



VolunteeringACT
an inclusive Canberra



VolunteerACT
an inclusive Canberra



ANNUAL REPORT

2021 / 2022

CONTENTS

3-8 About

- 3. Our strategy and purpose
- 4-5. Values
- 6. Chair's Message
- 7. Board of Directors
- 8-9. CEO's Message
- 10-11. Our Members

12-17 Improve inclusion in the Canberra region

- 12-13. Community Info Hub
- 14-16. Inclusion Programs

18-19 Influence change through policy and advocacy

- 18. Policy and Advocacy
- 19. Representation

20-25 Strengthen the sector to enable a more resilient Canberra community

- 20. Volunteer Management Activity (VMA)
- 21. Education and Training
- 22-24. Events
- 24. Membership

26-28 General Updates

- 26. Website and Social Media
- 26. Partners
- 27. Financial Review
- 28. Contact Details

VolunteeringACT acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the ACT, the Ngunnawal people. We acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of this city and this region.

Welcome to our 2021-2022 Annual Report

VolunteeringACT is the peak body for volunteering and community information in the Canberra region, as well as being a service provider of programs for people experiencing disadvantage and isolation, people with disability, and people needing support for mental wellness.

Through our activities, we improve inclusivity, enable sustainable volunteering, and create a more resilient Canberra community.

Charitable Objects

VolunteeringACT is a registered charity and a Public Benevolent Institution. We meet the five Objects in our Constitution by:

- Connecting people to volunteering opportunities.
- Supporting volunteer-involving organisations with training, advice, and volunteer recruitment.
- Making sure information on services and supports is accessible to everyone through our Community Information services.
- Fostering community networks to reflect sector voices in our policy and advocacy work.
- Supporting people experiencing disadvantage; and,
- Providing programs to help people reconnect with their community and access supported volunteering roles.

VolunteeringACT is a people-driven, service-focused organisation representing the interests of 191 members. We advocate for and support volunteers and engage with the broader Canberra community.

VolunteeringACT is the business name of Volunteering and Contact ACT Pty Ltd. The purpose of VolunteeringACT is to foster quality of life and an inclusive Canberra by enabling participation and connection. To do so, we deliver on three strategic priorities:

2.

Influence change through policy and advocacy

We drive the development of evidence-based policy as the Peak Body and lead advocate for volunteering in the Canberra region.

1.

Improve inclusion in the Canberra region

We foster inclusion by reducing barriers to participation in volunteering and access to community information.

3.

Strengthen the sector to enable a more resilient Canberra community

We are the trusted experts in volunteering and community information in the Canberra region and we strategically invest in capability and capacity building to strengthen the sector and enhance outcomes for our stakeholders and the community.

VAL
INTEC
PARTICI
COLLABO
INNOV
DIVER
EQU

VALUES
INTEGRITY
COMPATATION
COORDINATION
COOPERATION
DIVERSITY
QUALITY

CHAIR'S MESSAGE

I am delighted to present my first Annual Report as Chair of VolunteeringACT. This year has been an exciting year for us, with a refreshed strategic direction to reflect a changing sector direction, and the delivery of several significant programs and projects. However, it has also been a very challenging and unpredictable year, with the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic still being felt across the region and within all organisations. VolunteeringACT has continued to adapt to the changing environment around us and advocate strongly for local and national policy changes to support the recovery of the volunteering sector and enable a more inclusive and sustainable volunteering landscape.

I am especially proud of the work VolunteeringACT has undertaken this year to build new relationships with local community contacts and expand our reach across the volunteering and community information sectors, to embed co-design more firmly into our ongoing operations, and to commence our formal commitment to reconciliation. The Board and I look forward to the development of this work and to learn all we can from our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partners, to support this important journey for our organisation.

I thank our members for their ongoing engagement throughout the year, the exceptional work they do across many different sectors to support the Canberra community, and the resilience they have continued to demonstrate throughout the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on staffing, income streams and service delivery. I would like to acknowledge the continued support of our funding partners in the ACT Government (both the Community Services Directorate and ACT Health), Department of Social Services, Department of Health, and Department of Defence. Thank you to our sponsors and supporters in the Canberra Labour Club Group, MF & Associates, Galent Management Consulting, Canberra Weekly, Canberra Data Centres, and Chamberlains. And finally, we want to acknowledge the work of our service delivery partners – Hall and Wilcox, the ATO's Tax Help Program and the Australian Institute of Project Management.



To all our employees and volunteers, I thank you for the incredible work you all do to enact VolunteeringACT's mission and values, and the contribution this makes to the life of our region and the communities we serve. The events of the past few years have been unprecedented, and I am extremely proud of how you have risen to meet every challenge, and your continued commitment to delivering high quality services.

I look forward to working with you all in the coming year and leading VolunteeringACT into the next chapter.

Robyn Hendry
Chair

A handwritten signature in white ink that reads "Robyn Hendry".

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chair

Robyn Hendry

Deputy Chair

George Brennan

Treasurer

Helen McKenna

Company Secretary

Jean Giese

Directors

Jayne Curnow

Lee Maiden

Kim Kachel

Shivani Gounder

Baoliang Wan

Clare Cable

Clare Sullivan

Dianne O'Hare

CEO MESSAGE

Jean Giese



Welcome to VolunteeringACT's 2021-2022 Annual Report.

It is such a pleasure to reflect upon and report the milestones of the year. I am proud to lead an innovative, compassionate, and driven team supported by our skilled and dedicated Board. Throughout our organisation, volunteers are at the heart of our work and their contribution is incredibly valued. I would like to thank our Members, funders, partners, donors, and supporters, without whom, none of our work would be possible.

What a monumental year we have all had. We continue to see the impacts the pandemic has had on the community sector, and we are constantly reminded of the resilience and determination of our community throughout the myriad of challenges. Understanding a changing environment and the evolving role of volunteering and community information has been crucial to our support and engagement with the sector.

Our Annual Report is structured differently this year, putting a focus on our three strategic priorities; improving inclusion in the Canberra region, influencing change through policy and advocacy, and strengthening the sector to enable a more resilient Canberra community.

In all that we do is a focus on inclusion. To genuinely achieve this, we have embedded a range of codesign methods across our program areas to ensure that throughout the development and delivery of programs and services, that the experts the way.

This year, we have continued to deliver our highly successful and impactful programs including our Community Info Hub portfolio and Inclusive Volunteering Program. We have also been able to respond to new and emerging needs via our role in the Canberra Relief Network and the transition to the redesigned Volunteer Management Activity.

The next few years will be critical to ensure that volunteering and community information are adequately supported and resourced, that the value of volunteering to our whole society is recognised, and that we are able to continue to adapt to the needs of our wonderful community.

I look forward to the new year as we continue to engage with, learn from, and strengthen the sector.

Regards,

Jean Giese.
CEO



MEMI

2xxfm
Abbeyfield Australia
Abbeyfield Garran Inc
Abundant Water Inc
ACT Corrective Services
ACT Disability, Aged and Carers Advocacy Service
(ADACAS)
ACT Emergency Services Agency (ACT ESA)
ACT Fencing Association
ACT Mental Health Consumer Network Inc
ACT Parks and Conservation Services
ACT Volunteers in Policing
ACT Wildlife
ACTCOSS
Active Canberra
Adria Village
Alcohol, Tobacco & Other Drug Association ACT
Amnesty International Australia ACT/Southern NSW
Anglicare NSW South, NSW West and ACT
ANNECTO Canberra
Aurther Wilks OAM
Arts Capital Limited
Artsound Incorporated
Association of Parents & Friends of ACT Schools
Australian Centre for Service Learning
Australian Institute of Company Directors
Australian Institute of International Affairs
Australian National Botanic Gardens
Australian National Eisteddfod
Australian National University
Australian Red Cross ACT
Australian War Memorial

BERS

Australian Kookaburra Kids Foundation
BaptistCare NSW/ACT
Barnardos Canberra Australia
Basketball ACT
Belconnen Arts Centre
Beryl Women Inc
Better Hearing Australia Canberra
Brian Weir
Bush Heritage Australia
C3 Cares Monash
Calvary Haydon Retirement
Calvary Health Care ACT
Calvary John James Hospital
Canberra Blind Society
Canberra College of Piping and Drumming
Canberra Glassworks Ltd
Canberra Hospital and Health Services
Canberra International Music Festival
Canberra Police Community Youth Club (PCYC)
Canberra Railway Museum
Canberra Region Rugby League
Cancer Council ACT
Canteen ACT & NSNSW Division
Capital Football
Capital Nordic Walking Community Outreach
Capital Region Community Services
CatholicCare Canberra and Goulburn
Communities at Work
Community Connections Inc
Community First Development
Community Services #1
Conservation Council ACT Region Inc

MEMI

Council on the Ageing (COTA) ACT
Currie Crescent Community Centre
Cystic Fibrosis ACT
Deki Yangzom
Dementia Australia - ACT
Dianne O'Hara
Domestic Animal Services (DAS)
Doris Womens Refuge
Epilepsy Association ACT Inc
Ethnic Broadcasters Council of the ACT (CMS Radio)
Events ACT
Families and Friends for Drug and Law Reform
Family Drug Support
Federation of Nepalese Community Associations of Australia (FeNCAA)
Feel the Magic
Food Co-op Shop and Cafe
Fortem Australia (ACT)
Friends of the National Arboretum Canberra Inc
Fusion Canberra
George Brennan
Geoscience Australia
Girl Guides NSW, ACT & NT
Goodwin Aged Care Services
Greening Australia Capital Region
Greyhound Connections Inc
Hammondcare ACT
Hands Across Canberra
Hartley Lifecare Inc
Havelock Housing Association
Helen McKenna
Indigenous Reading Project
IRT Group
Jayne Curnow

BERS

Karinya House
Karralika Programs Inc
Kim Kachel
Koomarri
Landcare ACT
Lee Maiden
Libraries ACT
Lids4Kids
Lifeline Australia
Lifeline Canberra
Lifestream Christian Fellowship
Little Oak Sanctuary
Lynette Grayson
Margaret Reid AO
Marymead
Matthew Franklin
Multicultural Communities Council of Illawarra (MCCI)
Menslink
Mental Health Community Coalition ACT
Mental Health Foundation ACT
Mental Illness Education ACT (MIEACT)
Meridian Inc
Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House
Narrabundah Early Childhood School
National Arboretum Canberra
National Capital Authority
National Folk Festival
National Gallery of Australia
National Library of Australia
National Multicultural Festival
National Museum of Australia
National Opera
Nationsheart Christian Community

MEMI

Neighbourhood Watch ACT
North Belconnen Day Centre
Northside Community Service
Outward Bound Australia
Palliative Care ACT
Parentline ACT
Parkinson's ACT
Pedal Power
Pegasus - Riding for the disabled
Perinatal Wellbeing Centre
Playgroup ACT
Print Handicapped Radio of ACT
Prisoners Aid ACT
Project Independence
Queanbeyan Multilingual Centre Inc
Questacon Volunteer Explainer
Rise Above Capital Region Cancer Relief
Robyn Hendry
Ronald McDonald House Charities ACT & South East NSW
Roundabout Canberra
RSI & Overuse Injury Association
RSL LifeCare ACT
RSPCA ACT
Safe Shelter ACT
Sanctuary Aus
Scout Association of Australia (ACT)
SEE-Change Inc
ServeGate Australia
Sexual Health and Family Planning ACT (SHFPACT)
Sharing Places Inc
SHINE for Kids
SHOUT
Softball ACT

BERS

Soldier On
St Johns Ambulance ACT
St Johns Care
St Vincent De Paul Society Canberra/Goulburn
TADACT
Tanya Priest-Willimott
Ted Noffs Foundation
Tender Funderals Canberra Region
Tennis ACT
The Mill House Ventures Limited
The Smith Family (ACT)
This Is My Brave Australia Inc
Toora Women Inc
Tuggeranong Arts Centre
Tuggeranong Community Council (TCC)
UN Women Australia
Unitingcare Kippax
Unity College Australia
University of Canberra
Urban Parks and Places Volunteering
Victim Support ACT
Vicims of Crime Assistance League ACT
Villaggio Sant Antonio
Warehouse Circus Inc
Warrigal
WaterAbilities Disability Services
Wellways Australia Ltd
Weston Creek Uniting Church
Woden Community Service
Women With Disabilities ACT
Woodlands And Wetlands Trust
YMCA of Canberra
Young Neighbourhood Centre Inc
Youth Coalition of the ACT



HOW WE HAVE INCLUSION IN THE REGION

VolunteeringACT's first strategic priority is to improve inclusion in the Canberra region.

We foster inclusion by reducing barriers to participation in volunteering and access to community information through a range of programs, reconciliation commitments, and the facilitation of our Community Info Hub portfolio.

COMMUNITY INFO HUB

VolunteeringACT's Community Info Hub promotes inclusion and community participation via many channels. The Community Info Hub is a central point of contact and connection for the Canberra community. People can engage with the Hub through multiple channels including in-person at our Griffin Centre office, over the phone and online via the ACT Community Directory and Diary. Our Info Hub staff connect people to services, programs, events, community groups and training opportunities that enable better community participation.

HOW WERE OUR SERVICES PROVIDED?

During the year, 570 visitors accessed the Hub services, with an estimated 926 individual services provided, 351 resources were taken, and 528 different referrals were made to the community, government, and private organisations.

DIFFERENT REFERRALS PROVIDED

528

VISITS TO THE COMMUNITY INFO HUB

570

INDIVIDUAL SERVICES PROVIDED

926

WE FOSTERED THE CANBERRA ION

Our ACT Community Directory helps community organisations, sporting clubs, cultural, hobby and interest groups to promote their services, programs, and events, with the Directory listing a total of 2,017 community organisations and interest groups, and 3,317 services and programs that operate within the Canberra region. This extensive database of information can be freely and readily accessed by anyone through a range of different channels and formats. The Community Directory is an integral pillar supporting VolunteeringACT's goal to create a comprehensive and fully inclusive community information hub for the Canberra region community.

The ACT Community Diary displays events, exhibitions, festivals, and other entertainment/tourist activities as well as helps local community groups and organisations promote their one-off and regular events, activities, meetings, and training opportunities. On any given day the Community Diary has upwards of 60 or more different events promoted across the region, helping to keep Canberra active and engaged.

We publish a range of resources and Info Guides with new guides created in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. We created a special version of our Emergency Food Relief Guide to provide up-to-date and relevant information for people throughout and after lockdown as service availability changed. Our guides are available as printed copies at the Community Info Hub and as digital copies via our website. Our regular info guides include:

- ACT Legal Services Guide
- Complaints Resolution Guide
- Free Meal, Emergency Relief and Accommodation Guide
- Op Shops Guide
- Emergency Food Relief Guide

The Community Info Hub also partnered with the Australian Taxation Office between July and August 2021 to provide free tax help to low-income earners in the community. Eligible persons made appointments to attend our Community Info Hub to complete their tax returns. We provide the venue and administrative assistance to the program. This included booking appointments, performing eligibility checks, and providing pre-appointment information and checklists. VolunteeringACT thanks the ATO Tax Help volunteers who provided these free appointments.

Our Community Info Hub is a safe and accessible space for community members to access services and supports that meet their needs. Part of this service is providing access to computers and free telephone use for those who do not have one, or a computer/device connected to the internet. This year, we received a Technology Upgrade Grant which allowed us to modernise our facilities and provide a much-needed service to people without access to computers or the internet including reducing some of the barriers to engaging with digital technology and solutions experienced by so many people in our region.

INCLUSIVE VOLUNTEERING PATHWAYS TO EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

The Inclusive Volunteering Pathways to Employment Program works with organisations to help them become more inclusive as they reduce and remove barriers to the inclusion of people of all backgrounds and abilities. In particular, the Program aims to improve inclusive practices within organisations so they can involve people living with disability and/or mental health conditions.

Throughout this year, we have continued to deliver the Program thanks to funding from the Department of Social Services and delivered in partnership with The Centre for Volunteering (NSW) and Volunteering Tasmania. The Program has also provided opportunities for participants to engage in volunteering as a pathway to employment.

The Program team provided support including one-on-one coaching, resources, checklists, and training for organisations in the Canberra region to increase their capacity for inclusion. The Inclusive Volunteering for Organisations workshops highlighted the benefits of inclusion and discuss practical strategies for identifying and removing the barriers to involving volunteers from diverse backgrounds. These workshops have greatly increased understanding of disability and inclusion among community personnel. We have worked with a total of 145 volunteering involving organisations to improve inclusive attitudes and behaviours in the Canberra community.

A total of 35 participants were referred to the Program this year. By accessing the range of supports provided through the Program, participants reported increased personal social and economic participation. While volunteer programs were significantly impacted by the COVID-19 lockdowns and restrictions, participants continued to engage with the Program, and we were able to support them in working towards their employment goals through remote mentoring options.

The **Discuss and Develop** initiative was trialled during the lockdown as a way for participants to connect with volunteer mentors through a series of structured phone calls focusing on work-readiness skills. Volunteer mentors facilitated weekly conversations with participants centred on identified topics that address volunteer and work-ready skills development. This interaction with volunteer mentors was supported by group online workshops targeted at specific work-ready skills such as resume creation.

142

**VOLUNTEER INVOLVING
ORGANISATIONS ENGAGED WITH**

35

**PARTICIPANT
REFERRALS**

With limited volunteer opportunities available this financial year, participants also had the opportunity to engage with the Program through the Participant Advocacy Project, in which a group of participants could share their lived experience of disability in a safe space, to create a group submission to the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability. Program Coordinators worked alongside Relationships Australia, with support from Advocacy for Inclusion, to facilitate a series of focus groups. Counsellors from Relationships Australia used trauma-informed and person-centered practice to ensure all participants were supported at every stage of the process. This format also proved to be an empowering experience for participants in which they were able to make tangible contributions to affect change in the disability sector and provided participants with a forum in which to share their stories with their peers and form connections.

We recognise it is vital that people with lived experience of disability/mental health conditions have a voice and share power in the services that affect them. The Participant Advisory Group, made up of people with disability and specialist service providers, continues to work alongside program coordinators to co-design a feedback framework for the Program. The contributions of the Participant Advisory Group have an enormous impact on program activities and allow people with disability/mental health conditions to take on a greater role in service improvement. The Program team looks forward to continuing to engage organisations, participants, and volunteer mentors in further building the capacity for inclusion in the Canberra region in the next year.

CANBERRA RELIEF NETWORK

In August 2021, when ACT went into lockdown VolunteeringACT took a lead in providing support to vulnerable Canberrans, overseeing the running of the Canberra Relief Network's Connect Centre supported by the ACT Government. This saw our team support callers to receive food and hygiene hampers delivered to their homes with the support of our delivery partners. When this model ceased, our team then linked callers to community organisations that were providing other ongoing food and emergency relief services. During and after the 2021 lockdown, 2300 Canberran households were supported, with 4200 hampers delivered.

VolunteeringACT led the Canberra Relief Advisory Committee throughout the year and was successful via a budget submission to deliver a range of new food security projects which we look forward to designing and delivering over the next few years.

RE-ENGAGING VOLUNTEERS INTO RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE FACILITIES PROGRAM

In early 2022, a nationwide initiative was launched - the Re-engaging Volunteers into Residential Aged Care Facilities Program. This program was designed to encourage new and experienced volunteers to support the aged care sector via non-clinical volunteer support to older people residing in Residential Aged Care Facilities. The volunteer role includes companionship, social engagement, participation in leisure activities and exercise and administration support for the facilities. We have worked collaboratively with our sister state and territory volunteering peak bodies to deliver the program which includes volunteer recruitment, induction, facilitation of training and matching with an appropriate Aged Care Facility. The project is funded by the Department of Health and is scheduled to run until the end of September 2022.

MAP PROGRAM

The Map Program provides support to young people in the Canberra region to become more resilient, connected and job-ready by coupling mental health training with career mentoring and volunteering.

COVID-19 has had a significant impact on employment, with young people being disproportionately affected by job losses. This program provided support to young people aged 18-25 who were seeking employment.

The Program coupled mental health training, hosted by Lifeline Canberra and Mental Illness Education ACT (MIEACT), with workshops covering an introduction to volunteering and job readiness and participation in volunteering.

Through these activities, the MAP Program increased the mental health literacy and resilience of participants, whilst also providing pathways to employment through volunteering.

OUR COMMITMENT TO RECONCILIATION

VolunteeringACT is committed to reconciliation, and we aim to serve the First Nations communities of the ACT. We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the Land on which we work, the Ngunnawal people, and pay our respects to their Elders past, present, and emerging. We are delighted to be taking more formal steps to embed our commitment to reconciliation which as a first step was reflected through the development of our first Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) due to be launched in late 2022. A Reconciliation Working Group has been meeting and seeking advice from both Ngunnawal elders and First Nations peoples to understand the changes we need to make as an organisation. Through this work, we hope to strengthen our relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and relevant stakeholders and jointly develop our vision for how we can genuinely contribute to reconciliation.



CANBERRA RELIEF NETWORK MEDIA COVERAGE



Images: Canberra Weekly, Food relief network wins ACT Resilient Australia awards

COMMUNITY INFO HUB VOLUNTEER



RE-ENGAGING VOLUNTEERS INTO RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE FACILITIES PROGRAM PROMOTION



We have more in common than you might think



You've made my week!

Have I got a story for you?



Enrich your life by volunteering in residential aged care



Click here to volunteer today!

HOW WE INFLUENCE CHANGE THROUGH POLICY AND ADVOCACY



We drive the development of evidence-based policy as the lead advocate for volunteering and community information in the Canberra region. We engage with Participant Advisory Groups, co-design projects, and take an active role in many networks and with key stakeholders to promote volunteering and the wider community sector, in line with the national and local strategic landscape, emerging trends and evolving best practice.

VolunteeringACT proactively seeks input and views from a diverse range of stakeholders to inform its ongoing Policy and Advocacy work via direct communications, individual meetings, and regular sector networking sessions. Core activities during 2021-2022 included:

- A 12-week plan across October-December 2021 to re-open the volunteering sector, providing a practical roadmap for Government and community agencies to respond to the impacts of COVID-19 and help support volunteering recovery.
- A submission to the ACT 2022-2023 Budget, to advocate for investment in a volunteering recovery support package for the sector, and the development of a new Volunteering Strategy.
- Submission to the National Mental Health Workforce Strategy 2021-2031 Consultation.
- Submission to the Disability Employment Strategy Model Consultation.

We have also commenced a co-design project on volunteering for newly arrived migrants. The project aims to reduce barriers to volunteering for newly arrived migrants. We have a Participant Advisory Group of people who have lived experience as newly arrived migrants or are from organisations that serve the needs of newly arrived migrants.

During 2021-2022, there was a significant expansion in the national policy and advocacy landscape with increased opportunities to contribute to important conversations with key decision and policymakers across several portfolios. Key policy themes from this year impacting the volunteering sector included the ongoing impact of COVID-19, mental health and wellbeing, disability and employment pathways, emergency and crisis response, and workforce planning and resourcing. VolunteeringACT contributed to several national policy submissions, position papers and Federal Election proposals made by Volunteering Australia and their work on developing the new National Strategy for Volunteering.



Throughout the year, we have continued to advocate strongly for the development of a longer-term ACT Volunteering Strategy to replace the ACT Volunteering Statement, which expired in December 2021. We have been working in partnership with the ACT Government Community Services Directorate to collate sector feedback, develop an interim action plan to support some recovery solutions for the sector, and suggest an approach for future consultation and engagement. This partnership work will continue into 2022-2023.

Sector feedback is vital to understanding the demands of the community and responding to trends. In December 2021, we began conducting research into informal volunteering in the ACT. The aim of the research was to get a better understanding of why informal volunteering levels are rising, against the falling number of participants in formal volunteering activities. This trend is occurring across all States and Territories and is an important shift to investigate and respond to.

The research approach combined an initial survey with follow-up conversations to further unpack the key themes arising, via focus groups and one-to-one interviews.

Early findings indicate:

- Most informal volunteers in our sample are giving between one and five hours per week of their time.
- A high percentage of informal volunteers in our sample are also in either full or part-time employment.
- Most informal volunteers in our sample are aged 48-58 years, followed by those aged 37-47 years.
- Face-to-face informal volunteering activities are the most common, but almost half the sample indicated they volunteer online or by phone.

The research will continue during 2022-23 and future findings will be used in our policy and advocacy work.

REPRESENTATION

VolunteeringACT is active throughout the year via participation on several committees, forums, groups, and task forces and uses these representation roles to advocate strongly for volunteering and community information and to ensure the experiences and evidence coming from the sector are reflected and included in important local and national conversations. These include:

- Canberra Relief Network Advisory Committee
- Industry Strategy Steering Group
- Joint Community Government Reference Group
- ACTCOSS Justice Reform Group
- ACTCOSS Member Forum
- ACTCOSS CEO Forum
- National Volunteering Peak Body CEO Network
- National Volunteering Policy Group
- National Volunteering Research Group
- National Indigenous Policy and Practice Working Group
- National Volunteering Marketing and Communications Group
- ACT Community Sector NAIDOC Week Committee
- ACT Northern Region Network
- ACT CASP Peer Network
- ACTCOSS Reconciliation Peer Network
- Migrant and Refugee Support Services (MARSS) Multicultural Matters Meetings

HOW WE ARE STRENGTHENING OUR SECTOR

We are the trusted experts in volunteering and community information in the Canberra region and we are committed to invest in capability and capacity building activities which will strengthen the sector and enhance outcomes for our stakeholders and the community.

2021-2022 saw the commencement of the newly restructured Volunteer Management Activity, funded by the Department of Social Services which aims to create:

1. Increased opportunities to participate and reduction of barriers that prevent the inclusion of volunteers from identified backgrounds.
2. High-quality and accessible volunteering based on the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement.
3. Improved accessibility and range of quality Volunteer Management products and services across each jurisdiction.

We have spent the transition year within this program collaborating with the other state and territory volunteering peak bodies to design and scope a national framework and associated projects. Locally, we have reinvigorated our training and events portfolio and undertaken extensive member engagement to ensure the future of our support for volunteer-involving organisations continues to represent what is most needed. A large component of our work in the ACT has focussed on the co-design of new services and initiatives that support organisations that have existing barriers which prohibit an inclusive volunteering approach.

Our sector resilience activities (funded by the ACT Government and Department of Social Services) have evolved and been adapted to reflect the current volunteering landscape.

This year, we facilitated 1909 online volunteering referrals. Our Community Info Hub also facilitated 574 face-to-face and telephone referrals, resulting in a total of 2483 volunteering referrals during the year. Many referrals were to our Emergency Volunteering Database as we continue to hold responsibility under the ACT Community Recovery Plan to coordinate spontaneous volunteers. There are currently over 1600 Canberrans registered as Emergency Volunteers.

We delivered a wide range of training to volunteers and volunteer managers and coordinators. Training in 2022 was offered in both face-to-face and online formats, which increased accessibility for participants in various ways.

We offered a large training portfolio to support the growth, resilience, and capability of the sector. We were also able to launch some new training, including the very popular Wellbeing and Boundaries workshop, exploring mental health and how to deal with difficult situations and continued to offer our standard training portfolio, including Essentials for Volunteer Managers, National Standards for Volunteer Involvement, and Introduction to Volunteering.

100% OF PARTICIPANTS RATED
OUR TRAINING AS 'VERY
GOOD' OR 'EXCELLENT'

"I found the content informative, engaging and practical"

- Introduction to Volunteering Participant

**"This session helped break down what I didn't know into
manageable chunks that I can investigate and implement"**

- Essential for Volunteer Managers Participant

We have also been designing new training workshops set to run in the next financial year:

For Managers and Coordinators of Volunteers

- Involving Young Volunteers: Engaging, supporting, and connecting with young volunteers.
- Managing Risk: Identifying and understanding key risk considerations in a volunteer program.
- Virtual Volunteering: How to manage risk, and safely deliver a virtual volunteering program.
- Performance Appraisal: Understanding volunteer motivations and responsibilities & managing underperformance.

For Volunteers

- Volunteer Mentoring: Developing mentoring skills, understanding mentoring relationship benefits, risks, frameworks, and boundaries.
- Virtual Volunteering: self-management, communication and keeping safe.

Throughout the year, we hosted key events to promote and celebrate volunteering in the Canberra region

International Volunteer Day is held each year on 5 December. To celebrate the special occasion, we organised for the National Carillion to be lit up in VolunteeringACT's colours with "Shine a light on Volunteering" as the slogan used for promotion.

We also commissioned street artist, Bohie to create a three-panel window display in Garema Place, between the office and Canberra Centre, thanking Canberra volunteers and celebrating 30 years of the Volunteering Awards.



The 30th annual **Volunteering Awards, Canberra region** was held as a hybrid event, offering 300 seats in person and live streamed to the Canberra public on Tuesday 7 December. Each year, our awards ceremony provides a unique opportunity to acknowledge and celebrate the outstanding contribution of volunteers.

The 2021 Volunteering Awards, Canberra region received nominations across categories, with 10 winners, and five highly commended recipients. In 2021, for the second time in the Awards' history, the Judges also introduced a surprise category - the 'Judge's Award.' This Award recognised the contribution of a team of volunteers who sat across so many of the Award's categories that the Judge's decided they deserved separate recognition.



The 2021 winners were:

- Lesley Harland and John FitzGerald – Volunteer of the Year
- Contact Tracing Team – St John Ambulance ACT – Judge's Award
- Lesley Harland and John FitzGerald – Canberra's Choice Award
- ACT Disaster Relief – Volunteer Team of the Year
- Ben Walker – Young Volunteer of the Year Award
- Jefferey Fairweather - Senior Volunteer of the Year Award
- Desmond Gallagher – Inclusion Award
- Vinnies Youth Program Team – Innovation Award
- Amanda Wright – Volunteer Leadership Award
- Luka Musicki – Corporate Volunteering Award

The Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley, and his wife Mrs. Hurley were in attendance and opened the event. They were followed by Minister for Volunteering and Community Services, Minister Emma Davidson MLA.



The **Volunteer Manager of the Year Awards, Canberra region** recognises and celebrates the efforts of Managers and Coordinators of Volunteers who support and facilitate the engagement of volunteers. The winners of the Volunteer Manager of the Year Award were Sean Curtis and Mansour Buges from St Vincent de Paul Society's Night Patrol.



National Volunteer Week (NVW) is Australia's annual celebration to acknowledge the generous contribution of our nation's volunteers. This year it took place from Monday 16 May 2022 to Sunday 22 May 2022 with the theme: Better Together.

We hosted a range of events during National Volunteer Week, including:

- 2022 Volunteering Symposium
- Introduction to Volunteer Training
- Wellbeing & Boundaries Training
- 2022 Volunteering Expo

The **Volunteering Expo** is one of our flagship events each year. The 2022 Volunteering Expo was held on Saturday 21 May, during National Volunteer Week, to promote volunteering in the ACT community. The Expo provided an opportunity for members of the Canberra community to meet with a range of volunteer-involving organisations in the ACT and surrounding region and learn more about their volunteering opportunities.

In 2022, the Expo was held in line with ACT Government COVID-19 health advice. The 2022 Volunteering Expo was attended by 674 people, with 40 volunteer-involving organisations exhibiting. Held at the Former Transport Depot in Kingston, the expo involved exhibitors and a range of food and beverage stalls. The event was attended by Minister for Volunteering and Community Services, Minister Emma Davidson MLA who provided an opening address.

We couldn't deliver on our priority to strengthen the sector without our committed members. Members receive access to services, training and events that support their volunteer programs, and are consulted on advocacy and practice issues relevant to the sector and we thank them for their ongoing engagement and support.

**DURING 2021-2022
VOLUNTEERINGACT
SUPPORTED** **157** **MEMBERS**

Many of our members continue to recover their volunteer programs after several lockdowns and ongoing COVID-19 restrictions, boundaries, and issues. The resilience and tenacity of the sector throughout this past year have been truly remarkable. Although we have all faced challenges, many of our members have been able to return to their pre-COVID-19 volunteer activity levels in 2022.

2022 VOLUNTEERING EXPO



2022 VOLUNTEERING SYMPOSIUM

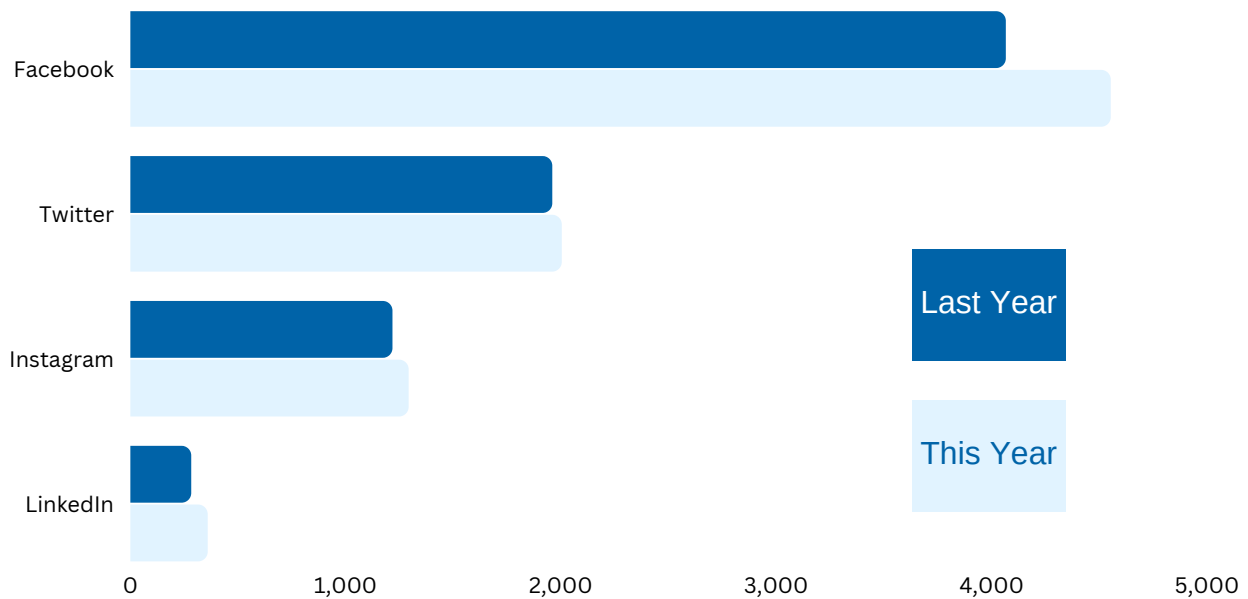


WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

In the past year, our website had a total of 34,636 users with a 1.72% increase in page views and an average of 1.53 sessions per user.

Our social media followers increased across all platforms during the funded period:

- Facebook followers increased from 4,063 to 4,550 (an increase of 12 per cent)
- Twitter followers increased from 1,957 to 2001 (an increase of 2.3 per cent)
- Instagram followers increased from 1,215 to 1290 (an increase of 6 per cent)
- Increase in LinkedIn Connections from 281 to 357 (an increase of 27 per cent)



OUR PARTNERS

- ACT Government (both the Community Services Directorate and ACT Health)
- Department of Social Services
- Department of Health
- Department of Defence.
- Canberra Labour Club Group
- MF & Associates
- Galent Management Consulting
- Canberra Weekly
- Canberra Data Centres
- Chamberlains
- Hall and Wilcox
- ATO's Tax Help Program
- Australian Institute of Project Management

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

2021–2022

Volunteering and Contact ACT Limited achieved a surplus of \$272,337 for the 2021-2022 financial year. This compares favourably with the surplus in 2020-2021 which was \$146,741. This surplus will add to our capital reserves which provide financial security through unexpected changes in circumstances and the ability to take up opportunities to make strategic investments in policy development, community-based projects and organisation development that strengthen volunteering and community information in the ACT. The audited Financial Statements are provided in full as an Attachment to this Annual Report.

Our activities in 2021-22 were delivered in accordance with all grant agreements. Many projects/programs exceeded work-plan deliverables highlighting the extraordinary effort of our team and our partners in other volunteering peak bodies and the community sector.

Income generated from non-government sources such as donations, events, consultancies, and memberships increased compared with 2021 and contributed significantly to our financial sustainability.

The challenge in 2022-23 and beyond is to continue to deliver high-quality outcomes, through a sustainably resourced team across our strategic agenda. The labour market is tightening so we will be focusing on retaining our valued staff team and attracting new people to join our team by developing our reputation as a great place to contribute to the community whilst building a rewarding career.

Thank you to everyone who supports financial management in Volunteering and Contact ACT: Lou Malfone (Finance Manager), Dan Eddleston (Operations Manager) Paula Boldra (Office Manager) and the Board Finance and Audit Committee.

Summary or financial position on 30 June 2022

Key indicator	2022	2021	Variance
Cash			
Cash received	2,652,464	1,922,905	\$729,559
Cash spent	2,228,811	2,350,110	\$121,298
Cash surplus (deficit)	423,652	(427,205)	\$850,857
Closing bank balance	2,574,774	2,151,121	\$423,652
Profitability			
Income	2,585,639	2,204,890	\$380,749
Expenses	2,313,302	2,058,149	-\$255,153
Profit (loss)	272,337	146,741	\$125,596

A background image showing three people in a professional setting. A woman on the left is smiling and looking towards the center. A woman in the center, wearing glasses and a white t-shirt with a logo, is holding a document and looking at it. A man on the right, wearing a cap and a grey sweater, is also looking at the document. The image is faded to allow text to be overlaid.

CONTACT

VOLUNTEERINGACT OFFICE

Level 2, 202 City Walk, Civic 2601
PO Box 128, Civic square, ACT 2601
P 02 6251 4060

COMMUNITY INFO HUB

Griffin Centre, 20 Genge Street,
Canberra 2601
P 02 6248 7988

EVENTS AND TRAINING HUB

Level 3, 202 City Walk, Civic 2601

E info@volunteeringact.org.au
www.volunteeringact.org.au
ABN 30 433 789 697