

Giving Trends
Special Investigation
Viva La Volunteers



giving trends
connecting with your cause



This special investigation, Viva La Volunteers was released on the 5th of December, 2016 in honour of International Volunteers Day. International Volunteers Day was established by the United Nations General Assembly in 1985 to raise public awareness of the economic and social contribution of volunteers at local, national and international level.

Viva La Volunteers looks at volunteering in the third sector and how we are engaging those who support through the gift of time.

Volunteers are not paid – not because they are worthless, but because they're priceless."

– Unknown



Volunteers in Australia

The economic contribution of volunteers in Australia is estimated to be over \$20 billion, making our volunteer workforce of over 6 million people, an incredibly valuable asset.

The following data compiled by Volunteering Australia, paints a picture of the kind of people who volunteer their time to help others.

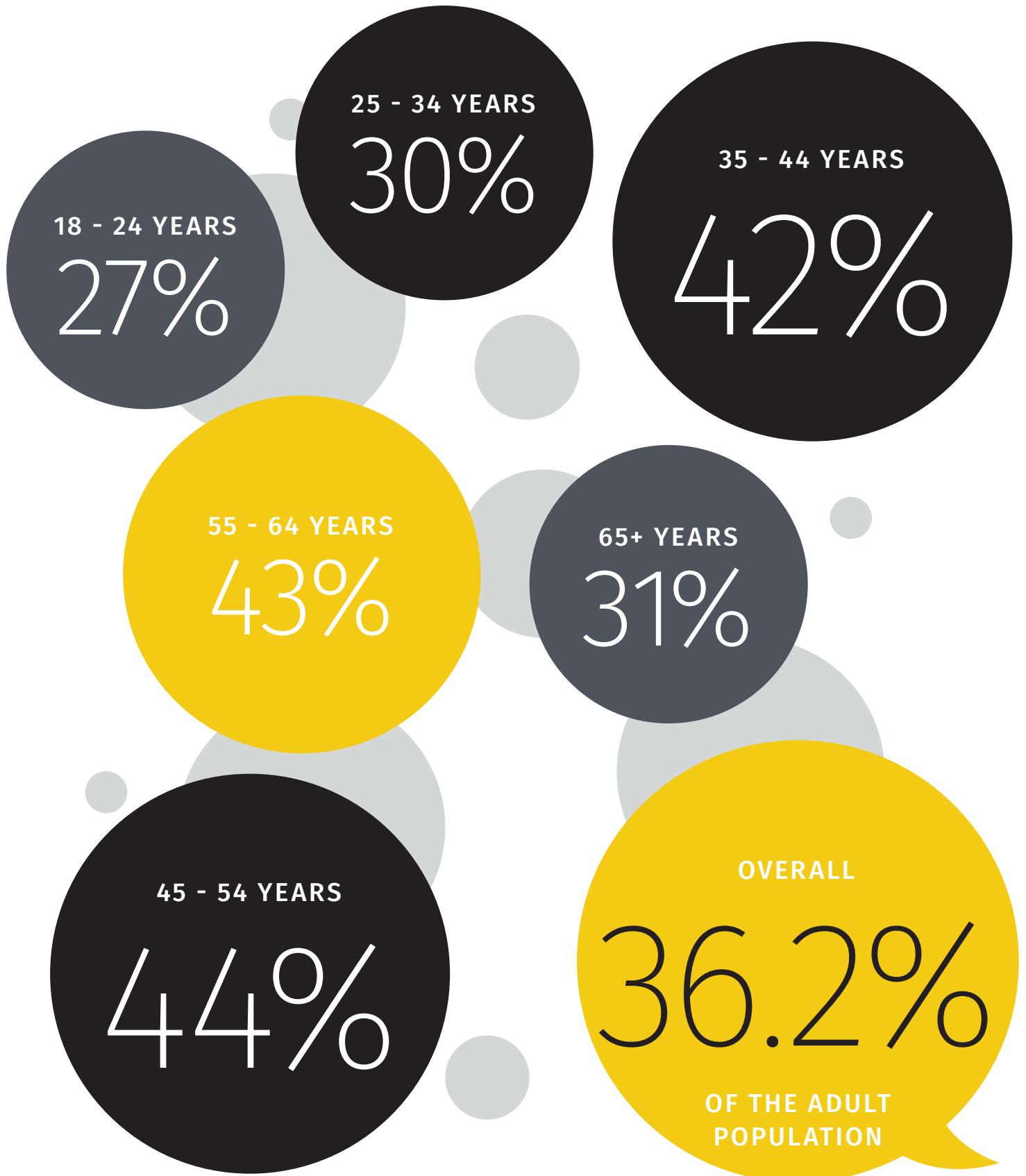
→ GENDER

In 2010, **38%** of adult women volunteered (3.24 million women)

and **34%** of adult men volunteered (2.85 million men)

Age

In 2010, the volunteer rates for adults by age group were:





Cultural and linguistic diversity

In 2010, 28% of adults born overseas volunteered (1.44 million people). 25% of adults who spoke a language other than English at home volunteered (840,000 people).

HEALTH

In 2010

33%

OF ADULTS WITH A
DISABILITY
OR LONG-TERM
HEALTH
CONDITION
VOLUNTEERED (2.22
MILLION PEOPLE),
COMPARED WITH

39%

FOR THOSE WITH
NO DISABILITY
OR LONG-TERM
HEALTH
CONDITION (3.86
MILLION PEOPLE).

40%

of adults with
a self-assessed
health status of
'excellent/very
good' volunteered,
compared with 26%
for those with a
health status of
'fair/poor.'

Employment Status

In 2010, the
volunteer rates
for adults by
labour force
status were:



Employed full
time – 38%

Employed
part-time
44%

Unemployed
20%

Retired
31%

Others not in
the labour force
30%



*“The best way
to find yourself is
to lose yourself in the
service of others.”*

- Mahatma Gandhi

Volunteering in the Third Sector

Respondents to the 2014/15 Giving Trends survey were asked a series of questions about their use and interactions with volunteers. The information that follows is drawn from that survey.

Volunteers are highly utilised in the Third Sector

It appears that the utilisation of volunteers in the third sector is very high with over 90% of Giving Trends survey participants reporting that their organisations engaged volunteers. Where volunteer labour is used, an organisation is likely to have more than 100 volunteers on their books.

How many volunteers does your organisation have?

Less than 10	14%
10-20	12%
20-50	15%
50-100	16%
Over 100	43%

Formal Vs Informal Volunteer Programs

Just because an organisation is utilising volunteer labour, does not necessarily mean they have a formal volunteer program. Among the organisations who engage volunteers, only 66% have a formal, ongoing volunteer program. The remaining 34% of survey respondents engaged volunteers on an intermittent or ad hoc basis.



Volunteering in the Third Sector

Continued

Volunteer Recruitment

The most popular methods of volunteer recruitment are:

1. Word of mouth
2. Website
3. Social media

Other volunteer recruitment methods mentioned were special events, promotion at the organisation's office/site/venue or third party website (eg Seek Volunteering).

Volunteer Roles

Volunteers perform a wide range of roles within Australia charities and not for profit organisations. The most common volunteer roles reported by survey respondents were....

1. Events
2. Administration
3. Fundraising

Volunteers were also engaged doing program work, professional services and advocacy.

Donating Time and Money

We asked survey respondents if the majority of their volunteers were also donors. While only 24% said "yes", the truly worrying statistic is that 23% could not answer the question.

Volunteers and donors are both incredibly valuable assets who need to be nurtured. You cannot do this without a clear picture of who they are, and why they give to your organisation. Keeping detailed and accurate records on all key stakeholder is absolutely essential, if you are going to effectively cultivate relationships with your volunteers and donors.



Conclusion

“Volunteers are not paid – not because they are worthless, but because they’re priceless”

– Terry Guillemets

For many organisations in the Third Sector, volunteers are an essential part of their workforce, providing skills, experience and labour that they could not otherwise afford. They can also be wonderful advocates for your organisation and the work that it does. Therefore effectively managing your volunteers is a very important task.

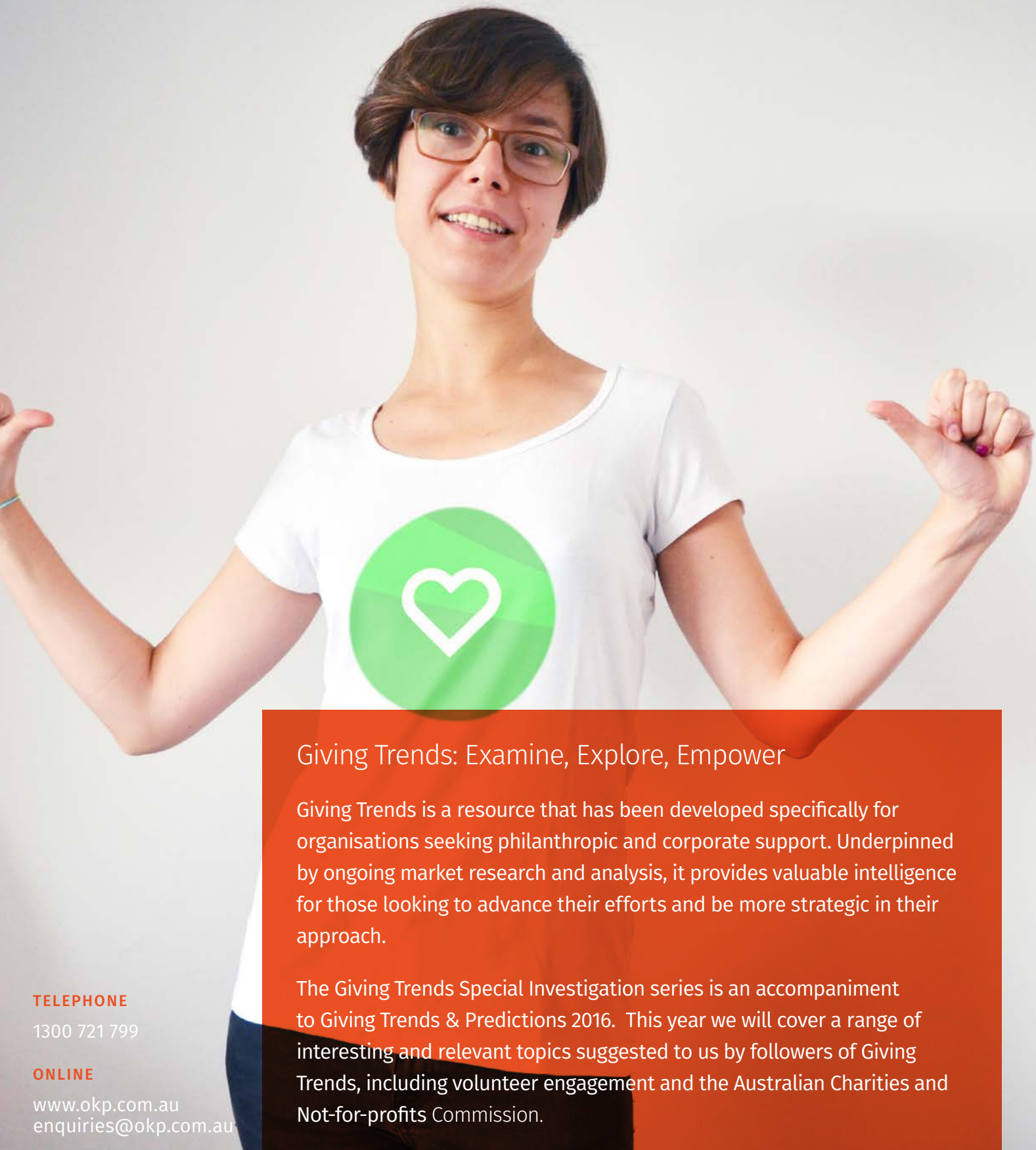
The relationship your organisation has with its volunteers is critical. While engaged and happy volunteers can be an asset to an organisation, disengaged and disgruntled volunteers can be a huge liability. The 34% of organisations who do not engage their volunteers through a formal program is a little concerning. They may be putting themselves at risk or missing out on the opportunity to create stronger, more fruitful relationships with their volunteers.

Establishing a formal volunteer program will ensure that your volunteer activities and interactions are guided by strategy and a long-term plan. It will enable you to get buy in from all levels of the organisation and structure the program in a way that facilitates good communication between staff and volunteers.

We hope that reading a Viva La Volunteers has helped you think about the role that volunteers play in your organisation and how they could be engaged more effectively.

Warm regards,

The Giving Trends Team



Giving Trends: Examine, Explore, Empower

Giving Trends is a resource that has been developed specifically for organisations seeking philanthropic and corporate support. Underpinned by ongoing market research and analysis, it provides valuable intelligence for those looking to advance their efforts and be more strategic in their approach.

The Giving Trends Special Investigation series is an accompaniment to Giving Trends & Predictions 2016. This year we will cover a range of interesting and relevant topics suggested to us by followers of Giving Trends, including volunteer engagement and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission.

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