

Volunteer Experience Crucial for Students and Graduates



- **Three-quarters of hiring managers view volunteering experience as an advantage in a job interview**
- **A third of those aged 40-54 volunteer through an organisation compared to one in five aged 15-24**
- **This National Student Volunteer Week (7-13 August), Student Advocates around the country are encouraging fellow students to attend events on campus to try volunteering opportunities that suit them**

Whilst employment rates are historically high¹, students without experience still need to stand out from more seasoned candidates. One study suggests that three-quarters (75%) of hiring managers agree having volunteering experience is an advantage in a job interview².

In fact, up to 85% of employers believe volunteering is just as credible as paid work, with the majority (92%) of employers even saying that relevant volunteering experience gives a candidate an edge in an interview³.

While a third (31%) of individuals between the ages of 40 and 54 contribute their time volunteering through organisations, the participation drops significantly for the younger demographic, with only one in five (19%) of those aged 15 to 24 years choosing to volunteer in a similar manner. Further, the volunteering sector has seen a significant loss of 147 million volunteer hours between 2014 and 2019⁴.

Historically, the perception of volunteering has been synonymous with inflexible commitment. However, as the world has evolved, so too have the opportunities for volunteering becoming more adaptable, offering single assignments, online tasks, and skill-based projects across every sector.

Hosted by Volunteering Queensland, **National Student Volunteer Week 2023** (#NSVW23) is a celebration of student volunteers and an avenue to inspire volunteerism among students and young people across Australia.

Student Advocate, Prudence Ashwell from Queensland University of Technology has volunteered herself and is passionate about motivating her peers to get involved with volunteering opportunities on and off campus.

“Volunteering in media and communications has given me so much, so I’m excited to spread the word and sell the personal and professional benefits of volunteering. I know my experience will give me a competitive edge when applying for jobs in the future, but it has also boosted my confidence tremendously and I’ve met so many new people.

¹ <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia/latest-release>

² https://seekvolau.s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/files/SEEK+Volunteer+PVW_Research+Summary_final.pdf

³ <https://www.seek.com.au/career-advice/article/3-reasons-volunteering-can-put-you-ahead-of-the-pack>

⁴ <https://volunteeringstrategy.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Volunteering-in-Australia-2022-The-Volunteer-Perspective.pdf> ABS(2020)

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“Students can get involved with volunteering in so many ways that can be flexible around study and work commitments. I’d encourage people to choose a cause or industry that they believe in and are passionate about so that they get personal fulfilment from it and enjoy it,” says Prue.

This year’s theme, “*Give. Grow. Belong.*”, taps into a generation who are more socially conscious than ever before.

Volunteering Queensland co-ordinates the event, with **CEO Mara Basanovic**, saying, “NSVW seeks currently enrolled students aged 16 and over who are passionate about making a difference in the world.”

“National Student Volunteer Week is about students engaging with fellow students from all backgrounds to volunteer, showing the range of different opportunities for students both on and off campus.”

“We invite all education providers, volunteer organisations and students across the country to take part in National Student Volunteer Week,” says Mara.

During National Student Volunteer Week, institutions, youth organisations, and volunteer-based organisations across the nation will host events to promote, acknowledge and appreciate their student volunteers.

If you are a student and want to take it one step further and become a Student Advocate on your campus or school, register at volunteeringqld.org.au/nsvw-student-advocate-application.

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About National Student Volunteer Week

Coordinated and delivered nationally by Volunteering Queensland since 2013 and supported by Volunteering Australia and all State and Territory Peak volunteering bodies, National Student Volunteer Week 2023 (#NSVW23) acknowledges and celebrates student volunteers and promotes volunteering to students and young people across Australia.

National Student Volunteer Week gives students the opportunity to lead others in connecting to their community and offering kindness. Students are provided with the chance to explore the personal and professional benefits of volunteering, which include valuable work experience, enhanced feelings of self-worth, refinement of values, increased understanding of people, local and global issues, and reduced social isolation. NSVW also recognises the significant skills, ideas, enthusiasm, creativity, and time that young people contribute through volunteering.

This year’s theme is “*Give. Grow. Belong*”

Give: share your time, skill or talent in any way you can.

Grow: realise that personal well-being comes from giving to others.

Belong: doing something together forges deep connection.

About Volunteering Queensland



Volunteering Queensland is the state peak body solely dedicated to advancing volunteering for the economic, social, cultural & environmental well-being of Queensland.