

Supporting inclusive volunteering in the City of Ryde



 City of Ryde



Lifestyle and opportunity at your doorstep

Acknowledgement



This document has been designed by City of Ryde Council, in consultation with people with lived experience of disability, to support all members of our community to understand, take part in and benefit from volunteering. We take this opportunity to thank all members of the City of Ryde Inclusive Volunteering working party for their generosity in sharing their experiences, including David Robinson, Eddie Tsang, Hale Adasal, Wenyan Wu, Jeanette Oujani, Maina Gordon, Rohini Rai, Rohan Coleman, Jeremy Cheng, Cassandra Best and Cecilia Park.

Alternative formats

This document is available as an accessible PDF and Word document. It is also available in Easy Read, Simplified Chinese and Korean.

To access these versions please visit the [City of Ryde](#) website, email community@ryde.nsw.gov.au or call 9952 8222.

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What is volunteering

Volunteering is for everyone!

Helping out through volunteering can make a real difference to the lives of individuals and organisations and plays a crucial role in our communities.

In NSW, almost 4.9 million people volunteer their time, skills and experience, contributing more than 1.5 billion hours to volunteering each year!

Volunteering is when you give your time freely to help another person, organisation, group or cause. It is defined by Volunteering Australia as “time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain.”



Why volunteer

Volunteering has so many benefits, both for the local community and for your own wellbeing.

Volunteering can:

- Give you a greater sense of purpose
- Introduce you to new skills
- Help you connect with people and make new friends
- Help you make a difference to your community
- Improve your mental well-being

Volunteering can be important for people with disability:

- It offers valuable opportunities for social connection and cultural inclusion
- It can offer pathways to paid employment.



“Inclusive volunteering opportunities ensure the benefits of volunteering can be enjoyed by everyone in our community.”

Maina's story



Volunteering opens doors to new friendships.

For the past 20 years, Maina Gordon has volunteered her time in the organisation, Mothers in Law. Maina helped found the organisation for professional women who are both mothers and lawyers to provide connection via a monthly networking event.

Starting out with just a few members, Mothers in Law quickly grew in numbers and impact. Maina started liaising with the

Law Society to deliver talks and professional development to the growing group of women.

“Apart from the fact we saved money on our professional development, just meeting up and talking about matters each month was enough,” says Maina, who lives with Multiple Sclerosis.

You make a lot of friends through volunteering. And you make true friends – all our children are grown up and we’ve known each other for 20 years. It’s like having a new family.

Maina Gordon

Maina volunteered her time organising each event, and writing up the notes from each session. As Maina’s Multiple Sclerosis progressed over time, other members of the group have stepped in to share the note taking.

For Maina, her decades-long commitment volunteering has paid off in friendships, connections and learning. “We still meet regularly after 20 years,” she says. “We support each other a lot and have made genuine friendships.”

Volunteering and disability

Discrimination is unlawful, and it is important that Volunteer Organisations provide inclusive volunteering opportunities that are available to everyone.

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is a way for people with disabilities in Australia to receive support. If you are an NDIS participant, you may be allocated funding in your plan that can assist you to be supported to volunteer or develop skills that will support you in volunteering. If you would like to find out more about NDIS funding to support volunteering opportunities, please contact the [NDIS](#) or your [Local Area Coordinator](#) (LAC).

Some individuals may identify as living with a disability but not receive funded supports. The NDIS can also support people with a disability who are ineligible for plan funding to connect with their local communities. Your Local Area Coordinator can assist you to identify and connect with volunteering opportunities.

Scan the QR code for more information on the [NDIS](#).



Your safety and supports

Responsibilities of the volunteer organisation

Volunteer organisations also have responsibilities. These are designed to respect your rights and keep you safe.

A volunteer organisation must:

- Uphold equal opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation
- Welcome you as a fellow team member who contributes to the organisation through your volunteer work;
- Provide training and induction to the organisation;
- Make sure you are comfortable to raise any issues and ensure they are acted upon where appropriate;
- Manage your personal information with confidentiality in line with their Privacy Policy;
- Re-imburse you for pre-approved expenses where appropriate;

- Give you appropriate insurance when performing your duties;
- Ensure you work in a safe and healthy environment;
- Allocate suitable tasks;
- Make sure you understand how to make complaints and how conflicts will be resolved.

Your responsibilities

Responsibilities as a volunteer

As a volunteer, you will be expected to:

- Act in a fair, honest and proper manner according to the law and organisational policies, plans and procedures.
- Perform your designated duties and ask if you require assistance.
- Participate in the appropriate induction and training provided.
- Report any injury/damage to yourself or a third party to your direct supervisor.
- Maintain confidentiality of customer, staff, volunteer and organisation information.
- Abide by the organisations 'code of conduct'.
- Advise your organisation if you require reasonable adjustments, and provide them with your Adjustments Passport (if applicable).

Depending on the nature of the volunteer opportunities, you may also need to:

- Take reasonable care to protect your own and others health and safety.
- Follow the directions of the person in charge of the activity.
- Bring to the attention of the appropriate person any matter which could affect the safe undertaking of the activity.
- Report to the appropriate person as soon as practicable any incidents or near misses which relate to health and safety to the volunteer activity.
- Use any equipment in accordance with the correct procedure.

Each organisation will have specific policies around:

- Training and induction
- Attendance
- Holidays
- Resignations
- Insurance
- Speak to your volunteer organisation directly to learn about their relevant policies.



Reasonable adjustment

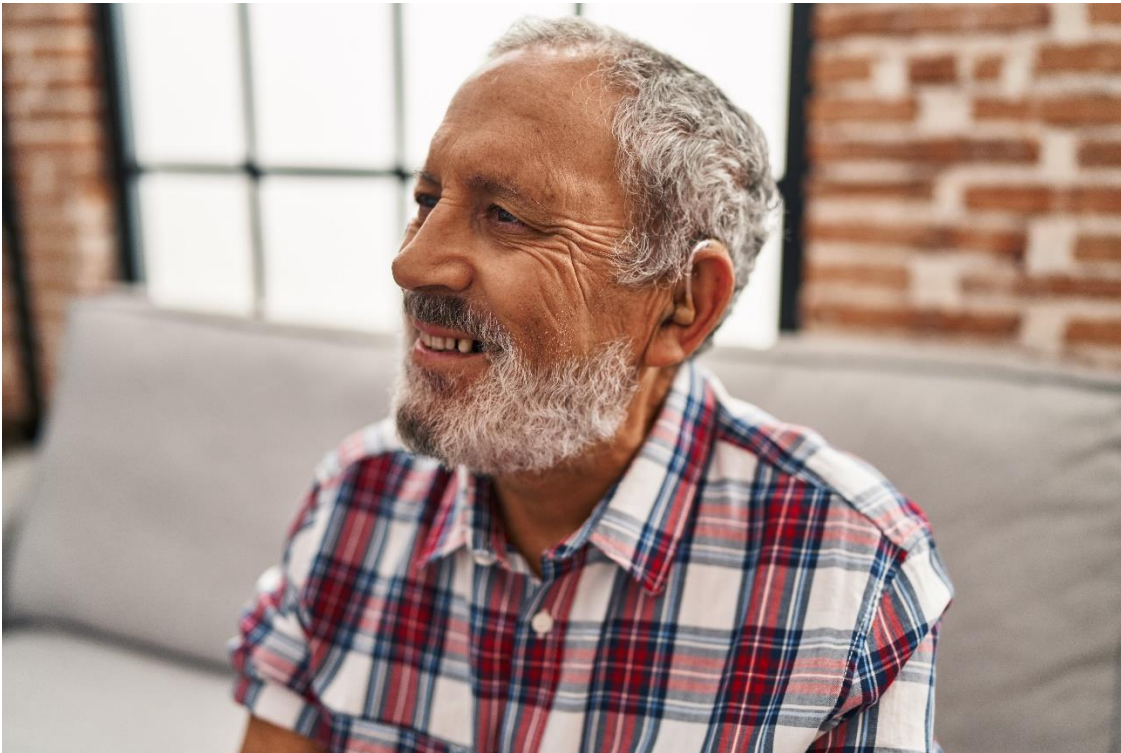
What supports you will need and how to communicate them

A volunteer organisation has to uphold anti-discrimination legislation. They are required to make reasonable adjustments so a person with a disability is able to perform the inherent requirements of the job.

Reasonable adjustments are any form of assistance or adjustment that is necessary, possible and reasonable to reduce or eliminate work-related barriers.

A reasonable adjustment could include:

- Changes to policies, work practices and physical layouts
- Provision of specialised equipment
- A mentor or a personal support worker to assist a person with disability to perform work tasks effectively, funded through a person's NDIS package.



Reasonable Adjustments Passport

You are best placed to advise any volunteer organisation what adjustments you might need in order to fulfil a volunteer opportunity. A Reasonable Adjustments Passport can help you communicate the adjustments you might need.

Reasonable Adjustments Passports:

- ensure everyone has a clear record of the agreed adjustments;
- reduce the need to re-assess adjustments as a result of changes to a passport owner's job or line manager;

- act as a useful template for conversations about current and future adjustments.

Ask your volunteer organisation if they have a Reasonable Adjustments Passport to help you communicate your requirements. If not, a template can be downloaded from [The Centre For Volunteering Knowledge Hub](#).



How to become a volunteer

If you're interested in taking the next step as a volunteer, you can:

1. Look for volunteer opportunities online

You can find volunteer opportunities online via:

[Seek Volunteer](#)



[NSW Volunteering](#)



2. Look around, ask around

have a chat with your friends, families, workplace and other networks to see if they know anyone or any business who might have volunteering opportunities.



Applying for a Volunteer Opportunity

Child Protection and Criminal History Checks

As a volunteer you may need a NSW Working with Children Check or a criminal history check. The organisation will inform you if you are required to provide any formal checks.

You can find information on applying for a Working With Children Check and National Police Check on the

[Service NSW website](#).



Paying for your Checks

A Working With Children Check is free for volunteers. Volunteers are also eligible for a Police Check at a discounted rate. Check with your Volunteer Organisation whether the cost of the check will be paid by the employer organisation, or whether you will need to pay.



How to get the best from your experience

It's important you enjoy your experience as a volunteer. We asked volunteers with disability for their tips on how to get the most out of your experience.

- Ask to see your volunteer organisation's Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP).
- Ask for the volunteer organisation's Reasonable Adjustments policy and complete their Reasonable Adjustments Passport.
- Communicate your access needs. For example, let them know if you need Easy Read documents, assistive technology, accessible parking or other requirements.
- Check if the building is accessible, including parking, transport and bathrooms.
- Ask what supports are available. Make sure you know who you can ask for help if you ever need it.

- Ask for a position description to ensure you have clarity over the tasks you will be expected to complete.

Accessibility services

Translating and Interpreting Service

Phone and on-site translating services

Phone: 131 450

Web: tisnational.gov.au

National Relay Services

Help if you're d/Deaf or find it hard to hear or speak to hearing people on the phone

Phone 1800 555 660

Email helpdesk@relayservice.com.au

Web accesshub.gov.au/about-the-nrs



Key Contacts

City of Ryde

Ryde area local council

Phone 02 9952 8222

Email cityofryde@ryde.nsw.gov.au

Web ryde.nsw.gov.au

The Centre for Volunteering

Peak body for volunteering

Phone 02 9621 3600

Email info@volunteering.com.au

Web volunteering.com.au

National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)

Provides funding for eligible people with disability

Phone 1800 800 110

0434 354 114

Email enquiries@ndis.gov.au

Web ndis.gov.au

Local Area Coordinator (LAC)

Supports people on the NDIS to create and work towards their goals.

Uniting

Phone 02 9275 9441

Email lacinfo@uniting.org

Web lac.uniting.org/home

Settlement Services International

Phone 1800 960 975

Email ssilac@ndis.gov.au

Web ssi.org.au/our-services/disability

People with Disability Australia

Disability advocacy & representation

Phone 02 9370 3100

Email pwd@pwd.org.au

Web pwd.org.au

Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association

Advocacy services for people with disability from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

Phone (02) 9891 6400

Email mdaa@mdaa.org.au

Web mdaa.org.au

Diversity and Disability Alliance

Assists people with disability from diverse backgrounds connect with peers, receive/give support and access peer mentoring

Phone 0434 354 114

Email info@ddalliance.org.au

Web ddalliance.org.au

Council for Intellectual Disability

Support and information for people with Intellectual Disability

Phone 1800 424 065

Email info@cid.org.au

Web cid.org.au



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<http://www.ryde.nsw.gov.au>