

## Inquiry into volunteering in Queensland

**Submission No:** 49  
**Submitted by:** Sherwood Neighbourhood Centre Inc  
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**Attachments:** No attachment

### Submitter Comments:

Our organisation usually has between 35 to 40 Volunteers volunteering at our centre each month.

Over many years of working at this organisation I have found that there is many reasons for people to volunteer. The most prominent reasons at this organisation are as follows but in any no particular order:

1. Wanting to give back or to help those less fortunate retiree's etc.
2. Volunteering wanting a sense of worth and pride in doing things to help their community.
3. Socially isolated and it is a way to meet like minded people and make friends.
4. People who have been injured at work and/or are under Workcover transitioning back to work with light duties in the first instance.
5. Tafe and University students who are studying in the field of Human Services and Social work who need placement for the practical component of their degree/diploma's.
6. People who suffer from a Disability that who are unable to sustain a full time job or not but also want to feel the sense of self worth along with being able to interact with people on a regular basis which helps to alleviate their social isolation and loneliness. along with their employability.
7. People from another culture and language who want to improve their English skills and comprehension.
8. People suffering mental illness who are unable to work fulltime but have the capacity to work a few hours a week.

Volunteers are an extremely important part of our organisations operations as we are not funded enough to cover the hundreds and hundreds of hours that would cost hundreds and thousands of dollars each year to pay an employees to assist with all the programs and tasks have here at our centre. Volunteering Qld plays a significant role in helping organisations as ours to find volunteers who are willing to help their community. As we have many volunteers it is difficult to manage that many along with the regular employees. our funding does not allow for a Volunteer Coordinator and due to the continuous interaction with volunteers who may need encouragement and training and reassuring it can be hard to find the time amongst daily task of a manager. My recommendation is that a funded Volunteer Coordinator to be provided for those not for profit organisation who receive minimal funding who are reliant on volunteers who mostly do a fabulous job but some of whom may need more support and training. Specific training or courses through University or Tafe for Volunteer Coordinators as it is a specialty role with many different skills needing to be acquired. My other recommendation that a monetary benefit to those who volunteer whether either a tax break, or those on a low income a little more money in their pension and/or lower the age for work for the dole from 55 yrs to 45 yrs along with the grants we (organisations) can apply to have fuel vouchers so to minimise their travel costs. I am certain these recommendations will help immensely to attract more volunteers to organisations to help their local communities.

1. Centrelink requirement, (to keep their payments they must volunteer).
2. Volunteer has been out of the workforce for a long time and it is a stepping stone back to work and can be used to help their Resume and have a recent Referee if needed.
- 3.