

Voice of the Volunteer Survey Design Process

1. Purpose

The *Voice of the Volunteer Survey* was developed to systematically capture and analyse volunteer perspectives. It provides Volunteer Involving Organisations (VIOs) with an evidence-based tool to monitor, evaluate and enhance the volunteer experience across local, organisational, Local Government Area (LGA), and state levels.

2. Objectives

The key objectives of the survey are to:

1. Establish a structured framework to assist managers in strengthening relationships with volunteers and improving their overall experience.
2. Capture insights into volunteer experiences across diverse geographic regions, roles, and sectors.
3. Identify emerging trends and recurring challenges to inform policy, program, and resource development.
4. Strengthen collaboration between government, Volunteer Involving Organisations (VIOs), and volunteers.
5. Deliver location-specific and actionable feedback to VIOs to guide targeted improvements.
6. Build sector-wide capacity by providing real-time, evidence-based, and longitudinal data to inform policy, advocacy, and sector support initiatives.

3. Design Principles and Environmental Considerations

3.1 Alignment with Sector Standards

- Ensured alignment with the *National Standards for Volunteer Involvement* and the *Volunteer Involvement Lifecycle*.
- Mapped survey content to recognised best-practice benchmarks for volunteer management.

3.2 Evidence-Based Methodology

- Integrated best-practice approaches from employee engagement and customer experience research.

- Applied a *Voice of the Customer* survey framework to ensure methodological rigour and practical application.

3.3 Actionable and Relevant Outcomes

- Designed questions to align with meaningful Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for volunteer managers.
- Ensured survey results could be directly linked to practical actions that enhance the volunteer experience.

4. Questionnaire Development Process

A structured, multi-phase process was undertaken to ensure both methodological integrity and relevance to the volunteering sector.

4.1 Draft 1 – Foundation Mapping

- Initial question set developed and mapped directly to the *National Standards for Volunteer Involvement*.

4.2 Draft 2 – Lifecycle and Methodology Integration

- Questions categorised according to the *Volunteer Involvement Lifecycle*.
- *Voice of the Customer* methodology applied to establish consistent categories, KPIs, and questions.
- Conducted under the academic guidance of Dr Alexander Long, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Society and Design, Bond University, and led by Project Manager Rikki Anderson with Research Assistant Julia Wicker.

4.3 Draft 2 Review – Research Advisory Committee

- Presented to the Volunteering Queensland Research Advisory Committee.
- Received overwhelmingly positive feedback and a recommendation to include demographic questions.

4.4 Draft 3 – Independent Methodological Review

- Submitted to IPSOS for expert review.
- Adjustments made in response to recommendations for enhanced clarity and consistency.

4.5 Draft 4 – Sector Alignment

- Consultation with Paul Muller, Institute of Project Management, to align with the *State of Volunteering* survey for consistent data collection and analysis.

4.6 Draft 5 – Pilot Testing

- Uploaded to survey platform for pilot testing.
- One-on-one testing with 12 volunteers to assess question clarity, accessibility, and flow.
- KPIs presented to a volunteer manager focus group for validation and practical relevance.
- Additional testing undertaken by Volunteering Queensland staff.

4.7 Draft 6 – Refinement and Final Expert Review

- Integrated all feedback from volunteer and manager testing.
- Resubmitted to IPSOS for final review, which resulted in minimal amendments.

4.8 Draft 7 – Finalisation

- Final version of the questionnaire approved for deployment as the *Voice of the Volunteer Survey*.

5. Summary

The development of the *Voice of the Volunteer Survey* reflects a rigorous, collaborative, and evidence-based process.

Grounded in sector standards and informed by both academic and practitioner expertise, the final tool provides a robust mechanism for:

- Measuring and monitoring volunteer experiences;
- Supporting continuous improvement within VIOs; and
- Strengthening the evidence base for sector-wide policy, advocacy, and strategic development.