

Media Release

Mr Colin Brooks MP

Minister for Child Protection and Family Services
Minister for Disability, Ageing and Carers



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BOOSTING VICTORIA'S VOLUNTEER RANKS

The Andrews Labor Government is delivering support to reinvigorate volunteering and bolster the ranks of community-based volunteer organisations for their vital work across Victoria.

Minister for Disability, Ageing and Carers Colin Brooks today announced the recipients of the Emerging Stronger grants, which will receive up to \$80,000 to help strengthen volunteering by re-engaging volunteers and broadening their volunteer base.

The \$1 million grants program recognises volunteering is vital to the delivery of everything from essential community services and innovative projects that build stronger, more resilient and inclusive communities.

Through the Emerging Stronger grants program, the Labor Government is helping to provide more volunteering opportunities that are empowering, flexible, accessible and collaborative.

Wellsprings for Women, an organisation helping women from refugee, asylum seeker and migrant backgrounds access volunteering opportunities, is among the 19 grant recipients.

The centre hosts homework clubs for primary school children and language classes for women across the Cities of greater Dandenong and Casey, where 69 percent and 45 percent of the population respectively speak a language other than English at home.

The Emerging Stronger grant will help fund a volunteer training program that will provide a pathway to paid employment for up to 75 women, specifically from refugee and migrant backgrounds.

The grant program is a key part of the Victorian Volunteering Strategy launched in May, which encourages people to give volunteering a go, or get back into it, following a significant drop in volunteering during the pandemic.

The Victorian Volunteering Strategy is the Government's five-year action plan to promote, build, support and celebrate all forms of volunteering.

For more information and to view a full list of grant recipients, visit volunteer.vic.gov.au/grants

Quotes attributable to Minister for Disability, Ageing and Carers Colin Brooks

"Volunteers are vital to a vast array of essential services and community activities. Volunteers are also healthier and happier through social connection, and the sense of purpose and achievement it provides."

"The programs run by grant recipients will boost volunteering and help Victoria's social recovery from COVID-19."

Quote attributable to Wellsprings for Women CEO Dalal Smiley

"Our training program will help these women attain volunteering opportunities which are so important to increase self-esteem and build social connections – and ultimately gain paid employment."