

Inquiry into volunteering in Queensland

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This submission is prepared by Quota Carindale, a not-for-profit organisation that has served the community for the last 38 years. Over this time we have supported various local charities such as, Small Steps 4 Hannah, Richies Rainbow, Forgotten Women, CleftPals Qld, Mummy's Wish along with providing Care Bears for QAS Mt Gravatt and Carina Stations and Carina Police, supported Meals on Wheels, and Residents at age care facilities with Christmas functions, plus supporting organisation to support citizens who have been misplaced by various floods over the years throughout Queensland.

Quota Carindale is a small group of women who raise these funds, and we are finding it more difficult to inspire the younger generation to join our organisation and to volunteer at fundraising days such as the sausage sizzles. Unfortunately for the individual clubs such as Quota, when people are looking to volunteer, they go to Volunteers Queensland (which is great, as they are still volunteering), I have addressed this within the submission and if further detail is required please contact [REDACTED]. **(please withhold my name and phone number if publishing)**

Submission to Committee Inquiry on Volunteering in Small Organisations

Introduction

- Volunteering within small organisations such as Quota, Soroptimist International, and similar groups provides significant benefits to both members and volunteers.
- Volunteers can do an enormous amount of good for an organisation, from saving your nonprofit a significant amount of money to increasing the quality of services provided. During times of financial difficulty, volunteers are critical in ensuring that nonprofits achieve their missions.
- These organisations support local charities and communities at both local and state levels.
- The sustainability of these groups is challenged by aging membership and difficulties in attracting younger volunteers.
- Challenges Faced by Small Volunteer Organisations

Recruitment and Retention

- Volunteers can be turned into Advocates of your cause
- Volunteers can make a difference at fundraising and program-related events e.g. Relay for Life – volunteers can help with logistics and join in on the fun, running to raise money. These volunteer efforts will result in more money raised, and therefore, more beneficiaries are helped by your nonprofit.
- Younger people are less likely to commit to regular volunteering schedules.
- Short-term initiatives like the 'Mud Army' attract volunteers due to their limited time commitment.
- Organisations struggle to connect with younger generations despite the mutual benefits of engagement.

Legislative and Regulatory Burdens

- Compliance with insurance requirements, including public liability and volunteer coverage, is costly.
- Blue Cards (working with children checks) are necessary but add to administrative burdens.
- Excessive regulation limits the ability of small groups to allocate funds toward community support.

Communication and Outreach

- Previously, free local newspapers provided an essential platform for event promotion and fundraising awareness.

- The decline of local print media has made it harder for organisations to reach potential volunteers and donors.
- Lack of expertise in social media and website management prevents effective engagement with younger audiences.

Emergency Response and Community Support

- Small volunteer organisations play a critical role in fundraising during emergency situations.
- Without these groups, the Government would need to employ additional personnel to fulfill community support roles.
- Volunteers save money and increase donations
- Volunteers can Help Boost Visibility

Youth Engagement Strategies

- Junior Clubs in state schools teach students valuable skills in meeting management and community service.
- Early exposure to volunteering encourages lifelong participation in charitable activities.

Recommendations

Government Support and Partnerships

- Establish collaboration between small volunteer organisations and State/Local Government to improve community engagement.
- Create a centralised online platform where new residents can find volunteer opportunities in their local area.
- Nonprofit volunteers can increase the impact of programs
- More individuals helping out means more opportunities to scale your programs. Enlisting the support of volunteers, whether in the office or on the ground, can help your organisation build its capacity and allow your nonprofit to check off a larger array of tasks. They can help you reach out to more beneficiaries, interact with them, and bring in fresher perspectives.
- Volunteers bring a diversity of skills to your organisation.
- Volunteers can do everything from administrative and office work to youth work, direct beneficiary work etc. One of the greatest benefits is access to the wide range of skills they bring.

Reducing Financial and Regulatory Burdens

- Consider subsidising insurance costs for small volunteer groups to ensure more funds go toward community initiatives.
- Streamline regulatory processes to reduce administrative burdens on small organisations.
- Improved Communication Channels
- Support small organisations with access to government-sponsored social media training and digital tools.
- Reintroduce community noticeboards, newsletters, or subsidised local advertising to promote events and volunteer opportunities.
- Every volunteer who assists has their own network. When they show off their passions for the organisation, their network is more likely to take an interest in your work and get involved, too. Tag them in your social media posts (with permission) to thank them for their dedication. Encourage them to share your posts on their own social media to help spread the word about your volunteer opportunities

Encouraging Youth Involvement

- Develop flexible, short-term volunteer opportunities that appeal to young people.
- Promote volunteering through schools, universities, and youth organisations to foster long-term engagement.

- **Conclusion**

Why is Volunteering important

- Connects you with others – meet new people.
- Builds self-confidence and self-esteem – sense of pride and identity, helping to boost self-confidence further by taking you out of your natural comfort zone and environment.
- Important for physical health – can boost mental and physical health. Evidence suggests that people who give their time to others might benefit from lower blood pressure and a longer lifespan. Researchers have found that the more people volunteered, the happier they were.
- Sense of purpose – because volunteering means choosing to work without monetary compensation, people often choose to give their time to issues or organisations they feel are important or have a special connection to.
- Helps you forget your own problems – focusing on others can give us a deeper sense of perspective and help distract us from negative thoughts and help stop rumination.
- Small volunteer organisations provide invaluable community services and reduce the financial burden on the Government.
- Targeted support, reduced regulatory constraints, and improved communication strategies will help sustain these vital groups.
- Investing in volunteer engagement, particularly among younger generations, will ensure the longevity and effectiveness of these organisations.

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