

Response to SV2030: A Decade of Action Volunteering Victoria

Sustainability Victoria recently released SV2030: A decade of action, their strategic plan for sustainability in Victoria over the next decade. The vision of SV2030 is for Victoria to transition to a circular, climate resilient, clean economy. We commend Sustainability Victoria on an ambitious strategy and specifically the focus on harnessing the power of community action to achieve its goals.

Volunteering Victoria made a [submission to the consultation on SV2030](#) outlining the key role that volunteering plays in working towards a sustainable future for Victoria. Volunteering intersects with multiple aspects of the strategy including its identified resources and focus areas. Most importantly, volunteering is aligned with the strategic vision and aims of SV2030 by inherently fostering connection, and offering unique opportunities for collaboration, partnership, and investment. We are therefore disappointed to note the absence of volunteering in SV2030.

Volunteering and a Sustainable Victoria

Victoria's volunteers are already heavily involved in action on environment, climate change, and sustainability. With investment, these efforts can be supported and strengthened, and the reach of volunteering expanded.

In [Volunteering Naturally](#), the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning has identified that volunteers are an essential part of the environment and sustainability workforce and programs, with more than 100,000 volunteers currently volunteering in and for sustainability initiatives. This is reflected in our [membership](#), which includes many volunteer organisations involved in sustainability and circular economy initiatives.

One of the three key focus areas of SV2030 is Community Action. As discussed in our submission, this focus area inherently involves individuals and communities volunteering their time for collective action in sustainability groups, programs, and activities. Indeed, volunteering is community action.

Yet, SV2030 does not overtly mention the role of volunteering or the way in which volunteering aligns with and promotes the objectives of the strategy. This is a missed opportunity to promote, grow and harness the invaluable contribution that volunteers make to future sustainability and climate resilience in Victoria.

Future opportunities

Volunteers give their time for free, however volunteering does not happen on its own or without planning and resourcing. With the steady decline in volunteering rates over the last decade, the contribution of volunteers can no longer be taken for granted. Sustainability Victoria has a unique





opportunity to provide leadership and initiative in acknowledging the value of volunteering, particularly as it relates to its strategic objectives.

Embedding the role of volunteering in SV2030 would ensure it is recognised, considered, and resourced in the planning of initiatives and activities. It would also pave the way for partnerships and collaboration with the volunteering communities. Volunteering Victoria is excited at the opportunity to work in partnership with Sustainability Victoria to ensure the role of volunteering is considered and prioritised in strategy, workforce planning and program design. We encourage Sustainability Victoria to take up this opportunity to more effectively meet its goal for a sustainable future for all Victorians.



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