

Monday 10 November 2025

New report finds Volunteering on the rise across NSW

- An extra 600,000 people are volunteering in NSW, a 5.6% increase over the past two years.
- 4.9 million people now volunteer in NSW, or 69.5% of the population. Young people are volunteering at high rates compared to other age groups.
- Volunteers in NSW give 1.3 billion hours of their time to their communities each year, contributing \$205.3 billion to the NSW economy, or 2.4% of Gross State Product.

The number of people volunteering across NSW is on the rise, with an extra 600,000 people across the state giving their time to help others, according to the latest research on volunteering in NSW.

The increase was captured in the 2025 NSW State of Volunteering Report which estimates that 4.9 million people over 15 years of age are now volunteering in NSW, or almost 70% of people, an increase of 5.6% over the past two years.

This is the third State of Volunteering Report to be published since 2021 and is the most comprehensive measure of volunteering and its impacts across NSW.

The report concludes that volunteering contributes more than \$205 billion to the NSW economy, or 2.4% of Gross State Product.

It also shows that younger people are just as likely to volunteer, despite having to spend more money than other age groups to support their volunteering.

The Centre for Volunteering CEO Gemma Rygate said the report's findings showed that volunteers in NSW are giving more time and effort to support social and economic wellbeing.

"The report shows that people are returning to volunteering after the COVID years and this is a very positive sign for NSW," Ms Rygate said.

"We know that volunteering makes communities healthier, stronger and more resilient. This latest report also shows it's a boost to economic wellbeing in NSW.

"Every dollar invested in volunteering provides a five-fold return to the NSW economy. It's a sure sign that we need to keep investing in volunteering and support for volunteer managers."

Ms Rygate said the latest report dispels the myth that young people are reluctant to volunteer.

"Young people are volunteering just as much as other age groups," she said.

"Younger people in NSW want to contribute to communities and causes, but they also see that volunteering is a very good way to increase their skills, gain workplace experience and achieve greater personal satisfaction and happiness."

The NSW State of Volunteering Report is funded by the NSW Department of Communities and Justice and is based on research conducted every two years, involving more than 2,500 NSW residents.

NSW Minister with responsibility for Volunteering Jodie Harrison said volunteering continues to thrive and be a force for good in New South Wales.

“This latest report shows people across the state want to contribute to their communities and are doing so in increasing numbers.

“It’s fantastic to see more young people taking up volunteering, because it’s a wonderful way to learn new skills, meet new people, and give back to the community.

“These young volunteers are already making a huge difference. We want to encourage and recognise their work, along with all the other volunteers whose contributions help New South Wales be the best state to live in.”

Report key findings

- 69.5% of NSW residents aged 15 and over volunteered in the past year – a total of 4.9 million volunteers.
- Volunteers give over 1.3 billion hours of their time to their communities each year.
- The number of volunteers (69.5%) is higher than in 2023 (63.9%).
- About 78% of people aged between 15-24 volunteer, 80% of people aged between 35-44 volunteer and 60% for those aged between 55-64 volunteer.
- The replacement cost of volunteering is \$45.5 billion.
- The economic impact of volunteering continues to grow, with volunteering contributing a benefit of \$205.3 billion to NSW, or 2.4% of NSW Gross State Product.
- Every dollar invested in volunteering returns around \$5.60 in economic and social benefits.
- The cost of volunteering continues to increase, with the average cost to volunteers per hour increasing to \$15.45, or \$4,200 a year.
- These costs are even more pronounced for younger volunteers, with an average cost per hour of \$18.84 for volunteers aged 15-29, the highest of any cohort.

Read the full report at www.volunteering.com.au

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