

Inviting Cultural Diversity in Volunteering



NAME OF ORGANISATION

A program to link people from other cultures to volunteering
with the support of a volunteer mentor

Inviting Cultural Diversity in Volunteering is a project funded by the Home and Community Care (HACC) program and coordinated by the Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne). This information was prepared by Sharon Porteous for the Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne), Suite 2/27 Bank St, Box Hill 3128, Ph: 9285 4888, www.miceastmelb.com.au.

Information for new Volunteers

WHAT IS VOLUNTEERING?

A volunteer is a person who chooses to work for no payment to help others. A volunteer can be from any background. People usually volunteer once per week, once per fortnight or once per month.

WHAT IS THE VOLUNTEER MENTOR PROGRAM ABOUT?

The volunteer mentor program helps people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to become volunteers in organisations that provide Home and Community Care Services (HACC). The program matches a new volunteer with a more experienced volunteer (mentor) to help them learn about the work they will do as a volunteer.

This program is a way for people from other cultures to become volunteers and experience the benefits of volunteering such as helping the community, experiencing Australian culture, improving self-confidence and self-esteem and learning new skills.

WHAT IS MENTORING?

Mentoring is where a more experienced person (the mentor) helps a less experienced person (the mentee) to achieve their aims. An experienced volunteer is trained as a **mentor** and matched with a new volunteer from another culture.

This program **benefits** the mentor and the new volunteer by:

- Learning new skills.
- Meeting new people.
- Having new experiences.
- Building self-confidence and self-esteem.

WHAT WILL THE MENTOR DO?

If you are a new volunteer from another culture, **the mentor will:**

- Welcome you to the organisation.
- Meet with you four times (usually once per week or once per fortnight).
- Work beside you and help you when you need it.
- Share their knowledge and experience with you.
- Listen to you and answer your questions.

WHAT IS YOUR ROLE?

Your **role** as a new volunteer is to:

- Listen carefully to the information and guidance given by the mentor.

- Undertake tasks as agreed to by the organisation you volunteer with.
- Accept responsibility for your own decisions and actions.
- Meet with the coordinator to discuss the mentoring relationship.
- Be honest and respect the mentor.
- Accept new ideas.
- Keep a record of contact with your mentor.
- Give your opinion about the project to the Project Worker when you finish contact with your mentor.

OTHER PEOPLE INVOLVED IN THE MENTOR PROGRAM

Coordinator

This person organises the mentors and the volunteers. The coordinator matches the mentors with the new volunteer. You can meet with the coordinator to talk about the mentor program, your volunteer role and any problems or questions you have. The coordinator will:

- Provide orientation and training to the mentor and mentee.
- Supervise the mentor and mentee.
- Help with problems or concerns.

Project Worker

This person organises the whole mentor program for three organisations. The Project Worker helps to train the mentors and provides the information mentors and volunteers need about the program. The Project Worker will evaluate the program to find out how successful it is. The Project Worker will evaluate the program by meeting with the Coordinator, mentors and volunteers to ask their opinions about the program.

THE IMPORTANCE OF CONFIDENTIALITY

It is important to remember that all people have the right to dignity and privacy and that this should be protected at all times. You should respect everyone's right to privacy and keep information confidential unless you are concerned about something. If you are not sure you should ask the coordinator.

It is also important to recognise that the aim of the mentoring relationship is to support the new volunteer in their volunteer placement. The mentoring relationship is not a place to discuss personal issues. Mentors and volunteers should respect each other's personal information and only share personal information where they feel comfortable. You decide what is okay for you to discuss. You should respect the mentor's time and keep your meetings to the time agreed. Money, gifts and favours should not be exchanged between mentors, volunteers and paid workers.

WHEN TO ASK FOR HELP

You should ask for help at anytime that you feel uncomfortable or unsure about what is going on in the mentor program. You can ask your mentor for help about your volunteer role. You should always ask the coordinator for help if you have a problem with your mentor or the mentor program.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

If you are happy to participate in the mentor program you need to fill in the "Participation Agreement" form which is attached. You should sign the form and give it to the coordinator.

The coordinator will help you to find a suitable volunteer role and match you with a mentor. The coordinator will write out the information you need such as the name of your mentor, the organisation you will volunteer for and how to contact the coordinator.

Inviting Cultural Diversity in Volunteering

- An EMR HACC CALD Project -

Pilot Volunteer Mentor Program Participation Agreement

This agreement relates to participation in the pilot volunteer mentor program as part of the Inviting Cultural Diversity in Volunteering Project.

Name of organisation: _____

Name of volunteer: _____

Position (please tick): Mentor New Volunteer

I understand and accept that my participation in the pilot volunteer mentor program includes:

- Specific responsibilities in addition to my usual volunteer role.
- Being bound by the confidentiality requirements of the program.
- Being involved in the evaluation of the program including participating in an interview or survey about the program.

Volunteer:

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Coordinator:

Signed: _____ Date: _____

What Happens Next – New Volunteers

- You will be linked with a mentor
- You will be given a volunteer position

The name of your **mentor** is: _____

Your **coordinator for the mentor program** is: _____

Located at: _____

Phone of your coordinator: _____

You should contact the coordinator if you have any questions about the mentor program.

About your new volunteer role:

The name of the **organisation** you will volunteer with is:

Phone number of the organisation: _____

Address of the organisation: _____

These are the best times to contact the organisation: _____

The date you start your volunteer role is: _____

The days you will be a volunteer are: _____

The time you start is: _____

The time you finish is: _____

Other special information you need to know is: _____

Your mentor will meet you at this organisation on your first day