



ANNUAL REPORT

2022-2023



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Thank you to our generous supporters

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



ABOUT

The Organisation

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.

History

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, the Community Learning Centre Rowville, Mountain District Learning Centre and Orana Neighbourhood House.



Our organisation EdConnect Australia, would not exist without our amazing and passionate volunteers! I love working with volunteers who are so inspiring and generous with their time, and I feel a real sense of a pride when I hear their stories of the difference that they make in a student's life.

Ed Connect Liaison Officer Melinda Spiteri



MANAGER'S REPORT

What a year it's been post Covid hosting Volunteer Expo's, attending festivals, creating innovative events for our Knox Volunteer Manager's network and co-designing new training workshops.

Our mission is to inspire people and organisations with what we do and become leaders in our field.

We have also focused on engaging organisations in the value of volunteering that come's with onboarding people with disabilities and migrants and refugees who have adopted the City of Knox as their new home.

The face of volunteering is changing in Victoria. Many volunteers are looking for more flexible opportunities and to make a significant 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 our online induction process. This means we can literally refer people onto their chosen volunteer position within hours. One important objective I have learned is you need to capture the potential volunteer quickly while their interest is at a peak.

Over the past 12 months our Knox volunteers contributed 65,520 hours to the City of Knox with the value of their volunteering worth more than \$3,054,542. 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.

Co-ordinator Mandy Limb's special interest in developing innovative events has certainly had organisations talking about how fabulous and different they are.

We hosted a networking event at Montania Café in Mountain Gate that offered great opportunities for 30 managers to connect and also relax with an Art Therapy workshop.

Our second Network event welcomed a Visual Merchandiser who delivered a session on how to organise your wardrobe for work. The Community Capacity Building Coordinator from Latrobe Community Health Services Tayla Davis was the guest speaker and spoke about the value of including people with disabilities in their volunteer programs. Tayla offered the opportunity to visit with the organisations to assist with creating a more inclusive in their environment.

Our Volunteer for Knox Community Space at Westfield Knox has a new home in the old Suncorp Bank, Level 1, near Rebel Sport, while massive renovations take place. We feel honoured that Westfield Management has trusted us to manage this space for the last nine years.

Manager Volunteer for Knox
Sally Dusting-Laird



IMPACT AND REACH

211 volunteers referred

1116 expressions of interest in Volunteer for Knox advertised positions

167 City of Knox non-profit organisations registered



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 per calendar year



Volunteers supporting volunteerism

Our V4K ambassador team contribute meaningfully to support our work out in the community by hosting information sessions twice weekly at the Westfield Knox Community Space



Promoting and advocating for volunteering

National Volunteer Week celebration and Volunteer Expo held at Coonara Community House and our governance team the Knox Learning Alliance promoting volunteering through their individual kiosks.



Value to the Knox Learning Alliance

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

Support for registered organisations

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

Followers on social media

A combined total of 1300 followers increasing the reach across our community



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 → STEP 2 → STEP 3 → STEP 4 → STEP 5

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

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.

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.

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.

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

A photograph of three people, likely volunteers, smiling and interacting. A woman with short grey hair is in the center, smiling broadly. To her left is a man with short dark hair, also smiling. To her right is another woman with blonde hair, partially visible. They are all wearing high-visibility yellow vests. The background is a soft-focus outdoor setting.

ANNUAL SNAPSHOT

– THE VALUE OF

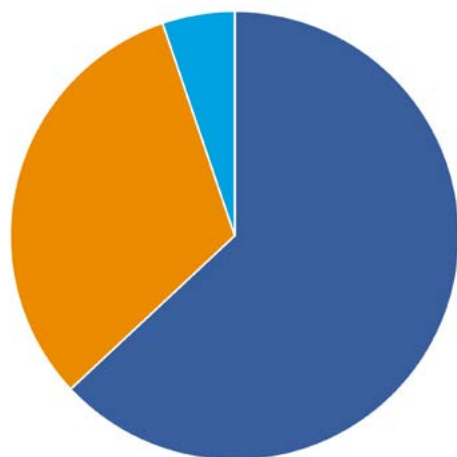
VOLUNTEERING IN KNOX

1 JULY 2022 – 30 JUNE 2023

211 VOLUNTEER REFERRALS

1116 EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

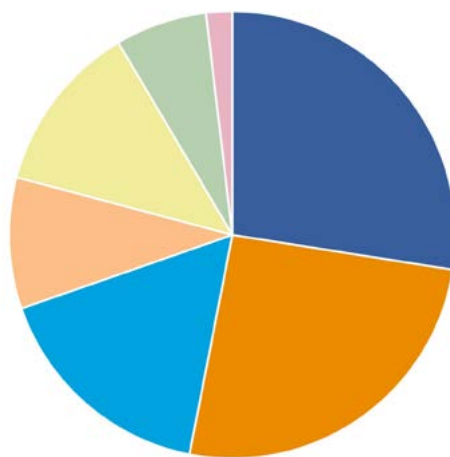
GENDER



■ Female ■ Male ■ Unspecified

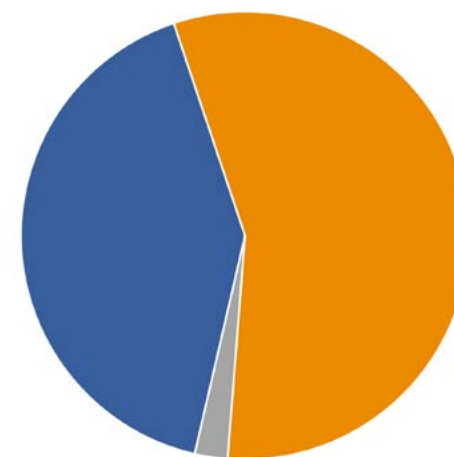
63% FEMALE

AGE



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

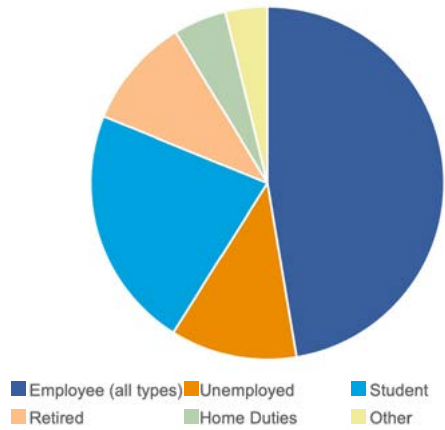
COUNTRY OF BIRTH



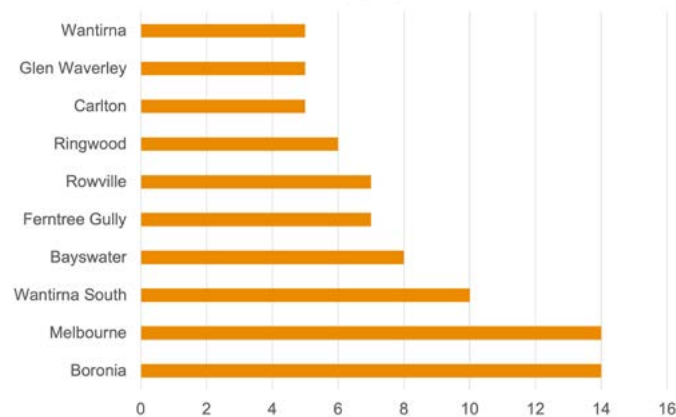
■ Australia ■ Overseas ■ Unspecified

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

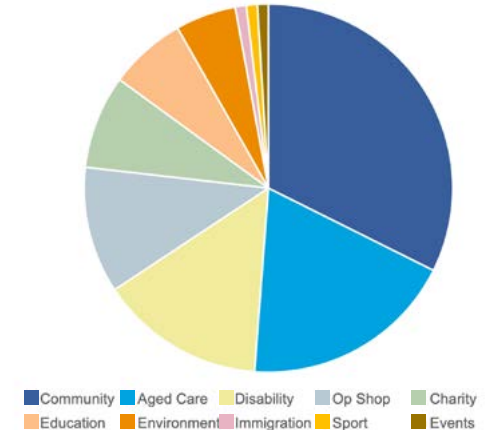
CURRENT EMPLOYMENT STATUS



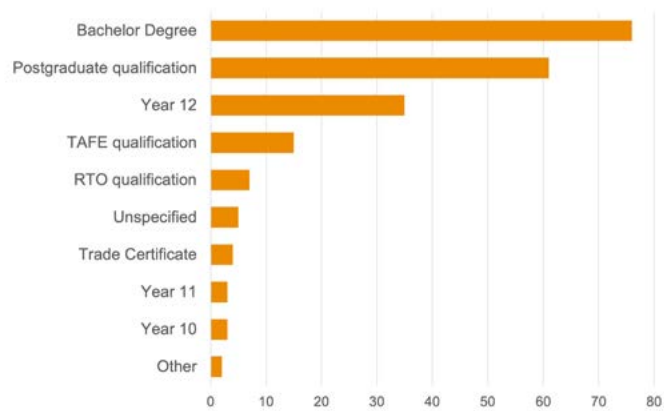
SUBURB (TOP 10)



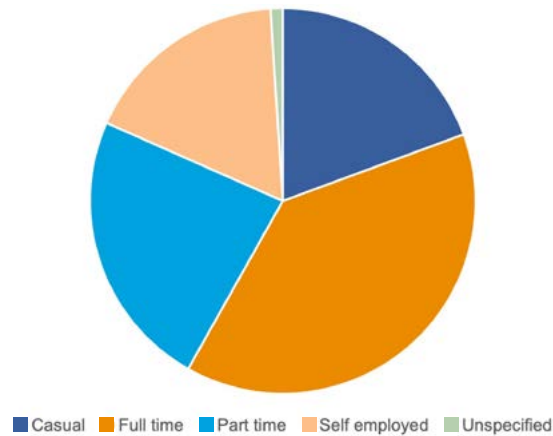
REFERRALS (CATEGORY)



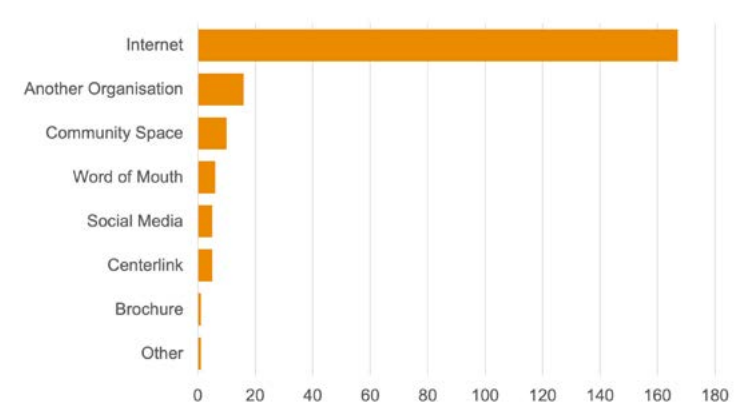
EDUCATION



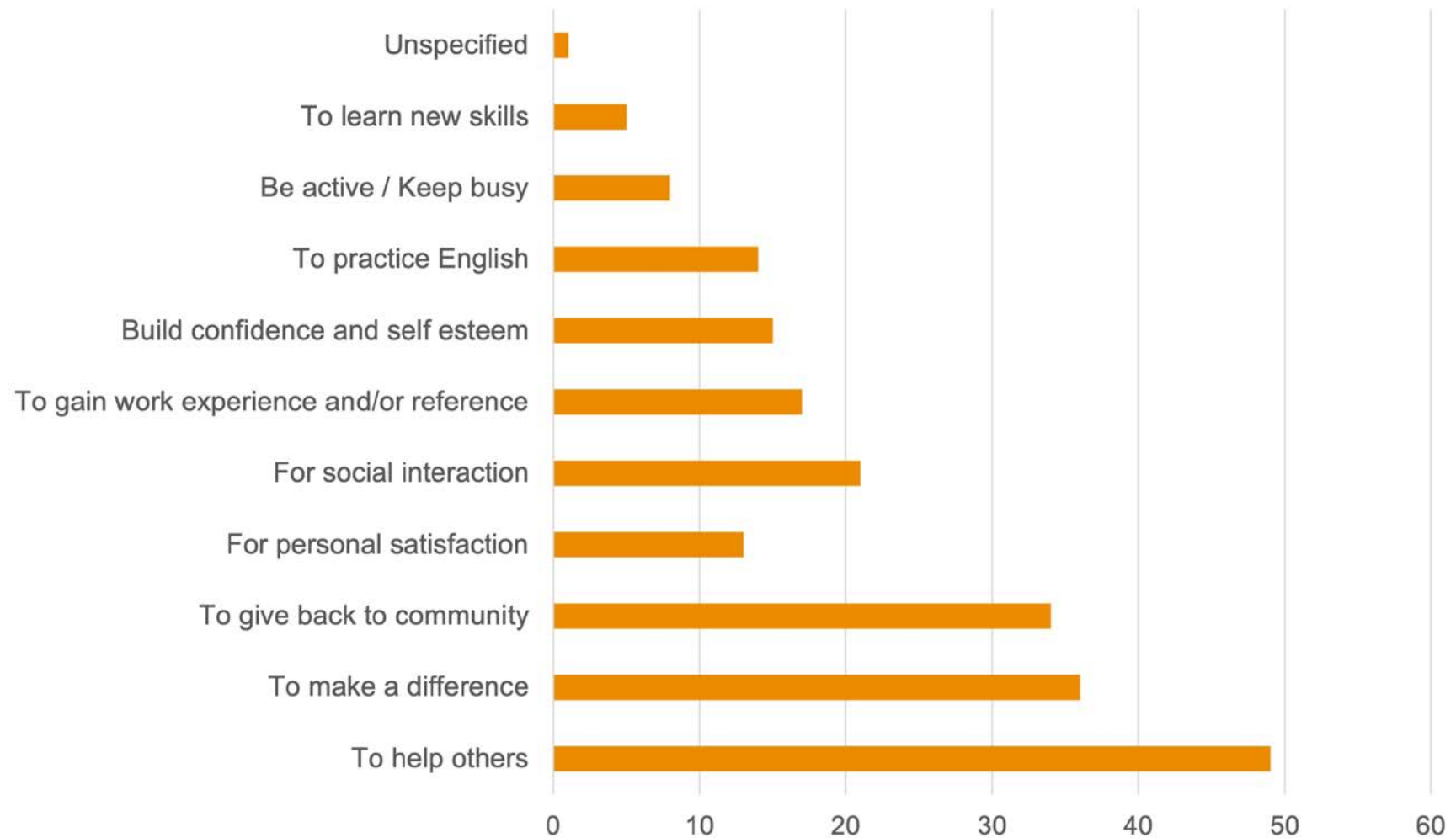
EMPLOYEE TYPE



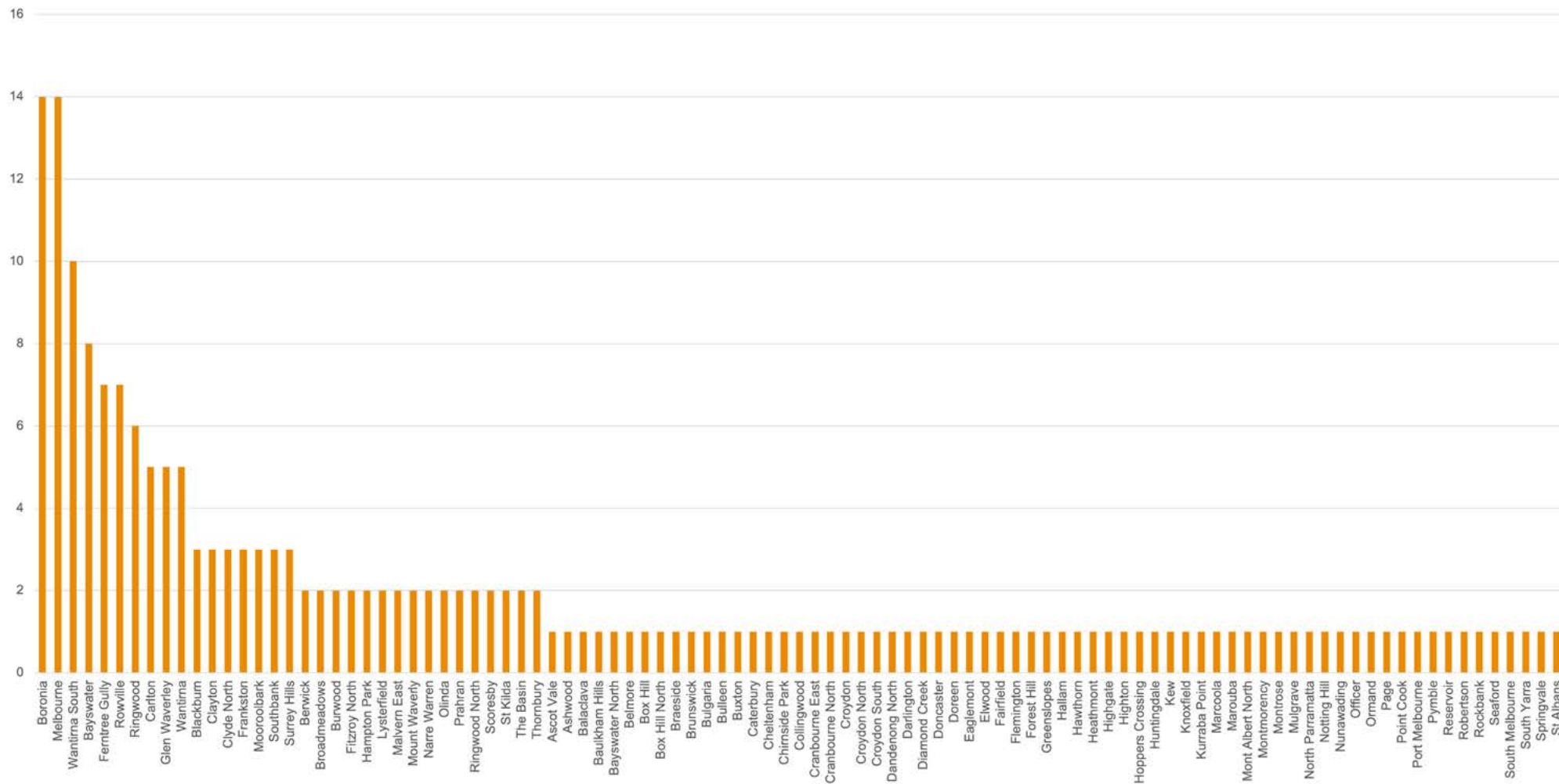
HOW THEY HEARD ABOUT V4K



REASON FOR VOLUNTEERING



SUBURB



VALUE

HOURS REPORTED ANNUALLY **65,520**

ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION ANNUALLY **\$3.05 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. Volunteers are now worth \$46.62 per hour.



International Volunteer Managers Day

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.

The V4K service profile has been achieved and sustained by the distribution of brochures, pamphlets, business cards and application forms at information kiosks at all the community houses in Knox, at the Westfield Knox community space and throughout the not for profit sector in the City of Knox. The community houses also have links on their websites to Volunteer for Knox.

Public visibility of V4K is increasing every year due to networking at Knox festivals, seniors and disability services events and Pop Up information sessions held quarterly at all Knox Houses. Volunteer champion's and ambassadors speak to and recruit interested shoppers on a weekly basis at the Westfield Knox community space which is managed by Sally Dusting-Laird in consultation with Westfield management. There is also regular advertising and articles in local newspapers.

New services are visited by staff onsite to ensure the service profile is promoted and both parties have clear and consistent communication to ensure the best quality practices for volunteer recruitment and retention. V4K staff have also attended and promoted at City of Knox funded events including Knox and Stringybark Festivals, Knox Seniors Week and participated in active aging activities, attended AGM's, information nights, been guest speakers at local volunteer services, universities and schools and attended a variety of Volunteer Victoria workshops and conferences.



I used to volunteer in the Starlight express room at the royal children's hospital - I don't know that I changed anyone's whole world but I certainly got to put a smile on hundreds of kids, who were dealing with their own or their siblings medical issues. One of my most memorable days was when I went with captain starlight to visit those patients who were unable to come down to us, we sang songs with them, made balloon animals, blew bubbles and helped them forget about their pain or discomfort just for a few minutes.

Eastern Regional Libraries Regional Literacy Officer - Lizzie James



CARRINGTON PARK – KNOX SENIORS FESTIVAL OPENING

3rd October, 2022

Volunteer for Knox were invited by Knox City Council to participate in the launch of the Knox Seniors Festival held at Carrington Park Leisure Centre in Scoresby.

Mayor Susan Laukens opened the event with an inspiring speech on how we all wish to 'Grow Old Gloriously' this set the tone for the day. We had the opportunity to chat with many people about volunteering in the City of Knox. Lots of general feedback was that each person contributed in some way to volunteering at some time in their life. We took 10 Expressions of Interest on the day which led to 3 people attending our Volunteer Information Session held the next day!

We gave away lots of brochures and merchandise which seemed to be very popular and a great way to ease into a conversation about volunteering! Being able to network with other organisations was also a bonus. Volunteer for Knox aim to promote our branding and all opportunities for volunteering in the City of Knox and this day was a valuable way of connecting with our Senior community. Overall a very successful day was had by all.



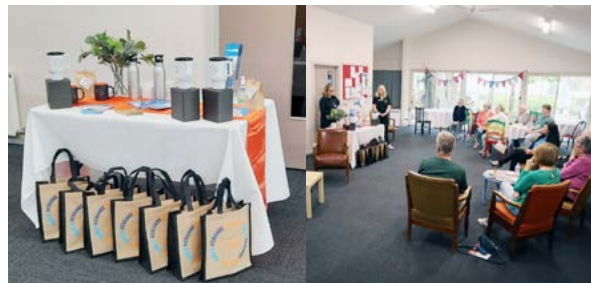
KNOX SENIORS FESTIVAL INFORMATION SESSION

4th October, 2022

To kick off the Knox Seniors Festival Volunteer for Knox (V4K) held a Volunteer Information Session at Coonara Community House on Tuesday 4th of October, thanks to funding from Knox City Council. This was promoted at Knox City Council as well as on all social media platforms at V4K and Coonara Community House. With thanks to Knox City Council and the Victorian Seniors Festival 'Takn it Easy' funding we received \$500 to assist towards running the day.

After advertising and promoting our event at the Knox Seniors Festival launch at Carrington Park Leisure Centre we had three extra bookings to bring our total of attendance to 20. Mullum Mullum Indigenous Gathering Place EldersPAG group joined us as well as Senior members of our community.

Volunteer for Knox Manager Sally Dusting-Laird spoke on the importance of volunteers and the many benefits that volunteering can bring to the life of a volunteer and the wider community.



STRINGYBARK FESTIVAL

Sunday 16th of October, 2022

Volunteer for Knox were invited to join the Stringybark Festival as a stall holder to promote the importance of volunteering in the City of Knox. We shared a marquee with Coonara Community House and were in a prime location near the eateries and the live music.



MOUNTAIN DISTRICT LEARNING CENTRE ARTISAN MARKET

26th November, 2022

V4K Co-ordinator Mandy Limb represented volunteering at the Mountain District Learning Centre's Artisan Market. Once again it was worth getting our brand name and purpose out to the community and chat with locals who had never considered volunteering!



SHARE THE JOY APPEAL

December, 2022

Volunteer for Knox is part of the working group for Knox Infolink's Share the Joy Appeal. The program brightened up the festive season throughout the City of Knox for hundreds of families with people in need receiving food hamper boxes and toys for the kids. Volunteer for Knox has provided many volunteers for this heartwarming appeal to help pack and deliver hampers over the past eight years.



KNOX FESTIVAL

4th March, 2023

Volunteer for Knox shared a marquee with Swinburne TAFE, Coonara Community House and Mountain District Learning Centre.

Volunteer for Knox promoted volunteering in the City of Knox by creating a stall that stood out. Our V4K colours of orange, blue and white really attracts people to our marquee. We had lots of giveaways for those who stopped by to discuss their interest in volunteering.



Recruitment and placement of individuals interested in volunteering in Knox

V4K have referred more than 1,700 volunteers for the City of Knox since 2014, handled 5,190 Expressions of Interest and the economic contribution has been over \$10 million dollars. These successful outcomes for Knox Council and the Knox community have been achieved through information sessions and advertising positions on Seek and Go Volunteer. Weekly information sessions are held at the Westfield Knox Community Space.

Follow up contact is made with all volunteers and organisations three months after placement to establish satisfaction levels with V4K service and current placement's.

Volunteer for Knox has a great relationship with Swinburne Jobs and Skills Centre staff and were invited in May 2023 to present a workshop on the value and benefits of volunteering to 100 students who identified as refugees or migrants. It was a great opportunity to talk about the volunteering pathways to employment and we had 80 students register their interest in volunteering after the workshop! We also partnered with EV (Eastern Volunteers) and Melbourne Polytechnic to deliver the session.

We currently have 167 organisations registered with us and have responded to more than 1100 enquiries over the past year. We advertise positions through the Viktor database on Seek and Go Volunteer with the internet being the most popular contact point for job roles.



The Community High Rise Gardens at Mountain District Learning Centre wouldn't be a place of beauty, calmness or joy without my amazing team of garden volunteers. The pride they have in what they do shows every day in every corner of our garden. And enjoy by all the staff, volunteers and all of the two legged, four legged, feathered and non-feathered visitors

Volunteer co-ordinator Luise Topma

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

Volunteering Victoria newsletters and current resources are updated regularly to our website. We also use socials regularly and update our Facebook, Instagram, Twitter pages to provide certainty for community organisations on current initiatives V4K develop and provide training to organisations and volunteers depending on feedback from needs surveys. We have held training sessions on producing Position Descriptions, How to Use Canva for marketing and promotion, Volunteering as a pathway to employment and regularly train not for profit services in best practice..

V4K developed a project to support local independent Op Shops and to assist and guide them in best practice, encouraging them to work collaboratively and have provided training for their leaders of volunteers on the National Standards for Involving Volunteers.

OP SHOP PROJECT

A number of small independent Knox Op Shop managers and volunteers were invited to attend a special training session at Coonara Community House in November hosted by professional Visual Merchandiser and Stylist Lynne Dobber. The attendees included representatives from the Knox Op Shop Bayswater, Foothills Community Care, in Mountain Gate and Rose Street Op Shop in Upper Ferntree Gully.

Volunteer for Knox have a number of not-for-profit Op Shop organisations registered in the City of Knox who are always looking for enthusiastic and willing volunteers for a range of roles within their shops.

The Op Shop Project was developed to build a supportive relationship between V4K and each Op Shop as well as create a strong networking opportunity. Our event room was set up to imitate a real Op Shop with lots of wares and unique items placed around the room! Lynne shared her experience on how to attract more customers into their shops and began with the importance of how each donated item should be honoured as it was somebody's treasure in life!

Our regularly updated Volunteer for Knox website is a valuable tool to keep organisations in touch with the latest information and also resources. Online enrolment forms can also be accessed through the website for new volunteer involving organisations.

Volunteer for Knox is also part of the reference group for the State Government funded project Linking Carers to vocational opportunities and volunteering project led by the CHAOS network. V4K have also recently partnered with the Community Development and Capacity Building Co-ordinator Outer East Melbourne Local Area Co-ordination Service NDIS to work closely on promoting the advantages of onboarding people with disabilities.



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

V4K prides itself on the partnerships and networks formed and provide information, referral support and information on volunteer trends to local government and community services. We have developed a Volunteer Recognition Program whereby registered organisations nominate a volunteer and a V4K co-ordinator presents certificates and reward vouchers for their valuable service throughout the year. Annual celebration of International Volunteers Day (Dec 5th) and National Volunteer Week (May) with appropriate promotion and events and the participation of multiple Volunteer Involving Organisations.

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 and community organisations have conducted more than 1000 interactive promotional events to celebrate and raise awareness of volunteering. Our weekly activities involve the Knox Community Chess Enthusiasts, the Australian Filipino Community seniors group, a Talking Cafe for socially isolated individuals, tech support to assist with digital literacy and Jobs Victoria and Migrant Information Centre information advocates.

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. 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

INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEER MANAGERS DAY

5th October, 2022

International Volunteer Managers Day is celebrated around the world on November 5 every year. Volunteer for Knox is proud to acknowledge the profession of volunteer leadership. Volunteer managers lead with passion, wisdom and imagination and provide the support and direction that allow volunteers to contribute to the community. Without their professional leadership, people's time, talents and efforts would be wasted.

To celebrate International Volunteer Managers Day, Volunteer for Knox held a Facebook Competition for all Volunteer Managers to share the joy they receive from their job role. We had some amazing heartfelt entries and are extremely proud of the hard work and dedication provided by our leaders in Volunteering!



Champion- Community Hub and Meeting Place in our Neighbourhood could not do the job we do feeding thousands of people each year without our volunteers. From early morning food pickups to home deliveries, the people who volunteer with us are what makes our job so good! They are always willing to go above and beyond and come with an open mind and kind hearts to help those less fortunate. We love our job because we get to work with our diverse volunteer base, increasing their skills, watching them shine and getting to see them and their reactions when we have the little (and big) successes. Such a privilege to work with and learn from such giving people.

Temple Society Australia – Champion Community Care Co-ordinator/Manager Martina Eaton

VOLUNTEER FOR KNOX EXPO

13 May, 2023

After 8 months of planning our Volunteer Expo / Family Fun Day finally arrived! The morning started off very foggy but once the fog lifted it was a glorious day with blue skies and fresh air!

The doors opened at Coonara Community House in Upper Ferntree Gully at 12 noon with 34 Volunteer Involving Organisation's ready to welcome the public and talk to them about their volunteer positions and their organisation.

The stallholders were:

Office of the Public Advocate, Bridges Connecting Communities, Knox SES, Upper Ferntree Gully CFA, The View Club, Boronia and Basin News, Eastern Regional Libraries, Coonara Community House, Girl Guides Vic, Puffing Billy Railway Station, Mountain District Learning Centre, Knox Historical Society, Knox Environment Society, Knox City Council, Ed Connect, Feed One Feed All, Outer Eastern Foodshare, Each L 2 P, Knox City Council Waste Education, Tabulam and Templer Homes, Studfield Wantirna Community News, Aussie Veterans Op Shop, RSPCA Op Shops, Salvation Army, Adult Migrant English Program, Habitat for Humanity, Melbourne Eastern Region Special Olympics, Uniting AgeWell, Knox Community Chess Enthusiasts, Martin Luther Homes, Rotary Club of Rowville/Lysterfield, Temple Society - Champion, International Draughts Club

Each stall was bright and inviting with some even offering giveaways such as lollies, wrist bands, chocolate balls, goodie bags, fire hats, hand sanitiser and other special treats. Some even took the opportunity to sell jams and cakes to raise some funds for their organisation. It was not only a great opportunity to showcase volunteer roles but also a chance to network with each other. Many new and old connections were made.

The schedule of events was jam packed and full of family entertainment such as Myuna Mobile Farm, Giant Bubble Artist, Tonyi the worm, For the Love of Dance session, games, raffles, cheese toasties and soup, cake, plant and pickers stall, kids craft, Bunnings potting, popcorn, a nature hunt and of course live music from Alan Bartlett to blend the festival vibe!

From 12-4pm we had nearly 540 people attend and raised \$2,050 with all proceeds going to Coonara Community House future community events. The cake stall, popcorn and soup sold out and the cheese toasties weren't far behind! We would like to thank the sponsors of our event:

Knox City Council, Cheer Cheese, Sprouts Play Centre Kilsyth, Ninja Nation, Décor Australia, Knox Leisureworks, Knox Environment Society and Puffing Billy Railway Station

A very big thank you to all of the staff, volunteers and community who assisted before and on the day in the community kitchen, on the gate, craft, pickers and cake stall and around the grounds! We couldn't have done it without you. The team work was outstanding.

A special thanks to Mayor Marcia Timmers-Leitch and Cr Meagan Baker from Dobson Ward for attending and chatting with our community.





AUSSIE BACKYARD SAUSAGE SIZZLE - NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK

17th May, 2023

National Volunteer Week is a time to celebrate all volunteers in a big way! It's the perfect time to recognise and thank volunteers in our local community who dedicate their passion and time to helping others! We couldn't think of a better way than with food! The theme this year was 'The Changemakers'.

We hosted an Aussie Backyard Sausage sizzle where 55 volunteers from local not-for-profit organisations joined in the celebration at Coonara Community House.

We decorated the long room with Aussie flags and bunting showing our pride in our country where nearly six million people volunteer to make our world a better place! The smell of sausages sizzled on our BBQ and our community kitchen volunteers were busy making Chickpea salad, pasta salad and traditional coleslaw!

Our new addition was the Volunteer for Knox winning wheel where we had 10 different prizes to win from V4K drinks sets, chocolates to a beautiful hand crocheted blanket donated by the Coonara knitters group! Each volunteer lined up with excitement to give the wheel their best spin! There were lots of laughs and it definitely added a fun atmosphere to the day!

We rolled the sharing board out and asked the question "What do you love most about volunteering?" and volunteers throughout the day added their thoughts. Some included "It makes me feel good!", "To learn English", "I'm not so lonely", "I learn new skills". It was a wonderful way for volunteers to share their thoughts with other volunteers, it also opened conversations about their common goals.

Each of the 55 volunteers received a Thank you certificate to take home. Nathan Blackwell | Administration Officer – Rowville Community Centre and Carrington Park Leisure Centre presented certificates to his volunteers, some of which had dedicated more than 25 years of service to the community.



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.

Volunteer for Knox staff attend state-wide Volunteering Victoria conferences, PD's and workshops and share industry updates with our registered organisations through social media and newsletters. 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 quarterly, to share information and resources, discuss issues of common interest, access professional development and make new connections and collaborate on projects.

Manager Sally Dusting-Laird and Co-ordinator Mandy Limb have completed a 12 month Continuing Professional Development program with Volunteering Victoria and are now recognised as a Professional Leader of Volunteers (PLV). The objective of the CPD is to keep professional knowledge and skills current, consistent, transparent, and to develop and adapt careers and manage public risk. They both enrol in this program annually.

V4K have established, facilitated and maintained a network of Volunteer Involving Organisations; including bi-annual network meetings including quarterly newsletters and online communication. A minimum of 25% of registered volunteer involving organisations attend the network meetings. V4K staff and the steering group (Knox Learning Alliance) meet on a regular basis with council staff to provide ongoing information around volunteering activities. The collaborative model of governance 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 an individual entity.

EVENT: VOLUNTEER FOR KNOX NETWORK MEETING

4th April, 2023

Volunteer Managers from Eastern Regional Libraries, Eastern Volunteers, Latrobe Community Health Services, Coonara Community House, Uniting AgeWell, RSPCA Op Shop, Australian Jazz Museum, Bourke and Beyond and Adult Migrant English Program, Champion attended our Network Meeting and Wardrobe workshop held at Coonara Community House.

The Community Capacity Building Coordinator from Latrobe Community Health Services Tayla Davis was the guest speaker and spoke about the value of including people with disabilities in their volunteer programs. Tayla offered the opportunity to visit with the organisations to assist with creating a more inclusive in their environment. Many were unaware this service was available.



NETWORK WITH A DIFFERENCE – VOLUNTEER FOR KNOX NETWORK MEETING

7th September, 2022

Workshop: Balance4Life – Art Therapy for Stress Management

Volunteer for Knox held a 'Network with a Difference' meeting for 30 Volunteer Managers of not-for-profit Volunteer Involving Organisations (VIO's) in the City of Knox. We welcomed our Volunteer Managers to Montania Café in Ferntree Gully where together we had an opportunity to discuss the challenges of re engaging volunteers post Covid.

Networking face to face brings a togetherness that most of us have missed during previous Pandemic lockdowns and we all appreciated the opportunity to be able to share in the ups and downs of volunteer life.

Not-for-profit organisations rely heavily on volunteers to continue the valuable work that they do and reduced numbers of volunteers have impacted organisations putting a strain on their workplace. Volunteer for Knox are continually looking for ways to support our registered VIO's with resources, guidance, training, meetings and creating connections so we felt it was very timely to deliver an Art Therapy for Stress Management Workshop during our meeting.

Meg from Balance4Life hosted the hands on workshop and allowed us to explore ways to have less stress and more balance in life. Being able to recognise stress and reach out to try to understand our stresses mean that we can begin to take control and manage stress better. With several drawing exercises we explored deeper meaning to our lives with lots of laughs along the way. Taking time to reassess and re-evaluate how we handle stress was very refreshing and left us feeling renewed to fight another day.

Conversations throughout the morning indicated that Volunteers are returning slowly to not-for-profit organisations but with caution. Volunteer Involving Organisations had to work hard to gain confidence in their volunteer team. The meeting was featured in the Ferntree Gully/Belgrave Star News.



I read books aloud to elderly residents at my local nursing home. I was only a teen at the time but the simple act of reading and connecting seemed to help with the health and recovery of senior members.

David Braybrooke



SUPPORTING VOLUNTEERS WITH DISABILITIES

We have been working closely with Interchange Outer east to support their clients to find volunteer opportunities. We helped "Andrew" find a position with Knox Infolink's Share the Joy appeal and he loves it!



Our V4K Viktor database and our Volunteer for Knox registration forms provide data to inform council of emerging trends and informs our service planning, providing communication transparency. 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. 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.

FEED ONE FEED ALL AND RESOUND CHURCH PARTNERSHIP PROJECT

Volunteer for Knox co-ordinator Mandy Limb worked closely connected Resound Church youth group with Feed One Feed All in 2022. FOFA needed a commercial kitchen and Resound Church Youth Group were looking to place 30 youth into meaningful volunteer work. Mandy worked with both organisations to bring together passionate people who were looking to make a difference in the lives of those less fortunate. The dream outcome was that FOFA now has a large permanent commercial kitchen to use at the church every week and the Youth Group help prepare 500-600 meals every week. The marriage of the two has lifted spirits, been boosted by a new young energy and allowed FOFA to continue with ensuring that everyone in our community has access to healthy meals!



Volunteer for Knox staff also conduct annual needs surveys with our registered volunteers and organisations and appropriate training and resources developed, promoted and provided. Free courses are offered to organisations to update volunteers skills in administration, 'stress management and wellbeing, technology, finance and communication. A training calendar is developed each term in consultation with the local community houses to offer around 20 Free and low cost training to volunteers and volunteer managers.

Our relationship with Swinburne Skills and Jobs Centre and Jobs Victoria also saw us offer an Employability Skills training workshop in February to volunteers looking at moving into paid work! Together we are working on engaging the long term unemployed into paid work with a stepping stone being volunteering to enhance their skills and resumes!

- One of Australia's largest providers of disability support services Scope has approached Volunteer for Knox to partner with them on an Empowering Community project this year.

- AMES Australia who provide English training, employment services, community engagement and settlement support to migrants, refugees and asylum seekers invited V4K to be part of a small focus group to explore best practices on how to recruit, retain and support volunteers from CALD communities.
- V4K is a stakeholder in an indigenous garden joint project between Mullum Mullum Indigenous Gathering Place and Coonara Community House providing volunteers when required
- Part of the reference group for the CHAOS Carers project – continuing until end of 2023
- Partners in an industry forum with Coonara Community House exploring how industry and job providers can collaborate together for future opportunities, the benefits of volunteering and employment pathways through the sector – Ongoing



There is a lady in our little town who just spreads the love and cheer everywhere she goes . She is elderly herself but she is involved in every event every charity in our town and I was at an event a week ago and was fortunate enough to sit beside her I was in awe of her and since I have embraced her way of thinking and it makes me happier to be a better person and help others.

Tracy Wedding





TRENDS

2016-2023

Observations on Age Groups

25 and Under and 25 – 35-year-olds have been the core volunteering groups for the past eight years.

Type of volunteering

Community services volunteering, followed by Aged care, disability services and working in Op Shops were the most popular positions.

Reasons for Volunteering

The top reason for people volunteering is to Help Others, to Make A Difference and to Give Back to the Community followed by Gaining Work Experience and Building Confidence. Full time, part time and casual workers were more likely to volunteer, followed by the self employed.

Current Employment status

Nearly half of our registered volunteers were employed, with approximately a third of all registered volunteers seeking work or were students. This has remained fairly consistent over the last few years with volunteering being recognised as a pathway to employment and working with jobseeker agencies.

Education

The majority of volunteers either have a Bachelors degree or post graduate qualification.

Diversity

Fifty-seven% of the V4K registered volunteers were born overseas. They were born in 36 different countries. Over the past eight years migrants continue to be the largest group offering to give back to the community. 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. This figure has continued to grow over the past few years with 11 people in the current year identifying as having a disability and placed in services.

Languages other than English

V4K volunteers spoke a total of 38 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 other organisation referrals and the Community Space at Knox the top three sources. .

Volunteer frequency

4 – 6 hours a week.

Total registrations

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

Gender

The trend for females to outnumber males continues with 63% female volunteers. Male volunteers have increased for the first time in years to 37%.

This year a couple of volunteers identified as other than male/female.

Age groups

Ages	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total	Trend
< 25	38	27	27	70	115	57	58	392	Fluctuates
26-35	29	17	25	48	58	48	54	279	Steady past few years
36-45	14	18	29	34	30	29	35	189	Steady increase
46-55	26	15	14	31	23	27	20	156	Steady past few years
56-65	32	37	35	17	25	25	26	197	Steady
65 <	16	14	12	12	11	6	14	85	Steady
Unspecified	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	4	N/A	4	
Total	155	128	142	212	262	196	211	1302	



**CASE
STUDIES**

Feed One Feed All



FEED ONE FEED ALL FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT LILLIE GIANG

FOFA stands for Feed One, Feed All and it's all about helping people in need by addressing food insecurity and providing hot fresh meals.

FOFA came about after the massive storm that ripped through the Dandenong Ranges in June 2021.

Those who experienced it said it was an absolute miracle no-one was killed. There were 76 homes destroyed, another 92 severely damaged, power cut to 6500 homes and thousands of people displaced.

Compassionate Lillie and a couple of friends offered to cook meals for the traumatised community at the storm centre headquarters in Kalorama.

"We had a makeshift kitchen, and the need for hot food started growing and growing so I started connecting with other friends to start an organization to help more of the community," Lillie said.

"I'm a trained chef and a teacher and I used to work in Criminal law but that's all behind me now and I love food, playing with food and sharing food.

"I also specialize in teaching especially with NDIS participants.

"It teaches them life skills and encourages them to try new things.

"Every week we cook and use upcycled goods, fresh ingredients delivered to us by our partner Outer East Foodshare and we create the meals and pack them up in containers.

"We don't see the clients at all our agencies actually come and collect the meals and deliver them to the clients in need.

"The meals are for people who are sick, elderly people recovering from illness, people with Mental Health issues or victims of domestic violence.

"Volunteer for Knox approached us asking if we needed more volunteers. They said they have 30 young people from the Resound Church in Scoresby who would like to contribute to our cause.

"We are now working with the youth program and using the commercial kitchen at the church.

"Resound Youth are a bunch of energetic people and they take over our kitchen.

"They chop, cut, stir-fry and wok, you name it they do it.

"They pack and label everything. The rate they go they are faster than us they are super so energetic they love it as well"

"I must say Volunteer for Knox are amazing. They are available anytime we need them.

"They have been fantastic finding us volunteers, especially in the marketing area. We are really grateful for Volunteer for Knox because without them we would still be struggling. '

"The volunteers are my life line actually. The kitchen is the heart of FOFA and the volunteers are the life line. They are the arteries and capillaries that flow through and without the volunteers FOFA wouldn't be here today.

"Our volunteers come here number one to pay it forward and to give back what they can to the community but also it's about the social connection.

"They get a lot of joy just being part and parcel of the family. We call ourselves the family, the FOFA family.

"We support each other just talking about the general things in life and having fun with food as well.

"If anyone is wanting to change the world take a little step and contact Volunteer for Knox and they will direct you in the right way to doing your little bit."

INTERCHANGE OUTER EAST DISABILITY SUPPORT WORKER AND VOLUNTEER ANDREW

Disability Support Worker Mary Elliott works for Interchange Outer East and a couple of years ago she decided on a career change from her former work as a naturopath and owner of health food shop.

She returned to TAFE and studied for her Certificate in Community services. That led into a “real interest” in disability support services.

“It’s a really positive environment to work in,” Mary said.

“I am in specialist services supporting young people and helping them with work and volunteering opportunities.”

Mary has been working with 22-year-old “Andrew” for the past 18 months.

“He’s very shy and we’ve tried a lot of different work ideas like gardening, cleaning and currently we are doing some deliveries for Knox Infoclink’s Share the Joy Christmas Appeal and he really enjoys that and hopes to become a removalist assistant,” she said.

“At the moment we are involved in transport and deliveries.

“We pick up donations given to local organisations and we drop them off to the Share the Joy hub.”

Mary’s main role as a disability support worker is to help Andrew build confidence and learn the tasks that he needs to complete.

“Someone might give him directions and he might get some of it but not all of it so I just help to support him and maybe give him some ideas and how things might work a bit better.

“He doesn’t drive so I’m the driver and he is the jockey and I might prompt him on how to approach people.

“We see a lot of different people and due to his shyness that can be a bit hard so we might talk about what we might say when we meet people.”

Mary said Volunteer for Knox has really supported her in finding volunteering opportunities for Andrew and other clients.

“They are excellent and can’t do enough for you,” she said.

“They usually give me a list of what’s available and workable for our participants.”

Mary believes Volunteer Involving Organisations can really benefit by providing opportunities for people with disabilities.

“It’s a win win all the time because the people in the organisation get to know the participant, they generally build good relationships with them and they often get tasks done that other people may not want to do,” she said

“It really helps the participant and can be life changing for them just to be out and about in the community and meet other people.



“It helps people working in the organisation interact with different people and it’s always good having diversity in your organisation.”

Some tips she can give for organisations is to really listen and find out what the person wants to actually do rather than forcing them into job roles they don’t really like.

“Listening to Andrew about what he actually wants to do rather than what might be easier for us to find can be a sticky issue sometimes,” she said.

“When someone is doing what they love to do then they are more open to learning and it really helps their mental health, their confidence and wellbeing.”

COONARA COMMUNITY HOUSE RECEPTION VOLUNTEER CHRIS COUTTS

Christopher Coutts, 22, volunteers in the community house sector as a receptionist one day a week.

Chris grew up in a “low income” family but was determined to stop the cycle and has enrolled in a Bachelor of Information Technology and will become the first in his family to complete a degree.

He also admits he’s on the Autism Spectrum but that hasn’t stop him from challenging himself.

“I’m regarded as a high functioning Autistic, meaning that I appear completely normal to the point where you wouldn’t realise that I had autism,” he said.

But one of his best qualities has shone through in his work as a receptionist.

“I have a caring heart of gold,” he said.

Finding employment has been hard work for Chris so volunteering was a great step in that direction.

“I was unable to land a job that worked with my university schedule,” he said.

“My only work experiences were as a glorified Stamper.

“I had medical conditions that required daily medical treatment and I managed to fall through the cracks when I tried to apply for payments from Centrelink due to not being a full-time student and being over 21.

“Thankfully my mother had been volunteering at the reception desk at Coonara Community House for a couple months, so I

asked her to see if the community house would allow me to get volunteer work experience at the reception desk.

Initially Chris was reluctant to start volunteering being in his early 20’s.

“I did have reservations and lacked any source of income and I was concerned about the cost of fuel, tolls and just the travel to and from the volunteer position,” he said.

“Those were some pretty big reasons why I felt that doing volunteer work was a last resort.

“I used to think volunteering was something that people with too much disposable income and/or free time will resort to, or they are doing it because they have an agenda

Chris offered some tips to people his age who are thinking of volunteering.

“If you’re going to become a volunteer, you should be willing to treat it seriously,” he said.

“It’s wrong to think that just because you’re not being paid for the work you do, that you get the right to pull out your phone and look at social media,” he said.

“Another piece of advice, if you’ve done everything you’ve been provided, then ask if there is anything else that could be done.

“There is always more to be done. There is always a backlog of tasks that have been sitting around for days, weeks, months even and no one has had the time to do them.



“You’re being given the opportunity to up-skill and get work experience until you eventually get an offer for paid work.

“If you commit to going beyond the expectations of your volunteer employer, they’re going to speak extremely highly of you when potential employers contact them.

“You’re going to make mistakes, you’ll get something wrong or you’ll forget to get the name of someone ringing in.

“You need to ask questions. Not only is asking questions important for you to be able to perform your work, but you’re demonstrating that you are willing to seek out the answers, that you’re willing to learn instead of pretending you know what you’re doing until it’s too late.”

ROSE ST OP SHOP UPPER FERNTREE GULLY MANAGER DEBBIE WATSON

Debbie Watson is the Manager of the Rose Street Op Shop in Upper Ferntree Gully.

The money raised at the Op Shop supports Tamminya House, a motel style set of seven units that provide short term crisis accommodation for victims of domestic violence, single parents and their children.

Homelessness is a serious problem in our society and a growing epidemic across the country. Tamminya House was established in 1991 and is working to build refuges for single families to help them stay safe while they get back on their feet and back into a home of their own.

"We have about 20 volunteers who donate their time to sort and accept donations and keep the shop tidy," Debbie said.

"Some even work two to three days a week to help support us.

"We have a lot of customers that come from appointments at the Angliss hospital and they have to kill time in between.

"Of course we have our regulars that always come and have a chat.

"I feel that our shop has a lot of community focus.

"We listen to the customers stories and sometimes we are a connection that they don't normally have in the community outside.

"We are still looking for volunteers so if anyone is interested please come in, doesn't matter what sort of personality you've got come in and we'll try it. If it works it works and if it doesn't well that's all good too because it will mean that we each learn something."



ROSE ST OP SHOP UPPER FERNTREE GULLY VOLUNTEER GLENDA HILLIS

Glenda Hillis discovered the Op Shop after realising that her days were unplanned and she was feeling a bit lost.

"I had nothing and I thought I need to do something," she said.

"So I walked around the corner asked if the Op shop needed a volunteer and then started the next day.

"That was eight years ago and ever since it's been fantastic."

"We have a lot of really amazing donations come in and we need to honour those donations as best we can.

"The really good donations I sell on eBay and make more money for the charity. In the last 4-5 years we've made \$32,000 for Tamminya House.

"My Granddaughter is 12 and she has been coming here for four years volunteering in the school holidays so she absolutely loves it. Everyone asks how old she is and she'll always say have a lovely day!"



COMMUNITY SPACE AT WESTFIELD KNOX

The Community Space at Westfield Knox Shopping Centre has been providing a venue for community groups, non-profits and local government to showcase what they do best to members of the public since 2014. We have been moved a couple of times to rent free shops during and Covid and now we have a new home at the Suncorp Bank on Level 1.

The aim of the Community Space is to celebrate community, volunteering and learning in the Knox community.

It is one of a kind in Australia and we feel honoured to be trusted by Westfield to manage this special space.

We have been notified by the Westfield retail manager that the community space will be a feature of the \$355 million redevelopment of the centre, transforming it into an elevated retail and lifestyle destination created for our community. Construction is now underway, with transformation to occur in stages between 2022 and 2023.

Activities slowly returned to the space post Covid as people felt more confident to move about in the community and at shopping centres.

We now have a Work Exposure group from Villa Maria Catholic Homes and Gateway Community Connections Wantirna selling homemade merchandise and building up their skills in retail sales.

Jobs Victoria and the Migrant Information centre use the space weekly to reach out to people looking for work.

Mountain District Learning Centre use the space every Wednesday to provide Free assistance to shoppers wanting to know more about their mobile devices.

Our Volunteer for Knox ambassadors and Charity group reach out to socially isolated people and introduce them to volunteering every Wednesday.

The Australian Filipino community use the space every Friday for their seniors group who call it home!





Our incredible Knox Community Chess Enthusiasts led by Eddie Atacador celebrated their 5th anniversary at Coonara Community House this year with a fabulous BBQ and special guests. Congratulations to Eddie and his team for continuing the great work of involving the Knox Community every Thursday at the Community Space in a free game of chess.

GRANT RECIPIENT

Volunteer for Knox were the recipient of a Suburban Revitalisation Living Local grant from the Victorian Government for the amount of \$12,174 for two touch screen connector kiosks.

The touch screen kiosks were initiated as a communication tool for potential volunteers to connect with Volunteer Involving Organisations. These kiosks were strategically placed at Coonara Community House and the other will be place into the Westfield Knox Community Space when the new premises are announced. Since implementing the kiosk the impact on community engagement to quickly access information on volunteering in the City of Knox has been hugely successful.

We look forward to the future potential that the kiosks have.

- The Connector Kiosks have promoted Volunteerism
- Assisted vulnerable community members to access services via a touch screen for their privacy.
- Increased volunteer participation
- Assisted the Volunteer Resource centre to become more sustainable, limiting their need for pamphlets
- Accessible for people with disabilities (Voice activated text)
- Assisted with social isolation, mental health and well being by connecting with social groups
- Opportunities for adult learning within their volunteer role
- Celebrated culture by promoting events
- Showcased volunteer videos and vignettes of "What's On in the City of Knox"
- Gathered data and analysed traffic for continuous improvement



A photograph of a group of people, likely volunteers, in a warehouse or community center. In the foreground, a woman with short blonde hair and glasses, wearing a green t-shirt and a 'VOLUNTEER' name tag, is pointing at a clipboard held by a man. The man is also wearing a green t-shirt and is looking at the clipboard. In the background, two other women are visible; one is holding a clipboard and a pen, and the other is looking at a smartphone. They are all in a room with large windows and brick walls. The text 'EXPENDITURE REPORT' is overlaid in white on an orange background in the bottom left corner.

EXPENDITURE REPORT

VOLUNTEER FOR KNOX FINANCIAL EXPENDITURE

1st July 2022 – 30th June 2023

Account	Jan - Jun 2023 (\$)	July - Dec 2022 (\$)	TOTAL
Trading Income			
V4K 2023	69,219.96	68,205.96	137,425.92
Gross Profit	69,219.96	68,205.96	137,425.92
Operating Expenses			
Salaries – V4K	34,719.02	38,252.21	72,971.23
Salary Sacrifice	6,760.00	6,760.00	13,520.00
Superannuation	6,239.39	6,327.50	12,566.89
Working with Children/Police Checks	0.00	181.82	181.82
Staff Professional Development	0.00	25.00	25.00
Knox Council Project Costs (catering, events, guest speakers)	5,794.58	5,296.93	11,091.51
IT Support	0.00	342.50	342.50
Marketing & Advertising	1,772.50	420.00	2,192.50
Office Supplies	147.27	71.82	219.09
Subscriptions & Memberships	50.00	709.09	759.09
Telephone – Mobile Phone	262.38	124.53	386.91
Governance (\$1400 x 5)	0.00	7,000.00	7,000.00
Financial Management	5,264.00	0.00	5,264.00
Office overheads (cleaning, utilities, etc)	0.00	6,240.00	6,240.00
Staffing oncosts	2,073.95	2,250.61	4,324.56
Venue hire for events	200.00	200.00	400.00
Total Operating Expenses	63,283.09	74,202.01	137,485.10
Net Profit	\$5,936.87	-\$5,996.05	-\$59.18