



**2023**

# Volunteering Awards

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Winners Showcase





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# 2023 Volunteering Awards

## Message from the Governor

It was a pleasure to welcome you all to Government House for the 2023 Volunteering Awards. First presented in 2021, these awards recognise the work of altruistic Victorians.

This year, volunteers have continued to play an important role in the Victorian community. The causes to which they've given their time are as diverse as the people that call this State home.

Whether caring for flood victims, protecting our wildlife or supporting Victorians experiencing homelessness, each volunteer has made this State a better and more compassionate place to live.

We see the positive impact their work has in our metropolitan cities and regional areas. On behalf of all Victorians, I'd like to thank them for giving back to their community.

Congratulations to this year's nominees and award winners. We look forward to seeing what each of you do next!



**Professor the Hon. Margaret Gardner AC**  
Governor of Victoria



# 2023 Volunteering Awards

## Message from the Premier

Victorians are known for their compassion and kindness.

Our annual Volunteering Awards celebrate that kindness – recognising the commitment of our state's tireless volunteers.

This year, the Victorian Volunteering Awards saw 422 nominations across eight award categories. Each and every one of you has made an invaluable contribution to your community – and to our state.

As Premier of Victoria, it's an honour to help recognise your efforts. I'd like to congratulate all the 2023 Victorian Volunteering Awards nominees, finalists and winners.

And whether you've been volunteering for years or you're at the start of your journey – thank you.

You make our state better, fairer, kinder and more connected.

We're lucky to have you.



**The Hon. Jacinta Allan MP**  
Premier of Victoria



# 2023 Volunteering Awards

## Message from the Minister

Volunteers contribute so much to our state.

The Volunteering Awards are an opportunity to recognise their generosity and care, which helps to build resilient and inclusive communities.

The quality of applications received for this round of the Volunteering Awards speaks to the dedication of all the volunteers around the state. From providing fresh fruit and vegetables to people in need, to offering wigs to people who have lost their hair due to medical conditions or treatments, this year's nominees are proof that there are so many ways to volunteer and make a meaningful impact in the community.

As Minister for Carers and Volunteers, I am proud that the Allan Labor Government recognises the efforts of volunteers and the positive difference they make across Victoria. I am pleased to acknowledge the finalists' commitment to supporting communities across Victoria at the 2023 Volunteering Awards.

Congratulations to all the finalists and winners, and to all of Victoria's volunteers, thank you for dedicating your time and skills to help others.



A blue ink signature of Ros Spence, written in a cursive style.

**The Hon. Ros Spence MP**  
Minister for Carers and Volunteers



# 2023 Volunteering Awards

## Introduction

The Victorian Volunteering Awards formally recognise, celebrate and thank volunteers and volunteer-involving organisations for their extraordinary and selfless contributions to Victorian people, communities, culture and environment.

Showcasing excellence by individuals, teams and organisations throughout 2023, the Awards are run by Volunteering Victoria with the support of the Victorian State Government.

The ceremony at Government House saw the announcement of winners in all eight categories:

### Organisation Awards:

- Inclusive Volunteering
- Volunteering Innovation
- Volunteering Partnerships
- Grassroots Volunteering

### Individual Awards:

- Young Volunteer
- Volunteer Impact
- Volunteer Leadership
- Volunteer Commitment

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

The Premier's Organisation of the Year, Volunteering Excellence Award was selected by the Premier from the winners of the four organisation categories.

On behalf of Volunteering Victoria, I congratulate all nominees and finalists for their valuable contributions in building inclusive, thriving communities across our state.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Geoff Sharp'.

**Geoff Sharp**  
CEO, Volunteering Victoria



# Premier's Volunteer of the Year Dame Elisabeth Murdoch Award

## CAITLIN GRIGSBY

Caitlin is the President of Gippsland Pride Initiative (GPI), a volunteer-led organisation working to provide visibility, engagement, awareness and celebration to the LGBTQIA+ community.

Under Caitlin's stewardship, Gippsland now has a thriving LGBTQIA+ organisation linking vulnerable people across the region to essential information, services and support.

As a leader, Caitlin uses her strengths and connections to work with local government and corporates to ensure that matters of inclusion are not just seen as community issues.

Whether it be in a corporate boardroom, a national conference, or a trestle at a local festival, she has an ability to provide simple solutions to what may seem complex problems, whilst making everyone feel heard and validated.

Caitlin's tenacity is unsurpassed, and her hard fought and high impact wins have only been delivered because of this persistence.

As President of the Gippsland Ranges Roller Derby, Caitlin organised the inaugural Pride Cup Roller Derby and Pride Gala, now one of the most well-known and well attended queer events in the Victorian queer calendar.

Caitlin also co-authored and coordinated the 'Rainbow Brick Road Report' which captures data from LGBTIQ Gippslanders to help inform decision-makers and inform GPI's recommendations.



*"I pay my respect, thanks and overwhelming lifelong gratitude to the folks who walked before me and created paths for LGBT+ people to organise, connect and build structures for ourselves in a world that doesn't always want us. This is not a path I've travelled alone... and I'm very grateful for this acknowledgement." - Caitlin Grigsby*



# Premier's Organisation of the Year Volunteering Excellence Award

## WOOR-DUNGIN

**Woor-Dungin Inc. is a not-for-profit organisation powered by volunteers, walking alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples toward self-determination.**

Meaning 'share' in the language of the Gonnai people of south-eastern Victoria, Woor-Dungin prides itself on fostering long-term relationships with communities. Their unique model focuses on facilitating culturally respectful connections with donors and pro bono supporters and nurturing the growth of vital networks and skills.

Through this collaborative approach, Woor-Dungin empowers individuals and communities to achieve collective milestones far beyond what they could on their own.

The impact of Woor-Dungin's endeavors is profound and far-reaching. Their initiatives have unlocked new funding avenues for partners, propelled communities forward, and even catalysed legislative reforms.

Notably, Woor-Dungin's pivotal role in driving social and legislative change is exemplified by its instrumental involvement in the establishment of Victoria's Spent Convictions Scheme in 2021, through their work on the Criminal Records Discrimination Program.

Central to these achievements is the unwavering dedication of its volunteer workforce, contributing an invaluable 2,000 hours annually to the organisation's mission.

The passion and commitment of Woor-Dungin's core team of five volunteers has not only ensured the organisation's resilience, but also revitalised its award-winning Aboriginal Partnerships Program.



**WOOR-DUNGIN**  
Partnerships for self-determination  
Decolonising | Empowering | Building relationships

*"Our volunteers are so important to all the work that we do... They create lasting partnerships with the people they work with. Those relationships have such a huge impact [through] the solid bond they've created with the First Nations communities and traditional owners in Victoria." - Shaun Middlebrook, CEO of Woor-Dungin*



# Inclusive Volunteering Award Winner

## WELLSPRINGS FOR WOMEN

**Wellsprings for Women provides safe, welcoming places and services that enable women to thrive.**

Its programs focus on building skills and capacity for migrant and refugee women, improving social, economic and emotional wellbeing through education, family violence prevention, and housing and employment support.

The diversity of Wellsprings' participants provides a richness of experience, but also the need for highly tailored grassroots solutions, grounded in culturally responsive lived experience. Wellsprings prides itself on its co-design processes with migrant and refugee women.



**Robyn Erwin**  
General Manager, Wellsprings for Women

**Finalists:** Afri-Aus Care    Blind Sports & Recreation Victoria    Deafblind Victoria    Port Phillip EcoCentre



# Volunteering Innovation Award

## Winner

### ASSOCIATION FOR CHILDREN WITH A DISABILITY

Association for Children with a Disability (ACD) is the Victorian advocacy service for children with disability (from birth to 18 years) and their families.

Recognising the influence of peer support in disability communities, ACD established its Community Champions volunteer program in 2021. Volunteers are parents of children with a range of disabilities across Victoria.

Volunteers share ACD's free information and resources with families of children with disability in their communities, share their personal experiences, and assist with ACD's advocacy work.



**Karen Dimmock**  
CEO, Association for Children with a Disability

**Finalists:** Bendigo Health   Epworth HealthCare   GoodCompany Foundation   Puffing Billy Railway   Warrnambool Community Garden



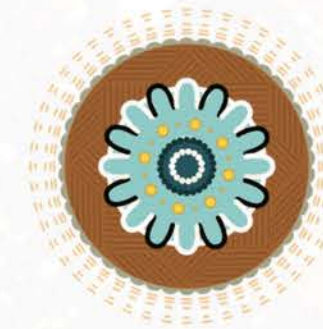
# Volunteering Partnerships Award Winner

## WOOR-DUNGIN

**Woor-Dungin is a not-for-profit organisation walking alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples toward self-determination.**

Woor-Dungin was established to support Victorian Aboriginal organisations in obtaining resources to advance important community projects. Its unique model involves consulting with Aboriginal partners about their needs and facilitating enduring partnerships between philanthropic bodies, pro-bono corporations and Aboriginal community-controlled organisations.

Woor-Dungin's major achievements in driving social and legislative change have been enabled by its skilled and committed volunteer workforce, who contribute over 2,000 hours per year.



**WOOR-DUNGIN**  
Partnerships for self-determination  
Decolonising | Empowering | Building relationships



**Shaun Middlebrook**  
CEO, Woor-Dungin

**Finalists:** Ardoch IPC Health Royal Flying Doctor Service Victoria Standing Tall In Hamilton Volunteer For Knox



# Grassroots Volunteering Award

## Winner

### PARKANDO

**ParKanDo is a peer support organisation, driven by four dedicated volunteers with personal experience of Parkinson's: Carmel, Mimi, Pam, and Peter.**

Tailored according to member preferences and through partnership with external providers, ParKanDo delivers diverse initiatives, offering emotional and social support, education, and shared information to individuals with Parkinson's, their families, and caregivers.

Established just three years ago, the committee's commitment and dedication has seen the organisation become one of the largest of its type within Victoria.



**Peter Wall**  
Co-Leader, ParKanDo

#### Finalists:

Asian Australian Volunteers  
BloodBikes Australia

Community Support Knox, Yarra Ranges and Surrounds  
Mornington Botanical Rose Gardens

Pakenham Eels Rugby League Club and Touch Association  
Positive Attitude Inc



# Young Volunteer Award Winner

## BENJY ORWIN

Benjy is a 14 year old Grade 9 student, who at 8 years of age started his own charity to help the homeless.

Socks 4 Support started out as a project to help keep those living on the streets warm.

Through Benjy's dedication, the charity has grown significantly and now donates socks to people affected by varying forms of abuse, poverty, and natural disasters worldwide.

Benjy has donated over 44,000 pairs of socks in the past 6 years, using this platform to encourage other young adults to stand up and make a difference.



**Finalists:** Amy Gregorovich Eliza Scott Gideon Stein Holly Briggs Joshua Wright Maya Pinn Trang Nguyen



# Volunteer Impact Award Winner

## JEAN BOHMER

**With over 70 years of dedicated volunteer service, Jean has demonstrated a lifelong commitment to supporting her community.**

She has made significant contributions across diverse areas and organisations such as Lifeline, St John Ambulance, and Radio for the Print Handicapped.

For the past 24 years, she has volunteered with Melbourne City Mission in the Palliative Care area, supporting carers with home and hospital visits. As part of the Bereavement team, Jean finds profound meaning and purpose in being trusted with compelling end of life stories.



**Finalists:**    Alix Carson    Grace Buschgens    Molina Asthana    Pat O'Donnell    Tienyi Long



# Volunteer Leadership Award

## Winner

### CAITLIN GRIGSBY

Caitlin has been a passionate community leader for over half her life, co-founding Gippsland Pride Initiative (GPI); a volunteer-led LGBTQIA+ organisation.

As President of Gippsland Ranges Roller Derby, she pioneered the first Australian Roller Derby 'Pride Cup' and the Gippsland Pride Gala, now a premier queer event in the Victorian calendar.

Since its incorporation in 2019, GPI has produced valuable LGBTQIA+ insights through the 'Rainbow Brick Road' Project and Report, hosted multiple sell-out Pride Galas, and orchestrated 150+ community activations across 6 regions.



**Finalists:** Ian Bodycoat   Roger Paterson   Ros Thurrowgood   Rufina Chan JP   Tea-Rose Passon



# Volunteer Commitment Award

## Winner

### TONY DAVIS

**A dedicated figure in the sporting community, Tony's commitment to volunteering spans over five decades.**

As a founding member of Kyneton Little Athletics, he has been a steadfast volunteer every Saturday morning for 53 years, holding roles such as Secretary, starter, line marker, and representative at regional and state conferences.

His humble and kind demeanour, coupled with unwavering dedication, has played a pivotal role in fostering the growth and success of Kyneton Little Athletics, where he continues to make a lasting impact at the age of 83.



**Finalists:** David Jefferies Lou Baulsom Peter Narandja Poh Chee Lim Raju Adhikari Rosita Fernandes Timothy Chiu



# 2023 Volunteering Awards - Nominations

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

## Individual Awards Nominations

Adam Guardabascio	Bailey Mercieca	Bruce Tripptree	Cynthia Knight	Emma Atkinson
Adrian Bertolini	Barbara Birthisel	Caitlin Grigsby	David Bracka	Eugenia Kaminskyj
Alan Samuel OAM JP	Barry Randall	Carl Zabilowicz	David Castles	Faith Griffiths
Alejandra Catania	Beatrice Head	Carol Gordon	David Fairclough	Fay Brown
Alfred Kumar	Ben Montgomery	Carole Wagner	David Gorman	Fiona Threlfall
Alice Ho	Benita Pippas	Caroline Rutherford	David Jefferies	Frances Brown
Alix Carson	Benjy Orwin	Catrina Moleta	Debbie Phelan	Frances Emerson
Alma Gill	Bernadette Murray	Charlotte Davitt	Debra McGregor	Gail Kavanagh
Amanda Green	Bev Carman	Ching Ying Lee	Deepak Vinayak OAM	Gary Marsden
Amy Gregorovich	Bhakta Bahadur Bhattarai	Chris Collingwood	Denise Palmer	Gavin Choong
Anil Kolanukonda	Bill Hallas	Christine Pow	Diane Dymond	Geoff Scown
Ann Taafe	Bing Du	Christine Segart	Diem Le	Gideon Stein
Anne Cherny	Bob Clark	Christine Summers	Donna Levinson-Murray	Gina Poulos
Anne Jenkinson	Brian Bell	Christopher Lee	Elaine Smith	Glenys Brennan
Annette Hong	Brooke Jensen	Claire Cogan	Eliza Scott	Grace Buschgens
Anthony Hahn	Brooke Parsons	Claire Pierce	Elizabeth (Lisa) Lionnet-Swann	Grace Chan
Anthony Scolyer	Bruce Boddington	Clare Drew	Elizabeth Davidson	Grace Pierce
Ayana Lokhandwala	Bruce Knight	Colin Richards	Elvis Martin	Graeme Bird



## Individual Awards Nominations (cont.)

Graham O'Rourke	James Howden	John Eldridge	Laurie Barton	Matthew Hornbuckle
Greg Parsons	Jane Fletcher-Evans	John Gipps	Laurie Hill	Maya Pinn
Hannah Eisen	Jason Paul Cox	John Kostoulas	Leonie Cavagna	Melissa Masutti
Hans Wright	Jay de Graaff	John Koutras	Lin Le Becher	Michael Melton
Hanwellage Don Karishma	Jazmyn Walkin	John Teesdale	Lina Orozco Munera	Michael Prior
Aashcharya	Jean Bohmer	Jordan Wilkinson	Linda McKay	Michele Shadforth
Harley Burastero	Jeanette Williams	Joshua Wright	Linny Kimly Phuong	Michelle La-Brooy
Haroon Sayed	Jenny Norvick	Joy Lummis	Liz Bullen	Mike Lescai
Harry Gibcus	Jessica Hooper	Judy Davies	Lou Baulsom	Mila Lazarovski
Harry Gibcus	Jill French	Judy Stanton	Lucas Yong	Mohini Ghaisas
Helen Bertuna	Jill O'Neil	Judy Wookey	Lydie Pradier	Molina Asthana
Helen Gibson	Jim Woods	Julia Ford	Lynese Goldie	Mona Hanna
Helen van den Berg	Jo Stewart	Julie Ballard	Lynette Hendry	Monica Long
Helen Yorston	Joanna White	Justice Graham	Magda Lane	Monique Loughnan
Himaka Gunasinghe	Joanne Delaney	Kaye Caulfield	Mahdi Sudi	Muneet Narang
Holly Briggs	Jill French	Kayla Manning	Mal Sadat	Muneet Narang
Hung Yu	Jill O'Neil	Keeley Johnson	Malcolm Padgett	Murray Bennett
Ian Bodycoat	Jim Woods	Kelly Harris	Margaret Anderson	Murray Gilbert
Ian Doug Ashton	Jo Stewart	Ken Millar	Margaret Bevan	Nada Sied
Ian Ray	Joanna White	Kerrigan Jr La-Brooy	Margaret Fleming	Natalie Back
Irene Norman	Joanne Delaney	Kevin Smart	Margaret Maxwell	Natalie Rabey
Isabella Cidoni	Joe Mercieca	Kim Upston	Margaret Panetta	Neal Grubb
Jack Gilchrist	Joey Sol Santos	Kirsten Campbell	Maria Pires-Armstrong	Neal Taylor
Jackie Somerville	John Bolger	Kris Parker	Marie Bonne	Neil Power
James Cameron	John Burrows	Larisa Wasiljew	Mary McBride	Neville Page



## Individual Awards Nominations (cont.)

Nic Hanna	Robert Porrino	Sharla Eddleston	Warwick Remington
Nick Strang	Roberta Orton	Shashi Kochhar	Wayne Scanlon
Nizam Jazeer Nijamudeen	Roger Paterson	Sheeza Shakeel	Wendy Eldridge
Norman Swanson	Romi Lerner	Stephanie D'Elia	Wendy van Horssen
Pat Griffith	Roni Dattani	Steve Charman	William Nadudvari
Pat O'Donnell	Ros Thurrowgood	Steve Lansell	Xiaojun Vicky Chen
Paul Bilson	Rosita Fernandes	Tamara Shepherd	Ying Hua Gavin Choong
Paul Burgin	Rubina Shaheen Nawabi	Tammy Nguyen	Yvonne Pilley
Paul Pritchard	Rufina Chan JP	Tea-Rose Passon	Zofia Sztendur
Peter Bellion	Russell Jaffe	Terence Hall JP	
Peter Johnson	Russell Williamson	Terry McNamara	
Peter Narandja	Ryan Grieve	Terry Norris	
Peter Sank	Ryan Jay Lawas	Thomas Hickey	
Peter Sutton	Sahar Ageed	Tienyi Long	
Philippa Cadman	Sajith Khan	Timothy Chiu	
Poh Chee Lim	Sally Conning	Tina Brunet	
Quyen Nguyen	Sandhya Rani Maganti	Tina Naughton	
Rachelle Mechielsen	Sandy Burton	Tony Davis	
Raju Adhikari	Sarah Cooke	Tracey Gaffney	
Rebecca Chang	Savio Nguyen	Trang Hang Nguyen	
Reese Addlem	Sayuni Kalubowila	Trini Espinosa Abascal	
Renee Mascurine	Scott Balestra	Tyler Bartley	
Richard Dorrstein	Serap Siper	Una Faux	
Ricky Baldwin	Severin During	Vasalia Govender	
Robert Morey	Shalini Kumar	Vinh Quang Luong	



## Organisation Awards Nominations

Association for Children with a Disability  
Australian Multicultural Community Services  
Australian Multicultural Theatre Association  
AVA Boroondara Senior Citizens  
Ballarat Foundation  
Beyond Disability Inc  
Brainwave Australia  
Bundoora Football Netball Club  
Castlemaine Community House  
Central Bayside Community Health Service  
Centre for Participation  
CHAILIS  
Chevra Hatzolah Melbourne  
COOK4CALD  
Darebin City Council  
Department of Energy, Environment & Climate Action  
DPV Health  
Duke Street Community House  
Eastern Palliative Care Association  
Epworth HealthCare  
Flemington Kensington News  
Football Integration Development Association

Footscray United Rangers Football Club  
Gethsemane Charity  
Greenlink Box Hill  
Health In Focus  
Katamatite Lions Club  
Keep Australia Beautiful Victoria  
Mathshub Melbourne  
Melbourne AMEP Volunteer Tutor Scheme  
Melbourne KMCC  
Melton Baptist Church - Op Shop  
Mornington Peninsula Shire  
Nagambie Rowing Club  
Neighbourhood Watch Tarneit Central  
Not-For-Profit Charity Community Consultants (NCCC)  
Operation Soul Surf  
Oxfam Australia  
Parks Victoria  
Phillip Island Boardriders Club  
Pinarc Disability Support  
Port Melbourne Life Saving Club  
Portsea Surf Life Saving Club  
Rehmat Sandhu Foundation

Reynard Street Neighbourhood House  
Rotary Inner Melbourne Emergency Relief Network  
Sailability Bendigo  
Seabreeze Quilters  
Second Chance Animal Rescue  
South West Sport Assembly  
St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne  
Stonnington Toy Library  
Strive Student Health Initiative  
Sunbury Ladies Badminton Club  
Sunbury Neighbourhood Kitchen  
The Y Ballarat  
TPI Victoria Inc  
Vietnamese Museum Australia  
ViệtSpeak  
Whittlesea City Salvos  
Woor-Dungin  
Wyndham Park Community Centre  
Zoos Victoria