

VOLUNTEER WORK



What is voluntary work?

Voluntary work generally provides a service to the community. Volunteering is an activity that takes place in not-for-profit community organisations and is undertaken;

- to be of benefit to the community and the volunteer;
- of the volunteer's own free will and without coercion;
- for no financial payment; and
- in designated volunteer positions only (i.e. is not replacing paid work)

What type of work do volunteers do?

Volunteers work in a range of areas including; health, welfare, community service, conservation, environment, sport and education. Listed below are some examples of volunteer opportunities:

- Museum of Victoria - explainer, tour guide
- Carlton Baths - sports program assistant
- Friends of the Zoo - tour guide
- PBS FM – music and arts journalist
- SPAN Community House - tutor
- People Outdoors – recreation assistant
- National Parks - surveying and mapping
- Referral Exchange - project work
- National Trust - researcher, guide
- Lifeline - telephone counselling
- Red Cross - public relations assistant
- Women's Information Referral Exchange - project work, information delivery
- Marine Discovery Centre - education assistant, scientific research
- Arthritis Foundation of Victoria - data processor for their Phonenumber program

What do you get from it?

There are many benefits to being a volunteer. Amongst many others, these include:

- an opportunity to connect with others in the community and make friends
- gaining valuable work experience which can be included in your Resume and used to enhance your employability
- developing contacts with others to increase your personal networks, which is useful when you are seeking employment
- gaining a broader perspective on the world and greater self-confidence by offering to give your time and services to others

What are the rights of volunteers?

Volunteers have rights that are designed to protect them in the workplace. When working in a volunteer capacity or when considering the possibility of voluntary work go through the following checklist.

Does my choice of workplace offer:

- a non-discriminatory workplace
- a volunteer position description
- confidentiality regarding my personal information?
- personal injury insurance for volunteers
- a safe environment to perform my work
- training and support to assist me in my volunteer role?
- induction and ongoing job-related training and skill development?
- re-imbursment for out of pocket expenses

What are the responsibilities of volunteers?

As a volunteer, organisations that are offering you voluntary work will expect of you the following:

Honesty

Volunteers, like paid staff, will sometimes make mistakes, so acceptance of fallibility is essential. If you don't know how to do something or can't understand what is being asked of you, always ask for help.

Reliability and dependability

Don't promise what you can't deliver!
Commitment to the job involving regular attendance is essential.

Confidentiality

Any breach of confidentiality will reflect on the organisation, so treat what you see and hear with respect and don't gossip.

Accountability

Carry out the work that you have agreed to do in a responsible and professional manner.

Commitment

You need to commit to the ethos of the organisation and the ability to work well with others as part of a team.

VOLUNTARY WORK RESOURCES

Leadership, Involvement and Volunteer Experience Unit (LIVE)

The LIVE Unit provides a range of volunteer support services including; volunteer information, training and placement. Located on the ground floor, 723 Swanston Street.

Contact: 8344 0799 or go to;

<http://www.services.unimelb.edu.au/live>

Student Volunteer Resource Service

The [Student Volunteer Resource Service](#) provides a range of volunteer services including; volunteer information and training, face to face interview and support to find the right volunteer position. For more information

contact Ali Kassem on 8344 9316 or email; akassem@unimelb.edu.au

Volunteering Australia

This is Australia's peak body for volunteering, providing volunteering information including; volunteering facts, news and resources.

<http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/html/s01home/home.asp>

Volunteering Victoria

Victoria's peak body for volunteering offering volunteer training, resources and placements.

<http://volunteeringvictoria.org.au/>

WHERE CAN YOU FIND VOLUNTARY WORK?

Volunteers Online

This is the University's volunteer search site listing an extensive range of volunteer opportunities available in the community.

<http://www.volunteersonline.unimelb.edu.au/StudentLogin.aspx>

Go Volunteer

<http://govolunteer.com.au/>

Australian Volunteer Search

This is Australia's biggest online volunteer search site.

<http://volunteersearch.gov.au/maps/maps.aspx?WHCode=13&st=22&rgn=vic>

SEEK Volunteer

This site also lists volunteer opportunities advertised by community organisations.

<http://www.volunteer.com.au/if.asp?loc=faq>

Victorian Volunteer Resource Centres

These centres provide volunteer opportunities specific to particular areas and suburbs.

<http://www.health.vic.gov.au/agedcare/publications/volunteer.htm#victorian>