

## Inquiry into volunteering in Queensland

**Submission No:** 225  
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**Attachments:** No attachment

### Submitter Comments:

I volunteer for a few community groups and hold executive positions on two committees for NFP's that are active all year round. We are definitely seeing challenges with aging volunteers, and not enough younger volunteers to replace them. Younger people are generally busy trying to work and balance family and other commitments, but at times I think it's also the culture of the organisation - they are not always welcomed, their ideas not listened to, so they get frustrated and leave. This leads to ongoing patterns with the longstanding volunteers who lack trust in new people. I think it would be great to get some leadership and training in NFPs to help this transition, and if possible some help to committees to change culture. I also see issues where there is a combination of volunteers and paid employees. In one organisation I work with, there is one paid employee and while she reports to the board, it feels like some of the volunteers think she reports to them, and are not very respectful. In another, volunteers are demanding vouchers, free food, free or discounted goods, which takes away from the charitable purpose. At the same time, they are not empowered to make decisions to bring in more revenue. They also see paid employees not doing much and feel undervalued. Again, I think this is a cultural shift that needs to be addressed and the founders/boards are not always equipped to handle such issues, being more management/HR issues they may not have experience or knowledge in. So again I think external input with training in NFPs would help to attract and manage volunteers. Volunteering should be fun, even if it is hard work, so a positive culture and trust in all participants is really important. Otherwise, volunteer-run organizations won't survive. There's also a risk of non-compliance if knowledge isn't transferred, or training isn't given to ensure the board is aware of current regulations. Volunteer treasurers are often hit with changes in payroll reporting, award rate increases, Super changes, GST requirements, disclosure requirements, and may not have training in this area. What may have been a simple exercise in the past to bank cash and issue cheques, has become more complex with technology - including reporting requirements online.