

NATIONAL VOLUNTEER INCENTIVE SCHEME

VOLUNTEER GREEN CARD



TRAINING THAT TRANSFORMS

2025-26 Pre-Budget Submission: **Building National Resilience through the National Volunteer Incentive Scheme (NVIS)**

January 2025



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Executive Summary

The Learnt Group welcomes the opportunity to submit this proposal advocating for a government-backed National Volunteer Support Alliance, a collaborative partnership formed in the national interest that integrates the government, Learnt Group, and the corporate sector. It will achieve this by leveraging our proven large-scale volunteer training and accreditation expertise through the Volunteer Green Card program.

The Volunteer Green Card program has been designed to mobilise skilled volunteers for disaster preparedness, recovery, climate resilience and environmental restorable efforts. The initiative will establish a scalable, structured, and nationally accredited volunteer community that is trained, credentialed, and ready to address Australia's increasing climate-related challenges.

We request government co-investment in our digital learning, communications and credentialing system, enabling the training, recognition, and deployment of volunteers at scale, ensuring the nation has a resilient, skilled, prepared and responsive volunteer force.

Introduction

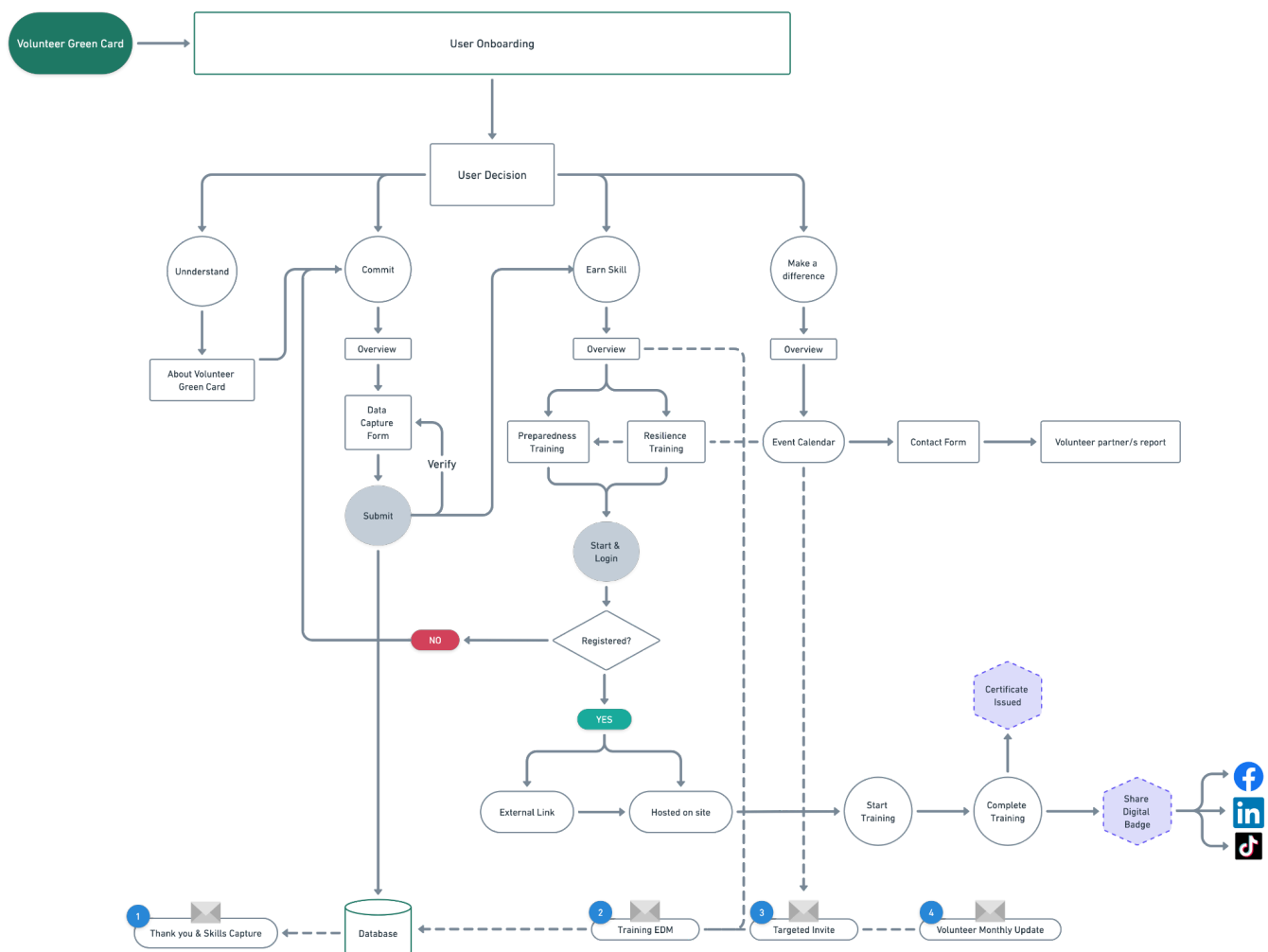
Australia faces increasingly severe and frequent climate-related disasters, including bushfires, floods, and other natural events.

A well-trained and rapidly deployable volunteer workforce is critical to mitigating risks, responding effectively, and supporting recovery efforts. However, current volunteer systems lack consistency, recognition, and coordination, leading to disaster response and community engagement inefficiencies.

The Learnt Group has extensive experience in volunteer training, credentialing, and supporting Australian volunteering initiatives. It has successfully implemented the Volunteer Green Card program, which provides nationally recognised volunteer training and accreditation. Our experience positions us as a key strategic partner and innovator in developing the National Volunteer Incentive Scheme (NVIS).

Through targeted advertising, promotion, and tailored incentives, the volunteer applicant will be invited to undergo general induction and online volunteer training. On successful completion of the general induction training and award of the Volunteer Green Card, the volunteer applicant will be presented with a range of volunteering opportunities in the disaster and climate change management sectors. *(User flow documented below)*

The volunteer applicant will then complete additional mission-specific e-learning prior to being invited by the agency or organisation to volunteer.



The Need for a Structured Volunteer Initiative

The impacts of climate change are intensifying, and communities require a workforce that is:

- Pre-trained and credentialed to respond to disasters.
- Equipped with standardised skills in disaster preparedness, disaster relief and environmental restoration to build community resilience.
- Incentivised to participate through recognised training, career pathways, and tax benefits.

Existing volunteer initiatives lack centralised training and accreditation, which leads to:

- Fragmented and inconsistent training across agencies and states.
- Barriers to entry due to unclear pathways to volunteer participation.
- Duplication of effort and inefficiencies in volunteer deployment.

By implementing a National Volunteer Green Card, Australia can create a structured and scalable approach to volunteerism that enhances national resilience and disaster preparedness. Whilst also ensuring funds are better applied towards preparedness, response and recovery activities.

The Volunteer Green Card: A Scalable Model

The Volunteer Green Card program, developed by LARNT Group, provides a proven framework that can be expanded to underpin the National Volunteer Incentive Scheme.

This program:

- Offers nationally recognised training in climate resilience, emergency response, and environmental restoration.
- Utilises a Learning Communications Platform (LCP) to deliver accessible online and blended training pathways.
- Integrates micro-credentialing and digital badges, enabling easy verification and portability of volunteer qualifications.
- Supports compliance tracking and workforce planning for organisations engaged in disaster preparedness, response and recovery efforts.

By expanding the Volunteer Green Card model, the Initiative will provide a cost-effective, scalable, and impact-driven solution for volunteer preparedness nationally.

Targeted Initiatives for Youth Participation

Recruitment Strategies:

- Engaging Campaigns**

The Volunteer Green Card will launch a multi-platform, youth-focused campaign that leverages social media with compelling visuals and authentic storytelling. The campaign will demonstrate the tangible impact young volunteers can achieve.

We will partner with relevant influencers and youth ambassadors to amplify our message and develop targeted advertising based on youth interests (e.g., environmentalism, community service, adventure activities).

The campaign will emphasise the Volunteer Green Card as a positive force for change, offering young people a unique opportunity to build community resilience and protect the environment.

- Strategic School Partnerships**

The Volunteer Green Card will establish formal partnerships with schools, TAFE and Universities to integrate volunteering into extracurricular programs and relevant curricula seamlessly.

Presentations at assemblies and career days will be offered, and school-based Volunteer Clubs will be established to cultivate interest and provide a clear pathway to National Volunteer Incentive Scheme involvement.

Strategic partnerships with youth organisations like Scouts, Guides, and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme will be prioritised.

- Youth Events**

We will organise interactive Disaster Resilience Workshops at schools, universities, and community centres. These engaging events will feature demonstrations, realistic simulations, and invaluable networking opportunities with current volunteers and disaster response professionals.

Interactive elements, such as virtual reality disaster scenarios and hands-on first aid training, will be incorporated to maximise engagement.

Kaylee Wilson

Activities Coordinator
Career explorer + Knowledge builder

INDUSTRY INSIGHTS: One in three young people in Australia engage in some form of voluntary work. The top three types of organisations are: Sport and Recreational Recreation, Mentoring & Community, and Parenting Children and Youth.

REASON FOR PARTICIPATING: The National Volunteer Incentive Scheme is a fantastic opportunity for young people to gain experience, develop skills, and make a difference in their community.

BACKGROUND

I have been volunteering with my parents since I was 10 years old. I started at a local community centre, where I was too young to understand but I later realised it was a difference in the lives of others. I want to keep growing and making a difference.

I have worked with a number of not-for-profit organisations, including a local charity that provides support for people with disabilities. I have been able to put my skills to use and help others in need.

I am now studying full-time and working part-time. I am looking for a role that allows me to continue my volunteering and make a difference in the lives of others.

CAREER ASPIRATIONS

The more I volunteer the more I want to turn it into a career. I am looking for a role that allows me to continue my volunteering and make a difference in the lives of others.

LEARNING BEHAVIOUR

I am a visual learner and I like to learn by doing. I am also a team player and I enjoy working with others. I am looking for a role that allows me to continue my volunteering and make a difference in the lives of others.

LEARNING CONTEXT + BREAKDOWN

WHERE: Classroom + home
WHEN: Anytime
FREQUENCY: Weekly + quarterly
TIME SPENT: 10 hours per week

FRUSTRATIONS + GOALS

To be honest, there isn't much training for volunteers. I am looking for a role that allows me to continue my volunteering and make a difference in the lives of others.

Undertaking learning and self-exploration

REASONING

I am looking for a role that allows me to continue my volunteering and make a difference in the lives of others. I am looking for a role that allows me to continue my volunteering and make a difference in the lives of others.

EXPERIMENTATION

I am looking for a role that allows me to continue my volunteering and make a difference in the lives of others. I am looking for a role that allows me to continue my volunteering and make a difference in the lives of others.

SELF-REFLECTION

I am looking for a role that allows me to continue my volunteering and make a difference in the lives of others. I am looking for a role that allows me to continue my volunteering and make a difference in the lives of others.

CONCLUSION

I am looking for a role that allows me to continue my volunteering and make a difference in the lives of others. I am looking for a role that allows me to continue my volunteering and make a difference in the lives of others.

Highlighting Youth Skills and Perspectives:

- **Digital Expertise**
The National Volunteer Incentive Scheme will explicitly recognise and value young people's digital expertise in disaster response. This includes leveraging their skills in social media management for effective communication and information dissemination.
- **Community Connection**
The National Volunteer Incentive Scheme will acknowledge and leverage young people's strong community connections, recognising their ability to mobilise networks and reach vulnerable populations within their communities effectively.
- **Fresh Perspectives**
The National Volunteer Incentive Scheme will actively solicit and value youth perspectives in shaping future disaster preparedness strategies and building long-term community resilience.

Tailored Incentives for Youth Participation:

- **Mentorship Programs**
The National Volunteer Incentive Scheme will implement structured mentorship programs, pairing young volunteers with experienced disaster response professionals or respected community leaders for personalised guidance and support.
- **Leadership Development**
We will provide specialised training programs to develop essential leadership skills, including project management, effective communication, and team building. We will also actively create and encourage opportunities for young volunteers to assume leadership roles within the Volunteer Green Card structure and affiliate organisations.
- **Educational Opportunities**
The National Volunteer Incentive Scheme and the Volunteer Green Card will explore and facilitate access to scholarships, grants, or bursaries for further education or training in areas directly related to disaster management, environmental science, or community development as a reward for dedicated service.
- **Skill-Based Recognition**
The National Volunteer Incentive Scheme will offer micro-credentials and certifications for specific skills acquired through volunteering, such as first aid, CPR, or community engagement. We will ensure that educational institutions and potential employers widely recognise and value these credentials.
- **Exclusive Experiences**
The National Volunteer Incentive Scheme will offer access to exclusive events, conferences, or workshops related to climate change and disaster resilience, providing unique opportunities for young volunteers to network with experts and leaders in the field.
- **Community Impact Recognition**
The National Volunteer Incentive Scheme will publicly recognise and celebrate the valuable contributions of young volunteers through awards ceremonies, strategic media coverage,

and targeted social media campaigns, showcasing their inspiring stories and demonstrable positive impact.

- **Flexible Volunteering Options**

The National Volunteer Incentive Scheme will offer a range of flexible volunteering opportunities tailored to the diverse schedules of young people, including short-term projects, remote online volunteering, and micro-volunteering tasks, ensuring accessibility and inclusivity.



The screenshot displays the Volunteer Greencard website interface. At the top, a green header bar contains a menu icon, a balance indicator showing '30 pts redeem', and the 'Volunteer Greencard' logo with a profile picture. Below the header is a large hero section with the title 'Volunteer Greencard.' and a sub-headline: 'Empower individuals with the knowledge and skills needed to excel in volunteer roles. Offering comprehensive education on the principles of volunteering, ensuring that participants are well-prepared to make a meaningful impact.' A 'DISCOVER' button is positioned below the hero text. Underneath, four course thumbnails are shown: 'INDUCTION', 'VOLUNTEER BASICS', 'COMMUNICATION SKILLS', and 'LEADERSHIP ESSENTIALS'. The 'MY COURSES' section follows, featuring a 'VIEW ALL' button and four course cards: 'TIME MANAGEMENT' (Status 25%), 'CONFLICT RESOLUTION' (Status 55%), 'CULTURAL AWARENESS' (Status 60%), and 'COMMUNITY BUILDING' (Status 45%). Below this is the 'MY LEARNING PATHWAYS' section, also with a 'VIEW ALL' button, containing four pathway cards: 'EVENT PLANNING' (Status 85%), 'FIRST AID TRAINING' (Status 40%), 'TEAM COLLABORATION' (Status 10%), and 'PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS' (Status 25%). A 'MESSAGE FROM MIKE KING' section is next, with a 'VIEW' button and a photo of Mike King. The final section is 'MY ACTIVITY', featuring a 'VIEW ALL' button and a calendar grid for the months of February through January. The calendar includes a legend for 'Read' (checked), 'Watched' (checked), 'Listened' (checked), and 'Experienced' (checked), and shows activity markers for Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.

Integrating Volunteering into Education

Curriculum Integration:

- **Curriculum Module Development**

The National Volunteer Incentive Scheme will collaborate with educational experts to develop and implement engaging curriculum modules on disaster preparedness and the importance of volunteerism for integration into school and university curricula.

These modules will be age-appropriate and aligned with national education standards, covering topics such as risk assessment, emergency response, community resilience, and the role of volunteers in disaster preparation and recovery.

- **Volunteer Opportunity Integration**

We will work with educational institutions to integrate relevant volunteer opportunities into existing coursework. This will include facilitating community service projects related to disaster preparedness and response, incorporating field studies focused on environmental sustainability and climate change impacts, and creating opportunities for students to apply their classroom learning in practical, real-world scenarios.

- **Educator Resources and Training**

The National Volunteer Incentive Scheme will provide teachers and educators with comprehensive resources and training on effectively integrating volunteerism into their teaching. This will include developing teacher guides, providing access to online resources and workshops, and offering professional development opportunities focused on service-learning teaching and community engagement strategies.

Student Leadership Development:

- **Empowering Student Leaders**

The National Volunteer Incentive Scheme will empower students to take ownership of volunteer initiatives within their schools and communities. This will involve providing training and mentorship to student leaders, supporting the formation of student-led Volunteer Action Clubs, and creating platforms for students to share their ideas and lead community-based projects.

- **Leadership Skill Development**

The National Volunteer Incentive Scheme will provide structured opportunities for students to develop and hone their leadership skills through practical volunteer experiences. This will include offering workshops on leadership, communication, project management, and team building and providing opportunities for students to take on leadership roles within the Volunteer Green Card's youth volunteer network.

Nationally Recognised Qualification Scheme

Skill Recognition:

- **Framework Development**

The Volunteer Green Card will introduce a robust framework for recognising and accrediting the diverse skills and knowledge gained through volunteer experience. This framework will be developed in consultation with industry experts, educational institutions, and other relevant stakeholders to ensure its relevance and credibility.

- **Micro-credentials and Qualifications**

The National Volunteer Incentive Scheme will offer micro-credentials, certificates, or formal qualifications demonstrating volunteer expertise in specific areas, such as first aid, CPR, search and rescue techniques, community engagement, and disaster relief coordination. These qualifications will be aligned with national standards and recognised by employers, educational institutions and not-for-profit organisations.

- **Recognition and Value**

The National Volunteer Incentive Scheme will actively promote the value and recognition of its qualification scheme among employers, educational institutions, and the broader community. This will involve building partnerships with industry associations, universities, and government agencies to ensure that volunteer experience is valued and considered during hiring and admissions processes.

Benefits for Volunteers:

- **Enhanced Employability and Career Pathways**

The Volunteer Green Card qualification scheme will provide tangible benefits to volunteers by enhancing their employability and opening career pathways in related fields.

The skills and experience gained through volunteering will make individuals more competitive in the job market and provide a valuable foundation for careers in disaster management, emergency services, environmental sustainability, and community development.

- **Access to Further Education**

The National Volunteer Incentive Scheme will work with educational institutions to ensure its qualifications are recognised for credit for further education and training programs. This will allow volunteers to advance their education and pursue higher-level qualifications in relevant fields.

- **Professional Development and Skill Enhancement**

The National Volunteer Incentive Scheme will offer ongoing opportunities for professional development and skill enhancement based on volunteer experience. This will include providing access to workshops, training courses, mentorship programs, and networking events, allowing volunteers to continuously develop their skills and expertise in areas related to disaster preparedness and response.

Funding Request

To establish and implement the National Volunteer Incentive Scheme, we seek \$29,265,000 in government funding to:

- Develop and deploy a national Learning Communications Platform (LCP) and credentialing platform for National Volunteer Incentive Scheme volunteers.
- Expand the Volunteer Green Card program to align with the National Volunteer Incentive Scheme requirements.
- Pilot implementation in partnership with industry volunteer agencies.
- Launch national marketing and outreach efforts to drive volunteer participation.

Breakdown of Investment

This funding will enable a self-sustaining model, reducing reliance on government investment over time, and aligning with Australia's 2030 vision for the National Disaster Risk Reduction framework.

	2025	2026	2027
Learnt Group - Co Contribution Learning and Credentialing Platform	(\$1,275,000)	(\$1,318,000)	(\$1,495,000)
Volunteer Green Card Program Licence and Expansion	\$750,000	\$1,495,000	\$1,495,000
Implementation and Partnerships (Pilot)	\$2,450,000	\$3,185,000	\$4,140,000
National Marketing and Outreach	\$3,500,000	\$5,000,000	\$7,250,000
NATIONAL ACTIVE USER OUTCOMES (MAU)	15,000	35,000	375,000
Total Investment	\$6,700,000	\$9,680,000	\$12,885,000

Insights from the Future of Volunteering and Disaster Resilience Reports

Building on findings from Boots on the Ground: Raising Resilience (2024), Future of Volunteering Insights Pack, and Volunteering Workshop Write-up, several key volunteer engagement challenges must be addressed:

- **Expectation mismatch** – Many volunteers report their roles are not what they anticipated, leading to disengagement.
- **Retention and training gaps** – Volunteers struggle with inadequate onboarding and a lack of meaningful engagement opportunities.
- **Resource inefficiencies** – No dedicated funding for volunteer training and management leads to underutilisation of available manpower.
- **Complexity in compliance** – Volunteers find onboarding processes cumbersome, impacting participation.
- **Corporate misalignment** – Corporate volunteering often fails to meet the needs of NFPs, reducing long-term engagement.

The National Volunteer Incentive Scheme will address these issues by ensuring structured training, providing clear pathways, and aligning volunteer supply with actual demand in disaster response efforts.

Proposed Enhancements Based on Recent Strategic Discussions

- **Integration with National Initiatives**
Align the Volunteer Green Card system with existing national volunteer recognition frameworks and government emergency response programs.
- **Expanding Youth Engagement**
Leverage structured programs like the Duke of Edinburgh Award and school-based volunteer initiatives to drive participation.
- **Corporate Volunteer Partnerships**
Establish structured corporate-NFP agreements to maximise sustainable engagement.
- **Technology-Enabled Matching Systems**
Implement platforms to match volunteers with suitable opportunities, improving retention and effectiveness.
- **Economic Justification**
Emphasise the economic value of volunteering, highlighting its estimated \$290 billion annual contribution to the Australian economy.

Expected Outcomes and Return on Investment

Government investment in the National Volunteer Incentive Scheme will deliver:

- Greater volunteer engagement, increasing participation and retention.
- Significant cost savings by reducing reliance on paid emergency responders.
- Enhanced disaster response efficiency, improving national preparedness.
- Stronger partnerships with the corporate and education sectors, enabling skill recognition beyond volunteer work.

Alignment with Government Priorities

This initiative aligns with the Australian Government's:

- National Strategy for Volunteering, supporting a long-term, sustainable volunteer workforce.
- Disaster Resilience Framework, addressing training and credentialing gaps in emergency preparedness and response.
- Budget priorities related to workforce development and community resilience, ensuring cost-effective national impact.

Evaluation and Monitoring

The program's success will be measured using clear performance metrics, including:

- Volunteer engagement and completion rates of credentialing programs.
- Response times and effectiveness in climate-related disaster efforts.
- Cost savings achieved through volunteer mobilisation versus paid emergency response.
- Long-term retention rates and career pathways for volunteers in climate-related industries.

Conclusion

The Learnt Group is uniquely positioned to deploy our existing National Volunteer Green Card Initiative, given our extensive experience in volunteer credentialing, online training, and workforce development.

We urge the government to invest in this initiative to build national resilience, enhance volunteer training, and foster long-term community engagement in climate preparation and response efforts.

We welcome engagement with government agencies and stakeholders for further discussion and partnership opportunities.



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