KEY OBSERVATIONS AND OUTCOMES**

## Provide an accessible and responsive Volunteer Resource Centre with a recognisable service profile to promote and facilitate volunteer activity and participation across the Knox municipality

From July through to December 2021 Covid was still affecting volunteering and volunteer numbers with lockdowns occurring at a moment's notice. We assisted our registered organisations to think outside the square and look at new job roles and include online positions. We found volunteers who assisted in business planning, web design, supporting isolated people with weekly phone calls, Zoom support networks, became board members and created online shops.

More than 80 workshops were offered to volunteers and organisations during this period to upskill, learn and re-engage with other community members. Our online induction sessions created during Covid enabled us to refer volunteers within hours. We connected with a Senior doctor from a large medical centre in Rowville, Wellness on Wellington during Covid and assisted patients to make appointments online to receive their Covid vaccinations. This has led their team to forward on socially isolated patients to us to reconnect with the community through volunteering, now known as social prescribing.



## VOLUNTEER EXPO 2021

After some postponements our Family Fun Day / Volunteering Expo finally happened on December 4 2021! And it was a sold out event with 400 community members walking through the door! An afternoon of perfect weather with a festival atmosphere at Coonara Community House!

We welcomed 25 Volunteer Involving Organisations all offering wonderful opportunities to volunteer within our community. These included Cool Kids First Aid, Studfield Wantirna Community Newspaper, Auscamps, Rowville Lysterfield Community Newspaper, Australian Jazz Museum, Dandenong Ranges Music Council, Friends of Glenfern Wedge, McKillop Foster Care, Coonara Community House, Volunteer for Knox, Orana Community House, Bridges, Knox Toy library, Knox Environment Society, Meals on Wheels and Knox City Council Waste Education. The stalls looked outstanding and attracted lots of interest from our guests! Timing was also great as we celebrated International Volunteer Week!

Mayor of Knox Council Cr Susan Laukens and Dobson Ward Cr Meagan Baker attended and it was such a pleasure to have the opportunity to share conversations about local issues and show the amazing work that our volunteer organisations do in our community.

A photo of the Volunteer for Knox team at the Expo event was also featured in the Victorian Volunteer Strategy 2022 2027.



## SHARE THE JOY APPEAL

Volunteer for Knox participates annually in the Knox share the joy Appeal assisting in the distribution of hampers to people in need in the Knox community.



## KNOX FESTIVAL

What a treat it was to join Orana Neighbourhood House, The Basin Community House, Mountain District Learning Centre, Rowville Community Learning, Coonara Community House and Swinburne Skills and Jobs Centre at the Knox Festival last weekend. Together we are strong, skilled and can offer our community an abundance of opportunities in volunteering, learning, leisure and more!

The rain didn't deter the general public from venturing outdoors as we experienced a steady stream of individuals and families stopping by for a chat! We hosted a children's activity creating Insect Hotels from a simple mug and nature and it was a huge hit with both children and adults! Over 120 Insect Hotels are heading to gardens ready to attract bees and insects! Sustainable play at its best!

Knox Mayor Cr Susan Laukens stopped by to say hello and share her support for the wonderful work that we are all doing. Each of our organisations created an attractive and inviting set up that really drew the crowds in to talk about what is on offer!

The festival was full of positive vibes with everyone attending relieved and happy to be out and about among our community once again. With a range of rides, eateries, entertainment and demonstrations adding to the atmosphere.

This event was very timely allowing us to showcase our unique opportunities available to a community that is well and truly ready to receive it. It really is a testament to how hard we have all worked getting through Covid.



## ROWVILLE COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTRE OPEN DAY

It was great to be out and about again and join in the activities at the Rowville Community Learning Centre Open Day and talk with people about the joys of volunteering.



## VOLUNTEER MANAGERS GARDEN PARTY

Volunteer for Knox celebrated Volunteer Managers in the beautiful grounds of Coonara Community House on Tuesday the 5th of April. With the backdrop of Coonara's stunning historic building and surrounded by lush gardens the setting was a perfect way to welcome our guests. Over 40 Volunteer Managers from Volunteer Involving Organisations in the City of Knox joined in for a day of recognition and reflection on what has been a challenging 2 years throughout the pandemic.

Tables adorned with white table cloths and fresh flowers were scattered throughout the grounds, guests were seated and enjoyed fresh Soul origin wraps, sweet treats and cool Ice Tea. Mayor Susan Laukens and Dobson Ward Cr Meagan Baker joined in the celebrations in formerly thanking the amazing

dedication and hard work of each and every Volunteer Manager. As a token of our appreciation each guest received a certificate of appreciation and a T2 gift box and a specially designed cookie to take home.

This was a fabulous opportunity to reconnect face to face and finally share some of those trials and tribulations of lockdowns and network on ways to re-engage volunteers in our new Covid normal world. We thank our Volunteer Managers for their support, guidance and teamwork they have provided their Volunteers and celebrate their achievements in leadership.



**“A NOTE TO SAY  
THANK YOU AND  
REALLY WELL  
DONE ON TUESDAY  
- A VERY POSITIVE  
OCCASION.  
LOTS OF ENERGY  
AROUND AND  
VERY SATISFYING  
FOR YOU BOTH I’M  
SURE.”**

**BORONIA & THE BASIN  
COMMUNITY NEWS**

## NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK – CINEMA DAY



National Volunteer Week is a special time for Volunteer for Knox to celebrate the wonderful achievements of volunteers in the Knox region. V4K chose Belgrave Cameo Cinema for its ambience and accessibility to volunteers in wheel chairs, walkers and canes. As an inclusive cinema they also offered Audio Descript.

The doors opened at 11.15am and the volunteers began to arrive and make their way to Cinema 6! With their attendance checked at the door they were welcomed with a raffle ticket and once seated received one of our new eco-friendly Jute goodie bags filled with popcorn, chocolate, water, Thank you certificate, pen and flyers! It was great seeing lots of familiar faces and having a chat about their ventures during Covid-19 and the challenges surrounding returning to a new normal.

Once most of the guests had arrived we tossed some giant yellow balloons to fly around the room and this was a wonderful icebreaker as it brought lots of laughs and was considered our exercise for the day! Mark from Mullum Mullum Indigenous Gathering Place was introduced to our guests and assisted the V4K team with drawing the raffle. We had 5 prizes to give away. All donated from local business who graciously gifted vouchers for our day. These included Puffing Billy Railway, Fernwood Fitness, Lorna Café, Little Rascals Play Centre, Australian Butchers Store, Cameo Cinema, Coonara Community House and Bubaji's Indian Restaurant. Each prize pack contained 5 vouchers. Venessa from Mullum Mullum presented Sally and Mandy with a small gift, a token of appreciation for the support that V4K offer to organisations. This was gratefully received and was a lovely surprise. Mark was invited to share Acknowledgement to Country with our guests and made a wonderful speech about taking the time to have conversations with those around us.

V4K employed Sierra Laird to produce an 11 minute video to celebrate the occasion which was played on the big screen. Four interviewees shared their volunteer journey with us. Margot Davies from the Jazz Museum, Nadia Porter from Rowville Lysterfield News, Eddie Atacador from Knox Community Chess

Enthusiasts and Tracy from Coonara Community House. These stories were very moving and showed us that everyone has their own volunteer journey that has enriched their lives. We thank Sierra for her wonderful insight and experience interviewing our volunteers, it was a touching piece of work.

The movie *The Drovers Wife* began and content with our popcorn, chocolates and drinks we all settled down to watch this epic tale of the legend of Molly Johnson. A searing thriller that leaves you asking how far do you go to protect your family? With great conversations after the movie we received some in depth feedback as everyone was moved by this tough and extraordinary true story.

We are so fortunate to be surrounded by so many amazing volunteers in the Knox region and today was a day that was all about them. They dedicate their time, passion, energy and love to all that they do in their volunteer roles and we are so proud of each and every one. Happy National Volunteer Week!

The five community houses and the Westfield Knox community space act as kiosks to promote volunteerism and act as a referral service. During National Volunteer Week table displays were set up with giveaways and merchandise to promote the benefits of volunteerism at each house and all the five Eastern Regional libraries.





Boronia & The Basin Community News is a local newspaper which was established in 1994, is run entirely by volunteers, and is distributed freely to some 12,500 homes and businesses each month.

We sought assistance from “Volunteer for Knox” to secure someone with accounting skills to replace our long serving Treasurer. We had several enquiries. Following some face to face meetings, one of the responders joined us and has been making a wonderful contribution, not just in the financial dimension, but towards the development of our paper as a whole.

Recently we sought assistance again from “Volunteer for Knox” to find an assistant to our new Treasurer, so that they can support one another and cover for each other in the case of absence or incapacity. Again we had a number of enquiries and now have the services of an enthusiastic Assistant Treasurer.

We are delighted with the outcomes from the support we have received from “Volunteer for Knox”. They are providing the community with a most positive and valued service.

**JOHN PERNU**  
PRESIDENT



## INSPIRING KINDNESS FERNTREE GULLY LIBRARY



Volunteer for Knox were invited by Knox City Council to join the Inspiring Kindness Event at the Ferntree Gully Library on Tuesday the 21st of June. The evening spread the simple message of how we can inspire kindness within our community. Guest speakers and Authors Luke and Daniel from Yiaia Next Door shared their touching story of their loss of their Mother to domestic violence and how the simple kindness and support of food from their Yiaia next door helped them during such a challenging time. We all shared some tastings of soup and moon biscuits from their newly launched recipe cook book.

Mullum Mullum guest speaker Vanessa shared her journey of food packages to the indigenous community and how they navigated their way through the pandemic. An absolute inspiration listening to how they assisted their community with deliveries to family's door steps during tough times.

Other amazing organisations attended such as Bunnings Warehouse, Knox Cares, Coonara Community House, Ferntree Gully Seed Library, Leap into Literacy and more! Volunteer for Knox received a lot of interest from the public with enquires on how to get started volunteering as well as Volunteer Involving Organisations looking for extra volunteers. With lots of promotional goodies to give away we really enjoyed being able to be out in the community sharing the message of the benefits of volunteering in the City of Knox once again! Thank you to Knox City Council for taking the time to remind us that a little kindness can go a long way.



## ATTENDED KNOX LIBRARY TO SPEAK TO MIGRANTS LEARNING ENGLISH ABOUT VOLUNTEERING



“Sally from Volunteer for Knox attended the Knox conversation circle at Knox library and introduced the participants to the wonderful benefits of Volunteering. We spent the rest of the session looking at their website and discussing the different opportunities available and what they might be interested in doing. They found it really interesting and valuable. Thanks again Sally.”

— **Lizzie James, Regional Literacy Officer  
Eastern Regional Libraries**

## ATTENDED A NETWORK MEETING WITH BUNNINGS

Volunteer for Knox were invited to attend a Community Business Network meeting in store to promote and share the benefits of volunteering in the City of Knox. Over 10 not-for-profit organisations attended and many connections were made. The benefits and the need of volunteering for both the Volunteer and the Volunteer Involving Organisation was clearly apparent and we would like to continue to support this need in our community.



## GUEST SPEAKER AT KNOX EMERGENCY RELIEF NETWORK MEETING

Provided update to Knox emergency relief organisations on the state of volunteering and Covid impact.

## GUEST SPEAKER AT CARERS MEETING

A State Government funded (Department of Families, Fairness and Housing) Carers Employment Support Program has commenced in the Outer East of Melbourne.

It's called the Linking Carers project. Unpaid carers of employment age are eligible to access the program to explore their options, current or future, for reconnecting to work, volunteering, social activities and small business development.

The project team recognises that it's not a simple decision to even consider work or study. Some carers will feel that it's all too hard. However this new project is an opportunity to begin to just think about how it might work, a chance to chat to someone without any obligation, and perhaps to meet up with other carers to have that conversation.

Employment can include working for an employer, unpaid or volunteer work or self-employment. Carers may choose to work only a few hours per week. There is no minimum required.

## KNOX COMMUNITY CHESS ENTHUSIASTS \$8000 MULTICULTURAL SENIORS SUPPORT GRANT 2021-2022



Volunteer for Knox was able to support the Knox Community Chess Enthusiasts in obtaining a grant of \$8,000 over four years under the Multicultural Seniors Support (MSS) 2021-25 grants program. The MSS 2021-25 grants program provides funding to multicultural seniors' groups across Victoria to support their members to build stronger connections with their communities.

The objectives of the program include celebrating and honouring multicultural seniors' unique contribution to Victoria; reducing social isolation and fostering social connections among multicultural senior citizens; promoting intergenerational connections and activities; encouraging cross cultural engagement and understanding; and supporting multicultural seniors' health and wellbeing, including in response to the pandemic.



**"You have encouraged a volunteer into a program. You can give yourselves another tick."**

— Keryn



# THIS YEAR COMING OUT OF COVID WE ATTRACTED THE ATTENTION OF MANY MEDIA ORGANISATIONS WITH OUR COMMUNITY EVENTS!



## Runner up in state awards



Sally from Coonara Community House

### Volunteers DON'T GET PAID NOT because they ARE WORTHLESS but BECAUSE THEY ARE PRICELESS.

EXPLORE LOCAL OPPORTUNITIES TO VOLUNTEER AT [VOLUNTEERFORKNOX.COM.AU](http://VOLUNTEERFORKNOX.COM.AU)

knox be kind



## Victorian Volunteer Strategy 2022-2027

Victoria's strategy to support volunteers and enhance volunteering

"For organisations to be relevant and sustain meaningful volunteer programs in the future, they need to adapt and change more readily to meet the needs of the people they support as well as the new cohorts of volunteers willing to share their time." (Engage survey responses)

- volunteers, taking part is a springboard opportunity. It may be a bridge to their family, but those engaging in it have found it well worth the effort. Long-term friendships are forming, and a sense of belonging is growing.
- volunteers are a vital part of the community. People who have significant skills in their lives who volunteer can make a difference.
- A successful Victorian volunteering community is one that:
- encourages formal and informal volunteering
- values smaller acts of kindness and support alongside more structured activity
- Large-scale programs have affected the maximum meaningful participation. They must also recognise that the volunteer environment now requires greater creativity and flexibility in the way we engage volunteers.
- Opportunities to volunteer may not mean face-to-face activity in every case. The supports for volunteers must be creative and innovative, tailored to changes in people's lives and their personal health and wellbeing while volunteering.
- The Strategy will be reviewed and refreshed in 2024 in the context of opportunities and planning for the Commonwealth Games and the critical new volunteers will play in success.

## COMMUNITY COURSE GUIDE

## Thank you to volunteers



## If this is your year to upskill or return to work, Reconnect is here for you



## COONARA COMMUNITY HOUSE



## 8 Volunteering in Knox Knox Volunteer Resource Centre co-ordinator runner up in State Awards



The Community Space has enabled the promotion of very important services, the volunteer community, education, and the community about the environment. It has provided a safe space for many community members to connect and support each other. It has been a great success for the community and the environment. It has been a great success for the community and the environment. It has been a great success for the community and the environment.

## ATTENDED VOLUNTEERING VICTORIA STATE CONFERENCE



## WESTFIELD KNOX COMMUNITY SPACE

During lockdowns Westfield Management moved the facility to a large retail shop so we could keep activities running and practice social distancing. In January 2022 we were moved back to the original site opposite the Fresh Food Market when renovations began. We have been invited to be part of the Discovery Team to advise and assist the Westfield team to create a new and larger community space in the new Centre.

The Space is manned for two full days by our team of Volunteer for Knox ambassadors who engage people through craft and knitting and then refer them onto the office.



All five Knox community houses act as Kiosks and a referral service to Volunteer for Knox and all have flags, brochures displayed and links on their websites.

A quarterly seasonal newsletter keeps organisations and volunteers up to date with events, resources, available training and current trends  
[www.volunteerforknox.com.au/resources](http://www.volunteerforknox.com.au/resources)

The Volunteer for Knox website is used as an important tool for resources, promoting events, training and a search engine for the community to find available volunteer positions.

[www.volunteerforknox.com.au](http://www.volunteerforknox.com.au)

## Recruitment and placement of individuals interested in volunteering in Knox

With our new and updated online induction process volunteers are referred onto organisations within hours and follow up calls are made after a three month period. Volunteer for Knox conducted a survey with volunteers to gauge their satisfaction in their placement. Around 20 per cent responded (similar number to other VRC's) and were satisfied with their placement.

We use the community space as an outreach recruitment hub and also at the many events we are involved in. Interested people can either apply for positions online (95%) through Seek or Go Volunteer (uploaded through our Viktor database) or have the option of meeting with staff in a face to face capacity for one on one inductions. Weekly information sessions are held at the Westfield Knox Community Space via our Volunteer for Knox volunteer ambassadors. The five community houses in Knox have trained their front desk volunteers on the referral method with walk-ins to Volunteer for Knox.

**“Thank you Mandy Limb for your connecting us. We have found an amazing partner, Resound Church and a kitchen we can call home. We are grateful for all your help in finding volunteers for us too. Thank you Volunteer for Knox”**

— Lillian Giang  
Feed One Feed All (non-profit)

## Assistance for local volunteer-based and volunteer-involving organisations to effectively recruit, host, support and develop volunteers in line with contemporary best practice.

The face of volunteering is changing in Victoria. Many volunteers are looking for more flexible opportunities and to make a great impact over a short period of time. People are wanting more online roles and they want the induction process to be more streamlined. This has already happened at Volunteer for Knox with the online induction process. A video of the Manager Sally Dusting-Laird was recorded delivering the induction process on the rights and responsibilities of volunteers and organisations and uploaded to You-Tube. A simple click on a link and the volunteers are inducted virtually. Volunteer for Knox has been encouraging organisations to reimagine how volunteers contribute to their organisations and redesign volunteer roles and recruitment processes to appeal to people with different skills, time restrictions and motivations. The experience of Covid-19 will be presenting challenges for a time to come because safety has become paramount in people's minds. We encourage organisations that welcoming back volunteers and engaging new volunteers will require Covid-safe settings, access to low or no contact volunteering and listening to their concerns. Technology will play a key role in streamlining their services and will transform the volunteering experience in the future.

Our Volunteer for Knox website, Facebook and Instagram pages became a valuable tool to keep organisations updated with the latest Covid information and also resources. Online enrolment forms can now also be accessed through the website for new volunteer involving organisations.

V4K was in constant contact with Volunteering Victoria during the Covid lockdowns and attended Professional Development Zoom workshops to gather information to share with our registered organisations. Bi-annual Network meetings have changed from face to face to using Zoom and attracted more people. Network meetings involve around 20 volunteer managers and offer a platform to talk through concerns and share experiences.

Free and low cost courses are offered to organisations through the community house network to update volunteer manager and volunteer skills in administration, stress management and wellbeing, technology, social media, finance and communication.

Needs surveys of Volunteer Involving Organisations are conducted annually and appropriate training and resources developed, promoted and/or provided.

Manager Sally Dusting-Laird completed Volunteer Victoria's Continuous Professional Development (CPD) program for 2021 comprising learning activities that enhance individual professional knowledge and skills. The objective of the CPD is to keep professional knowledge and skills current, develop and adapt careers and manage public risk. Mandy has also now enrolled in the program to maintain skills and knowledge.

Volunteer for Knox is an active member of state peak body Volunteering Victoria and the Volunteering Victoria Support Network (VVSN) The VVSN provides an opportunity for Volunteer Support Services and Resource centre co-ordinators and managers four times a year to share information and resources, discuss issues of common interest, access professional development, make new connections and collaborate on projects and activities.

## Enhance community awareness of the contribution made by volunteers to community life and the local economy

Volunteer for Knox staff are constantly looking for new ways of adapting our service to the changed environment during Covid.

Marketing and promotion have far exceeded the original plans due to the development of the Westfield Knox Community Space which is a vibrant shopfront used to promote Volunteer for Knox and Volunteer Involving Organisations in the City of Knox. This partnership with Westfield Knox is an essential tool for gaining community awareness of the contribution of volunteers to the Knox community and economy.

*In the past eight years, hundreds of volunteer involving organisations have conducted more than 1000 interactive promotional events to celebrate and raise awareness of volunteering.*

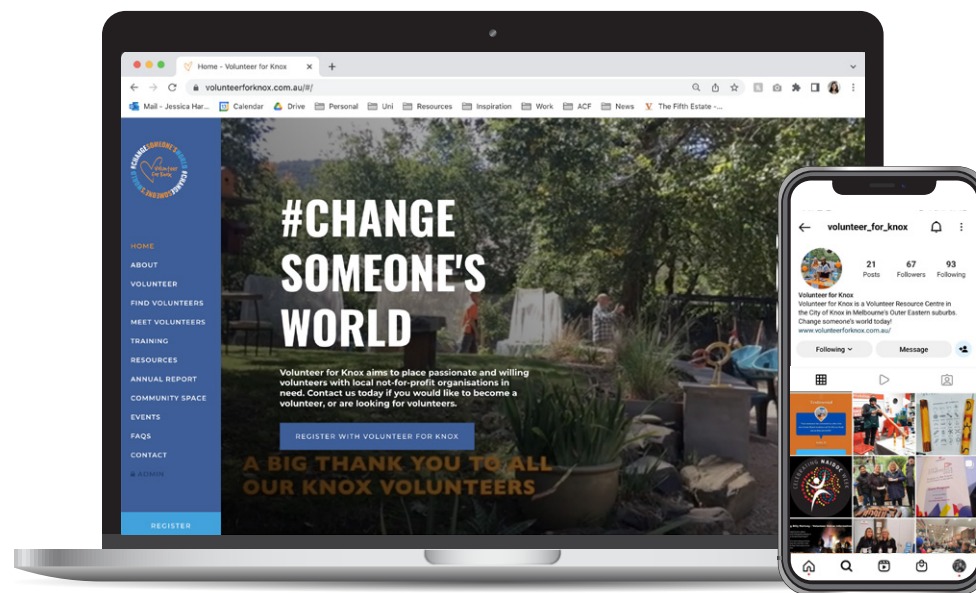
The Knox Community Chess Enthusiasts, the Australian Filipino Community seniors group, Talking Cafe for socially isolated individuals, tech support to assist with digital literacy and Migrant Information Centre information advocates attend the space on a weekly basis.

Westfield Knox Centre Management invited V4K to participate in future planning as part of their Discovery team to grow the community space into a larger hub in their new renovation and development. A Volunteer for Knox Expo to promote VIO's and engage potential volunteers was first initiated last year. Due to its success, 25 organisations participated and 400 people attended, this will be held as an annual event.

V4K use statistical information in our advertising and marketing (website) to showcase the Value of Volunteering for the individual and VIO's. Through our governance model with the KLA we are able to ensure that a wide range of stakeholders, including all arms of government and local employer groups are aware of the importance of volunteering.

Our Facebook and Instagram pages continue to grow and have just reached 700 likes and is updated regularly with job opportunities, industry updates and includes resources to assist organisations in celebrating volunteers.

Volunteer for Knox celebrates International Volunteer Day in December and National Volunteer Week in May using social media as a promotional tool and visiting organisations to acknowledge their volunteers with certificates and gifts.



## Provide municipal level role in local volunteer sector planning and advocacy. Contribute to data collection emerging trends and analysis of volunteering issues in Knox to inform local advocacy and service planning

The collaborative model of governance allows us to draw formal and informal data on trends in volunteering across Knox from the KLA and their individual relationships with their communities.

The unique model also enables Volunteer for Knox to be represented on a number of reference and steering groups and at a wide range of events that would not be possible as a small individual entity.

The Viktor data base is utilised to advertise vacancies at organisations and produce data that informs our service planning, provides communication transparency and emerging trends for annual reports. V4K staff and the KLA meet on a regular basis with council staff to provide ongoing information around volunteering activities. our Volunteer for Knox registration form data

Our Volunteer registration forms and Organisation registration forms have been continuously improved to gain as much relevant information as possible to assist in relevant data collection. Continuous improvement is a top priority area.

We offer support to Knox Council's Volunteer Business Partner Ruth Morgan in promoting council positions and share resources and knowledge.

Needs surveys of volunteer involving organisations are conducted and appropriate training and resources developed, promoted and or provided.

We have established, facilitated and maintained a Volunteer for Knox network of volunteer involving organisations; including biannual network meetings and co-designed training and support.

V4K staff and steering group (Knox Learning Alliance) meet with council staff to provide ongoing information around volunteering activities and advocacy. Our V4K Viktor database also gives council information on emerging trends and informs our service planning.

**“IT WAS GREAT  
TO BE ABLE TO  
TOUCH BASE  
AND HEAR ABOUT  
ALL THE AMAZING  
THINGS YOU HAVE  
BEEN DOING AT  
KNOX.”**

**JAN LUCAS,  
VOLUNTEERING  
VICTORIA COMMUNITY  
ENGAGEMENT  
COORDINATOR,  
GIPPSLAND**

A photograph showing a delivery person in a white uniform, mask, and gloves handing three cardboard boxes to an elderly man. The man is wearing a blue surgical mask, a tan sweater, and white gloves, and is holding a wooden cane. They are standing in a doorway. The image has a blue header and footer with white text.

**TRENDS**

**2016-2022**

## Type of volunteering

Community services volunteering followed by disability services and education are the most popular positions.

## Reasons for volunteering

The top reason for people volunteering is to Give Back to the Community followed by Gaining Work Experience and Building Confidence. Nearly 50 per cent of people volunteering came from an Administration background followed by Education, Customer service, Healthcare and IT. Part time and casual workers were more likely to volunteer.

## Job seekers

Approximately a quarter of all registered volunteers were seeking work or were students. This has remained consistent over the last few years with volunteering being recognized as a pathway to employment and working with jobseeker agencies.

## Diversity

Fifty-three percent of the V4K registered volunteers were born overseas. They come from 31 different countries. In 2016/2017 fifty-one percent were born overseas from 31 different countries and in 2018/2019 forty-five percent were born overseas from 26 different countries. China, India and Sri Lanka are the top three.

The fastest area of growth for volunteering within Volunteer for Knox has been by people with a disability. In 2016/2017 eight volunteers identified as having a disability. In 2017/2018 37 identified as living with a disability and nearly 20 per cent in 2018/2019. This year 11 people identified as having a disability.

## Languages other than English

V4K volunteers spoke a total of 48 languages other than English with Mandarin, Cantonese and Hindi being the top three.

## How they heard about V4K

More than 95% of volunteers made contact through email, the internet and Seek Volunteer advertisements with the Community Space at Knox, Word of Mouth and community houses the top three sources. This has not changed over the past few years and Covid would definitely have had an impact.

## Observations on age groups

35 and under and 56-65 year old's are the core volunteering groups.

Students, jobseekers and part time employees are the top three groups looking for volunteer opportunities.

## Age groups

Ages	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	Grand Total	Trend
25 and under	34	27	27	70	115	57	330	Fluctuates
26-35	29	17	25	48	58	48	225	Fluctuates
36-45	14	18	29	34	30	29	154	Steady Increase
46-55	26	15	14	31	23	27	136	Fluctuates
56-65	32	37	35	17	25	25	171	Fluctuates
66 and over	16	14	12	12	11	6	71	Steady
Unspecified	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	4	4	
Grand totals	151	128	142	212	262	196	1091	

## Total referrals

Referrals have continue to grow annually even during the Covid pandemic with online opportunities very popular.

## Gender

The trend for females to outnumber males continues with 75 per cent female volunteers. This year a couple of volunteers identified as other than male/female.

## Volunteer frequency

4 – 6 hours a week.

Students, jobseekers and part time employees are the top three groups looking for volunteer opportunities.

**25 AND UNDER, AND  
25 - 35 YEAR OLDS  
ARE THE CORE  
VOLUNTEERING  
GROUPS**

# COMMUNITY SPACE AT WESTFIELD KNOX



The Community Space at Westfield Knox received an unexpected gift during Covid 19 lockdowns. A change of venue during this challenging year with the offer of a new location and shopfront.

It is bigger, better and brighter allowing more people to use the space with social distancing rules in place.

Westfield Knox management really acknowledge the benefit of engaging with community through the space and fitted out an empty shop outside Myer on the lower level.

It is four times the size of the original community space and allows for its use to continue into the future.

The Westfield Knox Community Space has highlighted local community groups and what they do best to the public since 2014. It is one of a kind in Australia and we feel honoured to be trusted by Westfield to manage this special space.

The aim of the Community Space is to celebrate community, volunteering and learning in the Knox community. This space has enabled the:

- ✓ Promotion of important services provided in the community
- ✓ Recruitment of new members and volunteers
- ✓ Promoting Volunteer for Knox Resource Centre
- ✓ Celebration of community achievements
- ✓ Educating the community about issues and events
- ✓ Adult Learning Opportunities
- ✓ Showcasing local sporting clubs and schools
- ✓ Cultural celebrations
- ✓ Reducing social isolation for seniors

Since lockdowns were lifted we have filled the space with community activities six days a week and promoted our Volunteer for Knox training calendars for volunteers and organisations.

We host Talking Cafes, community celebrations, tech help for shoppers, crafting and games, Seniors activities and of course our famous Knox Community Chess Enthusiasts every Thursday facilitated by Eddie Atacador.

One of our incredible success stories is the ongoing growth of the Knox Community Chess Enthusiasts (KCCE) who recently celebrated four years at the space. We managed to facilitate online chess sessions via Zoom during lockdowns but it wasn't quite the same as playing in person. So when we reopened the KCCE participants were first in line to break in the new shopfront.

A story on the group was featured in the National newspaper The Phillipine Times.

Westfield Knox has continued to provide the Community Space to Coonara Community House to contribute to the ability of local community groups to promote themselves as well as recruit valuable volunteers.

We have hosted more than 150 community organisations and around 1250 events over the past seven years.

The ACFE board and Knox City Council contributed towards the initial setup and now it is resourced by the five community houses in Knox, including The Basin, Mountain District LC, Rowville CLC and Orana.



**CASE**

**STUDIES**

# KNOX COMMUNITY CHESS ENTHUSIASTS FOUNDER EDDIE ATACADOR

Eddie Atacador is a vibrant and inspiring member of the Knox community and founder of the Knox Community Chess Enthusiasts, a diverse, inclusive multicultural group of chess players from all walks of life and all ages who love a challenge and the chance to exercise the mind.

Eddie, familiar with volunteering with the Filipino community since the early 70's had joined the Knox Walkers group with his wife Lita at Westfield Knox when he noticed a regular occurrence after their walks. The women of the group would all join together for a coffee and the men would be standing bored somewhere in the corner of the shopping centre. It was then that Eddie met Sally from Volunteer for Knox and proposed his idea of creating a chess group at the Westfield Knox Community Space. Immediately Sally loved the idea and assured Eddie that Volunteer for Knox had the resources and connections to make this happen.

So, the Knox Community Chess Enthusiasts (KCCE) was born!



“This country has provided us a lot of things in life that are not available back home so I thought I have been privileged to benefit from this country so I will have to give it back.”

Now five years on, the success of KCCE has been a combination of efforts from Coonara Community House who auspice KCCE, Knox Learning Alliance (KLA) the governance team, Volunteer for Knox, Westfield Knox Community Space, Rowville Library and of course Eddie and his determination to create a place that provides friendships, community spirit and an all important sense of belonging to our community.

Recently Eddie and his club members celebrated their 5th Anniversary and the club has grown to upwards of 2000 members since his idea way back on that walking day. Forty regular members meet twice a week, once at the Community Space at Westfield Knox and the other at Rowville Library. Eddie has experienced many inspiring stories of changing people's lives throughout this time including reversing the effects of social isolation by offering a regular place to visit.

Members of the community volunteer at the chess club and are extremely happy to contribute their time as it means they have a regular routine, are mixing with others as well as enjoying



a game of chess. The volunteer roles consist of setting up the chess boards in the morning, welcoming members of the public and packing up at the end of the day. As the group has grown regular tournaments and celebration days are held, often with guest speakers like the Master and Director of Chess Australia and the Australian Filipino Community Services President.

Volunteer for Knox recently secured \$8800 over four years from the State Government's Multicultural Seniors Support Grant to assist KCCE in their endeavors to connect even further with the community. The State government funding recognises the need to support the health and wellbeing of our community and these funds provide chess boards, catering, PPE, trophies and assists with the general running of the club.

Eddie appreciates the support and guidance given by Volunteer for Knox and Community Space Manager Sally Dusting-Laird over the years, especially navigating through the pandemic when the chess group quickly pivoted to online. He encourages individuals to “Have a go” as it helps people to find an interest in life.

# RESOUND CHURCH YOUTH DIRECTOR CAITLYN PEARCE



One of Volunteer for Knox's newest organisation's and success stories is Resound Church, based in Scoresby. Caitlyn Pearce is the energetic and inspiring Youth Director at Resound Church. Caitlyn's vision was to get her team of 15-20 teenagers aged 14-18 years of age and 10 youth leaders involved in volunteering their time to a worthy cause in the community.

She contacted Volunteer for Knox when she had exhausted all other avenues and didn't really know where to turn next. "I just googled and Volunteer for Knox just came up and the website was so easy to use," she said.

Volunteer for Knox had a number of possibilities for Caitlyn but a stand out was Feed One, Feed All (FOFA). Founder and driving force of FOFA Lillie Giang and her wonderful team of volunteers

(some of which were referred by Volunteer for Knox) prepare, cook and pack hundreds of fresh nutritious meals for those in our community doing it tough in overwhelming circumstances.

Initial conversations between Resound Church and FOFA centered on how to connect a group of young people that want to do something for their community with an organization that is doing amazing things. Logistically FOFA's original kitchen in Lilydale had to close at a certain time and the Youth Group wanted to volunteer on a Friday evening. However, the perfect solution eventuated with Resound Church kindly offering their Commercial Kitchen in Scoresby to the FOFA team every Friday. This was an amazing win, win situation. So, the new home of FOFA was established and the Youth group were now on site and ready to volunteer!

Caitlyn's Youth group host a designated Community Outreach night each Friday and will be committed to volunteering with FOFA twice a term. Also, with an abundance of interest from church members FOFA will have the extra hands needed to continue their valuable work in the community.

Caitlyn expects to see many Friday nights collaborating with FOFA. She envisions: "Hustle, bustle, community, joy and laughter" filled with community spirit.

Caitlyn is an inspiration to today's youth leading by example.

"It's hard to teach passion so when somebody embodies that passion for themselves it's so much easier to do things," she said.

"We are then all linking arms and walking forward instead of trying to push people along with you."

*"Teaching young people, the importance of giving to others is so special but so important. I want to build that foundation in them and a sense of generosity as well."*

Volunteer for Knox recognize the importance of partnerships and this is an amazing example of how two enthusiastic and willing organisations have come together for the benefit of the community.

# ROWVILLE LYSTERFIELD COMMUNITY NEWS EDITOR NADIA PORTER

Volunteer for Knox have referred many dedicated and enthusiastic volunteers to not-for-profit organisations in the City of Knox over the years from a melting pot of diverse backgrounds to many interesting walks of life. Nadia is no exception, a passionate, caring and dedicated volunteer who appreciates the opportunity to be able to give back to her community.

Nadia was born in Beirut, Lebanon. Her parents were Russian but fled to Lebanon as refugees. Nadia recalls that feeling of giving at a very young age. Her face lights up with joy as she remembers a significant time in her life when working together and achieving something bigger than herself.

"When I started primary school and I was six years old I joined the Lebanese Red Cross and I marched in their Red Cross march in Beirut," she said.

"I always had this urge of helping. It made me feel good, it made me feel useful and it enriched me."

Nadia later moved to Australia and began her own family.

"I started volunteering when I first came here and noticed how big volunteering is in Australia," she said.

"It's a lot more than in Lebanon not because we don't want to volunteer, it's just because you are trying so hard to make ends meet.

"You don't have the luxuries and blessings of volunteering."

Nadia has a passion for writing so she started a column for the Rowville Lysterfield Community Newspaper as a volunteer.

"I confess I have the gift of the gab," she said. "I was extremely nervous and even questioned my abilities and being in my late 60's I wondered if age was a barrier."

But with encouragement from her daughters Nadia took a leap of faith and now is an extremely valued member of the team as the Editor.

"Don't look at the top of the ladder, go one step at a time," she said.

Nadia's confidence has grown immensely since volunteering. She now knows she is capable of anything she puts her mind to.

"You cannot put a price on memories," she said. "Life is just not all about material things. The most precious things in life are those that don't cost anything and they are the giving and the receiving."



# COONARA COMMUNITY HOUSE VOLUNTEER CO-ORDINATOR TRACY VERBURGT



Coonara Community House holds a special place for Tracy who has been the Volunteer Coordinator for 16 years. Tracy's role is to induct volunteers and make them feel comfortable in their new volunteer role whether it be as a gardener or on the reception desk. Tracy has a unique ability to listen to volunteer's interests, discover their strengths and place them in areas in which they will thrive.

Tracy has had many rewarding experiences over the years managing volunteers. Some who stay long term and others who find their way into employment. Tracy recalls one volunteer who holds a special memory, a person who resonates the epitome of volunteering.

"One volunteer in particular really struggled with mental health and anxiety and didn't sleep very well," she said.

"He would come into Coonara at about 10am and have a sleep in his car for a while.

"I would tap on his window and then he would come in and start his day."

"As a volunteer manager it is about being open minded and flexible according to each individual.

"In this case it made the difference to him volunteering or not being able to volunteer."

With Tracy taking the time to listen and understand his needs a trust was built and his confidence grew.

This particular volunteer found his passion with a disability group at Coonara which led to him completing his Certificate IV in Disability.

"We offer a warm, welcoming environment and over time people gain confidence and self-esteem and then all of a sudden they are blooming and shining," she said.

Tracy's experience allows her to expand on volunteer's comfort zones in a really safe way so that they are growing and they don't even realise that it is happening, it just happens organically.

Tracy suggests potential volunteers should just "just get out there and try a few different things and it will fall into place."



**EXPENDITURE**

**REPORT**

# VOLUNTEER RESOURCE CENTRE FINANCIAL EXPENDITURE

1st July 2021 – 30th June 2022

Account	Jan - June 2022 (\$)	July - Dec 2021 (\$)	TOTAL
<b>Trading Income</b>			
V4K 2022	67,530.96	67,530.96	135,061.92
<b>Gross Profit</b>	<b>67,530.96</b>	<b>67,530.96</b>	<b>135,061.92</b>
<b>Operating Expenses</b>			
Governance & Financial Management	0.00	7,677.13	<b>7,677.13</b>
Knox Council Project Costs	630.17	861.26	<b>1,491.43</b>
Marketing & Advertising	25,908.00	7,552.50	<b>33,460.50</b>
Mobile phone	245.40	245.40	<b>490.80</b>
Office Overheads (cleaning, utilities, etc)	0.00	7,280.00	<b>7,280.00</b>
Office Supplies	2,739.62	420.82	<b>3,160.44</b>
Salaries - V4K	34,499.87	37,921.15	<b>72,421.02</b>
Staffing oncosts	3,449.99	3,792.12	<b>7,242.10</b>
Subscriptions & Memberships	839.50	0.00	<b>839.50</b>
Venue Hire	0.00	1,000.00	<b>1,000.00</b>
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>68,312.55</b>	<b>66,749.38</b>	<b>135,061.92</b>
<b>Net Profit</b>	<b>(781.59)</b>	<b>781.59</b>	<b>(0.00)</b>