

MEMORANDUM

Our vision for the Victorian Volunteering Strategy



Executive Summary

The Victorian Government is currently developing a [Victorian Volunteer Strategy](#) (The Strategy). The Strategy will likely be the single biggest volunteering related initiative in Victoria over the next 5 years from the Victorian Government.

This initiative is welcomed as the Victorian Government is uniquely positioned to set the broad directions for volunteerism across our state, drawing on its resources, influence and ability to extensively coordinate. The impacts of a well-designed and resourced strategy will better support and engage Victoria's 2.3 million volunteers.

Conversely a weak strategy will not only be a wasted opportunity for the volunteering sector but will use limited organisational resources and distract focus from more effective initiatives. The Strategy is an exciting opportunity for the Victorian Government to deliver on its priorities and objectives. The "volunteering sector" as a collective is well placed to deliver positive outcomes for the Victorian Government and Victorian communities. As an often-overlooked activity, there are numerous opportunities to improve the impact of thousands of organisations that engage volunteers, with minimal and modest investments relative to other governmental investments.

Our Vision

BIG THINKING

While the operational aspect of The Strategy might be delivered over the course of 1-3 years, the Strategy should consider where the Victorian volunteer sector could be in 10-15-20 years (from: deliver a program to engage 150 school leavers in volunteering opportunities to: every Victorian school leaver should be educated about the opportunities and benefits of volunteering.)

TANGIBLE STEPS MAPPED AGAINST STATED PRIORITIES

The Victorian Government has made an excellent start by developing the [Priorities for Strengthening Volunteering in Victoria \(Ministerial Council of Volunteers\)](#).

The Strategy should build on these priorities and:



Include goals which are concrete either measured as key metrics or deliverables



Define success



Be timebound



Include a monitoring and evaluation framework depending on the nature of the initiatives the strategy takes.

A KEY MECHANISM FOR COORDINATION ACROSS THE VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT

The Victorian Government has an interest in ensuring the success and effectiveness of the volunteering sector. Many Victorian Government ministerial portfolios are supported by volunteering. The Strategy should involve coordination with other Victorian Government departments and show evidence of buy in from other ministerial portfolios.

A FOCUS ON COHORTS TO ENGAGE

The Strategy will be more effective if its focus is targeted. Cohorts of focus should be identified, with an articulation of how and why these groups require priority of attention. These groups may be demographic groups such as CALD, youth, people with disability and so on. Or groups such as non-volunteers, first time volunteers, skilled volunteers, or volunteers who have not re-engaged following the COVID-19 pandemic.

INFORMED BY EVIDENCE

The State of Volunteering in Victoria (2020) Report, Australian Bureau of Statistics data and other sources of information will provide natural inputs into the strategy.

The Strategy Taskforce should have the ability to:

- » Seek inter-departmental data or guidance
- » Commission research (subject to funds)
- » Develop short reports where further research is needed.

The Strategy should be cognisant of major trends in the Victorian economy and society (e.g. demographics, employment trends, cultural factors).

Where applicable, additional market research may be required to understand the motivations and barriers of particular groups of volunteers.

CONTEMPORARY AND FUTURE FOCUSED

Models of volunteerism are changing. Many of the traditional metrics and frameworks of volunteering need to be refreshed and re-envisioned. The Strategy should anticipate these changes to help leaders of volunteers to adapt and be more effective.

The initiatives within The Strategy should incorporate elements of digital technology and innovation, while being mindful that not all members of the community have access to digital technology.

Volunteering Victoria looks forward to working with the Victorian Government and other members of the Victorian Volunteer Strategy Taskforce to ensure the success of this opportunity—for our members and the entire volunteering community.