



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Our successful Tower of Strength campaign a big win for strong and resilient communities**

Volunteering Victoria welcomes the news delivered by the Department of Social Services that funding for the Volunteer Management Program will be reinstated, following the Tower of Strength campaign.

The funding will provide approximately \$5.25 million for Volunteering Support Services to continue to support to a diverse geographic and demographic cross-section of communities in Victoria from 1 January 2018 until June 2021.

Volunteering Support Services support volunteering in local communities across the state. They provide the critical infrastructure required for safe, effective and sustainable volunteering. It is essential to sufficiently fund Volunteering Supports Services, as they support and resource local volunteering programs, while empowering and ensuring the safe management of volunteers.

The sector-driven Tower of Strength campaign was coordinated by Volunteering Australia with considerable input from Volunteering Victoria and community based organisations. The campaign highlighted the tower of strength that builds strong and resilient communities. Volunteering Victoria CEO Sue Noble said, "This terrific outcome shows how powerful we are when the sector comes together, supported by local elected representatives and the community."

"Volunteering Victoria congratulates everyone involved, and would like to thank you for your tireless and determined efforts over the last four months to defend volunteering in your community."

The Department of Social Services has also announced that the Strong and Resilient Communities (SARC) grants round has opened. Under SARC, community organisations will benefit from \$45 million in funding to help foster community cohesion by increasing individual belonging, engagement, and strengthening community capacity. The funding is for a period of three and a quarter years, from 1 April 2017 until 30 June 2021, through a single series of grant rounds in 2017. For more information on the SARC grants, visit the [www.communitygrants.gov.au](http://www.communitygrants.gov.au).

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## **About Volunteering Victoria**

Volunteering Victoria is the state peak body for volunteering. Our vision is for resilient communities and empowered and active citizens through volunteering. Through our dynamic and transformative leadership, we work to promote and build a vibrant, prosperous and strong volunteering community that is inclusive, respected and sustainable. Volunteering Victoria is a member-based organisation, supported by a dedicated and highly professional team of staff and volunteers. From broad sectors, such as social services, health, sport, culture, emergency services and local government, our membership reflects the diversity of people and organisations that work with and support volunteers in our community.