

Getting Started With **Volunteering**

A GUIDE FOR NEWLY ARRIVED MIGRANTS

Moving to a new country can be exciting. It is also normal to feel worried or unsure. You might feel alone or wonder how to find your place. **You are not alone.**

Many people who moved to Australia say volunteering helped them feel welcome, build confidence, and find new opportunities.

This guide shares real stories and advice from people just like you – newly arrived migrants across Victoria who've taken their first steps into volunteering. Let their experiences inspire your own journey!

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Why volunteer?

People volunteer for many reasons after arriving in Australia. Here are some of the common benefits for newly arrived migrants:

Feel more connected

- Meet new people
- Get involved in the local community
- Build friendships and networks

Community and wellbeing

- Make friends
- Feel good helping others
- Feel welcome in Australia
- Improve health and wellbeing

Employment

- Learn about Australian workplaces
- Build confidence for work
- Get Australian referees
- Find a paid job

Personal growth

- Discover your strengths
- Feel more confident
- Get used to different accents and languages

Build skills

- Learn new skills
- Get experience
- Increase chances of finding a job
- Improve English and communication



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What other new migrants have said:



Volunteering 'provided me with the knowledge I needed to get employment, boost my confidence level, and show my worth'.

– Mariyam, Pakistan



Volunteering 'provided me the opportunities that changed my life'.

– Uzma, Pakistan



It's a great way to gain valuable skills, make new connections, and integrate into the local community.

Volunteering can also enhance your job prospects – employers appreciate it as a demonstration of initiative, adaptability, and commitment, making it a strong addition to your CV.

– Jia, China



TIP:

See the Volunteering Victoria website for more volunteer stories from new migrants:
<https://www.volunteeringvictoria.org.au/volunteer-stories/>

Activity: Consider the benefits of volunteering for you.



- How could volunteering help you?
For example: Meeting people, learning English, finding work.

- Why would you like to volunteer?

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How to find a volunteer role

There are lots of ways to start volunteering. Here are some suggestions:



Online platforms

- SEEK Volunteer - <https://www.volunteer.com.au>
- GoVolunteer - <https://www.govolunteer.com.au>

You can search for roles by your interests, location, and availability.



Local volunteer support services

Use the map on our website to find support near you:

<https://www.volunteeringvictoria.org.au/for-volunteers/volunteer-support-in-your-region>



Get personal help

The Virtual Volunteer Navigation Hub can help match your interests and skills with the right role for you: <https://www.volunteer.com.au/help-and-support/volunteering-centres>



Reach out to local organisations

Try contacting local groups, such as:

- Neighbourhood houses
- Toy or book libraries
- Local councils
- Sports clubs
- Community centres



Talk to people in your community

Speak with people in your community or groups you are part of – they might know about volunteer opportunities.



Choose a role that matches your skills and interests, as this makes the experience more enjoyable and sustainable.



– Sheryl, China

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Activity: Think about your ideal volunteer role.



- What causes do you care most about?
For example: Helping children, caring for animals, supporting the environment.

- What skills do you have?
For example: Cooking, teaching, speaking another language.

- What skills would you like to learn?

- How could volunteering be made easier for you?
For example: What support might you need?

- Who could you speak to about volunteering to learn more?



TIP:

See the Volunteering Victoria website for information about volunteering on a visa:
<https://www.volunteeringvictoria.org.au/for-volunteers/volunteering-on-a-visa>

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Top volunteering tips

This is what some newly arrived migrant volunteers had to say about getting started. Their advice might help you too!

- Don't be afraid to start.**
You can volunteer at any time in your journey.
- Do something you enjoy.**
Choose a role that matches your interests.
- Try your best.**
Every role matters, big or small.
- Stay open-minded.**
Trying new things can be great.
- Talk to your supervisor.**
Share your goals and ask questions.
- Speak up.**
Give feedback and ask for help when you need it.
- Make the most of it!**
Volunteering is a great way to grow your skills and confidence.

