



## **VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK**

This is an internal document containing information applicable to new and current employees and in-house volunteers. It should be provided during orientation.

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ABN: 28 002 416 024

This handbook is a guide to assist Not-for-profit organisations with recruitment and supervision of volunteer applicants. Please also refer to your organisation's applicable documents, websites and legislation for further details and advice.

## Welcome

### About Us

The Centre for Volunteering ("The Centre") is the peak body in NSW promoting and supporting volunteering and community participation. The Centre for Volunteering includes Volunteering NSW - our service-delivery arm, and the School of Volunteer Management, a registered training organisation.

We connect people and organisations in order to enrich our community. We achieve this through referral, training, resource development, information and education services to help people get involved in their communities, and enhance the capacity and skills of not-for-profit organisations, corporations and government to become involved in the community.

We do this by:

- offering services which help people get involved in their communities – such as volunteer referral to not-for-profit organisations, promoting volunteer opportunities, and school involvement programs, and
- providing training, information, and resources which enhance the knowledge and capacity of not-for-profit organisations, corporations, and government in community engagement.

We strive to be professional, service-oriented and vision focused in all our activities. We aim to develop our leadership in supporting and promoting volunteering through research, referral, training, resource development, information, fundraising and consulting services.

If you are a volunteer, employee, or contractor, this Volunteering Handbook will provide useful information about the organisation, where you can find more information about policies and procedures and general workplace information. The content is based on best practice, however should you require further explanation of any information noted in this handbook, please discuss the matter with your Volunteer Services Manager.

Thank you for joining us.

## Board of Directors



**Chairperson**

Valerie Hoogstad



**Chief Executive Officer**

Gemma Rygate

**Deputy Chair**

Kaye McCulloch

**Treasurer**

Ian Moyser

**Board Members**

Loki Ball  
Alan Bates  
Terry Brigden  
Bronwen Dalton  
Brendan Lynch  
Joy Woodhouse  
Les Hems

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## Definitions used in this Handbook

### **The Centre for Volunteering Volunteer (CFV) or Volunteer**

For the purposes of these policies and procedures a CFV Volunteer is someone working of their own free will within this organisation, or for this organisation or on a project of the organisation as an unpaid member of staff.

### **Copyright**

Copyright is a collection of rights in certain creative works such as text, artistic works, music, computer programs, sound recordings and films. The rights are granted exclusively to the copyright owner to reproduce the material, and for some material, the right to perform or show the work to the public. Copyright owners can prevent others from reproducing or communicating their work without their permission or may on-sell these rights to someone else. Copyright does not protect ideas, concepts, styles, or techniques, e.g. copyright will not protect an idea for a film or book, but it will protect a script for the film or even a storyboard for the film.

### **Client**

An individual, organisation, or a government entity to whom, for a fee, The Centre provides referral, training, resource development, information and education services.

### **Discrimination**

Australian law recognises two (2) ways in which discrimination may occur. These are direct discrimination and indirect discrimination. Direct discrimination occurs when an individual or a group are marginalised or excluded because of age, gender, religion, sexuality, cultural background, or disability. Indirect discrimination is less obvious and more difficult to identify. Generally, it must be shown that where a requirement or condition has been imposed which, even though neutral on its face, has an adverse impact on people with a particular attribute, in circumstances where that is unreasonable. As with direct discrimination, an intention to discriminate is not necessary.

### **Employee**

For the purposes of these policies and procedures, an employee is a paid member of staff whether full-time, part-time, or casual.

### **Equal Employment Opportunity**

Equal Employment Opportunity means that all persons regardless of gender, race, colour, age, marital or parental status, sexual preference, disability or religious belief have the right to be given fair consideration for a job or other job related benefits such as staff training and development.

### **Grievance or Complaint**

A grievance is a complaint, or a ground for complaint, against an unjust action taken in relation to a member of staff's work for The Centre.

**Member**

A Member is a not-for-profit organisation or an individual, who is a financial member of The Centre for Volunteering,

**Position Description**

The Position Description is the document detailing the work to be performed by a given position as it is expected to be performed after orientation and training. It also lists the skills, qualifications, experience and attributes required of a successful job candidate.

**Staff**

A member of staff is any person who performs work for or under the direction of The Centre for Volunteering, whether as a paid employee or a volunteer, whether full-time, part-time, or casual or.

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## Our Vision, Mission and Objectives

**Our Vision** is "To promote, support and facilitate volunteering through the engagement and representation of individuals and organisations for the benefit of communities across NSW"

**Our Mission** is "Setting the standard for volunteering". We promote and support volunteering and community participation. Through our leadership and experience in delivering services in NSW and throughout Australia, we connect people and organisations in order to enrich the community. The Centre for Volunteering also supports and promotes other forms of citizen participation.

**Our Key Objectives** are advocacy and communications through the promotion, support and recognition of volunteers and volunteering at the individual, community and national levels; education and capacity building by facilitating excellence and enabling best practice in volunteering and volunteer management; collaboration to strengthen membership and cooperation across all volunteer engaging organisations to enhance relationships and grow output and to embody good governance principles.

### What We Do

The Centre for Volunteering is the umbrella body for not-for-profit organisations including Volunteering NSW and the School of Volunteer Management. Volunteering NSW has a 40-year history of serving the community. The Centre undertakes special projects which support and promote volunteering and are of national significance. This includes seminars, good citizenship projects, awards and corporate-community engagement projects.

**Volunteering NSW** is the peak body for volunteering in New South Wales and has a membership consisting of not-for-profit organisations and individuals, as well as corporate clients and partners, government clients, funders and stakeholders. It delivers volunteer services such as referring volunteers to not-for-profit organisations, conducting school programs, promoting volunteer opportunities, and delivering benefits to member organisations.

**The School of Volunteer Management** is a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) and is administered under RTO requirements and is compliant with the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF). It conducts diploma, certificate, short courses and workshops to improve the quality and capacity of management in the not-for-profit sector as well as the for profit organisations. This includes courses in business, fundraising and volunteer management.

### Our Programs

The Centre for Volunteering delivers a wide array of services, programs and projects that encourage and support the aims and objectives of volunteerism in New South Wales. The programs and projects delivered vary in focus, client group, funding source and time frame.

A list of current programs is attached at [Appendix 3](#)

## Overview

The Centre places great emphasis on creating strong, respectful internal and external relationships focussed on enhancing our own and others' capabilities.

- We support each other, work together and recognise that we all play a vital role in creating a community we can all be proud of.
- We actively build relationships based on trust, honesty, respect, integrity, compassion.
- We understand, recognise, participate in and promote fairness and equity.
- We acknowledge that building relationships takes time and requires hard work, resources, effective communication, reflection and active engagement.

Our guiding principles are:

- to strengthen and enhance communities,
- to improve and enrich individuals lives,
- to assist communities to flourish,
- to ignite community spirit,
- to enhance community wellbeing, and
- to create sustainable communities.

The Centre meets its obligations and strives to fulfil its mission with the help of policies and procedures. We understand it can be difficult to know all of our policies. However, employees and volunteers are obliged to familiarise themselves with the key policies outlined here, and with the developing set of policies and procedures in the 'Policies & Procedures Folder' located on the computer network

If you have any doubts in relation to any procedure, please consult this handbook or the complete policies within the 'Policies & Procedures Folder'.

## What you need to know

As a volunteer you have the right:

- to work in a healthy and safe environment,
- to be interviewed and engaged in accordance with equal opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation,
- to be adequately covered by insurance,
- to be given accurate and truthful information about the organisation for which you are working,
- to be reimbursed for out of pocket expenses,
- to be given a copy of the organisation's volunteer policy and any other policy that may affect your work,
- not to fill a position previously held by a paid worker,
- not to do the work of paid staff during industrial disputes,



- to have a job description and agreed working hours,
- to have access to a grievance procedures,
- to be provided with orientation to the organisation,
- to have your confidential and personal information dealt with in accordance with the provisions of the Privacy Act; and
- to be provided with sufficient training to do your job.

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## The Principles of Volunteering

- Volunteering benefits the community and the volunteer,
- Volunteer work is unpaid,
- Volunteering is *always* a matter of choice,
- Volunteering is a legitimate way in which citizens can participate in the activities of their community,
- Volunteering is a vehicle for individuals or groups to address human, environmental and social needs,
- Volunteering is an activity performed in the not for profit sector,
- Volunteers do not replace paid workers nor constitute a threat to the job security of paid workers,
- Volunteering respects the rights, dignity and culture of others; and
- Volunteering promotes human rights and equality.

## Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct helps to define and develop policies and procedures in keeping with legal requirements and our ethical values of excellence, integrity, respect, collaboration, inclusiveness, and responsibility.

All staff have a responsibility to comply with legislation, policy, procedures and the Code of Conduct for The Centre. Staff should perform their duties effectively, provide impartial, accurate advice and act in a manner that promotes a productive and harmonious working environment.

The Code of Conduct requires that, in the course of their employment or engagement, employees and volunteers of The Centre must:

- Behave honestly and with integrity,
- Act with due care and diligence,
- Treat everyone with respect and courtesy and without harassment,
- Comply with all applicable Australian laws,
- Use The Centre's property and money efficiently, carefully and honestly with due authorisation and without misapplication and/or misappropriation,
- Comply with any lawful or reasonable direction given by a person with the authority to give that direction,
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality in relation to dealings with Board members, the CEO, or Senior Managers,
- Disclose, and take steps to avoid, any conflicts of interest whether real or apparent,
- Behave in a way that upholds the values, integrity and reputation of The Centre for Volunteering,
- Not provide false or misleading information,

- Not make improper use of internal information or disclose an employee's status, salary, power or authority in order to gain, or seek to gain, an advantage for the employee/volunteer or for any other person,
- At all times behave in a way that upholds the core values of the Centre for Volunteering and
- While on duty externally, interstate or overseas, at all times behave in a way that upholds the good reputation of The Centre and its departments.

Breaches of the Code of Conduct may relate to specific breaches of policies and procedures and may attract disciplinary action. Disciplinary action may include investigation, removal of privileges or access, repayment of monies, referral to Police in the case of unlawful behaviour, and termination of employment/engagement.

The Centre for Volunteering fosters the values of openness, honesty, tolerance, fairness and responsibility in social matters.

The Centre is a complex organisation comprising diverse groups that have different relationships to one another. It is essential in such a community that all members recognise and respect not only their own rights and responsibilities, but also the rights and responsibilities of other members of the community and those of The Centre itself.

### **Key Volunteer Policies**

We currently have key policies covering recruitment and selection, rights and obligations of staff and volunteer-specific matters. These are continually being developed and/or updated and upon completion are located in the Policies and Procedures folder.

### **Key Work Health & Safety Requirements**

This refers to policies, procedures and regulations which aim to ensure the wellbeing of employees and volunteers who undertake work at or for The Centre for Volunteering.

The key Work Health & Safety (WH&S) requirements are:

- All staff and volunteers must adhere to the Work Health & Safety Policy, a hard copy of which is available from the Manager, Office and People,
- All staff and volunteers are to make themselves familiar with the Emergency Procedures applicable to Level 3, 40 Gloucester Street, Sydney,
- If any staff member or volunteer is concerned in relation to a WH&S issue in the workplace, they should raise the matter immediately with the Manager, Office and People,
- The Centre's Manager, Office and People is responsible for the WH&S process which addresses any issues raised, promptly, develops procedures and documents such procedures. The Manager, Office and People also communicate WH&S policies and procedures to staff on a regular basis,
- All volunteers and staff should be familiar with the current procedures for the safe use of workstations, equipment, housekeeping, and purchasing.

## Access and use of Facilities & Rooms

The Centre has facilities and equipment including meeting rooms, training rooms, laptops and projector for use by the organisation and its staff. Booking and use of facilities by paid employees are subject to conditions.

The meeting and training rooms are subject to stringent reporting requirements by the School of Volunteer Management as part of their Registered Training Organisation status. To ensure these obligations are met, booking procedures are to be strictly be adhered to.

From time to time, external organisations may be granted permission to access these services for a fee. Staff and volunteers should avoid agreeing or making commitments to requests, and should avoid quoting an ad hoc fee for services. All enquiries must be directed to the Events Manager who has the full procedures for booking rooms. Please refer to the Policies and Procedures Folder for further details.

### Staff Calendar and Room Bookings

Staff may book rooms for meetings (Boardroom, Break Room and Training Room). Please check the shared staff calendar via Outlook. If a room has not been booked by someone else, then staff are free to book it.

In addition to signing in and out at reception, please enter your whereabouts in the shared calendar in Outlook (e.g. external meetings). This lets the reception team know how to direct callers, i.e. they know when they need to take messages for you.

### Kitchen Facilities

The facilities in the kitchen are for everyone to use, and everyone should clean up after themselves. Please do not leave any cutlery or dishes on the sink. All used cutlery and crockery should be stacked in the dishwasher. Staff share the responsibility of emptying the dishwasher and putting away the contents after a wash cycle.

There are glasses and cups set aside for meetings and guests in the break room cupboard. Where a staff member has invited guest/s for a meeting, that staff member will be responsible for setting up the meeting room (i.e. water, glasses, tea and coffee) and for leaving the room in a clean state when the meeting has concluded.

### Waste disposal

- The **red top recycling bin** located by the VRS is for all general, non-sensitive paper recycling, including cardboard and boxes. Boxes should be collapsed and placed in the bin. **Please note:** plastic covers and staples should not be left on paper based materials to be recycled.
- The **blue-top** bin located by the VRS is for sensitive documents which are to be disposed of securely. Documents may be placed into the bin through the slot in the lid of the bin. Should you require bulk disposal of sensitive documents, please ask the Manager, Office and People for the key to the locked top.
- **Printer cartridges** should be placed in the 'Planet Ark' box next to ITC Branch, located in the lower level area of the office.



- **General waste** should be disposed of in the bin allocated to your workstation, or one of the bins in the kitchen. The contracted cleaners empty bins every Wednesday.

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## Access and use of ITC, Internet & Email

### Telephone and IT Assistance

Please see the Telephone Extension List for information on telephone procedures.

This organisation has a number of information management and technology assets in place to assist staff in carrying out their work efficiently. As such, The Centre has a policy on the proper use of and access to ITC resources including Internet and email. This is contained in the Policies and Procedures Folder located in the G: drive.

The key policies and procedures to be aware of are:

- Unlawful and acceptable use of ITC resources outlines acts that are criminal in nature and may be referred to the authorities,
- Staff or volunteers are prohibited from copying or removing software owned by The Centre. The policy covers the process staff must follow should they request the acquisition of new software by the organisation,
- Requesting PC access applies to the process of connecting new staff to the network and general limitations on access to the network,
- Use of the Internet explains appropriate, inappropriate, illegal and unacceptable use of the internet at The Centre. This policy also covers the consequences for such breaches,
- The use of Centre resources for personal profit or gain is **strictly prohibited**.
- Technical assistance may be sought from the ITC Branch,
- Security explains the minimum that staff need to know about protecting the Centre's systems against security breaches, SPAM and viruses as well as protecting the privacy of logins and passwords. This policy also covers the consequences for breaches of security provisions, and
- Ownership and removal of documents stipulates the Centre's copyright over any material developed by staff or volunteers.

## Phone Policy and Etiquette

### Reception, Phone and Email

Staff and volunteers working on reception are requested to:

- Always act politely and greet new arrivals in a friendly manner,
- Attempt to diffuse any potentially difficult situation/person by using a calm and friendly manner and using an even tone of voice, as this has been shown to reduce the incidence of confrontations in customer service environments,
- Should your efforts to ameliorate the situation not be effective, ask the person to be seated and notify your manager immediately,
- You should always answer phone calls and greet guests at the front desk if the reception is unattended,
- Where the guest has an appointment with a staff member, you should immediately advise them of the arrival of their guest,
- Employees are not permitted to read extraneous materials such as magazines, papers or books while attending the reception. The computer located at that desk should be used to continue with their usual work and
- Volunteers are requested to ask their line manager if there is any office work they can assist with while attending at reception.

### Personal use

Interstate calls are permitted only for work purposes. International calls are restricted to certain managers only. Please use your mobile phone for personal calls and ensure that it is set to 'meeting' or 'vibrate' so as not to disturb others in the office with loud or inappropriate ringtones.

### Answering the phone

Please answer the phone if you are attending the reception phone with the following phrase "Good Morning/Afternoon, The Centre for Volunteering, how may I help you?" Your tone should be warm, calm and professional. If you are at your desk you should use the greeting "Hello, this is XYZ speaking".

### Dealing with difficulties

Remember that that if you cannot understand the person speaking, it is equally possible that they too, do not understand or comprehend what you are saying. Therefore, avoid becoming frustrated where you can. Give the caller time to digest the information you have provided and if required, paraphrase the salient points. Don't be pressured to hurry a call by other incoming calls. Where you need to answer other calls, politely ask the original caller to please hold the line while you attend to the new call or offer to call them back. Do not answer queries with "I think so". You should clarify your answers and provide an authoritative answer where possible or call them back with the correct information.

### Taking messages

In general, when managers or staff are engaged in meetings or discussions, they should not be interrupted. Reception can be asked to take messages for staff members who are attending scheduled meetings. Where the caller indicates that the call relates to a matter of urgency, the call should be forwarded to the staff member. Messages should be taken accurately and should include the correct spelling of the caller's name, a correct phone number, and a short message. This information should be emailed to the staff member immediately.

### Voice Mail

Your direct line to distribute to regular contacts is 02 8295 70+ the last two digits of your extension number. (e.g. if your extension is 104 your direct line is 8295 7004)

### Transferring a call

Dial the extension number you wish to transfer the call to and then press 'transfer'

### Email policy

- Use of email should be limited as far as possible to work matters only. Only essential work-based information should be stored in your Inbox or email folders,
- Sending harassing, obscene and/or other threatening messages, unsolicited junk mail (SPAM), "for profit" messages or chain letters, pornography of any kind or explicit information or explicit graphics of any kind attracts disciplinary action and may lead to dismissal,
- There are acceptable, unacceptable and illegal uses of email. These are detailed within the Policies & Procedures Folder in G:\.

**DO NOT** open attachments from unknown/unverified sources. Please advise ITC branch if you have queries in relation to attachments or emails generally.

### Email etiquette

- You should respond to email messages containing important information or requests from your manager or another staff member as soon as possible,
- Email does not replace face-to-face communication with colleagues or clients,
- E-mail messages represent not just you as an individual but also the organisation and therefore, they should always be respectful of the addressee as well as The Centre for Volunteering,
- Emails should address the issue, not the addressee, use appropriate tone and language. You should support your point/s with a clearly argued position based on facts.
- Emails which are badly expressed, poorly constructed, misleading, not proofread prior to sending or are ineffective can cause confusion and lead to an unnecessary exchange of correspondence which can, in turn, lead to loss of time and productivity as well as frustration,
- Any matter which requires detailed consideration and/or negotiation should be discussed in person or during scheduled meetings.





- Email messages should not include graphics unless you are asking for feedback on the file,
- Capital letters should be avoided. This is considered 'SHOUTING',
- You should report any unlawful or offensive content to your manager for further action by the ITC branch, or management,
- If you receive SPAM or junk mail – **do not** click on any links in the email message and do not reply. Add it to your 'Junk Mail' Filter and delete the message immediately.

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## Routine Matters

### Restrooms

Restrooms for The Centre are located in the foyer area directly across from the lifts.

### Hours of Operation

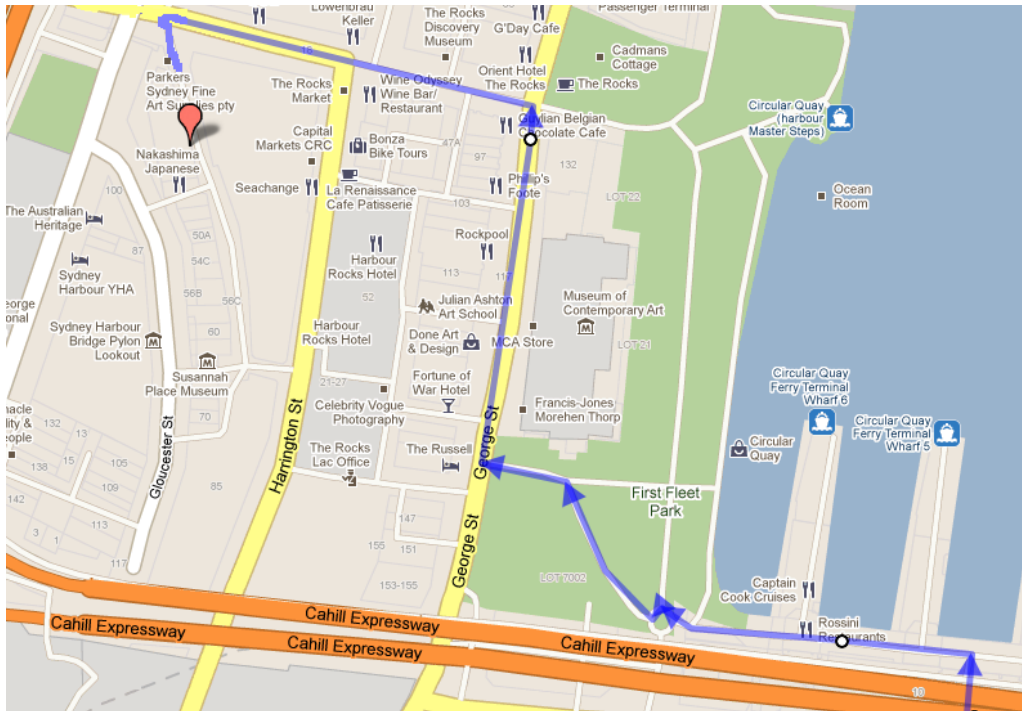
Office hours are from 9 am to 5 pm Monday to Friday, with reception switchboard hours from 10 am to 4 pm Monday to Friday.

### Transport to Gloucester/Cambridge Street

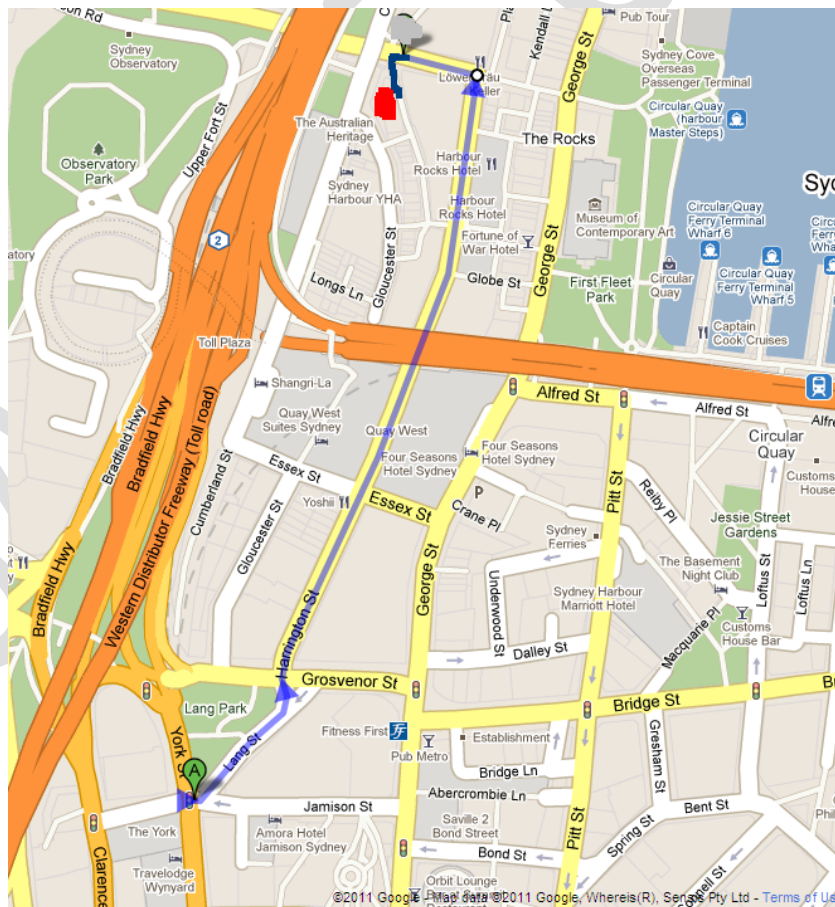
The office is located in The Rocks, with the closest stations being Circular Quay and Wynyard. There are two main access points to 40 Gloucester Street. One route is by entering at the ground floor from the corner of Gloucester and Cumberland streets, across from the Australian Hotel. The other entry point is via Cambridge Street, entering through number 11 Cambridge Street (next to Nakashima Restaurant) and accessing the office by taking the lift up to level 3.

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### Walking directions from Circular Quay



### Walking directions from Wynyard



Further detailed directions can be found via the website:  
[http://volunteering.com.au/contact\\_us.asp](http://volunteering.com.au/contact_us.asp)

### **Nearby banks, shops and post offices**

The closest post office is located on Pitt Street towards Circular Quay station. NAB is at 255 George Street; Westpac is on the corner of Pitt and Bridge Streets, just a little further than the Post Office. There is a large convenience store down stairs via Argyle Street in the Clock Tower Centre. The nearest Post Box is located on George Street via Argyle Street. The closest ATM is located in the Arcade on Playfair Street, just off Argyle Street.

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## Appendix 1

### The Centre for Volunteering – Organisational Chart (as at November 2015)

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## APPENDIX 2

The Strategic Plan 2012-2016

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## APPENDIX 3

### Current Programs

- Skilled Volunteer Vacancies
- Skilled Volunteer Alerts
- Special Events Volunteer Vacancies
- Volunteer 'Matching' Program
- Member Services – Advice, Consultation, Reporting
- Group/Corporate Volunteering Events
- Networking Events
- Accredited Training
- Short Courses
- Training Workshops
- Professional Development Courses

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