



volunteering

TASMANIA

Be Connected

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29 September 2022

The Hon Julie Collins MP
Minister for Housing, Homelessness and Small Business
PO Box 6022
House of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600



Dear Minister,

Volunteering Tasmania is the peak body for volunteering in Tasmania. We work to ensure that the diverse contributions of volunteering are understood, respected, and valued as powerful drivers of community prosperity, inclusion, and well-being in Tasmania.

We have welcomed news that the Federal Treasurer, the Hon Dr Jim Chalmers MP has expressed intent to include well-being metrics in the October Federal Budget. On behalf of the Tasmanian volunteering sector, we encourage support for the inclusion of volunteering as a well-being metric to prioritise the historically underrepresented and quantifiably difficult assessment of individual and community well-being.

Budget mechanisms that assess the progress of a broader set of measures than traditional fiscal and economic budgets have the capacity to strengthen the development of social capital, resilience, and well-being of communities. The adoption of well-being indicators have enabled countries such as New Zealand, Finland, Scotland, and Wales to deepen their understanding of well-being and to measure the intergenerational impacts of policy upon key measures of well-being.

Extensive research demonstrates that volunteering is a unique and comprehensive indicator of individual and community well-being as it represents social connection, physical and mental health, a sense of purpose and connection to place. The significance of volunteering to community well-being has been recognised by the New Zealand Government and embedded within the Living Standards Framework, enabling an assessment of progress on volunteering as a key indicator and measure of well-being.

Volunteering is Tasmania's largest sector in terms of social, economic and community participation and volunteers are engaged across all aspects of community life. While the landscape of the volunteer sector differs greatly across the country and responds to changes and challenges presented by COVID-19, we know that Australians deeply value the contributions of volunteers to the social, cultural, environmental, and economic well-being of their communities.

The inclusion of volunteering as a well-being indicator in the October Federal Budget presents an opportunity to deepen our understanding of volunteering on a national, and state and territory level, and to strive for an inclusive and sustainable future of volunteering. It is an opportunity to practice a commitment to the development and support of strong, vibrant and resilient communities.

Yours sincerely,

Lisa Schimanski
Chief Executive Officer
Volunteering Tasmania

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