St Vincent de Paul Society
NSW

good works

MEMBERSHIP & VOLUNTEER STRATEGY
JUNE 2024 – JUNE 2028

Approved by the Executive Leadership Team
and State Council – October 2024

INTRODUCTION

Members and volunteers are at the heart of the of The St Vincent de Paul Society - NSW (the Society), which prides itself on being a grass-roots organisation that is an integral part of local communities across NSW. They are critical to the Society delivering on its mission and vision.

The work of our members and volunteers shares a common purpose of helping those who are disadvantaged and marginalised in our society. Their work reaches across all areas of our operations, supporting people experiencing poverty or disadvantage in line with the Society's Mission and Vision.

Our members provide social connection and companionship as well as assistance with living expenses and access to food and referral support. Our volunteers keep our Vinnies Stores open and support our service delivery. Both work hand in hand with staff in a wide variety of essential work across NSW.

The Strategy seeks to ensure the ongoing sustainability of these good works by increasing the number of members and volunteers of all ages, establishing new Conferences, better supporting existing members and volunteers, and reducing attrition rates through engagement, recognition and support. It builds on the success of the past Membership Strategy, which saw membership grow across NSW by over 10 per cent and a significant boost to the number of youth members.

SCOPE

This is a whole-of-Society strategy impacting our membership, the Society's employed staff and its enabling functions. It will guide and assist all our people to implement initiatives that ensure a vibrant and growing cohort of members and volunteers. It calls on all our people to work together to strengthen and grow the Society. Actions will be delivered over a four-year period, concluding in June 2028.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2024-2028

The strategy builds on and is consistent with the St Vincent de Paul Society NSW Strategic Plan 2024-2028 'Strengthening Communities, Transforming Lives'. This strategy supports the NSW Strategic Plan under its 3 stated goals.

- Goal 1: Excel – Amplify the impact of our service offering
  The Strategy will help drive collaboration between Conferences, Vinnies Services and shops. It will also grow Conference and volunteer engagement in acts of service delivery.

- Goal 2: Grow – Extend the reach of our services
  The Strategy will use our membership and volunteer footprint to provide flexible support to keep people in their homes through the provision of referral support, early intervention programs and material assistance.

- Goal 3: Cultivate
  Enable our people, operational and financial capabilities so that we can deliver more and better outcomes
  The Strategy will deliver improved member and volunteer engagement.

OUR STRATEGY PRIORITIES

The Membership & Volunteer Strategy has three priority areas. These are to:

- Better retain our existing members and volunteers

- Grow our member and volunteer cohort

- Improve communication and collaboration across member and volunteer cohorts

PRIORITY 1: RETAIN OUR MEMBER AND VOLUNTEER COHORT

KPI 1: Slow avoidable loss of members
Measure: Data shows a reduction on the current attrition rate of 11.91%, reducing by 1.2% each year to achieve an attrition rate of 7.5% by Strategy's end

KPI 2: Slow avoidable loss of volunteers
Measure: Data shows a reduction on the current attrition rate of 13.23%, reducing by 0.94% each year to achieve an attrition rate of 9.5% by Strategy's end

Action	Sub-actions	Lead	When	Deliverables
1.1 Ensure new Members and Volunteers are tasked to do meaningful and practical activities *quickly* after sign-up	1.1.1 Conduct a review of member and volunteer onboarding procedures and develop a best practice onboarding experience.	Member & Volunteer Engagement; Regions	Y1	New onboarding guidelines which provide a simplified onboarding experience developed and implemented in every region

AND

All members and volunteers who sign-up to the Society are provided at least one practical volunteering/ member activity within 1 month of submitting application form. |
| | 1.1.2 Document the range of existing member and volunteer activities and develop + deliver bespoke onboarding journeys for each recruitment campaign, which prioritise community and organisational need, capacity and timeliness. | Member & Volunteer Engagement; Regions | Y1-Y4 | |

| 1.2 Recognise the great contribution members and volunteers make to the work of the Society and the people we serve | 1.2.1 Provide length of service and lifetime services awards to members and volunteers. | Member & Volunteer Engagement | Y1; Y2; Y3; Y4 | Service awards are distributed

AND

Members and volunteers are frequently nominated for external awards

AND

The work of members and volunteers is frequently highlighted in internal and external publications

AND

Annual statewide recognition award service event is held
AND

Local recognition events and awards are held and distributed |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1.2.2 Nominate individuals or groups of members or volunteers for external awards, such as nominations for community or volunteering sector awards. | Member & Volunteer Engagement, Regions | Y1; Y2; Y3; Y4 | |
| | 1.2.3 Highlight the work of members & volunteers in external and internal publications, the website and on social media | Member & Volunteer Engagement, Communications Team | Y1; Y2; Y3; Y4 | |
| | 1.2.4 Deliver an annual statewide recognition award service event for members, volunteers and other key contributors to the Society. | Member & Volunteer Engagement, Regions | Y2-Y4 | |
| | 1.2.5 Facilitate recognition of member and volunteer achievements through region-based (local) awards and events | Regions | Y1; Y2; Y3; Y4 | |

| 1.3 Better understand why members and volunteers exit the Society and develop strategies to retain those people for longer | 1.3.1 Investigate and implement a statewide method for the collection and recording of offboarding surveys for members and volunteers | Member & Volunteer Engagement | Y1-Y2 | Offboarding procedures have been reviewed

AND

The majority of members and volunteers exiting the society complete an exit survey

AND

The organisation understands the reasons why people leave the Society

AND

New ideas for retaining members and volunteers have been implemented using exit survey data |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1.3.2 Review member & volunteer offboarding procedures | Member & Volunteer Engagement | Y1 | |
| | 1.3.3 Facilitate the use of exit surveys across the state | Member & Volunteer Engagement; Regions | Y1-Y4 | |
| | 1.3.4 Develop new ways of retaining members and volunteers utilising exit survey data | Member & Volunteer Engagement | Y1-Y4 | |
| | 1.3.5 Collect existing recent exit survey data and produce a report which details the key reasons people are exiting the Society and provide recommendations for retention | Member & Volunteer Engagement, Member Programs | Y1 | |

| 1.4 Deliver high quality opportunities for Member and Volunteer networking and learning; ensure pathways exist for young people into leadership | 1.4.1 Identify opportunities to bring youth and other Society leaders together so that young members are integrated into the full breadth of Vincentian good works. | Youth Committee, Membership Committee, Member & Volunteer Engagement, Youth Committee | Y1-Y4 | Young Adult Conference Presidents and other young emerging leaders understand and are confident of their place in the organization

AND

More Youth & Young Adult Conferences are aggregated are participating at a Regional leadership level |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1.4.2 Ensure Youth & Young Adult Conferences are aware of their aggregation options and encouraged to aggregate | Youth Committee, Membership Committee, Member & Volunteer Engagement, Youth Committee | | AND

Events held

AND

Mission master classes and spiritual reflection guides offered to each Central Council

AND |
| | 1.4.3 Ensure members are provided opportunities for spiritual development by offering spiritual reflection guides and mission master classes in each Central Council | Mission & Formation | | Every new member and volunteer receive a new member welcome pack as part of the onboarding process |

	1.4.4 Organise and hold an annual event for Regional Council Presidents and other Society leaders	Member & Volunteer Engagement	Y1; Y2; Y3; Y4	
	1.4.5 Organise and hold an annual event for young adult members	Member & Volunteer Engagement		
	1.4.6 Ensure local social events for members and volunteers are held, including Central Council retreats	Regions		
	1.4.7 Ensure the distribution of new member and volunteer packs to new members or volunteers	Member & Volunteer Engagement, Regions		
1.5 Learning approach targeted toward developing leadership skills	1.5.1 New and existing conference presidents complete the induction and mentoring training contained in the Conference Presidents Resource Toolkit.	Member & Volunteer Learning Coordinators	Y1-Y4	Training is undertaken by new and existing conference presidents AND

within the membership	1.5.2 Conduct a review of the Leading with Impact program and roll out a revised version across all central councils			Conference presidents increasingly report a good understanding of their place in the wider Society structure and the services and referral pathways that are available to them

AND

Leading with Impact program revised and rolled out across all central councils

AND

Learning needs analysis undertaken, skills gaps identified and training solutions are delivered |
	1.5.3 Conduct a learning needs analysis to identify skills gaps within the member and volunteer cohorts and develop learning plan accordingly			
1.6 Support members and volunteers to complete compliance courses	1.6.1 Set up learning pop-up kiosks at key Society locations accessible to members and volunteers, such as at VSCs and Hubs.	Member & Volunteer Learning	Y1-Y4	The learning kiosk model is implemented AND Monthly calendar of compliance training sessions is created AND Members and volunteers complete all compliance courses at a rate of 95% or above
	1.6.2 Develop a calendar with monthly compliance training sessions available to members and volunteers, including online options via Teams.			

PRIORITY 2: GROW OUR MEMBER AND VOLUNTEER COHORT

KPI 1: Increase net number of Conferences
Measure: Data shows a net increase in of number of active conferences by 10 to 427 by end of FY 2028

KPI 2: Grow total member numbers by 15% to 5,000 by the end of FY 2028
Measure: Data shows an annual net increase of 165-200 members

KPI 3: Grow the number of youth members (<36 years) by 12% to 745 by the end of FY 2028
Measure: Data shows an annual net increase of 20-30 youth members

KPI 4: Grow total volunteer numbers by 12% to 8185 by end of FY 2028[1]
Measure: Data shows annual net increase of 220-250 volunteers

Action	Sub-actions	Lead	When	Deliverables
2.1 Align & deliver effective local	2.1.1 Establish locally based member and volunteer recruitment plans across each	Member & Volunteer	Y1;Y2	

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[1] *This KPI will be met jointly between efforts of MVEI and CERF*

member and volunteer recruitment campaigns with community need	region with set targets, prioritised based on need	Engagement, Regions		Each region has a plan implemented to address gaps in conference coverage AND Conference locations are correlated to community need AND 5 New conferences are established across the state
	2.1.2 Undertake a gaps analysis to investigate areas in need of members or volunteers across the Society (particularly in disadvantaged areas) and develop region-based recruitment plans; proactively support Society members and staff to fulfil their recruitment needs			
	2.1.4 Establish (or re-establish if conferences have become dormant) at least two new Conferences undertaking client support/ emergency assistance work per region	Regions	Y1-Y4	
2.2 Expand the range of specialist conferences and early intervention crisis support hubs	2.2.1 Highlight the work of diverse members and volunteers through internal and external communications	Member & Volunteer Engagement, Regions	Y1-Y4	10 new Special Works Conferences are established AND The work and experiences of diverse members and volunteers are
	2.2.2 Establish ten new Special Works Conferences aligned to identified Vinnies Services			

	2.2.3 Investigate the development of a community of practice support network for diverse and specialist conferences	Member & Volunteer Engagement, Regions		increasingly shown through internal and external communications

AND

Volunteers and specialist conferences report being well supported

AND

Vinnies Vans Services are supported by appropriate numbers of members and volunteers, including recruitment of new members and volunteers for new services.

AND

Up to four new early intervention crisis support hubs are established |
	2.2.4 Leverage our growing Vinnies Vans footprint as a recruitment and engagement opportunity for membership; and support our Vinnies Vans Services to ensure their runs are staffed with appropriate levels of members and volunteers.	Vinnies Vans, Member & Volunteer Engagement Team		
	2.2.5 Establish up to four new early intervention crisis support hubs for frontline community assistance.			
	2.3.1 Attend all O-Weeks of the major universities; review and update the process for responding to and engaging	Member & Volunteer Engagement,	Y1; Y1; Y3; Y4	Youth member and volunteer numbers grow by 12%

2.3 Grow the number of young members and volunteers	with interested students and facilitate the creation of new conferences.	Regions, Youth Committee		AND New member welcome events occur AND Digital and other recruitment campaigns are undertaken
	2.3.2 Facilitate new member welcome events to quickly build strong social ties to the Society and its good works			
	2.3.3 Utilise digital marketing (including social media and volunteering/ job sites) to recruit members and volunteers	Member & Volunteer Engagement		
2.4 The Vinnies Service Medallion (VSM) becomes the pathway through which we engage with secondary schools in NSW.	2.4.1 Transition all existing program relationships with secondary schools into the VSM	Regions	Y1; Y2; Y3; Y4	Program rolled out in all secondary schools where the Society has a presence AND 22 schools from Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta are participate in the VSM
	2.4.2 Develop tailored forms of VSM program delivery for schools who are already participating in Society activities (e.g. schools who already do the sleepout activity will now be 'recognised' as part of the VSM)	Regions, Member & Volunteer Engagement	Y1; Y2; Y3; Y4	

	2.4.3 Roll-out the VSM in all Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta schools	Regions, Member & Volunteer Engagement	Y1; Y2	AND At least 10 additional secondary schools with no recent Society engagement are engaged with the VSM
	2.4.4 Leverage experience of schools engaged with the VSM to engage other schools with the program	Member & Volunteer Engagement	Y2;Y3; Y4	
	2.4.5 School staff in regions support the ongoing engagement and implementation of the program	Regions		
2.5 Provide practical opportunities for those who are time poor to become members or volunteers	• 2.5.1 Develop specific plans to grow and retain our member and volunteer base to be inclusive of the following cohorts: • Primary and secondary students • University students • Young professionals	Member & Volunteer Engagement	Y1-Y4	Growth plans implemented AND The Society attracts and retains more members and volunteers who live lives with differing and/ or competing time-demands

	• Families • Recent retirees and those approaching retirement			
	2.5.2 Develop specific marketing material for the above cohorts in line with regional recruitment plans and KPIs, and target promotions to them	Member & Volunteer Engagement, Communications Team	Y1-Y4	
2.6 Refresh our external and internal imagery to reflect a modern and diverse member and volunteer base	2.6.1 Expand the range of visual imagery (still and moving) of a diverse membership and volunteer-base in action	Member & Volunteer Engagement, Communications Team	Y1-Y4	Library of visual imagery (still and moving) updated

PRIORITY 3: IMPROVE COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION

KPI 1: Members and volunteers increasingly report higher levels of satisfaction with the way the Society communicates with them

Measure (Option 1 - BAU): Members and volunteers report a 5% increase in satisfaction with the way the Society communicates with them to 61%

Measure (Option 2 - Additional investment required): Members and volunteers report a 20% increase in satisfaction with the way the Society communicates with them to 76%

KPI 2: Members and Volunteers increasingly report higher levels of satisfaction with the way members and volunteers collaborate

Measure: Members and volunteers report a 10% increase in satisfaction in the way members and volunteers work together to 87%

Action	Sub-actions	Lead	When	Deliverables
3.1 Better record, raise the profile and communicate the impact of the work of	3.1.1 Provide an annual impact report for members and volunteers	Member & Volunteer Engagement, Member Programs	Y2	Impact report is produced AND MVEI contributes quality weekly content

members and volunteers	3.1.2 Contribute to the success of a new social media channel/s to communicate the work of our members and volunteers	Member & Volunteer Engagement, Communications Team	Y1-Y2	to the Communications Team for the new social media accounts AND Operations report for each Conference produced
	3.1.3 Product an annual report on Conference operations and provide it to Conference presidents	Member & Volunteer Engagement, Member Programs	Y1;Y2;Y3; Y4	
	3.1.4 Ensure member and volunteer stories appear regularly in the member newsletter and on Workplace; and use social media platforms to effectively showcase the material assistance that members and volunteers provide			
3.2 Ensure Society communications method matches the needs of different	3.2.1 Refresh member and volunteer communications approach by: - investigating using short videos as a method of communication;	Member & Volunteer Engagement, Communications Team	Y1-Y4	Plan for member and volunteer communications refresh finalised AND Members and volunteers increasingly

member and volunteer cohorts	- providing letter options for those who are not tech-savvy; - utlising SMS messaging (e.g. invitations for events or volunteering opportunities) where appropriate, as well as email			report that they are communicated with well by the Society AND Members and volunteers and volunteers are provided with alternate communication options based on their needs or capabilities
	3.2.2 Use channels such as The Vincentian and Volunteering at Vinnies to ensure that Members and Volunteers are aware of alternate opportunities of work available to them across the Society (especially locally)			
3.4 Improve communication with and between members and volunteers	3.4.1 Continue to produce regular state-wide member and volunteering newsletters	Member & Volunteer Engagement	Y1	'Volunteering at Vinnies' and 'The Vincentian' newsletters produced AND Members and volunteers increasingly use MAVS and are made aware of the work of their fellow members/ volunteers
	3.4.2 Support the uptake and use of the MAVS system	Member Programs		

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