

# Case study: Leading change towards inclusive practice

## Baptcare – Inclusive Volunteering Award recipient 2024

**Baptcare believes in celebrating diversity in all its forms and considers it a key organisational strength. The organisation has enhanced its commitment to diversity and inclusion by actively reducing barriers to volunteering and making specific changes to increase inclusivity.**

### **Reducing Barriers for Volunteers**

The delivery of Baptcare's 24 programs is governed by specific legislation, such as the Aged Care Act of 1997 for residential aged care. These regulations often require high-level verbal and written communication skills, technology use, and travel, which can create significant barriers for potential volunteers – particularly those who are young, come from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds, have a disability, or face financial constraints.

Recognising these challenges, Baptcare centralised its volunteer recruitment process, ensuring that applicants receive personalised support to navigate the application requirements. The recruitment team collaborates closely with applicants to address specific needs, making the process more inclusive and accessible.

### **Including Volunteers with Diverse Lived Experiences**

Baptcare facilitates 16 programs in residential aged care, where over 70% of residents come from a CALD background. To foster meaningful connections, Baptcare encourages volunteers who are young, ageing and/or from CALD communities to engage with residents, often pairing individuals from similar backgrounds to enhance mutual understanding and impact in each other's lives.

In the past year alone, Baptcare has increased the diversity of volunteers by over 20% (adding more than 120 volunteers). To continue this valuable work, the organisation has embedded

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diversity-focused strategies into its volunteer programs. These include staff portfolios dedicated to engaging and supporting youth, those from CALD communities, migrants, and refugees.

Volunteers are encouraged to share their lived experiences with other volunteers within the organisation, by creating safe and inclusive spaces. Initiatives such as regular 'Bring a Meal' days are held, where people are asked to bring a dish from their culture to share with others. Volunteers, paid staff and residents/clients are also invited to contribute to a Harmony Day Cookbook, celebrating cultural diversity as part of Harmony Day celebrations each year.

### **Targeted Recruitment**

Based on discussions with migrant and CALD community groups, Baptcare has improved its recruitment advertising to better reach diverse audiences. This targeted approach ensures volunteers feel respected, encouraged, and supported from the outset, embedding them into the volunteer and Baptcare communities.

### **Inclusive Policies and Procedures**

Inclusivity is embedded into Baptcare's policies and procedures. The organisation has established dedicated working groups, including a Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Working Group, Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group, and the Rainbow Tick Working Group. Comprising both staff and volunteers, these groups guide Baptcare's efforts to foster inclusion across all areas of the organisation.

Baptcare have also established a team responsible for updating policies and procedures with a focus on diversity and inclusion. Draft policies are circulated for review across the organisation to ensure a collaborative approach. Where necessary, these documents can also be translated to ensure accessibility for CALD volunteers and staff.

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## **Leadership Commitment to Inclusion**

Baptcare's leadership, including the Board, CEO and Executive Management, is incredibly supportive of the organisation's diversity and inclusion goals. This commitment is reflected in the allocation of budgets and resources to support positive change. All volunteers are actively involved in decision-making processes and are given opportunities throughout the year to share their insights and personal experiences.

Baptcare is deeply appreciative and supportive of its volunteers, acknowledging their vital role in improving the lives of others while creating a more inclusive community.



**Baptcare**

"At Baptcare we believe in celebrating diversity in all its forms and consider diversity and inclusion an organisational strength."

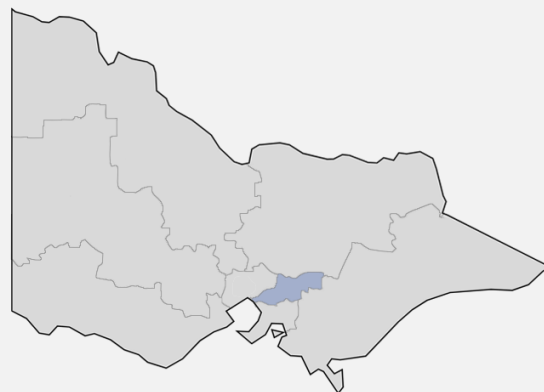
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<https://www.volunteeringvictoria.org.au/leading-volunteers/vma-2022-2026/>



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*Volunteering Victoria acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea, and community. We pay our respect to Elders past and present.*