

# Welcoming and safe volunteer spaces

## Strategies to use personal pronouns effectively

### 1. Prioritise pronoun usage:

- Incorporate pronoun usage as a standard practice in all interactions
- Encourage staff and volunteers to use pronouns at meetings or gatherings
- Create a signage of pronouns and their meanings in easy read format.

### 2. Inform volunteers:

- Give information about pronouns, gender identity and the importance of using correct pronouns
- Provide training sessions and resources for volunteers to understand the topic
- Have lived experience guest speakers join meetings and share how it validates.

### 3. Make pronouns visible:

- Encourage everyone to share pronouns on name tags, email signatures or other identification
- Create a culture where pronouns are shared and respected
- Include an optional pronoun field in volunteer application forms.

### 4. Practice listening:

- When volunteers share their pronouns and make an effort to remember and use them
- Demonstrating respect for individual identities creates a welcoming environment.

### 5. Utilise technology:

- Use tools and platforms that allow volunteers to input and display their pronouns
- This supports sharing and remembering pronouns in digital communications.

### 6. Correct misgendering with kindness:

- Address misuse of pronouns in private and be respectful
- Emphasise the value of personal identity and correcting in a non- judgemental way
- Highlight the importance of correct pronoun usage to build an inclusive environment
- Ask people to suggest ways to assist them to consider applying the use of pronouns
- Pronouns can be a new concept; and take time to build into own belief system.

### 7. Create a culture of accountability:

- People should be comfortable to hold themselves and others accountable when using correct pronouns
- Encourage open conversations about pronoun usage
- Be prompt to address any concerns or issues that arise
- Develop information guides to reinforce new ways of interacting that embraces a volunteer's identity.

### 8. Practice, practice, practice:

- Consistent practice is key to remember and use correct pronouns
- Encourage use and respect of pronouns to help reinforce the habit
- Start meetings using affirmed pronouns
- Produce a short welcoming video and update your website.