

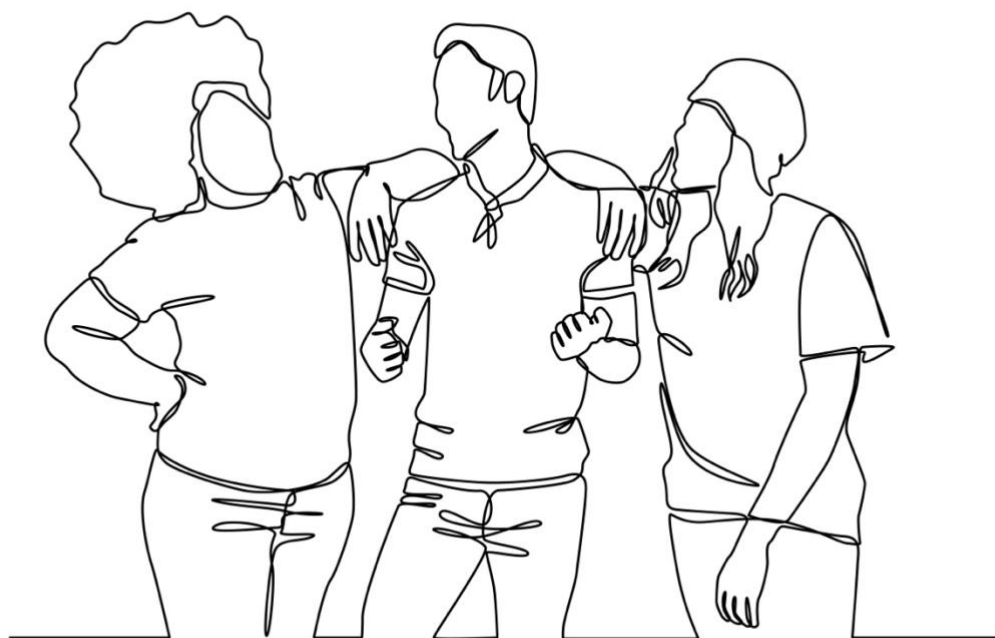
## **Inquiry into volunteering in Queensland**

<b>Submission No:</b>	422
<b>Submitted by:</b>	2Spirits & The Queensland Council for LGBTI Health
<b>Publication:</b>	Making the submission and your name public
<b>Attachments:</b>	See attachment
<b>Submitter Comments:</b>	

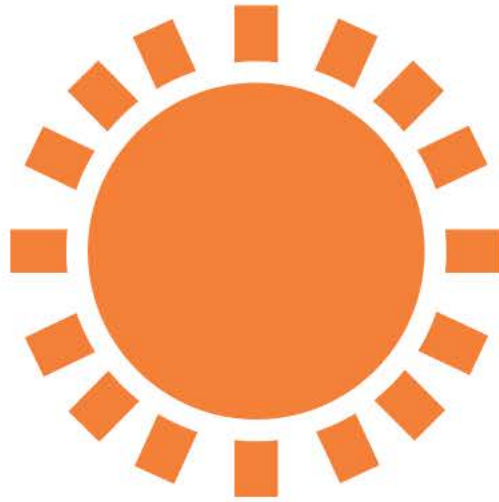
**From our Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer,  
Sistergirl and Brotherboy Communities**

**Inquiry into Volunteering in Queensland**

February 2025



# Acknowledgement



We acknowledge and pay our respects to the Traditional Owners of Country across these lands, oceans and waterways now known as Queensland. The sovereignty of these lands was never ceded. For us to do our work with integrity, Traditional Custodians, ancestors and Elders, and the ways of knowing, being and doing, must be central to how we work, live, walk and play.

We acknowledge the deep-rooted connections through our histories that live and breathe throughout our communities here in Queensland. We acknowledge the folk who are still walking alongside us who have fought many battles to advance our right to live, love and be visible, and we remember and hold dear, those who are no longer with us, but who have taught us precious lessons about the way to hold ourselves in a world that continues to make our authentic lives and selves less visible.

As an Alliance of organisations who place peer work at the center of our reason for being, we recognise, and are immensely grateful for the knowledge that this document holds, and how our personal and collective histories and futures have been shaped to members of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex, Queer, Asexual, Sistergirl and Brotherboy people and communities.

May each generation be closer to living lives reflected by love, belonging, dignity and freedom.

Committee Secretary  
Local Government, Small Business and  
Customer Service Committee  
Via Submission Portal



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28<sup>th</sup> of February, 2025

Dear Committee,

### **Inquiry into Volunteering in Queensland**

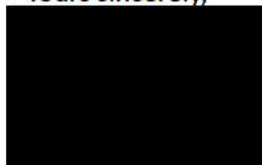
On behalf of 2Spirits and the Queensland Council for LGBTI Health (QC), we are pleased to present our submission to the Inquiry into Volunteering in Queensland. Our organisations are dedicated to supporting our Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer, Sistergirl and Brotherboy (LGBTIQ+SB) communities across Queensland, and we believe this inquiry addresses issues, opportunities and truths for our communities volunteering in Queensland today.

Our submission has been developed in collaboration with 2Spirits and QC, reflecting our shared commitment to advocating for the health and well-being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTIQ+SB individuals. We have drawn upon our collective experience and community engagement to provide insights and recommendations that we hope will inform the committee's discussions.

We trust that our contribution will assist the committee in understanding the unique challenges faced by our communities and in framing effective strategies to address them.

Thank you for considering our submission.

Yours sincerely,



Dylan Barrett  
Executive Officer  
2Spirits



Rocky Byrne  
Chief Executive Officer  
Queensland Council for LGBTI Health

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## 1. Summary



We have been a home for our Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer, Sistergirl and Brotherboy Queenslanders for 40 years, playing a key role in advocating for and supporting LGBTIQ+ Sistergirl and Brotherboy communities across Queensland. We have over 100 volunteers across Queensland, with many folks who have volunteered in the past and who are interested. We also acknowledge the people who contribute in other ways as peer-to-peer support people. This submission addresses the gaps in existing volunteer inclusion strategies, highlights the findings of our volunteer survey, and presents examples from other parts of the country, illustrating systemic barriers. The impacts and improvements to mental health, well-being, peer relationships, and community capacity building are clear from feedback and research, contributing to better social and emotional well-being, mental health, and even physical health outcomes for all our communities in Queensland.

Key points include:

- The lack of LGBTIQ+SB specific volunteer inclusion policies in Queensland.
- Addressing barriers, points of access and how to create safer spaces for our LGBTIQ+SB volunteers from national and state volunteering initiatives.
- The importance of peer-to-peer volunteer programs for mental, physical, and social well-being improvements now and over time.
- Recommendations for the development and implementation of an LGBTIQ+SB Volunteer Inclusion Strategy.
- The Queensland Government can leverage the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games to promote inclusive volunteering opportunities and public health response initiatives, such as volunteer-led safe sex resources while committing to cultural security measures to diversify volunteer participation and ensure LGBTIQ+SB volunteers are included in event planning and delivery.

## 2. Introduction

QC and 2Spirits have a long history of rich volunteer leadership, coordination, and engagement with and for our LGBTIQ+SB communities. As organisations founded by volunteers, they play a fundamental role in providing social support, peer education, and policy development. Despite their contributions, the current volunteer frameworks in Queensland do not adequately recognise or accommodate the needs of LGBTIQ+SB individuals. This submission aims to provide insights and recommendations to inform policy improvements.

A review of volunteer inclusion strategies in Queensland highlights a need for greater representation of LGBTIQ+SB individuals. As evidenced in our research, barriers to participation often include discrimination, lack of culturally secure environments, and absence of targeted recruitment and retention efforts. The impacts and improvements to mental health, well-being, peer relationships, and community capacity building are clear from feedback and research, assisting in better social and emotional well-being, mental health, and even physical health outcomes for all our communities across Queensland.



### 3. Our Ways



Our organisations proudly engage over 100 dedicated volunteers across Queensland, contributing through various roles such as Local Expert Groups, boards, and programs, including the LGBTI Seniors Visiting Service, Wrapped 'N Ready Packers, Health Promotion Outreach, and the newly established Gayawur Rainbow Drop-In Service – Affirming Care for our LGBTIQ+SB communities., alongside more done by folks as peer-supporters and allies. Additionally, we have about 70 individuals on our applicant stage eager to join our spaces.

To compile this submission, QC and 2Spirits conducted:

- A survey with 22 volunteers across both organisations, past and present, with qualitative and quantitative data.
- A review of existing volunteer policies and inclusion strategies at the national and state levels.
- Reflected on examples of past experiences involving LGBTIQ+SB volunteer participation and challenges.
- Researched and provided relevant literature on volunteer well-being and inclusion.

The collected data was analysed to identify key themes and trends, which form the basis of our recommendations.

### 4. Gaps in Current Volunteer Inclusion Strategies

A review of volunteering resources and frameworks reveals significant gaps in LGBTIQ+SB representation. Key findings include:

- The absence of LGBTIQ+SB inclusion policies in Volunteering Queensland and Volunteering Australia strategies (Volunteering Australia, 2024).
- Limited national and state-level resources addressing LGBTIQ+SB volunteer needs, with Volunteering Victoria being one of the only organisations providing guidelines (Volunteering Victoria, 2021).
- A lack of training and cultural security measures to ensure LGBTIQ+SB volunteers feel supported in mainstream organisations.
- The impact of exclusion on volunteer recruitment and retention rates within LGBTIQ+SB communities.
- Additionally, formal volunteering frameworks often don't always acknowledge the informal and community-based ways that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTIQ+ Sistergirl and Brotherboy communities engage in acts of care, support, and solidarity. These kinship-based practices, including yarning, mentoring, and providing safe spaces for peers, are essential forms of cultural and community volunteering that may not fit within traditional volunteering structures but are critical for community wellbeing. The lack of recognition of these informal networks further marginalises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTIQ+SB people, reinforcing barriers to inclusion and participation in formal volunteering roles.

## 5. Survey Findings, February 2025

Our volunteer survey reflects the diverse communities across Queensland, spanning city suburbs, coastal retreats, and regional hubs. From urban centres to tropical and hinterland regions, our volunteers bring a wealth of experiences and local knowledge, strengthening our connections and impact across the state.

### *Impactful words*

Some words from the respondents and the essence of our volunteering with us

#### Support and Care

- Supportive
- Caring
- Supportive Care
- Safe
- Educated
- Reliable
- Committed

- Productive
- Cohesive
- Democratic
- Trust
- Peaceful

#### Positive Impact and Motivation

- Positive Impact
- Gratitude
- Fulfilled
- Motivated
- Valued
- Pride
- Energised
- Inspired
- Grateful
- Challenged

#### Community and Connection

- Community
- Connection
- Social Cohesion
- Engagement
- Involvement
- Connected
- Inclusive
- Diverse
- Elder

#### Awareness and Education

- Awareness
- Educated
- Inclusive
- Engaged

#### Advocacy and Empowerment

- Advocacy
- Empowerment
- Advocate

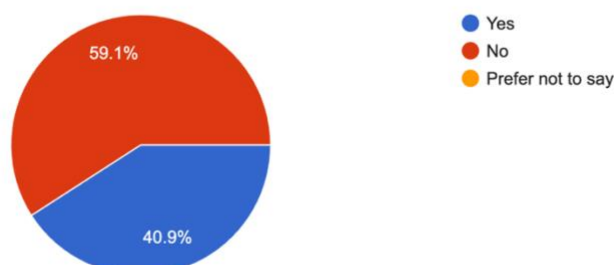


### Notable data

- **Over one-third of respondents** reported being from a migrant background.
- **Over half of respondents** are being reported from our LGBTIQ+SB communities.

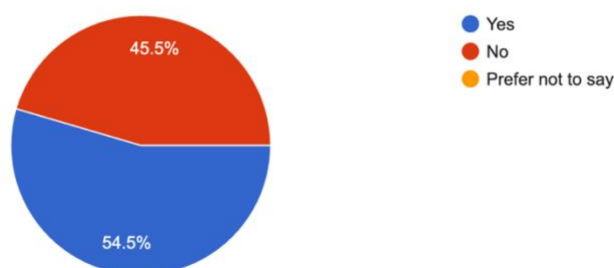
Are you from a migrant background?

22 responses



Are you part of our LGBTIQ+ Sistergirl and Brotherboy communities?

22 responses

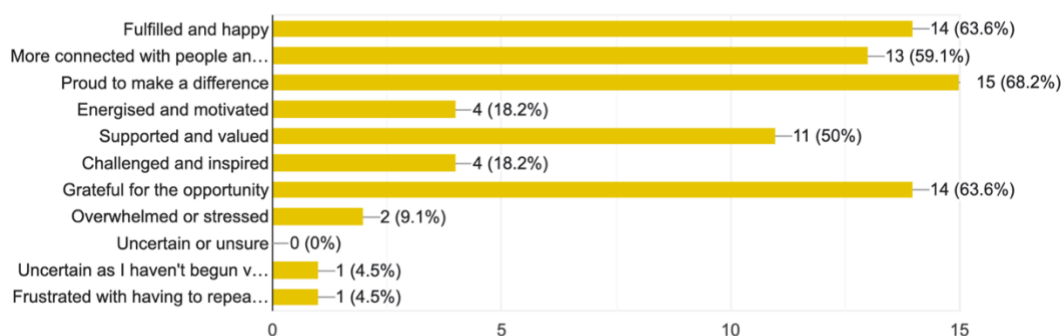


### Benefits to Volunteers:

- **Personal Satisfaction:** 63.6% of volunteers reported feeling fulfilled and happy, 59.1% felt more connected with people, and 68.2% were proud to make a difference.
- **Skill Development:** 77.3% of volunteers developed new job-related skills, increased their self-confidence, and built social networks.
- **Health and Well-being:** 50% of volunteers felt supported and valued, and 45.5% felt energised and motivated.
- **Around half** of respondents reported having volunteered with us for more than three years.

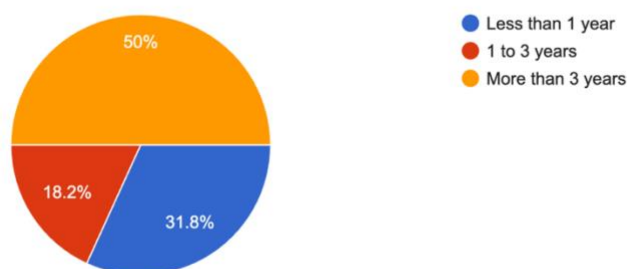
### What best describes your feeling when volunteering with us? (Please tick all that apply to you)

22 responses



### How long have you been volunteering at QC or 2Spirits?

22 responses

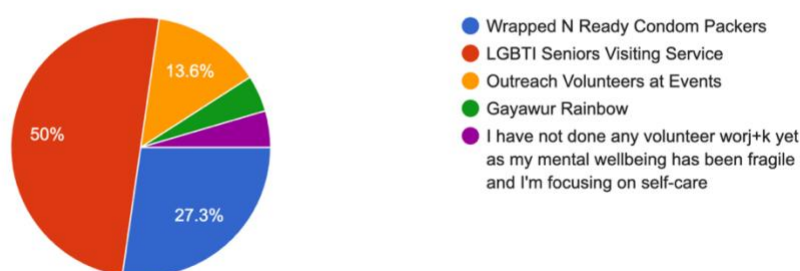


### Benefits to Organisations:

- **Enhanced Service Delivery:** Volunteers contributed to various programs such as LGBTI Seniors Visiting Service (50%), Wrapped N Ready Condom Packers (27.3%), and Outreach Volunteers at Events (13.6%).
- **Community Engagement:** Volunteers helped raise awareness about sexual health, supported LGBTI seniors, and organised community events.

### Which program area/s have you spent the majority of your time volunteering?

22 responses

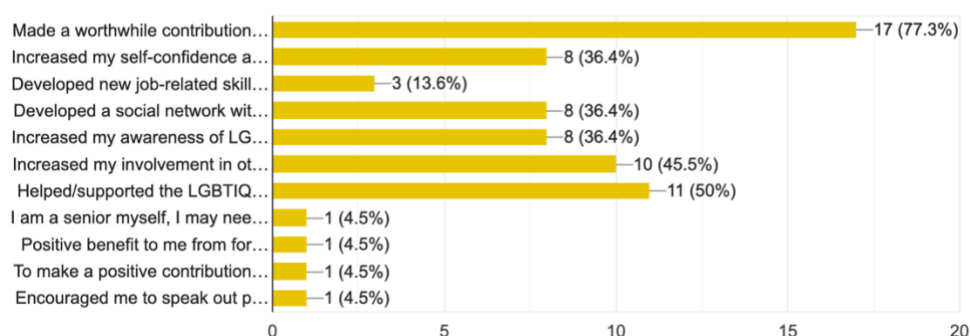


## Benefits to Communities and the State:

- **Social Cohesion:** Volunteering fosters a sense of community spirit, reduces social isolation, and promotes inclusivity. For example, 77.3% of volunteers felt they made a worthwhile contribution to the community.
- **Economic Impact:** Volunteers provide services that save costs for organisations and the state. For instance, volunteers in the LGBTI Seniors Visiting Service help reduce loneliness and improve health outcomes, saving healthcare costs.

### What motivates you to volunteer your time?

22 responses



## Barriers to Volunteering

### Legislative and Regulatory Burdens:

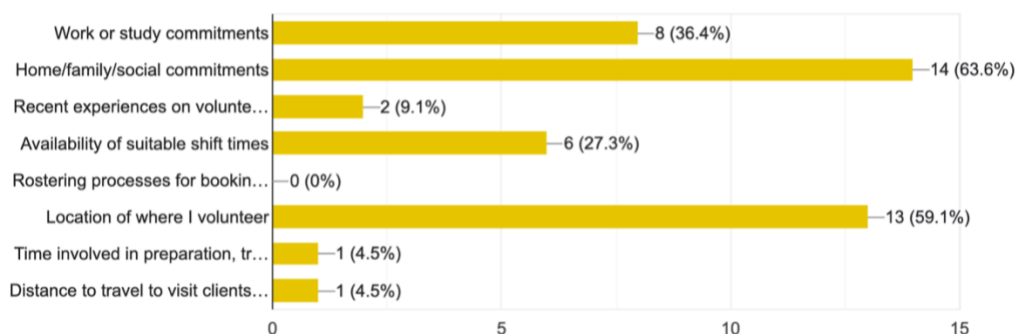
- **Excessive Background Checks:** 14.3% of volunteers found the Blue Card process and police checks difficult and time-consuming.
- **Administrative Challenges:** 9.5% of volunteers faced challenges with IT support and navigating online training.

### Other Restrictions:

- **Time Constraints:** 63.6% of volunteers cited work, study, and family commitments as factors influencing their availability.
- **Location and Transport:** 59.1% of volunteers mentioned the distance to travel to volunteer sites as a barrier.

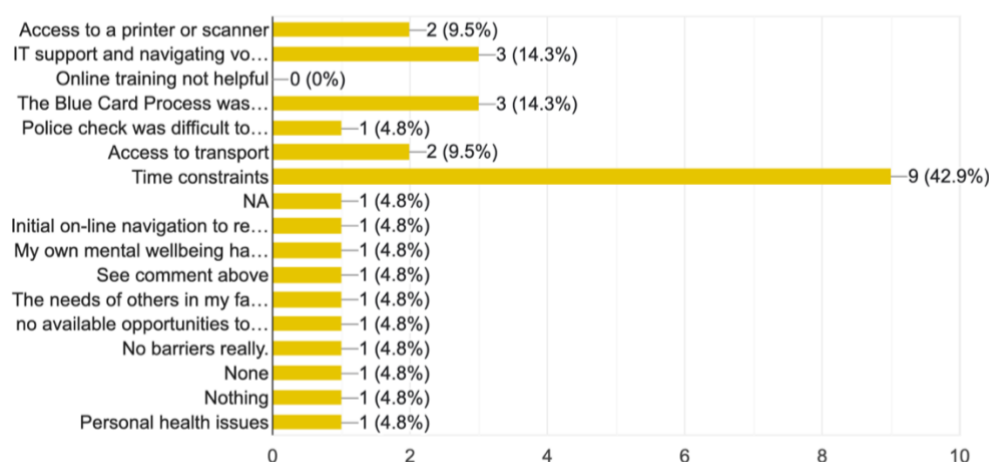
### What factor/s most influence your availability to do volunteer shifts at 2Spirits or QC?

22 responses



## What barriers, if any, have you encountered in your volunteer role?

21 responses



## Experiences, Motivations, and Challenges

### Experiences:

- **Positive Experiences:** Many volunteers expressed satisfaction with their roles, with 68.2% feeling energised and motivated and 50% feeling supported and valued.
- **Challenges:** Some volunteers (18.2%) felt overwhelmed or stressed, particularly when dealing with high workloads or complex tasks.

### Motivations:

- **Making a Difference:** 77.3% of volunteers were motivated by the desire to make a positive contribution to the community.
- **Personal Growth:** Volunteers were motivated by opportunities to develop new skills (77.3%), gain experience, and build social connections (36.4%).

### Challenges:

- **Lack of Support:** Volunteers suggested that more on-the-job training and regular catch-ups with other volunteers would improve their experience.
- **Health and Well-being:** Personal health issues and mental well-being were noted as factors impacting volunteers' ability to continue their roles.
- **Unique Challenges for Diverse Groups**

### Challenges:

- **Representation:** There is a need for more representation of people of colour and diverse gender identities in volunteer roles.
- **Accessibility:** Volunteers with disabilities or those who do not drive faced difficulties in participating fully.
- **Cultural Sensitivity:** Ensuring that volunteer programs are inclusive and culturally sensitive is essential for encouraging diverse participation.

### *Opportunities for Improvement:*

- **Targeted Outreach:** Engaging with diverse communities through targeted outreach programs can help increase participation.
- **Flexible Volunteering Options:** Offering flexible volunteering opportunities, such as remote or outdoor activities, can make volunteering more accessible.
- **Support and Training:** Providing additional support, training, and resources tailored to the needs of diverse groups can enhance their volunteering experience.

### *Availability and Barriers*

#### *Factors Influencing Availability:*

- **Work or Study Commitments:** 36.4% of volunteers cited work or study commitments as a factor influencing their availability.
- **Home/Family/Social Commitments:** 63.6% of volunteers mentioned home, family, and social commitments as influencing their availability.
- **Location and Transport:** 59.1% of volunteers noted the distance to travel to volunteer sites as a barrier.

#### *Staying Motivated:*

- **Connecting with People:** Volunteers stay motivated by connecting with people and understanding the impact of their work.
- **Support from QC Staff:** Volunteers appreciated the support from QC staff, which helped them stay motivated.

#### *Challenges Faced:*

- **Lack of Representation:** Volunteers noted the need for more representation of diverse groups in volunteer roles.
- **Accessibility Issues:** Volunteers with disabilities or those who do not drive faced difficulties in participating fully.
- **Cultural Sensitivity:** Ensuring that volunteer programs are inclusive and culturally sensitive is essential for encouraging diverse participation.
- Feedback and Suggestions for Improvement

#### *Improving Volunteer Experience:*

- **More Shifts:** Volunteers suggested offering more shifts and flexibility with volunteer dates and times.
- **On-the-Job Training:** Volunteers recommended more on-the-job training and regular reviews to seek suggestions from both volunteers and clients.
- **Support and Resources:** Volunteers suggested providing more support and resources, such as a support person or drop-in centre, to make volunteering easier.

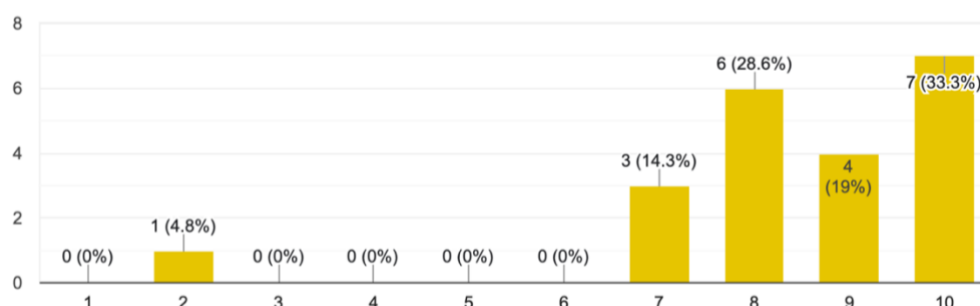
#### *Encouraging Diverse Participation:*

- **Targeted Outreach:** Engaging with diverse communities through targeted outreach programs can help increase participation.

- **Flexible Volunteering Options:** Offering flexible volunteering opportunities, such as remote or outdoor activities, can make volunteering more accessible.
- **Publicity and Awareness:** Increasing publicity and awareness of the benefits of volunteering and the opportunities available can encourage more diverse participation.

Overall, out of 10 please rate your experience as a volunteer, where 1 is very poor and 10 is excellent.

21 responses



The survey findings highlight the significant contributions and benefits of volunteering in Queensland, as well as the challenges faced by volunteers. Volunteering provides immense personal satisfaction, skill development, and health benefits to individuals. It also enhances service delivery and community engagement for organisations, fostering social cohesion and economic impact for the state.

However, volunteers face delays or some barriers such as lengthy background checks, administrative challenges, time constraints, and accessibility and transport issues. These challenges are particularly pronounced for diverse groups, emphasising the need for more inclusive and culturally sensitive volunteer programs.

To improve the volunteering experience, it is essential to streamline administrative processes, provide better support and training, and offer flexible volunteering options and transport assistance. Increasing representation and targeted outreach can also encourage more diverse participation, ensuring that the benefits of volunteering are accessible to all.

By addressing these challenges and implementing the suggested improvements, the volunteering sector in Queensland can continue to thrive and make a positive impact on society.

#### *Other survey data*

QC's LGBTI Seniors Visiting Service plays an essential role in providing social and emotional support for older LGBTI+SB individuals. Survey findings show:

- 50% of our 55 visitor volunteers are aged 50+.
- 33% of volunteers are aged 65+.

Despite these benefits, systemic barriers hinder LGBTIQ+SB volunteers from fully engaging in broader volunteer networks. Addressing these barriers requires intentional inclusion strategies and funding support.



## 6. Examples and research Highlighting Systemic Barriers



### *Enhancing Health and Economic Outcomes through Inclusive Volunteering in Queensland's LGBTIQ+SB Communities*

Engagement in volunteer activities has been shown to enhance mental and physical health, reduce stress, and provide a sense of purpose, leading to improved well-being across the lifespan (Mayo Clinic Health System, 2023). For our LGBTIQ+SB communities, inclusive volunteer opportunities offer safe spaces that affirm identity and reduce isolation, thereby promoting mental health and community connection. These positive health outcomes can decrease reliance on healthcare services, alleviating system pressures.

Moreover, improved well-being facilitates greater participation in the workforce and community activities, contributing to economic growth and societal cohesion. Notably, while there is much work to be done for our communities in health across the lifespan, engaging in volunteer activities has been shown to offer significant health benefits, including reduced stress, improved mood, and enhanced resilience (COTA Queensland, 2024). Volunteering fosters social connections and provides a sense of purpose, which is crucial for mental well-being. In Queensland, community organisations highlight that sustained volunteering is associated with better mental health outcomes. By promoting social interaction and community engagement, volunteering serves as a valuable tool for enhancing both mental and physical health.

Investing in and collaborating with Queensland's LGBTIQ+SB communities is pivotal for fostering inclusive volunteerism and enhancing workforce participation. The Queensland Government's "Pride in our Communities 2024–2032" strategy underscores the importance of embedding First Nations-led LGBTIQ+ inclusive culture, fostering stronger community connections, and ensuring responsive, accessible services for all individuals (Queensland Government, 2024). By actively engaging with LGBTIQ+SB individuals, organisations can bridge existing gaps, creating safe and affirming environments that encourage volunteerism and workforce involvement.

Inclusive practices not only enrich the diversity of volunteer and professional sectors but also lead to improved health and well-being outcomes for LGBTIQ+SB Queenslanders. This, in turn, reduces pressure on healthcare systems in many ways in general, and bolsters economic growth. The "Queensland Volunteering Strategy 2024–2032" emphasises the need to create opportunities for all individuals to contribute their unique talents, thereby sustaining and growing the state's vibrant volunteering sector (Queensland Government, 2024). Collaborative efforts that prioritise inclusivity and support for LGBTIQ+SB communities are essential steps toward a more equitable and thriving Queensland.

### *Benefits and Role of Volunteering in Enhancing the Well-Being of Older Lesbian and Gay Adults*

Research indicates that volunteering significantly enhances the mental, physical, and social well-being of older lesbian and gay adults. A study involving 754 Australian lesbian and gay individuals aged 60 and above found that volunteers reported better mental health than non-volunteers (Lyons et al., 2020). Notably, gay male volunteers experienced higher self-rated health, increased social support, and reduced psychological distress. Additionally, those volunteering for LGBTI organisations reported a stronger sense of community connectedness compared to those volunteering for non-LGBTI organisations.

These findings underscore the importance of culturally specific volunteer opportunities in reinforcing community identity and supporting well-being. This is particularly relevant in regions like

Queensland, where older LGBTI individuals may face social isolation and lack traditional family support structures. Engaging in volunteer activities not only fosters a sense of belonging and purpose but also provides essential social connections, thereby mitigating feelings of loneliness and depression prevalent in marginalised groups. Promoting and facilitating volunteer opportunities within LGBTI communities can serve as a vital strategy to enhance the overall well-being of older lesbian and gay adults.

### *Impact of COVID-19 on LGBTIQ+SB Volunteering*

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted volunteering opportunities for LGBTIQ+SB individuals, particularly older adults, by exacerbating existing barriers and creating new ones. Due to lockdowns and social distancing measures, many volunteer roles either shifted online or were paused, limiting access for those who preferred in-person engagement or lacked the technological capacity to participate virtually. Research indicates that social isolation and loss of community engagement opportunities negatively affect mental health, leading to increased levels of anxiety and depression within LGBTIQ+SB populations (Salerno et al., 2020; van der Miesen et al., 2020).

Furthermore, the shift to virtual spaces, while beneficial in maintaining some level of connection, also posed accessibility challenges for those unfamiliar with digital platforms or without adequate internet access (Fish et al., 2020). Studies on LGBTQ+ youth during the pandemic found that online interactions could not fully replace the support and affirmation provided by in-person community spaces (Green et al., 2021). These findings highlight the importance of inclusive volunteering opportunities that cater to LGBTIQ+SB individuals by providing safe, accessible spaces to reconnect with peers and community networks.

### *Inclusive Practices for LGBTIQ+SB Volunteers*

Adopting inclusive practices is essential to attracting and retaining LGBTIQ+SB volunteers. Organisations that welcome LGBTIQ+SB individuals into their volunteer programs must ensure that their policies, environments, and language are affirming and supportive. Creating an inclusive volunteer experience requires offering training for both staff and volunteers on LGBTIQ+SB issues, ensuring that the volunteer roles are advertised in LGBTIQ+ inclusive spaces, and fostering a culture of respect and recognition of diversity (Volunteering Australia, 2021). Furthermore, organisations can make their spaces more accessible by actively seeking feedback from LGBTIQ+SB volunteers and making necessary adjustments to meet their specific needs, ensuring that everyone feels valued and safe in the volunteering environment.

### *Care Army Initiative (2020)*

The Queensland Government's Care Army Initiative aimed to recruit volunteers during the COVID-19 pandemic to support vulnerable community members (Volunteering Queensland, 2024). However, there appeared to be a lack of cultural security measures identified to ensure that LGBTIQ+SB individuals were specifically considered within the initiative. This highlights the ongoing need for tailored strategies that address the unique needs of LGBTIQ+SB volunteers and care recipients within broader volunteer recruitment efforts.

### *Federal Community Visitors Scheme (2021)*

The Federal Community Visitors Scheme aimed to recruit volunteers to provide social connections for older Australians. While the scheme generated a significant number of expressions of interest, there was a gap in some referring and linking to LGBTIQ+SB volunteers toward peer-to-peer programs where the referral numbers could have been higher (LGBTIQ+ Health Australia, 2021). This reveals a barrier can exist to ensuring that LGBTIQ+SB individuals have access to culturally safe and affirming volunteer opportunities.

### *Volunteering in Aged Care Residences (2021-22)*

In 2021-22, the Federal Department of Health & Aged Care and Volunteering Australia launched a recruitment drive aimed at increasing volunteer participation in aged care residences. However, LGBTIQ+SB volunteers faced an additional barrier: a lack of risk-mitigation strategies to protect them from potential discrimination within the aged care sector. Only after persistent advocacy were LGBTIQ+SB-specific programs recognised, underscoring the continued need for policies that mitigate discrimination and provide support for LGBTIQ+SB individuals in aged care settings (Volunteering Queensland, 2024).

### *Rainbow Realities (2023)*

Research into the mental health outcomes of LGBTIQ+ community participation highlights several protective effects, particularly for trans and gender-diverse adults. Participation in peer-led safe spaces has been shown to improve perceptions of community connection and reduce poor well-being outcomes for some LGBTIQ+ subpopulations. Almost three-quarters (71.3%) of trans and gender-diverse adults who had participated in LGBTIQ+ community events reported lower levels of psychological distress. Engaging in LGBTIQ+ community events more frequently also led to higher subjective well-being. However, research also found that frequent engagement with LGBTIQ+ social media platforms was associated with higher psychological distress, possibly due to exposure to discriminatory rhetoric (Amos et al., 2023). This reinforces the need for more opportunities for in-person engagement to ensure the protective benefits of community participation.

## 7. Recommendations

### *Policy and Inclusion Strategies*

- Development of an LGBTIQ+SB Volunteer Inclusion Strategy for Queensland.
- Review and strengthen infrastructure and accessibility to volunteering for all Queenslanders, no matter where they live or who they are.
- Integration of cultural security measures in all volunteer initiatives.
- Recognition of informal and community-based volunteering models.
- Recognise and value the diverse ways that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTIQ+SB communities contribute through informal peer support and kinship networks.
- Advocate for national and state-level strategies that actively incorporate LGBTIQ+SB-inclusive volunteering frameworks and resources.

### *Support and Resources*

- Increased funding for peer-based volunteer programs.
- Additional training and mentoring for volunteers and organisations.
- Flexible and accessible volunteer roles for diverse communities, recognising the intersectionality of diverse communities.

### *Engagement and Representation*

- Build stronger partnerships with LGBTIQ+SB-led organisations and community leaders to co-design volunteering pathways that reflect the lived experiences of diverse communities, including intersectional communities.
- Improved representation of LGBTIQ+SB individuals in volunteering campaigns.
- Targeted outreach to increase participation in underrepresented groups.
- Representation and advisory input to inform inclusive volunteering policies.

### *Leveraging Volunteering for the 2032 Olympics*

- Begin scope, planning and partnership for the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games for our communities locally and as they grow and welcome visitors, to help promote inclusive volunteering opportunities and public health response initiatives, such as volunteer-led safe sex resources and other safety initiatives.
- A commitment to cultural safety and secure measures will help diversify volunteer participation.
- LGBTIQ+SB volunteers are included in event planning and delivery.

## 8. Conclusion

Volunteering is a fundamental aspect of social cohesion, and it is imperative that all individuals, including those from LGBTIQ+SB communities, have equitable access to volunteer opportunities. The impacts and improvement to mental health, well-being, peer relationships and community capacity building are clear from feedback and research, assisting in better social and emotional well-being, mental health and even physical health outcomes for all of our communities in Queensland. By implementing an LGBTIQ+SB Volunteer Inclusion Strategy, Queensland can foster a more inclusive and diverse volunteer workforce, where all volunteers can find a place to belong.

We strongly encourage and would welcome the committee to take these recommendations earnestly and to collaborate with stakeholders to ensure that LGBTIQ+SB individuals are represented, supported, and valued in all volunteer settings.

## 9. References

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