

Strong and Resilient Communities Activity (SARC) – Community Support – Small Grants for Volunteer Involving Organisations

The Centre for Volunteering is pleased to announce 29 successful recipients of the Strong and Resilient Communities Activity (SARC) – Community Support – Small Grants for Volunteer Involving Organisations for NSW. Funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services and administered by The Centre for Volunteering, these small grants assist community organisations to support the social and economic participation of vulnerable and disadvantaged people by strengthening volunteering through capability and capacity building.

Details of the successful activities are outlined below.

| Organisation | Overview of Activity |
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| Agape Outreach Inc | Volunteers to undertake three targeted skills training programs - Accidental Counsellor, Strengthening Connections and Mental Health First Aid. These Programs will build volunteer capacity, resilience and emotional capacity in supporting Agape's client base and optimising employment opportunities. agapeoutreachinc.com |
| Diamond Women Ltd | Improve the accessibility to services for rural women via website upgrades (including virtual counselling, online workshops, and improved navigation) and build the capacity of volunteers and volunteer managers by providing training to facilitate empowerment activities, foster independence and support. diamondwomen.com.au |
| Edmund Rice Community Services NSW | This project will provide training for the NSW Program Manager to build their capacity to engage, recruit, and retain youth mentor volunteers. It will provide a cultural workshop for youth volunteers who work one on one with the children who come from diverse backgrounds to attend Edmund Rice activities and programs. Volunteers will also be involved in the co-design and delivery of two youth-led workshops that will be used to support child participants to increase their social connections, resilience, and build individual empowerment. ercs.org.au |
| Educar Foundation Ltd / Max Potential | The Max Potential program offers personalised leadership coaching and community service opportunities for young adults aged 15-18, while training volunteers to become community coaches. This dual approach empowers participants to build resilience, confidence, and leadership skills. This funding will support the recruitment of young adults and volunteer community coaches and provide training of coaches, the delivery of workshops, and professional coaching for participants. |

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| | <p>Ongoing volunteer support reinforces youth development while providing volunteers with opportunities to enhance their skills through active participation in the program's final stages.</p> <p>maxpotential.com.au</p> |
| Empowering Parents In Crisis (EPIC) | <p>Strengthen volunteer management capability and build the capacity of Peer Parent Volunteers through Youth Mental Health First Aid and Communication Skills training and Cultural Workshops. This will ensure volunteers are equipped to offer emotional and practical support and gain an understanding of how to support diverse communities. In addition, volunteer recruitment, retention, and engagement strategies will be developed and enhanced through alignment with the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement.</p> <p>empoweringparentsincrisis.com</p> |
| Fairfield Bulls Football Club Incorporate | <p>Provide training for volunteers to facilitate empowerment activities and training for volunteer managers to improve the quality of volunteer programs to build recruitment, engagement and retention. This project aims to create a more cohesive and sustainable volunteer ecosystem resulting in improved volunteer experiences, more effective community engagement, and a greater capacity to support diverse cohorts.</p> <p>fbfc.com.au</p> |
| First Steps Count Incorporated | <p>This project will enhance the engagement, learning, and retention of parent volunteers through a comprehensive training program aimed at empowering them to confidently connect with families. The Volunteer Coordinator will undergo specialised training focused on the strengths-based approach and trauma-informed practices tailored to the local community. In addition, the Volunteer Coordinator will play a key role in facilitating and organising ongoing training, while managing the day-to-day operations of the volunteer team.</p> <p>firststepscount.org</p> |
| FND Australia Support Services Inc | <p>This project aims to enhance the capacity of FND Australia to effectively recruit, retain, and support volunteers by collaborating with experts to co-design processes, policies, training programs, and formal documentation. It will also provide guidance, training, and mentorship to volunteers in alignment with National Standards for Volunteer Involvement and National Volunteer Strategy and create meaningful, purposeful roles for individuals with Functional Neurological Disorder (FND), while advancing awareness, understanding, support, and services related to FND.</p> <p>FNDaus.org.au</p> |
| For the Love of Dogs Academy | <p>The project will establish volunteer recruitment systems and a streamlined onboarding process. Volunteers will receive comprehensive training in disability and mental health awareness, inclusion practices, and pet first aid - ensuring volunteers have the skills necessary to effectively support these cohorts. In addition, an accessibility consultant will be engaged to audit and improve their website, ensuring it is inclusive for all volunteers, especially those with disabilities.</p> <p>loveofdogs.org.au</p> |

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| Harman Foundation Limited | <p>Enhance the Harman Foundation 24/7 Telephone Helpline Services by empowering volunteers through targeted training programs ensuring better service delivery and improve the quality of support for disengaged youth, women, individuals with disabilities and the unemployed – promoting community participation and self-agency.</p> <p>harmanfoundation.org.au</p> |
| Healthabitat Ltd | <p>Improve the knowledge, skills and economic opportunities of both Healthabitat's volunteers and the local community members who are employed in Healthabitat's projects. In particular, volunteers will be upskilled by undertaking the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment) which will qualify them to co-design and deliver formal accreditation to project participants.</p> <p>healthabitat.com</p> |
| Help you cope Ltd | <p>This project aims to create a robust volunteer program that aligns with the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement and significantly improves support for autism caregivers in our community. Volunteer managers will receive training focused on effective volunteer management practices, enabling them to better support and develop volunteers. Tailored training will equip volunteers with essential skills and enhance their competencies, to boost their confidence but also improve their employability. This will lead to improved program continuity and a stronger support network for autism caregivers.</p> <p>helpyoucope.com.au</p> |
| House to Grow Ltd | <p>Provide training opportunities for volunteers to improve the quality of facilitation skills, deepen understanding of group dynamics, and develop ability to lead workshops and group activities that will enhance service quality while creating pathways for personal and professional growth. The project will contribute to long-term capacity building by creating a pool of experienced volunteers who can contribute to various community development initiatives.</p> <p>housetogrow.org</p> |
| Lake Macquarie Suicide Prevention and Support Network Inc | <p>This project will involve more community volunteers connecting with individuals facing mental health challenges. Volunteers will gain new skills and provide support to vulnerable people, improving access for those impacted by mental health. They will receive expert training in "Suicidal Conversations" and be supported by a Volunteer Coordinator to ensure the volunteering experience is positive – this will be facilitated by the development of a Volunteer Peer Support Management Guide.</p> <p>connectedtocare.com.au</p> |
| Leeton Connect Incorporated | <p>This project will focus on engaging and upskilling volunteers in local volunteer-involved, not-for-profit (NFP) organisations through the delivery of two workshops and one training opportunity focussing on people with disability and mental health and women and the unemployed. These workshops aim to create an inclusive local volunteer culture that understands, values and recognises their volunteers and the contributions they make to their organisations and the local community.</p> <p>facebook.com/LeetonConnect</p> |

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| LIVEfree Project | <p>This project aims to empower young leaders and diverse volunteers and volunteer leaders through inclusive leadership training, cultural competency workshops, and targeted development programs to foster community impact and improve the quality of volunteer programs. A consultant will also be engaged to align policies with the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement.</p> <p>livefreeproject.org.au</p> |
| Mullumbimby Sustainability Education and Enterprise Development | <p>This project will engage a consultant to conduct a review and update existing policies and procedures to ensure alignment and integration of the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement. In addition, it will facilitate a co-design approach between volunteer managers and volunteers to devise and implement a training and events program to support capacity building and improved outcomes for volunteers – increasing their confidence, self-esteem, social connection and work readiness through their volunteering experience.</p> <p>mullumseed.org.au</p> |
| Nannas Touch Community Connections Lithgow Inc | <p>This project will support two Volunteer Coordinators to manage internal and outreach programs, uplift volunteer skills and resilience through cultural workshops, vocational training and wellbeing workshops, and engage a consultant to ensure policies and processes are consistent with the National Strategy for Volunteering and the Standards for Volunteer Involvement.</p> <p>facebook.com/NannasTouch.CommunityConnections</p> |
| Outdoors NSW & ACT Limited | <p>This project aims to build the capacity of volunteers by offering cultural training that fosters inclusivity, enhances program effectiveness, and improves their ability to engage with diverse groups. With better cultural awareness, volunteers will feel more confident in their roles, leading to improved retention and satisfaction. Volunteer Managers will learn strategies to create culturally inclusive environments and how design volunteer roles that appeal to a broader audience.</p> <p>outdoorsnswact.org</p> |
| Port Macquarie Basketball Association | <p>This project aims to develop training programs for volunteer managers to recruit, engage, upskill, and retain volunteers, supporting the association's growth and sustainability. It will provide pathways for volunteers to build skills, boosting self-esteem and mental health through community contributions. Training in areas like first aid, refereeing, and coaching will enhance volunteer expertise and support basketball. The project seeks to strengthen community bonds, expand the volunteer base, and create an inclusive environment that nurtures a love for basketball.</p> <p>portmacquariebasketball.com.au</p> |
| Ready 2 Change LTD | <p>This project will increase volunteer capacity and capability by providing Training workshops for volunteers to develop skills in mentoring, engagement, and cultural responsiveness, ensuring they are equipped to support vulnerable youth; Management training to improve volunteer recruitment, and wellbeing practices; and Cultural workshops to promote inclusive practices, creating a safe and supportive environment.</p> <p>ready2change.org.au</p> |

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| Serpentine Community Gallery Inc. | <p>Volunteers will receive training in Accidental counselling, Safe talk (Suicide Prevention) & We Al-Li trauma, culturally informed training. Training in customer service and art curation will also be provided using a strength-based approach. The project will increase the skills, confidence and their ability to deal with people with acute needs. Serpentine will also engage a consultant to develop an inclusive and trauma informed policy and induction manual for volunteers aligned to the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement and the National Volunteer Strategy.</p> <p>serpentinearts.org</p> |
| Somali Welfare and Cultural Centre | <p>This project will enhance the capacity to recruit, induct, and retain volunteers from diverse backgrounds. A consultant will review and update SWCC's volunteer management policies to align with current legislation and the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement. A short-term project officer will support implementation, ensuring the project aligns with the organisation's mission, structure, and programs, and identifies volunteer training needs. Additionally, Food Safety Supervisor training will be provided to equip volunteers to supervise food preparation and comply with food safety regulations.</p> <p>africultures.com.au</p> |
| THE Rural Woman Cooperative | <p>THE Rural Woman Cooperative will engage a suitably qualified consultant to develop a comprehensive volunteering framework for the establishment of online and in-person place based Chapters of THE Rural Woman across rural NSW. A key initiative of their 2024-2027 Strategic Plan, it will be created in collaboration with their members, which aims to advance the social and economic participation of rural women and girls in New South Wales.</p> <p>theruralwoman.com</p> |
| The Women's Shed Hills Shire | <p>This project empowers volunteers and vulnerable women through training, workshops, and support services to enhance skills, reduce isolation, and foster a resilient, inclusive community. It includes skill-building opportunities, Cultural Awareness Workshops, and volunteer manager training to improve recruitment and retention. Consultants will review volunteer programs, and website accessibility will be improved to ensure inclusivity for all.</p> <p>facebook.com/thewomensshedhillsshire</p> |
| Volunteer Marine Rescue NSW - Sussex Inlet | <p>The involvement of female volunteers is crucial for promoting diversity, inclusivity, and enhancing operational effectiveness. These volunteers will complete Vocational Education Training/Assessment qualifications and participate in leadership development programs, gaining the skills and confidence needed to lead in rescue/community environments. By equipping them with these skills, the goal is to improve retention rates.</p> <p>marinerescuensw.com.au</p> |
| VWCCS Inc (Victims and Witnesses of Crime Court Support) | <p>Train new volunteers with foundational skills in dealing with vicarious trauma and train experienced volunteers in dealing with more advanced vicarious trauma. The implementation of these training programs will ensure volunteers are well-prepared and supported, which translates into better-quality service delivery and a skilled and resilient volunteer workforce capable of meeting the demands of their roles.</p> <p>vwccs.org.au</p> |

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| Warriewood Surf Life Saving Club | <p>The project will engage of a specialised Clinician to provide training and resources to support and upskill volunteer surf lifesavers to run a beach safety program to empower people with a disability (including people with neurodivergence) to safely access water activities at the beach and join the Warriewood SLSC community. Access to a trained clinician will enable volunteers to seek additional knowledge and ensure a best practice approach throughout the delivery of the program.</p> <p>warriewoodslsc.com.au</p> |
| Wheelchair Rugby League Australia Limited | <p>The project aims to create a safe, inclusive volunteer program by enhancing skills, safety, and leadership. Training for volunteer managers will focus on best practices for managing diverse volunteers and aligning with the National Strategy for Volunteering. Tailored resources will support volunteer engagement and accessibility, while mentorship programs will pair experienced volunteers and managers with new recruits to build skills and confidence for continued participation.</p> <p>nrlwheelchair.com.au</p> |