

Fact Sheet

All About Volunteering

Volunteering is a way for people to become involved in their communities, but the term 'volunteering' has the potential to mean different things to different people.

The **Universal Declaration on Volunteering** is an international statement about volunteering, its importance and place in the world, and what characterises volunteering. It was adopted by the international board of directors of IAVE, The International Association for Volunteer Effort, at its 16th World Volunteer Conference.

The **Definition & Principles of Volunteering** are the result of a national consultation undertaken in 1996 with a wide range of stakeholders including volunteers, personnel of nonprofit organisations, policy makers and unions.

5 Models of Volunteering

Volunteering Queensland has identified five models of volunteering encompassing the different ways in which volunteers engage with their communities:

Formal

This type of volunteering involves a volunteer working in an ongoing and defined role for a nonprofit organisation. Often there will be a Volunteer Coordinator or Manager who supports the work of volunteers within the organisation.

Project

Project based volunteering occurs when volunteers work for a nonprofit organisation to achieve specific outcomes. The work may involve being part of a project team and usually has a clear time-frame or end to the project.

Governance

Volunteers on boards and management committees work within a different structure again, as it is their role to set direction for a nonprofit organisation rather than to follow it.

Non-formal

When community members come together around a shared interest this is also a form of volunteering. Hobby groups, illness related self-help groups, unfunded neighbourhood groups are all examples of non-formal volunteering.

Social Action

Social action groups are similar to self-help groups in that people come together around a shared interest, but differ in that for social action groups that interest is in bringing about defined changes. Environmental groups, political lobbying groups and community action groups all fit into this type of volunteering.

Volunteer motivations

People choose to volunteer for a wide variety of reasons. Some may have traditional altruistic reasons, some may wish to meet people in the area; some join because they are asked or a friend is involved, some wish to contribute their skills and experience, others may want to try something new or learn new skills. Often people have a number of reasons for volunteering. Many volunteers join an organisation or program for one reason but remain with it for a different reason.

For more information visit our website at www.volqld.org.au or call 3002 7600.