

# Victorian State Budget 2020 -2021

## SUBMISSION

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**TO:** Victoria State Government

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**FROM:** Volunteering Victoria

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**DATE:** January 2020

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**STATUS:** Final





## 1 . ABOUT US

**Volunteering Victoria** is the state peak body for volunteering in Victoria, focusing on advocacy, sector development and the promotion of volunteering. VV's role is to lead the development of a collaborative, sustainable, thriving volunteering community and movement in Victoria.

Volunteering Victoria promotes and builds a vibrant, strong volunteering community that is inclusive, respected and sustainable, encouraging resilient communities and empowered and active citizens through volunteering. Volunteering Victoria works with key strategic partners, its 370 members and stakeholders to promote, value and support effective volunteering.

Volunteering Victoria strives to find new and creative ways to engage organisations and individuals in meaningful volunteering, supporting volunteer managers, volunteers and volunteer-involving organisations.

## 2 . EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Volunteering Victoria welcomes the opportunity to provide this submission to three Government Departments as they prepare for their 2020-2021 budgets.

1.	Department of Health and Human Services ( <b>DHHS</b> )
2.	Local Government Victoria ( <b>LGV</b> )
3.	Multicultural Victoria

In addition to the direct economic benefits provided by a volunteer workforce of 1,511,500 Victorians, volunteering has many direct and indirect benefits for the strength and resilience of Victorian communities.<sup>1</sup>

Individuals, communities and governments at all levels benefit from volunteering and volunteers. Encouraging, promoting and supporting volunteering is essential to ensure its efficacy, strength and sustainability.

Volunteers undertake important and valuable work that improves social cohesion, and makes our communities stronger, safer and more liveable.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ministerial Council for Volunteer's Volunteers in Victoria: Trends, Challenges and Opportunities Report, 2017. This Report was developed in 2017 to provide a contemporary narrative for volunteering. It also provides a summary of the known social benefits, economic value and current trends. Findings from this report highlight key trends, challenges and opportunities for volunteering, and have informed the development of strategic priorities to strengthen and support the volunteer sector in Victoria, p 5.

<sup>2</sup> Ministerial Council for Volunteer's Volunteers in Victoria: Trends, Challenges and Opportunities Report, 2017, p 5.

Organisations that involve volunteers (VIOs) need to be supported to ensure they are able to attract and retain volunteers and volunteers are effectively engaged and benefit from their involvement. Volunteering Victoria supports VIOs through advocacy, sector development and the promotion of volunteering.

Victoria gains immense benefits from its volunteers, not just from the economic contribution that volunteers make, but also from enhanced social cohesion and environmental, spiritual and health and wellbeing outcomes.<sup>3</sup>

This submission demonstrates how Volunteering Victoria complements government policy and programs and supports an investment in volunteering over the next 12 months. Volunteering Victoria is uniquely positioned with a singular focus on volunteering, in all forms and across all sectors.

## Recommendations

1. DHHS and Volunteering Victoria continue to enhance formal coordination and strategic alignment of volunteering across the State to support growth and innovation in the sector and to ensure a strong and effective Victorian Volunteer Strategy.
2. Local Government Victoria supports effective delivery of volunteering services across the diverse range of council services by resourcing specialised professional development opportunities for identified local needs. This could include training in aligning practice to the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement.
3. The Victorian Government works with Volunteering Victoria and Justice Connect on legislative improvements, in close consultation with VIOs and other peak bodies and:

*a.* prioritises work towards a nationally consistent scheme which incorporates recommendations in the Working with Children Check Report.

*b.* ensures that volunteering is specifically listed as a protected area of public life to the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic). Care will need to be taken when amending the legislation, in particular to the definition of volunteering (making sure it reflects current forms of volunteering and other forms of unpaid work, for example, Work for the Dole participants, mutual obligation activities, court-ordered volunteering, work under work and development permits), and to balance the regulatory burden, if any, against equality before the law. Legislative changes should be phased in and the sector should be supported to adapt to changes and responsibilities.

*c.* ensure that the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic) clarifies different types of unpaid work and provides the same protections to other forms of unpaid worker participants, as traditional volunteers. The Victorian Government should also check to ensure that there are alternative (and sufficient) protections for these kinds of unpaid work (e.g. in the same way that emergency volunteers have been excluded as alternative protections apply).

4. The Victorian Government supports the development of specialised inclusive multicultural volunteering materials, workshops and training opportunities. The outcomes are: more diverse volunteer workforce with better utilisation of skills and experience, greater diversity awareness and inclusion, and increasingly inclusive and harmonious communities

### 3 . IMPORTANCE OF VOLUNTEERING TO VICTORIANS

Volunteering is ‘time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain.’<sup>4</sup>

The importance of volunteering to individuals, communities and to government, is clear and acknowledged. The Government of Victoria expressly recognises the extent, value, contribution and impact of volunteers by delivering on a 2018 Election commitment, to develop a volunteer strategy to support and enhance volunteerism in Victoria.

Volunteers are a vital part of Victoria’s social, economic, cultural and environmental fabric, and volunteering delivers immense value to Victoria, for communities, places and individuals.<sup>5</sup>

The Ministerial Council for Volunteers (the Council) operated from 2015 to 2018 to provide high-level independent advice to the Government of Victoria on how best to support and strengthen the volunteer sector. The Council developed a number of priorities for strengthening volunteering in Victoria which provide a platform for future volunteering policy development and design across the volunteering community in Victoria. These priorities support the Council’s vision for volunteering, where “Volunteers are engaged, supported and valued, and undertake their roles in a volunteering community that is effective, sustainable and valuable to all Victorians”.

#### Victoria Volunteer Strategy

The Victoria Volunteer Strategy will be informed by consultation with a broad range of stakeholders across the Victorian public and volunteering community. To ensure buy-in and support for the strategy, the consultation is seeking deep insights into the challenges and opportunities for volunteers, community members, managers of volunteers and organisations.

The importance of volunteering for social cohesion is underlined by the fact that the vast majority (81 per cent) of Victorian community sector charities are supported by volunteers (VCOSS, 2015).<sup>6</sup>

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4 Volunteering Australia, <https://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/resources/definition-of-volunteering/#/>, 2016.

5 Ministerial Council for Volunteer’s Volunteers in Victoria: Trends, Challenges and Opportunities Report, 2017, p 5.

6 Ministerial Council for Volunteer’s Volunteers in Victoria: Trends, Challenges and Opportunities Report, 2017, p 32

Clearly volunteering needs to be encouraged, supported and sustained. The Strategy will ensure that Government is part of the program of support.

There is an opportunity now to strengthen and grow volunteering to stand us in good stead for the future, and with a strategic, long-term and place-based approach, we can drive a strong and vibrant culture of volunteering in Victoria.<sup>7</sup>

By harnessing existing supports and practices and building upon available opportunities, all levels of government, together with the community, not-for-profit sector and businesses, can work together to ensure Victoria has a strong culture of volunteering into the future.<sup>8</sup>

Many of the organisations that involve, and in many cases rely, on volunteers are not for profit (NFP) organisations doing work that benefits the community across a wide range of sectors. These organisations directly and significantly improve the quality of life for various parts of the community.

Organisations that depend on volunteers face a challenge in attracting new volunteers, and in ensuring that rates of participation are adequate to provide a stable volunteer workforce. According to the ABS (2015), Australia-wide rates of volunteering dropped from 42 per cent of the population aged over 15 years in 2006, to 32 per cent in 2014.<sup>9</sup>

**Volunteers and the organisations that involve them should not be taken for granted. Volunteer time may be given willingly and without financial gain but assuming that, because it is done willingly, it will continue on a sustained basis without support, is simply incorrect. If the rate of volunteering reduces in-line with current trends, this will have an enormous and detrimental impact on services provided by the state.**

VIOs play a vital role in supporting, managing and encouraging volunteering. But these organisations need support, specifically in relation to their volunteering activities, to ensure they are able to attract and retain volunteers and that volunteers are effectively utilised and benefit from their involvement. Volunteers need to be organised, managed and trained, actively and efficiently.

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7 Ibid, p 5.

8 Ibid, p 41.

9 Ibid, p 12



## Leading a workforce of 1.5 million

The key to managing emerging challenges and expectations in volunteering is the role of leaders and managers of volunteers.<sup>10</sup>

The training and development needs of leaders of volunteers, whether paid or unpaid, are just as real as for other staff in the organisation. Well trained staff and volunteers will significantly reduce risks to the organisation and best assist it to fulfil its mission.<sup>11</sup>

Leaders and managers of volunteers are fundamental to the success of any volunteer effort and can uniquely contribute to the ongoing resilience and sustainability of volunteering. Support is required to access professional development opportunities for managers of volunteers and encourage broader implementation of best-practice management approaches in line with the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement.

- Increased organisational awareness to maximise the benefits of volunteer involvement.
- Increased awareness and capability for volunteer managers to develop effective volunteer involvement strategies and practices.
- Increased organisational capacity and capability to involve volunteers in meaningful and useful activities that contribute to the outcomes of the organisation's work.
- Improved awareness and skills to ensure the rights of volunteers are protected and that they are supported to carry out their roles and responsibilities.

## 4 . BUDGET SUBMISSION ALIGNMENT WITH GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

The Department of Planning and Community Development (2012) estimated that volunteering contributions were worth about \$23 billion to the Victorian economy in 2011 and are set to grow to as much as \$42 billion by 2021 if rates of volunteering continue.<sup>12</sup>

Another important economic effect of the volunteer effort is the value that volunteers can add to government services. This is particularly relevant because the health and welfare organisations contracted to deliver community services often employ large volunteer workforces.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Ministerial Council for Volunteer's Volunteers in Victoria: Trends, Challenges and Opportunities Report, 2017, p36.

<sup>11</sup> Ministerial Council for Volunteer's Leadership in Volunteering- Key findings and improvement opportunities Report, 2017, p 4.

<sup>12</sup> Ministerial Council for Volunteer's Volunteers in Victoria: Trends, Challenges and Opportunities Report, 2017, p34

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, p 34.



As part of Volunteering Victoria's sector advocacy role, we recently surveyed members on their engagement with government and their capacity to do so effectively. Over half of the VIOs surveyed indicated that they have received government funding in some form, predominantly state government funding. However, while 62% of respondents indicated that they received some state government funding only 35% of those receive funding for volunteer involving programs.<sup>14</sup>

Effective engagement by VIOs with government, ensuring government understands and appreciates the value, impact and contribution of volunteering, and being able to access funding that directly supports the volunteering activities of VIOs is essential to a strong, resilient and effective volunteering sector.

While the value, contribution and importance of volunteers is recognised by Government, and notwithstanding easier access to information, many volunteer organisations are unable to effectively or adequately engage with or advocate for funding for their organisation's volunteer involvement.

## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

DHHS works to achieve the best health, wellbeing and safety for all Victorians so that they can lead a life they value. The Department knows that most people want to be connected to their communities, and experience a good life – their health, safety and wellbeing rely on being able to participate fully in the community and economy and access services. The Department's purpose is to help them to get there.

DHHS supports the community sector primarily through a health and wellbeing perspective. While there are many synergies between volunteering and welfare issues, the volunteering sector is also much broader and intersects with almost all government portfolios.

As illustrated in the Victorian Government's Volunteers in Victoria 2017 report, volunteering intersects with many sectors such as emergency services, arts, culture and heritage, environment and conservation, tourism, major events, higher education, sport and recreation and so on.

As the Victorian Government understands, investment in the management and leadership of volunteering has significant benefits to volunteering in Victoria, to a broad range of portfolios across government and to the Victorian community as a whole. It is a cost effective and efficient way of supporting the development of a sustainable and resilient volunteer workforce for the state.

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<sup>14</sup> Volunteering Victoria's State Government Advocacy Research Project <https://www.volunteeringvictoria.org.au/state-government-advocacy-research-project/>, 2019

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT VICTORIA

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Local Government Victoria provides policy advice, oversees legislation and works with councils to support responsive and accountable local government services.

Volunteers can represent a significant proportion of a local government's workforce.

Local government volunteers and volunteering programs enhance the service delivery of local governments that enable empowered communities to respond to their own needs. Volunteers are engaged in a diverse range of activities, including:

- Provision of youth family and senior services and services to people who are otherwise disconnected or isolated people (meals on wheels, medical transport)
- Support for arts, heritage and libraries
- Development and maintenance of local assets and community spaces.
- Emergency services before, during and after a disaster.
- Environmental development and stewardship.

Local governments have communicated a number of challenges to Volunteering Victoria which can be addressed, but which require considered approaches and professional development to improve. The kinds of challenges local governments face in the following list is only a small sample:

- Rural and regional population and demographic changes. Volunteers are often 'born and bred' in their community. Engaging new members of the community and attracting skilled volunteers requires strategy and resources.
- Adapting to and meeting new forms of volunteering that meet the needs of changing demographics with flexible opportunities for example short term, project/skilled based roles.
- Volunteer managers are generally enthusiastic about engaging younger volunteers, however engaging this group requires more sophisticated online engagement and marketing techniques and tools.



## MULTICULTURAL VICTORIA

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Multicultural Victoria promote diversity and inclusion. MCV ensure that Victorians of all cultural and religious backgrounds can enjoy the benefits of a multicultural society.

Victoria is home to one of Australia's most diverse populations – and is the country's fastest growing state. Diversity will continue to be a defining characteristic of the Victorian identity, which comprises over 260 languages and dialects, and 135 religious faiths. 26.2% of all Victorians born overseas and almost 50% have at least one parent born overseas.

Despite its numerous benefits for migrants, volunteer organisations and the broader community, the participation rate of multicultural communities in formal volunteering is lower than other segments of the community. This under representation may be due to low rates of self-reporting, which highlights the need for more research funding and targeted programs to engage these communities.

Volunteering can play a role in connecting and engaging individuals from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities. It is the vision of VV to build a vibrant, diverse, satisfied and growing multicultural membership and network of stakeholders that is truly representative of the entire Victorian multicultural community.

The theme of Volunteering Victoria's 2017 Annual General Meeting forum was diversity and inclusion. "If you don't have a seat at the table, bring your own chair." The forum included speakers from a range of organisation contributing their insights. Volunteering by definition supports the "common good". In modern Australian society, inclusion and diversity are imperatives in pursuit of the common good. Inclusion and diversity are not "soft concepts" – it is essential for the survival of many organisations to respond to a diverse market, and therefore there is a strong business case for an organisation to diversify its workforce.

Just as multiculturalism enriches the lives of Victorians, it also presents a number of challenges for communities, organisations and government as they prepare to welcome new CALD families and individuals, and to strengthen already diverse communities. Research shows that CALD individuals, particularly asylum seekers and refugees, are at higher risk of experiencing mental health problems than other Australians and are more likely to feel alienated or isolated.



## 5 . RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1 That DHHS and Volunteering Victoria continue to enhance formal coordination and strategic alignment to support growth and innovation in the sector and to inform the Victorian Volunteer Strategy

The Victoria Volunteer Strategy being developed by the Government of Victoria is critical to the future of effective and sustainable volunteerism in Victoria. To ensure buy-in and support for the strategy, the consultation is seeking deep insights into the challenges and opportunities for volunteers, community members, managers of volunteers and organisations. Parliamentary Secretary for Volunteers, Anthony Carbines, will oversee development of the strategy. Volunteering Victoria as the state peak has a critical role to play in this process.

#### **The four strategic priorities developed by the Ministerial Council for Volunteers are:**

1. The repositioning and valuing of volunteering.
2. Supporting leaders and managers of volunteers.
3. Enhanced collaboration across the sector and government.
4. The use of social media and technology.

Volunteering Victoria supports the strategic priorities of the Ministerial Council and is committed to working collaboratively with DHHS to further strengthen the volunteering sector. The Report of the Council acknowledges the important contribution of Volunteering Victoria as the state peak in Victoria.<sup>15</sup> Volunteering Victoria will continue in its advisory role as a strong basis for future collaboration. Getting the structural fundamentals right to support the volunteering sector is the best way over the medium to long term to develop robust, well-scoped and targeted support for the sector.

As the state peak body, Volunteering Victoria is well placed to continue to support development of the strategy during 2020. A member-based organisation, with over 350 not-for-profit and corporate members, Volunteering Victoria brings together diverse people and organisations across many sectors with a commitment to volunteering in our State. This is a time of significant and swift demographic, technological, economic and social change. Ensuring the appropriate strategy is developed and then implemented with peak body support for the volunteering sector is essential.

Volunteering Victoria is well positioned to inform policy development, consult with members and broadly across the sector, and facilitate pilot initiatives and programs.

Volunteering Victoria enjoys a collaborative and constructive relationship with the DHHS and welcomes the support from the Department to facilitate Volunteering Victoria's ability to plan strategically in consultation with our members and in alignment with the Victorian Government's priorities.

The current peak body funding for Volunteering Victoria contributes to supporting some of the core programs and services Volunteering Victoria provides for the leaders and managers of volunteers. Volunteering Victoria will continue to support development of an appropriate and effective volunteer strategy and allow the volunteering sector to grow and innovate. In addition, Volunteering Victoria will pursue initiatives that the Victorian Government support, such as greater geographic and sectoral representation and a bigger presence across regional Victoria.

**Cost:** Nil (Funded through our existing peak body grant)

*DHHS and Volunteering Victoria continue to enhance formal coordination and strategic alignment to support growth and innovation in the sector and to inform the Victorian Volunteer Strategy.*

## 5.2 Local Government

The Victorian Government and 79 local governments, as stated in the Victorian State Local Government Agreement, are committed to progressing social, economic and environmental outcomes for Victoria's communities by:

- Strengthening the capacity of local government to provide services and functions.
- Fostering a culture of continuous improvement to enhance the performance of both levels of government.
- Improving the local coordination and strategic planning of government services and functions.

In a recent survey conducted by Volunteering Victoria, 11 councils responded.<sup>16</sup> One survey question was "Has your organisation identified any particular short-term priority issues specifically as they relate to volunteering as part of a recent strategic or project planning exercise?" Responses from the local government sector included "Internal awareness-raising and advocacy and development of projects designed to strengthen volunteer support;" "The need for centralized volunteer coordination"; "Incorporating a volunteer management system so that the organisation has a clear line of sight regarding its volunteer program and implementing an HR and best practice volunteer management model"; and "for a more "connected community" which translates in many ways one of which is volunteer participation".

Volunteering Victoria currently delivers professional development training on the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement and is well placed to build on this platform and support local government with their volunteering priorities. The Victorian Government can strengthen the volunteer capacity of local government through continued improvement and enhanced skills of volunteer managers.

<sup>16</sup> Volunteering Victoria's State Government Advocacy Research Project <https://www.volunteeringvictoria.org.au/state-government-advocacy-research-project/>, 2019

## National Standards for Volunteer Involvement

Volunteering Victoria currently delivers professional development training on the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement and is well placed to build on this platform and support local government with their volunteering priorities. The Victorian Government can strengthen the volunteer capacity of local government through continued improvement and enhanced skills of volunteer managers.

## Resilience, emergency management and volunteers

In Victoria, the state government expects municipal councils to make arrangements for the management of spontaneous volunteers in emergencies (Department of Justice 2013). There is ample evidence to suggest that it is more productive for local governments to conceptualise spontaneous volunteers as a positive, necessary and useful resource in the realm of emergency management.

Local level capability is recognised as the frontline for disaster management, primarily due to the benefits of localised knowledge and networks. Local governments have a broad breadth of roles and responsibilities across disaster management arrangements. Local governments are identified as the primary agencies to take on the responsibility for ensuring the effective deployments of spontaneous disaster volunteers.

Volunteering Victoria, through its partnership with world-experts Volunteering Queensland, are perfectly positioned to support Local Government Victoria, local governments and their partners to develop sustainable new models for local community capability building in disasters.

**Estimated Cost:** \$300,000 per annum for three years

*Local Government Victoria supports the effective delivery of volunteering services across the diverse range of council portfolios by resourcing specialised professional development opportunities for identified local needs. This includes training in aligning practice to the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement and emergency management volunteers*



### 5.3 Providing stronger protections for volunteers in State legislation

Justice Connect and Volunteering Victoria have identified three priority areas of legislation and policy for the Victorian Government to provide greater clarity and certainty to the volunteering sector. We seek to work closely with the Victorian Government to explore how legislation affecting volunteers can be improved, in consultation with the volunteering sector. VIOs should be supported and resourced to adapt to legislative changes and continue to be in line with best practice. Volunteering Victoria and Justice Connect have established a strategic partnership to deliver the proposed activities outlined in this submission. Volunteering Victoria and JusticeConnect have worked together with other organisations in the past to deliver the outlined project activities and have set up a plan for collaboration with the broader volunteering community.

#### 5.3.1 Working with Children Check scheme

We acknowledge the work the Victorian Government has already done to implement the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The scheme continues to be challenging for the volunteering sector given variations (and at times inconsistencies) between different jurisdictions.

**Estimated Cost: \$50,000**

*The Victorian Government works with Volunteering Victoria and Justice Connect on legislative improvements, in close consultation with VIOs and other peak bodies, and prioritises work towards a nationally consistent scheme which incorporates recommendations in the Working with Children Check Report.*

#### 5.3.2 Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)

Under the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic), volunteering is not included as an area of public life in which discrimination can occur. For the purpose of sexual harassment provisions only, employment includes 'work on a voluntary or unpaid basis'. As a general principle, equal protection should be given to volunteers in respect of both discriminatory conduct and sexual harassment. There may be a need to consider how best to balance a regulatory burden, if any, against equality before the law.

**Estimated Cost: \$50,000**

*The Victorian Government works with Volunteering Victoria and Justice Connect on legislative improvements, in close consultation with VIOs and other peak bodies, and ensures that volunteering is specifically listed as a protected area of public life to the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic). Care will need to be taken when amending the legislation, in particular to the definition of volunteering (making sure it reflects current forms of volunteering and other forms of unpaid work, for example, Work for the Dole participants, mutual obligation activities, court-ordered volunteering, work under work and development permits), and to balance the regulatory burden, if any, against equality before the law. Legislative changes should be phased in and the sector should be supported to adapt to changes and responsibilities.*

### 5.3.3 Wrongs Act 1958 (Vic)

Section 37 of the Wrongs Act states: “A volunteer is not liable in any civil proceeding for anything done, or not done, in good faith by him or her in providing a service in relation to community work organised by a community organisation.” However, it is unclear whether these protections apply to other types of unpaid work (such as Work for the Dole or mutual obligations).

**Estimated Cost: \$100,000**

*The Victorian Government works with Volunteering Victoria and Justice Connect on legislative improvements, in close consultation with VIOs and other peak bodies, and ensure that the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic) clarifies different types of unpaid work and provides the same protections to other forms of unpaid worker participants, as traditional volunteers. The Victorian Government should also check to ensure that there are alternative (and sufficient) protections for these kinds of unpaid work (e.g. in the same way that emergency volunteers have been excluded as alternative protections apply).*

### 5.4 Specialised inclusive multicultural volunteering materials, workshops and training opportunities

In August 2016 Volunteering Victoria collaborated with the Multicultural Volunteering Special Interest Group, to host Victoria’s first Multicultural Volunteering conference. The conference was a sell-out success, attracting over 100 attendees and speakers from government, private and not-for-profit sectors, volunteer involving organisations and volunteer support services to tackle the many challenges that surround the multicultural and CALD volunteering space, and to highlight a range of possible solutions.

#### **Feedback from multicultural organisations and volunteer involving organisations to Volunteering Victoria has highlighted the need for more:**

- Government recognition and respect of CALD volunteers.
- ‘Cultural competency’ training for organisations hoping to engage CALD volunteers.
- Research to understand cultural barriers and pilot programs to test solutions.

The Victorian Government's commitment to multiculturalism and inclusiveness is outlined in "Victorian. And proud of it." The Multicultural Policy Statement outlines inclusivity strategies "whether at home, at work, while volunteering or in the community."

In 2018 Volunteering Victoria supported the LIVE initiative (Lead, Intern, Volunteer and Experience) of the Multicultural Policy Statement through our delivery of the Study Melbourne Live Volunteer project.<sup>17</sup> The pilot project is a part of creating a new platform for international students to develop skills and build social connectedness. Volunteering Victoria has identified a number of opportunities in which the peak body could support multicultural inclusiveness through volunteering.

While there are numerous volunteer-involving organisations that want to engage diverse volunteers, there are many cultural and organisational barriers to inclusivity for a range of communities. With appropriate resources, Volunteering Victoria will develop a series of training opportunities, online materials and workshops aimed at equipping organisations with the necessary tools to create inclusive environments.

**Estimated Cost:** \$100,000 per annum for three years

*To develop specialised inclusive multicultural volunteering materials, workshops and training opportunities. The outcomes are: more diverse volunteer workforce with better utilisation of skills and experience, greater diversity awareness and inclusion, and increasingly inclusive and harmonious communities*

## 6 . CONTACT

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