

# Professionalising Volunteering

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# Monash Journal article

## **“Pay volunteers: charity chief”**

“Volunteers need to be paid and the volunteering industry has to become more professional...”

# Personal Background



**KEY CHANGE  
MUSIC**



the human race



**highresolves**  
INITIATIVE

# Overview

## **Conference theme:**

The future of volunteering

## **My opinion:**

The future of volunteering lies in the professionalisation of volunteering

# The merits of volunteering

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- Serving others/giving back
- Personal fulfilment
- Shapes world view & attitudes
- Provides unique experiences & opportunities
- Benefits for non-profits & beneficiaries

# Eg 1: David Cameron's 'Big Society'



Volunteering as a vehicle for assisting the **economic recovery of an entire country**

## Eg 2: Jade Gallop



Volunteering as a **life changing experience**

**How do we professionalise  
volunteering?**

# 1. Thinking about & structuring the volunteer experience

# The volunteer experience

**Organisations...** need to treat volunteers like paid staff.

**Volunteers...** need to work like they are being paid.

# The volunteer experience

Lack of professionalism in the volunteer experience

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**Dysfunctional volunteer culture**

## 2. Structuring & supporting non-profit organisations

# Nature of non-profits & volunteers

- Non-profits that **can't exist** without volunteers
- Non-profits that **can and should move beyond** dependence on volunteers
- People able to volunteer on an **ongoing basis**
- People for whom volunteering is **not sustainable**

*How do we transform unsustainable non-profits and provide more opportunities for people to transition from volunteering to paid work where appropriate?*

## a) From charity to social enterprise

“Social enterprises are social mission driven organisations which apply **market-based strategies to achieve a social purpose**. The movement includes both **non-profits that use business models to pursue their mission** and for-profits whose primary purposes are social.”

- Organisational professionalism & enhanced service delivery
  - eg: **Fitted For Work & Dear Gladys**,
- Opportunities for volunteers to become paid employees
  - eg: **Key Change Music**

## b) Funding for non-profits

Government, philanthropic and corporate support is **rarely available for operating costs** (including salaries).

- The shift internationally
  - eg: **Boston Foundation (USA)**
- The situation in Australia
  - eg: **Jade Gallop**

# Conclusion

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1. The future of volunteering lies in the **professionalisation of volunteering**
2. This requires a shift in the way that we **think about and structure the volunteer experience** & the way that we **structure and support non-profits**
3. Such a shift will result in **benefits for non-profit organisations, volunteers and beneficiaries**