

Inclusive volunteering

Engaging volunteers with disability

- Focus on the person and what they can do, not the disability
- Be respectful and have equitable processes in place.
- Make it easier for people with disability to volunteer.
- Have images of people with disability in various volunteer roles, to provide an idea of what type of roles are available.
- Have a 'smile' in your voice, important for over the phone or those with low vision.
- It's okay to ask questions and clarify, don't be afraid to say or do the wrong thing.
- Language matters, ask and listen to how the person describes themselves and reflect the same language.
- Use welcoming and inclusive language e.g. 'people living with disability are welcomed and encouraged to apply'.
- Highlight volunteer role flexibility (tasks, time) and be willing to discuss and make changes.
- Explore options through volunteer grants and NDIS to accommodate adjustments e.g. height adjustable desks, hands free phones. People with disability may be able to access NDIS funding to purchase items to support them to volunteer ***note any items gained via their NDIS funding goes with them when they leave the volunteer role/organisation***
- Talk about what parts of a role a person is comfortable with and ask what they would like to do.
- Be open to develop a new volunteer role, let them direct what their role might be to suit them, provide some options if they're not sure, including visual images.
- Demonstrate a willingness to make changes and be inclusive for genuine engagement e.g. 'our organisation wants to be more inclusive, if you have lived experience with disability please join us to help us frame an organisation where you would like to volunteer'.
- Make application forms inclusive and brief, in various formats and offer support to complete.
- It is unnecessary to know everything at the application stage, establish rapport and trust first.
- Remove unnecessary requirements e.g. drivers' licence.
- Let people know they can have someone at the interview with them.
- Provide interview questions in advance.
- Be adaptable with the time of and place of the interview e.g. local library or coffeeshop.
- Existing volunteers need to be taken along on the inclusive volunteer journey, sometimes an established volunteer can be a barrier.

