



AAFBG RESOURCE FOR MEMBERS

Resource 2 Adopted February 2026 Revised 2026-04

ATTRACTING AND SUPPORTING MEMBERS AND VOLUNTEERS FOR FRIENDS OF BOTANIC GARDENS

PURPOSE

To assist Friends of Botanic Gardens to attract members and to recruit, induct, train and support volunteers. This is a general guide which needs to be adapted to the particular circumstances of garden management and the roles of the Friends of the Garden.

CONTENTS

1. Introduction: Friends Membership and Volunteering
2. Attracting Members
3. Volunteering
 - 3.1. Preparation prior to volunteer recruitment
 - 3.2. Recruiting volunteers - advertising and events
 - 3.3 Induction and training of volunteers
 - 3.4 Ongoing volunteer communication and support
 - 3.5 Celebrating volunteers and special events

4 TEMPLATES and CHECKLISTS

- 4.1 Template: Example of Volunteer Role Description
- 4.2 Templates: Volunteer Induction, Health and Safety, Incident Reports
- 4.3 Template: Code of Conduct
- 4.4 Checklists: Tools and Ideas for Recruiting Volunteers

REFERENCE: This resource is informed by the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement (Volunteering Australia). Further resources on volunteering are available from state based agencies. Find your nearest centre at <https://volunteeringhub.org.au/contact/>

TERMS USED

Friends of Botanic Garden: is used as the short hand expression for an incorporated association of voluntary members which support a botanic garden or an arboretum or related botanical institution, including to provide volunteer services.

Garden Management Authority: is the legal authority managing the land and property of a botanic garden. This is usually a local government authority or government agency.

1 INTRODUCTION: FRIENDS MEMBERSHIP AND VOLUNTEERING

Friends of Botanic Garden groups are usually incorporated as not-for-profit associations with a set of rules to govern the association. These rules outline the rights and responsibilities of the members of the incorporated association.

To become a volunteer in a botanic garden often requires becoming a member of the Friends of the Botanic Garden group. This is important for keeping an up-to-date register of members and volunteers for regular communication and to help manage workplace health and safety issues in cooperation with the Garden Management Authority.

In some botanic gardens volunteers can register directly with the Garden Management Authority which has their own procedures for volunteer recruitment and management.

Membership of a Friends of Botanic Garden Association usually involves:

- Keeping in touch with garden news via newsletters and attending events
- Assisting with fundraising for the garden
- Volunteering time and services for the Friends Association and the botanic garden

All members of Friends Associations are invited to Annual General Meetings and to related meetings or events as set out in the formal rules or constitution of the Association. Some members may choose just to support the garden by keeping in touch via newsletters, attending events and making donations to the garden via the Friends.

Friends and Botanic Garden volunteer roles may include:

- serving on the governing board/committee of the Friends Association
- assisting in an administrative or coordination role for the Friends,
- helping with fundraising activities and events,
- contributing to the communication and publicity of the activities of the Friends and of tours, events and services in the garden (newsletters, website, social media)
- working in a plant nursery
- guiding tours and assisting with educational activities,
- working in garden maintenance
- assisting with plant conservation and botanical services such as Living Plants Collections, herbaria, seed banks and in plant identification services.

2. ATTRACTING MEMBERS

More information on recruiting and retaining membership of a Friends group can be found in AAFBG Resource 1: Establishing a Friends of Botanic Garden group.

The key steps to attracting and supporting members are to:

1 Advertise for members using stories with good photos

- Develop a membership leaflet which summaries how members help the botanic garden and provide community benefits through the garden via the Friends group. This may be a combined membership and volunteering registration leaflet.
- Include a summary of member benefits and make it easy to apply.
- Include photos and quotes of current members.
- Advertise via printed brochures, websites, social media campaigns. Develop stories for local media stories, set up information stalls at fairs or community events. Ask for promotional help using the communication platforms of your local or state government.

2 Respond promptly to member applications

- Ensure applicants receive a quick and friendly welcoming communication via a phone call and welcome letter. Invite new member to an upcoming event and introduce new members to others. Make new members feel at home!

3. Communicate Regularly with Members

- Send out a regular printed or email newsletter with invitations to garden events.
- Tell the story of the progress being made in the garden and of the needs which are still to be addressed, adding ways to donate or contribute as appropriate.
- Celebrate member contributions and the features/beauty of the botanic garden.

4. Organise Special Events for Members

- Invite members to special tours or “back of house” events in the garden to learn about the work in plant nurseries, seed banks, herbarium or other special projects.
- Encourage members to bring a friend or family member to events (“Friends + friend”).

A good way to gain more members is by current members telling others how they enjoy being a part of the Friends and the life of the botanic garden as a community asset.

3. VOLUNTEERING

Volunteers are essential to the maintenance and visitor services of many botanic gardens.

Volunteers enjoy the friendship, health and well-being associated with contributing to the botanic garden as part of volunteer teams. The botanic garden as a community asset benefits by enjoying the services of volunteers. A win-win partnership!

In some botanic gardens volunteers can register directly with the Garden Management Authority which will have their own policies and procedures. The following steps are focussed on botanic gardens where the Friends group is mainly responsible for recruiting and managing volunteers in cooperation with the Garden Management Authority.

STEPS FOR ATTRACTING AND SUPPORTING VOLUNTEERS

- 3.1 Preparation needed prior to volunteer recruitment**
- 3.2 Recruiting volunteers: advertising and events**
- 3.3 Induction and training of volunteers**
- 3.4 Ongoing volunteer communication and support**
- 3.5 Celebrating volunteers and special events**

The actions needed under each step are summarised below. The templates and checklists in Section 4 are designed to make these steps easier.

3.1 Preparation prior to volunteer recruitment

Before recruiting volunteers the governing board of the Friends of the Botanic Garden and/or the Garden Management Authority need to:

1. Articulate in a public statement, such as a mission statement or Strategic Plan, the value of volunteers for the botanic garden and a commitment to support volunteers.
2. adopt volunteering policies and procedures including a volunteer induction process, health and safety procedures and a Code of Conduct (Refer to the templates in section 4)
3. develop volunteer role descriptions - to inform prospective volunteers of the purpose and value of the role, the key tasks of the role, the training and support available to the volunteer in that role and who the volunteer reports to or how the team is coordinated
4. appoint a Volunteer Coordinator or a team of people with appropriate skills and aptitudes to manage volunteer recruitment, placement, induction and training processes as well as for the administration of volunteer records and insurances.

Nothing is ever perfect and the governing board should establish a process of regular review of volunteer programs to identify opportunities for continuous improvement.

In addition, to prepare for step 3.2:

1. Begin gathering good photos of volunteers, with their consent, with quotes and stories to use in recruitment tools and advertising. (See 4.4.1: How to obtain good quality photos)
2. Ensure it is very easy to register as volunteer or to find more information about volunteering. Consider investing in software or apps which enable applying for membership or registering to be a volunteer to be done online.

3.2 Recruiting volunteers: advertising and special events

Ongoing advertising for volunteer recruitment may include:

- Posting regular stories on the garden website and via social media of examples of volunteering in the garden with a photo and a quote from a current volunteer.
- Distributing a 'volunteering at the botanic garden' brochure via local government and community events. This may involve setting up an information booth at the garden, or at a local community fair or event with a good display of photos.
Refer to 4.4 for checklist of contents for a recruitment brochure and information booth.
- Asking the Garden Management Authority to assist in promoting a volunteer recruitment drive via their website and local community newsletters.
- Asking current volunteers to invite their family and friends to consider volunteering.

Organise a volunteer recruitment event

- A special volunteer recruitment event can be organised around an event at the garden such as BGANZ Botanic Gardens Week. This can include a display or information stall about volunteering and offer some hands on experiences for prospective volunteers.
- Organise a special tour of the garden to see what volunteers do. Prospective volunteers can experience what volunteers do and how much they enjoy volunteering.
- Advertise your special volunteer event by submitting stories with photos or video to local news media to come and see what volunteers have achieved at the garden.
- Make sure it is as easy as possible for prospective volunteers to sign up and then to be placed in a role with good induction and ongoing support (See step 3.1)

Special events to find out what volunteers do will help to match up a new volunteer to an area of service which meets their interests and abilities. These events also help to promote the botanic garden and the work of the Friends to the local community.

MEDIA TIPS FOR A VOLUNTEER INFORMATION EVENT

If planning a media story for a volunteer event make sure you have an authorised spokesperson ready to speak to media with the answers to likely questions including:

- What do volunteers do at the garden? What roles do you need to fill?
- What training is provided? Why volunteer? (Benefits to volunteers and community)
- How to volunteer? (Via the website or at the garden – when, where, how?)

Also consider organising one or two willing and able volunteers to be primed and ready to be interviewed for a media story.

See 4.4 Checklist of tools and ideas for recruiting volunteers

3.3 Induction and training of volunteers

If new volunteers are to be retained it is vital that they feel welcomed into the Friends and garden community and be placed in the right role with the training and support they need.

The person or team assigned to manage new volunteer placements should:

1. Call and email the new volunteer to acknowledge the application and send a welcome letter from the President of the Friends or someone in authority at the garden.
2. Set up a face-to-face meeting with the new volunteer to introduce them to the garden, their preferred volunteer work area and to run through a volunteer induction checklist.
3. Have a package of information with the volunteer role description, essential health and safety information and Code of Conduct. Discuss any training and equipment needed.
4. Introduce the new volunteer to a work area coordinator, or a mentor/buddy, who will help the volunteer to feel at home and receive the training and support they need.
5. Follow up with the new volunteer after the first month to see how they going in the role.

The person responsible for placing new volunteers should be ready to have honest conversations if it becomes apparent that a volunteer is not a good fit for a particular role. Do they need more training or a different mentor? Is there a more suitable volunteer role?

Refer to:

- 4.1 Template for a Volunteer Role Description
- 4.2 Templates for Volunteer Induction, Health and Safety, Incident Reports
- 4.3 Template for a Code of Conduct

3.4 Ongoing volunteer communication and support

After a volunteer is inducted and settled into their role there is a need for regular communication to provide information about volunteer achievements and special events.

- Provide a regular newsletter with garden news and to invite volunteers to special tours or events or to advertise training opportunities.
- Conduct follow up well-being checks with volunteers, especially when there is an unexplained absence.
- Recognise the long service anniversaries of volunteers.
- If a volunteer role needs to be revised, or changes are needed to policy and procedures affecting all volunteers, ensure appropriate consultation with volunteers.

Respecting volunteer privacy:

- In group emails to a volunteer team put the email addresses in BCC (blind copy) not in the email address list, unless consent has been provided from all volunteers involved.
- Do not provide other contact details for the volunteer, such as a mobile phone number, unless consent has been provided or is required by the work area coordinator.
- Ensure any details provided of health information about the volunteer and the volunteer's emergency contact person is kept secure and is only available to people who need access to these details for health and safety reasons.

3.5 Celebrating volunteers and special events

Volunteers contribute a lot to botanic gardens for broader educational and community benefit. This deserves regular acknowledgment and celebration!

Celebrating volunteers can be achieved in a variety of ways including:

- Stories about volunteers in garden newsletters and social media posts
- Promoting the collective contribution of volunteers in garden reports
- Media stories about specific progress/achievements involving volunteers
- Recognising volunteers via awards and for long service/life memberships
- Organising special events for volunteers

Good photos of volunteers in their roles are important to communicating their work. See 4.4.1 for tips on obtaining good quality photos, with consent.

Volunteer Stories

- A regular 'volunteer profile' (or a volunteer team profile) to learn about the person/people, activities on this area
- Reports for the Friends AGMs or public meetings which note the number of volunteers, total hours contributed, estimated value, list of community and conservation benefits
- Stories about progress in the garden which generate a sense of shared volunteer community and achievement – for garden newsletters and local media.

Recognising Volunteers

- Awards can be developed and presented to recognise outstanding volunteer efforts.
- Certificates awarded for long service with stories for the garden newsletter.
- Life Memberships awarded for outstanding and long service with citations/stories.

Special Events for Volunteers

Special events for volunteers not only provide a benefit to volunteers but also allow volunteers from different work areas to meet each other and to learn about other areas of work in the garden. Allow volunteers to invite a family member or friend to attend the special event as their invited guest.

- Adapt a garden tour as a special behind the scenes event, or create a special garden walk, just for volunteers and their invited friends.
- Organise special presentations on topics of interest for volunteers and their invited friends or a discounted group price to attend an event of interest in the region.
- Organise a special annual "Thank You Volunteers" event with a free meal or refreshments and some fun and interesting activities. If you have a special awards program or Life Memberships program announce and celebrate these at the event.

At all special volunteer events include a message to acknowledge and celebrate the progress made and the achievements of all volunteers for the wider community benefit. If volunteers

have been encouraged to bring a friend or family member to events make sure there is an information table and an easy way for others to sign up as a volunteer!

4.1 **TEMPLATE: EXAMPLE OF VOLUNTEER ROLE DESCRIPTION**

[Insert name of the Friends of the Garden] **GUIDING IN THE BOTANIC GARDEN**

Guiding visitors in the botanic garden is a vital part of the educational purpose of the garden and is mostly carried out by the volunteers of the Friends of the Garden. The garden offers a range of tours. Guiding notes are provided to learn about the plants or features of each tour. Garden guides do NOT need to be botanists! The team of guides are all on a shared journey of learning and discovery. Garden guides do need to enjoy sharing a love of plants and nature with a variety of people.

Guide Role

Garden guides may choose to assist with any or all of the following:

1. Lead or assist with walking tours of the botanic garden for a wide variety of visitors
2. Assist with school visits to the botanic garden such as leading a walking tour with students or assisting the City Council employed Education Officer with an educational activity
3. Drive an electric buggy to provide tours and for internal garden transport for special events or for visitors needing mobility assistance. (This requires extra training.)

Training and Support for Garden Guides

- Guides are inducted and supported by a volunteer Guides Coordinator and/or by the City Council employed Education Officer.
- Guides are invited to participate in regular information and training events and are provided with guide notes for standard tours.
- A Guides Manual is available with general information about the history, plants, features and conservation work of the garden.
- Guides are provided with a distinctive shirt with a garden patch to distinguish guides when assisting with tours and school visits.

The role of volunteer guides is highly valued by visitors to the botanic garden and by local schools. The electric buggy transport and guiding service is much appreciated by visitors with mobility restrictions including elderly garden visitors.

Guides Coordinator

The Guides Coordinator is appointed by the Friends Committee to:

- Coordinate the induction of new guides, with the assistance of other experienced guides
- Roster and assign guides for tour bookings and e-buggy transport needs

- With the Education Officer coordinates the assignment of guides to assist with school visits and other educational programs or events
- Liaises with other coordinators on garden services and the promotion of tours
- Provides reports to the Friends Committee on tours and guiding needs

4.2 TEMPLATES: **VOLUNTEER INDUCTION HEALTH AND SAFETY INFORMATION INCIDENT REPORT FORM**

[insert name of your Friends of Garden group]

VOLUNTEER INDUCTION CHECKLIST

A: VOLUNTEER PLACEMENT AND GENERAL INDUCTION

Volunteer Administration and Information

- You are a member of the Friends of the Garden and up to date on the membership fee.
- You have submitted a Volunteer Registration form with details of a person to contact in the event of an emergency affecting you.
- You have been assigned a volunteer role and introduced to a work area Coordinator/supervisor or to an experienced volunteer buddy/mentor for that role.
- Where needed for the volunteer role you have been given a name badge or uniform.

Awareness of the Code of Conduct and Health and Safety Information

- You understand the expectations of the Code of Conduct
- You understand your responsibility to look out for your own health and safety and the health and safety of others
- You know where to find a First Aid kit and an AED
- You know where to evacuate to and what to do in the event of an emergency
- You know how to deal with anti-social behaviour in the garden
- You know how to make an Incident Report

B: SPECIFIC ORIENTATION AND TRAINING FOR THE ROLE

Awareness of the particular needs of the volunteer role

- You understand the volunteer role description and know how to seek further training or guidance for specific tasks or the use of equipment in this role.
- You know how to access the area of your volunteer work (access route, keys, pass codes etc) where to find the equipment you need and who to contact if there is a problem
- You know where to find facilities such as toilets, washrooms, storage for personal items

Personal protection and equipment

- Where required for the volunteer role you have protective clothing (such as gloves, hat, sturdy shoes) and anything else required for safety in performing the tasks required.
- You know where to find sunscreen, insect repellent, water refill points

HEALTH AND SAFETY INFORMATION

[insert name of your Friends of Garden group]

All volunteers need to comply with the risk management and health and safety procedures of the Garden Management Authority and follow the instructions of the garden staff.

The Garden Management Authority is [INSERT NAME HERE].

The contact details for the Garden Manager and garden staff are on a Contacts List which is updated regularly and can be found here: [INSERT LOCATIONS].

Workplace health and safety is a priority for everyone at the botanic garden

1. **Please take all reasonable care to look after your own health and safety.**
This includes personal protective measures such as sun protection (hat and sunscreen), drinking water, insect repellent, personal protective equipment suitable for the task (gloves, sturdy footwear, suitable clothing, eye protection), avoiding hazardous areas.
2. **Look out for the health and safety of others.** This includes other volunteers and visitors to the garden. If you see a hazard please report it to the garden staff.
3. **Know where to find First Aid** and other help in the event of an emergency or accident.
4. **Ask for guidance or training** before undertaking any task that you are unsure about or before using any equipment you do not know how to operate.

[ADD OVERPAGE: garden map of First Aid locations and emergency Assembly Areas]

EMERGENCIES AND EVACUATION

In the event of a fire, storm, chemical spill, violent threat:

- Evacuate to a safe Assembly Area when necessary
- Call 000 for the appropriate service as needed (Fire, Ambulance, Police)
- Inform the garden staff when safe to do so, and follow their instructions

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Such as vandalism, attempted theft, threatening behaviour, abuse of animals.

- DO NOT attempt to intervene as this may cause risk to your own safety
- Call 000 or [insert local Police number]
- Inform the garden staff

INCIDENT REPORTING

All incidents which require the police, cause injury, or which may give rise to insurance claim must be recorded in an Incident Report. Incident Reporting Forms are available at:

[insert location].

PREVENTING THE SPREAD OF DISEASE - PHYTOSANITARY METHODS

Wear gloves when handling soil and mulch. Take care working in garden nurseries or moving between garden areas to clean equipment and footwear to avoid the spread of soil pathogens. Report any signs of plant disease to the Garden Management Authority.

INCIDENT REPORT FORM

An Incident Report must be submitted for any incident which requires the police, or which causes injury or which may give rise to an insurance claim.

Incident Report Forms are available at: **[insert location]**

A copy of all Incident Reports must be provided to the Garden Management Authority.

KEY INFORMATION REQUIRED

Incident Location:

Date and Time of Incident:

What Happened? Describe the incident with as many details as you can remember.
If an injury was sustained provide details of the injury and how it was treated?
Use the back of this form if extra space is required.

Who was involved? Are there witnesses?

Record the details of people involved and of any witnesses to the incident.

PEOPLE INVOLVED:

WITNESSES:

Name: Phone: Email:

Were any photos taken of the incident or the scene? Yes / No

CONTACT DETAILS FOR PHOTOS OF THE INCIDENT/SCENE:

Name: Phone: Email:

If no photos - draw a sketch of the incident scene on the reverse of this page with key details.

Contact Details of Person making this Incident Report

Name: Phone: Email:

4.3 TEMPLATE: CODE OF CONDUCT

[Insert name of the Friends of Botanic Group]

CODE OF CONDUCT

This Code of Conduct applies to:

1. Members and volunteers of the Friends of the Garden undertaking work for the garden
2. Any person working for the garden under a contract with the Friends of the Garden

The Friends of the Garden are the **[Friends ofinsert full garden name]**

The Garden Management Authority is: **[insert name]**

OUR AIM: TO BUILD A COLLABORATIVE AND RESPECTFUL CULTURE

The Friends of the Garden seek to promote a transparent, collaborative and respectful culture amongst the members and volunteers and to work to prevent breaches of this Code of Conduct.

1. *We treat each other with respect and seek to work as a team*
2. *We will not harass, bully, or discriminate against others*
3. *We do our best to help visitors in a polite and professional way*
4. *We all take responsibility for the health and safety of ourselves and others*
5. *We respect the privacy of others and of confidential information*

6. *We will act with transparency and disclose any potential conflicts of interest in our roles for the Friends of the Garden in relation to our other personal interests*
7. *We will act with integrity to support good public administration of the garden*
8. *We will adhere to the laws, guidelines and directions of the Garden Management Authority as the legal manager of the botanic garden.*
9. *We will be accountable for the transparent and effective use of the resources of the Friends of the Garden and of garden assets managed by the Garden Management Authority.*
10. *We will take responsibility to address any breaches of this Code of Conduct.*

ADDRESSING A POTENTIAL BREACH OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

In the first instance, any potential breach of this Code of Conduct should be attempted to be resolved as soon as possible directly between the parties affected, and with a mediator when required.

Where this is not possible the details of an alleged breach of the Code of Conduct (what, when, who) should be advised to the President of the Friends of the Garden in writing, either delivered in person or emailed to: **[INSERT EMAIL ADDRESS]**. If the breach relates to the President, then the allegation is referred to the Vice President or Secretary on the Friends governing board.

The submission of an alleged breach will be treated in confidence unless the person bringing the alleged breach agrees to make this known with the parties affected in order to seek a resolution.

4.4 TOOLS AND IDEAS FOR RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS

Volunteer recruitment programs need to have the following in place:

- A list of the range of volunteer roles available with concise information on the tasks in each volunteer role and how training and support is provided
- Good quality photos of happy volunteers doing their volunteer roles.
- An easy way to apply to be a volunteer or to find more information.

The main tools and methods for volunteer recruitment:

1. **A Volunteer recruitment brochure:** see the content checklist below.
2. A **display or stall** with good photos and an easy way to register as a volunteer.
3. **Online advertising and local media stories** – ads and stories on the garden website, other websites, social media stories, local media stories....all with good quality photos.
4. A **Volunteer Information event** or program to celebrate and showcase volunteering

4.4.1 Obtaining good quality photos

Good quality photos are key to the success of recruitment tools and stories. They take some planning and effort. A good quality photo is well composed to show the main subject or activity in good lighting with minimal background distraction. The photos should simply convey the different types of volunteer activity and happy people in their roles!

- List the volunteering roles and activities to portray. Think about what the volunteers should be doing in the photo? Is any equipment needed?
- What are the best locations? With good light and minimal background distraction.

A modern smart phone camera is sufficient to take a good quality photo if thought has gone into the purpose, location, lighting and the composition of the photo.

TIPS FOR TAKING GOOD QUALITY PHOTOS WITH INFORMED CONSENT

- Explain the purpose and possible public uses of the photos
- Seek the consent of the people in the photos for that purpose with any conditions (Either at the photo shoot, or subsequently by email after supplying the photos)
- Set up the composition of the photo – of the person or people doing an activity.
- Give direction to people - so as to get the composition right and with happy faces!
- Check the photos for adequate lighting and focus – especially of faces.
- Try different angles to improve lighting or to reduce background distractions.
- Mainly use landscape format, with some photos in portrait format.

Take a notebook and pen: to write down the names of people in the photo (and check their spelling) plus quotes and stories about the activity. Also to record email addresses if offering to send copies of the photos for people to check before consent is provided. Record if consent is provided for the public use of the images.

4.4.2 Volunteer recruitment brochure

Some Friends groups may combine how to become a member and how to register as a volunteer in the one recruitment brochure. The checklist below can be modified to add “Join Us” with the benefits of membership, as well as how to register to be a volunteer.

BROCHURE CONTENT CHECKLIST assuming a printed double side tri-fold brochure

- Cover panel “Join us” and/or “Volunteer in the Botanic Garden” with a good photo
- Back cover: How to apply with contact details and a QR code to a website page
- Inside panel 1: Benefits of Friends/membership and volunteering:
learn new things, make new friends, enjoy working in garden environment, invites to special events, contribute to a wider community benefit.
- Inside panel 2: List of the range of volunteer roles + more good photos
- Quote/testimony by a volunteer with photo: “why I love volunteering here...”

QR Codes and Website: The website of the Friends or the botanic garden should have a dedicated page for volunteering information and registration linked to a QR code in the brochures or in ads. This dedicated website page can have the same content as the volunteer recruitment brochure with easy steps on how to register.

4.4.3 Volunteering Display and Information Stall

CHECKLIST FOR THE DISPLAY OR INFORMATION STALL

- A big banner heading “**Volunteer at the Botanic Garden**” with the Friends/Garden name/logo. Add a sub-heading like: “Growing the green heart of our community”?
- A set of very large laminated photos with captions explaining volunteer roles. The photos need to be A3 or A2 size (that is 2 - 4 times A4 size) to stand out in a display.
- Include some volunteer quotes and testimonies (in enlarged text).
- Easy to find information on how to register as a volunteer, or to find more information – on the display AND in recruitment brochures. This may include a QR code to a volunteer information/registration page on the garden website.
- Items of interest on an information stall table: plants, flower display, tools, resources

4.4.4 Online advertising/local media

Having gone to the trouble to get all the volunteering information in place and to obtain good photos and quotes for your volunteer recruitment brochure this same material can now be used to promote the volunteering opportunities at your garden via:

- Ads on the garden website home page – with a link to the volunteering info/rego page
- Social media posts: a series featuring a photo and quote of different volunteer roles
- Stories and advertisements in local media, with a good lead photo about volunteering and the benefits for volunteers and to the local community.

4.4.5 Volunteer Information Events

Volunteer information events allow potential volunteers to see what is involved in volunteering before signing up. It enables current volunteers to explain what they enjoy about volunteering and helps to celebrate the roles that the Friends/volunteers play to provide wider community benefits. A special event might be combined with an ongoing “try it out first” program for prospective volunteers. This can help to match up a prospective volunteer to a volunteer work area which meets their interests and abilities.

CHECKLIST FOR ORGANISING A VOLUNTEER INFORMATION EVENT

1. Ensure all your volunteer information and application systems are ready to go.
2. Consult existing volunteers to plan dates and times when potential new volunteers can come and see them at work. Check what activities prospective volunteers might try.
3. Develop website ads for the “volunteering at the botanic garden” event or program
4. Prepare a series of social media posts profiling volunteer roles in the lead up to the event
5. Develop a media story about the event or program, using the photos and stories
6. Organise an Information Stall for the event
7. Make sure it is easy to register as a new volunteer on the day and keep a record of prospective volunteers for follow up who indicated an interest but did not sign up.

Ask for feedback from prospective volunteers about their experience on the day.

Tips for local media stories to promote the event (free advertising)

- Have your event details ready with good photos, quotes and stories ready to provide.
- Contact the local media outlet in advance to advise of the event date and nature. Ask about what they need to do a story and who to follow up with (phone and email)
- Follow up with written details of the event and to provide some good photos with story ideas and quotes – by volunteers and the Friends spokesperson.
- Have an authorised spokesperson ready to speak to media, primed with key facts and messages including how to try out a volunteer role and how to register as a volunteer.
- Organise and prepare some willing and able volunteers for interview by local media.

Some media outlets may send a reporter to write or cover the story and will need a liaison person in the garden to take them to meet volunteers in action. Other media outlets, especially local newspapers, may be happy to receive your prepared story ideas and quotes with some good lead photos which they will edit before publishing.