

Example: Economy and business

This is the introduction and first section of [an article exploring problems and solutions in volunteer workforce engagement published in *Lens*](#) (Monash University). The article is organised using a Question/Answer structure and is expressed in everyday, accessible language. The character of ‘the volunteer’ is developed throughout the article. Overall, the tone is semi-formal and the active voice is applied.

What happened to Australia’s volunteer army?

Herman Tse, Professor, Department of Management.

Kohyan Kiazard, Associate Professor, Department of Management, Monash Business School.

Volunteerism is waning in Australia. The army of Good Samaritans propping up the country’s social and economic fabric is shrinking. But it’s not necessarily a lack of desire to volunteer that’s to blame.

Rather, the sector is suffering from a funding shortage and increased demand for volunteer labour, compounded by a complex web of systems for attracting, training and retaining volunteers.

In short, the volunteers who give so much of their time – assisting people with disabilities, running community sport, providing disaster relief in floods and fires – need support in return.

A Volunteering Australia study shows that in 2021, only one in five people (about 20%) was actively volunteering in the community. This is a drastic reduction from 36% in 2010, and 29% in 2019. Regional and rural areas are particularly hard-hit, and without urgent intervention the downward spiral will continue, jeopardising the \$58 billion volunteers contribute to the Victorian economy alone.

A question as a headline can be effective in conveying the topic and gaining reader engagement. ✓

This article is co-authored. Expert authors’ professional position and affiliation. 💡

The opening paragraph highlights the ‘problem’ that will be addressed in the article. Notice the short sentences and paragraph. ✓

A list sentence introducing the causes of the problem. 💡

The sentence begins with a signpost phrase – ‘in short’ – to alert the reader to a summative definition of the term ‘volunteer’. 💡

A definition towards the start of the text establishes the main character of the article, in this case ‘volunteers’. ✓

Two strategies are used in this paragraph to highlight the extent of the volunteer problem: facts and figures, and dramatic, emotive language like ‘urgent intervention’ and ‘jeopardising’. 💡

Legend

✓ Good practice

✎ Needs improvement

💡 Comment

Professor Herman Tse and Associate Professor Kohyar Kiazad from the [Monash Business School](#) have recently partnered with [Volunteering Victoria](#) (VV) to help articulate the challenges facing volunteerism and develop strategies to strengthen the sector, which was pushed to breaking point during the COVID-19 crisis.

“While volunteering is making a return since the easing of the pandemic, participation in volunteering had already been gradually declining in the last decade,” says VV Acting CEO Dr Antoine Guillemette.

“This means that even if we were to return to a pre-pandemic participation level, it would still be much lower than a decade ago. It’s imperative that we find ways to reverse this trend.”

How do we recruit more volunteers?

It’s not a lack of community goodwill holding back volunteerism. The sector needs to innovate and become more accessible to more people if it’s to remain relevant and sustainable in the long term.

This means improving diversity and inclusiveness, and embracing flexible modes of volunteerism, whether it be through remote engagement, hybrid collaborations, or informal ad hoc opportunities, rather than relying too heavily on volunteers making a regular commitment.

The sector also needs to remove the administrative and cost barriers preventing would-be volunteers from participating.

This is an attributed expert quote which emphasises the problem and the need for solutions. ✓

For clarity, it could have been helpful to include the attribution at the end of the full quote, or reaffirm for the reader that this text is also a quote from Guillemette. ✎

Subheading. The wording continues the question/answer structure established in the headline and gives a clear direction for this section. The inclusive pronoun ‘we’ addresses readers. 💡

The use of a contraction makes the tone conversational. 💡

The introduction concludes with a solution to the problem that the article is exploring. ✓

Source

Tse, H. & Kiazad, K. (2022 October 18). *What happened to Australia’s volunteer army?* Lens. <https://lens.monash.edu/@business-economy/2022/10/18/1385173/what-happened-to-australias-volunteer-army>