

## **Inquiry into volunteering in Queensland**

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<b>Submitted by:</b>	Australian Sporting Alliance for People with a Disability - ASAPD
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## **Australian Sporting Alliance for People with a Disability (ASAPD) submission to the Queensland Parliament Inquiry into Volunteering (the Inquiry)**

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### **ASAPD Background**

ASAPD collaborates, advocates, and facilitates inclusive sport and physical activity for people with a disability, impairment, or limitation. ASAPD operates under the leadership of a National Board which serves as a coalition of advocates (eight National Sporting Organisations for Disability – NSOD’s) who collaboratively break down barriers and promote equitable access for people of all abilities.

ASAPD echoes the Inquiry’s sentiment that it is important to increase the awareness and understanding of volunteering and its central importance to all Queensland communities. Volunteering underpins all sporting organisations across Australia and ASAPD is committed to removing barriers for people with disability who want to be involved in sport, including playing and volunteering. Consequently, the Inquiry being listed as a priority action in Queensland will provide for a mutually beneficial first step to ensure there is more support, and pathways created, for Queenslanders who want to volunteer.

### **ASAPD commitment to removing barriers and creating pathways**

ASAPD is represented on the Australian Sports Commission Volunteer Coalition (the Coalition). The coalition launched its *Sport Volunteer Action Plan* in 2022 (the Action Plan).

The vision of the Action Plan aligns closely with the intention of the Inquiry “...*people from all walks of life to see and realise opportunities to contribute to individual, club and community goals in a way that suits them*”. Additionally, the Action Plan positions volunteering as more than just enabling Australians to play sport, it highlights the benefits individuals receive by volunteering in a sporting community, including a sense of belonging and connection to their community.

ASAPD is proud of its involvement in the Coalition given a shared commitment by Governments and sporting organisations across Australia to include volunteers, including those with disabilities, in discussions and planning for sport activities.

ASAPD recommends that the Action Plan is considered by the Inquiry given its close alignment, including the Action Plan's visionary drivers, guiding principles and key drivers. For more information, please refer to the following link to the Action Plan, including the two-year review - <https://www.ausport.gov.au/volunteering/sport-volunteer-coalition-action-plan>

It is important to note the Action Plan highlights several visionary drivers that are directed at all Australians.

- Everyone can participate in volunteering, whether they are from a culturally diverse group, are connected/not connected to the sport, young, older, committed/time poor or have a disability.
- Volunteer opportunities must be visible and accessible to diverse groups of people. It isn't enough to say you are inclusive – volunteers need to see how they can contribute and see other people like them.
- Realising opportunities means clubs have inclusive cultures and the sufficient structure in place to support people to be effective e.g., training, job descriptions.

#### **Upcoming national sport events in Queensland**

- 2026 - managed by Deaf Sports Australia, the Australian Deaf Games will occur on the Sunshine Coast – over 200 volunteers will be required.
- 2026 - Transplant Australia are proposing to conduct a National Games on the Sunshine Coast – over 100 volunteers will be required.

At both events volunteers will come from a variety of communities and backgrounds. Most will have disabilities or limitations, but all will be welcomed and treated equally, with respect and a vote of thanks. It is hoped it will be a positive experience for all and leave with positive stories and new friendships.

In the spirit of upcoming events and to align with the Inquiry's intention, ASAPD would like to see all sport events being inclusive of volunteers with disability. All Australians / Queenslanders should have equal access to volunteering opportunities at all levels of the sporting landscape.

## **Response to the Inquiry's Terms of Reference (ToR)**

<b>Terms of Reference</b>	<b>ASAPD Feedback</b>
The current state of volunteering in Queensland and the value it contributes, including benefits to volunteers, organisations, communities, and the state	Improved mental health, a sense of belonging and part of a community. Improved confidence in communicating to people in the sporting community and the wider community, including workplaces
The views of volunteers, prospective volunteers, and the volunteering sector on the current barriers to volunteering, including excessive legislative and regulatory burdens and other restrictions adversely limiting active volunteers	Must reduce government red tape and regulatory burdens, including documents being inclusive and more accessible for people with disability, and for example, blue card legislative frameworks are not nationally consistent.
The current experiences, motivations and challenges for volunteers and volunteer-involving organisations and their recommendations for addressing challenges and improving the volunteering experience	Ensure the sporting landscape is welcoming, accessible and inclusive. Reduce barriers See case study and acclamation <a href="https://www.sportaus.gov.au/volunteers/media/community-spirit-shines-through-at-the-australian-deaf-games">https://www.sportaus.gov.au/volunteers/media/community-spirit-shines-through-at-the-australian-deaf-games</a>
The unique challenges experienced by people from diverse backgrounds, genders, age groups, abilities and locations, and opportunities to improve volunteering participation, accessibility, and experience for these groups	See links that highlight the importance of volunteers to individuals and organisations Emily - <a href="https://www.facebook.com/share/v/1AAXhegEgp/">https://www.facebook.com/share/v/1AAXhegEgp/</a> <a href="https://www.rda.org.au/volunteering">https://www.rda.org.au/volunteering</a>
The extent, effectiveness, and efficiency of current government support at all levels for the volunteering sector in Queensland and sustainable opportunities for improvement	The need to improve connection and effectiveness of policies that can highlight and promote. For example, indicators of success as noted in the Action Plan are – a) More people volunteering in sport more often. b) Volunteers feel fulfilled and have an enjoyable and positive experience. c) Volunteering is a strategic priority for the sport sector. d) Social and economic contribution of volunteers in sport is realised. e) Volunteers in sport reflective of local community.

	f) Evidence informed volunteer policy and practice
Opportunities for the Queensland government to leverage all portfolios to support growth in volunteering across Queensland, including through hosting the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games	Work with key stakeholders, including event organisers during the runway to 2032 to ensure work, planning and strategies highlight the need to ensure the whole volunteering experience is positive; develop accessible resources, toolkits, presentations that highlight the importance and benefits of volunteering; develop case studies highlighting successful volunteer campaigns; develop strategies that highlight the win / win outcomes for all in promoting volunteering and positive vocational outcomes
Opportunities to increase emergency response volunteering in Queensland, including how to optimise the engagement, support and integration of volunteers assisting with natural disasters and community recovery	Nil response
First Nations peoples volunteering, including in remote and discrete communities, and the role of First Nations volunteering in Closing the Gap	<p>From a person with a disability perspective, volunteering in a safe, growing, and welcoming space is critical for everyone.</p> <p>Please refer to the below Intersectionality Roadmap which details some intersectionality with First Nations people.</p> <p>The Australian Sports Commission has just released the <a href="https://www.sportaus.gov.au/integrity_in_sport/inclusive-sport/understanding-our-diverse-audiences/lowSES#:~:text=Intersectionality%20is%20a%20term%20that,health%2C%20social%20class%20and%20age">https://www.sportaus.gov.au/integrity_in_sport/inclusive-sport/understanding-our-diverse-audiences/lowSES#:~:text=Intersectionality%20is%20a%20term%20that,health%2C%20social%20class%20and%20age</a> intersectionality roadmap. The document highlights the benefits of including everybody in the sport participation landscape that includes volunteering.</p>

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission to the Inquiry. We look forward to the findings and recommendations and how they can contribute to creating pathways and removing barriers for volunteers across Queensland, including those with disability.

If you have any questions regarding ASAPD's submission, please use the contact details at the top of the submission.