



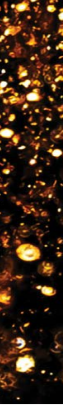
2021 Volunteering Awards

Showcase



Contents

3	Message from the Governor
4	Message from the Premier
5	Message from Minister Carbines
6	Message from the Parliamentary Secretary
7	Awards Introduction by Scott Miller
8	Awards Recipients
8	Premier's Volunteer of the Year
9	COVID-19 Resilience Award
10	COVID-19 Innovation Award
11	COVID-19 Support and Connection Award
12	Volunteering Partnership Award
13	Inclusive Volunteering Award
14	Volunteering Pathways to Skills and Inclusion Award
15	Volunteering Leadership Award
17	List of Awards Nominations



2021 Volunteering Awards Message from the Governor



As the Governor of Victoria, I am delighted to welcome you all to Government House for the 2021 Volunteering Awards – for the first time combining the Premier’s Volunteer Champion Awards and Volunteering Victoria’s State Awards.

Volunteering plays an essential role in our State. It is a pleasure to recognise the enormous contribution made by the large number of Victorians who volunteer their time to support and help others. While their generosity is always appreciated, it has been particularly inspiring and heartening, given the difficulties of the last two years.

On behalf of all Victorians, congratulations to each of the 2021 Award nominees and to today’s Award winners. We thank you – in the words of our State motto – for your contributions to Victoria’s ongoing Peace and Prosperity.

The Honourable Linda Dessau AC

Governor of Victoria

2021

Volunteering Awards

Message from the Premier



Victorians have a proud history of being there for each other.

Our volunteers and volunteer leaders across the state embody the best of who we are, and all that we do to care for each other.

Whether it's helping the most vulnerable to access support, getting people into sport, protecting our environment, culture, or promoting health and wellbeing - our volunteers shape our state and make us better and stronger.

For the first time, we bring together the Premier's Volunteer Champions Awards and Volunteering Victoria's State Awards to acknowledge and celebrate all volunteers and your extraordinary contributions.

Today as we reflect on the diverse work of volunteers across the state, I want to recognise the important role volunteers play in shaping our communities into happier, healthier, and more inclusive places to live.

On behalf of all Victorians, congratulations to the Premier's Volunteer Champion and to all the 2021 Volunteering Awards Finalists. We thank you for the work you do, your spirit and compassion in the important contributions you make to our state every day.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be 'Dan Andrews'.

Daniel Andrews MP

Premier of Victoria

2021

Volunteering Awards

Message from Minister Carbines



Volunteers are so important to Victoria's economic and social fabric. Whether it's delivering essential food relief or medical supplies, animal welfare or teaching someone to video call their loved ones, volunteers are the backbone of our communities and we say thank you.

As Minister for Disability, Ageing and Carers and Minister for Child Protection and Family Services, I am so grateful for the dedication and kindness shown by Victorian volunteers, especially throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Volunteers have rallied to give their time, energy and skills to helping Victorians stay safe and connected. This ranges from supporting people with the latest COVID-19 advice to innovative programs like online cooking classes, yoga and morning teas.

The Andrews Labor Government recognises that these efforts have made a real difference to our communities. That's why every person and organisation nominated in the 2021 Volunteering Awards should feel very proud.

Congratulations to all finalists and thank you for your ongoing commitment and generosity.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Anthony Carbines'.

Hon Anthony Carbines MP

Minister for Disability, Ageing and Carers
Minister for Child Protection and Family Services

2021 Volunteering Awards Message from the Parliamentary Secretary



As Parliamentary Secretary for Health, Carers and Volunteers I extend my thanks to Victoria's volunteers for the work they do each and every day.

Victorian volunteers have shown great collective spirit, resilience and adaptability in the face of adversity over the past two years.

The 2021 Volunteering Awards are a powerful way to recognise and say thanks to all our amazing volunteers, who provide vital support and keep Victorians well-connected.

I look forward to continuing to work with our volunteering community to create a more inclusive Victoria.

Congratulations to all the nominees and thank you for all your efforts in strengthening our communities.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large 'J' and 'B' followed by a period.

Hon Josh Bull MP

Parliamentary Secretary for Health
Parliamentary Secretary for Carers and Volunteers

Awards Introduction



The Volunteering Awards 2021 recognise and celebrate the impact volunteers, volunteer leaders and volunteer programs have in building resilient communities, services and connections across Victoria.

Showcasing excellence by individuals, teams and volunteer involving organisations throughout 2021, the awards are run by Volunteering Victoria with the support of the Victorian State Government through the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing.

The 2021 Awards combines the Premier's Volunteer Champion Awards and Volunteering Victoria's State Awards.

Despite the challenges presented by the pandemic, volunteers and volunteer involving organisations have continued to make their substantial contribution to our communities. Forty-eight Finalists across seven categories have been selected from 158 entries. The Finalists come from across Victoria, reflecting the rich diversity of volunteers, their roles and achievements.

Today's ceremony will see the announcement of winners and runners up in all seven categories:

- COVID-19 Resilience
- COVID-19 Innovation
- COVID-19 Support and Connection
- Volunteering Leadership
- Inclusive Volunteering
- Volunteering Partnerships
- Volunteering Pathways to Skills and Inclusion

The Premier's Volunteer of the Year, Dame Elisabeth Murdoch Award has been selected by the Premier from the winners of the last four categories.

On behalf of Volunteering Victoria, I congratulate all nominees and Finalists for the generosity of spirit, effort and collective impact you bring to our families, communities and State.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Scott Miller', with a horizontal line underneath.

Scott Miller

Chief Executive Officer
Volunteering Victoria

Premier's Volunteer of the Year

Dame Elisabeth Murdoch Award

Jaya Manchikanti

Jaya Manchikanti is the Founder and immediate past president of IndianCare, serving from 2013 to late 2021. IndianCare is a Victorian not-for-profit community organisation dedicated to addressing the welfare needs of people of Indian origin in Victoria, providing direct support and pathway connection in the areas of family violence, substance abuse, health, international students, social isolation, migration, education and employment, and elder abuse.

Jaya's influence and leadership have been instrumental to the Indian community during the pandemic. Serving as President in a voluntary capacity, Jaya provided leadership on all aspects of the organisation at board and operational levels. She is a community development specialist, and under her leadership IndianCare has grown from a small voluntary group to one of the largest Indian and South Asian community social welfare organisations in Australia.



IndianCare continues to create volunteering pathways for social justice impact in the Indian community in Victoria, recently partnering with Victoria University to offer placements for social students. These pathways were established by Jaya through years of advocacy and relationship building.

We commend Jaya for her truly inspiring work and congratulate her for the well-deserved accolade of Premier's Volunteer of the Year, Dame Elisabeth Murdoch Award.

COVID-19 Resilience Award

Winner

C Care

Depending on a predominantly volunteer workforce, C Care is a front-line community organisation supporting individuals and families experiencing food insecurity and social isolation. Reacting to the rapid growth in demand during the pandemic, C Care overcame the challenges posed by restrictions through implementing an extensive suite of changes to continue providing high quality service delivery. Throughout, C Care demonstrably supported their volunteers to be resilient and adapt to the changing circumstances imposed by COVID-19.



Runner-up

Uniting (Victoria and Tasmania)

Uniting believes that everyone has the right to live to their fullest potential, but there are times when individuals, families and communities find barriers in their way. For those times, Uniting is there, welcoming everyone without judgement. Forced by the pandemic to re-imagine the way it worked through its' volunteer programs, Uniting adapted quickly, finding innovative and safe ways to deliver essential services, provide food packages and continue to offer care, comfort and more to people in need.

Finalists

Bellarine Community Support Register
Phillip Island Nature Parks

Warrnambool and District Community Hospice

Wildlife Victoria
Women and Mentoring (WAM)

COVID-19 Innovation Award

Winner

Royal Women's Hospital

Founded in 1856 as a place where disadvantaged women could give birth safely and receive proper medical care, the Royal Women's Hospital is among the oldest and most distinguished women's hospitals in the world. In January 2021 the Hospital launched the Guide and Waitroom Support Volunteer Program to alleviate COVID-19 related pressures experienced by patients, their families and support people. The Program helped over 20,000 patients navigate the hospital, access their appointments whilst feeling safe, cared for and supported.



Runner-up

genU

genU comprises a group of passionate, driven people who want everyone's lives to be happier and healthier, especially people with disabilities, the ageing and those experiencing disadvantage. genU, aims to solve challenges that come along to enable each person they support live the life they choose. Facing the unprecedented challenges posed by COVID-19 genU's Office Team displayed innovation and adaptability to meet the social and emotional needs of clients partnering with hundreds of volunteers to identify service gaps and launch a highly successful new virtual volunteering platform.



Finalists

Brotherhood of St. Laurence
Court Network

Diabetes Victoria – Peer
Support Program

Little Dreamers Australia
Mount Burnett Observatory

COVID-19 Support and Connection Award

Winner

Very Special Kids

Very Special Kids provides specialist palliative care for children and young people and tailored support for their families, through life, death and bereavement. In the absence in-person events, Very Special Kids turned to a range of innovative activities to continue supporting and connecting their volunteers, resulting in the volunteer cohort growing by 39% in 2021. Very Special Kids has expanded the reach of their volunteer service delivery, notably to regional-rural volunteers, fostering opportunities to assist Victorian families in need of paediatric palliative care support.



Runner-up

Seabreeze Quilters

Seabreeze Quilters are a community-based quilting group that meet monthly at the Altona Meadows Library and Learning Centre. Members support the community through the provision of care packages for victims of family violence and quilts for children. The group supports many charities in their local area and ran virtual events to keep members connected to one another during the pandemic. In the lead-up to last Christmas, members created over 450 handmade gifts for the 165 recipients of Meals on Wheels in Hobsons Bay.

Finalists

Ardoch

Griefline

Lort Smith Animal Hospital

Road Trauma Support Services Victoria

Scouts Victoria

Volunteering Partnerships Award

Winner

Parks Victoria, AMES and Sikh Partnership

An association that formed at the height of COVID-19 restrictions, the Parks Victoria, AMES and Sikh Partnership has demonstrated innovative thinking to provide over 4,000 kilograms of vegetables to community kitchens across the Wyndham municipality. The program has now become an annual feature of the formal gardens at Werribee Park and has also been adopted by the South Sudanese Womens Group alongside Karen and Sikh community members to produce fresh vegetables for food relief.



Runner-up

Sally Dusting-Laird

Sally, a former journalist, is the co-ordinator of Volunteer for Knox Resource Centre. In that role Sally manages the Community Space at Westfield Knox City Shopping Centre, an initiative for community groups to promote volunteering and showcase what they do best. The space is provided rent free by Westfield and through this partnership the Knox Resource Centre has connected with over 300 volunteer involving organisations and hosted around 2000 events.

Finalists

Benjy Orwin

Northern Health

Michelle Stacey

Volunteering Geelong

Inclusive Volunteering Award

Winner

Bassir Qadiri

A volunteer since 2009, Bassir has worked with various Victorian community organisations, including the Bakhtar Community organisation. Bassir has worked tirelessly with all Afghan ethnicities by offering food relief, support to homeless people, people living with disability, victims of domestic violence, seniors and refugees. Since the fall of Afghanistan, Bassir is involved in the resettlement program coordinating the provision of clothes, furniture and food relief to refugees.



Runner-up

Peter T Ryan

Peter played an instrumental role in the set-up, development and growth of the Victorian Football Integration Development Association (FIDA), as President for 23 years. FIDA is a football competition for players with an intellectual disability, comprising 28 clubs and 800 players. Peter is passionate about volunteering and has had a sustained and substantial impact for people with an intellectual disability wanting to play the sport they love.

Finalists

Emily Unity
Harpreet Kandra

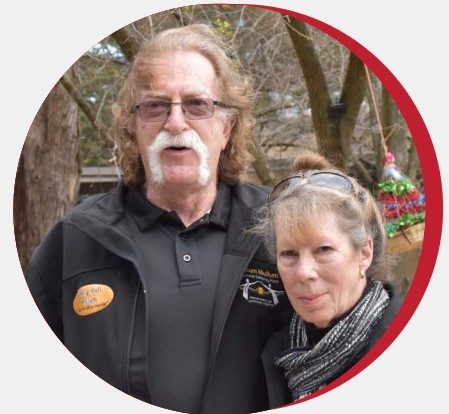
Jesse Argent
Patrick Taylor

Volunteering Pathways to Skills and Inclusion Award

Winner

Chris and Heather Cosgriff

As a husband-and-wife team Chris and Heather has dedicated over 10 years supporting the Mullum Mullum Indigenous Gathering Place, an Aboriginal Community controlled organisation. One of their most significant contributions has been to help build and sustain the food relief program Mullum Pantry which has been running for 7 years. They have also volunteered over many years to Lilydale SES, RoadSafe Yarra Ranges, Metropolitan Education Centre, Blackburn English Language School, Coranderrk Festival Committee and the Communities Council on Ethnic Issues Eastern Region.



Runner-up

Maureen Leahy

Maureen Leahy is an inspired advocate for community hubs, working with the people of Broadmeadows for over 44 years. Maureen has established a strongly recognised and successful volunteering program as Hub leader at Meadows Primary School. She has helped hundreds of individuals get an opportunity to become actively involved in the community, utilise their skills and follow their ambitions. Maureen's understanding and connection with diverse communities has made a strong impact on the results of her volunteering program.

Finalists

Charitha Dissanayake
Fiona Nicholls

Merrin Butler
Shishir Pandit

Volunteering Leadership Award

Winner

Jaya Manchikanti

Jaya led, in a voluntary capacity, the establishment of IndianCare, an organisation addressing the welfare needs of the diverse, growing Indian community in Victoria. Utilising a strengths-based community development approach, Jaya led her fellow board members, staff and volunteers to address a broad range of welfare issues. Jaya's influence and leadership were instrumental to the Indian community throughout the pandemic, ensuring there was tailored, in-language, culturally specific support. Under her leadership IndianCare grew from a small voluntary group to one of the largest Indian and South Asian community welfare organisations in Australia.



Runner-up

Graeme Stockton

Graeme has volunteered thousands of hours to conservation groups and individuals across the Surfcoast region. A foundation member of Surfers Appreciating the Natural Environment (SANE) he formed the Surf Coast Energy Group in 2007. Both organisations focus on environmental volunteering, involving the local community in tackling climate change and addressing sustainability issues. Graeme is an active advocate in the community and with local, state and federal governments. As a result of his advocacy, the Surf Coast Energy Group secured \$10,000,000.00 for a sustainable energy program in the Corangamite region.



Finalists

Bartlomiej Kolodziejczyk
Belle Wen Xian Lim

Erin Smith
Jamuna Parajuli

Kellie Ann Wishart
Susan Webster

Commendation

Benjy Orwin

Although a Finalist in another category, the judging panel commends the volunteer leadership shown by Benjy Orwin, the youngest person to be shortlisted. In 2018 at just 8 years of age Benjy was motivated to start the charity Socks 4 Support, which has donated 26,500 pairs of socks to people in need, including the homeless, people suffering domestic violence and substance abuse. Benjy has demonstrated inspirational leadership that belies his years.



Awards Nominations

We would like to acknowledge and thank all nominees for their passion, dedication and commitment to their community.

Individual Awards Nominations

Adam Cain Kent	Farhad Sharif	Lillie Giang
Alice Ho (Minh Han)	Gary Caddy	Liz Tektonopoulos
Amy Churchouse	Gary Cantwell	Mannie Kaur Verma
Andrew Piddington	George Haitidis	Margaret Roberts
Ange Liston-McCaughley	Glenn Wilson	Mary Burgess
Avraham Adelst	Harpreet Kandra	Matthew Segal
Banna Hanna	Helen Barber	Michael Tian
Betty Williams OAM	Jessica Hooper	Naomi Jane Campbell
Bill Sheahan	Jessica Nashed	Paul O'Dwyer
Caragh Palmer	Jo Peake	Rachel Glasic
Chris and Heather Cosgriff	Joanne Farguson	Renea Johnson
Chris May	Joanne Knight	Richard Davis and John Millard
Chuentat Kang	John Gibbons	Robert Koller
Cynthia Furby	John Kostoulis	Sam Atukorala
David Taylor	John Stevenson	Samual Harrison
Deepak Vinayak OAM JP	Julie D'Amore	Sandra Davies
Donald Cooper	Kathryn (Kaye) Rodden	Seng Doi
Dr Emma Sherry	Kelly Warren	Susan Brunskill
Dr Jon and Mrs Sue Stebbins	Kerry Landman	Susan Harraway
Dr Ponniah Anandajayasekeram	Klaus Jungling	Thaadshayini Angelina Jeyarajah
Dur Aschna	Lenise Thorne	Zrinka Sagor
Emily Learey	Leonie Wilson	

Organisations Awards Nominations

300 Blankets
Asylum Seeker Resource Centre
Australian Red Cross - Emergency Services Victoria Capability & Capacity Team
Brimbank City Council
Cafs (Child & Family Services Ballarat) Thread Together Hub
Caladenia Dementia Care
Central Victorian Community Broadcasters Inc (Phoenix FM)
City of Whittlesea - Delivered Meals
Connect Health & Community
Cook Island Community Services of Victoria
Diverse Communities & Social Services (DCSS Australia)
Foodbank Victoria
Forever Friends Animal Rescue Inc
GJS Intellectual Company Australia
Goulburn Valley Pride, Out In the Open Festival
Latrobe Regional Hospital
Life Saving Victoria
MannaCare
Melbourne AMEP Volunteer Tutor Scheme
Mornington Peninsula Shire
Newport Calisthenic Club Incorporated
Office of the Public Advocate
Olivia's Place
Palliative Care South East
Red Cross Emergency Services Victoria
Royal Flying Doctor Service Victoria - Flying Doctor Community Transport
RSPCA Victoria
St John Ambulance Victoria
The Water Well Project
U3A Network Victoria
Vic.Talk Inc
Victoria State Emergency Service
VicWISE INC
Western Health
Zoe Support Australia

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