

# Annual Report

# 2024



**volunteering**  
queensland





# Mara Basanovic

(CEO 2016-2024)

At the end of yet another busy year for Volunteering Queensland, CEO Mara Basanovic was farewelled in June to a well-deserved retirement. For over eight years, Mara has been a passionate advocate at the helm of Volunteering Queensland, navigating through significant transformation and change. Her substantial impact included the transition to a strong, positive fiscal position and multiple strategic, operational, and technological advancements. Previously the CEO of Volunteering Western Australia, Mara has made her mark nationally across the sector.

Mara successfully rebranded and repositioned Volunteering Queensland to advance its role as a respected peak body for volunteering. She has worked to unite Queensland's volunteering sector and build volunteering through good volunteer management practice. Mara has been pivotal in implementing many innovative programs promoting equity and inclusion as well as sector and broader community capacity and capability building.

Notably, Mara led Volunteering Queensland's Emergency Volunteering CREW and Care Army response through the management of numerous devastating disasters and the COVID-19 pandemic. A focus of her leadership has been the reinvigoration and valuing of volunteering at a time of challenge and decline in volunteer participation rates. Her leadership has positioned Volunteering Queensland as a dynamic and innovative organisation. She leaves a huge legacy and will be greatly missed. We thank her for her hard work, dedication, and perseverance. Her retirement plans, naturally, include engaging in local volunteering opportunities.



# Jane Hedger

Chief Executive Officer

Following two terms on the VQ Board, Jane Hedger was appointed as CEO and undertook handover in June with Mara prior to her retirement. Jane comes to the sector with significant executive leadership experience across government and community organisations with community development, training and membership/customer skills and a strong history of volunteering.

"I am very excited to have joined this amazing team of passionate and experienced staff. Following the release of the latest thought-provoking State of Volunteering Report and Advocacy Plan to guide our future, there is an ambitious program of work ahead in further growing and maturing volunteering across the sector and providing a stronger voice for volunteers and volunteer involving organisations.

We have a huge opportunity right now to work collaboratively on projects that augment our stretched social services, re-engage young people, combat social isolation, help people back into meaningful engagement, and further grow our culture of helping each other so that we keep Queensland communities strong and resilient into an uncertain future. The work that our team and members have done in 23-24 is an excellent foundation for these new projects.

Our rapidly changing social and environmental challenges will require new thinking. Volunteering will change. It will be our role to lead, guide, innovate, support and empower communities and organisations to survive and thrive.

We are all excited to be partnering with governments, organisations, Volunteer Resource Centres, volunteers, and communities on a strong vision for volunteering impact."



# Linda Lavarch

President/Chair

As I reflect on the past year, it's important to acknowledge the contributions of those who have guided and supported Volunteering Queensland. My deepest gratitude goes to our outgoing President and Board of Directors, Brett Johnson, Natasha Doherty, Deb Nisbet and Peter Tragardh. Their leadership and commitment have been invaluable, and we are grateful for their service.

To Mara Basanovic, our outgoing CEO, for her years of service, dedication, and leadership. Mara has been instrumental in driving our organisation forward. I also want to take this opportunity to welcome our new Board as well as our new CEO, Jane Hedger. Their combined expertise, energy, and dedication will strengthen VQ's vital role as the peak body and voice for volunteering in Queensland.

In May, the State of Volunteering in Queensland 2024 Report was launched underscoring both the significant contributions of volunteers and the challenges faced. In 2023, volunteering contributed an astounding \$117.8 billion to our economy and provided the equivalent to 113,000 full-time jobs, valued at \$31.3 billion. The report, however, noted a 10% decline in formal volunteering and a sharp rise in the cost of volunteering.

At VQ, we are dedicated to addressing these issues, working with all levels of government to ensure volunteering remains accessible and impactful for all Queenslanders. I encourage everyone to reflect on the power of volunteering, not only in times of prosperity but also during times of challenge. Volunteering is where human need and human kindness meet, and when these two elements come together, even the most difficult problem can be overcome.

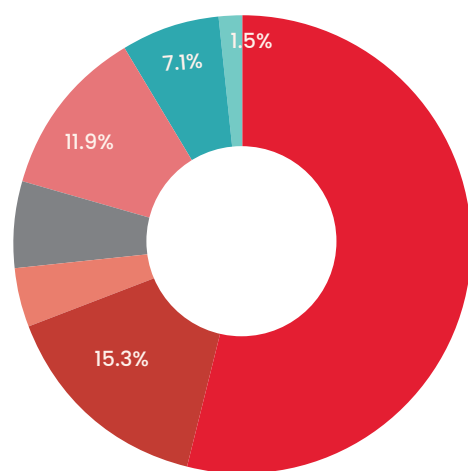
Thank you to our volunteers, members, partners, staff and supporters for your continued dedication to VQ.





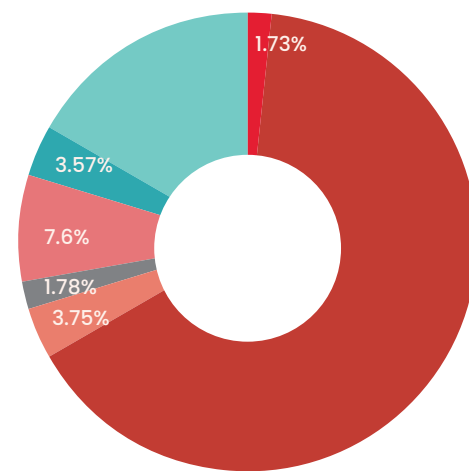


## Cost of Volunteering



### Where our income comes from

- Federal Govt - DSS
- State Govt - Peak Body
- Grants & Interest
- Training
- Projects
- Activities and Events
- Memberships



### How we allocate our resources

- Training
- Community Development, Projects & Grants
- Research & Advocacy Training
- Story Telling & Marketing
- Awards and Events
- Volunteering Activities
- Operational

## Advocacy



### 2024 Youth Report



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### 2024 State of Volunteering Report



## Make Queensland Fair Campaign

Volunteering Queensland is proud to be a foundation partner in the Make Queensland Fair campaign, led by QCOS and with the collaboration of several other partner organisations, which aims to highlight the far-reaching implications of the cost-of-living crisis on Queenslanders. The cost-of-living crisis is forcing more and more people to seek help from support organisations, many of which rely heavily on volunteers to operate. Cost-of-living pressures are also recognised as a barrier to people continuing to volunteer, or forcing them to reduce their volunteer or potentially stop volunteering all together.

For more information



*Scan me*

Make Qld Fair Campaign



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Campaign Achievements to date



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# Queensland Volunteering Awards

The 2024 Queensland Volunteering Awards took place on Wednesday morning 22 May, at Brisbane City Hall. It was so fantastic to see everyone come together to support the nominees and finalists and see the reactions when the recipients of each award were announced.

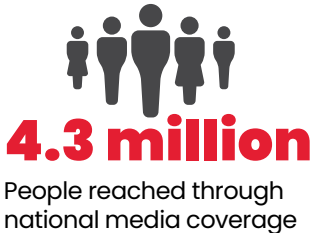
The Queensland Volunteering Awards acknowledge and honour the astonishing contribution and spirit of service of all Queensland volunteers and volunteer involving organisations.

The Awards are presented across six categories:

- **Queensland Lifetime Contribution to Volunteering Award**  
Allan Quartermaine
- **Queensland Youth Volunteer of the Year Award**  
Tobias Kennet
- **Queensland Excellence in Volunteer Management Award**  
Vicki Meyer
- **Queensland Volunteering Impact Award**  
Care Kits for Kids Qld Inc
- **Queensland Corporate Volunteering Award**  
Auto & General
- **Queensland Volunteer of the Year Award**  
Ian Grace



**Thank you to all recipients, finalists, nominees and nominators who took the time to share the great work of our volunteer stars in the community.**



“It’s a great experience. I will definitely do things like this in the future.”

“I personally believe volunteering is a part of an individual’s growth and developing a nature of contributing back to the community. Being a student ambassador helped me with it, and I absolutely loved it.”

“My role as Student Ambassador taught me more than a part-time job. I enhanced my communication skills, public speaking skills and organisational skills. It was a learning and memorable experience for me as I felt proud to increase NSVW awareness and involve students in volunteering.”

Learn more at [volunteeringqld.org.au](http://volunteeringqld.org.au)





# Homeless Connect

On May 16, 2024, the Brisbane City Council partnered with Volunteering Queensland to orchestrate the 29th Brisbane Homeless Connect event. It was a motivating event and despite the not so favourable weather conditions, 872 vulnerable community members were connected to essential services, through a joyful day filled with support, food, entertainment, and genuine social inclusion.

- **872** participants assisted by **298** volunteers.
- **98%** of volunteers would recommend the experience to others
- **100%** of volunteers would volunteer at this event again.



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# Sector Engagement & Training

Volunteering Queensland delivers workshops, training, and professional development to organisations across Queensland aligned to the refreshed National Standards for Volunteer Involvement (NSVI). These include the Volunteer Management Essentials covering planning a volunteer program, designing roles, recruitment & selection, onboarding, recognition & management skills, the National Standards Gap Analysis and the Continuing Professional Development

**New booking system and calendar**



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## Professional Development

37

Face to face in locations across Queensland

274

Community engagement, consultations and workshops

22

Online sessions

## Accredited & Non-Accredited Training

32

Secondary/ High Schools – Certificate I-III

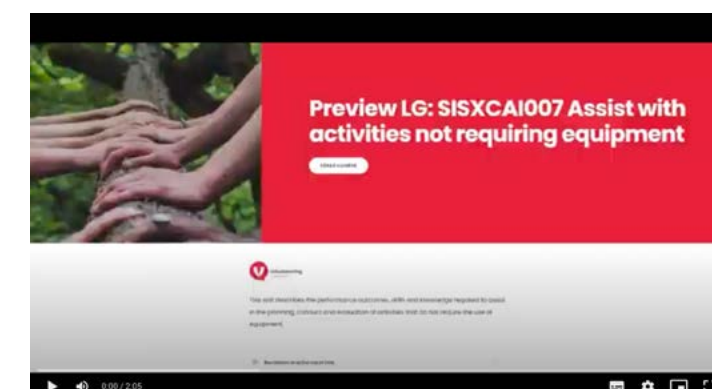
897

Enrolled participants in courses 2023/2024

655

Completions 2023/2024

Volunteering Queensland provides accredited courses through the Registered Training Organisation (RTO) via its Certificate I, II & III in Active Volunteering as well as the Certificate IV in Coordination of Volunteer Programs.





# Impact Stories

**"We just call it helping"**  
Perspectives on inclusive partnerships

**Then and now:**  
Jovana's story

**Member Stories:**  
Gelly from ChaplainWatch

# Community Development

## My Qld Volunteer Story



*Sean me*

## VMA Projects 23/24

- Building Inclusive Connections
- Accessible Zed
- Hervey Bay Neighbourhood Centre / Fraser Coast



*Sean me*

**"Hearing real-world stories of projects".**

**"Presenters were amazing, and I loved listening to their information".**

**"Learning about how we can maximise access and how other organisations are solving problems".**

**"Hearing about so many diverse experiences".**

Quotes from 'Building Inclusive Connections' Showcase from Oct 2023

## Qld Projects Funded under the Volunteer Management Activity Program

Project	Grant Value	Duration	Stage
4ZZZ disability inclusion program	\$40,023.20	12 months	Completed June 2024
HBNC Volunteer Strategy Roll Out 2023 – 2024 (Fraser Coast – Hervey Bay, Maryborough and surrounds)	\$57,765.00	12 months	Completed June 2024
NSVW-2024 Student Advocates	\$16,698.00	1 month	Completed August 2024
Volunteer Ready stage II	\$21,684.96	6 months	Completed June 2024
Breaking Down Barriers to Volunteering in Douglas Shire Stage II	\$81,499.00	12 months	Completion expected Dec 2024
Inala Elders Volunteering Project stage II	\$150,818.00	12 months	Completion expected May 2025
SBS Inclusion Training Year 2	\$2,800.00	12 months	To renew Oct 2024
Indigenous Cultrual Awarness Year 2	\$999.00	12 months	To renew Nov 2024
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$372,287.16</b>		



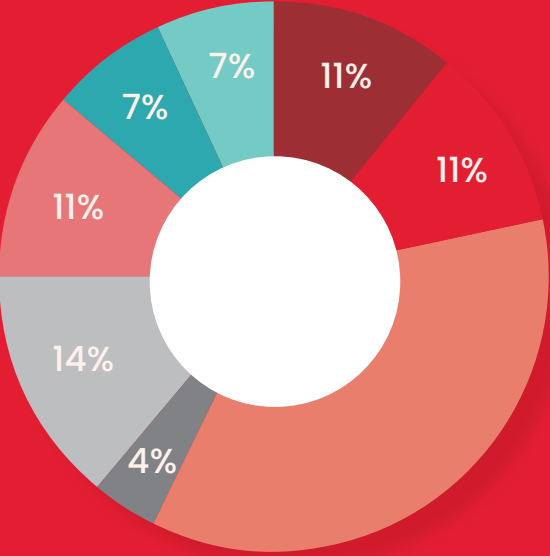


# Corporate Volunteering Impact Report

Our Corporate Volunteering Program connects corporate groups looking to give back with local organisations in need of support.

### Sectors Supported:

- Food Insecurity
- Health
- Family Services
- Disabilities
- Environment
- Children
- Social Inclusion
- Seniors



### Overview:



# EV CREW – Care Army

We maintained these critical volunteering databases to facilitate Queenslanders helping their local community.

## Disaster Season Christmas 2023 Gold Coast and Townsville emergency response

**140**

Volunteers assisted Cairns Regional Council with support clean-up activities through the Emergency Volunteering Community Response to Extreme Weather (EV CREW).

**154**

Volunteers assisted Disaster Relief Australia and City of Gold Coast to manage clean-up efforts via EV CREW.

**Volunteering Gold Coast**  
Assisted in recruiting volunteers for clean-up initiatives led by Global Care.

## Participation in Recovery Committees

Volunteering Queensland actively participated in various local, district, and state Human and Social Recovery and Resilience Committees, providing reports and discussing recovery activities and priorities. The supported committees included:

- SE Queensland Human Social Recovery (combined Gold Coast and Logan Committees) chaired by the Department of Treaty, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Communities, and the Arts.
- State Human and Social Recovery and Resilience Group, chaired by the same department.
- Scenic Rim Local Recovery Group, chaired by the Scenic Rim Regional Council.
- Redland Local Disaster Management Group, chaired by Redland City Council.

## Resource and Information Provision

Volunteering Queensland provided crucial information and resources to various councils to aid in their response to the storm event, including:

- Scenic Rim Council
- Western Downs Regional Council
- Logan City Council
- Gympie Regional Council
- Ipswich City Council
- Noosa Regional Council



# Road Ahead

## Release of Qld State Volunteering Strategy

The Queensland Government consulted with Volunteering Queensland and the wider volunteering sector to inform the development of their Queensland Volunteering Strategy (the Strategy), a key action in their Communities 2032 Action Plan 2022-2025. The Strategy will direct the Queensland Government's efforts to elevate volunteering in Queensland. The core focus areas of the Strategy are to ensure volunteering is supported and sustainable, vibrant and inclusive, and properly recognised and celebrated. These focus areas are reinforced by a twenty-nine point Action Plan, with the key government agency identified for progressing each action with the support of the volunteering ecosystem. The Strategy and related Action Plan will be released in September 2024.

## Election Year / Advocacy Strategy

### Volunteering Queensland Advocacy Plan

As part of finalizing our 2024 State of Volunteering Report, Volunteering Queensland produced an Advocacy Plan to guide our ongoing work in the short and medium term. This builds on work already done by VQ and the wider volunteering ecosystem. We will continue to liaise with Volunteer Involving Organisations and with volunteers themselves about how best to progress these actions, including more effectively communicating these to policy and decision makers. VQ will also continue to engage with all representatives and political parties in the newly elected state Parliament, including advocating on key proposals such as those we put forward in our pre-Budget and pre-election submissions. These include providing more resources and training for Queenslanders who volunteer and local organisations who assist them, ongoing investment in volunteering in emergency and disaster situations, stronger insurance protections for volunteers and resourcing of future research into volunteering in our state.

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Advocacy Plan from the State  
of Volunteering Report

Form for feedback on  
Advocacy Plan

State of Volunteering Report



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# Strategy Timeline

-  **Commitment to develop a Qld Volunteering Strategy**  
The Qld Government committed to develop a Qld Volunteering Strategy as part of the Communities 2023 Action Plan 2022 - 2025
-  **Volunteering sector engagement**  
Currently underway
-  **Sector engagement data analysis**
-  **Cross-government engagement with Qld departments and agencies**
-  **Develop Strategy**
-  **Strategy to be launched late 2024**



# Thank you

A heartfelt thank you to all our volunteers, volunteer managers, VIOs, VRCs, and community and corporate volunteers. Your generosity, dedication, and hard work are the backbone of everything we do.



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