

STATE OF VOLUNTEERING REPORT 2014: THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL VALUE OF VOLUNTEERING



Executive Summary



A Message from the Premier

I welcome the third State of Volunteering Report produced by Volunteering Tasmania.

Volunteers are the backbone of our society, with volunteering essential to connecting people with opportunities for meaningful participation. Volunteering contributes to our sense of belonging, builds social networks and binds communities.

Tasmanians are particularly well known for volunteering their time, with past research showing that we lead Australia in rates of participation. This embodies the generous and compassionate nature of Tasmanians and our ongoing desire to help out our neighbours and our communities.

The ways in which Tasmanians volunteer their time is varied. Volunteers can be working at our arts and music festivals; in our school canteens and on our sports fields. They are also providing assistance to the elderly and vulnerable, and in times of disaster volunteers are often the first on the scene to help out. Truly, our society would be a lot poorer were it not for the contribution of volunteers.

We know how volunteers contribute their time, thanks to the research provided in Volunteering Tasmania's biennial State of Volunteering Reports. Each year the State of Volunteering Report conveys new and exciting information on the volunteering sector in Tasmania. It is the only piece of research that offers this insight into Tasmania's volunteering sector.

In past years Volunteering Tasmania has explored the level of volunteer-involving organisations and the impact of Tasmania's ageing population on volunteerism. The 2014 report however, marks a departure from previous research. It provides a unique insight into the contribution of volunteering - treating volunteering as a significant industry in its own right.

The 2014 State of Volunteering Report also shows us, for the first time, just how significant volunteering is to Tasmania and how much the fabric of our society hinges on these generous donations of time. It does so through quantifying the social and economic contribution of volunteering in the community. This is a first in volunteering research, for Tasmania and across the nation. It highlights Volunteering Tasmania's ability to deliver robust social and economic information that provides a strong evidence base for future strategic decision making.

I encourage you to look to the findings of this report. The data and research gathered provides a unique understanding of Tasmanian volunteers and is startling in revealing just how generous

Tasmanians are with their time, and how much volunteers contribute in economic terms to our society.

The 2014 State of Volunteering report reminds us that volunteers are a significant part of Tasmania's society, and sets an agenda for future investment in this field. I look forward to working to ensure that volunteering continues to be encouraged, supported and recognised across Tasmania.

Hon. Will Hodgman MP, Premier of Tasmania



Foreword

The value of volunteering is something we have long reflected on at Volunteering Tasmania. It is one of the hardest questions to answer. Because the more valuable an activity or item is the more difficult it is to value.

Volunteering Tasmania has collaborated with the Institute of Project Management to present a comprehensive analysis of the social, economic and cultural value of volunteering in Tasmania.

It is the first time a full cost benefit analysis of volunteering has occurred in a defined region; and the first time that an accurate reflection of the social, cultural and economic value of volunteering has been achieved

Volunteering is not just essential to the welfare and wellbeing of Tasmanians, it is also a key driver of economic growth. Our research places volunteering front and centre as Tasmania's largest industry - contributing nearly 5 billion dollars in benefits to the community.

Whilst this number is immense, our research shows that full potential of volunteering is yet to be realised. This number is just the tip of the iceberg.

The State of Volunteering Report 2014 shows us that volunteering influences economic activity across a range of sectors. It doesn't just benefit the individual or the organisations that they may belong to. Volunteering can be a significant driver of growth.

Our research shows that volunteering offers a significant return of investment: for every \$1 invested in volunteering, over \$4 in benefits are returned. If these returns are already achieved, we can only imagine what Tasmania would look like if we invested seriously in volunteering, the way that we do with other key Tasmanian industries.

By treating and growing volunteering as a sector in its own right, the resources and benefits would be there to share amongst all Tasmanians. If we worked together to achieve this, Tasmania as a whole would feel an enormous impact.

We welcome the findings from the State of Volunteering Report 2014 and consider it a must read for volunteers, managers of volunteers, and volunteer involving organisations.

This report is a significant piece of evidence that should receive attention from other sectors, as it highlights some astounding findings. These findings show not just what volunteering currently contributes to Tasmania, but the potential for us to do more.



Adrienne Picone

CEO Volunteering Tasmania



Michelle Ewington

Chair Volunteering Tasmania Board

The Economic, Social and Cultural Value of Volunteering to Tasmania, 2014



This report was commissioned by Volunteering Tasmania to quantify the economic, social and cultural value of volunteering to Tasmania.

The original contribution of this study is to apply the Institute of Project Management's (IPM) Model of Value Creation to locate the discrete values of volunteering activity and, for the first time, illustrate the dynamic ways in which they interact.

The model depicts how individuals, businesses and governments use their time and money to enable volunteering in Tasmania, which alter the individual and community states of physical, human, social, and symbolic capital. This is then converted by users into a set of economically valuable outputs that impact upon the welfare of society.

In its application, the IPM Model of Value Creation adopts the best-practice principles of cost and benefit analysis to estimate the value of the unique cluster of activities that comprise volunteering. As the first known valuation of volunteering as an economic and cultural ecosystem within a defined region, this study is as much exploratory as it is conclusive. Further research into a number of areas is encouraged.

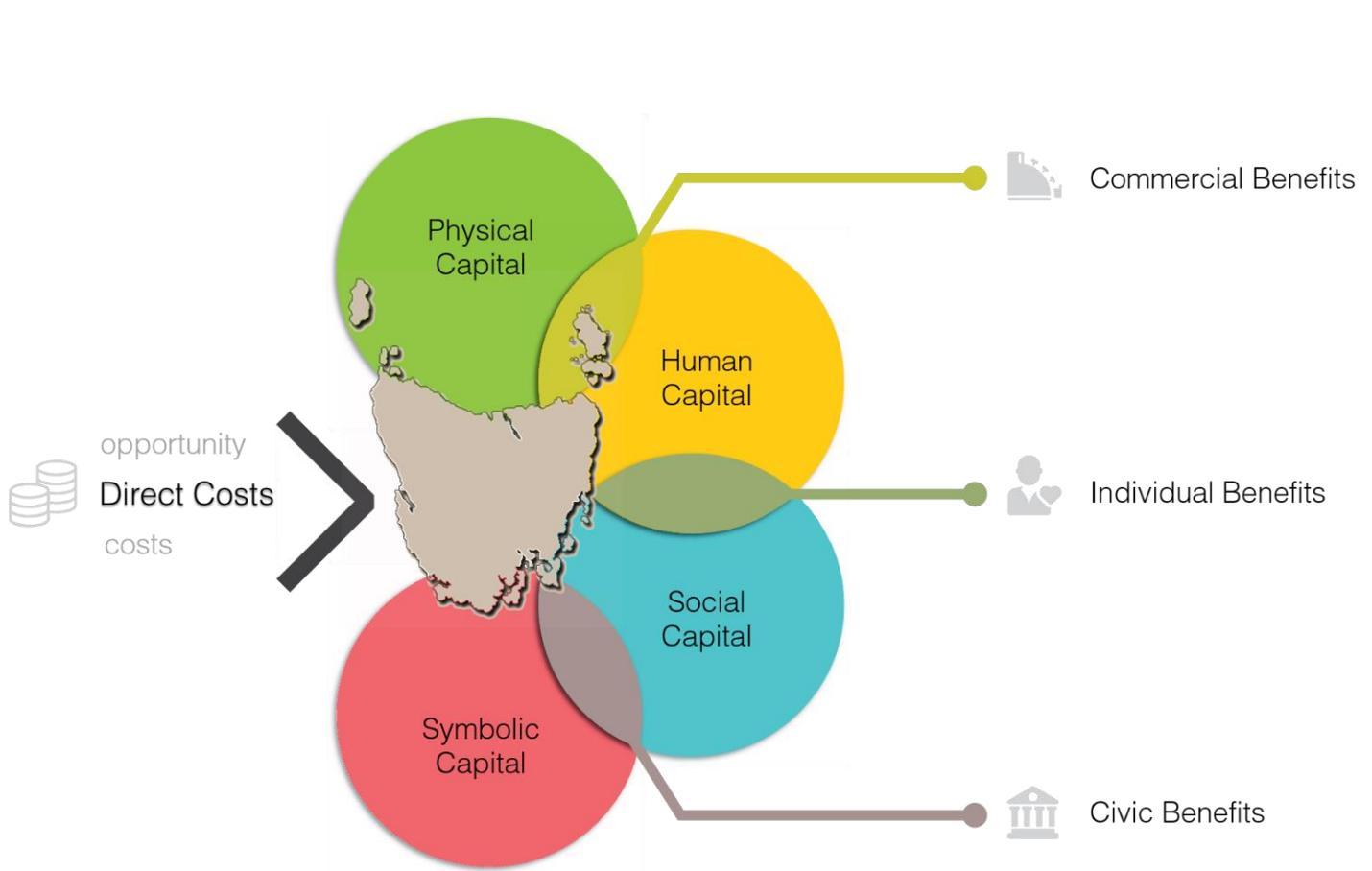
The socio-economic and cultural value of volunteering to Tasmania in 2014 is conservatively estimated to be **\$4.9 billion**. This figure is much greater than previous estimates based on price or economic impact alone, yet is likely to be a significant underestimate given the limitations of the available data and forensic techniques.

Other findings of note include:

- **four out of five** Tasmanians volunteered in 2014, donating a total of **7.1 million hours**
- people between 65 and 74 years of age volunteer, on average, **22.8 hours per month**—the rest participate at the average rate of 12.5 hours per month
- there are approximately **2,000 volunteer involving organisations** (VIOs) in Tasmania across the not-for-profit, government and private sectors
- individuals significantly self-finance their volunteering activity, out-spending VIOs at a rate of **2:1**
- only **10.1 per cent** of volunteers are reimbursed for their out-of-pocket expenses
- treated as a sector in its own right, volunteering is **Tasmania's largest industry** by employment
- Tasmanian employers enjoy a net productivity premium of **\$1.2 billion** as a result of their employees' volunteering
- in the last 12 months, over **4,000 tourists** visited Tasmania for the purpose of volunteering. Their average stay of 13.9 nights was significantly higher than the average tourist stay of 8.9 nights
- the people of Tasmania identified a personal well-being benefit of **\$651.4 million** from volunteering in 2014
- for *every dollar* invested in volunteering, at least **\$4 in benefits** are returned to the community, and
- increasing the rate of volunteering in the community by as little as **one per cent per year** through marginal increases in government investment will yield exponential community benefits.

The principal finding is that although the current levels of investment in volunteering yield a strong return, a more economically efficient outcome can be achieved by increasing the regular rate of volunteering in the community. For example, exploiting the self-identified under-utilisation of volunteering capacity in Tasmania would yield an additional **\$706.1 million** in benefits over ten years.

The IPM Model of Value Creation proposed by this report is therefore a useful tool for enabling and explaining the costs and benefits of volunteering in a defined economy, and for evaluating policy alternatives in support of this aim.



Full findings of the State of Volunteering Report 2014 are available at
www.volunteeringtas.org.au

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- Mellissa Gray, Department of Premier and Cabinet

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