

### **National Volunteer Week Reimagines Volunteering for the Future**

National Volunteer Week (NVW) is Australia's largest annual celebration of volunteers. From Monday 17th to Sunday 23rd May 2021, NVW will celebrate the significant contribution of Australia's almost six million volunteers dedicating 600 million hours to support their communities.

Each year, 2.3 million Victorian volunteers donate over 507 million hours to help others; however compelling new research reveals the severe and ongoing impact of COVID-19 on the sector.

According to the [State of Volunteering in Victoria Report](#), the initial COVID-19 impact in April-May 2020 saw a 50.2% decline in the volunteering participation rate, from 42.1% (2.3 million) to 21.0% (1.1 million).

"This year's National Volunteer Week theme acknowledges the importance of recognising, reconnecting and reimagining volunteering across Victoria during these times," says Scott Miller, Chief Executive of Volunteering Victoria.

At the height of the pandemic in Australia, two thirds of volunteers (66%) stopped volunteering altogether, equating to an estimated loss of 12.2 million hours per week.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly disrupted volunteerism in Victoria. We are confident the Victorian volunteering sector will recover from the effects of the pandemic after the year we have all had," adds Miller.

"We are working hard to engage with different volunteer-involving organisations and decision makers across Government to support and build an understanding of the impact of COVID-19 on volunteering and its role in the recovery process of the Victorian community," says Miller.

This National Volunteer Week (17<sup>th</sup> -23<sup>rd</sup> May), Volunteering Victoria is recognising that volunteers make our communities stronger, especially during times of need, crisis or isolation.

More information on National Volunteering Week [here](#) and #NVW2021 on Twitter and Facebook

#### **MEDIA INQUIRIES:**

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