

Media Release

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Shake it up in National Volunteer Week (20 – 26 May)

This National Volunteer Week, we're calling on volunteering media allies to shake it up.

At Volunteering Victoria, we know that come next week we will start fielding requests to find the oldest volunteer, or the youngest, or the most loyal, or the longest serving...

"Is there any chance they work with puppies? Can we get the oldest and youngest patting the puppies together? And will there be scones?"

Of course, volunteers and volunteer-involving organisations are grateful for any coverage they can get. Too often they are the unsung heroes in our communities. But as National Volunteer Week 2024 approaches, Volunteering Victoria is asking you to **reconsider volunteering**. We're challenging the media to ask better questions and dig a little deeper. We need a refreshed perspective on volunteering; one that reflects the evolving nature of volunteerism and celebrates the diversity within our communities.

"Volunteering is evolving, and so should the way we talk about it," says Geoff Sharp, CEO at Volunteering Victoria. "The way we volunteer, who volunteers and where we volunteer are all in a state of change. We must find ways to showcase the multitude of opportunities available for people to give their time."

As the state peak body, we celebrate the oldest, the youngest, the longest serving and everyone in between. But you don't need to be exceptional or have accumulated thousands of volunteering hours to be recognised as important and valuable. In fact, we know that sometimes featuring too many 'exceptional' stories can make people think their own contributions don't count in the same way.

There are countless other volunteer stories waiting to be told – stories that showcase the breadth and depth of volunteering experiences. It's time to broaden our storytelling to showcase the myriad of ways individuals are making a difference.

"Perceptions of volunteering must shift from outdated notions to understanding the reality of community giving in 2024," Geoff adds.



Volunteering is no longer confined to traditional roles or time commitments, nor is it a one-size-fits-all activity. In today's fast-paced world, people are seeking flexibility and innovation, and embracing new ways to contribute to their communities.

For example:

- » skills-based projects
- » remote or virtual opportunities
- » micro-volunteering
- » student volunteers
- » group or corporate activities
- » formal roles with large not-for-profits
- » Or even ways we've yet to discover...

In many cases, volunteering is simply individuals and small groups doing what they can, where they can. You can give to your community in more diverse ways than ever before.

This year's National Volunteer Week theme, '[Something For Everyone](#)', emphasises that there are volunteering opportunities for us all. Volunteering is truly for everyone. Our communities thrive when volunteers of all types and backgrounds work to enrich our communities. We all have unique perspectives, skill sets, and life experiences, and our collective efforts are most impactful when volunteering looks like our communities. Everyone will benefit when the stories we tell about volunteering embrace these differences and diversity.

So, in the lead-up to National Volunteer Week 2024, we encourage you to join us in reimagining volunteering. If you still want that oldest volunteer, we will do our best to help. But let's hear new voices, challenge assumptions, and highlight all the ways individuals contribute to creating positive change in our communities.

Mind you, we are suckers for puppy pats and won't say no to a good score!

National Volunteer Week events:

Interested in how Victorians are celebrating? [See our website](#) for a list of National Volunteer Week events happening across Victoria.



For media inquiries, please contact:

Jen Frees

Communications Officer, Volunteering Victoria

info@volunteeringvictoria.org.au

About Volunteering Victoria:

Volunteering Victoria is the state peak body for volunteering, dedicated to promoting and supporting volunteering across Victoria. We work with volunteers, volunteer-involving organisations, and government to advocate for the value of volunteering and to create an enabling environment for volunteering to thrive. For more information, visit volunteeringvictoria.org.au

