

RESPONSE TO VOLUNTEERINGACT

SEPTEMBER 2020

LEADERSHIP

THE APPOINTMENT OF A MINISTER FOR VOLUNTEERING

The ACT Greens value the work of volunteers in our community. We agree that 2020 has been the year of the volunteer, from the bushfires to COVID - with volunteer firefighters, evacuation centre volunteers and wildlife carers, to food banks and mental health support activities - the work of volunteers in our community is vast and varied. We believe that the responsibility for volunteering best sits in the Community Services Directorate, and thus the minister responsible for community services should also be responsible for volunteering.

The Greens propose that a Ministerial Advisory Council on Volunteering be established, that ensures that the government is focussed on the needs and issues of volunteers and also liaises with other directorates and ministers in relation to the volunteer efforts in their portfolios. This would overcome the siloed nature of government functions.

SUSTAINABILITY

INVESTMENT IN A VOLUNTEER READY PROGRAM

The ACT Greens want all who choose to, to have the information, skills, training and support to help their community through volunteering. Meaningful volunteering not only helps the organisation and recipients, but also the individual volunteer - in developing employable skills and by building a sense of concern and connection for their community. The Greens support VolunteeringACT's Volunteer Ready Program at an annual cost of \$100,000. We believe that this is the right time to pursue this program not only because of job losses experienced by young people, but also because COVID-19 has highlighted that we are all connected and our society is only as strong as its most vulnerable. COVID-19 also generated and created micro-volunteer efforts that have been self led throughout the region, the Volunteer Ready Program could encourage and harness this momentum and link those participants to formalised volunteer roles.

EVIDENCE

RESEARCH THE STATE OF VOLUNTEERING IN THE ACT

The ACT Greens believe that the data of volunteering trends in our community should be captured.

The Greens will commit \$100,000 per year, for the next four years for the development and implementation of a timebanking system, similar to that running in New South Wales. Timebanking is a community program that allows the voluntary exchange of services between members. When a volunteer gives an hour, they receive an hour in return. Developing an online system like this would allow for the relevant data to be collected and collated. It would also encourage more volunteering within our community as it allows for the exchange of services between institutional and individual members. Timebanking would create a new, innovative way to connect people to the organisations and causes they care about and create a sharing economy. We believe that the development and implementation of a timebanking system would be an excellent way to provide VolunteeringACT with the relevant, necessary data on volunteering.

Thank you for the opportunity to expand on our plans for volunteering in the ACT.

You can keep up to date with our election initiatives here:

<https://greens.org.au/act/better-normal>.

[Our policy platform, including our detailed education policy, is here.](#)

If you have any further questions, our ACT Greens Spokesperson for Community Services and Volunteering is Emma Davidson.

You can contact her via email at emma.davidson@act.greens.org.au or mobile on 0459 901 306.

Clancy Barnard, Campaign Manager

On behalf of the ACT Greens

18 September 2020