Volunteer Recruitment, Retention & Engagement: Scouts Australia

Funder/Client
Scouts Australia

Project Overview
In Australia, we love to help others, with around 30% of the population participating in some form of voluntary work. As such, it’s important that an adequate focus is placed on the quality of the volunteer experience. Over the last three years, a team of our researchers has been working in close partnership with Scouts Australia to better understand what makes for a meaningful volunteer position.

Across countless surveys and interviews, over 8,000 different members of Scouts from WA, VIC, TAS and SA have provided their input to help shape the volunteer experiences of tomorrow. The research program focused on three key areas; recruitment, effective training and continuing to promote thriving.

Outcomes
- From a recruitment perspective, the results of the research lead Scouts towards taking a much more active role in the process of recruitment. In close consultation with the research team, Scouts rolled out a national recruitment program which included realistic role previews, scripted training and the provision of support material.

- In regards to training, it was identified that the existing training had not been developed with the trainee’s experience in mind. This often resulted in an isolating and tedious process which was seen as effecting volunteer retention. The research team made three key recommendations which were to accelerate training completion, enhance the online experience through better developing materials and enriching the quality and availability of socialisation channels.

- In order to continue promoting thriving and growth, the research team has spent time observing and documenting best practices from existing communities of practice. In future, there are plans to fully develop an integrated best practice framework for Scouts communities of practice.

- Throughout these research themes, there has been a core focus on promoting the overall engagement of volunteers. By focusing on attracting the right individuals, training them effectively and providing them with ways to grow and stay connected, Scouts Australia has drastically improved their volunteer landscape.