

## Volunteers to create 'human pie-chart'

On Tuesday morning at 10.30am Volunteering Tasmania will gather more than 100 volunteers on Parliament Lawns to create a 'human pie-chart' to visually represent the number of volunteers supporting government services.

Volunteering Tasmania chief executive Alison Lai said the event was designed to reinforce the contribution of Tasmanian volunteers, and highlight the importance of investing in strategies to safeguard it.

"We have an enviable culture of volunteering with 4 in 5 Tasmanians giving their time willingly to help others," Alison said.

"The contribution of these volunteers is conservatively estimated to be worth \$4.9 billion every year to Tasmania, which is a significant contribution that must be protected."

With volunteers involved in almost every aspect of Tasmanian life, Alison stressed that many key sectors, particularly emergency and community services are highly dependent on volunteers.

"Understanding the reliance communities have on the services provided by volunteers, it is critical that we look to the future to identify opportunities and strategies to protect their contribution," she said.

"We have provided a funding proposal to all the major political parties that will enable us to project future volunteering levels over the next 10 years, and develop strategies with communities that may need assistance."

Advocating for tri-partisan support, Alison said that this event was necessary to ensure all political candidates understood Tasmania's considerable volunteer contribution.

"We are in discussions with the major political parties and have had discussions with individual candidates," she said.

"Many of these conversations have been positive, and others have reinforced our belief that more work needs to be done to raise awareness about the reliance that our State has on volunteers.

“So with the assistance of volunteers, we are literally creating a ‘human’ picture of what this reliance looks like.

“There is no doubt that our volunteers are highly valued, but none of us are born volunteers and if we want to continue to have a strong volunteering culture we need to invest in it, just as we do our paid workforces.

“In addition to the social, health and wellbeing and professional benefits volunteering provides, we need to stop considering it as just something listed at the bottom of a resume.

“Volunteers are sustaining many of our key labour forces, and their combined contribution is significant to Tasmania’s economic and cultural success.

“Simply put, Tasmania would stop without volunteers and safeguarding volunteering will secure Tasmania’s future.”

397 words.

**FOR INTERVIEWS:**

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**ABOUT VOLUNTEERING TASMANIA:**

Volunteering Tasmania is the peak body for volunteering in Tasmania, representing the interests of all Tasmanians involved in volunteering through training and development, advocacy, research and policy development.