

2022



NSW Multicultural Volunteering Report



The Centre for
Volunteering

The Centre for Volunteering acknowledges the Gadigal People of the Eora Nation as the traditional owners of the land on which our office stands. We recognise the importance of their connection to place and community on these lands and pay our respects to Elders, past and present.



**The Centre for
Volunteering**

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Executive summary

The purpose of this research is to explore the meaning and lived experience of multicultural volunteering in New South Wales (NSW), Australia. The data provides valuable context, from which the motivations, barriers and impacts of volunteering practices within multicultural communities can be measured and recognised.

Through a mixed-method research design, insights were obtained from a sample of 835 multicultural volunteers and managers and contrasted with the views and attitudes of Anglo-Australians sharing the same spaces. With respondents self-identifying with 92 different ethnic or cultural groups.

The report observes that for volunteers from multicultural backgrounds acts of giving are culturally embedded and develop deep community connections and support systems. For multicultural volunteers, these support systems create a sense of belonging and social engagement which extends far beyond the immediate multicultural community.

Beyond their desire to help others, the findings emphasize the cultural importance of giving back, of helping not only multicultural groups but being a participatory and useful citizen in the larger Australian community.

The research uncovers that there is a strong sense of humility within multicultural volunteers. That being, volunteers from multicultural backgrounds see their role as a volunteer as less important than the cause or effect it has on those on the receiving end of their assistance.

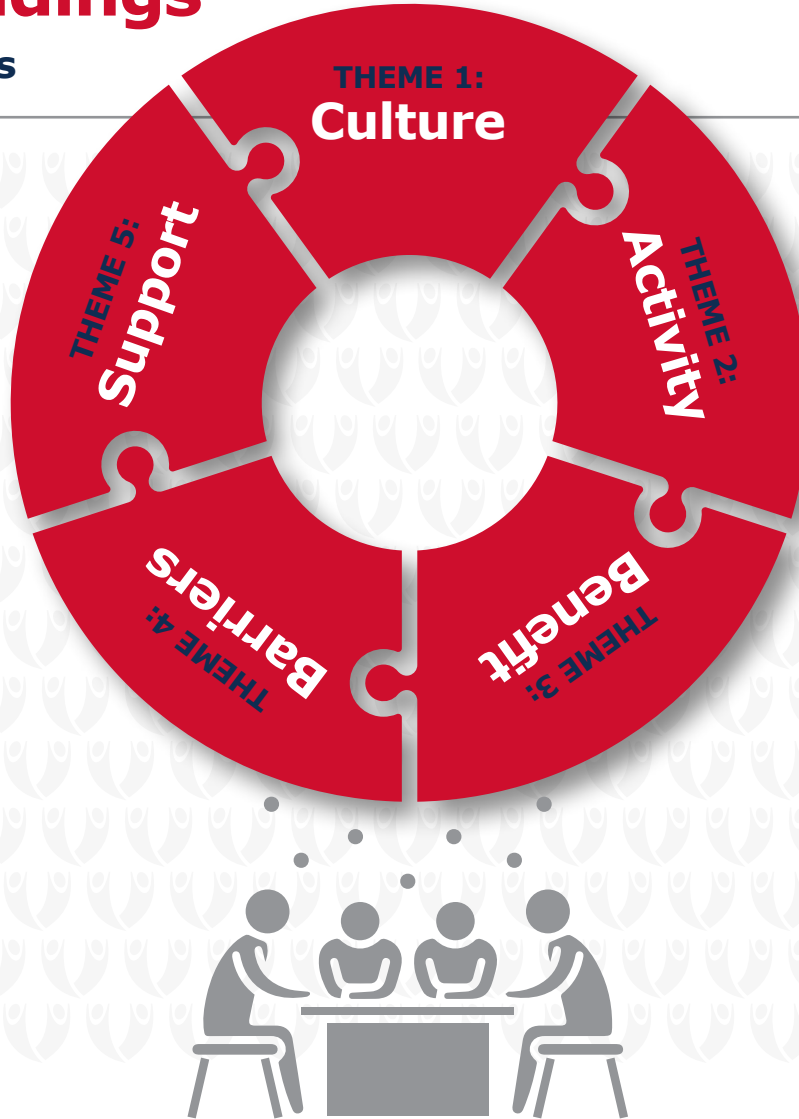
This underlying humility was uniform among all multicultural volunteers, no matter from where they came from, including those born in Australia but whose ancestors were not. The importance of giving for a common good, irrespective of faith, heritage, was evident.

The research also found that 85.6% of multicultural volunteers agreed that diversity is valued by volunteer-involving organisations in NSW. However, multicultural volunteers sometimes feel shut out from 'mainstream' volunteering. Evidence suggests that, while not endemic, racism exists within the volunteering sector.

While findings in the report note that people may experience less racism from within volunteering, and volunteer managers are seen as the least racist actors within the volunteer eco system; the fact that people still have a significant perceived exposure to racism from the general community while volunteering suggests that there is much more that can (and should) be done to protect them.

Key Findings

Focus groups



A select group of 16 ethnically and culturally diverse practitioner experts in multicultural volunteering were invited to discuss their experiences of multicultural volunteering in a series of four semi-structured focus group interviews. Their responses organised around five key themes that went on to inform the subsequent survey.

1. CULTURE

Volunteering is culturally embedded in multicultural communities. The recipients of acts of volunteering are at the centre of the experience, not the volunteer.

2. ACTIVITY

Acts of volunteering by multicultural communities are sometimes undervalued. The way volunteers culturally behave is sometimes misunderstood.

3. BENEFIT

Multicultural volunteers enjoy enhanced social engagement and belonging. The wider community benefits from multicultural volunteering, not just the multicultural one.

4. BARRIERS

Multicultural volunteers sometimes feel shut out from 'mainstream' volunteering. This includes exclusion from participation, recognition and decision-making.

5. SUPPORT

More data on multicultural volunteering needs to be collected. The stories of multicultural volunteers need to be told and shared.

Key Findings

Survey of multicultural volunteers



A sample of 835 residents of NSW were surveyed in **12 languages** on the attitudes to and experiences of multicultural volunteering. Respondents self-identified with **92 different ethnic or cultural groups**.



Predominantly volunteer in **NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANISATIONS**

For those **fluent in English**

volunteer most frequently by:

- * **teaching** * **coaching** *
- * **providing administrative or resource support** *



Beyond the desire to **HELP OTHERS**, the main motivation for volunteering is for **COMMUNITY CONNECTION**



A main motivation to volunteer is to use their **SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE**

There tends to be less diversity in how Multicultural volunteers **WITHOUT ENGLISH LANGUAGE FLUENCY**

volunteer, giving (in relative terms) much more **HOME AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT** than those who are fluent in English.



The main things **preventing** volunteering more:

- * **A lack of time** *
- * **burnout** *



Most volunteering occurs **WITHIN LOCAL COMMUNITY**



A main motivation to volunteer is to **SUPPORT A CAUSE**



Many of them are **just not sure how to volunteer more or have never been asked**



They are generally **OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THEIR FUTURE INTENTIONS TO VOLUNTEER**

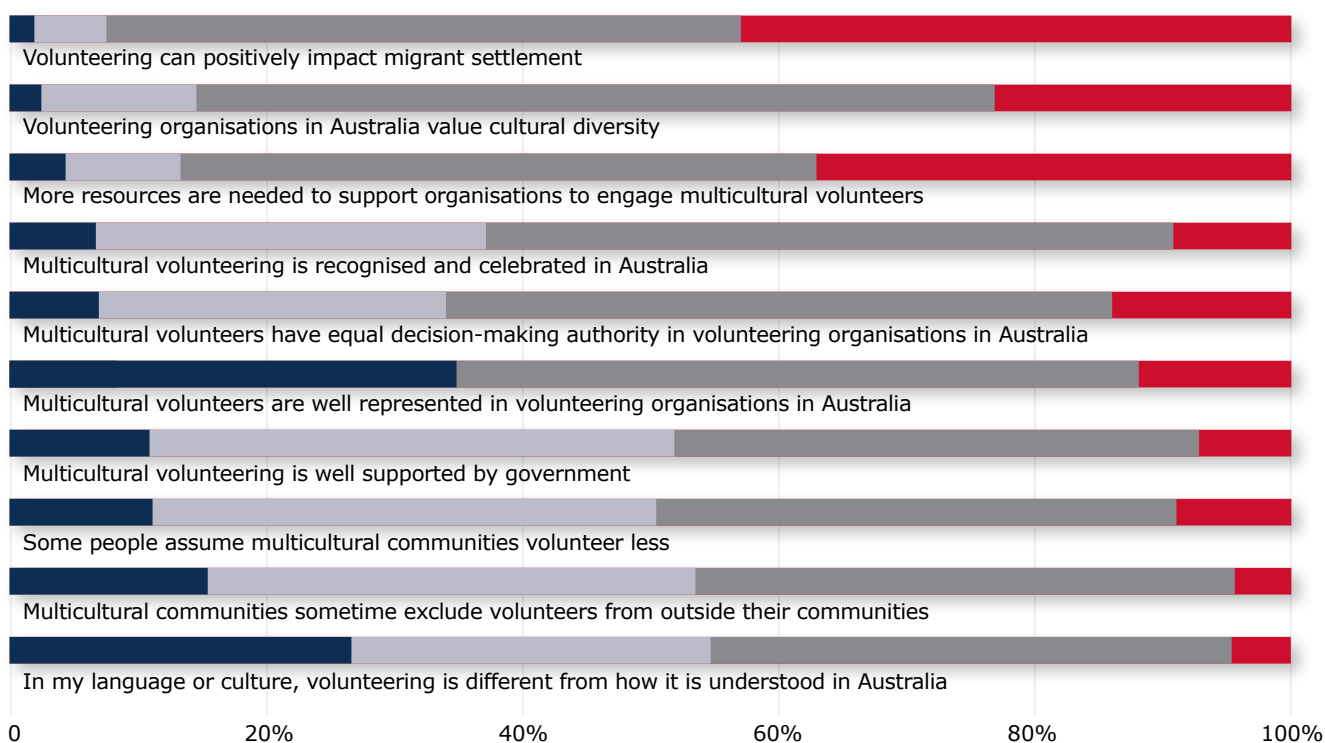
Perceptions of multicultural volunteering

The following charts show how NSW residents (both multicultural and Anglo-Australian) volunteer. There are significant differences in how people responded to these questions by age, gender, place of residence, ethnic identity, English language fluency and the number of hours they volunteer. These differences are detailed in the body of the report.



Perceptions of multicultural volunteering

● Strongly disagree ● Agree
● Disagree ● Strongly agree



Perceptions of multicultural volunteering (2/2)

● Never ● Often
● Sometimes ● Always

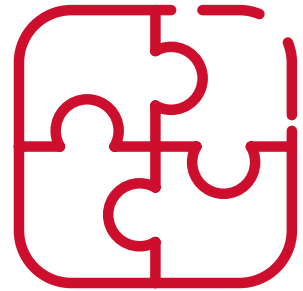


Racism and volunteering

When asked questions about racism in volunteering, people’s responses differed significantly by age, place of residence, ethnic identity, English language fluency and the number of hours they volunteer, but not by gender. These differences are detailed in the body of the report.

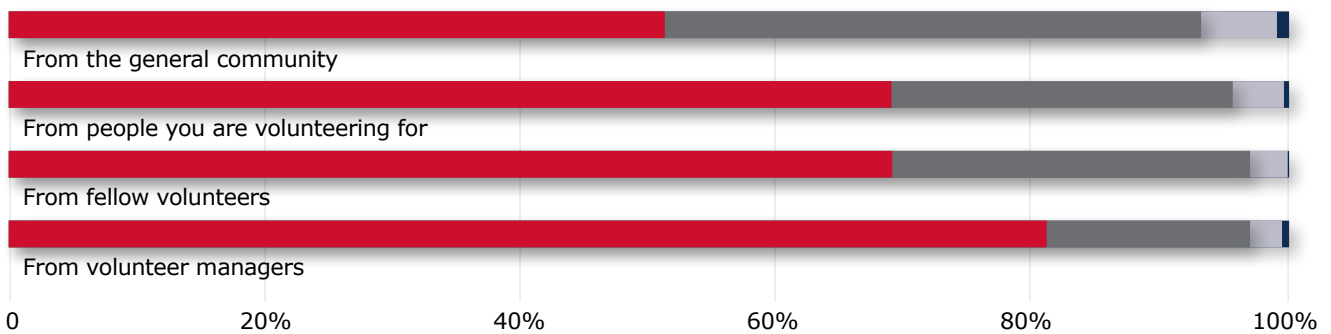
The evidence suggests that, while not endemic, racism exists within volunteering and should be an issue of concern for volunteer-involving organisations and advocacy groups. Volunteer managers are seen as the least racist actors in the volunteering ecosystem; however, one in five volunteers still have observed or experienced them being racist.

Although it appears that people experience less racism from within volunteering, the fact that people still have a significant perceived exposure to racism from the general community while volunteering suggests that there is much more that can (and should) be done to protect them.



NSW residents’ observations and experiences of racism while volunteering

● Never ● Often
● Sometimes ● Always



THE HON. NATASHA
MACLAREN-JONES MLC

Message from the Minister



NSW volunteers are key in the success of our state. From the bush to the coast, our volunteers are present in every community, ensuring their towns are well-supported.

The contributions of volunteers is invaluable, whether contributing formally with an organisation or cause, or informally in community life helping neighbours and strangers.

As Minister for Families and Communities and Minister for Disability Services, and in particular as the Minister responsible for Volunteering, I know firsthand the incredible impact volunteers have on supporting our state.

Over the past few years our volunteers have consistently been on the frontline. From bushfires to the COVID-19 pandemic and most recently the floods, it is the efforts of volunteers from all walks of life and cultural backgrounds that are driving community resilience and recovery.

Each of the 4.9 million volunteers across NSW are critical to our state's social and economic capital, contributing an estimated 1.5 billion hours. They are a testament to the human spirit and their drive is remarkable.

Volunteering is diverse, from delivering food and supplies, making meals and cups of tea, providing warm blankets and a listening ear, helping with language skills and homework, to essential frontline responses in times of crisis.

The NSW Government has in place the NSW Volunteering Strategy 2020-2030 which has set the vision for the sector as '*Volunteering in NSW grows and is vibrant. Everyone can volunteer, more often, throughout life, and their contributions are celebrated.*'

Embracing and supporting the sector's diversity and helping it to reflect the communities it operates in is vital and by working together and investing in the sector, we can achieve our vision.

Working in partnership has brought this research to life, and I thank all who have been involved including The Centre for Volunteering, The Institute of Project Management, and representatives from Department of Communities and Justice and Multicultural NSW.

Warmly,

The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones MLC
Minister for Families and Communities
Minister for Disability Services

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THE HON. MARK COURE MP

Message from the Minister



New South Wales is a proud multicultural society. People from all corners of the globe want to live, work and study in NSW because of the opportunities to have a brighter future.

While people see the opportunities available to them, they also see opportunities to give back and serve their community. This quality unites us all as a society—no matter our cultural background, language, or religious or spiritual beliefs, we all want to give back and help serve others.

This report proves this notion and showcases that people from all walks of life chose to take on the uniquely Australian quality of extending a hand to those that need help. The report also showcases the variety of ways in which people chose to volunteer and serve others, not for want of reward or recognition, but because they want to leave our state better for all.

Embracing and supporting the sector's diversity and helping it to reflect the communities it operates in is vital and by working together and investing in the sector, we can achieve our vision. Working in partnership has brought this research to life, and I thank all who have been involved including The Centre for Volunteering, The Institute of Project Management, and representatives from Department of Communities and Justice and Multicultural NSW.

Both personally and as Minister for Multiculturalism, I have seen this and experienced firsthand the overwhelming sense of service by diverse communities across our state.

To all volunteers across our state, thank you for helping make it the great place it is today. Your work is truly appreciated.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mark Coure'. The signature is fluid and cursive.

The Hon. Mark Coure MP
Minister for Multiculturalism
Minister for Seniors



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Thank you for joining us
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HELEN FREELAND

Message from the Chair



The NSW Centre for Volunteering is very proud to be part of producing *Multicultural Volunteering in New South Wales 2022* which we believe will be an invaluable resource for everyone working in the volunteering sector as well as individuals and organisations that promote and support volunteering. We are grateful for our partnership with the NSW Department of Communities and Justice, Multicultural NSW and the Institute for Project Management with whom we have now published this second significant research report into volunteering in NSW.

Among the many reasons for undertaking research into multicultural volunteering is our recognition that a significant proportion of our Australian community has come from other places, and our appreciation that they contribute different cultural practices and understandings to society. Volunteering reflects this diversity and so in seeking to understand how the experiences of multicultural volunteers are different and the same, we strive to ensure our products and services continue to be relevant and useful to the needs of the sector as a whole as well as the groups that make it up.

As the Peak body, The Centre has roles in advocacy, support services and sector development. The better we understand our stakeholders' needs and interests, the more meaningful will be the impact we have in enabling the sector and the more relevant will be our offerings to volunteer involving organisations and volunteers themselves.

This research tells us a lot about the experiences of people and groups from multicultural backgrounds revealing both quantitative and qualitative data. The voices of volunteers themselves provide new insights into their experiences and how The Centre and other organisations working with and supporting volunteers can enhance their experiences, support in ways that are relevant and promote volunteering more broadly.

The research challenges us to seek a deeper understanding of volunteering and appreciate that differences are enriching but that more nuanced and targeted resources and supports are required to unlock the potential and more fully support multicultural volunteering in NSW.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized 'H' and 'F' intertwined.

Helen Freeland
Board Chair



GEMMA RYGATE

Message from the CEO



I am pleased to present to the sector the inaugural report on Multicultural Volunteering in NSW. This is a significant piece of research for NSW multicultural communities, the volunteering sector and for all who believe in the value and power of volunteering – otherwise known as giving, sharing and helping out in community.

The report provides valuable insights and enlightening evidence which we can use to build a better understanding of the value of volunteering within multicultural communities, including its impact, and the motivations, the challenges, the needs and the benefits within the broader community in NSW.

The findings of the report are significant and reinforce the fact that volunteering is irreplaceable, irrespective of culture, race, upbringing or background. Volunteering is key to driving social connection and cohesion and to building strong and resilient communities. The benefits of volunteering are reciprocal and multi-layered – for multicultural volunteers, the acts of giving are culturally embedded and the recipients are at the centre of the experience, not the volunteer themselves. In turn, these acts of giving reach far further than their own communities, benefiting individuals, groups and communities across the state.

This research is an indicator of how volunteering weaves a cultural fabric that develops deep community connections and support systems, and creates a sense of belonging and social engagement. It is a powerful reminder of how critical the volunteer workforce is and how important it is for government, businesses and the broader community to value, engage with and invest in our sector.

We thank the many individuals, groups and organisations who have contributed to this report as members of the reference group, as researchers and advisors, and who have provided valuable survey information. Together you have played an important role in bringing this research to fruition.

Thank you especially to the NSW Government, the Department of Communities and Justice and Multicultural NSW, for enabling The Centre for Volunteering to undertake this research. Being equipped with data and empirical evidence from which we can highlight the impacts of multicultural volunteering and celebrate diversity, ensures we can work together effectively to shape

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Gemma Rygate".

Gemma Rygate
Chief Executive Officer



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This is an independent report commissioned by The Centre for Volunteering and prepared by the Institute of Project Management. The principal authors are Paul Muller and Dr Rose Kling.

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The analysis and opinions in this report are the views of its authors and third parties. Publication of this document by The Centre for Volunteering does not necessarily reflect the views of The Centre for Volunteering. Nevertheless, it has been written with significant contributions from:

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We would also like to thank the many others, including the focus group and survey participants, who gave their time confidentially.

This report and related collateral can be found at: volunteering.com.au

Introduction

The purpose of this research is to explore the meaning and lived experience of multicultural volunteering in New South Wales (NSW), Australia. Whereas there is an emerging body of Australian and international research on the volunteer experiences of specific ethnic and cultural groups, there is no significant literature on the collective experience of those who do not predominantly identify as Anglo-Australian.

This study extends a collaborative research program undertaken in 2021 by The Centre for Volunteering, the NSW Department of Communities and Justice, and the Institute of Project Management to quantify the economic, social and cultural value of volunteering to the state of New South Wales.¹ Joined now by Multicultural NSW, this project also connects the strategic objectives of adjacent sectoral partners Volunteering Australia (volunteering as an incubator for inclusion)² and the Commonwealth Department of Social Services (increasing the accessibility of volunteering opportunities for First Nations Peoples and newly arrived migrants).³

Through a mixed-method research design, insights were obtained from multicultural volunteers and managers and contrasted with the views and attitudes of Anglo-Australians sharing the same spaces.

Reflecting this, the report is divided into two parts. The first part gives voice via a series of small session focus groups to an eclectic group of sector representatives who identify as multicultural. Drawing on the focus group learnings, the second part reports on the findings of an online survey of a broad cross-section of NSW residents on their volunteering experiences, with specific regard to multicultural intersections.

This study reveals a number of new insights that will confirm with evidence and occasionally challenge the assumptions of those familiar with and new to multicultural volunteering. As the first report of its kind, our findings should be considered indicative rather than definitive. And as much as we are excited by what they tell us about multicultural volunteering in NSW, we also hope they inspire a new direction of volunteering inquiry.

1. The Centre for Volunteering, 2021, *New South Wales State of Volunteering Report*.
2. Volunteering Australia, 2022, *Discovery Insights Report: Co-designing the National Strategy for Volunteering*.
3. Department of Social Services (Cth), 2021, *Volunteer Management Activity*.

A brief history of multiculturalism in NSW

Not every reader will be familiar with the multicultural story of NSW, so a brief and incomplete history is provided here to give context to this report.

The first people to migrate to the Australian continent most likely came from regions in South-East Asia between 40,000 and 60,000 years ago. Descended from Africa, it is estimated these First Nations Peoples comprised around 600 different

tribes speaking 200 distinct dialects by the end of the eighteenth century.⁴

The penal colony of New South Wales was established by the British Empire in Australia in 1788. Despite some records of friendly engagement, the settlers' colonisation systematically dispossessed the land from the First Nations Peoples with violence and oppressive power.

The Chinese notably contributed to the next wave of migration to colonised Australia. This occurred in the second half of the nineteenth century after gold was discovered in 1851 near Bathurst, NSW. In the same period, low-wage immigration and forced migration through slavery saw an increase in the population of Pacific Islanders.⁵ Other notable non-European migrant groups of the period included Malays, Japanese, Afghans and Māori.

From the outset, migrants of colour were treated as second-class citizens, with special taxes and restrictions on work and settlement extensively levied on them. This treatment was enshrined in political doctrine shortly after Federation in 1901 through the White Australia policy. The legislative outputs of this policy gave British migrants preference over all others through the first four decades of the twentieth century,⁶ although there were notable refugee intakes after the First World War from Italy and Yugoslavia (particularly Croatia).⁷

Driven by a new 'populate or perish' philosophy, in the 20 years following the Second World War (1945-1965) two million migrants arrived in Australia, including the first government-sanctioned non-British migrants.⁸ Following the first wave of migrants from southern and eastern Europe, Australia in the 1950s started accepting carefully selected migrants from the Middle East and Asia.

This culminated in 1972 when the quota system, based on country of origin and preservation of racial 'homogeneity', was replaced by 'structured selection'. Migrants were to be chosen according to personal and social attributes and occupational group rather than country of origin.⁹ It is around this time too that the term 'multiculturalism' was popularised.

Notable waves of migration have been driven since that time by refugee crises, including from near neighbours Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and East Timor, as well as more distant countries like Chile, Cyprus, Lebanon, the former Yugoslavia and El Salvador.

More recently, humanitarian groups have been welcomed from the Horn of Africa (Sudan, Eritrea, Somalia), Central Africa, the Middle East and Afghanistan, Burma and Sri Lanka.¹⁰

According to the 2021 Census, the top five self-identified ancestries of NSW residents are:

- English (29.8%)
- Australian (28.6%)
- Irish (9.1%)
- Scottish (7.7%)
- Chinese (7.5%).

In this report, we refer to the most populous ethnic group in NSW as Anglo-Australians (people of predominantly Caucasian appearance, identity or descent).

That said, 29.5% of households in NSW now use a non-English language and 56.3% of residents had at least one birth parent born outside Australia. Contributing to the multicultural makeup of the State, there are also over 200,000 international students from 129 countries studying in NSW, with the top 10 countries of origin, and all but one of the top 17, being from the Asian continent (85.7% of the international student population).

NSW has thus transformed into a State of remarkable ethnic and cultural diversity, and at a tremendous pace over the last 50 years. This report is intended to shine a light on the collective contribution of these multicultural communities, specifically their volunteers.

4. A.N. Williams, 2013, *A New Population Curve for Prehistoric Australia*.

5. Australian Human Rights Commission, 2003, *Australian South Sea Islanders: A Century of Race Discrimination under Australian Law*.

6. Myra Willard, 1967, *The History of the White Australia Policy*.

7. Department of Immigration (Cth), 2017, *A History of the Department of Immigration: Managing Migration to Australia*.

8. National Museum Australia, 2022, *Postwar Immigration Drive*.

9. NSW Migration Heritage Centre, 2010, *Australia's Migration History*.

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11. Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2022, *2021 Census – Cultural Diversity*.

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13. Department of Education (Cth), 2022, *International Student Numbers by Country, by State and Territory*.

PART I: MULTICULTURAL VOLUNTEER FOCUS GROUPS

Methodology

Data collection

Focus group discussions are often used as a qualitative research method as they provide an in-depth understanding of people's perceptions of social issues. The process normally includes purposive sampling to invite participants with knowledge of or experience with the topic under investigation.

Although there is little information in the literature about best practice for focus group techniques in qualitative research, it has often been seen as 'synonymous' with semi-structured individual and group interviews. Focus groups are useful in providing a representation of real life by eliciting the viewpoint of participants through their vocabulary and discussions about specific topics. They enable a breadth of understanding of a topic through a semi-structured question-and-answer process. Focus groups also allow participants to provide details of their own experiences and knowledge of a research topic through facilitated, open-ended and systematic questioning procedures.

The purpose of this research was to investigate multicultural volunteering. Representatives of key industry stakeholders in the multicultural volunteering sector were purposively sampled via an invitation to participate in the research as the target group. Participants were invited from a short list of non-Anglo-Australian, ethnically and culturally diverse practitioner experts in multicultural volunteering advanced by The Centre for Volunteering and Multicultural NSW.

Following the invitation to participate, sixteen (16) individuals self-selected to contribute to the research by attending one of four (4) asynchronous focus group sessions. The focus group sessions were held in late July and early August 2022, with four panellists in each session. Consent was implied by the self-selection of participants to attend a focus group of their choice. Each online Zoom focus group

session was also recorded with the permission of the participants. The total number of participants across the four focus group sessions included nine (9) females and seven (7) males.

Each focus group session ran for 90 minutes and invited discussion on the following questions:

- How do multicultural communities volunteer?
- What is unique or noticeably different about multicultural volunteering?
- What are some of the myths or assumptions others hold about multicultural volunteering?
- What are the barriers to people from multicultural backgrounds volunteering or volunteering more?
- What are the benefits specific to multicultural volunteering?
- How can we make multicultural volunteering bigger and better?

The six open-ended questions were asked, predominantly in the same order, of each focus group. The questions were designed to gather data specific to the topic of interest and explore how different non-Anglo-Australians perceive volunteering, how individuals and community groups approach volunteering, and to identify the predominant forms of volunteering undertaken by members of multicultural communities.

When participants began answering a subsequent question along with a previous question, both questions were then provided again, verbally and in written form (via an online chat mechanism). This maintained a semi-structured approach to the collection of qualitative, open-ended data, and allowed for the experiences and thoughts of participants to be collected seamlessly and to contribute to the rich qualitative data collected.

The advantage of semi-structured focus groups in qualitative research is that they allow for reasonable flexibility and, with the provision of predetermined questions for participants,

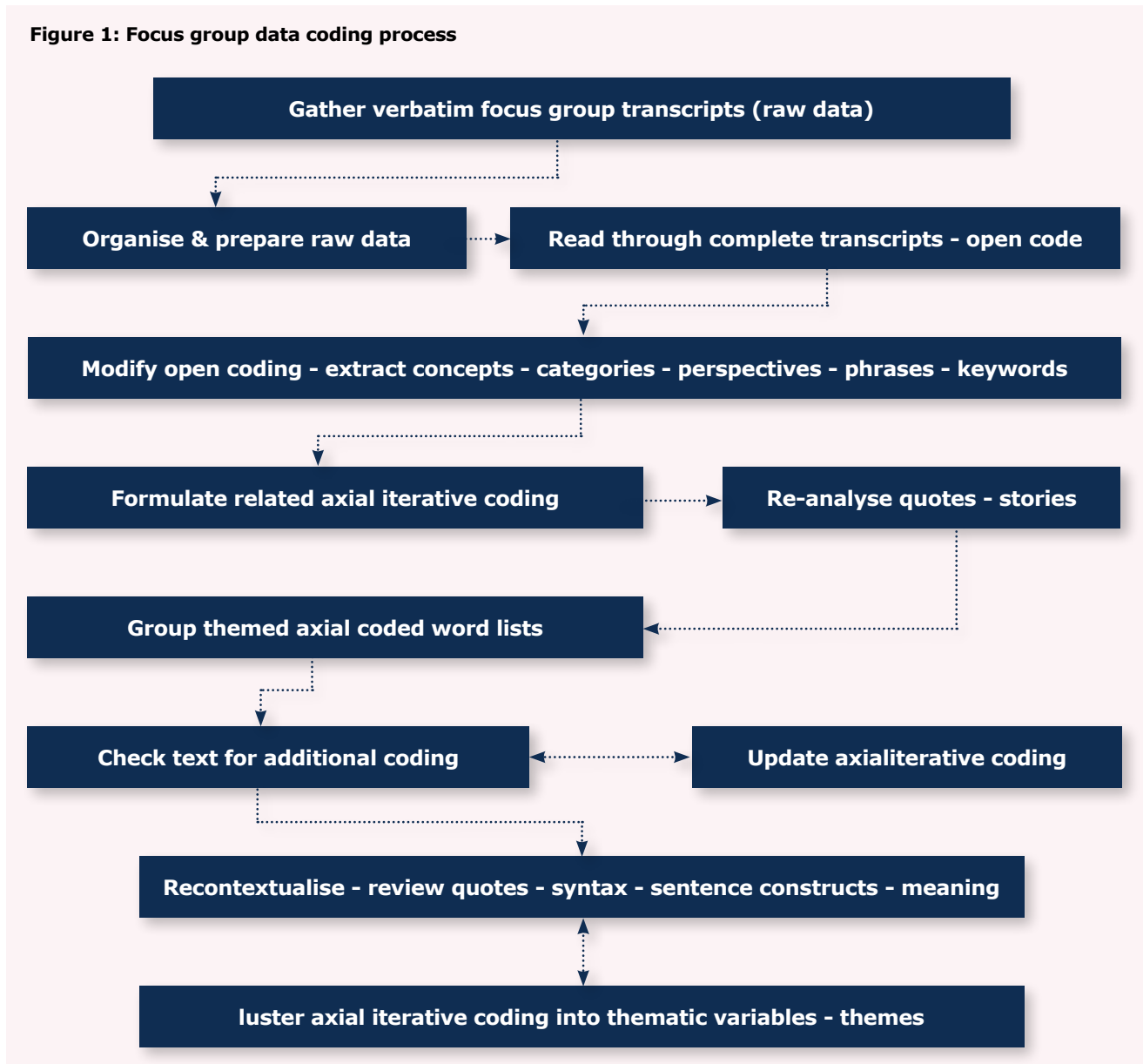
limit distractions. This encourages participants to provide detailed and individually relevant rich responses to the questions.

Verbatim transcripts were professionally extracted from focus group recordings which were then modified using Microsoft Word to exclude pauses, unclear words and filler words such as “er,” “you know” and “um”. In total, approximately 30,000 words of transcript were obtained from the four (4) focus group sessions.

Data analysis

As an iterative and descriptive process, meanings and classification of themes and inductive analyses of speech and language is not a linear process but examines the use of keywords, topic-related sentences, sentence structure, wording or phraseology, emphasis, tone, pausing and pitch. Figure 1 shows the steps conducted to formulate the inductive, qualitative and interpretive initial coding and the process to extract key themes and explanations.

Figure 1: Focus group data coding process



The process commenced with a subjective and holistic analysis of the complete set of data. Under consideration was the intersection between the choice of wording in response to specific questions and the potential to draw themes from similarities in the phraseology housing key words.

This qualitative coding process, where the choice of words in the context of sentence structure was classified into discrete groups or clusters, was then weighted by the prevalence of similar words and phrases in the transcript. Verification followed via reflection, the re-reading of transcripts, cross-referencing and reorganising emerging codes and themes, and checking the coherence of descriptions and their match to the coding. The original analyses were then recoded where necessary and a mind map was devised to represent the relationships formed, themes and tentative conclusions.

Conclusions were then drawn with a final verification and checking that implicit meanings matched the morphological intent of the language used by participants. The last step in the analysis involved a reduction of the text, checking the coherence of evaluation, a final revision and formulation of the final set of coding and related themes.

The following excerpts demonstrate the iterative process for initial analysis, coding and thematic analysis of the focus group data, using responses to three (3) questions from the focus group transcript.

QUESTION 1: How do multicultural communities volunteer?

"...I think we do have a common goal...we want to actually be helpful and useful...we do something willingly not anticipating anything in return...you are actually contributing to the community overall...you have to give your time for the greater good...it's part of the respect, part of your upbringing...part of the culture...it's about the elderly they need support...multicultural communities are very giving and very caring... we have (sic) visiting the sick, it's very important to us. Also looking after the needs, especially the orphans, we have great emphasis on taking care of orphans, taking care of the widows and divorcees. It's responsibility...if we have knowledge, we also need to share the knowledge that we have, and any expertise..."

These extracts were indicative of the common responses captured across all focus group sessions and align to culture and activity, where participants mentioned their upbringing instilled a duty to care for all, to give back to the community.

The types of volunteering (activity) also evident from the transcripts revealed a preference for undertaking volunteering tasks that directly assist members of the local community, immediate family, all immigrants (especially to assist with communication in English), to help the elderly, and to undertake any task needed without expectation of reward or recognition.

- Open coding
 - Background
 - Contributing
 - Expected
 - Caring.
- Themes
 - Culture
 - Activity.

QUESTION 3: What are some of the myths or assumptions others hold about multicultural volunteering?

"...there are a lot of assumptions and prejudice... when you look at someone from a different colour and different multicultural group they don't really understand what volunteers work – what the work is...a lot is judged on English grade...do you look at them by the colour, the way they dress, and geographic area... there's a lot of talent but it is not showcased... given as much publicity...the assumption is that multicultural volunteering isn't really big in Australia...but there are a lot of people who do volunteer...help your family...help your community....it's absolutely huge... it's a myth to say that we don't participate....because in the community so many organisations rely 100% on volunteering..."

Throughout the focus group sessions, the dominant voice was that of a lack of understanding of what multicultural volunteering provides for small and large communities, and the lack of media representation to highlight and educate others on the value of multicultural volunteering.

The quotations above were extracted from long and descriptive statements focusing on the perception that multicultural volunteers lacked the skills or expertise to perform business, managerial or specialised tasks, but that the tasks performed were not as respected as mainstream volunteering activities and that multicultural volunteers had to “prove the extra step...show yourself that you are above that level or the position that they think you are...and earn that respect”.

Also evident were statements centred around the lack of support or training for multicultural volunteers, along with mention of the location of services, transportation, politics and lack of engagement from the community.

- Open coding
 - Not measured
 - Ethnicity
 - Perception
 - Quiet achievers.
- Themes
 - Barriers
 - Support.

QUESTION 5: What are the benefits specific to multicultural volunteering?

“...when you’re hiring somebody, they have already got the soft skills...if you are engaging somebody who is from (an) ethnic background, definitely, he or she will help you professionally...he or she will cater to a greater audience...because they are not born here...if they are coming as a migrant, they don’t take things for granted...we all work together hand in hand when there’s a job to be done we all come in and we all put our hands together and work... our multicultural communities are very giving, and very caring and sometimes we talk about volunteering, it’s such a Western term, but I think our communities do that unconditionally...”

These statements demonstrate how multicultural volunteering is perceived to not only benefit the people directly involved in volunteering, but all multicultural individuals and the wider Australian community.

Other recurring themes in the discussions were that employers benefit from the expertise and experience multicultural volunteers bring to their organisations, and that organisations become more diverse (representing the variety of culture in the Australian population) and more inclusive.

- Open coding
 - Proficient
 - Professional
 - Achievements
 - Respect.
- Themes
 - Benefits
 - Support
 - Culture.

Following the initial coding using open and axial coding and thematic analysis, transcripts were inspected for repetition of terms, phrases or comments and key terms in context. At the end of the process, five evident themes emerged.

Focus group findings

Table 1: Thematic outputs of focus group analysis

Open Coding	Axial Iterative Coding			THEME
Help local communities	contribute	connected	belong	CULTURE
Help family, migrants, refugees	culture	duty	tradition	
First point of contact	country	language	migrants	
Part of DNA, culture, upbringing	responsibility	culture	duty	
Without financial gain, quiet achievers	humble	care	supportive	
Importance of giving for common good	contribute	respect	goal	
Faith is doing good deeds	personal	giving	upbringing	
Work behind the scenes	reward	recognition	humble	ACTIVITY
A lot of talent, brains and resources	proficient	talent	professionals	
Learn to work together	interactions	achievements	respect	
Not measured, perception, assumption	tracking	numbers	political	BARRIERS
Navigate the system	neglected	hard	money	
Language barriers to settlement	different	understand	difficulty	
Assumptions, prejudice, colour, dress, geographic area	racism	born	ancestry	
No difference, nationality, background or status	assume	countries	different	
Ethnicity, racism, shaming, ignorance, obstacles	racism	perceive	identified	
Regional location	overseas	outside	society	
Lack of integration, lack of coexistence	challenging	assumption	disconnection	
Intimidating, confidence	migrant	learning	brave	
Feeling connected	personal	engaged	integrated	BENEFITS
Learning along the way	confident	teach	upskill	
Mix with Western culture	uniqueness	understanding	belong	
Social groups, share experiences	background	uniqueness	opportunity	
Join the community, sense of belonging	wellbeing	neighbourhood	member	
Benefits are enormous, really valuable	country	advantage	return	
Tap into expertise and experiences	advantage	recognition	knowing	SUPPORT
Promote more, education	role	talent	upskill	

Coffs Harbour's
STARTTS volunteers



South Eastern
Community Connect



Wagga Wagga City
Library Language Café



It was evident from the initial review of the raw data that the understanding of multicultural volunteering in multicultural communities is reasonably well defined. However, the understanding of the types of work, the impact on people and communities, and the interpretation of the value of multicultural volunteering are not well defined by the larger community, by government, employers and those external to multicultural communities.

The transcript analysis also provided insights into the perception of the advantages from multicultural volunteering activities, for both those directly benefiting from the work, but also in enhancing and solidifying recognition of Australia's cultural footprint in a global sense.

Here is what we learned.

THEME 1: CULTURE

Volunteering is culturally embedded in multicultural communities. The recipients of acts of volunteering are at the centre of the experience, not the volunteer.

"...it's in the background, for the greater good, respect, part of upbringing, part of culture, becomes a habit, do it without knowing..."

"...I think the key point for most cultures is the humbleness..."

"...multicultural volunteering is (an) intangible cultural and social asset..."

Consistent statements from participants emphasised the cultural importance of giving back to community, of helping not only multicultural groups but being a participatory and useful citizen in the larger Australian community.

A culture of humility was evident in the discourse, as was the sense that many in the larger community lacked understanding that the role undertaken in volunteering was of less importance than the effect on those receiving the assistance.

It was felt that this underlying humility was uniform among all multicultural volunteers, no matter from

where they came, including those born in Australia but whose ancestors were not. The importance of giving for a common good, irrespective of faith, was also evident in the language used.

There was also mention of how culturally apparent humbleness was sometimes misinterpreted to be a lack of confidence in one's ability to complete a task.

THEME 2: ACTIVITY

Acts of volunteering by multicultural communities are sometimes undervalued. The way volunteers culturally behave is sometimes misunderstood.

"...they are helping their family members, their communities, where they happen to be, at churches, mosques, helping whatever community they belong to..."

"...in multicultural communities is about the elderly, they need support and company, someone to talk to, not feel so isolated..."

"...we do something willingly, not anticipating anything in return..."

Consistent throughout the discourse were references to missed opportunities to highlight how multicultural volunteering not only affects those involved, but how it contributes to the diversity in Australia. It was felt that with more assistance and strategic marketing, more volunteers would be engaged, and the positive outcomes broadened.

Again, a similar thread emphasised the possible misinterpretation of undertaking basic tasks as an indicator of the lack of ability to perform higher-level skilled tasks. Also mentioned was the need to step forward and self-promote, as being intimidated or reticent to offer one's expertise was a self-imposed barrier, due to such culturally referenced behaviour.

THEME 3: BENEFITS

"...It's very fulfilling...volunteering is not only that you give but what you take from it. The friendships that you make, and the socialising..."

"...you feel like you are somehow connected to this wider multicultural community..."

"...we just make this society a better and a very interesting place to work and volunteer..."

Participants felt that the social and cultural benefits enabled by multicultural volunteers were not being measured or shared with the wider population. They believed that the recognition (albeit without expected reward) was also lacking in general media and community or government reporting mechanisms. However, a strong sense of belonging, shared experience and being a part of the community were discussed often as a positive and especially valuable outcome from volunteering.

THEME 4: BARRIERS

Multicultural volunteers sometimes feel shut out from 'mainstream' volunteering. This includes exclusion from participation, recognition and decision-making.

"...I think a lot of people want to volunteer, but they don't know how to put their foot in to start..."

"...one of the issue(s) right now is that there's a lack of training, and lack of engagement..."

"...hardly see a positive story of a migrant or multicultural community being shared in the media..."

"...sometimes, if you don't get that support from your local community or from your local people, you don't feel like volunteering..."

An overriding and constant theme arising from the focus group discussion was the need to feel more connected and integrated with 'mainstream' volunteering. Mainstream volunteering was understood here to refer to larger, formal volunteer-involving organisations that were predominantly Anglo-Australian.

Some participants mentioned a lack of coexistence due to the assumptions that people in multicultural

volunteering are providing informal volunteering only, and the capacity to involve them in more formal (and perhaps recognised) volunteering was often limited due to misinterpretation of the worth, ability and value of multicultural volunteers.

THEME 5: SUPPORT

More data on multicultural volunteering needs to be collected. The stories of multicultural volunteers need to be told and shared.

"...multicultural volunteering is a huge component of the volunteering industry... They don't get much help from the outside..."

"...what I feel that there is no good tracking of the amount of volunteers generally, in Australia. There is no registry. I don't know if the government needs to do it or a big registry where anyone who wants to volunteer, they can register and tell what time and day of the week and whatever area they can volunteer..."

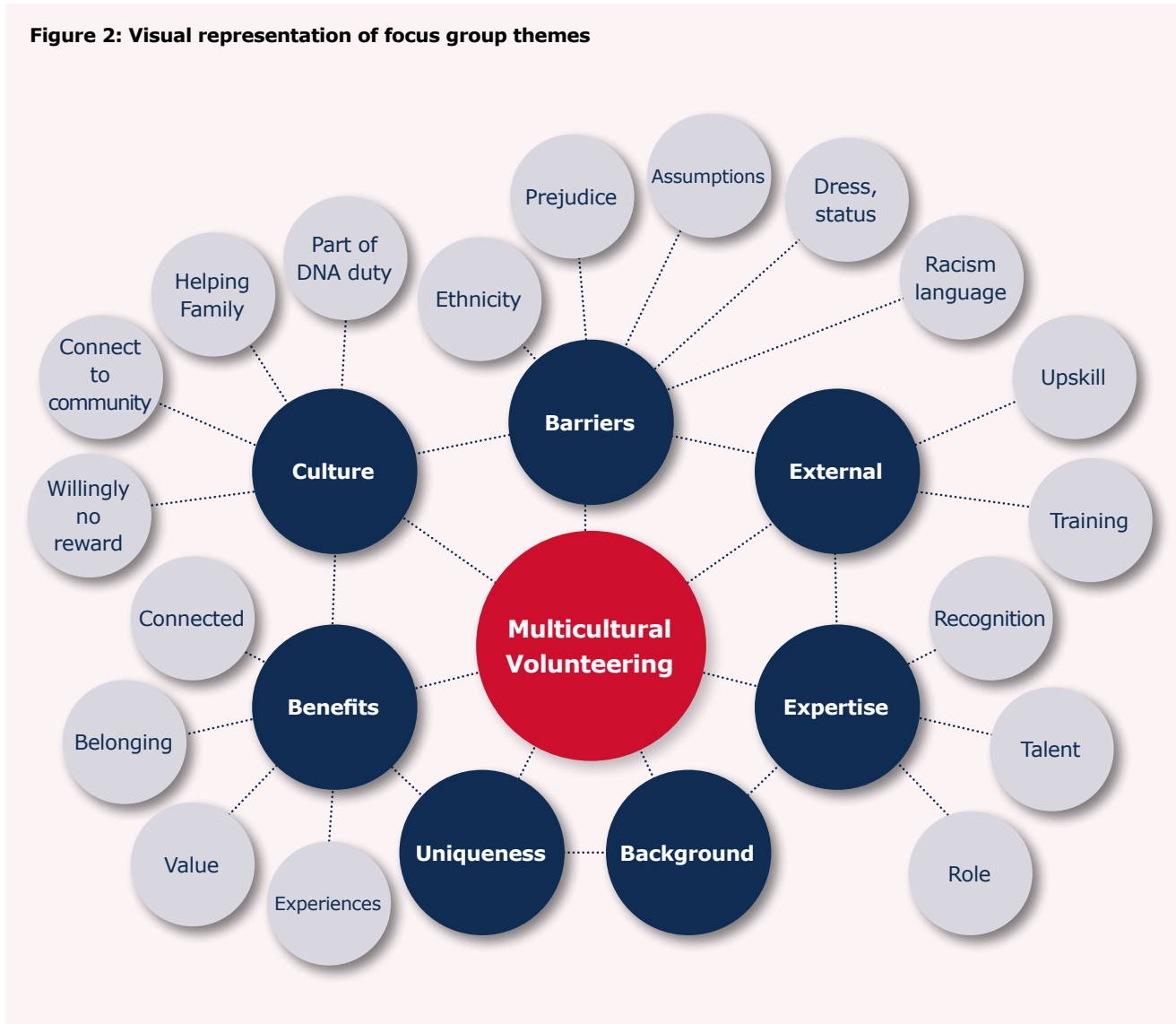
"...I think it needs to be a multi-prong strategy. I think for the young ones, we're going through the social media, Facebook, Instagram, that kind of stuff. And I think it's got to be written in a way that's going to be drawing the young person to want to volunteer for their own community, or the greater community..."

A strong theme that emerged from these discussions was interest in some form of central register to record statistical records of multicultural volunteering. The intent for such a database would be to facilitate the distribution of targeted funding and resources.

Other apparent threads connected to the need for more positive media exposure depicting the types of multicultural volunteering occurring, together with the impact and value of the role it plays in assisting all those accessing the services. Participants considered that, with more positive stories and event promotions in the general media, more volunteers would be encouraged to participate where they previously had either no knowledge of or were unsure how to contribute.

Summary

Figure 2: Visual representation of focus group themes



Consistent with the Australian and international literature on volunteering in ethnic or cultural minority communities, there were numerous mentions of insufficient assistance, incorrect or flawed information, lack of understanding, no media awareness and a feeling of being separated from the mainstream population and its resources.

Yet there was a definite thread of positivity from participants' discussions of experiences with multicultural volunteering. They spoke of their connection to the community and making lasting

friendships and networks from their volunteering activities. There was a strong sense of connection to their own cultures and sharing of experiences in Australia and a wish to give back to the nation.

Lastly, the community of people actively involved with multicultural volunteering, although diverse, were unanimous in feeling as one, no matter their parentage or language. You could also sense through their cultural humility a strong reservoir of cultural pride in their volunteering.

International student leadership and ambassador program



Bankstown Bull Sharks



PART II: SURVEY OF MULTICULTURAL VOLUNTEERS

Methodology

Instrument design

To test the representativeness of the themes revealed by the focus groups, a survey of NSW residents was prepared. Acknowledging that it was almost impossible to perfectly demarcate the population of multicultural versus Anglo-Australian residents, we used the NSW and interstate iterations of the State of Volunteering Report¹⁴ as a baseline to check for response consistency and validity.

In other words, if common questions delivered in each survey were answered consistently, we would have evidence that our data was reliable for extrapolation. As it turned out, there was sufficient consistency between how people answered the State of Volunteering questions and the ones in this study that we were confident in the validity of our data; although, minor exceptions are noted in the analysis that follows.

To those core questions, we added 19 questions in three question groups about the multicultural volunteering experience. These questions drew extensively on the qualitative analysis of Part I of this report and our review of relevant literature.

Two lightning rounds of pilot testing were then conducted with a select group of stakeholders. From that process, we received feedback on improving the plain English readability of the instrument, better nuanced and more relevant examples of volunteering for a multicultural audience, and the more appropriate phrasing of questions that might be culturally sensitive. Design and technical tweaks to the online survey instrument were also actioned.

The survey was then professionally translated by Multicultural NSW into the following 11 languages to promote participation from a broad cross-section of the community:

- Arabic
- Chinese (simplified)
- Chinese (traditional)
- Italian
- Japanese
- Korean
- Nepalese
- Persian (Farsi)
- Punjabi
- Spanish
- Vietnamese.

These languages were chosen with reference to Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data on the most commonly spoken languages in NSW.

The project advisory committee then completed a final review of the survey instrument and approved it for distribution.

Data collection

Our online survey of NSW residents aged 15 years and over was conducted over three weeks in September 2022 using the instrument attached in Appendix B.

Promotion of the survey and project was developed and commenced before survey launch. Extensive outreach was undertaken in advance via cross-promotion of the project and the need for engagement and voices across metropolitan, regional and remote hubs in NSW.

Building on this outreach, local councils, migrant resource centres, multicultural agencies and various other stakeholders assisted in the digital dissemination of the survey through their social

14. The Centre for Volunteering, 2021, *New South Wales State of Volunteering Report*.

media channels, and in print via QR codes at functions, events and local community centres such as libraries and meeting places.

During the survey phase, The Centre for Volunteering supplemented this with a direct digital communications strategy undertaken in house and through collaboration with the aforementioned stakeholders. Promotion continued through newsletters, direct engagement via phone and a multi-pronged social media campaign across a variety of channels.

The social media promotions were two-faceted, including general awareness and a specific campaign for migrant/multicultural and culturally and linguistically diverse communities across NSW. These communications were in languages such as Chinese Simplified, Chinese Traditional, Arabic, Vietnamese, Spanish and Korean. On the ground, The Centre collaborated with community leaders, volunteer-involving organisations and social groups. They also conducted focus groups to promote the survey and ask participants to share it among their networks.

This strategy also took into account that terminology such as 'giving', 'helping' and 'sharing' are more commonly used in multicultural communities than the term 'volunteering'. We therefore provided examples of the different types of activity we intended with the term volunteering, advocating that all were relevant to our interest.

Data management

Within the survey itself, response options were randomised for participants to eliminate bias, and numeric entry fields were capped with reasonable limits to prevent the overstatement of value. The following individual survey responses were also excluded from our analysis:

- Responses commenced before the survey officially opened on 29 August (pilot and test responses)
- Responses that did not complete through to at least Q10: *In the last 12 months, how did you volunteer your time?*
- Responses to the postcode question (Q4) that were outside of NSW.

Eligible responses to the postcode question (Q4) were recategorised as being either within Greater Sydney or the Rest of NSW.

After 'cleaning' the data, a sample of 835 responses ($n = 835$) was available to us to analyse.

To reflect the population distribution, results were post-weighted to ABS data on NSW residents' age, gender and place of residence (Greater Sydney or Rest of NSW).¹⁵ Following the application of post-stratification weights, chi-square goodness of fit tests revealed non-significant differences for all of age (Q1), gender (Q2) and place of residence (Q3), suggesting that the weighted sample was adequately representative of the NSW population.

In the analysis that followed, it was found that the responses regarding hours of paid work (Q4) and household income (Q5) were not significantly predictive of volunteer behaviour or attitudes. For that reason, they are not discussed further in our report.

An individual's ethnic and cultural identity (Q6-9), however, was significant to how they engaged with volunteering. To aid analysis, we created the following categories of respondents:

- Anglo-Australian ($n = 284$)
- Multicultural ($n = 547$).

Note that the effect of weighting means that the sum of respondents in a category may not always equal the overall sample size.

Multicultural respondents were then sub-categorised as being either fluent in English or with English as an additional language (EAL). Those who identified as non-Anglo-Australian (Q7) and speaking and writing English at a professional or native level (Q9) were sub-categorised as Multicultural fluent ($n = 400$), with all other non-Anglo-Australian respondents sub-categorised as Multicultural EAL ($n = 147$). A total of 92 different ethnic and cultural identities were reported by respondents (Q8).¹⁶

It should finally be noted that the quotes included in the findings that follow are lifted from the focus group discussions, showing the strong connection between the two phases of this research.

15. Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2022, *2021 Census – Cultural Diversity*.

16. See the Glossary in Appendix A for brief explanations of the statistical shorthand used in this report.

Multicultural volunteering participation

How do multicultural residents of NSW volunteer?

There are significant differences in how people self-identify as a volunteer. These differences impact research into volunteering. For example, the 2021 census found that 14.1% of Australian residents, "Did voluntary work through an organisation or group (last 12 months)."¹⁷ By contrast, the ABS General Social Survey found that, "One quarter (25%) of Australians aged 15 years and over participated in unpaid voluntary work through an organisation in 2020."¹⁸

These differences are not trivial and are largely attributable to how the question is asked. To address this issue, Volunteering Australia (VA) defined volunteering in 2015 as, "Time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain."¹⁹

Despite its elegance, this definition inevitably benefits from clarification through enumerative examples. Various State of Volunteering Reports have used VA guidance²⁰ to make their definition more tangible when presented to research participants. This has resulted in consistent, repeatable findings of community participation in both formal and informal volunteering of 70-80% of the population.²¹

It was also noted by our focus group participants that there may be different ethnic and cultural interpretations of the word 'volunteer'. For that reason, we took feedback from our pilot survey group to slightly modify the equivalent State of Volunteering Report question to better align multicultural experiences (that may or may not be regarded in their communities as volunteering) with the VA definition.

Question 10 ultimately asked of survey respondents:

Volunteering is defined here as "time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain."

Volunteering is helping someone or something.

You do not receive money for this, but maybe someone pays for your food, travel or other costs.

It includes volunteering organised by your employer or school.

It does not include work you do to receive a government allowance (like work for the dole) or as part of a court order (like community service).

It does not include only helping your family or people living in your house.

An example that is not volunteering: helping your flat-mate, cousin or sister with their homework.

An example that is volunteering: coaching your child's football team, because people outside your household and family also benefit.

In the last 12 months, how did you volunteer your time?

Tick all that apply, including any regular, occasional, spontaneous or one-off volunteering you did

- Home support (for example: domestic work, home maintenance or unpaid child care)
- Resource support (for example: meal sharing, translation, transport or running errands)
- Emotional support (for example: personal care, assistance or companionship)
- Teaching or coaching (for example: as an unpaid mentor, advisor or leader)
- Administrative support (for example: fundraising, book-keeping or customer service)
- Skilled support (for example: construction, IT or other industry expertise)
- Emergency support (for example: during a pandemic or natural disaster)
- Sports (for example: coaching, officiating, managing or providing transport)
- Advocacy (for example: creating or sharing media, campaigning or protesting)
- Governance (for example: as an unpaid official, board or committee member)
- Environmental or animal protection (for example: clean-up, rescue or rehabilitation)
- Other community contribution (for example: religious service, pastoral care or sharing culture)
- I did not or could not volunteer in the last 12 months

Only 6.6% of survey respondents indicated that they did not volunteer in the last 12 months. This is a very low number of non-volunteers relative to the comparable findings of the State of Volunteering Report (20-30%).

This would indicate that our data collection methodology is biased towards volunteers. Therefore, population-level assumptions that might flow from this – such as inferences about the number of multicultural volunteers in NSW – cannot be made.

That said, our purpose is not to compare volunteers with non-volunteers. Our purpose is to better understand the characteristics of multicultural volunteering in NSW.

Figure 3 reveals how those respondents who do not identify as Anglo-Australian volunteer. *Teaching and coaching* was the top category for both groups of multicultural volunteers – those with and without English language fluency. After that, multicultural

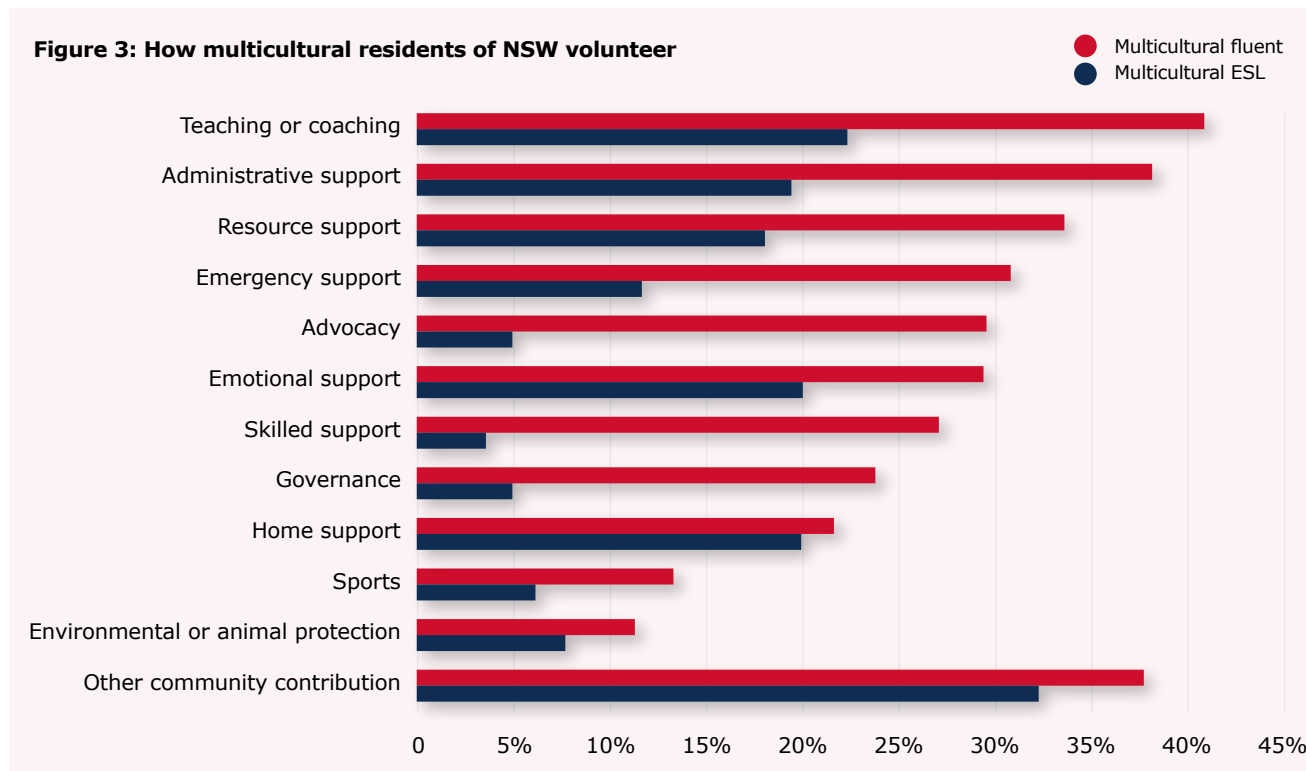
EAL volunteers preferred *providing home or emotional support*, whereas those with fluency participated in a much broader range of activities.

On average, multicultural fluent respondents reported volunteering in 3.5 different categories, suggesting a high level of diversity in how they volunteer. Multicultural EAL respondents, however, reported volunteering in just 2.3 different categories.

The very high number of respondents in both groups who indicated that they make an *'other community contribution'* implies more work needs to be done to develop a taxonomy of acts of multicultural volunteering.

For that reason, these findings should be considered more indicative than determinative.

"...volunteering is a great way of getting connected and meeting different people..."



17. Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2022, *2021 Census – Unpaid work and care*.
 18. Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021, *General Social Survey: Summary Results, Australia*.
 19. Volunteering Australia, 2022, <https://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/resources/definition-of-volunteering>
 20. Volunteering Australia, 2015, *Definition of Volunteering FAQs*; *Volunteering Australia, 2017, Definition of Volunteering FAQs Supplement*.
 21. The Centre for Volunteering, 2022, *NSW State of Volunteering Report*.

Willoughby City Council
MOSAIC Multicultural Centre



Who do multicultural residents of NSW volunteer with?

Question 11 asked:

In the last 12 months, who did you volunteer with? *Tick all that apply*

- Not-for-profit organisations such as sporting clubs; environment, conservation and animal welfare groups; special interest or hobby groups; youth groups; political parties; charities
- Religious or faith-based groups such as congregations, places of worship, charities or service organisations
- Government services such as public schools, hospitals, emergency or local government agencies
- Private/commercial businesses such as non-government schools, aged care facilities, festivals or events
- Individuals, interests, issues or the environment without assistance from any of the above

Figure 4 shows that almost seven out of every eight multicultural respondents volunteered with not-for-profit organisations (86.7%). Those with non-native English were next most likely to volunteer with religious or faith-based groups, whereas those with English fluency preferred government services and non-organisational volunteering.

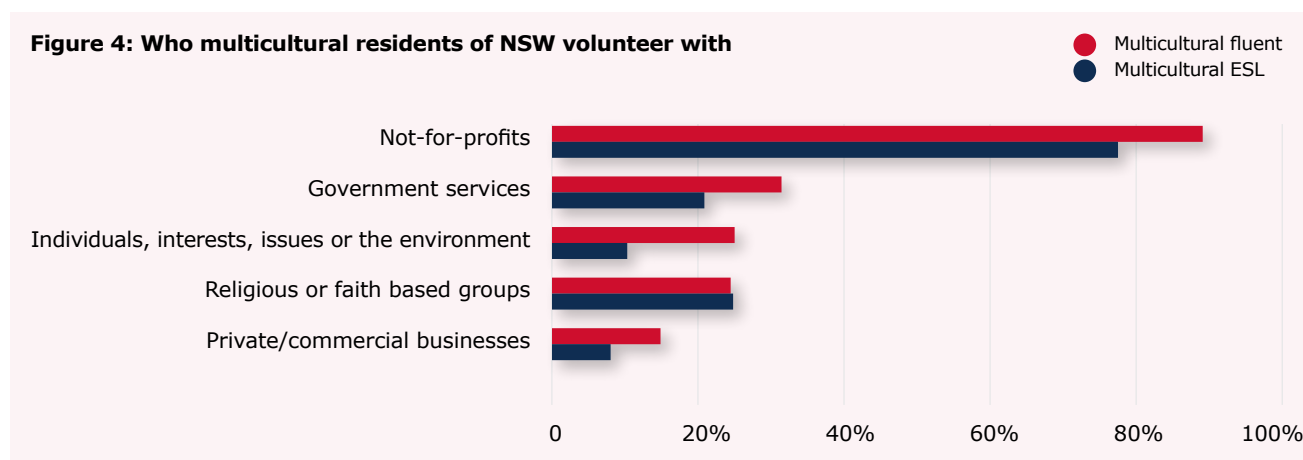
On average, multicultural respondents reported volunteering in 1.7 different categories of the five available choices.

Of interest here is the fact that we have conflated the traditional distinction of formal and informal volunteering,²² meaning that these findings are not directly comparable with other work in this space, including the State of Volunteering Reports. This was done in response to strong and uncontested feedback from multiple sources that the labels of formal and informal volunteering would be confusing or irrelevant to many multicultural respondents.

Our new, catch-all classification for 'informal' volunteering was response option five: *Individuals, interests, issues or the environment without assistance from any of the above*. Relative to other research, our finding that 21.3% of all multicultural volunteers do so informally is quite low – in the NSW State of Volunteering Report, 89.8% of all respondents indicated they volunteer informally.²²

More work teasing out meaningful definitions of informal volunteering is therefore necessary for a complete appreciation of multicultural volunteering in NSW.

"...around 90% of the time, they volunteer for their friends... and all without thinking that they are actually volunteering..."



22. The ABS defines 'formal volunteering' as unpaid voluntary work through an organisation and 'informal volunteering' as the provision of unpaid work/support to non-family members outside of the household.
 23. The Centre for Volunteering, 2022, *NSW State of Volunteering Report*.

How much do multicultural residents of NSW volunteer?

Questions 12 and 13 asked respondents to estimate the number of hours they volunteer over defined periods.

On average, how many hours do you regularly volunteer each month?

Enter 0 hours if you did not regularly volunteer

In the last 12 months, how many hours did you occasionally or spontaneously volunteer?

This includes volunteering for a project, event or season; or filling a special or urgent need

Enter 0 hours if you did not occasionally or spontaneously volunteer

Given the previously noted bias of the sample towards those who volunteer, it is also likely that our respondents typically volunteer more than the average resident of NSW. For that reason, we should not make assumptions from our data about the volume of multicultural volunteering in the State.

That said, even though our data does not allow us to make estimates of volunteering quantity, we will use information about how much each individual volunteers to make estimates of tendency later in this report.

For reference, the State of Volunteering Report found in 2020 NSW residents volunteered an average of 5.8 hours per week, or 25 hours each month.²⁴

"...many of us just drop the children at school and come straight and spent the day from 9am to 2:30pm (volunteering), just to leave to pick up the children..."

How much do multicultural residents of NSW spend on their volunteering?

The bias of our sample towards volunteers again means that we cannot generalise for the population of NSW from respondents' reported expenditure (Q19-21).

24. The Centre for Volunteering, 2022, *NSW State of Volunteering Report*.
25. The Centre for Volunteering, 2022, *NSW State of Volunteering Report*.

Nevertheless, our analysis revealed a statistically significant, strong positive correlation between the hours an individual volunteered and their gross expenditure on the activity. This means that the hours a person spent volunteering explained over half (53.4%) of the variability in the monthly expenses incurred by a volunteer.

Given the collinearity of volunteer hours and expenditure, in the analysis that follows we exclusively rely on volunteer hours when making relevant estimates of tendency.

For reference, the State of Volunteering Report found in 2020 NSW residents spent an average of approximately \$1,900 on their volunteering.²⁵

Where do multicultural residents of NSW volunteer?

Question 14 asked:

Where do you volunteer?

Ensure your total adds up to 100%

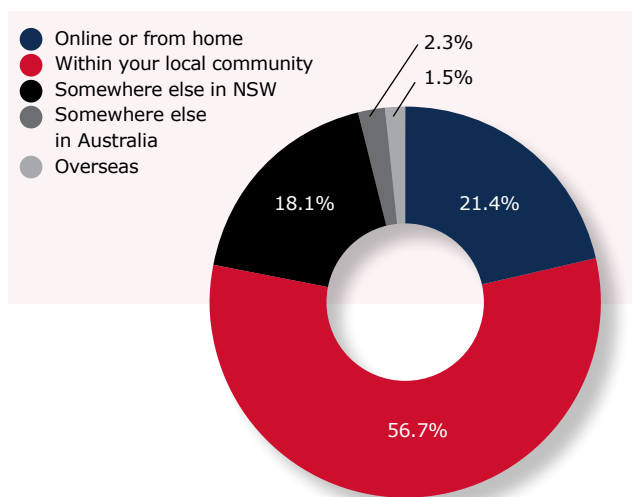
- Online or from home _____
- Within your local community _____
- Somewhere else in NSW _____
- Somewhere else in Australia _____
- Overseas _____

An algorithm in the survey software ensured answers summed to 100% before allowing respondents to continue.

The differences in where multicultural residents of NSW volunteered by English language fluency were within the margin of error and not statistically significant.

Figure 5 shows that over three-quarters of volunteering by multicultural residents of NSW occurred either at home or within their local communities. It should be noted that even though many travel restrictions had been lifted at the time of the survey, the proximity of our data collection period to the COVID-19 pandemic means that this finding should not be considered 'typical'.

Figure 5: Where multicultural residents of NSW volunteer



Why do multicultural residents of NSW volunteer?

Question 15 invited respondents to consider a range of volunteer motivations. This taxonomy was developed from the extant literature on volunteer motivations and repeatedly tested in the State of Volunteering Reports.

Feedback from the pilot rounds of testing in this survey helped simplify the language and added a new classification, "For social status or reward". This inclusion allowed us to test the hypothesis of focus and pilot group participants that multicultural volunteers do not volunteer for social status or reward.

"...they don't think about the financial gain, or any reward or recognition..."

Response options were presented in a random order to each survey participant and respondents were not restricted in how many options they could select.

Why do you volunteer?

Tick all that apply

- For social and community connection
- To develop new skills or gain work experience
- To gain confidence
- To use my skills and experience
- Because I am expected or required to

- To help others
- For religious or cultural connection
- To support a cause
- For enjoyment
- To be active
- For social status or reward
- Other reasons

Figure 6 reveals that the top two motivations for all multicultural volunteers in NSW were to *help others* and for *social and community connection*. For EAL volunteers, *the opportunity to use my skills and experience* was the next strongest motivator. More so than English language fluent multicultural volunteers, EAL volunteers were also motivated by the opportunity to gain confidence.

Whereas neither group was particularly motivated by social status or reward, there was an observable difference in that 12.9% of EAL volunteers felt that this was important versus 9.7% of those with English language fluency.

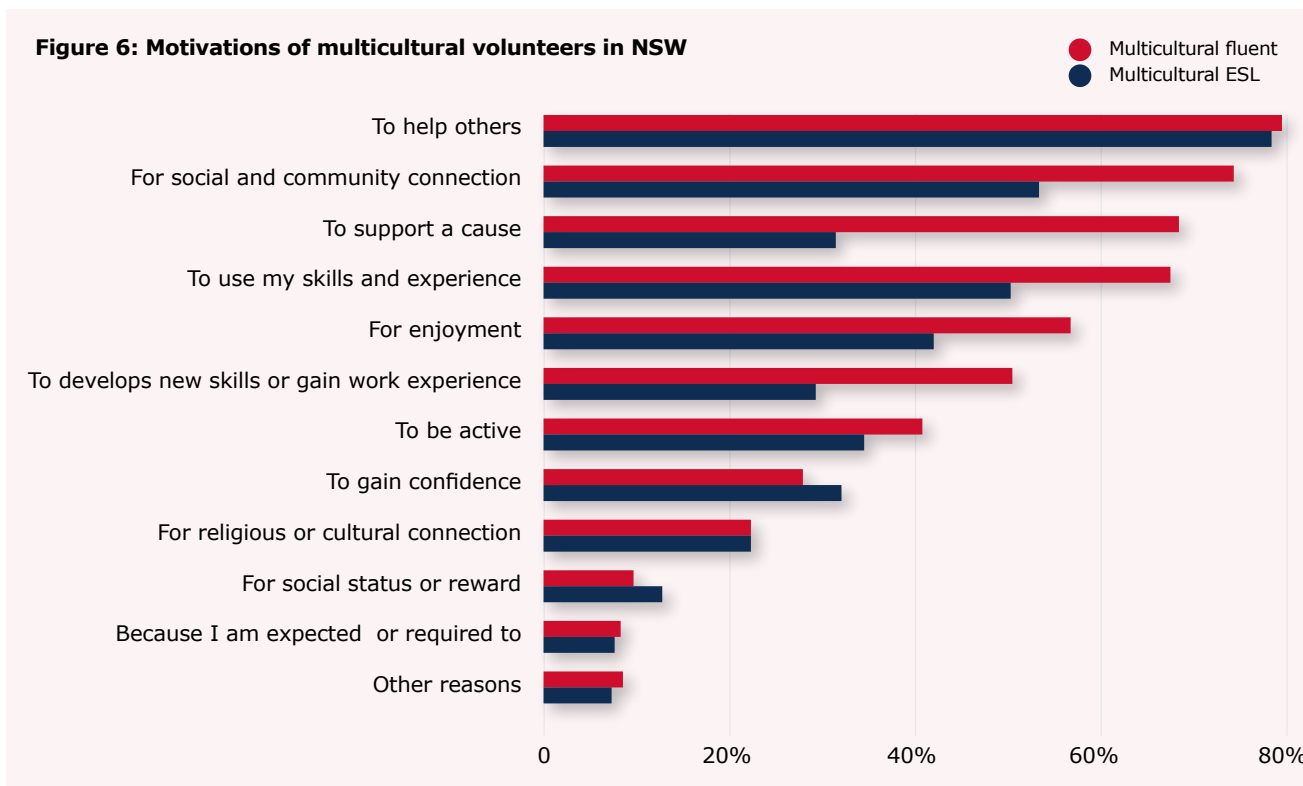
Also of interest was the theme repeated in both our focus groups and the literature that many cultures see volunteering as fundamentally embedded in their way of life, rather than as a distinct activity. Depending on your perspective, this is either consistent or inconsistent with the finding that less than 10% of all multicultural volunteers did so because they felt *expected or required to*.

The very low number of respondents in both groups who indicated that they have 'other reasons' for volunteering (8.3%) implies this taxonomy of motivations is sufficient for multicultural volunteering research.

On average, multicultural respondents with English language fluency reported 5.2 different motivations for volunteering, versus 4.0 motivations for multicultural respondents without English language fluency. This would suggest to volunteer-involving organisations and advocacy groups that it is inappropriate to pitch volunteering to multicultural communities as good for just one reason.

Whereas someone might look at Figure 6 and conclude we need to target the top three motivations when looking to appeal to multicultural volunteers, there may in fact be significant duplication in the

Figure 6: Motivations of multicultural volunteers in NSW



responses. In other words, the same group of people are preferring the top three motivators, and a different group of people are motivated by the next three in the ordered list.

TURF analysis (total unduplicated reach and frequency) is a statistical technique that ranks combinations of options by how many unique people will like these combinations. In other words, it looks at the least amount of overlap across options to optimise the top three messages that will appeal to a maximum number of potential and actual multicultural volunteers.

For example, TURF analysis explains why you will almost universally see vegan options on a menu. A vegan meal might be the least purchased dish on a menu, but if there is a group of five people in a dining party and one is vegan, they will only go to restaurants that have at least one vegan meal.

So, what does TURF analysis of the motivations of multicultural volunteers reveal?

If a volunteer-involving organisation wants to run

a campaign that appeals to the largest pool of multicultural volunteers, these are the values they should promote, in order of priority:

- To help others (63.0% of the population)
- For social and community connection and to help others (73.3% of the population)
- For social and community connection, to use my skills and experience and to help others (75.2% of the population)
- To use my skills and experience, to help others, to support a cause and for enjoyment (76.7% of the population).

Given the significant overlap created by people giving an unlimited number of motivations, the benefit of adding each additional response is marginal, in that the value added by each new option is proportionally less than the one previously added.

It is ultimately up to the individual volunteer-involving organisation to choose the optimal number of messages that align with their unique brand in a way that does not clutter or confuse potential volunteers.

Western Sydney MRC Volunteers



What are the barriers to volunteering for multicultural residents of NSW?

Question 22 looked at the flipside to motivation and asked people what stops them giving more time as a volunteer.

Focus and pilot group feedback saw us extend the State of Volunteering Report taxonomy to give respondents the following modified or new options to choose from:

- Limited language or practical skills
- Cultural traditions
- Lack of confidence
- Burnout (over-volunteering).

Once again, response options were presented in a random order to each survey participant and respondents were not restricted in how many options they could select.

What stops you giving more time as a volunteer?

Tick all that apply

- No time (for example: family / work / study commitments)
- No transport
- Costs
- Health reasons
- Limited language or practical skills
- Bad experiences volunteering
- Cultural traditions
- Lack of confidence
- Burnout (over-volunteering)
- Government restrictions / requirements
- Not interested in volunteering more
- Not interested in the other volunteering options in my area
- Not sure how / never been asked

Our analysis of responses to this question included non-volunteers, but the low number of non-volunteer respondents means that we cannot make meaningful assumptions about their barriers in isolation.

Figure 7 reveals quite stark differences in the barriers to volunteering between multicultural persons who are fluent and non-fluent in English.

As expected, multicultural EAL volunteers cite their *limited language or practical skills* and *lack of confidence* as disproportionately significant barriers to them volunteering more or at all. Interestingly, though, just only 58.2% of this cohort (as opposed to 79.2% of multicultural volunteers fluent in English) cite time as a constraint. One notable constraint for EAL volunteers is that they are *not sure how to volunteer or never have been asked*.

Burnout (over-volunteering) is the second biggest barrier to fluent English speakers volunteering more (30.5%), whereas it hardly rates a mention for EAL volunteers (3.5%). Taken together, the facts that EAL volunteers are *not sure how to volunteer or never have been asked* and are not significantly *over-volunteering* suggest there is likely to be surplus capacity for volunteering in this segment of the market.

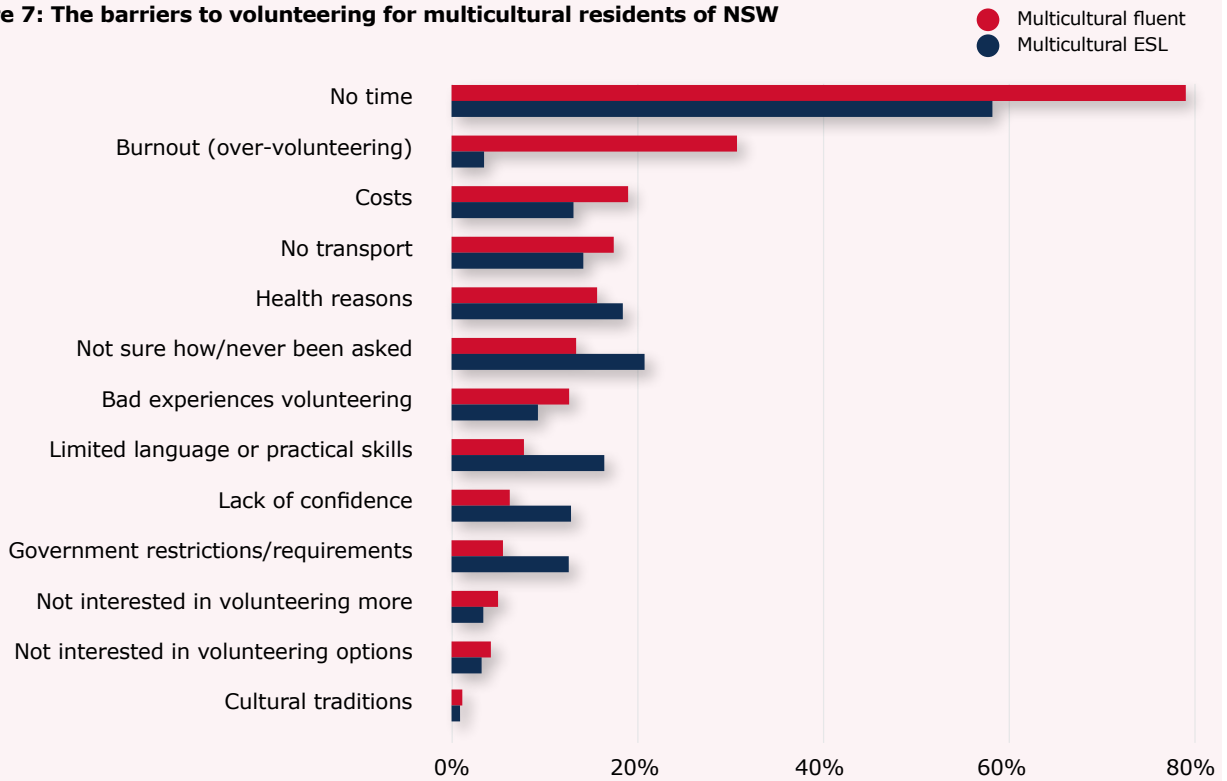
Importantly, neither cohort feels especially restricted by *cultural traditions*²⁶ when it comes to volunteering (1.0%), even though focus group participants suggested that some volunteer-involving organisations appear reluctant to embrace multicultural volunteers because of their perception of this as a barrier.

On average, multicultural respondents consistently reported 2.1 different barriers to volunteering. This is markedly less than the sum of motivations reported and may suggest that removing just one or two barriers for an individual may notably impact their capacity to volunteer.

TURF analysis can further guide volunteer-involving organisations or advocacy groups looking to remove barriers to volunteering. Given the significant difference in barriers perceived by EAL and fluent English speakers, it is useful to run separate TURF analyses for each cohort. And even though the biggest barrier to multicultural residents of NSW volunteering is time, our TURF

26. Examples of cultural traditions that could theoretically prevent or limit a person's volunteering might include conflicts between religious or cultural attire (such as a hijab or kirpan) and volunteer uniform requirements, or religious or cultural observances (such as Ramadan) or dietary restrictions (such as vegetarian or kosher food) not allowed for by volunteer-involving organisations.

Figure 7: The barriers to volunteering for multicultural residents of NSW



analyses assume it is not within the capability of volunteer-involving organisations or advocacy groups to create more time.

For multicultural residents of NSW who are fluent in English, the barriers that should be targeted for the greatest potential impact are, in priority order:

- Burnout (24.2% of the population)
- Not sure how / never been asked and burnout (33.9% of the population)
- Not sure how / never been asked, health reasons and burnout (40.7% of the population)
- Not sure how / never been asked, no transport, health reasons and burnout (47.2% of the population).

For multicultural EAL residents of NSW, the barriers that should be targeted for the greatest potential impact are, in priority order:

- Not sure how / never been asked (14.0% of the population)

- Not sure how / never been asked and health reasons (25.6% of the population)
- Not sure how / never been asked, health reasons and limited language or practical skills (32.6% of the population)
- Not sure how / never been asked, costs, health reasons and limited language or practical skills (36.1% of the population).

Given the limited overlap between responses, the optimisation opportunity is much lower for both cohorts than it is with motivations.

"...we have very less ethnic channels, and especially living in additional place, I find that you don't have a flexibility or luxury of having an ethnic radio or something like that. So, you don't get to know the opportunities where you can volunteer..."

Afghan Peace Foundation



AASHA Foundation



AASHA
Australia Foundation Limited
ABN 59608970645 ACN 608970645



CARING FOR PEOPLE WHO
CARED FOR US
AND
FACILITATING CULTURALLY
APPROPRIATE CARE

Proudly Supported By



AIMS
A Acceptance
A Advice
S Support
H Help
A Assistance

What is the future volunteering intent of multicultural residents of NSW?

To determine the future volunteering intent of the multicultural residents of NSW, we asked the following question (Q23):

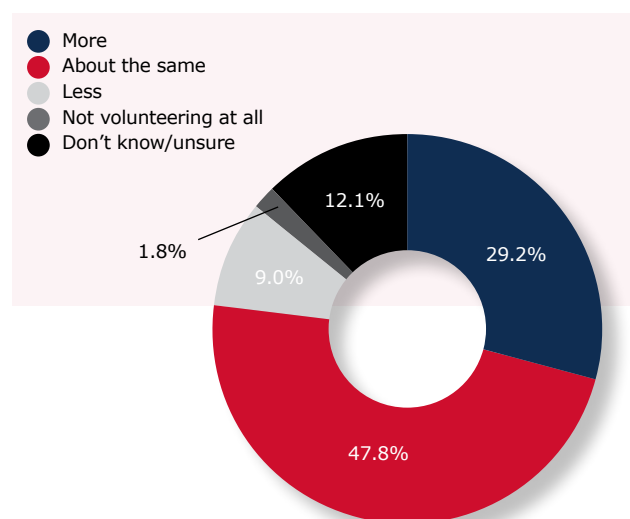
Finally, in 3 years' time are you likely to be volunteering more or less than you did in the last 12 months?

- More
- About the same
- Less
- Not volunteering at all
- Don't know / unsure

The differences in the volunteering intent of multicultural residents of NSW by English language fluency were within the margin of error and not statistically significant.

Figure 8 shows respondents were largely positive when asked whether, in three years, they were likely to be volunteering more or less than they did in the last 12 months; 77.0% of multicultural respondents (including non-volunteers) stated they would be volunteering about the same or more in three years.

Figure 8: Future volunteering intent of multicultural residents of NSW



Summary

Our enquiry into how the multicultural residents of NSW volunteer has revealed the following.

- They predominantly volunteer in not-for-profit organisations.
- Most of their volunteering occurs within their local community.
- Beyond their desire to help others, their main motivation for volunteering is for community connection.
- They are generally optimistic about their future intentions to volunteer.

For multicultural volunteers who are fluent in English, additional findings emerged.

- They volunteer most frequently by teaching, coaching, or providing administrative or resource support.
- Another of their main motivations to volunteer is to support a cause.
- A lack of time and burnout are the main things preventing them from volunteering more.

Multicultural volunteers without English language fluency told us the following.

- There tends to be less diversity in how they volunteer, giving (in relative terms) much more home and emotional support than their English-speaking peers.
- Another of their main motivations to volunteer is to use their skills and experience.
- A lack of time is also the main thing preventing them from volunteering more, but many of them are just not sure how to volunteer more or have never been asked.

In the next chapter, we will continue to explore how these two groups perceive the act of volunteering through the lens of multiculturalism. We will also consider the impact of other demographics on these perceptions.

Perceptions of multicultural volunteering

In this section, we analysed the responses to a series of subjective questions put to participants regarding their experiences with and perceptions of multicultural volunteering in NSW.

Using a statistical technique known as regression analysis,²⁷ we looked beyond descriptive tallies of frequency to see if there was correlation between an individual's response and any of their following demographic attributes:

- Age
- Gender
- Place of residence
- Ethnic identity
- English language fluency
- Hours volunteered.

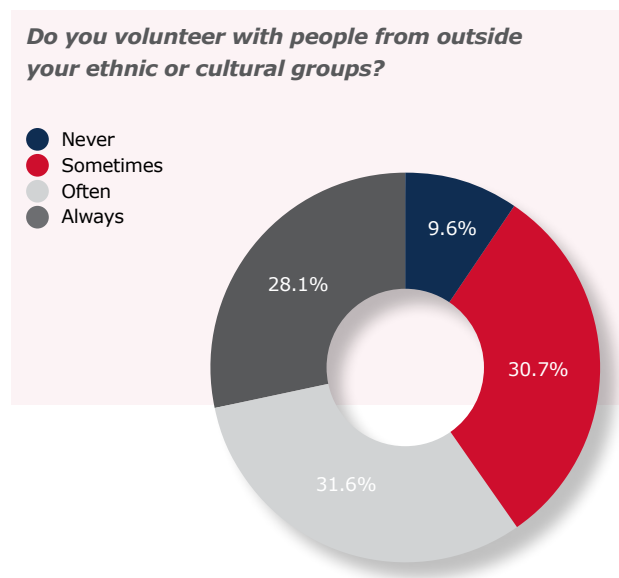
In other words, do any of these variables reliably predict how a person is likely to answer each of the questions under examination?

As it will be shown, not every factor was determinative in every instance; however, a number of revelations will be of interest to practitioners and are worthy of further research.

Ethnic or cultural diversity in volunteering

Figure 9 shows 90.4% of NSW residents volunteer outside their ethnic or cultural groups.

Figure 9: Ethnic or cultural diversity in volunteering in NSW



The following statistically significant effects were observed.²⁸

- A multicultural resident of NSW was more likely than someone identifying as Anglo-Australian to volunteer outside their ethnic or cultural group.
- A person under 45 was more likely than an older person to volunteer outside their ethnic or cultural group.
- A person fluent in English was more likely than an EAL volunteer to volunteer outside their ethnic or cultural group.

Gender, place of residence and hours volunteered had no statistically significant effect on the odds of a person volunteering outside their ethnic or cultural group.

"...we all work together hand in hand when there's a job to be done. We all come in and we all put our hands together and work. And there is no difference between nationality, background or status..."

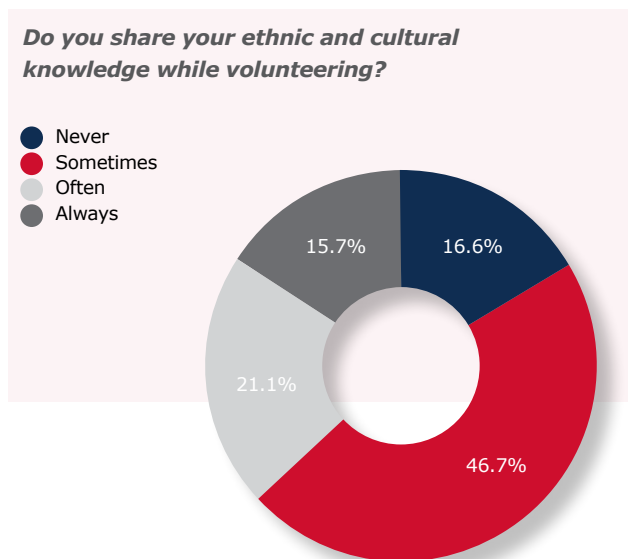
27. Although the preference is always to run a cumulative odds ordinal logistic regression with proportional odds, when the assumption of proportional odds is not met (using the test of parallel lines), we revert to multinomial logistic regression analysis.

28. Statistical significance is defined in this report to mean there is a less than one-in-twenty chance that the result occurred by chance alone ($p < 0.05$).

Ethnic or cultural knowledge sharing while volunteering

Given that 90.4% of NSW residents volunteer outside their ethnic or cultural groups (Figure 9), volunteering presents a significant opportunity for ethnic and cultural knowledge sharing. Figure 10 shows 83.4% of NSW residents share their ethnic and cultural knowledge while volunteering.

Figure 10: Ethnic or cultural knowledge sharing while volunteering in NSW



The following statistically significant effects were observed.

- Females were more likely than males to share their ethnic or cultural knowledge while volunteering.
- Residents of Greater Sydney were more likely than residents living in the rest of NSW to share their ethnic or cultural knowledge while volunteering.
- A multicultural resident of NSW volunteering was more likely than someone identifying as Anglo-Australian to share their ethnic or cultural knowledge while volunteering.
- A person over 45 was more likely than a younger person to share their ethnic or cultural knowledge while volunteering.
- A person who volunteers more than the average number of regular volunteer hours each month was more likely than their counterpart to share their ethnic or cultural knowledge while volunteering.

A person’s English language fluency had no statistically significant effect on the odds of them sharing their ethnic or cultural knowledge while volunteering.

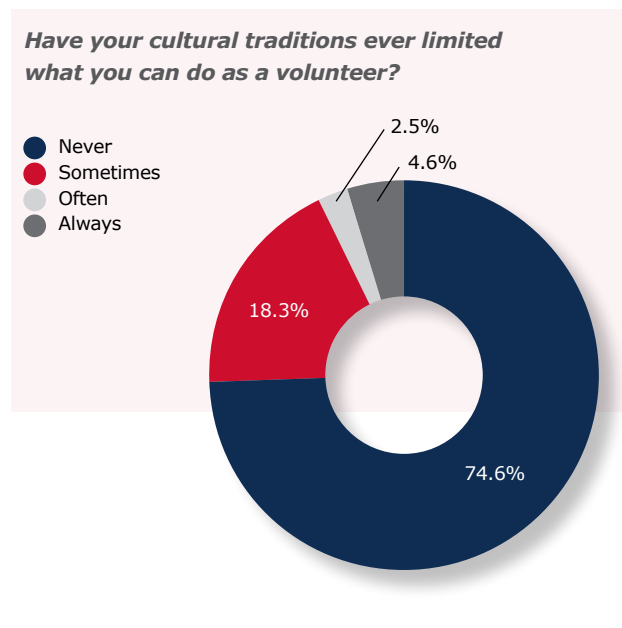
“...we bring a lot of different experience, different values, different way of living... we are all (a) mixed pot...”

Cultural traditions as a constraint on volunteering

We have previously determined that cultural traditions are not a particularly relevant **barrier** to multicultural volunteering in NSW, with 1.0% of the multicultural population identifying it as such. Figure 11 nevertheless shows one-quarter (25.4%) of NSW residents perceive cultural traditions to be a **constraint** on their volunteering.

We take this to mean that whereas a person’s ethnic or cultural identity will only prevent a person volunteering in exceptional circumstances, that identity may limit the nature or frequency of their volunteering (in ways that can be accommodated).

Figure 11: Cultural traditions as a constraint on volunteering in NSW



The following statistically significant effect was observed.

- An EAL volunteer was more likely than someone fluent in English to have cultural traditions limit what they can do as a volunteer.

This effect for each variable was statistically significant and keenly felt.

- An EAL volunteer was 3.5 times more likely than someone fluent in English to answer *sometimes* to this question than *never*.
- An EAL volunteer was 4.6 times more likely than someone fluent in English to answer *often* to this question than *always*.
- An EAL volunteer was 8.8 times more likely than someone fluent in English to answer *always* to this question than *often*.

A person's age, gender, place of residence, ethnic identity and the number of hours they volunteer had no statistically significant effect on the odds of them having cultural traditions limit what they can do as a volunteer.

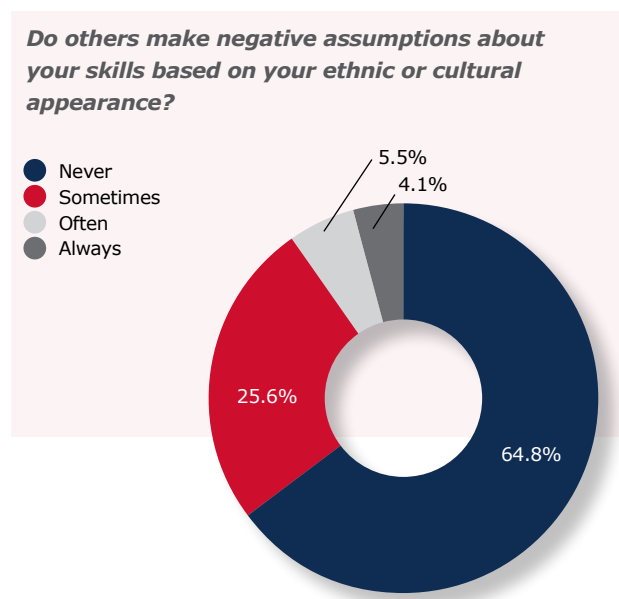
It is noteworthy that ethnic identity had no significant effect on the way people responded to this question. This means that the one-quarter of NSW residents who identified cultural constraints on their volunteering were just as likely to be Anglo-Australian as multicultural.

"...people do not engage with the volunteers from multicultural background because they have a feeling that they need to be spoon fed..."

Ethnic or cultural appearance and its impact on volunteering

Figure 12 shows 35.2% NSW residents have perceived negative, appearance-based assumptions about their skills while volunteering.

Figure 12: Ethnic or cultural appearance and its impact on volunteering in NSW



The following statistically significant effects were observed.

- A multicultural resident of NSW was 2.6 times more likely than someone identifying as Anglo-Australian to perceive negative, appearance-based assumptions about their skills while volunteering.
- A person under 45 was 1.8 times more likely than someone younger to perceive negative, appearance-based assumptions about their skills while volunteering.

A person's gender, place of residence, ethnic identity and the number of hours they volunteer had no statistically significant effect on the odds of them perceiving negative, appearance-based assumptions about their skills while volunteering.

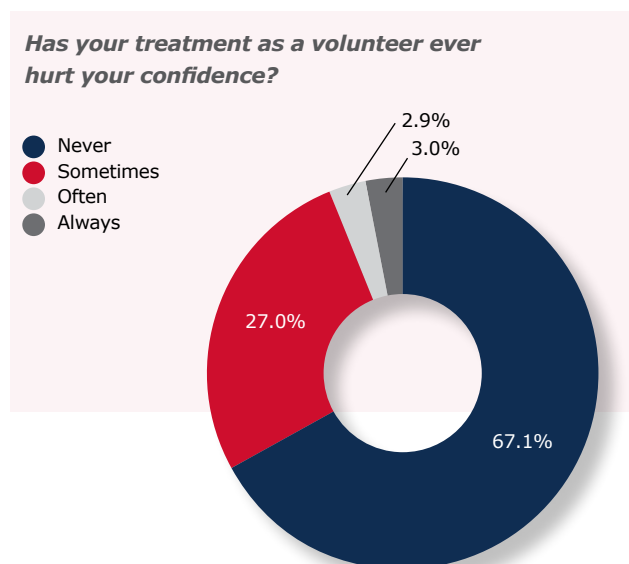
"...maybe multicultural volunteers are left or neglected to perform simple tasks and not even given challenging roles..."

The impact of treatment as a volunteer on confidence

We have previously determined that a lack of confidence is a relevant barrier to multicultural volunteering in NSW, with 6.3% of the multicultural population fluent in English and 12.9% of the EAL population identifying it as such.

Figure 13 goes on to reveal that one in three volunteers (32.9%) have had their confidence negatively impacted by their treatment as a volunteer, and one in 17 (5.9%) experience that on a disturbingly frequent basis.

Figure 13: The impact of treatment as a volunteer on confidence in NSW



The following statistically significant effects were observed.

- A volunteer living in the rest of NSW was 1.9 times more likely than someone living in Greater Sydney to have their confidence negatively impacted by their treatment as a volunteer.
- A person under 45 was also 1.9 times more likely than someone older to have their confidence negatively impacted by their treatment as a volunteer.
- A person volunteers more than the average number of regular volunteer hours each month also 1.9 times more likely than someone

who volunteers less to have their confidence negatively impacted by their treatment as a volunteer.

A person's gender, place of residence, ethnic identity and English language fluency had no statistically significant effect on the odds of them having their confidence negatively impacted by their treatment as a volunteer.

"...sometimes I really feel respected. But sometimes, I feel that I'm just there as a checklist where somebody is from a coloured background..."

Linguistic or cultural differences in the understanding of volunteering

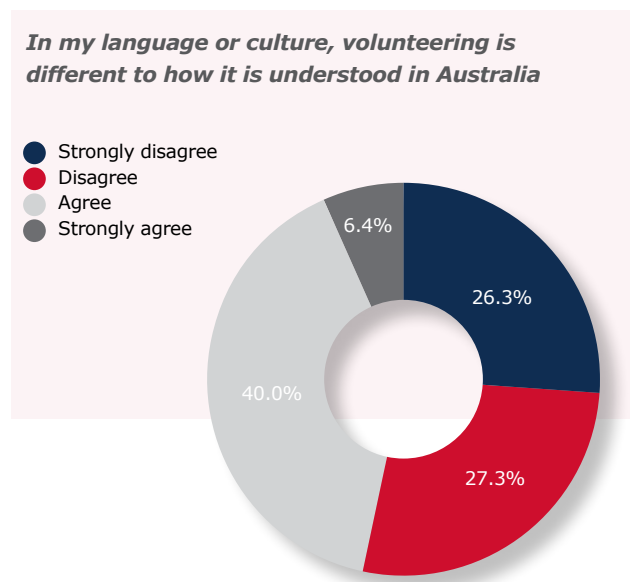
Survey participants next were asked to rate the strength of their agreement with a series of statements.

Focus group participants proposed that the term 'volunteering' has cultural meaning that is not universally translatable.

"...sometimes, we talk about volunteering, it's such a Western term.... I don't think they realise they're volunteering to help out their community, like driving someone or picking up something, delivering it to another place..."

Figure 14 reveals that nearly half (46.4%) of multicultural volunteers agree that volunteering is understood differently in their language or culture.²⁹ This lends affirmation to the hypothesis proposed by focus group participants that the construct of volunteering is not linguistically or culturally ubiquitous. Indeed, 11 (2.8%) multicultural respondents self-identified acts of volunteering (Q10) but contradictorily recorded zero regular or spontaneous volunteering hours (Q12-13).

Figure 14: Multicultural residents of NSW linguistic or cultural differences in the understanding of volunteering



The following statistically significant effect was observed.

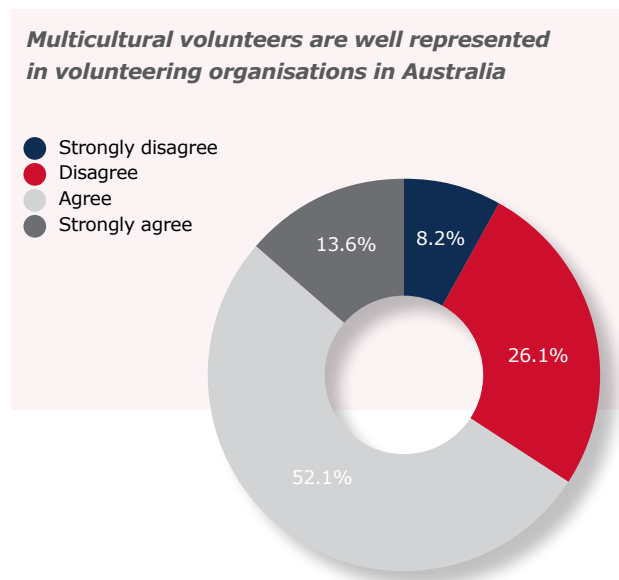
- A person under 45 was more likely than an older person to agree with the statement that in their language or culture, volunteering is different to how it is understood in Australia.

A person's gender, place of residence, English language fluency and the number of hours they volunteer had no statistically significant effect on the odds of them agreeing or disagreeing with the statement that in my language or culture, volunteering is different to how it is understood in Australia.

Multicultural representation in volunteer-involving organisations

Figure 15 shows 65.7% of NSW residents feel that multicultural volunteers are well represented in volunteer-involving organisations. Conversely, just over one-in-three (34.3%) feel there is an under-representation of multicultural volunteers in the sector.

Figure 15: Multicultural representation in volunteer-involving organisations in NSW



The following statistically significant effects were observed.

- Residents of Greater Sydney were more likely than residents living in the rest of NSW to agree that multicultural volunteers are well represented.
- EAL volunteers were more likely than those fluent in English to agree that multicultural volunteers are well represented.
- A person who volunteers less than the average number of regular volunteer hours each month was more likely than their counterpart to agree that multicultural volunteers are well represented.

A person's age, gender and ethnic identity had no statistically significant effect on the odds of them agreeing or disagreeing with the statement that multicultural volunteers are well represented in volunteering organisations in Australia.

"...sometimes they don't feel a sense of belonging when they join the mainstream volunteering organisation..."

29. As this question was specifically directed at multicultural participants, responses from Anglo-Australian identifying participants were excluded.

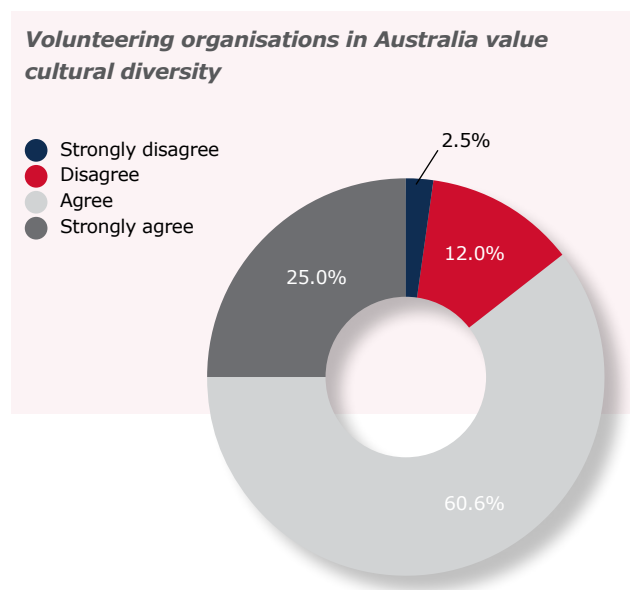
The value placed on cultural diversity by volunteer-involving organisations

While Figure 15 showed that only 65.7% of volunteers felt multicultural volunteers were well represented in volunteer-involving organisations, a much stronger 85.6% of volunteers agreed that, to some extent, diversity is valued in volunteer-involving organisations (Figure 16).

A modest one in seven (14.4%) felt that volunteer-involving organisations could do better in valuing cultural diversity.

We cannot say in this report whether the gap between value and representation is closing or widening. It will be interesting to observe how these perceptions change over time.

Figure 16: The value placed on cultural diversity by volunteer-involving organisations in NSW



A person’s age, gender, place of residence, ethnic identity, English language fluency and the number of hours they volunteer had no statistically significant effect on the odds of them agreeing or disagreeing with the statement that volunteer-involving organisations in Australia value cultural diversity.

“...having that talent and exposure from the multicultural will really set our country up, Australia to be a world leader... I mean, language benefits, cultural benefits...that makes us unique as Australians”

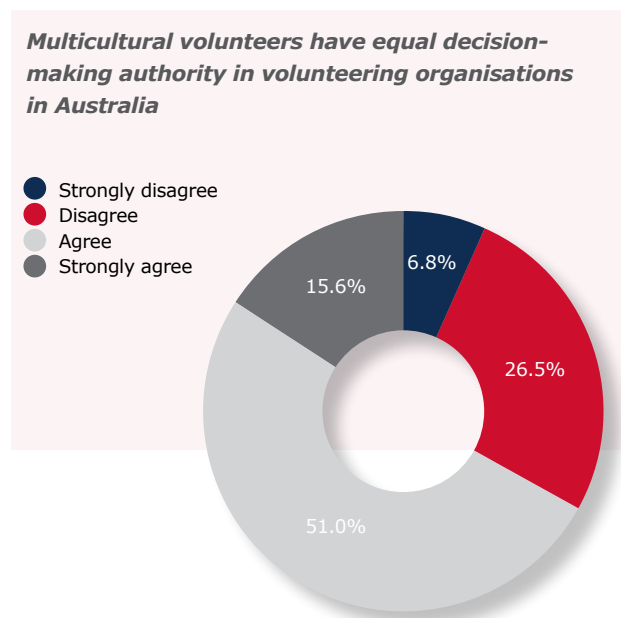
The decision-making authority of multicultural volunteers

Figure 17 shows 66.6% of NSW residents feel that multicultural volunteers have equal decision-making authority in volunteer-involving organisations.

Conversely, just over one-in-three (33.4%) disagree with this statement.

This is almost identical to the responses revealed in Figure 15 (63.7% of NSW residents agreed that multicultural volunteers are well represented in volunteer-involving organisations versus 34.3% disagreeing).

Figure 17: The decision-making authority of multicultural volunteers in NSW



As with the question on representation (Figure 15), the following statistically significant effects were observed.

- Residents of Greater Sydney were more likely than residents living in the rest of NSW to agree that multicultural volunteers have equal decision-making authority in volunteer-involving organisations.
- An EAL volunteer was more likely than someone fluent in English to agree that multicultural volunteers have equal decision-making authority in volunteer-involving organisations.
- A person who volunteers less than the average number of regular volunteer hours each month was more likely than their counterpart to agree that multicultural volunteers have equal decision-making authority in volunteer-involving organisations.

Additionally, someone identifying as Anglo-Australian was more likely than a multicultural resident of NSW to agree that multicultural volunteers have equal decision-making authority in volunteer-involving organisations.

A person’s age and gender had no statistically significant effect on the odds of them agreeing or disagreeing with the statement that multicultural volunteers have equal decision-making authority in volunteer-involving organisations in Australia.

Given the high degree of collinearity between the findings revealed in Figure 15 and Figure 17, future iterations of the survey might only ask one of these questions.

“...there is a lot to gain from multicultural communities. There are a lot of brains in there. And I think, it’s untapped. And there’s a lot of talent. But I think if you get rid of that assumption and the prejudice... there’s a lot hidden talent there...”

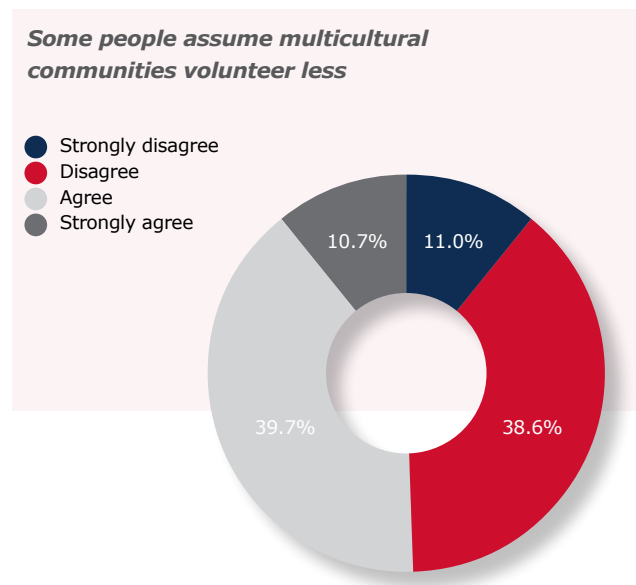
Assumptions about the volume of multicultural volunteering

Figure 18 reveals that there was a nearly dichotomous split between survey respondents, with approximately half agreeing and half disagreeing with the statement that people assume multicultural communities volunteer less.

This interestingly aligns with the perception expressed by focus group participants that multicultural volunteering is often invisible to the rest of the community, particularly when viewed through the media.

Our report does not find empirical evidence of multicultural communities volunteering more or less than the average resident of NSW. The absence of such evidence perhaps explains why the community is so evenly split on this question, and it is recommended as a direction for future research.

Figure 18: Assumptions about the volume of multicultural volunteering in NSW



The following statistically significant effects were observed.

- Residents living in the rest of NSW were more likely than residents of Greater Sydney to agree that people assume multicultural communities volunteer less.
- A multicultural resident of NSW volunteering was more likely than someone identifying as Anglo-Australian to agree that people assume multicultural communities volunteer less.
- A person under 45 was more likely than an older person to agree that people assume multicultural communities volunteer less.
- An EAL volunteer was more likely than someone

fluent in English to agree that people assume multicultural communities volunteer less.

A person’s gender and the number of hours they volunteer had no statistically significant effect on the odds of them agreeing or disagreeing with the statement that some people assume multicultural communities volunteer less.

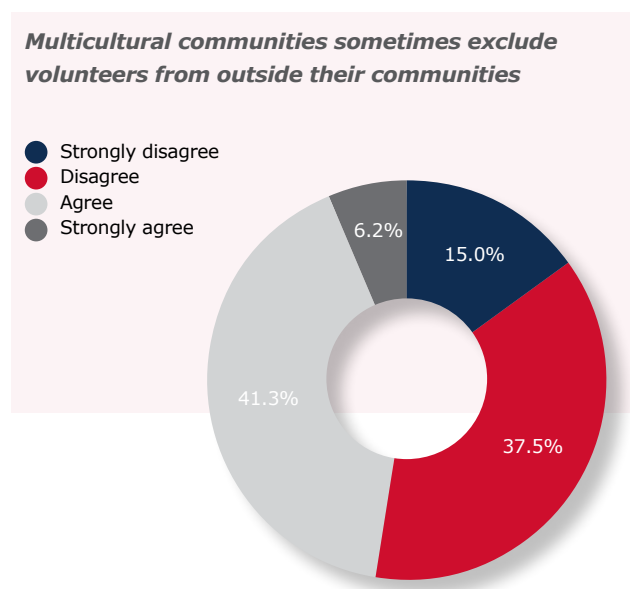
To better unpack the nuance in this question, future iterations of this survey could also ask more directly of Anglo-Australians whether they think multicultural communities volunteer less. They could also ask multicultural residents whether they think Anglo-Australians assume they volunteer less and/or whether they think they volunteer less themselves.

“...I think people assume that multicultural volunteering isn’t really big in Australia. But actually, there are a lot of people who do volunteer...”

Perceptions of volunteer exclusion within multicultural communities

Figure 19 reveals a similar schism among respondents along the lines of the previous question, with just over half disagreeing and 47.5% agreeing with the statement that multicultural communities sometimes exclude volunteers from outside their communities.

Figure 19: Perceptions of volunteer exclusion within multicultural communities in NSW



The following statistically significant effects were observed.

- Males were more likely than females to agree with the statement.
- An Anglo-Australian resident of NSW volunteering was more likely than someone identifying as multicultural to agree with the statement.
- A person who volunteers more than the average number of regular volunteer hours each month was more likely than those who volunteer less to agree with the statement.

A person’s age, place of residence and English language fluency had no statistically significant effect on the odds of them agreeing or disagreeing with the statement that multicultural communities sometimes exclude volunteers from outside their communities.

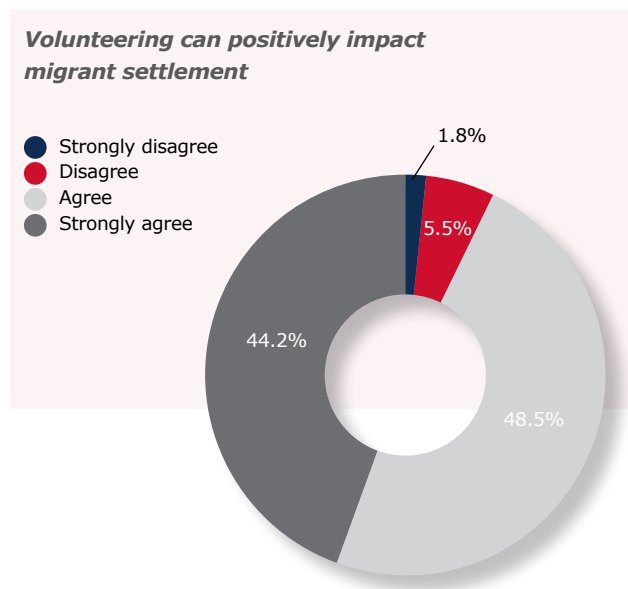
“...they help the local council, and then they volunteer in the kids’ school, also with their local ethnic bodies...”

The impact of volunteering on migrant settlement

Figure 20 shows almost universal support (92.6%) for the notion that volunteering can positively impact migrant settlement. In fact, more than two out of five NSW residents (44.2%) strongly agree with this statement.

This is the strongest unidirectional finding in our research. It suggests the existence of a strong social licence for volunteering and sponsoring organisations that work in this sometimes politically contested space.

Figure 20: The impact of volunteering on migrant settlement in NSW



The following statistically significant effects were observed.

- Females were more likely than males to agree that volunteering can positively impact migrant settlement.
- EAL volunteers – people who are probably more likely to be migrants – were more likely than someone fluent in English to agree that volunteering can positively impact migrant settlement.

Not too much should be read into these variances, however, given the almost unilateral support for the statement.

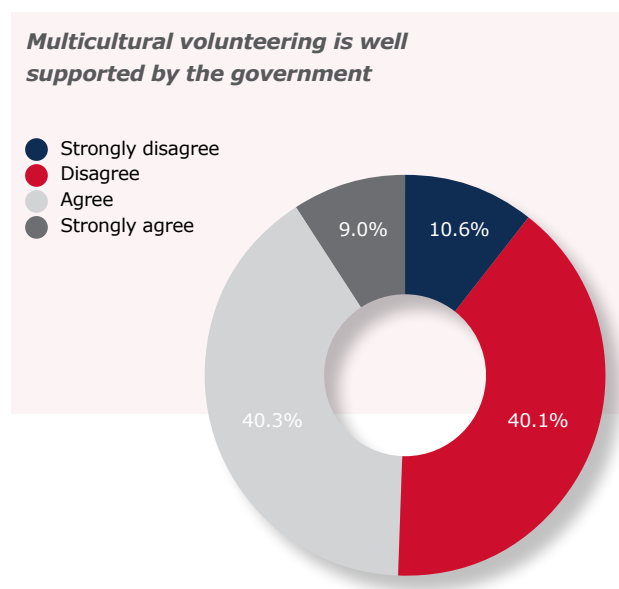
A person’s age, place of residence, ethnic identity and the number of hours they volunteer had no statistically significant effect on the odds of them agreeing or disagreeing with the statement that volunteering can positively impact migrant settlement.

“...there is a lot of work behind the scenes...helping refugees, through helping non-English speaking background...helping out a lot of family members...helping people go into the shops...”

Government support for multicultural volunteering

Figure 21 reveals a community divided on the question of whether multicultural volunteering is well supported by the government. It should be noted that we did not ask respondents to qualify which tier(s) of government should take responsibility for that support.

Figure 21: Government support for multicultural volunteering in NSW



The following statistically significant effects were observed.

- Residents of Greater Sydney were more likely than residents living in the rest of NSW to agree that multicultural volunteering is well supported by the government.
- An Anglo-Australian resident of NSW volunteering was more likely than someone identifying as multicultural to agree that multicultural volunteering is well supported by the government.
- A person over 45 was more likely than a younger person to agree that multicultural volunteering is well supported by the government.
- EAL volunteers were more likely than someone fluent in English to agree that multicultural volunteering is well supported by the government.

A person's gender, ethnic identity and the number of hours they volunteer had no statistically significant effect on the odds of them agreeing or disagreeing with the statement that multicultural volunteering is well supported by the government.

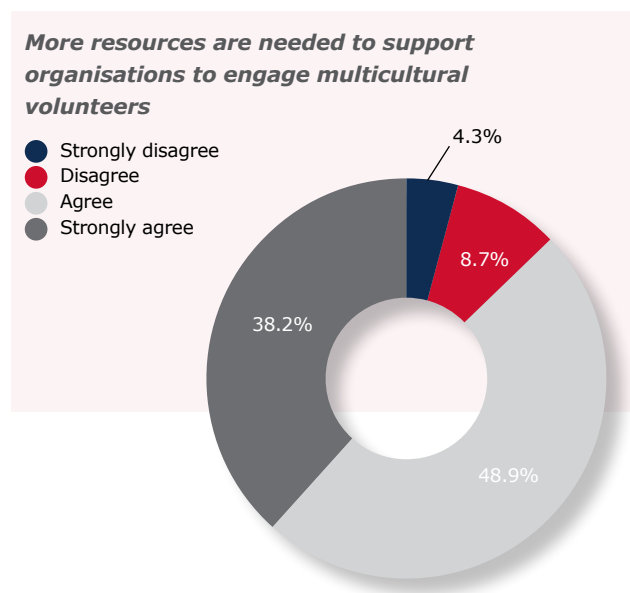
"...our organisation doesn't get any money from the government. We're all volunteering, giving our time..."

Resource support for multicultural volunteer engagement

Figure 22 shows that seven in every eight NSW residents (87.0%) perceive a lack of resource support for multicultural volunteer engagement.

It should be noted that we did not ask respondents to qualify where that resource support should come from. Given that in the previous question (Figure 21) approximately half of respondents felt the government was doing its job well in this regard, we can infer that many see private sector resourcing of multicultural volunteering as an important piece of the funding puzzle.

Figure 22: Resource support for multicultural volunteer engagement in NSW



The following statistically significant effects were observed.

- Residents of Greater Sydney were more likely than residents living in the rest of NSW to agree that more resources are needed to support organisations to engage multicultural volunteers.
- Someone identifying as Anglo-Australian was more likely than a multicultural resident of NSW to agree that more resources are needed to support organisations to engage multicultural volunteers.
- EAL volunteers were more likely than someone fluent in English to agree that more resources are needed to support organisations to engage multicultural volunteers.
- A person who volunteers more than the average number of regular volunteer hours each month was more likely than someone who volunteers less to agree that more resources are needed to support organisations to engage multicultural volunteers.

Interestingly, residents of Greater Sydney, those identifying as Anglo-Australian and EAL volunteers were more likely to feel government support is sufficient, but that more resource support is needed. This suggests that they are more likely to demand private sector investment in multicultural volunteering.

Once again, though, the strong positive general support for this statement suggests that, if more resource investment was to be incentivised, it would be a non-controversial policy objective.

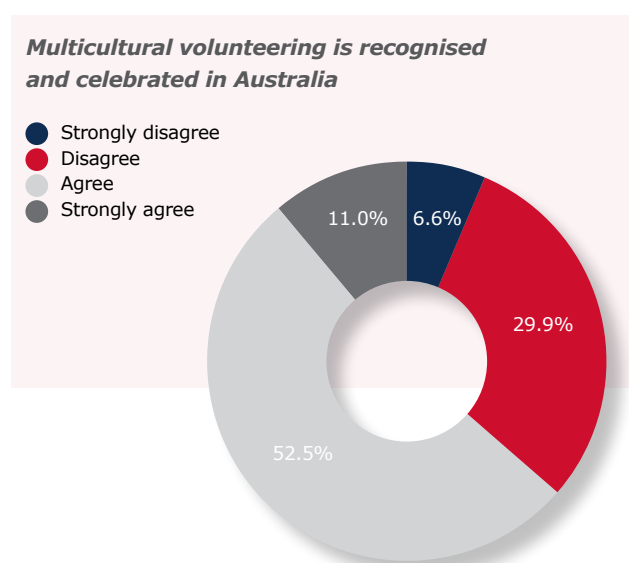
A person's age and gender had no statistically significant effect on the odds of them agreeing or disagreeing with the statement that more resources are needed to support organisations to engage multicultural volunteers.

"...so we need to look at ways how can we encourage people to come out and volunteer because we do need it. As you know there's so much that the government can do..."

The recognition and celebration of multicultural volunteering

Figure 23 shows that two-thirds of NSW residents (63.5%) feel that multicultural volunteering is recognised and celebrated in Australia; however, a significant number of respondents (36.5%) of respondents do not agree, implying more can be done.

Figure 23: The recognition and celebration of multicultural volunteering in NSW



The following statistically significant effects were observed.

- Residents of Greater Sydney were more likely than residents living in the rest of NSW to agree that multicultural volunteering is recognised and celebrated in Australia.
- An EAL volunteer was more likely than someone fluent in English to agree that multicultural volunteering is recognised and celebrated in Australia.
- A person who volunteers less than the average number of regular volunteer hours each month was more likely than someone who volunteers more to agree that multicultural volunteering is recognised and celebrated in Australia.

A person's age, gender and ethnic identity had no statistically significant effect on the odds of them agreeing or disagreeing with the statement that multicultural volunteering is recognised and celebrated in Australia.

"...I think, if we address some of the barriers and obstacles, we can make it bigger. But I think, the most important thing is appreciation and respect for the volunteers..."

Summary

Repeated statistical analysis of the type presented here can sometimes be quite dry and overwhelming. What volunteer-involving organisations and advocacy groups can take from our analysis depends on what they are trying to achieve and what interventions they are willing to make.

For example, a volunteer-involving organisation may seek to increase their cohort of active volunteers and improve the volunteer experience of their membership.

From this research, they learn that NSW residents who are not fluent in English and those who are over 45 are less likely to volunteer outside their ethnic or cultural group.

With that in mind, a campaign targeting NSW residents not fluent in English can be optimised for around one-third of the EAL population if it specifically demonstrates how the volunteer-involving organisation will:

- Show people how to volunteer (not sure how / never been asked)
- Provide all-ability volunteering opportunities (health reasons), and
- Support people with low English language (limited language or practical skills).

Mindful of the fact that EAL volunteers are far more likely to have limits placed on their volunteering by cultural tradition, a volunteer-involving organisation should be flexible in accommodating volunteers' uniform, dietary, religious observance and other needs.

It might also be learnt from this research that Anglo-Australian volunteers are less likely to share their ethnic or cultural knowledge than multicultural volunteers. Therefore, volunteer-involving organisations could empower and encourage their

Anglo-Australian volunteers to participate in cultural exchange with respect and reciprocity.

Similarly, an advocate for the volunteering sector might wish to improve opportunities for multicultural volunteers in regional NSW. This research assists them by showing that residents in regional NSW feel strongly that:

- Multicultural volunteers are not well represented in volunteer-involving organisations
- Multicultural volunteers do not have equal decision-making authority in volunteer-involving organisations
- Multicultural volunteering is not well supported by the government, and
- Multicultural volunteering is not recognised and celebrated.³⁰

When lobbying government and other stakeholders for resources, they can highlight the strongly held community view (especially among non-native

English speakers) that multicultural volunteering positively impacts migrant settlement. They can also look for opportunities at the intersection between the community’s volunteering needs and the volunteering interests of multicultural Australians (Figure 3).

More importantly, they can use instruments like the one developed in this research (Appendix B) to enquire directly of their community’s unique and specific requirements.

“...when you’re hiring somebody, they have already got the soft skill... people from migrant background, they usually are multilingual...you are engaging somebody who is from ethnic background, definitely, he or she will help you professionally as well as personally. And then, he or she will cater to a greater audience... more (diversity) in your workplace...”

Figure 24: Perceptions of multicultural volunteering (1/2)



30. Future iterations of this survey would benefit from asking questions about multicultural volunteering “where I live” (as opposed to “in Australia”).

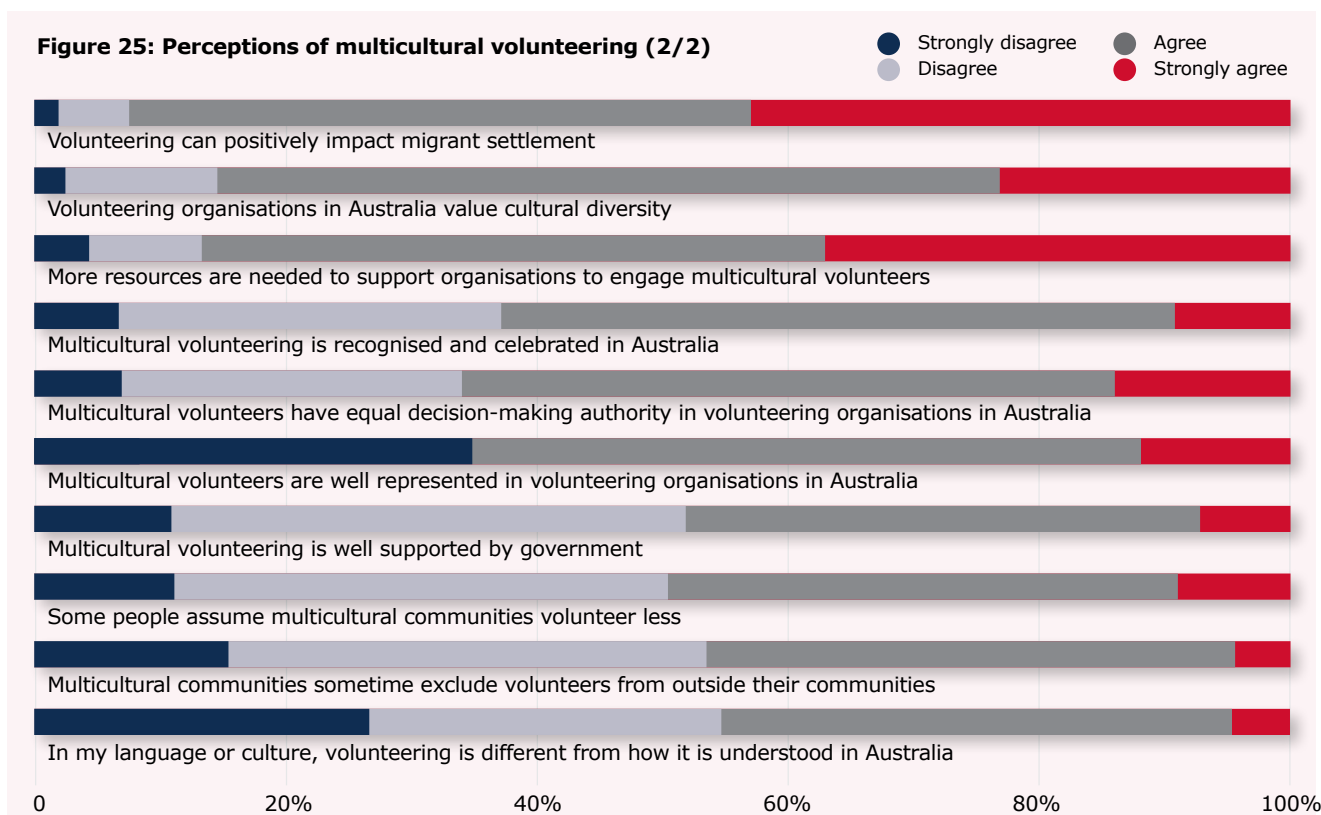


Table 2: Perceptions of multicultural volunteering in NSW (1/2)

STATEMENT	Never	Sometimes Often Always	Statistically more likely	Statistically less likely	No difference
Do you volunteer with people from outside your ethnic or cultural groups?	9.6%	90.4%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies as multicultural Aged under 45 Fluent English 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies as Anglo-Australian Aged over 45 English as an additional language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender Place of residence Hours volunteered
Do you share your ethnic and cultural knowledge while volunteering?	16.6%	83.4%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Females Greater Sydney Identifies as multicultural Aged over 45 Volunteers more 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Males Rest of NSW Identifies as Anglo-Australian Aged under 45 Volunteers less 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English fluency
Have your cultural traditions ever limited what you can do as a volunteer?	74.6%	25.4%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English as an additional language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fluent English 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender Place of residence Ethnic identity Age Hours volunteered
Do others make negative assumptions about your skills based on your ethnic or cultural appearance?	64.8%	35.2%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies as multicultural Aged under 45 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies as Anglo-Australian Aged over 45 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender Place of residence English fluency Hours volunteered
Has your treatment as a volunteer ever hurt your confidence?	67.1%	32.9%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rest of NSW Aged under 45 Volunteers more 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater Sydney Aged over 45 Volunteers less 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender Ethnic identity English fluency

Fairfield Community Nursery



AusLEAP



Table 3: Perceptions of multicultural volunteering in NSW (2/2)

STATEMENT	Disagree	Agree	Statistically more likely to agree	Statistically more likely to disagree	No difference
In my language or culture, volunteering is different to how it is understood in Australia	53.6%	46.4%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aged under 45 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aged under 45 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender • Place of residence • English fluency • Hours volunteered
Multicultural volunteers are well represented in volunteering organisations in Australia	34.3%	65.7%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater Sydney • English as an additional language • Volunteers less 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rest of NSW • Fluent in English • Volunteers more 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender • Ethnic identity • Age
Volunteering organisations in Australia value cultural diversity	14.4%	85.6%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender • Place of residence • Ethnic identity • Age • English fluency • Hours volunteered
Multicultural volunteers have equal decision-making authority in volunteering organisations in Australia	33.4%	66.6%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater Sydney • Identifies as Anglo-Australian • English as an additional language • Volunteers less 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rest of NSW • Identifies as multicultural • Fluent in English • Volunteers more 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender • Age
Some people assume multicultural communities volunteer less	49.6%	50.4%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rest of NSW • Identifies as multicultural • Aged under 45 • English as an additional language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater Sydney • Identifies as Anglo-Australian • Aged over 45 • Fluent in English 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender • Hours volunteered
Multicultural communities sometimes exclude volunteers from outside their communities	52.5%	47.5%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Males • Identifies as Anglo-Australian • Volunteers more 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Females • Identifies as multicultural • Volunteers less 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place of residence • Age • English Fluency
Volunteering can positively impact migrant settlement	7.4%	92.6%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Females • English as an additional language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Males • Fluent in English 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place of residence • Ethnic identity • Age • Hours volunteered
Multicultural volunteering is well supported by the government	50.7%	49.3%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater Sydney • Identifies as Anglo-Australian • Aged over 45 • English as an additional language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rest of Sydney • Identifies as multicultural • Aged under 45 • Fluent in English 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age • Hours volunteered
More resources are needed to support organisations to engage multicultural volunteers	13.0%	87.0%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater Sydney • Identifies as Anglo-Australian • English as an additional language • Volunteers more 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rest of NSW • Identifies as multicultural • Fluent in English • Volunteers less 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender • Age
Multicultural volunteering is recognised and celebrated in Australia	36.5%	63.5%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater Sydney • English as an additional language • Volunteers more 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rest of NSW • Fluent in English • Volunteers less 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender • Ethnic identity • Age

Table 4: Perceptions of multicultural volunteering in NSW by demographic

DEMOGRAPHIC	Category	Statistically <i>more</i> likely	Statistically <i>less</i> likely
Gender	Female	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share ethnic and cultural knowledge while volunteering 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None
	Male	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share ethnic and cultural knowledge while volunteering
Place of residence	Greater Sydney	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share ethnic and cultural knowledge while volunteering 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have had their confidence hurt as a result of their treatment as a volunteer
	Rest of NSW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have had their confidence hurt as a result of their treatment as a volunteer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share ethnic and cultural knowledge while volunteering
Ethnic identity	Anglo-Australian	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer with people from outside ethnic or cultural groups • Share ethnic and cultural knowledge while volunteering • Perceive others making negative assumptions about their skills based on their ethnic or cultural appearance
	Multicultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer with people from outside ethnic or cultural groups • Share ethnic and cultural knowledge while volunteering • Perceive others making negative assumptions about their skills based on their ethnic or cultural appearance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None
Age	Under 45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer with people from outside ethnic or cultural groups • Perceive others making negative assumptions about their skills based on their ethnic or cultural appearance • Have had their confidence hurt as a result of their treatment as a volunteer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share ethnic and cultural knowledge while volunteering
	Over 45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share ethnic and cultural knowledge while volunteering 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer with people from outside ethnic or cultural groups • Perceive others making negative assumptions about their skills based on their ethnic or cultural appearance • Have had their confidence hurt as a result of their treatment as a volunteer
English fluency	Fluent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer with people from outside ethnic or cultural groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have cultural traditions limit what they can do as a volunteer
	Additional language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have cultural traditions limit what they can do as a volunteer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer with people from outside ethnic or cultural groups
Hours volunteered	Less than average	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share ethnic and cultural knowledge while volunteering • Have had their confidence hurt as a result of their treatment as a volunteer
	More than average	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share ethnic and cultural knowledge while volunteering • Have had their confidence hurt as a result of their treatment as a volunteer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None

Table 5: Perceptions of multicultural volunteering in NSW by demographic

DEMOGRAPHIC	Category	Statistically more likely to <i>agree</i>	Statistically more likely to <i>disagree</i>
Gender	Female	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volunteering can positively impact migrant settlement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multicultural communities sometimes exclude volunteers from outside their communities
	Male	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multicultural communities sometimes exclude volunteers from outside their communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volunteering can positively impact migrant settlement
Place of residence	Greater Sydney	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multicultural volunteers are well represented in volunteering organisations in Australia Multicultural volunteers have equal decision-making authority in volunteering organisations in Australia Multicultural volunteering is well supported by the government More resources are needed to support organisations to engage multicultural volunteers Multicultural volunteering is recognised and celebrated in Australia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some people assume multicultural communities volunteer less
	Rest of NSW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some people assume multicultural communities volunteer less 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multicultural volunteers are well represented in volunteering organisations in Australia Multicultural volunteers have equal decision-making authority in volunteering organisations in Australia Multicultural volunteering is well supported by the government More resources are needed to support organisations to engage multicultural volunteers Multicultural volunteering is recognised and celebrated in Australia
Ethnic identity	Anglo-Australian	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multicultural volunteers have equal decision-making authority in volunteering organisations in Australia Multicultural communities sometimes exclude volunteers from outside their communities Multicultural volunteering is well supported by the government More resources are needed to support organisations to engage multicultural volunteers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some people assume multicultural communities volunteer less
	Multicultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some people assume multicultural communities volunteer less 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multicultural volunteers have equal decision-making authority in volunteering organisations in Australia Multicultural communities sometimes exclude volunteers from outside their communities Multicultural volunteering is well supported by the government More resources are needed to support organisations to engage multicultural volunteers

DEMOGRAPHIC	Category	Statistically more likely to <i>agree</i>	Statistically more likely to <i>disagree</i>
Age	Under 45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In my language or culture, volunteering is different to how it is understood in Australia • Some people assume multicultural communities volunteer less 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None
	Over 45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In my language or culture, volunteering is different to how it is understood in Australia • Some people assume multicultural communities volunteer less
English fluency	Fluent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multicultural volunteers are well represented in volunteering organisations in Australia • Multicultural volunteers have equal decision-making authority in volunteering organisations in Australia • Some people assume multicultural communities volunteer less • Volunteering can positively impact migrant settlement • Multicultural volunteering is well supported by the government • More resources are needed to support organisations to engage multicultural volunteers • Multicultural volunteering is recognised and celebrated in Australia
	Additional language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multicultural volunteers are well represented in volunteering organisations in Australia • Multicultural volunteers have equal decision-making authority in volunteering organisations in Australia • Some people assume multicultural communities volunteer less • Volunteering can positively impact migrant settlement • Multicultural volunteering is well supported by the government • More resources are needed to support organisations to engage multicultural volunteers • Multicultural volunteering is recognised and celebrated in Australia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None
Hours volunteered	Less than average	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multicultural volunteers are well represented in volunteering organisations in Australia • Multicultural volunteers have equal decision-making authority in volunteering organisations in Australia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multicultural communities sometimes exclude volunteers from outside their communities • More resources are needed to support organisations to engage multicultural volunteers • Multicultural volunteering is recognised and celebrated in Australia
	More than average	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multicultural communities sometimes exclude volunteers from outside their communities • More resources are needed to support organisations to engage multicultural volunteers • Multicultural volunteering is recognised and celebrated in Australia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multicultural volunteers are well represented in volunteering organisations in Australia • Multicultural volunteers have equal decision-making authority in volunteering organisations in Australia



Racism and volunteering

There should be no debate over the existence of racism in Australian society. The Scanlon Report, for example, found:

In 2021, 57% of Australia-born respondents viewed racism as a problem (compared to 36%-37% in 2020), 57% of UK- and Ireland-born (35% in 2020), and 69% born in an Asian country (55% in 2020), including 78% born in China, Hong Kong or Taiwan.³¹

The report goes on to add that perceptions of racism are polarising, with older generations, men, conservative voters and those with an education that finished by Year 11 being the categories of people most likely to reject social assumptions of racism.

Perhaps an intent to avoid controversy is why our review of the literature on multicultural volunteering revealed almost no direct references to racism. This absence is stark, especially given the frequent acknowledgement of disparities or even discrimination that appear to be rooted in ethnic or cultural distinction.

For example, we know the odds of a multicultural resident of NSW perceiving negative, appearance-based assumptions about their skills while volunteering were 2.6 times that of someone identifying as Anglo-Australian (Figure 12). And whereas there is no statistically significant ethnic bias in Figure 13, one in three volunteers (32.9%) have had their confidence negatively impacted by their treatment as a volunteer, and one in 17 (5.9%) experience that on a disturbingly frequent basis. In these circumstances, it may be difficult for the multicultural recipients of such treatment to discern its precise cause.

This study intentionally stops short of proposing causal reasons for these differences. It is not our hypothesis, for example, that racism explains why multicultural volunteers feel unsupported by government. In the same way, we do not suggest it is because of inflation, climate change or the apathy of any given generation.

As with all scientific enquiry, we do not presuppose the existence of racism in volunteering. However, given the coincidental prevalence of racism in the

society where volunteering occurs, it is useful to enquire about its presence. Appreciating different communities' perceptions of racism in volunteering is a necessary and important piece of the equation of understanding.

To that end, we asked the following question of our survey respondents.

Have you observed or experienced racism while volunteering?

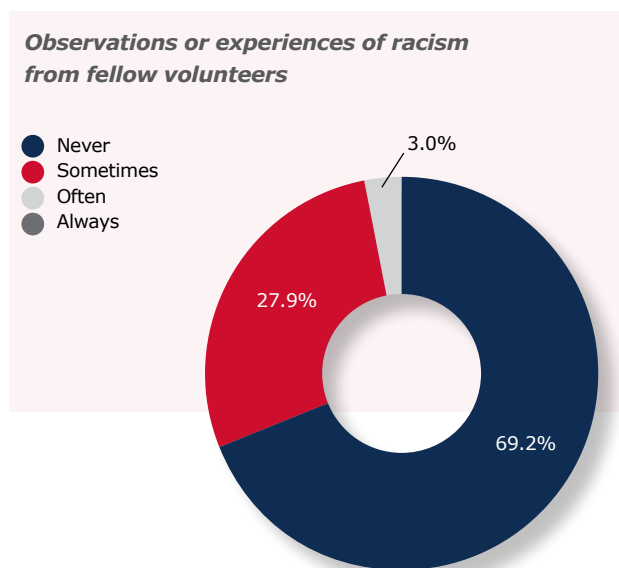
	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
From fellow volunteers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
From volunteer managers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
From people you are volunteering for	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
From the general community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Given that race is a social construct, we follow well-established research norms in this study and allow respondents to define racism subjectively on their own terms.

Racism from fellow volunteers

Figure 26 shows that one in three NSW residents (30.8%) have observed or experienced racism from fellow volunteers.

Figure 26: Observations or experiences of racism from fellow volunteers in NSW



31. Andrew Markus, 2021, *Mapping Social Cohesion*.

The following statistically significant effects were observed.

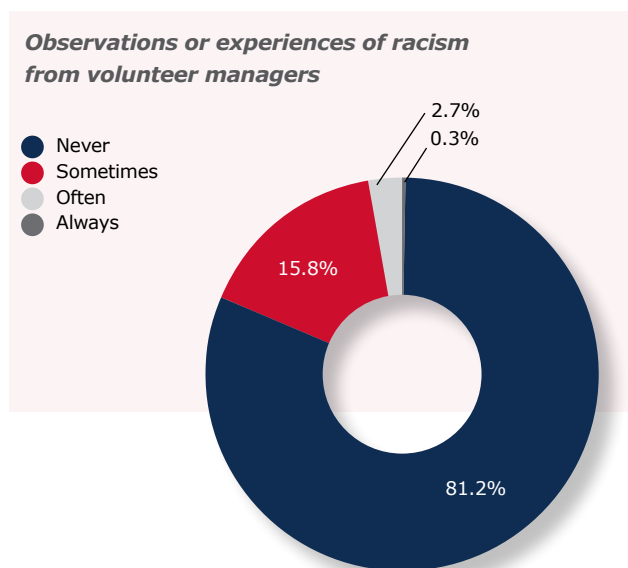
- A person living in the rest of NSW was 2.7 times more likely than someone living in Greater Sydney to have observed or experienced racism from fellow volunteers.
- A person over 45 was 1.6 times more likely than someone younger to have observed or experienced racism from fellow volunteers
- A person who volunteers more than the average number of regular volunteer hours each month was 1.8 times more likely than someone who volunteers less to have observed or experienced racism from fellow volunteers.

A person’s gender, age and English fluency had no statistically significant effect on the odds of them observing or experiencing racism from fellow volunteers.

Racism from volunteer managers

Figure 27 shows that one in five NSW residents (18.8%) have observed or experienced racism from a volunteer manager.

Figure 27: Observations or experiences of racism from volunteer managers in NSW



The following statistically significant effect was observed.

- A multicultural resident of NSW volunteering was more likely than someone identifying as Anglo-Australian to observe or experience racism from a volunteer manager.

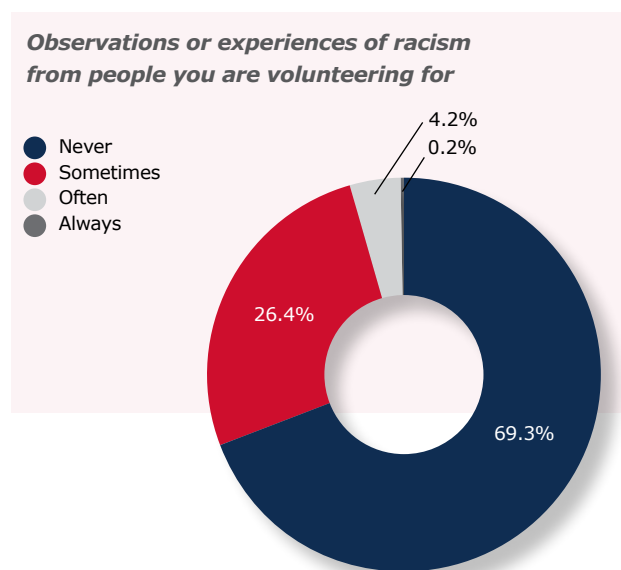
This is the one instance where there is a disconnect between multicultural and Anglo-Australian observations or experiences of racism in volunteering, suggesting a blind spot in the Anglo-Australian volunteer community.

A person’s age, gender, place of residence, English language fluency and the number of hours they volunteer had no statistically significant effect on the odds of them observing or experiencing racism from a volunteer manager.

Racism from the recipients of volunteering

Figure 28 shows that one in three NSW residents (30.7%) have observed or experienced racism from someone they are volunteering for (for example, a consumer or client of a volunteering service). These numbers are on par with the racism that respondents observed or experienced from fellow volunteers (Figure 26).

Figure 28: Racism from the recipients of volunteering in NSW



The following statistically significant effects were observed.

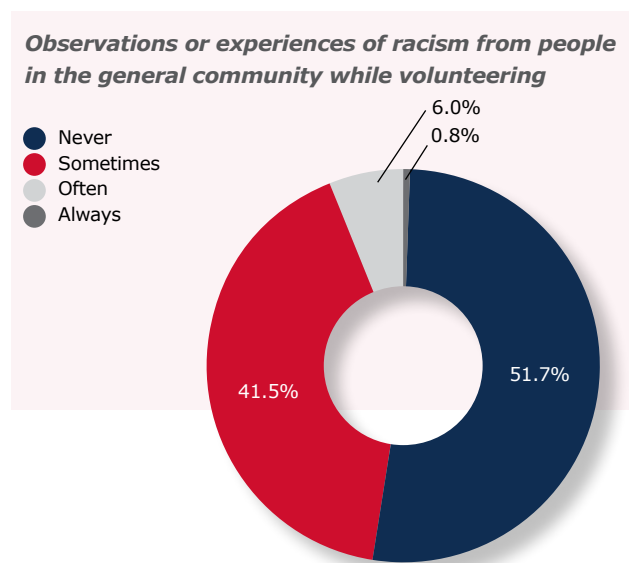
- Residents living in the rest of NSW are more likely than residents of Greater Sydney to observe or experience racism from someone they are volunteering for.
- A multicultural resident of NSW volunteering was more likely than someone identifying as Anglo-Australian to observe or experience racism from someone they are volunteering for.
- A person who volunteers more than the average number of regular volunteer hours each month was more likely than someone volunteering less to observe or experience racism from someone they are volunteering for.

A person’s age, gender and English language fluency had no statistically significant effect on the odds of them observing or experiencing racism from someone they are volunteering for.

Racism from the general community while volunteering

Of all the questions asked, this one reported the strongest incidence of racism. Figure 29 shows that half of NSW residents (48.3%) have observed or experienced racism from the general community while volunteering.

Figure 29: Racism from the general community while volunteering in NSW



The following statistically significant effects were observed.

- Residents living in the rest of NSW were more likely than residents of Greater Sydney to observe or experience racism from the general community while volunteering.
- A person under 45 was more likely than an older person to observe or experience racism from the general community while volunteering.
- A person fluent in English was more likely than an EAL volunteer to observe or experience racism from the general community while volunteering.
- A person who volunteers more than the average number of regular volunteer hours each month was more likely than someone volunteering less to observe or experience racism from the general community while volunteering.

A person’s gender and ethnic identity had no statistically significant effect on the odds of them observing or experiencing racism from the general community while volunteering.

Summary

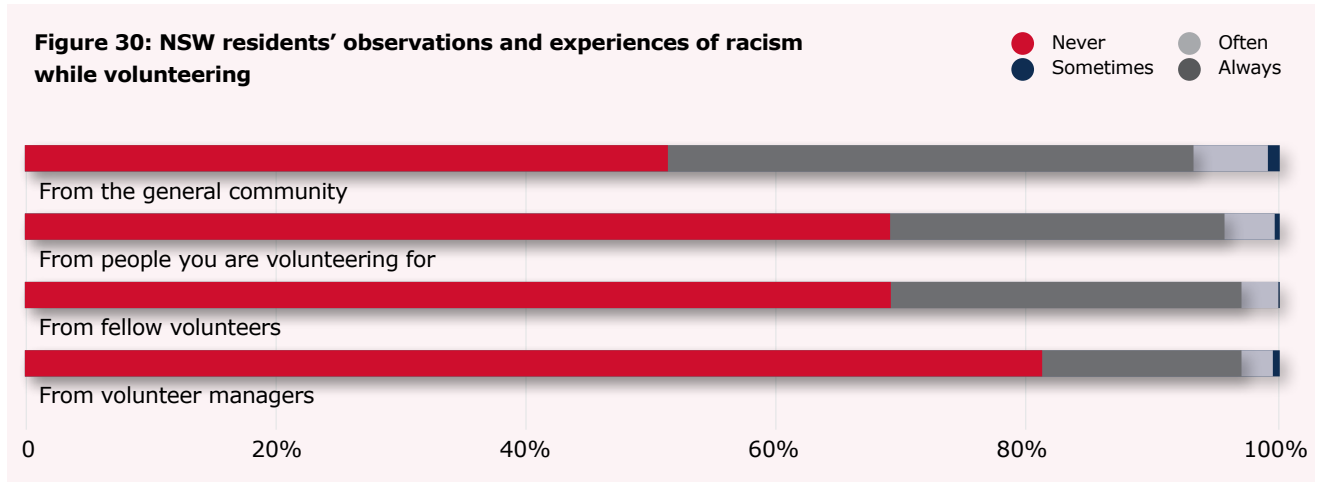


Table 6: Racism and volunteering in NSW

Observed or experienced	Never	Sometimes Often Always	Statistically more likely	Statistically less likely	No difference
From fellow volunteers	69.2%	30.8%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rest of NSW Aged over 45 Volunteers more than the average number of regular volunteer hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater Sydney Aged over 45 Volunteers less than the average number of regular volunteer hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender Ethnic identity English fluency
From volunteer managers	81.2%	18.8%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies as multicultural 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies as Anglo-Australian 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender Place of residence Age English fluency Hours volunteered
From people you are volunteering for	69.3%	30.7%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rest of NSW Identifies as multicultural Volunteers more than the average number of regular volunteer hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater Sydney Identifies as Anglo-Australian Volunteers less than the average number of regular volunteer hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender Age English fluency
From the general community while volunteering	51.7%	48.3%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rest of NSW Aged under 45 English as an additional language Volunteers more than the average number of regular volunteer hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater Sydney Aged over 45 Fluent English Volunteers less than the average number of regular volunteer hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender Ethnic identity

Table 7: Racism and volunteering in NSW by demographic

DEMOGRAPHIC	Category	Statistically <i>more</i> likely to observe or experience racism	Statistically <i>less</i> likely to observe or experience racism
Gender	Female	• None	• None
	Male	• None	• None
Place of residence	Greater Sydney	• None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From fellow volunteers • From people they are volunteering for • From the general community while volunteering
	Rest of NSW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From fellow volunteers • From people they are volunteering for • From the general community while volunteering 	• None
Ethnic identity	Anglo-Australian	• None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From volunteer managers • From people they are volunteering for
	Multicultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From volunteer managers • From people they are volunteering for 	• None
Age	Under 45	• From the general community while volunteering	• From fellow volunteers
	Over 45	• From fellow volunteers	• From the general community while volunteering
English fluency	Fluent	• None	• From the general community while volunteering
	Additional language	• From the general community while volunteering	• None
Hours volunteered	Less than average	• None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From fellow volunteers • From people they are volunteering for • From the general community while volunteering
	More than average	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From fellow volunteers • From people they are volunteering for • From the general community while volunteering 	• None

Several categories of NSW resident are more likely than others to have observed or experienced racism while volunteering. They are people who:

- Live outside of Greater Sydney
- Identify as multicultural
- Volunteer more than the average number of hours.

Other preliminary findings about racism and volunteering can also be advanced.

1. Is volunteering free from racism?

No. The evidence suggests that, while not endemic, racism exists within volunteering and should be an issue of concern for volunteer-involving organisations and advocacy groups. Volunteer managers are seen as the least racist actors in the volunteering ecosystem; however, one in five volunteers still have observed or experienced them being racist.

2. Is volunteering a shield from racism?

No. Although it appears that people experience less racism from within volunteering, the fact that people still have a significant perceived exposure to racism from the general community while volunteering suggests that there is much more that can (and should) be done to protect them.

3. Is volunteering safer from racism than other social activities?

We cannot tell from the data. Our research methodology is not perfectly comparable to other contemporary studies on the perceptions of racism. When replicating this work, researchers should consider at least asking an appropriate grounding question, such as do you experience less/more/the same racism while volunteering as you do in {other activities}.

It should finally be noted that one risk in our approach to data collection is that it may have introduced an inadvertent bias towards Anglo-Australians who are empathetic to multicultural experiences of volunteering. Subsequent research should bear this in mind if a true comparison between Anglo-Australian and multicultural experiences of volunteering (and the racism within) is to be made.

"...racism, shaming, and ignorance these are some of the obstacles which prevent the (multicultural) community from volunteering, and also lack of support from the local community..."

Australian Afghan Hassanian Youth Association



CUMBERLAND CITY COUNCIL

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Conclusion

Multicultural identity cannot be reduced to a single, homogenous construct. There is, however, utility in comparing the experiences of a dominant cultural group – in our instance, Anglo-Australians – to the coexistent ‘other’. This is because the assumptions that underpin decision-making in any social space are often arrived at from privilege without representative regard for minority perspectives or impacts.

By giving explicit voice to both the English language fluent and less-fluent multicultural ‘other’, we begin to challenge the many unspoken assumptions that enable the institution of volunteering as it manifests in NSW today. This is especially important as the volunteering sector intentionally pivots to a more diverse and inclusive future.

The findings of our research make a valuable contribution to the practice of multicultural volunteering in NSW; however, their limits should also be recognised. As a first quantitative study of its kind, our data cannot be considered truly valid until it is successfully replicated, ideally at scale. Iterative improvements to our methodology have also been proposed throughout.

It is ultimately incumbent on adopting organisations and advocates to look at their unique purpose, practices and operating environment to discern from this report issues of relevance and opportunities of interest.

Recommendations

The findings in this report are significant and greatly improve our documented understanding of multicultural volunteering in New South Wales. The following recommendations are non-exhaustive and merely highlight areas where practitioners, policymakers and researchers can immediately act on or add value to our work.

Actions

There are significant opportunities for volunteer-involving organisations and advocates to improve engagement, reach and service provision in multicultural communities. The gaps in how

different demographics perceive aspects of multicultural volunteering further reveal the potential for numerous high-yield interventions.

These positive interventions will be made possible by the development of detailed, targeted resources and training for volunteer managers. Whereas moral arguments for multicultural volunteering – it’s a good thing, we all should do it – are important, they lack the practical substance of tools and tips that volunteer managers can use to change behaviour and realise results.

Examples of the practical application of this research are given in the summary to the section

on the perception of multicultural volunteering. Awareness and implementation training and resources should also be directed to reducing instances of racism at all the points of volunteer contact.

However, these assets cannot be produced from thin air. More government and private sector funding is urgently required for volunteer-involving organisations that are either presently or looking to become (more) multicultural. To secure these resources, the sector can explicitly and uncontroversially connect multicultural volunteering to stated government objectives. The example of migrant settlement is an obvious one already cited; others might include improving the quality of aged care, workforce development (especially among EAL residents) and the agendas for active and cohesive communities.

Foundational economic theory also suggests that one key way to increase private sector funding for multicultural volunteering is for government to incentivise the activity. This can be done through the promotion in media of positive examples of multicultural volunteering, showing how multicultural volunteers are an underutilised source of knowledge and skills, and providing other brand and commercial benefits to organisations that invest in multicultural volunteering.

Future research

Research into the volunteer experiences of specific ethnic and cultural cohorts continues to be important and is not diminished by our work. By revealing the significant differences in the attitudes and experiences of the collective multicultural 'other', this study also demonstrates the need for nuanced data collection that sits between monocultural and culturally blind analyses of volunteering.

Several improvements to our research instruments are recommended that could also extend to other aspects of the volunteering research ecosystem. The most important of these is elaborating upon the definition of 'volunteering' to enable a consistent multicultural understanding of the term. Deeper investigation into the extent and impact of racism in volunteering is also encouraged. With more data, richer analysis through cross-tabulation can be done. How do female, rural youth view multicultural volunteering versus lower-income men living in the ethnically diverse outer suburbs of Sydney? We could also look at how multicultural volunteering is locally experienced in highly volunteer-dependent sectors, such as community sport or disaster and emergency management.

What we do have, though, is a baseline. Iterations of this research will show how the attitudes towards and experiences of multicultural volunteers are changing over time, particularly as a result of any interventions the sector makes.

Appendices

Appendix A – Glossary

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
Anglo-Australian residents	Residents of NSW who predominantly self-identify with Caucasian Australian heritage and culture. 'Anglo' is a late Latin prefix used in modern parlance to refer, somewhat loosely, to people of British descent.
EAL	English as an additional language
<i>n</i>	Sample size – the number of respondents in a category
NSW	New South Wales, Australia
Multicultural residents	Residents of NSW who do not predominantly identify as Anglo-Australian
Q	Survey question number
TURF analysis	Total unduplicated reach and frequency analysis

Appendix B – Online survey instrument

Thanks for taking part in this important survey.

It should take about 10 minutes of your time.

The answers you provide are anonymous.

1. How old are you?
 - Under 30
 - 30-45
 - 45-60
 - Over 60
2. What is your gender?
 - Male
 - Female
 - Other
 - I'd rather not say
3. What is your 4-digit postcode? _____
4. On average, how many hours per week do you work for pay?
 - None
 - 0-20
 - 20-40
 - More than 40
5. What is your weekly household income (after tax)?
 - Less than \$1,124
 - More than \$1,124
 - I'd rather not say
6. Were you born in Australia?
 - Yes
 - No
7. With which ethnicity or culture do you most identify?
 - Anglo-Australian
 - Other(s)
8. Which ethnicities or cultures do you most identify with?

One answer per line - only complete every line if you identify with multiple ethnicities or cultures

9. How fluent is your English?

	Not at all	Basic	Conversational	Professional	Native
Spoken English	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Written English	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

ABOUT VOLUNTEERING

Volunteering is defined here as "time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain."

Volunteering is helping someone or something.

You do not receive money for this, but maybe someone pays for your food, travel or other costs.

It includes volunteering organised by your employer or school.

It does not include work you do to receive a government allowance (like work for the dole) or as part of a court order (like community service).

It does not include only helping your family or people living in your house.

An example that is not volunteering: helping your flat-mate, cousin or sister with their homework.

An example that is volunteering: coaching your child's football team, because people outside your household and family also benefit.

10. In the last 12 months, how did you volunteer your time?

Tick all that apply, including any regular, occasional, spontaneous or one-off volunteering you did

- Home support (for example: domestic work, home maintenance or unpaid child care)
- Resource support (for example: meal sharing, translation, transport or running errands)
- Emotional support (for example: personal care, assistance or companionship)
- Teaching or coaching (for example: as an unpaid mentor, advisor or leader)
- Administrative support (for example: fundraising, book-keeping or customer service)
- Skilled support (for example: construction, IT or other industry expertise)
- Emergency support (for example: during a pandemic or natural disaster)
- Sports (for example: coaching, officiating, managing or providing transport)
- Advocacy (for example: creating or sharing media, campaigning or protesting)
- Governance (for example: as an unpaid official, board or committee member)
- Environmental or animal protection (for example: clean-up, rescue or rehabilitation)
- Other community contribution (for example: religious service, pastoral care or sharing culture)
- I did not or could not volunteer in the last 12 months

11. In the last 12 months, who did you volunteer with?

Tick all that apply

- Not-for-profit organisations such as sporting clubs; environment, conservation and animal welfare groups; special interest or hobby groups; youth groups; political parties; charities
- Religious or faith-based groups such as congregations, places of worship, charities or service organisations
- Government services such as public schools, hospitals, emergency or local government agencies
- Private/commercial businesses such as non-government schools, aged care facilities, festivals or events
- Individuals, interests, issues or the environment without assistance from any of the above

12. On average, how many hours do you regularly volunteer each month?

Enter 0 hours if you did not regularly volunteer

13. In the last 12 months, how many hours did you occasionally or spontaneously volunteer?

This includes volunteering for a project, event or season; or filling a special or urgent need

Enter 0 hours if you did not occasionally or spontaneously volunteer

14. Where do you volunteer?

Ensure your total adds up to 100%

- Online or from home _____
- Within your local community _____
- Somewhere else in NSW _____
- Somewhere else in Australia _____
- Overseas _____

15. Why do you volunteer?

Tick all that apply

- For social and community connection
- To develop new skills or gain work experience
- To gain confidence
- To use my skills and experience
- Because I am expected or required to
- To help others
- For religious or cultural connection
- To support a cause
- For enjoyment
- To be active
- For social status or reward
- Other reasons

16. Please tell us about your experiences volunteering

	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
Do you volunteer with people from outside your ethnic or cultural groups?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you share your ethnic and cultural knowledge while volunteering?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have your cultural traditions ever limited what you can do as a volunteer?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do others make negative assumptions about your skills based on your ethnic or cultural appearance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has your treatment as a volunteer ever hurt your confidence?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

17. Please rate your agreement with the following statements

	Strong disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
In my language or culture, volunteering is different from how it is understood in Australia	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Multicultural volunteers are well represented in volunteering organisations in Australia	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Volunteering organisations in Australia value cultural diversity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Multicultural volunteers have equal decision-making authority in volunteering organisations in Australia	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some people assume multicultural communities volunteer less	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Multicultural communities sometimes exclude volunteers from outside their communities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Volunteering can positively impact migrant settlement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Multicultural volunteering is well supported by the government	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
More resources are needed to support organisations to engage multicultural volunteers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Multicultural volunteering is recognised and celebrated in Australia	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

18. Have you observed or experienced racism while volunteering?

	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
From fellow volunteers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
From volunteer managers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
From people you are volunteering for	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
From the general community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

19. On average, how much money do you personally spend on your volunteering activities each month?

Enter \$0 if you have no expenses for a category

- Memberships, licences and subscriptions _____
- Transport, travel and motor vehicle expenses _____
- Self-education, training and courses _____
- Uniforms and clothing _____
- Tools, equipment and materials _____
- Phone, internet and communications _____
- Food and drink _____
- Accommodation _____
- Other volunteering expenses _____

20. Do you donate any cash or other gifts to the organisations or individuals you volunteer with?

- Yes
- No

21. Approximately how much did you give in the last 12 months? _____

If you donated goods, please include an estimate (or best guess) of their value.

22. What stops you giving more time as a volunteer?

Tick all that apply

- No time (for example: family / work / study commitments)
- No transport
- Costs
- Health reasons
- Limited language or practical skills
- Bad experiences volunteering
- Cultural traditions
- Lack of confidence
- Burnout (over-volunteering)
- Government restrictions / requirements
- Not interested in volunteering more
- Not interested in the other volunteering options in my area
- Not sure how / never been asked

23. Finally, in 3 years' time are you likely to be volunteering more or less than you did in the last 12 months?

- More
- About the same
- Less
- Not volunteering at all
- Don't know / unsure



The Centre for Volunteering acknowledges the Gadigal People of the Eora Nation as the traditional owners of the land on which our office stands. We recognise the importance of their connection to place and community on these lands and pay our respects to Elders, past and present.



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