



# The National Standards for Volunteer Involvement

## Module Ten

Outro: A Review of the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement



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*“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world: indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”*

*— Margaret Mead.*

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# Reviewing the “What” and “Why” of the National Standards

The National Standards for Volunteer Involvement pave the way for a more responsible, impactful, and successful VIO framework. By revisiting the reasoning and the key points behind each Standard and Step, we reinforce our knowledge and refocus our efforts whilst taking action.



## STANDARD 1: LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

**“The governing body and senior employees lead and promote a positive culture towards volunteering and implement effective management systems to support volunteer involvement.” – Volunteering Australia.**

### Key Points:

- Clearly define and support leadership and management responsibilities for volunteers.
- Communicate, ensure understanding, and implement policies and procedures for volunteers across the organisation.
- Apply risk management processes to volunteer involvement.

- Maintain records of volunteer involvement.
- Create processes for managing relationships with partner agencies involved in collaborative volunteer activities.

### Why Does it Matter?

Imagine stepping into an environment where leaders thrive, teams come together, and goals are achieved... *That's* the kind of organisation VIO managers want to create. By implementing clear systems, you set a roadmap that gives direction to volunteers while managing the inherent risks. Better leadership leads to a better organisation, provides managers with the tools to manage time, monitor success, and assign and evaluate performance. To build a strong, motivated team, start by establishing systems that create a clear path forward for everyone.







# STANDARD 2:

## COMMITMENT TO VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT

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“Commitment to volunteer involvement is set out through vision, planning and resourcing, and supports the organisation’s strategic direction.” – Volunteering Australia.

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### Key Points:

- Publicly declare your organisation’s dedication to involving volunteers, and promise to make a significant impact.
- Plan and design your volunteer program to directly contribute to your organisation’s purpose, goals, and objectives.
- Ensure that all resources are ready and available for volunteers.

### Why Does it Matter?

Volunteers are not just another part of your organisation – they are the heart and soul of your cause! They have the power to enhance, empower, and uphold it, but *only* if they are fully aligned with your organisation’s purpose.

This is where Standard 2 comes in: it brings everything together, including the efforts of your volunteers, employees, and managers, to create a powerful force for change.

Publicly declaring your purpose is the first step. You then need to plan and design your organisation in order to set your volunteers up for success. By doing this, you will enable the countless benefits of being a volunteer-involving organisation, including clarity of intent and increased support. Without these principles, volunteer work can lose its impact and value, thereby becoming a burden instead of a benefit. By embracing Standard 2, you can elevate your volunteer program and transform your results.



# STANDARD 3:

## VOLUNTEER ROLES

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“Volunteers are engaged in meaningful and appropriate roles which contribute to the organisation’s purpose, goals and objectives.” – Volunteering Australia.

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### Key Points:

- Design volunteer roles to play a critical role in furthering your organisation’s purpose, goals, and objectives.
- Tailor roles to fit the needs of the community, service users, and stakeholders with whom the organisation works.
- Define, document, and communicate roles to ensure clear expectations.
- Review input from both volunteers and employees to ensure ongoing alignment and effectiveness.

### Why Does it Matter?

It’s simple: the success of a VIO lies in building deep connections with its volunteer community. You hold a powerful responsibility to create meaningful roles that amplify each volunteer’s unique skills and passions. Empower every team member to feel essential to your mission and prioritise transparency to build trust and collaboration.

Stay agile by continuously refining these roles to meet the community’s evolving needs. Clear communication reinforces the foundational relationship among volunteers, leaders, and the people you serve. By promoting unity and shared progress, you can tackle any challenge with a dedicated and impactful team at your side.





# STANDARD 4: RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION



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**“Volunteer recruitment and selection strategies are planned, consistent and meet the needs of the organisation and volunteers.” – Volunteering Australia.**

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## **Key Points:**

- Attract the right volunteers based on their interests, knowledge, and skills through targeted recruitment efforts.
- Provide potential volunteers with detailed information on the organisation, the role, and the recruitment process.
- Select volunteers with relevant interests, knowledge, and skills while complying with anti-discrimination legislation.
- Ensure everyone’s safety by thoroughly screening volunteers for specific roles.

## **Why Does it Matter?**

As you prepare to enhance your volunteer program, remember this: Recruiting the right volunteers is about more than just ticking off compliance. It starts with a well-crafted recruitment strategy that builds trust-based relationships with your volunteers, that is aligned with your organisation’s mission and values, and that recognises their unique abilities.

To excel in volunteer recruitment, you must address the main challenge: finding volunteers with the time, commitment, and passion. You are then able to engage them by highlighting their unique strengths, knowledge, and abilities, and place them where their passions lie.

By standardising your volunteer assessment, selection, and onboarding processes, you’ll reduce risk and create a safer environment as you attract more dedicated volunteers. A safer environment will not only protect your volunteers, but also ensure that your organisation can readily fulfil project outcomes, thereby increasing your capacity for impact.







# STANDARD 5:

## SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT

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**“Volunteers understand their roles and gain knowledge, skills and feedback needed to safely and effectively carry out their duties.”**  
– Volunteering Australia.

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### Key Points:

- Prepare volunteers with an orientation process that caters to their unique roles.
- Know your volunteers – regularly assessing their competencies will enable you to identify their support and development needs.
- Empower your volunteers by discovering skills relevant to their roles and allocating time and training for growth.
- Support your volunteers with sufficient supervision and guidance to excel in their roles and responsibilities.
- Execute changes in volunteer involvement fairly and consistently for a positive impact.

### Why Does it Matter?

Volunteers' unwavering support is paramount to the growth of any VIO. However, in order to leverage the power of their dedication, you must invest in their potential. Providing volunteers with tailored orientation, ongoing training, and clear policies will not only empower them to perform their roles effectively, but also instil a sense of belonging to your organisation.

Investing in volunteer training is investing in their retention and abilities. Training makes volunteers more effective and equips them to become ambassadors of your organisation. Rallying behind volunteers' ambitions prioritises their success; in turn, they'll propel your organisation's mission!





# STANDARD 6:

## WORKPLACE SAFETY AND WELLBEING

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**“The health, safety and wellbeing of volunteers is protected in the workplace.”**  
– Volunteering Australia.

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### Key Points:

- Build strong relationships with your volunteers through effective communication practices.
- Prioritise the safety and health of your volunteers by implementing training and safety procedures to avoid potential hazards.
- Ensure your volunteers know how to report issues through accessible complaints and grievance procedures.

### Why Does it Matter?

Caring for your volunteers is both a legal obligation and a moral duty. You must ensure their safety whilst they strive for your organisation's benefit by providing safe working environments, equipment, and training. Strive to exceed the minimum standards, to demonstrate your commitment to volunteers. This not only diminishes potential risks, but also reinforces a culture of empathy and reliability that will motivate your volunteers to stick around, be productive, and feel satisfied. Put these principles into practice with a comprehensive safety plan. Your volunteers are a vital asset, so give them the care they deserve.



# STANDARD 7: VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION



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**“Volunteer contribution, value and impact is understood, appreciated and acknowledged.” – Volunteering Australia.**

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## Key Points:

- Appreciate volunteers as an essential part of your organisation: they benefit the organisation, service users, and the community.
- Inform volunteers of their contribution and the positive impact they make.
- Regularly acknowledge and praise volunteers for their individual and team efforts.
- Be appropriate and respectful of volunteers’ cultural values and perspectives when recognising their contributions.

## Why Does it Matter?

At the core of volunteerism lies a simple truth: it’s all about creating relationships. Bonds define us and make us better versions of ourselves as leaders. By adhering to Standard 7, you’ll nurture these connections and create a sense of belonging that inspires your volunteers to contribute more to your cause than ever before.

When volunteers feel appreciated, recognised, and respected, they can become changemakers. Remarkable outcomes include increased feedback, identifying areas for improvement, and greater enthusiasm among community members. Incorporating volunteer recognition and impact assessment into your organisational framework is essential to creating a culture of engagement that is both meaningful and measurable.







# STANDARD 8: QUALITY MANAGEMENT AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT



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**“Effective volunteer involvement results from a system of good practice, review and continuous improvement.” – Volunteering Australia.**

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## **Key Points:**

- Implement policies and procedures to guide all aspects of volunteer involvement.
- Regularly review volunteer involvement in line with evaluation and quality management frameworks.
- Monitor and report on volunteer performance to governing bodies, employees, volunteers, and stakeholders.
- Provide opportunities for volunteers to give feedback on the organisation’s volunteer involvement and relevant areas of its work.

## **Why Does it Matter?**

You can continually improve and innovate your program by setting new policies and procedures and measuring their effectiveness. It’s time to take your organisation on a journey focused on growth, enthusiasm, and purpose.

Meeting this Standard means that you are on the path to volunteering program greatness, where you’re not just ticking boxes, you’re creating engaged advocates for your organisation’s purpose.

Effective volunteer involvement is not just about completing tasks: it’s about building a community and network of reliable supporters to champion your cause. Investing in your volunteers’ success will create a wave of positive impact that extends well beyond achieving your goals.







# The 10 Steps to Implementing the National Standards



## Step 1



### Identify the benefits and challenges

#### Key Points:

- **Task 1:** Review the 8 National Standards.
- **Task 2:** Identify the Benefits for Your Organisation.
- **Task 3:** Identify the Risks for Your Organisation.
- **Task 4:** Assess Your Skills and Delegate for Strengths.

#### Why Does it Matter?

As the lead person for implementing the National Standards in your organisation, you're the key to kick-starting this project. As with any big undertaking, it's important to identify the benefits and challenges of implementing the Standards in your organisation. Doing so will help you stay focused on the goal, to overcome any hurdles along the way, and to ensure you're providing your community with the best possible service. Take a moment to reflect on why it's important to you and your organisation and let that motivate you as you move forward.

## Step 2



### Gain Leadership Commitment

#### Key Points:

- **Task 1:** Create a Presentation.
- **Task 2:** Get a Formal Agreement.

#### Why Does it Matter?

The backbone of your organisation's success rests on management's unwavering support in adopting the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement. Convincing key leaders of the significance of implementing these Standards will serve as a cornerstone for your progress. Their leadership and commitment are vital at the beginning and along the way. So, let's get them on board and commit to creating a better future for your organisation, shall we?



## Step 3



### Build Your National Standards Team

#### Key Points:

- Task 1: Recruit Your Team.
- Task 2: Train Your Team.
- Task 3: Develop Your Team's Mission.
- Task 4: Assign Roles.
- Task 5: Train, Learn, and Review.

#### Why Does it Matter?

Forming a dream team of quality Standard enthusiasts will take the execution to the next level! It shouldn't be just one person's responsibility – many hands make light work and provide diverse perspectives. Make sure to involve your colleagues in the process, and mentor them to become an organised, driven task force. This empowering approach will ignite creativity and bring fresh ideas to the project, leading to exceptional outcomes for your organisation.

## Step 4



### Conduct a Gap Assessment

#### Key Points:

- Task 1: Rate Your Current Efforts.
- Task 2: Narrow Down Which Criteria are Needed.
- Task 3: Create an Action Plan.

#### Why Does it Matter?

This is where you get real with volunteer involvement in your organisation. Embrace the National Standards and identify the difference between where you are and where you need to be. This Step will shape the improvements you need to make in order for your actions to transform your volunteer management to the next level.

## Step 5



### Develop the Project Plan

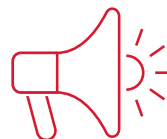
#### Key Points:

- Task 1: Divide the Project into Tasks.
- Task 2: Estimate the Time and Costs.
- Task 3: Visualise Your Plan.

#### Why Does it Matter?

Creating a solid project plan is crucial to effectively managing your project from start to triumphant finish! To ensure you reach the finish line, focus on four key planning dimensions: work tasks, time, cost, and responsibilities. A good plan will create a path to project success.

## Step 6



### Promote and Communicate

#### Key Points:

- Task 1: Identify Project Stakeholders.
- Task 2: Advise Project Stakeholders.
- Task 3: Promote the National Standards.
- Task 4: Gather Volunteer Feedback.
- Task 5: Analyse & Share Feedback Results.
- Task 6: Share Progress Reports.

#### Why Does it Matter?

The project team has the crucial responsibility to spread the word throughout the organisation about the project's goals and progress. Keeping everyone informed and engaged is the key to gaining support and achieving success. With your team's help, you'll be able to conquer new challenges and deliver extraordinary results.

## Step 7



### Determine the Management System

#### Key Points:

- Task 1: Create an Organisation Chart.
- Task 2: Review Written Job Descriptions.
- Task 3: Identify Core Processes.
- Task 4: Identify Key Tasks.

#### Why Does it Matter?

Defining an ideal management system to support your organisation's adoption of the National Standards is essential. This Step guides your project team to determine the right policies and procedures. If your gap assessment reveals minimal differences between your current practices and the Standards, sharpen your focus by reviewing your volunteer management system in Steps 7 and 8. A strong system is key to the Standards and to making a meaningful impact.

## Step 8



### Document the Volunteer Management System

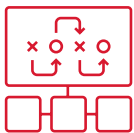
#### Key Points:

- Task 1: Appoint a Documentation Leader.
- Task 2: Prepare a General Volunteer Policy.
- Task 3: Determine the Necessary Policy Statements.
- Task 4: Draft Policy Statements for Each Activity.
- Task 5: Identify Procedures and Work Forms.
- Task 6: Prepare Procedure Drafts.
- Task 7: Review Draft Procedures.
- Task 8: Request Feedback.
- Task 9: Distribute Finalised Procedures!

#### Why Does it Matter?

Effective documentation of your volunteer management system is key to encouraging volunteer engagement and to keeping them motivated and happy. Follow Step 8 to develop policies, procedures, and work forms that clearly outline your organisation's expectations. Don't rush into it! Take the time to figure out what you need to document and why. This will enable you to create a plan that boosts team focus and makes documenting easier and more rewarding.

## Step 9



### Implement the Policies and Procedures

#### Key Points:

- Task 1: Create a Release & Implementation Plan.
- Task 2: Circulate the Policies and Procedures.
- Task 3: Conduct Briefing Sessions.
- Task 4: Feedback and Review..
- Task 5: Team Evaluation.

#### Why Does it Matter?

To effectively implement a volunteer involvement management system, you need everyone's collaboration. Volunteers, supervisors, and all involved personnel must understand the rationale behind all of the procedural changes and updates, and acknowledge their advantages. Remember that this system will elevate everyone's efforts towards the shared goal of creating positive impact.

## Step 10



### Maintain the System

#### Key Points:

- Task 1: Bring Your Project to a Close.
- Task 2: Assign a Maintenance Leader.
- Task 3: Consider Creating a Standards Maintenance Team.
- Task 4: Develop a Risk Management Plan.
- Task 5: Audit Your Management System.
- Task 6: Celebrate Your Progress!

#### Why Does it Matter?

Ensuring that your system remains up-to-date with the National Standards will be an ongoing journey, not a one-time project. Take pride in continuously improving your volunteer management process through regular check-ins and incremental enhancements. Doing so will empower your team and provide a strong foundation for fostering meaningful community impact.







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Department of Social Services.



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*The seven State and Territory volunteering peak bodies acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea, and community. We pay our respect to Elders past and present.*