Stepping up or stepping out? Volunteer leaders in Australian grassroots associations

by

Christel Lorraine Mex

Thesis
submitted to Flinders University
for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

College of Humanities, Arts & Social Sciences
31 January 2019

CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

ABSTRACT

Society benefits significantly from the work of small groups of volunteers who come together for a common cause. Generally known as grassroots associations, it is estimated that there are almost half a million of these groups operating in Australia today. Grassroots associations are small, often community-based, and are run solely by volunteers without the benefit of paid staff. Examples include environmental groups, sporting clubs, health support groups, service clubs and even community bands. Despite the importance of these associations in civil society, there is very little research on them in Australia.

This dissertation helps to fill this significant research gap by presenting a case study of the current state of grassroots associations in South Australia. Through a mixed-methods research approach, with 12 focus groups and a survey of 1,500 association members in South Australia, the study argues that membership numbers of these associations are indeed declining with fewer members willing to step up and become leaders. The thesis also identifies why, or why not, members choose to nominate as leaders. Barriers to leadership are presented at both the environmental and organisational level, and include the rise of individualism, unwelcomed professionalism due to regulation and red tape, demands of new technology and poor management including the misuse of power within volunteer committees.

At the conclusion, integrated solutions are recommended based on the evidence uncovered in the data. These solutions include a reduction of red tape imposed by governments and insurers, more accessibility to the volunteering infrastructure and more capacity building programs to enable positive and supportive cultures within grassroots associations.

This thesis provides a substantial and original contribution to knowledge by generating and uncovering critical new data on the state of grassroots associations in South Australia and their governance. It finds that these groups make up the vast majority of the percentage of the third-sector, yet are virtually ignored by governments and the volunteering infrastructure. Most alarmingly, this study finds that these vital associations are not only struggling to find replacement leaders, but many of them are struggling to survive. The study also unveils new trends in small association volunteering and recommends innovative policy solutions to build their capacity for the long term.

GLOSSARY & ACRONYMS

Term	Definition
$	Australian Dollars
Committee	A group of people who have legal responsibility for decisions made and actions taken by a voluntary organisation. This group might [also] be called a council, board or similar. In membership organisations, the management committee is usually elected by the members at the annual general meeting. (Hedley & Rochester 1992).
DCSI	South Australian Department of Communities and Social Inclusion (changed to the Department of Human Services in 2018)
GA	Grassroots association
Grassroots Association	Locally based, significantly autonomous, volunteer-run, formal non-profit (i.e., voluntary) groups that manifest substantial voluntary altruism as groups and use the associational form of organisation and, thus, have official memberships of volunteers who perform most, and often all, of the work/activity done in and by these non-profits (Smith 2000, p. 7).
Individualism	A philosophical, moral, social and political stance that affirms that the interests of the individual should take precedence over those of the community and the state (Ricard 2015).
Non-profit organisation or group	A formal or informal group of people joined together to pursue a common not-for-profit goal, with no distribution of excess revenue ("profits" of non-profit organisations) to members or leaders or their households. Nor is a non-profit group a government agency. Non-profit groups may act in the interests of public benefits (non-member benefits), member benefits, or both. (Smith, Stebbins & Grotz 2017).
Oligarchy	A political theory claiming the power within any organisation, large or small, will eventually be transferred to a small number individuals within that group (Michels 1915).
Paid staff associations	Associations with paid staff, ranging from a single person to hundreds of people (Nesbit et al. 2016, p. 916).
Peak body	An umbrella organisation that has other affiliated organisations as members.
Purple circle	Unclear in origin, but probably refers to close advisors of the British monarchy who wore the colour purple (Paull & Redmond 2011).
Regular members	Individuals who join an association to participate in, or volunteer for, the activities and purpose of the association and do not partake in any leadership responsibilities.
Volunteer leaders	Committee or board members of grassroots associations who do not earn a salary or any remuneration.
Volunteering infrastructure	National, state/territory peak bodies, regional networks and alliances, metropolitan, rural and regional volunteer resource centres and volunteer referral services as well as other promotional and referral agencies whose core business is volunteering (Maher 2015, p. 13)
VSA & NT	Volunteering South Australia and Northern Territory

DECLARATION

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university; and that to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

Signed....................Christel L Mex.................................

Date...................20 January 2019............................

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

I love the club which I belong to, and volunteering has given me so many great opportunities that I would never have dreamt of. However, if you don't have a good spine (committee), none of this can happen!! (survey respondent from a grassroots association)

1.1 Rationale and aims

Australian society benefits from the work of small groups of people who band together for a common cause and form 'habits of the heart' (Bellah 1985). Some become so popular that they professionalise over time, engaging both paid staff and volunteers (Knoke & Wood 1981, p. 22; Valeau 2014). Free public libraries, museums and social services such as Meals on Wheels all had their beginnings in small grassroots associations by playing a role as 'community builders' (Kenny et al. 2015, p. 88). These groups are also the incubators of major social movements, generating social change and building skills that support civic involvement and democracy (Andrews et al. 2010; Wollebæk & Selle 2002, p. 35; Tocqueville 1969 [1835-1840]). GAs bring people together around mutual interests, recreational pursuits and causes which creates social bonds and builds trust. In their qualitative study of volunteer groups in Australia, Leonard and Onyx found that community organisations were a 'valuable source of both strong and loose ties' and provided members with opportunities to expand their networks (2003, p. 195). A preeminent scholar of grassroots associations, David Horton Smith, defines them as:

> … locally based, significantly autonomous, volunteer-run, formal nonprofit (i.e., voluntary) groups that manifest substantial voluntary altruism as groups and use the associational form of organization and, thus, have official memberships of volunteers who perform most, and often all, of the work/activity done in and by these nonprofits *(2000, p. 7).*

For the purpose of this thesis, the Smith definition of grassroots associations (GAs) is adopted, but also clearly restricts the definition to associations who have no paid staff, or non-employing associations. The thesis will investigate and explain why membership numbers of GAs have been experiencing a long-term decline since 1985, as well as a decline in the participation rate of people who serve as volunteer leaders on committees, which has fallen from 17 percent in 2006 to 14 percent in 2016 (Harrison Research 2016b). Hedley and Rochester defined these committees as groups of people who have responsibility for making decisions in a voluntary association, and are usually elected at an

annual general meeting to provide collective leadership (1992). For the purposes of this study, a volunteer leader is defined as any member of a committee or board of a grassroots association who does not earn a salary or receive any remuneration. This is aligned with the Australian definition of volunteering, where it is defined as 'time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain' (Volunteering Australia 2016). Regular members of GAs, by contrast, are defined as individuals who join an association to participate in, or volunteer for, the activities of the association but do not partake in any leadership responsibilities. The thesis is part of an Australian Research Council funded project that aims to identify ways to encourage non-volunteers to become volunteers, and how organisations can improve their ability to recruit volunteers (*Creating and Sustaining a Strong Future for Volunteering in Australia*, LP140100528). The thesis contributes to the project by investigating how regular members of grassroots organisations can be converted to volunteer leaders.

The research and findings in this thesis support the anecdotal observations of the author in her role as the first General Manager of the South Australian Office for Volunteers (2001-2004), Executive Officer of the South Australian Volunteering Strategy (2013-2015) and as a current elected official for her local council. Through this real-life experience, the author witnessed numerous annual general meetings where few members put their hand up for GA volunteer committee positions, with people often criticising the way these meetings were run (Woods & James 1994).

The data collected in this study confirms that GAs in Australia are struggling for long-term survival, with declining membership numbers and committee nominations. The thesis examines specifically the volunteer leaders of grassroots associations and, by extension, their regular members, to determine why leadership nominations are declining, identify the motivations and barriers to leadership, and what interventions can assist GAs to become more sustainable for the future. There is little academic research on small associations, and even less on their leaders (Schneider, SK & George 2011). As Posner (2015) observed in his study of sporting associations in the USA, this research gap is a significant issue due to the vast numbers of volunteers who are influenced by volunteer leaders. Most grassroots associations start as semiformal groups with a fluid membership, often evolving into incorporated associations which allows the association the ability to operate as a legal entity (Smith 1992). Many grassroots associations remain small and focus on the local communities from where they originated. Since the introduction of social media, 'virtual'

groups of people with common interests have also formed GAs that cross jurisdictions (Wells 2015).

In addition to furthering their causes and interests at a local level, GAs also bring communities together and create 'bridging social capital'. This is where individuals form ties with people in other groups, which is important for maintaining civil society (Kavanaugh, Reese, et al. 2005). In his influential book, *Bowling Alone*, Robert Putnam highlighted the importance of social capital, and argued that "social networks have value", making our lives more fulfilling and meaningful (2000, p. 19). Social capital, as described by Putnam, "refers to the ways in which our lives are made more productive by social ties" (2000, p. 19). Further emphasising the importance of small groups, he stated that "a well-connected individual in a poorly connected society, is not as productive as a well-connected individual in well-connected society" (2000, p 20). Australian researchers Leonard and Onyx differ slightly from Putnam (2000) who separated the generation of social capital and volunteering because not all volunteering was reciprocal in nature. Leonard and Onyx argue that volunteers, like those who lead GAs, 'should be seen as central to the creation and maintenance of local networks of trust, reciprocity and the potential to identify and solve problems' (2003, p. 73).

Also writing from an Australian context, Eckersley asserted that Western society is in danger of becoming too materialistic and self-absorbed, "distract[ing] people from what is most important to well-being: the quality of their relationships with each other and the world" (2012, p. 19). Social researcher, Hugh Mackay, concurred, contending that individuals thrive by participating in groups, and that "we are at our best when we belong" (2014a). Grassroots associations bond communities together and foster civil society. Kunreuther and Edwards suggested that GAs "do not simply meet social needs, they also provide skills that help individuals to engage in the political and economic system, and build increased capacity at the local level for citizen interaction in democratic societies" (2011, p. 2). The importance of grassroots associations, therefore, lies in how they provide opportunities for people to build networks as a 'point of entry' for individuals to work together for the betterment of their communities (Schneider, J. A. 2004, p. 4).

Many grassroots organisations, however, are struggling to be sustainable, especially in regards to the replenishment of their management committees. According to the *General Social Survey* published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), volunteering rates have declined from a high of 36 percent in 2010, to 31 percent in 2014 (Australian Bureau

of Statistics 2014). That means just under 70 percent of Australians did not volunteer for any organisation as of 2014. The survey also found that volunteer work in recreation and civic groups had fallen, with participation falling in sport and recreation by four percent and involvement in civic and political groups falling by five percent (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2014). Hugh Mackay suggested that Australians do not volunteer or join groups as much now as in the past due to the time restrictions of two-income households, frequent relocations and fewer children who often present opportunities for social cohesion in neighbourhoods (Mackay 2014b). In addition, lack of time is frequently cited as a significant barrier to volunteering (Bowlby & Lloyd Evans 2011; Cleave & Doherty 2005; 2014; Haski-Leventhal, Debbie & Meijs 2011; Merrill 2006; Pope 2005; Sundeen, Raskoff & Garcia 2007). In a recent survey of over 2,000 volunteers conducted by Volunteering Australia (2016), work and family commitments were cited as significant barriers to volunteering. However, some researchers have argued that the focus on time neglects other aspects of the decision to volunteer, such as social norms and other external influences (Shi et al. 2017; Warburton & Crosier 2001).

Brudney and Meijs introduced a new concept in volunteer management, proposing that volunteers are a common-pool resource, akin to a natural resource that can be understood as a "human-made, renewable resource" (2009, p. 570). They also proposed that volunteers need to be well managed and nurtured as a whole to ensure the sustainability of volunteerism for the benefit of the broader community into the future (2013, p. 4). Brudney and Meijs suggested that the 'volunteer commons' could benefit from the design principles of Nobel Prize winner, Elinor Ostrom, who, in 1990, developed a theory around sustainable land management practices for communities managing a common resource (2009, p. 572). In simple terms, the theory proposed that people who have a common interest in a natural resource need to work together deliberately to sustain it rather than compete for it. In translating Ostrom's theory to volunteering, Brudney and Meijs maintained that poor volunteering experiences could affect future volunteer recruitment across communities and have a negative impact on the reputations of all volunteer-involving organisations.

In *Bowling Alone*, Putnam challenged American citizens to find ways to encourage more people to participate in the public life of communities. He suggested that the problem of public participation "has two faces–one institutional and one individual" (2000, p. 403). Putnam likened the issue to the market metaphor of supply and demand (supply of

volunteering opportunities vs the demand for volunteers). Like Brudney and Meijs, he suggested that associations need to make sure that their members and volunteers have positive experiences so that people stay engaged in their communities. He stated that civic associations in the United States "are somewhat antiquated a century after most of them were created, and they need to be reformed in ways that invite more active participation" (2000, p. 413). Cnaan and Park supported this view, maintaining that volunteering is an important lead indicator of social capital, and that association membership is an essential form of civic engagement (2016).

Small grassroots associations, which create social capital, depend on regular members to step up and serve on committees to provide collective leadership. The evidence from both the literature and data uncovered in this thesis suggests that fewer people are nominating to join volunteer committees in Australia as the author's published paper on this study's focus groups suggests (Mex 2018). This is also happening overseas (Nesbit, Rimes, et al. 2017; Posner 2015). If the leadership ranks of Australia's grassroots organisations are in free-fall as the literature suggests, can these organisations survive? Was Putnam right to imply that this type of volunteering will die out with the 'long civic generation', those born between 1910 and 1930 (2000), and those who Goss described as the 'civic torchbearers' for civil society? (1999, p. 379). Or as others believe, it could be simply a case of the natural 'wax and wane' of group evolution (Fischer 2005; Wuthnow 1998), with people volunteering in different ways (Rotolo & Wilson 2004). With the right tools, can the leaders of grassroots organisations pass the baton to future generations to ensure their sustainability? These critical questions will be addressed in this thesis through the following research objectives (ROs):

RO1: Establish if the membership numbers of grassroots associations are declining in South Australia.

RO2: Investigate leadership nomination trends within grassroots associations, and any degree of concern.

RO3: Investigate the reasons why members of grassroots associations choose to nominate as leaders, and the barriers faced by people considering leadership positions.

RO4: Identify intervention and recruitment strategies that could encourage more members to nominate for volunteer leadership positions in grassroots associations.

1.2 Research strategy

The thesis is a case study of the current state of grassroots associations in South Australia, as it investigates the research objectives in a real-life context using multiple cases and several sources of data (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2012). It adopted a mixed-methods research approach consisting of a series of twelve focus groups and a survey completed by representatives from South Australian associations. The focus groups were conducted in three diverse local government areas of South Australia in 2016 and were held with volunteer leaders and regular members of grassroots associations as participants. The focus groups identified motivations and barriers to membership and leadership, challenges facing leaders, and potential retention and recruitment strategies for both members and leaders.

The findings from the focus groups were used to shape the subsequent survey questions which collected significant quantitative data, further addressing the research objectives of this thesis. The survey was conducted between December 2017 and March 2018, and had 1,509 respondents across South Australia. The respondents shared over 4,000 comments in addition to answering 29 quantitative questions. The questions were centred around membership trends, barriers to leadership, attributes of successful committees, motivations and suggested recruitment strategies. The sample size allowed for statistically robust comparisons between leaders and regular members, and also between respondents from GAs and associations with paid staff.

The discussion chapters of the thesis connect the focus group and survey findings with relevant literature, and present the issues around the constructs of macro, meso and micro barriers for cogent analysis. Macro-level barriers are environmental consequences following societal, government and economic changes that create difficulties for leaders of GAs. Meso-level barriers are policies or actions generated at the organisational level that inhibit or dissuade regular members of GAs from stepping up as leaders. Obstacles that are faced internally by individuals when considering leadership positions are considered at the micro-level. In the concluding chapters, policy and program interventions are suggested as a way forward to help grassroots associations remain sustainable for the long term.

1.3 Significance of the study

Society benefits greatly from volunteers who form small groups, work together to build communities and promote social change. In 2010, it was estimated that were approximately 440,000 of these groups operating in Australia (Australian Productivity Commission 2010). Due to the significant number of volunteers affected by the leaders of GAs, they are an important but largely neglected, topic for researchers of the third sector (Bowers 2014; Nesbit, Rimes, et al. 2017; Posner 2015).

Grassroots associations are run solely by volunteers and do not have the benefit of paid volunteer coordinators. Do these small groups, therefore, have the resources to change with the times and address the many barriers identified in this study? Or are they no longer relevant to Australian society and will be replaced by new forms of 'virtual' civic engagement such as Facebook and MeetUp groups (McCorvey 2018; Scott, JK & Johnson 2005; Vie 2014). It has been argued that these are fuelling the growth of 'slacktivist' supporters who benefit from association membership without doing any coordination work (Boulton 2015; Holmes & Slater 2012; Kristofferson, White & Peloza 2014).

This thesis uncovers new data on Australian grassroots associations that confirm they are not only struggling to find replacement leaders, but some are also battling for their very survival. It reveals new trends in group volunteering and offers fresh policy solutions that potentially will help GAs grow and prosper by building their capacity for the long term. In her book *Volunteering, why we can't survive without it,* Oppenheimer argues that Australians have always been innovative in their volunteering by "working together, forging relationships with communities to make things happen" (2008, p. 26). This thesis argues that if the leaders of grassroots associations are willing to change and innovate, augmented with assistance from governments and the volunteering infrastructure with policy and capacity building interventions, the future could be vastly improved for grassroots associations in Australia.

1.4 Thesis structure

The following chapter investigates existing research on GAs from a variety of western countries focusing on issues concerning volunteer leaders, and includes relevant government reports and statistical data regarding GAs. A detailed description of the

research methodology, including the research philosophy, design, data collection techniques and limitations, is included in Chapter Three.

Chapter Four assesses the findings of 12 focus groups held with committee members and regular members of grassroots associations from three diverse geographical areas in South Australia. The survey findings from 1,509 South Australian respondents are analysed in Chapter Five, with the sample including representatives from GAs and associations with paid staff, as well as volunteer leaders and regular members to provide comparisons.

A discussion of the macro barriers, or external factors facing GAs and their members, is presented in Chapter Six. This is followed by an analysis of barriers created by grassroots associations themselves at the meso-level in Chapter Seven, particularly around the obstacles that prevent regular members from nominating for leadership positions. An examination of the micro barriers that individuals face when considering leadership positions in GAs is discussed in Chapter Eight. Possible interventions by governments, the volunteering infrastructure and GAs themselves, which could improve the future sustainability of GAs, are outlined in Chapter Nine. In the thesis conclusion, a summary of findings, key points, contributions to knowledge, and opportunities for further research are presented.

CHAPTER 2: THE LITERATURE

Researchers in the voluntary and community sector have traditionally tended to ignore grassroots, volunteer-led organisations and focus instead on larger organisations that are more immediately obvious' (Ockenden and Hutin, 2008, p.6)

There remains a systemic lack of large-scale, robust empirical knowledge on social and community groups (Soteri-Proctor et al. 2017, p. 820).

2.1 Introduction

The introduction to this thesis outlined the purpose of the study and the importance of grassroots associations and their leaders in Australia. The objective of this chapter is to provide further background by reviewing the existing literature on grassroots associations (GAs) and the issues they face, particularly around the research objectives of membership trends, barriers to leadership, and recruitment and retention strategies for members of GAs who may nominate to be volunteer leaders. The length of the literature review is extensive so that the complexity and breadth of the topic, and its interwoven themes, can be adequately covered.

The review begins by exploring the various definitions of grassroots associations and their value to society both in cultural and economic terms. It then focuses on issues associated with GAs in an Australian context, their governance protocols and the increased professionalisation. This is followed by an exploration of pressures experienced by these groups through the literature that relates to the leadership of GAs, including the structure, motivations and behaviour of volunteer-run committees and boards, and the individuals who lead them. The chapter concludes with a summary of what already is being done to assist GAs, along with important gaps in the literature identified by leading researchers.

2.2 What are grassroots associations

For this thesis, and as outlined in Section 1.1, the author adopts the definition of grassroots associations as afforded by David Horton Smith, a leading scholar of grassroots organisations. He suggests that GAs "are locally based, significantly autonomous, volunteer-run, formal nonprofit (i.e., voluntary) groups … and use the associational form of organization and thus, have official memberships of volunteers who

perform most, and often all, of the work/activity done in and by these nonprofits" (2000, p. 7). For the purposes of this thesis, the definition is limited to grassroots associations that are run solely by volunteers and have no paid staff.

Some scholars have noted that there is a lack of clarity around defining the types of associations that form the voluntary sector, of which GAs form a part. "The extent and nature of the voluntary sector's contributions often remain unremarked or are discussed confusedly because of a lack of clarity on the terminology, definitions and classifications" (Kendall & Knapp 1995, p. 66). Knoke and Wood defined voluntary associations as "formally organized, named collectivities in which the majority of participants do not derive their livelihood from their activities in the group" (1981, p. 8). This definition was quite broad, encompassing trade unions, service clubs, churches and political parties. Knoke also suggested that most associations "embrace principles of egalitarian and voluntary participation [and] are crucial mechanisms for social integration" (1986, p. 7). In a later definition, Knoke defined associations as "a formally organized named group, most of whose members—whether person or organizations—are not financially recompensed for their participation" (1986, p. 2).

Florin et al. coined the term 'voluntary community organizations', offering a rather complex definition that included characteristics such as being geographically-based, volunteer-driven, locally-initiated, with a human scale (meaning face-to-face and informal), problem-solving and multipurpose (1992, p. 216). Mosaoka called them 'all-volunteer organizations', being non-profits "where volunteers manage the organization and do most or all of the work" (1999, p. 2). Other studies referred to them as 'below-the-radar' organisations, 'small battalions of the third sector' and 'small-scale civil society organisations', describing them as small voluntary organisations, community groups and semi-formal activities in the third sector (Aiken & Harris 2017; McCabe, Phillimore & Mayblin 2010; Phillimore & McCabe 2015; Soteri-Proctor 2011, p. 2). Using case studies of community associations in Wisconsin and Pennsylvania in the USA, Schneider called them 'community-based nonprofits', which were "mediating institutions where people meet, develop ties to each other, and perhaps engage in civic activities" (2008, p. 86). Others claimed that civic groups had their origins in grassroots associations and described them as community associations and local associations (Harris 2015), or informal organisations with a stated purpose, and "not simply regular gatherings of friends" (Cnaan, Ram A & Park 2016, p. 12).

When describing four models of volunteer involvement, Rochester described the 'member/activist' model of organisations where all operations of the association are conducted solely by volunteers (1999, p. 15). In later years, Ockenden and Hutin defined them as 'volunteer-led groups' while noting that there was confusion around the definition of these types of small associations. They described them as "groups of people with common interest or problems band together in self-help groups or grassroots associations to produce a collective response to perceived needs" (2008, p. 10). Grassroots associations are therefore unlikely to be professionalised, to have formal management training or access to consultants and volunteer infrastructure services as compared to larger non-profits (Harris 2015; Smith 2000). In their recent literature review of civic participation, Cnaan and Park observed contrasting data of membership organisations, suggesting that the provision of standardised association types in surveys would help with the accuracy of association membership and activity (2016).

Smith argued that, over time, grassroots associations develop into more complex civic organisations that lead to program volunteering which offers specific roles and job descriptions for volunteers. He also suggested that "associational participation is a major engine of democratic participation [and] cumulatively, grassroots associations have a very substantial effect on American society and on the lives of its citizens" (1997, p. 269). Smith later went on to say that the real strength of grassroots associations "lies in their people, their cumulative numbers, their volunteer activities, and especially their commitment and value as associational volunteers" (2000, p. 63).

It is clear that grassroots associations come in many shapes and sizes. They can form for recreational purposes, social welfare initiatives or political causes. In 2009, European researchers developed three categories of associations based on aims: leisure organisations (such as hobby and sporting groups), interest organisations (such as professional and neighbourhood associations), and activist organisations (such as political and animal rights groups) (van der Meer, te Grotenhuis & Scheepers 2009). The authors suggested that "we need to treat civic society not as an undifferentiated monolith, but as a complex sphere of associations with different aims and different needs. Citizens do not simply join any association; they join an association to which they are attracted" (2009, p. 238). British researchers, Kendell and Knapp, categorised associations by their primary function but noted that most consider themselves multi-functional (1995).

In Australia, grassroots associations were also defined as 'community organisations', within the 'third sector' and the 'community sector'. As Mark Lyons, a leading Australian researcher of this sector, wrote in 2001:

> The range of things that third sector organisations do is enormous. They stage plays and concerts; they teach yoga and organise cricket competitions; they restore old machinery and encourage new inventions; they perform ceremonies, treat the sick, house the homeless, seek justice for the oppressed, represent the interest of workers and seek government support for business and so on. There are few fields of human activity where there are not some activities undertaken by third sector organisations (2001, p. 14).

Indigenous Australians are also active volunteers, although much of their organising is done informally (Onyx and Leonard 2010). It has been found by some researchers that volunteering in indigenous communities is intrinsically entrenched that it is considered a natural part of life although it is not captured in the census or other official reporting (Browne-Young et al. 2013). Due to their small size, grassroots associations have greater flexibility than larger organisations, and indeed governments, and can get things done quickly. As Smith (2000) observed, "[i]f people see a problem in their community or the world, or if they simply have a common interest, then they can immediately start to work on a problem or interest … they require no money to begin, no office space, no paid staff, no legal incorporation, no tax exemption and no other trappings of a paid-staff group" (2000, pp. 144-5). Smith also emphasised that grassroots associations are not perfect and cannot solve all the world's problems, but they "can be very powerful in their cumulative impact … and are a power to be reckoned with individually, in local coalitions as well as in regional, national or transnational federations" (2000, p. 248).

According to conventional social norms, not all grassroots associations are "uniformly positive or socially desirable" (Reisch & Guyet 2008, p. 171). Defined as 'deviant' and 'anarchist' associations by some researchers, or the 'dark side' of the civil society/non-profit sector, they are organised and sometimes incorporated, but depending on one's point of view, act in a self-interested way to the disadvantage or discrimination of others (Becker 1995; Jensen 2017; Smith 2008). Obvious examples of deviant associations include cults, gun lobbies, the Ku Klux Klan and underground militia (Smith 2000, p. 86; 2008, p. 1). Some GAs can provide both a public good and social decline. Cooper and Macfarland described community bingo halls in the UK as "the hidden wealth of communities, [generating] a wealth of social and public good that is often intangible and unquantified" (2012, p. 5). Leading Australian social researcher, Eva Cox, however, was concerned that the image of volunteering was too righteous: "Using simplistic definitions of

social capital as an unquestioned good, and presuming that volunteering per se is nearly always socially positive, does not allow the possible negative aspects of volunteering to be examined" (cited in Warburton & Oppenheimer 2000, p. 140). Cox provided examples such as the Melbourne Club (an all-male exclusive social club) who were there to reinforce the status quo of the privileged in society (cited in Warburton, J & Oppenheimer 2000, p. 140).

Putnam recognised that participation in organised groups was a significant indicator of social capital, valuing the "norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them" (2000, p. 19). In an earlier interpretation, Bourdieu (1986) considered social capital in a more neutral context, noting that it could produce both positive and negative outcomes, depending on one's point of view. Van Deth et al. (2017) argued that in regards to associations, the trust, norms and networks of social capital is an outcome that provides a significant public benefit. Recognising that 'negative modes' of social capital do exist, they assert that association involvement is mostly positive and provides opportunities "to learn new social skills, meet other people and gain access to networks, and to develop pro-social norms and values, especially trust" (2017, p. 182). Furthermore, Chua and Erickson argued that the more social capital there is in a community, the more individuals will become connected to one another, forging friendships and joining associations which will, in turn, expand a person's social networks and the community's social capital even more (2017, p. 198). Hemming concurred and found through his opt-in survey of 179 GA leaders in the UK that, "[i]n these small groups we forge meaningful and lasting connections to one another: we communicate, make decisions as one, we work together towards shared ends" (2011, p. 12).

Researchers have suggested that organisational structures are even more critical to social capital than casual face-to-face gatherings, as it gives legitimacy and status to the cause that the group is espousing which, in turn, 'institutionalises' social capital. Wollebæk & Strømsnes came to this conclusion by examining survey data collected by the European Science Foundation sourced from countries across Western and Eastern Europe. They ascertained that "The strength and prevalence of the voluntary sector–the degree to which it permeates society and is perceived as real infrastructure of collection action–is in our view a more important variable than is the amount of time people spend meeting face-to-face" (2007, p. 250).

2.3 Value of grassroots associations

Since the nineteenth century, it has been assumed that voluntary associations contribute positively to society. In his study of associations in the United States, French philosopher, de Tocqueville suggested that participation in community groups was central to American democracy and that these small groups promoted trust in communities and encouraged dialogue, compromise and participation in the political process. He argued that, "Not only do they [voluntary organisations] empower individuals, enabling them to overcome their individual weaknesses, they also function as a learning school for democracy, where members learn to deliberate, reach compromises, and work for the common good" (de Tocqueville 1835 cited in Hooghe 2003, p. 49). This view of community groups enhancing the democratic process is still supported by contemporary researchers. Boeckmann & Tyler argued that when citizens are engaged as volunteers in community groups it builds trust in others and in society in general, which then leads to greater voting participation (2002). In his study into the correlation of voluntary association membership and personal values, Hooghe (2003) found through a face-to-face survey of 1,300 citizens in Belgium that current and past association membership is a reliable indicator for adherence to democratic attitudes. This supports longitudinal research conducted two decades earlier in the USA, which found that members of associations were more politically active than non-members (Baumgartner & Walker 1988). In their extensive literature review of recent civic participation, which included data from the *General Social Survey* of 2014, Cnaan and Park found that 70 percent of people in the USA were active in civic groups (2016).

Grassroots associations, and the not-for-profit sector in general, are highly valued in societies across the globe and have a long history of public approval (Glover 2004; Kunreuther & Edwards 2011; Putnam 2000; Sharpe 2006; Smith 2000; van Puyvelde et al. 2015). They bring people together for a collective cause, create social bonds, promote political action through education, encourage reciprocity (Schneider, J A 2008), and have long been considered a critical component of social change and community development (Reisch & Guyet 2008). As Newton suggested, "voluntary associations create the bonds of social solidarity that are the basis for civil society and democracy" (2001, p. 206). Defining voluntary altruism as a "motivational or goal-oriented tendency of an entity' and 'service to another" (Smith 2000, p. 28), Smith emphasised the high esteem that these organisations have in societies demonstrated by tax exemptions and other benefits given by governments.

In his investigation of time-series data over twenty years from the US *General Social Survey*, Rotolo further elaborated on the importance of voluntary associations and their relation to social capital asserting that, "Participation in voluntary groups provides an important outlet for the development of social network ties that, in turn, foster the development of social capital" (1999, p. 200). In a later survey of 4,000 Norwegians on the topic of association membership, giving and volunteering, Wollebæk & Selle (2002) found that members of associations were more civically engaged than those who were not members. In an Australian example, it was discovered through a survey of 2,400 randomly selected individuals, followed by 40 in-depth interviews in Adelaide, that civic action was more likely to occur from people with active neighbourhood connections (Ziersch et al. 2005).

In a recent review of the *General Social Survey* in the USA, Paxton and Rap found that the standard voluntary association question omitted entire categories and variants relating to informal associations, thus significantly under-reporting their value (2016). In the UK, the number of grassroots associations is estimated to outnumber those that are registered and formalised, by nine times in some estimates (Mohan 2012; Soteri-Proctor 2011). This is similar to Europe where, in a study conducted across six democratic countries, it was found that 71 percent of all associations had no paid staff (Maloney & Rossteutscher 2007). As a grassroots volunteer in Reading, England explained, "We're not just here for the sport, but helping this community ... it's somewhere to come in off the street, talk to people, share their troubles" (Bowlby & Lloyd Evans 2011, p. 424).

In his book, *Does Altruism Exist*, based on new developments in evolutionary science, Wilson took a slightly different approach by investigating the definition of altruism and how it aligned with evolution theory and the development of groups, including small groups such as GAs. He used Darwin's theory to explain that when members of a group help each other, they are creating a "better tribe" (2015, p. 32). Wilson further outlined evolutionary game theory, explaining how pairs of humans who help each other are better off than pairs who do not, arguing that "[we] have the ability to cooperate in groups of unrelated individuals" (Wilson, DS 2015, p. 52).

Other authors too have attempted to put an economic value of volunteering and the not-for-profit sector, which includes GAs, by placing a monetary value on volunteer hours and other indicators (Ironmonger 2011; O'Dwyer 2014 cited in Oppenheimer & Warburton 2014; Putnam 2000). However, data on the economic value of grassroots associations is

scarce because they are hard to quantify (Cnaan, Milofsky & Hunter 2008; Glover 2004; Smith 1997). Smith argued that, although they have small budgets, "there are so many millions of them that grassroots associations are economically quite significant cumulatively … however, the real "assets" of grassroots associations really are people, specifically members, and more specifically active volunteer members and leaders" (2000, p. 58). Soteri-Proctor, Phillimore and McCabe agreed, arguing that the loss of GAs would have a negative impact on society due to "the loss of opportunities for collaboration and community building that can enhance the well-being of individuals and wider communities" (2013, p. 1031). Until their positive impact on societies can be measured appropriately, however, GAs will struggle for proper recognition (Flatau et al. 2015).

2.4 Grassroots associations in Australia

Although associations are less researched in Australia and have a different history and context, the literature suggests that the benefits of grassroots associations to Australian society are similar to what scholars from North America and Great Britain have documented. Formal volunteering in Australian associations has its roots in Britain, initially as a colony of the Crown. In its early years, from British settlement in 1788, charitable acts and volunteering were strongly influenced by the government including leadership and funding. As Oppenheimer observed, "From its origins as a convict gaoler, the state either partnered private philanthropy … or assumed direct responsibility itself" (2008, p. 17). Oppenheimer proposed that the real growth of associations in Australia began when convict transportation ceased, with responsibility for community development gradually transferring to community leaders through partnership arrangements with governments. She explained that associations formed in response to the need to build civic institutions and infrastructure for the common good before local governments formed and took over these responsibilities (2008). These traditional voluntary associations were made up of "diverse members of communities who met to foster social ties, raise concerns, and form reciprocal obligations" (Keen 1999, p. 644). Examples of these early associations are the Mechanics' Institutes who built libraries and organised local recreational activities. Many of these groups received government grants, and some of their work was later taken over by local governments (Keen 1999). Oppenheimer (2005) found that Australian volunteerism increased after the second world war, revealing that the Commonwealth Government worked closely with the voluntary sector in reconstruction projects such as building community centres and supporting social welfare initiatives.

In Australia, the Australian Productivity Commission (APC), a federal statutory authority, reported that there were approximately 600,000 non-profit organisations in the country, which they defined as "organisations that impose the non-distribution of profits to the members of the organisation" (2010, pp. XVIII, 60). The APC reported that the great majority of these non-profits are small 'non-employing organisations' that rely on volunteers, with about 300,000 of these being unincorporated. The report also stated that non-profits were significant contributors to the Australian economy with an economic value of $443 billion to Australia's GDP and eight percent of employment in 2006-07.

To formalise their operations and to obtain legal protection for individual members, GAs can apply through state governments to become incorporated associations. These associations then have an option to register with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC). The Australian Government created the ACNC in 2012 as a response to recommendations from the Australian Productivity Commission and calls from the non-profit sector for harmonising different state-based laws regarding fundraising. Despite an election promise to repeal the ACNC, in 2016, the Liberal-National Coalition Government confirmed the retention of the ACNC after consultation with the sector (2016). As of 2016, there were 52,166 charities and not-for-profit organisations registered with the commission (Powell et al. 2017). Organisations that are registered are eligible to apply to register as a 'charity' and have tax concessions and 'deductible gift recipient' status from the Australian Tax Office. There are extensive criteria to be registered as a non-profit organisation and further criteria to be met in order to become a registered charity. "To be a charity, all of [the] not-for-profit's purposes must be charitable, except for purposes that are "incidental or ancillary" to (further or aid) the charitable purposes" (Knight & Gilchrist 2014, p. 1). The *Charities Act 2013* lists twelve charitable purposes, and there are several 'subtypes' of charity that organisations can nominate themselves as (*Charities Act 2013*). There are also tests for public benefit and governance standards in order to be registered. Registered organisations can identify themselves as small, medium or large based on their annual income. The classification of 'small' is very generous, however, with annual revenue of less than $250,000 for 'small', and less than $1 million for a 'medium' classification. Registered organisations can also nominate their 'charitable purpose' as defined in the Act and sectors of the population they benefit.

Small organisations (with a turnover of less than $250,000) make up 67 percent of all registered organisations. Furthermore, 44 percent of these small organisations do not

have paid staff, which means they could be considered to be GAs (Knight & Gilchrist 2014). It is also worth observing, however, that only a very small minority of grassroots associations across Australia are registered with the Commission. For example, in 2015 there was only one bowling club registered (the Clairmont Bowling Club in West Australia) and only 45 organisations with the keyword 'neighbourhood' in their names (Cortis et al. 2016). Obvious barriers to registration included a requirement for an Australian Business Number (ABN) and the significant amount of detailed information required in the application process. As many GAs would not meet the 'charity' definition for tax deductibility status, and due to the barriers stated above, there is little incentive for GAs to register. In South Australia, there were 3,813 South Australian associations registered with ACNC in 2016 (Powell et al. 2017). However, according to a database provided to the author from the South Australian Office of Consumer and Business Services (OCBS), as of 2016, there were 20,346 incorporated associations registered in South Australia (Office of Consumer and Business Services 2016). That means that only 19 percent of associations have bothered to register with ACNC, and the likely reason was to gain tax deductibility status.

A large proportion of ACNC registered organisations have volunteers. Across Australia, eighty-six percent of them involve over two million volunteers with larger organisations having the largest number of volunteers (Knight & Gilchrist 2014). This represents a small proportion of the 6.1 million volunteers in Australia (2010), which is in keeping with the notion that only a small percentage of grassroots associations are recorded with the ACNC.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics released its *General Social Survey* results in 2014, which found that fewer people were getting involved in community groups, recreation activities and civic and political groups (2014). The trend data from this survey shows that the volunteering rate had declined to 31 percent from a peak of 36 percent in 2010. On an individual level, Australian volunteers are contributing fewer hours per year, reducing to 56 hours in 2006 from a high of 74 hours in 1995 (Oppenheimer, M et al. 2015). Economic marginalisation could also be affecting volunteer rates. Statistics in Australia and overseas consistently show that individuals from low-income households volunteer less for organisations than those on higher incomes (Dept of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs 2008, Musick & Wilson 2008). In addition, Schlozman et al. found that economic inequality in civic life was entrenched across the United States

and that 'the voices heard through the medium of citizen participation might be loud and clear, but they will be far from equal' (1999).

The decline of volunteering in Australia has been an ongoing trend, with participation dropping during periods of economic downturn, particularly in the 1990s, with service clubs, sport and social clubs and youth organisations, such as scouts and guides, being particularly affected (Lyons 2001). In 1999, Keen observed that participation in Australian service clubs was declining due to time and economic pressures:

> Rotary … is losing steam in Australia. Members have less time to attend meetings and develop the kinds of networks that facilitated community and market interactions in the early years. In the post-World War II era, service organisations such as Rotary, Lions, Apex and the Masons seem to have started a decline, with no replacements in sight, reflecting a changing business environment that permits less free time and changing (that is, less segregated) relationships between men and women. Whatever the reason – be it long working hours, togetherness, or the television set – the most interesting revelation of the Australian data is the surge in association activity just after the world wars. Did the post-war enthusiasm for joining groups reflect an attempt to continue the close-knit nature of social capital fostered by the wartime experience? (Keen 1999, pp. 644-45).

Keen's observation of service clubs in Australia was mirrored earlier in the United States. In his comprehensive history of Rotary, Lions and Kiwanis published in 1993, Charles documented sharp membership declines during periods of economic recession followed by increases during economic upswings. Charles recorded a drop after the 1987 crash, but also attributes other changes in society for the decline in participation such as metropolitan sprawl, bureaucratic issues and competing interests:

> Whatever the long-term impact of these trends … when combined with economic uncertainty, they encouraged middle-class retreat and privatization, disrupting the operations of the organizational sector in many areas of American life. As Rotary, Kiwanis and Lions clubs struggled to ensure their place in new middle-class communities, the middle class as a whole also became less confident that its vision defined the nation and less certain how it might serve the community (Charles 1993, p. 158).

Although periods of economic upswing occurred in the years following the publication of Charles' book in 1993 and Keen's article in 1999, volunteer participation in associations, and the number of associations, has continued to decline in Australia. The number of new association registrations has declined in South Australia, from a high of 709 new registrations in 1985, to just 315 new registrations in 2016 (Office of Consumer and Business Services 2016). As the retiring president of the now-closed South Australian Association of School Parent Clubs, Jenice Zerna, explained to a local newspaper that she "and other long serving committee members were simply worn out," with "most people saying we don't have the time to go to meetings and things like that" (Williams, T 2016).

2.5 Rise of professionalism

Small groups often progress to form associations in order to gain structure and protect individual committee members from personal liability. Sometimes this means creating a legal identity through incorporation, business registration for the collection of the goods and services tax, and formalised record keeping and email lists of interested parties. As Cnaan, Milofsky and Hunter observed, "[i]n every community, one can find subgroups that emerge into voluntary associations" (2008, p. 2). Groups often incorporate once they start obtaining assets and applying for government grants. Incorporated associations may also enjoy tax advantages, such as being reimbursed for the goods and services tax and allowing donations to be tax deductible for the donor (Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission 2016; Office of Consumer and Business Services 2011b).

In South Australia, grassroots associations obtain incorporated status through the *Associations Incorporation Act 1985* (the Act). To be eligible to receive incorporation, organisations must have an approved purpose under Section 18 of the Act, such as having a "religious, education, charitable or benevolent purpose, encouraging literature, science or the arts, sport, amusement, or … any purpose approved by the Minister of Corporate Affairs" (*Associations Incorporation Act 1985*, p. 14). This gives the organisation special rights as a whole and also protects individual members. Being incorporated, however, brings additional legal obligations to the organisation such as reporting and governance obligations.

Once incorporated, the journey to bureaucracy begins for small associations. The Act outlines several rules to be followed, such as having a legal name, constitution, management committee, public officer, annual general meetings and audited financial statements. Being a 'prescribed association' (reaching gross receipts of AUD $500,000) brings more onerous reporting requirements (*Associations Incorporation Act 1985*). How the rules of the Act are interpreted by small associations vary, but many have constitutions that require four office bearers in a management committee comprising a president, vice president, treasurer and secretary who is often the public officer. Even though the Act only requires a committee and public officer, many small associations are under the impression that four office bearers are expected. This may be due to various publications provided by the Office of Consumer and Business Services (2011a) that include four office bearers in example rules and constitutions.

Governance surrounding associations does not stop with the Act. Common law and public liability issues have forced small associations to purchase insurance, which became increasingly expensive in the early 2000s in Australia due to the worldwide insurance crisis and collapse of HIH Insurance (Myles 2014 cited in Oppenheimer & Warburton 2014). Additionally, Australian society has become increasingly litigious and cautious, and this brings with it a range of risk management policies, food safety rules and WHS obligations that associations have to consider (Oppenheimer, M, Warburton & Carey 2015; Pick, Holmes & Brueckner 2011; Winterton, Warburton & Oppenheimer 2013). In fact, under the South Australian *Work Health and Safety Act 2012*, associations who employ at least one person must adhere to the rules of the Act, which means they are legally bound to provide a safe working environment not only for staff but also for all the volunteers that are involved with the association (2012). This also extends to 2010 child safety legislation, which requires criminal history checks and mandatory reporting training for volunteers who work with or near children and people who are vulnerable (*Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016*). To help volunteer-involving organisations manage these new legal obligations, a volunteer support infrastructure has been created in Australia through a network of government-funded volunteer support centres and peak bodies that provide training, recruitment and advocacy support (Maher 2014 cited in Oppenheimer & Warburton 2014). These centres support non-profit organisations who pay a membership fee and, for the most part, have paid volunteer coordinators to manage volunteers in their organisation.

Hill and Stevens described this increased formalisation in the non-profit sector as 'professionalism', meaning "the introduction of more structured policies and procedures for managing volunteers" (2011, p. 107). While these governance obligations and regulations may appear to be a good thing and protect individuals, it does introduce professionalism and an increasingly complex workload for leaders and committee members of small associations (Hutchison & Ockenden 2008; King 2017; Oppenheimer, M 2001; Pearce 1993). It has been cited as a reason why some people leave volunteering and leadership positions (Brueckner, Holmes & Pick 2017; Hedley 1995; Kreutzer & Jager 2011). In their report on the impact of public policy on volunteering, Hutchison and Ockenden found that the formalisation of management structures in small associations "may also threaten the inclusiveness of volunteering and sideline volunteers from decision-making processes" (2008, p. 7). Howlett (2010) concurred, arguing that although coordination of their 'work' is welcomed by volunteers, an increased focus on professionalism should not come at the

expense of diversity, informality and flexibility. Before professionalisation, for example, introducing new members to the norms and rules of most GAs was an informal process and quite ad-hoc (Soteri-Proctor et al. 2017, p. 814).

As mentioned earlier, leaders of GAs initially create these organisations or take up leadership roles out of a sense of community need and personal passion. Many do not expect the extent of accountability and governance required upon incorporation. As Rochester pointed out, "Management concepts such as control and supervision are alien to these kinds of organizations, which operate on the basis of teamwork and personal leadership" (1999, p. 18). Nesbit et al. (2017) concurred, finding that the word 'businesslike' was a negative word in the context of leading volunteers. For the most part, people joined associations for a leisure purpose, and, "[t]he experts on managing paid workers not volunteers, mistakenly persuade/seduce too many association leaders that their paid worker management techniques are best for managing associations, when this is simply false, according to both empirical research and theory" (Nesbit et al. 2017, p. 933). In her in-depth case study of a Canadian softball league, Sharpe concluded that professionalism was a significant factor in the decline of its membership:

> While a move toward formalisation would help such associations thrive within a social environment that favours formalization, it is precisely the informal, accessible, and leisurely style of grassroots associations that contribute to their most important social benefits *(2003, p. 448).*

This dissatisfaction of increased professionalism in GAs may have been a factor many of them turning into professional associations after the new social movements of the 1960s and 1970s. In this period, western governments took on more responsibility for social programs and funded the voluntary sector to deliver new programs, such as the Australian Assistance Plan in the 1970s (Eklund, Oppenheimer & Scott 2018). This was also an unstable time of social change in western countries and coincided with a mass withdrawal from traditional membership-based associations. In her landmark study of the history of hundreds of associations in the USA, Skocpol (2003) found that branch-based associations were being replaced with centralised organisations and that this was having a negative impact on civic life in the USA. Where local chapters across the country were once the beehives of civic engagement, Skocpol found they were being replaced by 'professional groups'.

> Where once cross-class voluntary federations held sway, national public life is now dominated by professionally managed advocacy groups without chapters or members. And at the state and local levels "voluntary groups" are, more often than not, nonprofit institutions through

which paid employees deliver services and coordinate occasional volunteer projects *(2003, p. 7).*

Earlier in 1989, Young identified the trend of nationally networked voluntary associations in the USA which gradually evolved into franchised systems where national offices started to control and close local affiliates (Young, DR 1989). A survey of the American Association of Retired Persons members confirmed this trend, which found that over half of their members did not volunteer (Sauer 2002). In their extensive literature review on board governance of associations, van Puyvelde et al. (2017) found a similar trend worldwide, finding that some associations were 'commoditizing membership, seeing it primarily as a source of funding and support rather than a mechanism for control and accountability' (2017, p. 897). Researchers have penned numerous terms to describe 'checkbook' members of association, such as 'free-riders', 'slacktivists', 'pay 'n' players', 'hobbyists' and even 'utility-maximizing consumers' (Holmes & Slater 2012; Howard & Gilbert 2008; Kristofferson, White & Peloza 2014; Wollebæk 2009). The literature has yet to analyse the long-term impact this trend of arm's length membership is having on grassroots associations.

2.6 Leadership of grassroots associations

People volunteer on GA committees for a wide variety of reasons; it may be for recreational purposes, personal benefit, or to express themselves and use creativity in ways that they cannot through paid employment while benefiting the community (Agard 2011; Nesbit, Rimes, et al. 2017; Rochester, C. 1999). Nesbit et al. described leaders of associations as "providing shared vision, direction and strategy; focus on motivating and developing people without the use of formal reward and punishment systems" and "may include board members and chairs, elected volunteer officers, committee chairs [and] informal leaders" (2017, pp. 915-6). Hedley and Rochester defined a volunteer management committee member as, "anyone who serves on the management committee of a voluntary organisation, is unpaid, and, is not there as a part of their paid employment" (1992, p. 9). Masaoka (1999) outlined the role of all-volunteer boards and committees in a 'Board Responsibility Matrix' which identified their main responsibilities using simple terms (Figure 1):

THE BOARD RESPONSIBILITY MATRIX

The board as the *governors* or *trustees* of the organization.	The board as *managers* and *leaders* of the organization.
Responsibilities	
In its *governance* role, the board fulfills its responsibilities by acting as a collective body.	In its *management* and *leadership* roles, board members fulfill these responsibilities through their actions as individuals.
Objectives	
Objective: To ensure that the organization fulfills its legal and financial responsibilities and fulfills its responsibilities to the community.	**Objective:** To ensure that the organization's work is accomplished and to represent the organization to the community
1. Handle the money and file the forms. Safeguard assets from misuse, waste, and embezzlement. 2. Keep it legal and safe. Ensure compliance with federal, state, and local regulations, and fulfillment of contractual obligations. 3. Make big decisions for the future. 4. Make sure the organization is accountable to its constituencies, and protect the organization's reputation. 5. Get help when you need it. 6. Plan for arrival and departure of individual members.	7. Get the work done. 8. Support other volunteers so they can successfully contribute to the organization's work. 9. Be ambassadors to the community. Lend names and personal credibility and reputation to the organization. 10. Pass along the covenant. Provide leadership in spirit.

Figure 2.1: Board/Committee Responsibility Matrix for All-Volunteer Organisations
Source: Masaoka 1999, p. 7

2.6.1 Motivations of volunteer leaders

While the above matrix is a useful tool for GAs who wish to proceed to formalisation, volunteer leaders, who lead association members who are also volunteers, operate with restricted authority, especially since volunteers are not paid employees and do not function under a command and control system (Bowers 2012). Many GAs create roles and positions as the size of the association increases, and they often start with just one person or 'macher', a Yiddish word describing a person who makes things happen: "a doer, social operator, somebody who inspires action" (Hemming 2011, p. 115). In the eighteenth-century, English satirist Ned Ward (1709) lampooned the formality of clubs calling their leaders "victuallers" (p10), old bearded hypocrites" (p.14), who "rattle and fall foul of one another" (p.10), and "exercise their cunning tricks till the very next merry meeting" (p.11). Hemming observed that many GAs do not bother with official rules or formalities in their early years, and that "[y]ou don't find many clubs or societies with positions such as 'meeting organiser', 'head person' or 'she who invites speakers'" (2011, p. 104). In his 'how-to' guide for volunteer leaders, Scheier (2003) brazenly, and somewhat cynically, reminded readers that "non-staffed groups often resemble roller-coasters. They go up with inspiring leaders, dramatic crises or other mobilizing events; they're down or dead most of the rest of the time" (2003, p. 3).

Morris and Staggenborg believed that leaders are more than just functionary and are crucial to social movements which often start as GAs, as they "inspire commitment, mobilize resources, create and recognize opportunities, devise strategies, frame demands

and influence outcomes" (2004, p. 171). Phillimore and McCabe concurred, stressing that the 'secret' of small group success "was attracting individuals with the enthusiasm and personality to take people along with them" (2015, p. 146). In his book about leadership in the non-profit sector, Mason (1996) introduced the theory of the 'expressive dimension', explaining that volunteers will join groups to express themselves. This provided non-profit organisations with a unique 'major source of energy' (p. 286), unlike companies that may consider expressive activity bad for business. He explained that,

> Expression is the process of directly manifesting, or pressing out, what people feel because they want to do something for themselves, for other individuals, or for the society as much as because they want something done. Expression is all those activities that are ends in themselves; it is doing something for the direct gratification of doing *(Mason, D 1996, p. 287)*.

Those who feel strongly about an issue, and wish to express themselves in a meaningful way, often volunteer to create and lead grassroots associations (Chetkovich & Kunreuther 2006). As the core founders of these associations, they are essential to many membership-based groups that solely rely on volunteer leaders for their operations (Holmes & Slater 2012). A volunteer in the grassroots organisation, Sheltering Our Own, in the USA, described it as follows:

> I think first of all, [you need someone with] a vision … a dream initially of what they want, what they see the organization as. Then you need someone who's willing to take actions, who's willing to take the initiative, who's willing to do what it takes to get it there. But also [to] consider everyone's opinions …. So, you don't want someone who's just obsessed with their own thoughts and ideas. You want someone who's accepting of other beliefs as well … I guess you just need a dreamer, a thinker, and a doer (Kamla Chowdhury, in Chetkovich & Kunreuther 2006, p. 52)*.

Labelling these leaders as 'community mobilisers', Netting (2008) described their journey with this observation:

> Community movements and local organisations often begin with talented and committed people who believe enough in some cause or change that they push for action … and in order to pursue their cause, they often have to mobilize other volunteers in order to move *forward* (in Cnaan, R. A. 2008, p. 410).

2.6.2 Leadership traits and behaviours

The quality of leadership that these 'community mobilisers' implement, however, greatly affects the attitude of regular members, their commitment and the recruitment and retention of future leaders. In their qualitative study of 23 leaders of successful GAs in the USA, Boehm and Staples found that they shared common traits such as the ability to develop "a joint vision, reciprocal relations with followers, and an emphasis on task group processes" (2006, p. 77). In the sport volunteer sector, Nichols (2005) called these leaders 'stalwarts', with their main motivations being a combination of altruism, recreation and self-

development, while detecting that their numbers were in decline due to over-work. As van Puyvelde et al. observed, "maintaining active participation of members in running their association is another important challenge facing associations" (2017, p. 900). In his study of 600 volunteer leaders of a national youth sport association in the USA, Posner found that,

> The overall attitudes of volunteer members were impacted by leaders' focus on ethical behaviour and concern for the well-being of their followers. Empowerment was also found to be a strong mediator in the relationship between leadership and volunteer satisfaction, volunteer commitment, and volunteer intention to stay active in their clubs (2015, p. 886).

Grassroots associations may or may not be incorporated, but all of them operate under norms of behaviour to achieve goals effectively. Putnam described this as "cultivating a norm of generalized reciprocity" (2000, p. 21). Knoke and Wood described GAs as using 'normative power', which enables organisations to maintain control through accepted norms of group behaviour, leading to 'collective goals' to ensure that the interests of the group come before individual interests (1981, pp. 9, 21). These organisational control systems have a direct effect on member commitment, with association norms the most important to member commitment. Knoke and Wood observed that "Associations acquire essential resources from member energy, skills, time, money and support and the component that has the greatest impact to an association is member commitment" (1981, pp. 3-4).

In her 2006 literature review of non-profit membership associations, Tschirhart found that participation in associations was correlated to commitment, and that "characteristics of the organisation, the member, and interpersonal interactions of members all influence commitment" (p. 531). In a Canadian study of sport organisations, Doherty, Patterson and van Bussel (2004) established that there were high expectations for positive behaviour of volunteer committee members, especially in regards to social interactions. With recent heightened awareness of workplace wellbeing and the introduction of new laws to prevent bullying in Australia, Paull and Omari (2015) found that many poor behaviours displayed in the paid workplace are also experienced by volunteers. Mex (2018), in a paper based on this study's focus groups in South Australia, found that poor behaviours and bullying within grassroots association committees were barriers to new committee member recruitment. Behaviour norms and the socialisation process in group behaviour was explored in detail by Haski-Leventhal and Bargal (2008), who argued that volunteers often experience great ambiguity when commencing their roles and go through a process of organisational

socialisation when joining associations. Through their 'Volunteer Stages and Transitions Model', they explained that individuals take an active part in the socialisation progress to make sense of their new environment (Haski-Leventhal & Bargal 2008).

In a study of around 300 grassroots associations affiliated with the environmental organisation Sierra Club in the United States, Andrews et al. (2010) developed a multidimensional framework to measure success factors specifically for civic associations. Similar to Knoke and Wood, they noted that civic associations,

> … rely on volunteers to do their work, conduct decentralized decision making, and govern themselves through elected leaders … the capacity of civic association for collective action depends on their members' contributions of money, time, effort and skill to common purpose. The efficacy of their leadership thus, lay in their ability to mobilize and direct the commitment, accountability and cooperation of voluntary participants' *(2010, pp. 2-3).*

Andrews et al. also found that the development of leaders in grassroots associations was the key success factor for ongoing survival, arguing that '[a]ssociations must both develop capacity of current leadership and develop new leadership on an ongoing basis' (2010, p. 11).

2.6.3   Development of oligarchies

Cnaan (1991) found that most leaders of small associations are uncontested at elections due to the lack of rewards of such positions, and it was similarly difficult to find members to volunteer and serve on management committees. Nesbit et al. concurred, finding that committee or board members are often recruited through personal social networks with selection criteria which is "often ambiguous and quite open-ended, usually favoring individuals who are seemingly competent, willing to serve, and have time for the position" (2017, p. 919). As Blanke observed, "more often than not, someone takes the helm reluctantly, through guilt, persuasion, or process elimination" (2006, p. 1). This may be indicative of a long-term trend in GAs. Hedley and Rochester found in their 1991 national survey of volunteer leaders of non-profit organisations in the UK that people "drifted" into becoming committee members and that over half become involved after being asked, furthering the belief of some volunteer leaders that "committees choose you" (1992, p. 23).

These dynamics can lead to oligarchical tendencies, with committee members facing little change year after year and associations being driven by a small elite which become 'purple circles' (Paull & Redmond 2011; Perkins & Poole 1996). Rothschild and Leach (2008) proposed that associations should be aware of Robert Michel's famous 'iron law of oligarchy', suggesting that all organisations will eventually come to be ruled by a small

group that become entrenched in power. Other researchers agreed that if fewer people put their hand up to lead GAs, oligarchical leadership can result leading to associations becoming less democratic over time (English & Peters 2011; Enjolras & Waldahl 2010; Knoke 1981; Nichols 2005; Rothschild & Leach 2008; van Puyvelde et al. 2017).

In some cases, committee members of grassroots associations gradually become entrenched and develop into what Aldous Huxley dubbed 'village Napoleons', managing their organisations in an undemocratic and dictatorial fashion (Huxley 1962, p. 152). With the same people putting their hand up to lead year after year, often because nobody else does, members can become complacent and defer to the experience and passion of existing (and in many cases) founding leaders. It can lead to a vicious cycle, where members who do not have the time or inclination to lead allow those who do to continue in leadership positions over many years, which can lead to apathy and passivity amongst members (Knoke & Wood 1981). An Australian example of this has been found in Meals on Wheels, where ordinary volunteers claimed that volunteer leaders were resistant to change, and that "committees have become their little kingdoms and they don't want to let go of them" (Anonymous volunteer TT, in Oppenheimer, M, Warburton & Carey 2015, p. 1564). English and Peters (2011) describe this phenomenon as 'founders' syndrome', where original creators of associations will not let go of the past, becoming inflexible in their management style which makes it difficult for later committee members to contribute.

Oligarchy styles of leadership can also develop accidentally when GAs use social media. The tools provided by platform software, such as Facebook, affect the governance of grassroots associations by the nature of the software rules, governing the site 'owners' or 'administrators'. It has been suggested that these social media groups are more democratic than traditional organisations because all discussion is transparent and it records each interaction by members (Scott and Johnson 2005). However, others maintain that online groups reinforce oligarchy tendencies because the "top-down community construction does not allow members to negotiate the meaning or values of the community" (Eaton 2010, p. 176), and those that set up the site become de-facto leaders (Hercheui 2011).

2.6.4 Organisational culture in GAs and leadership implications

Although there has been very little research on the motivations of volunteer leaders (Nesbit, Rimes, et al. 2017, p. 920), Rochester explored the motivations of activists regarding personal development, education and self-esteem which he found encourages

further leadership involvement. He explains that this leads to an "upward spiral in which successful activity encourages increasing levels of involvement with greater and greater rewards … [whereby] many activists are driven by a deeper set of values about the importance of active citizenship and the idea of community" (Rochester 1999, p. 15). In their theory describing the volunteer commons, Brudney and Meijs argue that poor organisational cultures not only turn away volunteers from individual associations, they can also have an adverse effect on how entire communities view volunteering through negative word of mouth (2013). Haski-Leventhal, Debbie, Meijs & Hustinx (2009) developed this idea further with the framework of recruitability, which proposes that associations need to have specific components in place in order to attract and sustain volunteers. These include how accessible an organisation is to volunteers, if they have adequate resources to retain volunteers, and sufficient networks and cooperation with external parties that would increase their profile and capacity to support volunteers.

Many leaders of grassroots organisations stay involved because the activity is their primary focus of leisure or a significant source of identity and self-expression (Charles 1993; Ockenden & Hutin 2008). Volunteer leaders are more committed to an organisation when they possess applicable skills and are aligned with the organisation's cause (Baggetta, Han & Andrews 2013). In fact, it was found that lack of commitment was the major predictor of committee turnover in a major survey of sporting associations in Queensland (Cuskelly & Boag 2001). When comparing Lions Club volunteer leaders in Canada to their trade union counterparts, Catano et. al. found that volunteer leaders "presented higher levels of transformation leadership to their followers … and were more psychologically involved and committed to their organisation", where union leaders relied on a more transactional style of leadership (2001, p. 260). When developing a framework to identify motivations for board members in non-profit organisations with paid staff in Canada, Inglis and Cleave found that, in general, volunteer board members served for altruistic reasons, and "were more motivated by a concern for others than a concern for self" (2006, p. 98). Similarly, when comparing volunteer association leaders with the population as a whole in France, researchers Prouteau and Tabariés (2010) found that association leaders were more dedicated to their communities, more driven to activist causes, and spent more time volunteering for multiple associations.

Organisation behaviour theorists Rothschild and Leach (2008) proposed three types of cultures that are prevalent amongst membership associations – those that avoid conflict,

those that are internally combative and those that have a culture of openness. In his study of 32 membership-based organisations in Indianapolis, Knoke (1981) found that there is a high correlation between the success of an organisation and a highly committed membership base, which can be nurtured with good communication and participatory decision making. Using data from over 1,600 volunteer leaders in the Sierra Club in the United States, Baggetta, Han and Andrews discovered that associations that embrace good teamwork, share work equally and spend less time in meetings have more committed volunteer leaders (2013, p. 544). Thomas Rotolo, in his multilevel study of ten communities in Nebraska and the *US Census*, built on social science research that suggested that 'homophilous social associations', or voluntary groups that share the same characteristics, are more likely attract and retain other similar members (2000b, p. 272). In their extensive literature review regarding the leadership of associations, Nesbit et al. observed that the quality of leaders varied greatly, and the possible problems of mismanagement included "poor quality work, not accomplishing work on time, corruption, fraud and misbehavior toward or mistreatment of members" (2017, p. 926). They also found that there was practically no empirical data that detailed the qualities of effective volunteer leaders (2017). This is undoubtedly the case in the Australian context.

Because of extra demands and time commitments placed on volunteer committee members of GAs, it is often difficult to recruit leaders and replenish the ranks of retiring committee members. This may be because these roles are more demanding than task-based or episodic volunteering with little extra reward (Bowlby & Lloyd Evans 2011; Wanwimolruk 2014). Leadership roles can become unpopular as the volunteer leaders themselves do not appreciate the complexity of the task and the responsibility required when taking on leadership roles (Hedley 1995). Due to their high-level skills in communication, organisation and networking, volunteer leaders tend to do more than their fair share of work compared to other volunteers and tend to experience burnout, particularly when they do not receive adequate recognition or achieve their goals for the association (Baggetta, Han & Andrews 2013; Nesbit, Rimes, et al. 2017; Ockenden & Hutin 2008; Pearce 1993; Rochester 1999). In their study of volunteer leaders of Lions Clubs in Canada, Catano et al. (2001) found that volunteer leaders often experience increased workloads that possibly interfere with paid employment.

Grassroots associations do not have the formal procedures or 'command and control' culture that exists within organisations with paid staff. Rochester observed that

"[a]ssociations are also characterized by high levels of organizational ambiguity. There is no clear-cut division between those who 'own' the organization, those who undertake its work and those who benefit from its activities" (1999, p. 16). Role ambiguity has been found to be a significant contributing factor to burnout, forcing volunteers to reconsider their involvement in an association (Allen & Mueller 2013). In their literature review on leadership and management in associations, which included all-volunteer associations and those that had the support of paid staff, Nesbit et al. (2017) concluded that successful leadership in associations significantly different from leadership in business, government agencies and even non-profit agencies. They found that "[a]ssociations must focus mainly on leading volunteers, not on managing paid staff, who have very different motivations and incentives", and associations have a "special reliance on voluntary contributions–through membership, financial donations, meeting attendance and volunteer work on committees as leaders/officers" (Nesbit, Rimes, et al. 2017, p. 915).

In many respects, leaders of grassroots organisations require more advanced skills than leaders of larger non-profit organisations. As in any organisation, some want to lead, others want to be in the periphery, and others are happy to be a 'cog in the wheel'. It is more complex in small associations where they have to "find a balance between meeting the individual needs of their members and maintaining a vision of their longer-term goals", and, "the fact that members participate in associations as volunteers limits the extent to which these members can be directed or managed" (Harris, M 1998, p. 147). It can be very complicated leading volunteers in a GA as compared to associations who have the benefit of a paid volunteer coordinator, as volunteers cannot be coerced and the behaviour of volunteers is sometimes difficult to control (Farmer & Fedor 1999). The direction of the association must be formed collaboratively with members, volunteer to volunteer (Chetkovich & Kunreuther 2006). As in many workplaces, not all volunteers are happy in their roles, nor enthusiastic or passionate because of antiquated management practices, power dynamics, inflexibility and poor leadership (Hankinson & Rochester 2005; Johnson, T 2016; Paull & Omari in Oppenheimer, M & Warburton 2014). The goals of GAs are often more complex than private enterprise organisations, and their leaders need to mobilise volunteers and members through shared values and goals instead of command and control methods:

> Authority (in grassroots associations) is uncertain, and leadership is precarious. Because the association is voluntary, its chief officer has neither the effective power nor the acknowledged right to coerce the members – they are, after all, members and not employees (Wilson, JQ 2010 cited in Andrews et al. 2010, p. 7).

Literature could not be found that compared the personality types of leaders in grassroots associations to leaders in other types of organisations. In general, volunteers are often classified as 'prosocial' types with high levels of personal empathy, and those who suffer from social anxiety will avoid volunteering altogether (Hustinx, Cnaan & Handy 2010). It has been found that leaders of grassroots associations can be charismatic, especially leaders who have founded organisations. They attract volunteers due to tenacity, high amounts of energy, and sheer belief in the cause (Pearce 1993). Milofsky suggested that "a community only comes into group awareness through the agency of organizational activists" and that key individuals in communities act as 'moral entrepreneurs' to get things done (Milofsky 2008, p. 2). In some cases, these volunteer entrepreneurs are very focused on their cause, and it becomes their main passion in life:

> A man's preoccupation may become his occupation. What started as an amateur interest in a moral issue may become an almost full-time job; indeed, for many reformers it becomes just this. The success of the crusade, therefore, leaves the crusader without a vocation … He becomes a professional discoverer of wrongs to be righted, of situations requiring new rules (Becker 1995, p. 172).

In their study of service clubs in a southern city in the USA, Schneider and George found that 'servant' leadership (taking an interest in developing subordinates), as opposed to 'transformational' leadership (motivation through vision), was a better predictor of volunteer commitment (2011). They pointed out that, "[s]ervant leadership may be uniquely suited to the management challenges of volunteer organizations … it appears that volunteers who worked with servant leaders did feel more empowered within the service club setting" (Schneider, SK & George 2011, p. 74). This supports the view that by looking after fellow volunteers and giving them meaningful roles, volunteer leaders are more likely to create sustainable organisations (Brudney & Meijs 2009; Locke, Ellis & Smith 2003).

2.6.5   Recruitment and retention of volunteer leaders

Because of the extra demands and time commitments placed on volunteer committee members of GAs, it is often difficult to replenish the ranks of retiring committee members especially when the association is internally focused and "stuck with the existing pool of volunteers" (Meijs, Lucas & Hoogstad 2001, p. 51). As one Australian Meals on Wheels volunteer said when key committee members consistently resigned, "they are just walking out the door" (Oppenheimer, M, Warburton & Carey 2015, p. 1562). This may be happening because committee roles are much more demanding than task-based or episodic volunteering with little extra reward. In a survey of non-government organisations in Reading, England, that included a significant proportion of grassroots associations, it

was found that it was difficult to replace committee members: "people are too busy now ... too stressed, disillusioned with life and their help fades out" (Bowlby & Lloyd Evans 2011, p. 424).

In one of the first comparative studies of grassroots associations and private sector organisations, Pearce found that leaders of GAs avoided leadership opportunities as opposed to paid employees who clamoured for promotions in private industry:

> In voluntary organisations authority could be obtained merely by seeking it, that is, by pursuing an office. However, leadership roles were not commonly sought by members of these organizations; in fact, many actively avoided them. … Volunteers desired significantly less organizational influence than they currently held. No employees, neither leaders nor non-leaders, expressed that desire. Non-office holding volunteers rarely showed an interest in the assumption of positions of leadership (Pearce 1980, pp. 86,9).

Some years later in her study of non-profit associations in the United Kingdom, Pearce found that it was much more difficult to recruit volunteer leaders due to the "burdens of holding office" such as excessive time commitment, fundraising, communications and governance reporting (1993, p. 137). Cnaan came to a similar conclusion in a study of leaders of neighbourhood associations in the US, observing that, "The cost of participation – that is, donations, time from work or family, and neighbors' requests–far exceeds any available material rewards" (1991, p. 626). In their qualitative study into the perception of volunteering in the United Kingdom, Hankinson and Rochester found many negative aspects associated with committee work, including "drowning in paperwork" and "meetings going on forever … dominated by a few opinionated individuals where no-one else got a chance to speak" (2005, p. 100). Darlington pointed out that these leadership roles became unpopular as most members of management committees did not realise the extent of the complexity and responsibility involved in volunteer leadership roles (1995). It has been said that 90 percent of the work in volunteer committees is done by only 10 percent of the members (Fischer 2005), causing fatigue and stress in many grassroots associations. Nichols found, in his survey of over 8,000 sport volunteers in the UK, that the sector was over-dependent on a small number of volunteers who contributed most of the work, and that the most demanding roles involved leadership and coordination (Nichols 2005).

The democratic process can, in some cases, be the cause of an association's unravelling. As Johnson observed, decisions based on compromise can sometimes dilute the purpose for which members initially join, and "unhappy members can withdraw" (1990, p. 5). Mission drift can also have a negative impact on associations and can occur when the

membership base of an organisation becomes larger and more diverse. In their simulation study of grassroots associations, van Puyvelde et al. suggested that "potential members have their own preferences about the mission and many undertake actions that divert the mission to their own interests" (2015, p. 142).

Knoke and Wood suggested that strong associations have active memberships with transparent democratic processes: "When members are highly efficacious and feel able to affect organizational policy decisions, they are likely to exhibit very positive commitment to the organization" (1981, p. 75). Andrews et al. described these active members as 'core activists', who, in addition to elected leaders, play a crucial role in achieving the goals of the association by motivating others to participate and provide administrative support (2010, p. 14). These activists, members and volunteers, whatever they may be called, need leaders to get things done. As Pearce found in her 1980 comparative study, volunteers have much to lose when taking up leadership positions and perhaps more thought should be given to the incentives of volunteer leadership and sharing the workload among members:

> When volunteers have little to gain and much to lose by assuming active leadership roles in their organizations, it certainly is in many members' self-interest to maintain a rank-and-file role (p. 90) …. and, [i]f organizations are to remain viable, they must find ways to increase the attractiveness of their leadership positions … progress can be made in reducing the added 'costs' of leadership positions. Too often in these sample volunteer organisations, greater participation was 'rewarded' with more work so that the better members were often forced to quit in order to avoid being buried in assignments (p. 92).

Volunteer leaders are vital to the sustainability of grassroots associations. Being that there are so many GAs in Australia delivering significant value to civil society, their leaders deserve particular attention. Volunteer leaders of GAs develop strategy, organise programs, communicate complex concepts, manage governance and engage fellow volunteers. Little is known about these volunteer leaders as data is rarely collected on their activities in surveys (Cnaan & Park 2016). Because quality and commitment of volunteer leaders in grassroots associations have a significant impact on organisational success, more investment may need to be made in training existing leaders and improve the collective skills of committees (Baggetta, Han & Andrews 2013; Meijs & Brudney 2007; Schneider & George 2011).

2.7 Challenges and opportunities in committee work

Much has been written about the need to change management practices to recruit and maintain volunteers, however, most of this research has concentrated on organisations

with paid volunteer managers (Dunn, Chambers & Hyde 2015; Dwyer et al. 2013; Hidalgo & Moreno 2009; Hustinx 2010; Meijs & Brudney 2007; Wilson 2012). Examples of antiquated management practices cited by the above researchers that would also be relevant to GAs, include fixed duty roster times for volunteers, inflexible work duties and rigid meeting schedules. In their study of small- to medium-sized associations in Detroit, Trzcinski and Sobeck (2012) found that associations who were willing to change and engage with their members in program development were more likely to be sustainable and even grow. Similarly, in their survey of 393 volunteers in Spain, Hidalgo and Moreno (2009) found a high correlation between social integration and retention, and that the main predictors of volunteer retention in organisations were positive social networks, organisational support and stimulating tasks. However, in Norway, Wollebæk found in his study of voluntary associations using complete census data, that small associations were less likely to undertake core or peripheral changes than larger non-profit organisations. He theorised that "[i]n civic society, organizations can decline for decades and still cling on to a minimalist existence' and that younger associations were more likely to adapt to change, and more willing to move on when the life of an association is threatened by external developments" (Wollebæk 2009, p. 380). Noting these critical issues, Candena-Rao, Luna and Puga (2012) suggested that there should be specific criteria developed for associations to measure their performance in the areas of decision-making, cohesion and responding to the external environment.

It has been demonstrated that volunteers show more loyalty to an organisation, including GAs, when there is proper training, role flexibility, incentives and recognition (Wilson, J 2012). In recent years, new management practices resulting in increased bureaucracy brought on by legal requirements, as already cited, has impacted negatively on volunteer retention and recruitment. It has been suggested that these management practices are not keeping pace with growing individualism in western society and the busy nature of people's lives. As Hustinx observed, "The increasing focus on personal preferences and needs has induced many organizations to tune their managerial practices in more volunteer-centred ways" (2010, p. 237). Hustinx and Lammertyn coined the phrase 'reflexive volunteering' to describe the change that is occurring from inflexible volunteer involvement to a more individualised design of volunteering roles within organisations (2003).

In their 1996 study of 229 charities which closed down in Minnesota, Hager et al. found that major reasons for their demise included their small size, loss and turnover of personnel, financial difficulties, losing relevance to their communities and funders, with some also citing internal conflict and power struggles as significant factors (1996). A more recent Canadian study of 4,000 charities that were deregistered between 2002 and 2008, found that charities forced to close were likely to be small and young, or had failed to adapt to changing environmental conditions. The authors of the study, Elson, Spyker and Rogers, called this a "liability of adolescence or a liability of obsolescence" (2010, p. 5). Although focusing on associations with paid staff, a recent survey of 65 CEOs of Australian non-profit organisations in the social services sector similarly concluded that a key indicator of vulnerability was the presence of dysfunctional volunteer boards, with issues such as "not having an experienced board chairperson, the board having only limited oversight, … board members not having a wide range of skills and high turnover' (Zhai et al. 2017, p. 386).

Having leaders in GAs that have the skills to adapt to new technology and social media could be an advantage. Facebook was the leading social media platform in 2015, surpassing competitors such as Snapchat and Instagram, with 81 percent of the total social media market (comScore, 2015). As of June 2017, more than one billion people worldwide use the product *Facebook Groups,* which could be considered the next generation of GAs. One hundred million of these users are part of "meaningful groups", which has "quickly become the most important part of someone's experience on Facebook" (Jin 2017, p. 3). The Facebook website describes Groups as a "private space to share with small groups of people", and members can share photos, files, organise events, conduct online chats and post updates (*Facebook products* 2017). Facebook Groups can be either open, closed or secret, and have various privacy levels from which to choose. Facebook Groups are the most widely used social media platform in this product category and are used by both long-standing GAs such as Rotary, to issue-based GAs who are not incorporated and may last only for a few weeks. Other social networking platforms that also offer group support include Mighty Networks and Google Groups, which provide stand-alone websites for groups to provide information and coordinate activities.

On 22 June 2017, the CEO of Facebook, Mark Zuckerberg, hosted a summit for Facebook Group administrators where he announced a new mission for Facebook, which was to "give people the power to build community and bring the world closer together' adding that

an important aspect of the new mission was to 'support group admins [administrators], who are real community leaders on Facebook" (Jin 2017). A few days before the summit, he released an open letter where he discussed how Facebook could contribute to supportive, safe, informed, civically-engaged and inclusive communities (Zuckerberg 2017). He discussed how building a global community "starts with millions of smaller communities and intimate social structures that we turn to for our personal, emotional and spiritual needs" and noted that since the 1970s there has been a decline of membership groups (2017). He stated that new online communities are a 'bright spot' in this space and that "Meaningful groups transcend online … nothing beats a face-to-face connection, but online connections can fortify in-person ones" (Seetharaman 2017). It appears that Zuckerberg believes that if Facebook groups are active and have very engaged members (e.g., are 'meaningful'), it improves and builds on traditional online communications because these groups have a purpose and benefit individual members.

By holding the summit, Zuckerberg recognised the importance of the administrators of Facebook groups and face-to-face networking, noting that "the most successful physical communities have engaged leaders and we've seen the same with online groups as well" (Zuckerberg 2017). However, others believe that the introduction of artificial intelligence in social media makes it harder for group administrators to protect their patch. The founder and CEO of a Facebook Groups competitor, Gina Bianchini of Mighty Networks, wrote shortly after the Facebook summit that, "for a group admin, all of their hard work to build a community and bring value to their members is diminished by Facebook relentlessly marketing other competitive groups" (Bianchini 2017). Zuckerberg, however, believed that this group-to-group linking tool would "help bring communities and sub-communities closer together" even though some see this feature as an invasion of privacy (Seetharaman 2017). Kavanaugh et al. (2005) endorsed Zuckerberg's view, finding that social media enables people with weak ties to communicate easily with each other, creating bridging social capital. They also found that active internet users with 'bridging ties' have a high level of offline social engagement (2005, p. 119). This correlates with the literature, which has found a positive relationship between the use of Facebook and the increase of social ties, offline interactions and social capital (Burke, Kraut & Marlow 2011; Lee, E, Kim & Ahn 2014; Valenzuela, Park & Kee 2009; Warren, Sulaiman & Jaafar 2015; Young, K 2011).

Although Facebook Groups are an emerging area of research, Park, Kee and Valenzuela (2009) found in a study of college students using the product, that it encouraged

participation in civic and political action and that it "shows the potential of social networking sites as an emerging yet powerful tool for drawing young adults' attention to societal concerns and uniting the young generation as active participants in society" (2009, p. 733). A similar study found that those involved in political Facebook groups share information that can quickly mobilise offline collective action and can help build trusting relationships amongst members (Valenzuela, Park & Kee 2009). In a case study of three Facebook Groups, Ferree (2015) found that they are a useful communication tool. Participants in her study said, "the ability to send photos is easy and the capability to communicate with many people at the same time with time-sensitive material [is good]", and, "[e]ven though we try to meet in person several times a year, not all members can. This keeps things up to date on a daily basis, and the result is that the group is alive and active, even when we cannot meet up" (Ferree 2015, pp. 2,3).

Bob Price (2002), in his qualitative study of voluntary association leaders in Texas, argued that structural factors are under-emphasised when researching the barriers to volunteering. He suggested that the way 'work' is organised, the way that families are organised and the way that voluntary associations are organised, including GAs, all have an effect on volunteer participation as well as cultural factors that may inhibit volunteering more broadly (Price 2002). English and Peters (2011) found in their study of ten feminist associations in Canada that greater inclusion of new ideas from members could be gained from better chairing of meetings and introducing a type of code of conduct that outlines how committee members in these GAs would work together more collaboratively. Some larger not-for-profit organisations have introduced new ways to attract volunteers, including Meals on Wheels in Canada who have introduced creative means to attract more drivers, including young people to deliver meals on bicycles (Winterton, Warburton & Oppenheimer 2013). This is an example of how organisations, including GAs, can correctly identify their target groups and understand how they are positioned to attract the right types of volunteers (Haski-Leventhal & Meijs 2011).

Episodic volunteering is a recent volunteer management practice, preferred by many volunteers who desire a more individualised experience, offering once-off or casual volunteer opportunities for those who do not want a regular commitment in a volunteer role (Cnaan & Handy 2005; Dunn, Chambers & Hyde 2015; Hustinx 2010; Wilson 2012). However, in addition to flexible volunteering opportunities, it has been found that episodic roles can have direct benefits to volunteers including task significance and social

interaction (Macduff 2005). In their study of volunteers at a one-day event in the Netherlands, Maas et al. (2015) found that volunteers in this episodic offering were likely to increase their volunteering commitment for an organisation if they experienced direct personal benefits. This has been confirmed in a recent Australian study that included GAs, where it was found that organisations who offer flexibility in volunteer roles are more 'recruitable' (Holmes et al. 2018).

The literature demonstrates that in order to recruit and retain volunteers, which by extension would include volunteer committee members, leaders of grassroots associations need to be 'volunteer-centric', offer diverse and exciting roles, treat volunteers with respect, be mindful of risk management and legal requirements and make volunteering an enjoyable experience (Haski-Leventhal et al. 2018; Lien 2010). Building the capacity of volunteer leaders on these constructs would benefit those who receive services from grassroots associations (Posner 2015). In an Australian study into sporting clubs, many of which are GAs, the increased level of volunteer engagement was due to structural changes (Ringuet et al. (2008) cited in Holmes & Slater 2012). Brudney and Gazley confirmed this in their earlier examination of longitudinal data in the USA that there is a documented relationship between good volunteer administration and a positive volunteer experience (2006). However, they also found that organisations did not invest significantly in volunteer administration (2006). As the organisations in the Brudney and Gazley study were large associations with paid staff, the challenges are formidable for small grassroots associations when recruiting volunteer leaders. Holmes et al. (2015) proposed that organisations are better placed to convert people to volunteering when they recognise the barriers to volunteering and identify interventions that could help potential volunteers become more willing, capable and available to volunteer.

Haski-Leventhal, Meijs and Hustinx (2009) found that governments, business, educational institutions and the media can help promote and enhance volunteering, including volunteers in GAs. They offered suggestions such as increased funding for the volunteering infrastructure, reduction of red tape, more corporate volunteering and mandatory service learning in educational institutions. They also suggested that volunteer-involving organisations themselves should expand their networks to embrace partnership with these third parties (Haski-Leventhal Meijs & Hustinx 2009). In Australia, the volunteering infrastructure is a network of peak bodies and volunteer centres, funded by federal and state governments, that refer potential volunteers to volunteer-involving

organisations who are members of this infrastructure (Maher 2015). DeGolier describes their operations as "connecting people with opportunities to serve, building the capacity for effective local volunteering, promoting volunteer, and participating in strategic initiatives that mobilize volunteers to meet local needs" (2002, p. 1). The volunteering infrastructure in Australia has a hierarchy, with Volunteering Australia advocating for the sector at a national level, supported by member state peak bodies which also offer referral services and advocacy (Maher 2015). Under the state agencies are locally-based volunteer resource centres that provide referral services and support to local volunteers and organisations. The state and local centres have three main functions which include volunteer support and referral, management and training support, and community awareness building that raises the profile of volunteering more generally. Under their current rules of membership, however, these services are mostly unavailable to members and leaders of GAs (Volunteering SA & NT 2017).

2.8 Gaps identified in the research

It has been well documented and suggested here that most volunteering literature is written from the context of non-profit associations that employ staff and engage volunteers through formal volunteer programs (Cnaan 2008; Kunreuther & Edwards 2011; Ockenden & Hutin 2008; Oppenheimer & Warburton 2014; Posner 2015; Sharpe 2006). Although large in number, small grassroots associations are often hidden from view because they are inadvertently omitted from the volunteering infrastructure, national accounts, non-profit sector research and surveys such as the census (Nesbit, Rimes, et al. 2017; Smith 2000, 2010) Toepler (2003) pointed out in his comparative study of key indicators from 360 small, medium and large organisations in the arts and culture sector in Maryland, grassroots associations far outnumber other non-profits and, if translated to all non-profit sectors, this could be indicative that several billion dollars are unaccounted for in the US national accounts (Toepler 2003). Similarly, in the United Kingdom, a street-level mapping project in 2011 found that most GAs were not identified in any official directories (Mohan 2012). Sundblom et al. who investigated the life-cycles of associations, suggested that the decline of associations deserves much more research, observing that success stories are more popular and that decline is "somehow seen as unproblematic or even uninteresting" (2017, p. 960).

Grassroots associations do not have the public profile of the larger nonprofits, and they remain invisible in various government reporting and compliance regulations. Public

surveys almost never differentiate the size of organisations that people volunteer for, nor ask if there is a mixture of paid staff and volunteers within these organisations. Grassroots associations are, therefore, 'below the radar' (McCabe & Phillimore 2013). As Milofsky wrote, "One reason community movements, associations, and informal organizations are theoretically challenging is that they do not adhere to the key assumptions that guide the way managerial or bureaucratic theory defines organizational structures" (2008, p. 3). Glover (2004) agreed, calling for more methodological research in grassroots organisations and, as Tschirhart and Gazley pointed out in 2014, further research on membership associations would be welcome due to their prominence in many countries. Soteri-Proctor et al. recently argued that there is a systematic failure in ignoring GAs in social science research and that there remains a "lack of large-scale, robust empirical knowledge on social and community groups and activities beyond local GAs of high local prestige-power and those appearing in official government/regulatory listings [resulting in] a deeper systematic bias created by survey sampling" (2017, p. 820). McCabe, Phillimore and Mayblin went further, pointing out that there were "substantial gaps in the research literature" especially around the activities of GAs, and on the "role and impact these volunteer-led activities [have] at a community level" (2010, p. 20). Ware (2014) pointed out that more research on small-scale community groups would lift their profile and assist them access more networks and build resilience.

In regards to literature focusing on volunteer leaders of grassroots organisations, even less is available. Most of the research cited around leadership in the non-profit sector was within the context of larger organisations with paid staff. One survey of volunteer leaders in a US national sporting organisation found that these leaders were more likely to exhibit ethical behaviours and focus on the wellbeing of volunteers, and use more 'leadership behaviours' than managers in the private sector (Posner 2015). Posner (2015) also noted that there was little research of volunteer leaders and that this subject was important because of the sheer number of volunteers affected by volunteer leaders. Nesbit et al. went further, arguing that associations were becoming ever more important worldwide and there was a significant lack of research on the characteristics and criteria for selecting their volunteer leaders (Nesbit, Rimes, et al. 2017). Schneider and George came to a similar conclusion stating that "little empirical literature exists regarding the leadership of traditional civic clubs devoted to community service" (2011, p. 60). Herman (2005) observed that little research had been completed on how service on boards and committees impacts volunteer leaders themselves, while Ostrower and Stone

acknowledged that there is very little known about GA boards and that "they may be radically different in some ways, forcing us to rethink and refine current assumptions" (2006, p. 624).

Some literature could be found relating to GA volunteer leaders in Australia, but it was generally found in specific areas in the sport, tourism and arts sectors. Cuskelly and Boag (2001) found in their survey of 262 volunteer committee members in sport that the average turnover rate of committee members was 29.6 percent. They observed that there was a significant problem of leader retention in sport and that "[l]ittle is known about volunteer turnover behaviour and why it occurs in sport organisations" (Cuskelly & Boag 2001, p. 80). In another Queensland study, Hoye (2006) found that small sporting associations found it challenging to recruit committee members, which in turn made it more challenging for them to build internal positive relationships than in larger associations, and that working relationships within associations was worthy of more research. Yet another Queensland study, a case study of committee members in a single arts society, found that its leaders displayed strong identification with the group and reported many benefits including feelings of accomplishment, socialising and self-enrichment (Bendle & Patterson 2009).

Researchers concurred that more research was needed into aspects of group cohesion, assimilation of new members and the behaviours and norms in volunteer committees (Doherty, Patterson & Van Bussel 2004; Kramer 2011). A Western Australian survey of volunteers in GAs found that 54 percent of respondents felt that liking people in their group was an important reason for volunteering (Department for Communities Western Australia 2012). At a more general level, Wilson (2012) found through his extensive literature review of publications using social survey data, that the experience of volunteering, particularly regarding volunteer commitment and satisfaction, has been a neglected area of research particularly around the internal operation of organisations, "… the most likely determinants of volunteer satisfaction, commitment and loyalty, are to be found in the organization of the volunteer experience" (Wilson, J 2012, p. 201).

2.9 Summary

As has been outlined in this chapter, the importance of grassroots associations is well documented. They provide avenues for personal expression, strengthen our democracies and provide bridging social capital that builds healthy communities (Coffé & Geys 2008; Smith 2010). The literature also reveals that GAs constitute the clear majority of non-profit

organisations in many western countries and make significant economic contributions, as well as social ones, to their communities. Despite their size, GAs have to deal with increased professionalism in a similar way that their larger counterparts do, despite not having a paid workforce to support them. This increased professionalism is having a negative impact on the volunteer leaders that serve on GA committees and boards, which are increasingly becoming marginalised with fewer and fewer people putting their hand up to join their ranks.

The literature raised many suggestions for future research on GAs, which could provide them with more support so that they can stay strong, healthy and resilient. Particularly relevant to this thesis were research recommendations around quantifying in more definitive terms the contributions that GAs make to society, the barriers faced by volunteer leaders and what interventions can be made by policy makers, and the volunteering infrastructure to support GAs in the future. The next chapter will describe the research methodology employed to gather data for this thesis to help answer the specific research objectives which were identified as gaps in the existing literature.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Sometimes a poem says it best; sometimes a data matrix does. Sometimes words say it best; sometimes numbers do. The more well versed you are in the field's eclectic methods of investigation, the better your ability to understand the diverse patterns and complex meanings of social life (Saldaña 2015, p. 3).

3.1 Introduction

The preceding chapters introduced the purpose and rationale of this study, and analysed the relevant literature concerning grassroots associations (GAs) and their leaders. This chapter outlines the methodology used to gather data for the study relevant to the research objectives. It will detail the research approach, data collection strategies and analysis tools.

The research methodology received ethics approval from the Social and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee of Flinders University in March 2016 in accordance with its policy on research involving humans (Appendix 1). The approval process included an examination of the research project, ethical principles, the adoption of data collection procedures, the participant recruitment process and how the records were to be securely stored.

The research paradigm was both positivist and interpretive in nature, by using a mixed-methods research approach which enabled both empirical observations and detailed understandings of people's experiences and beliefs (Neuman 1997).

3.2 Research Approach

The research objectives of the thesis are exploratory, as the study seeks to find new insights by investigating trends, asking questions, exploring issues and gaining a better understanding of issues facing GAs and their leaders through the analysis of new data (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2012). A case study research approach was selected due to the nature of the exploratory research objectives, and the phenomena of complex and multi-faceted issues facing contemporary GAs (Yin 2003). The case study, using multiple cases, focused on GAs in South Australia which has a population of 1.7 million as of December 2017 (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2017) and is also the researcher's state of

residence. Within this approach, a mixed methods research design was executed, and the collection of quantitative and qualitative data was used to explore the questions from multiple angles of enquiry (Creswell & Clark 2007). Mackenzie and Knipe defined mixed methods as research that gathers data both numerically and with text, and "often has greater impact" than stand-alone methods (2006, p. 7).

One example of a mixed method approach concerning volunteerism research is Cleave and Doherty's (2005) Canadian study investigating the barriers to volunteering through a quantitative telephone survey, followed by qualitative semi-structured interviews with volunteers and non-volunteers. Other examples in this field include Holmes and Slater's (2012) study into the patterns of volunteering in membership associations using questionnaires and face-to-face interviews, and Han, Sparks and Towery's (2017) recent study into citizen group strategies which incorporated longitudinal data, interviews and ethnographic observations.

Qualitative methods can address a multitude of research objectives, including providing contextual background on the study population, exploring the reasons why a phenomenon exists, evaluating a current issue in detail and identifying new theories in a strategic context (Huberman & Miles 2002). Exploratory studies often use qualitative focus groups in a semi-structured fashion to explore and understand an issue in depth (Yin 2003). The researcher utilised focus groups for this study for the above reasons, and this qualitative data was also used to inform the development of the survey questionnaire which collected not only information on trends, but also data on motivations and opinions.

The questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data from a large number of respondents, and was distributed to members of South Australian associations creating primary data that is unique to this study. Respondents were asked to respond to specific questions in a pre-arranged order that were designed to build on the focus group findings, Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill defined quantitative data as "numerical data or data that have been quantified" (2012, p. 679) with questionnairs used for "descriptive or explanatory research" (2012, p. 419).

This study also sourced a wide variety of primary quantitative data in documents and reports from federal, state and local governments as well as non-government organisations.

A process diagram describing the research approach is provided in Figure 3.1, which shows how each step informs and connects to the subsequent phase.

Data collection on associations
- Associations Database
- Directory of Community Services

→

Focus groups
- Pre-test of quesioning route
- Six focus groups held in three regions, with committee members and regular members

→

Survey to associations
- Usability testing
- Email invitations (for probabilty sampling)
- Weblink (for non-probability sampling)

→

Data analysis
- NVivo software for qualitative data (focus groups and survey)
- IBM SPSS software for quantitative data (survey)

Figure 3.1: Research approach

3.3 Focus Groups

Focus groups were chosen for this study in order to understand the questions posed by the research objectives in depth by exploring people's views in a structured setting that allowed for group interaction (Kitzinger 1994). Researchers often use focus groups to collect qualitative data when there is a lack of research in the topic area and to inform the development of new theory (Bryman 2016; Lee, TW 1999). This makes focus groups an ideal methodology to explore the topic of leaders of grassroots associations. Focus groups encourage participants to discuss and debate research objectives and explore not only what people agree on, but also the issues where they disagree (Bryman 2016). Furthermore, focus groups can explore reasons why people feel a certain way about an issue which allow the researcher to gain a broader in-depth understanding of the research topic and how important the issue is for participants (Bryman 2016). With participants having the opportunity to hear what others have to say about the topic, focus groups also allow for debate among participants (Smithson 2000). Additionally, the researcher can hear "more realistic accounts of what people think" because after listening to what others have to say, participants can re-consider their views during the discussion (Bryman 2016, p. 502). Disagreements between participants can "clarify why people believe what they do", and help the researcher find out what factors can cause people to change their minds on an issue (Kitzinger 1994, p. 116). In regards to this study, the focus groups allowed for debate and frank discussions that aided in addressing specific aspects of the research objectives, particularly around leadership motivations.

The ideal size of a focus group is between six to ten members, which provides enough people to promote discussion and debate, but small enough to enable everyone to have a say (Stewart & Shamdasani 2014). Focus groups are either heterogeneous to obtain different perspectives on the research objectives or homogeneous, to share everyday experiences with participants with similar characteristics (Ward, P 2016). It is important to note that not all focus groups can be truly homogeneous, as people are individuals and do not always agree (Kitzinger 1994).

Limitations of focus groups include data quality issues around reliability, bias, validity and the ability to generalise the findings to a broader study population (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2012). Because interview guides can be inherently flexible, the exact wording of questions asked in each focus group can vary between groups and doubts about the replication of the findings by other researchers can occur. Researchers can mitigate these doubts by retaining detailed records including the recruitment process, interview guide and analysis protocols (Kvale & Brinkmann 2009). Interview bias can occur in focus groups through the facilitator's framing of questions or by the perceptions of the participants which can lead to response bias (Kvale & Brinkmann 2009). Some interviewees who are introverted may not be as forthcoming as others who may dominate conversations, and this potentially limits the number of opinions being heard and repeating a normative discussion (Smithson 2000). Facilitators can mitigate this by ensuring that everyone has a say (Stewart & Shamdasani 2014). Other limitations of focus groups are logistical and cannot be avoided, such as where participants are not able to attend due to time and travel restraints, or one needs to go through a gatekeeper of an organisation to access participants (Symon & Cassell 2012). Data collected from focus groups can be unwieldy, consisting of verbatim transcriptions which require the researcher to provide structure to a cumbersome dataset (Huberman 2002). The steps undertaken to address the limitations of this study are described below under each step of the focus group process.

There were several ethical issues and risks that were considered during the planning of the focus groups, and these were identified in the ethics application which was approved in March 2016 (Appendix 1). The ethical risks included privacy protection for focus group participants (including anonymity), participants feeling obliged or pressured to participate, and the potential for participants to become distressed during the discussions. The risks were mitigated by recruiting potential participants through official contact persons in publically available databases. These were usually the secretaries or presidents of

associations and were regularly contacted by members of the public. At the start of each focus group session, information on the project was provided, the opportunity for questions to be asked and answered was given, and participants were advised that they were free to leave at any time. All participants were provided with approved project information and consent forms in the weeks prior to the focus groups being held, which included an undertaking that privacy would be respected in the published thesis with no names or organisations identified. Further detail on the recruitment process for the focus groups is described below.

3.3.1 Recruitment and profile of focus group participants

The researcher chose homogeneous focus groups for this study to gain an understanding of the various perspectives between committee members and regular members of grassroots associations, with participants who had direct experience of a particular circumstance and could participate in a focused discussion on the topic (Merton 2008). It is common to have three to four focus groups with each cluster to reach saturation of new ideas concerning the research objectives (Krueger & Casey 2014). Thus, the researcher conducted six groups in total with both committee members and regular members of grassroots associations who were the primary focus of the research.

Non-probability sampling was used for this study in the recruitment of focus group participants because the perspectives of both cohorts of committee members and regular members of grassroots associations were required to answer the research objectives (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2012). Some stratification of sociodemographic factors were taken into account to ensure that the focus group participants came with different perspectives (Bryman 2016). Three different socioeconomic locations were chosen to hold the sessions and, while it was not practical to screen for age groups as participants sometimes do not wish to disclose this information, it was possible to obtain some gender balance and diversity of organisational types for the focus groups in this study.

Six focus groups were held in South Australia from July to September 2016, in three diverse local government areas (Figure 3.2). Diverse locations were chosen to ensure a balanced socioeconomic representation of focus group participants so that outlier variation in the findings could be reduced (Huberman & Miles 2002). The researcher chose the town of Tanunda in the Barossa Valley Council area, which is in a rural area of South Australia located 90 kilometres north of the capital city of Adelaide. Since most of the population of the state lives in or around Adelaide, the researcher chose two metropolitan council areas

to complete the focus groups. These areas included the City of Burnside, which is a high socioeconomic advantaged area located seven kilometres from the Adelaide central business district, and the City of Onkaparinga, which is 25 kilometres south of Adelaide and has a low socioeconomic profile (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2011).
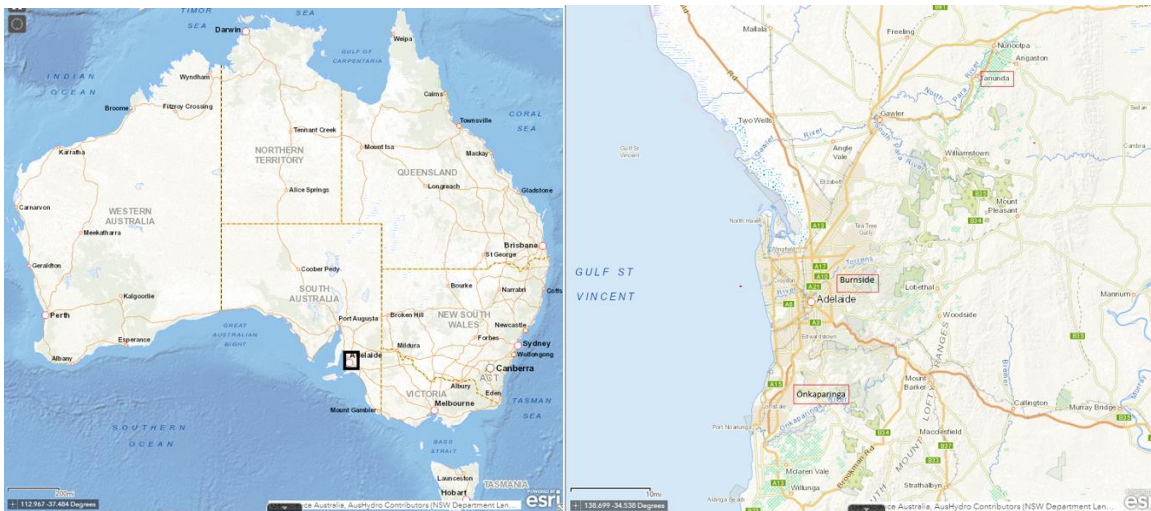
Figure 3.2: (a) South Australia and (b) Focus group locations (outlined in red).
Source: Geoscience Australia 2019.

The researcher sought advice from community development staff in each council area on meeting room locations and the scheduling for the focus groups. The staff recommended convenient and safe meeting rooms with suitable facilities and amenities, and advised what times and days of the week would be most appropriate for the local participants. The researcher held two focus groups in each location; one with committee members and one with regular members of GAs. These locations were chosen because of their relevance to two of the primary research objectives, which were to establish if committee recruitment is of concern to grassroots associations and, secondly, why people did not nominate for committee positions. Having two cohorts (committee members and regular members) also enabled comparisons between the two groups. There was a total of 51 participants, comprising 28 committee members and 23 regular members, with an average attendance of eight participants in each focus group. The dates, number of participants and venues for each of the focus groups are provided in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Focus groups schedule and participants

	Burnside, inner suburb of Adelaide	Tanunda, rural town in Barossa Valley	Onkaparinga, regional suburb, south of Adelaide
Committee member focus groups	18 July, 7:15-9:00pm 4 female, 4 male 2 younger than 45 Sectors: Sport, civic, environment, recreation, arts	15 Aug, 5:15-7:30pm 5 female, 5 male 2 younger than 45 Sectors: Arts, sport, civic, hobby, health, emergency	22 Aug, 3:00-5:00pm 6 female, 4 male 0 younger than 45 Sectors: Recreation, hobby, arts, civic, health, education
Regular member focus groups	27 Sept, 5:15-7:30pm 6 female, 2 male 3 younger than 45 Sectors: Sport, arts, civic, hobby, disability	16 Aug, 5:15-7:30pm 6 female, 1 male 1 younger than 45 Sectors: Civic, arts, hobby, emergency, aged care	29 Aug, 3:00-5:00pm 3 female, 5 male 2 younger than 45 Sectors: Civic, sport, hobby, arts, health, emergency

The researcher started the recruitment process by asking council staff to provide a list of grassroots associations in their area. This was augmented by the list of incorporated associations provided by the Government of South Australia (2016) and the South Australian Community Information Directory (*SA Community: Directory of Community Services* 2016). The list of incorporated associations from the South Australian Government included 22,000 incorporated associations, but the registration status and address fields were too outdated to be relied upon and did not include email addresses.

An excel spreadsheet was then created with all known grassroots associations in each council area, using information from the local volunteer research centres, the database of associations and the community information directory. While the researcher developed this extensive database with all possible grassroots associations in each location, it was not feasible to select focus group participants at random from this data bank (for probability sampling). This was because contact information was not available for all of the organisations and the database information did not disclose if an association was able to be defined as 'grassroots' in terms of being local with no paid staff (Smith 2000) as the number of paid employees was not available on the databases.

The researcher's judgement was used to edit a final list of associations that would receive an email invitation, where the associations were likely to be local, grassroots and able to contribute to the research objectives (Huberman & Miles 2002). A volunteer self-selection

sampling technique was employed (Symon & Cassell 2012) where committee members and regular members volunteered to participate after accepting an invitation because they were interested in the research topic or wanted to receive a $50 gift voucher incentive (Stewart & Shamdasani 2014). The researcher sent an email invitation (Appendix 3) to these organisations inviting committee members and regular members to attend the relevant focus groups in their council area, and attached to the invitation email was the participant information sheet (Appendix 4).

After initial acceptances were received, email invitations were followed up by telephone to targeted GA representatives that did not respond to the original invitation to ensure minimum numbers and diversity in the focus groups. The researcher sought both gender diversity and a variety of sectors to be represented in the focus groups, as it was important that the process not only explored what people agreed on but also how people from different backgrounds viewed the issues (Kitzinger 1994). Regarding diversity, the largest sector of organisations in South Australia that involve volunteers is sport (36 percent), followed by welfare/community groups (25 percent) and other quarters such as religious organisations, education, environment, emergency services and health (Harrison Research 2016a). The databases supplied from the councils, the South Australian Community Information Directory and the Government of South Australia all included a broad range of sectors. This enabled the researcher to target a variety of sectors for the focus groups, with the highest proportions coming equally from civic, arts and recreational groups, followed closely by sporting clubs, health service delivery, emergency services and environmental groups.

A noticeable gap in the focus groups attendance was low participation by people with a disability, individuals from a culturally and linguistically diverse background (CALD) and people under the age of 40. While the types of organisations represented from each sector did not exclude these groups and may indeed have members from that cohort, it is possible that the focus group findings may have been enhanced with increased participation of people from these backgrounds. Single representatives from these groups, however, would not necessarily represent the views from their broader cohorts (Krueger & Casey 2014). The study could have been augmented with homogenous focus groups specifically designed for young people, people with a disability and CALD communities. This would have allowed for a greater understanding of their experiences and views on the discussion topic (Smithson 2000).

Once participants accepted, the researcher sent them an information sheet and the consent form (Appendix 5), with confirmation details of the focus group session. Those participants with an email address were sent a confirmation email a few days before the date of the focus group and the researcher made phone calls to a few participants without email addresses. All were asked to confirm their attendance which resulted in only one unexpected absence. The largest attendance at a focus group was ten (for the Onkaparinga and Tanunda committee members), and the smallest attendance was in Tanunda with seven attending the regular member group.

3.3.2 The interview guides and data collection process

The focus groups in this study were facilitated by the researcher and allowed participants to interact and interpret each other's' responses (Kitzinger 1994). The facilitator kept the discussion focused on the questions, ensuring that all participants had a say, as well as making ethnographic observations on nonverbal communications (Ward, P 2016). An interview guide was developed (Appendix 2) which was a list of conversation-style questions in an ordered sequence, prepared in advance to ensure consistency across the different focus groups (Krueger & Casey 2014). The guide provided an agenda for the discussion and established a structure whereby participants could contribute and interact (Stewart & Shamdasani 2014) and were used to help the participants build on the ideas raised in sequential order and to enable consistency across all focus groups (Krueger & Casey 2014).

The interview guides were tailored slightly differently for the committee member and regular member cohorts. The questions were based on the thesis research objectives and designed to reflect the components of the volunteerability, recruitability and volunteer commons theories. The researcher held a practice focus group on 28 June 2016 in the Burnside Council Civic Centre. This enabled pre-testing of the questioning route to check if the wording of the questions was appropriate, to test if the questions encouraged discussion, and to identify any issues that were not well understood (Stewart & Shamdasani 2014). The practice focus group comprised of five residents who were known to the researcher, representing committee members of a residents' association, a service club, a touch football club, a Toastmasters club and a cycling club. Two females and three males attended, ranging in age from 45 to 70. Some had difficulty finding the venue, so the clarity of directions for future focus groups was adjusted to reduce the risk of late arrivals. Two of the participants knew each other, but the rest met for the first time (and appeared

to enjoy the session). All were passionate about their associations and enjoyed sharing common experiences with each other.

There was a high level of emotion expressed from two of the participants around their negative experiences on committees, so this enabled preparation for this scenario in future focus groups. The researcher tested the questioning route, and because some of the questions were repetitive and unclear, questions were subsequently adjusted. The researcher was also able to test how well the discussion was managed, ensure that everyone had a chance to contribute and to limit participants from dominating proceedings. The researcher was also able to test the clarity of the consent form and participant information sheet which did not need to be changed. The voice recorder and 'smart pen' were tested and it was found that the voice recorder was much more reliable than the smart pen. The practice session went 30 minutes overtime, in part due to late arrivals and the slow process of induction and welcome introductions. The researcher improved the process for future focus groups with administrative improvements such as pre-filling data on the sign-in sheets and having the consent forms on the table ready for signature.

Following the practice focus group, the researcher refined the questioning route as well as the invitation and registration process for the official focus groups. Participants were asked questions about their motivations for joining the associations and committees, their perception of committee work, if their associations were having trouble attracting committee members, barriers to joining committees, what attributes described successful committees, and what would be successful recruitment strategies to attract new committee members. The researcher recorded each focus group with written consent from all participants, and she confirmed the confidentiality of the identity of the individuals and organisations at the start of recording. All recordings were transcribed in Microsoft Word and participants were given individual identifier numbers to protect their identity in the transcribed document. The researcher prepared the written transcription data in table format with each participant's comment assigned to their identifier code. Data was stored with password protection on the investigator's computer at Flinders University and will be retained for at least five years from the submission of this thesis.

Following each focus group session, a two-question evaluation survey was sent to participants via SurveyMonkey to evaluate the sessions (Appendix 6). The first question asked if they would recommend the session to others (on a five-point Likert scale) and the

second was an open-ended text box asking for any comments or suggestions. Fifteen committee members completed the survey with 80 percent of respondents reporting that they were likely to recommend the focus group to others, while 13 percent were neutral and 7 percent were unlikely to recommend the session. Ten regular members completed the survey with 90 percent responding that they were likely to recommend the focus group to others, while 10 percent were unlikely to recommend. Twenty-one participants responded with comments mostly about how the session was run but also offering further comments about the discussion topic, which the researcher coded in NVivo. There were no suggestions on how to improve the sessions apart from one participant who asked that the researcher provide more explanation of how the research would be used in the future.

3.3.3 The coding process

The researcher uploaded the transcriptions to NVivo software for coding. Case classifications included a unique identifier, age group, gender, the region where their organisation was based, the primary activity of the organisation and the participant's role (Appendix 7). The case classifications enable comparisons between committee members and regular members, age group, gender and region. The researcher developed a theory-driven codebook before the commencement of coding based on the questioning route and themes that evolved from the literature review (Appendix 8). The codebook enabled consistency in coding across all focus group transcripts by providing a full explanation and description of each code (DeCuir-Gunby, Marshall & McCulloch 2011; Saldaña 2015). The initial codes started with 'parent' high-level codes that enabled the grouping of data with similar themes. The original parent codes were:

- Benefits of committee membership
- Benefits of membership and volunteering
- Barriers to joining committees
- Principal committee roles
- Skills required for committee membership
- Attributes of good committee members
- Committee recruitment strategies

The codebook was further developed and refined during the coding process, guided by the words and phrases used by the participants (Saldaña 2015). Some parent codes were changed to reflect the data. For example, 'Skills required for committee membership' was

merged with 'Attributes of good committee members' and renamed 'Factors for success'. The researcher created a new parent code called 'Reasons for difficulties' to reflect many comments that emerged within this theme. 'Benefits of committee membership' and 'Benefits of volunteering' were also merged, as the differences between committee members and regular members could be established through the case classifications. The final parent codes were:

- Benefits of committee work and membership
- Barriers to joining committees
- Factors for success
- Reasons for difficulties
- Committee recruitment strategies

A structure of child codes was established to organise themes and topics raised during the focus groups under each parent code (see codebook in Appendix 8). Some child codes with similar meanings were combined during the process to reduce the number of codes and simplify the examination of the findings. One example included the child codes 'Looking after members' and 'Recognition' which were combined to form the child code 'Recognise, look after members' under the 'Factors for success' parent code. Also within this parent code, 'Episodic opportunities' was merged into the 'Flexibility' child code.

Synergies across the data required the researcher to code some data under two separate codes. For example, some successful recruitment strategies that were reported by participants were also coded under 'Factors for success', because respondents indicated that these strategies built strong organisational membership. Inversely, the researcher coded many barriers to joining committees under 'Reasons for difficulties'. For example, oligarchies in some committees produced poor behaviours that participants reported as barriers to joining. This dual coding of the data shows clear links between the codes. For example, attributes of successful committee members are related to reasons for committee success, such as 'Looking after members' being both a 'Factor for success' and a 'Recruitment strategy'. Coding of the data allowed for quantifying the responses and frequency was then used as an indication of importance in the discussion outlined in Chapter Four.

Once the researcher finalised the codes and updated the code list, she checked each transcript for coding accuracy. This meant that much of the data had to be re-coded to

newly created child codes and, in some cases, dual-coded under related child codes as described above. A detailed analysis of the focus group findings is provided in Chapter Four.

3.4 Survey of associations

The goal of the survey was to build on the findings from focus groups using quantitative data (Appendix 9). The survey questions were designed with a similar questioning route to the focus groups and were based on the thesis research objectives and the components of the volunteerability, recruitability and volunteer commons theories (Holmes et al. 2015; Meijs et al. 2006). Screening questions were included to clarify the respondents' role in the association, if the organisation had paid staff, its core activity and where the association was based. The demographic and organisational type questions were based on the categories used in other published surveys so that the researcher could make comparisons against data sets (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2010; Harrison Research 2016a; Knight & Gilchrist 2014). The survey enabled categorical analysis with demographic questions as well as questions concerning membership trends, committee nomination trends, motivations, organisational characteristics and suggested recruitment strategies.

3.4.1 Survey design

The survey design was centred on the thesis research objectives and informed by the focus groups findings with a similar questioning route. Screening questions were included to clarify the respondents' role in the association, if the association had paid staff, its core activity and where the association was based. The demographic and organisational type questions were based on the categories used in other published surveys so that the researcher could make comparisons against existing sets of data. The design of the survey was based around each of the research objectives, with specific variables identified that would help address the objectives. Examples of variables include the role of the respondent (a committee member or regular member), whether or not the respondent was from a grassroots association, and the location and purpose of the associations. The data requirements table, with a full list of variables and datasets included in the survey, can be found in Appendix 10.

The researcher pilot tested the survey in June 2016 along with a draft covering letter. This involved testing with a committee member of a grassroots association known to the

researcher for 'usability testing' to identify any difficulties in language, formatting or any other obstacles that would affect the understandability of the survey and its response rate (Oppenheimer, AJ et al. 2011, p. 4). The committee member reviewed the survey in the presence of the researcher with comments provided verbally and in writing. This allowed the subject to ask questions progressively and at the same time provide feedback. Many questions were reworded in response to this feedback. The second draft of the survey was constructed using SurveyMonkey software which has flexible survey design tools and utilises Secure Sockets Layer encryption for data security (SurveyMonkey 2016). The questions obtained demographic information, data on the associations and their purpose, whether or not the respondents were committee members, and opinion topics investigated with a five or seven-point Likert scale (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2012). The SurveyMonkey platform allowed for logic and screening questions, where certain questions were presented based on responses from previous questions. The researcher further tested this version of the survey in November 2016 to 60 people who were a mixture of committee members of associations, regular members of associations, and academics. Feedback received included suggestions of further categories in some questions and several wording suggestions that enhanced the survey's 'usability' (Crawford, McCabe & Pope 2005, p. 47). The researcher incorporated most of the suggestions gained from the feedback into an updated version of the survey.

The researcher distributed the final survey over a two-month period in December 2016 and January 2017. It included four open-ended response questions at its conclusion, which allowed respondents to add further comments and suggestions on the issues raised in the survey. The survey questions received 4,663 open-ended comments, which indicated that the respondents were very engaged with the survey topic. In the introductory email, survey participants were invited to contact the researcher if they wanted to receive the results of the survey after publication. Twenty participants provided contact details for this purpose.

3.4.2 Survey sample and distribution

The researcher sent the survey to the database of associations registered with the South Australian Directory of Community Services *(SA Community: Directory of Community Services 2016),* an online community information directory of South Australian associations and community services. This enabled probability list-based sampling, which identified potential participants from a database of a distinct and well-defined population, intended to "to mirror key attributes of the population" (Tourangeau 2013, p. 4). The

Directory of Community Services is maintained by Connecting-Up (*Connecting Up Inc.* 2017), a non-profit organisation that is funded by the South Australian Government. The contact details of the 8,411 associations in the directory are publicly available on the website and are updated quarterly. The management of Connecting-Up provided the database in excel format to the researcher with emails for the survey distribution. After deleting government agencies and private company services (such as job placement services and for-profit dance schools), and associations without email addresses, the researcher reduced the database to 5,119 associations for survey distribution. Out of these, 781 people responded to the survey equating to 15 percent of the database. To increase the reach of the survey, non-probability sampling was used by promoting the survey as an unrestricted self-selected survey, with targeted messaging to non-profit associations through the Connecting-Up online newsletter, the Volunteering SA&NT online newsletter and on Facebook (Tourangeau 2013). The researcher collected an additional 729 self-selected respondents with this sampling approach. The survey was open from December 2016 to March 2017, with a total of 1,510 respondents at its close. Of the total, 205 were incomplete responses.

It is worth noting that the number of 8,411 associations in the Directory of Community Services is less than the total number of 22,059 registered incorporated associations in South Australia (2016). The latter was found to be unreliable by the researcher because it was out of date, had incomplete information and few of the associations in the database had contact details. The researcher contacted a random sample of about thirty associations on the database, and many were found to be no longer in operation even though they had not formally deregistered. In fact, only 1,488 of the total 22,059 associations were recorded as deregistered. A vast majority of the nominated public officers were found to be no longer with the association or not contactable. Due to the incomplete nature of the data and its non-currency, the master list of all associations in South Australia was unfortunately not able to be used for the survey.

Another available database to the researcher was a list of 3,886 South Australian registered charities (2016). This database does not have a strong representation of grassroots associations and therefore could not be used for the survey. However, in a random cross-referenced search done by the researcher, it was found that most of the organisations in the registered charities database were also listed in the SA Community database. As the SA Community database was the most complete database with current

contact information of a circumscribed group, it was judged to be most relevant and reliable for the survey. The database provided a high proportion of the target population of non-profit associations in South Australia. Since most of the members of this population have access to the internet, the researcher assumed that the survey to this particular database would yield good quality survey results with minimal coverage bias (Tourangeau 2013).

The researcher included an incentive in the survey invitation to participate in a draw to receive one of four sets of books on volunteer engagement donated by Volunteering SA-NT and two copies of Melanie Oppenheimer's organisational history, *The Power of Humanity: 100 Years of the Australian Red Cross*. The incentive was used to increase the response rate (Singer & Couper 2008), and it appeared to have a positive outcome, with 441 respondents (30 percent) entering the draw. The six winners were drawn anonymously by the President of Volunteering Australia at the offices of Volunteering SA&NT in Adelaide on 12 April 2017 and the winners were sent the books by mail in May 2017. Participants were told in the introduction to the survey about the importance of the research, which may have also increased response rate with the perception that participating in the survey would contribute to the social good (Kropf & Blair 2005).

3.4.3 Limitations of the survey sample

The researcher chose a web-based, self-completed questionnaire due to the cost-effective nature of the method and its ability to reach large numbers of respondents with suitable characteristics, such as members and leaders of grassroots associations (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2012). The response rates from web-based surveys have also been found to be similar to traditional methods such as paper and phone questionnaires (Ritter et al. 2004). Another advantage of the web-based questionnaire was the ability to automate data entry, which reduced the risk of data entry errors and the amount of time required to manually enter the data (Oppenheimer, AJ et al. 2011).

Due to the sampling methods and technology requirements of the web-based survey, the sample may have some participation bias, as respondents were self-selected in a list-based probability sample rather than drawn from a non-probability sample (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2012). The sample was biased towards respondents who were committee members of associations (78 percent), even though the researcher also sought responses from regular members of associations. This produced nonresponse bias from regular members who were an essential variable in the survey (Tourangeau 2013). This

bias may have occurred because committee members were the recipients of the survey invitation emails and were asked to forward the invitation to regular members, which was voluntary. It is also possible that committee members were more engaged with their associations and more likely to be interested in the research topic than regular members. Due to the high number of responses, there were sufficient numbers of respondents who were regular members (n=289) to make statistically valid comparisons between regular members and committee members through the use of Pearson Chi-square testing for independence (Keppel & Zedeck 1989). This test is particularly useful in determining significant relationships between categorical variables with different sample sizes. This was the case for the survey undertaken in this thesis, where relationships between variables such as role, gender and age needed to be identified as either significant or not significant (Pallant 2016).

Another limitation of the sample was that potential participants who were time-poor, who would have much to contribute to the study, could easily delete the email invitation. Even though 86 percent of all Australian households have access to the internet, it is likely that some older members of associations do not use the internet and would not have access to the survey. The Australian Bureau of Statistics reported that just 51 percent of older Australians over the age of 65 use the internet (2015).

Due to the self-selection nature of the online survey, there was an under-representation of respondents under the age of 50 years (19 percent). This is a significantly lower representation of this age group compared to the total South Australian population, where 62 percent of the population is under the age of 50 (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016). Fortunately, there were enough respondents under the age of 50 (n=245) to make statistically valid comparisons between different age groups (Keppel & Zedeck 1989).

The representation from regional South Australia in this survey (38.5 percent) was higher than the 2016 Australian census figures that showed that only 23 percent of South Australians were based in regional areas (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016). The survey results, therefore, may show a slight bias to respondents from regional areas. While the survey included some demographic information such as geographic regions, age group and gender, it did not ask for occupation or education level received which would have added to the richness of the data.

SurveyMonkey software was chosen for the web-based survey as it allows for survey design and collection within the same software (SurveyMonkey 2016). Two questions employed a SurveyMonkey 'slider scale' question that asked for the respondent's attitude on a 7-point numeric self-anchoring rating scale (See Q21 and Q22 in Appendix 9). Unfortunately, SurveyMonkey offered the number zero as an answer on the sliding scale. It was unclear if respondents who did not click on zero were logically assuming they were answering the question as zero as it appeared on-screen. Unless they clicked on the number zero, SurveyMonkey recorded the answer as missing data. Because of this problem, the data collected for these questions was found to be unreliable, and the researcher did not analyse this data.

The low cost of creating the web-based survey, the technology offerings that reduce human error, and its ability to quickly reach a high number of respondents at a low cost outweighed its limitations (Tourangeau 2013). In summary, the sampling frame was mostly sound being that the list-based sample provided by Our Community offered a high proportion of the target population of associations, there were no duplications in the database, and the list contained up-to-date information (Tourangeau 2013, p. 16). The findings of the survey are presented and analysed in Chapter Five.

3.4.4 Survey analysis

The researcher uploaded the SurveyMonkey data to IMB Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to assist in the analysis of survey responses. The software was chosen for its capacity to analyse large amounts of data and to create charts and tables relevant to the study (Marsh & Elliott 2008). The software was also able to collect the qualitative data entered by participants from the open-ended questions, and this was uploaded to NVivo software using the same coding process as the focus group data (see Section 3.3.3 above).

As more than one method was used to collect data for this thesis, and the fact that the data was collected using a variety of sources including statistical information from various government agencies, the data was triangulated and analysed collectively in the discussion chapters (Rothbauer 2008).

3.5 Chapter summary

This chapter outlined the research methodology used to address the research objectives of the study. It explained how the research design was exploratory and used a mixed methods approach by integrating the findings from both quantitative and qualitative data. The methodological tools were described, and included focus groups in diverse locations with targeted samples of committee members and regular members of grassroots associations. Findings from the focus groups informed the development of a survey to South Australian associations which collected both quantitative and qualitative data.

Over 1500 members and leaders of non-profit associations completed the survey which utilised both probability and non-probability sampling techniques. The total sample included respondents from GAs and associations with paid staff, which enabled correlated comparisons. Respondents to the survey also included committee members and regular members of GAs, which allowed for detailed comparisons of the two cohorts when exploring the research objectives. Demographic questions at the end of the survey allowed for comparisons based on association type, purpose, region, and the respondents' gender, age group and role in the association.

Taking into account the limitations of the research methods including the risks of bias, reliability and validity, the strengths of the mixed-methods approach meant that a very large number association members and volunteers were recruited to participate in the study. In addition, the researcher's own personal experience, both professionally and as a committee volunteer, added to the robustness of the methodology as it greatly informed the analysis of the research objectives.

The following chapter focuses on and analyses the results of the focus groups, followed by the survey results which will be examined in Chapter Five.

CHAPTER 4: EXAMINATION OF FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS

They just get used to doing things in the same way, the same events, all the time, the same time of the year, and doing them in the exact same way they always done them, and not being open to suggestions of how things could be done better (regular member focus group participant from Burnside).

4.1 Introduction

Chapter Three detailed the methodology of this study, which utilised a mixed methods approach that included focus groups, an online survey and statistical data from various statistical and government reports. This chapter examines the data collected from the six focus groups held in mid-2016 with regular members and leaders of grassroots associations (GAs) in three distinct geographical areas of South Australia where the researcher resides.

The chapter begins with a profile of the focus group participants and then examines the data as it addressed the research objectives including the motivations for serving on GA committees and the barriers to joining them, attributes of successful GA committees and their reasons for difficulties, and suggested recruitment strategies for members to volunteer for committee positions. A key finding that arose from the focus groups was that that poor leadership, including the misuse of power by volunteer leaders, is an important barrier to people who consider serving on committees.

4.2 Profile of focus group participants

As outlined in Chapter Three, there were six focus groups held, with 51 participants, across three different regions of South Australia. All participants were from GAs, 28 were committee members, and 23 were regular members. Almost half of the participants were members of more than one organisation, bringing with them a broad range of volunteering experiences. Figure 4.1 shows that more females than males (60 percent vs 40 percent) participated in the focus groups, which accurately reflected the 2016 state-wide gender ratio of formal volunteers in South Australia (Harrison Research 2016a). Most participants fell between the ages of 50 and 70 years (59 percent). This is a slightly older age profile than the total pool of formal volunteers in South Australia, where 35 percent of volunteers were aged between 35 and 54, and 34 percent were aged over 55. However, volunteers who serve on voluntary committees and boards in an honorary capacity across South

Australia had an older profile with 71 percent over 45, which was reflected in the focus group demographics (Harrison Research 2016a). The participants represented GAs from a variety of sectors, with the highest proportions coming equally from civic, arts and recreational groups, followed closely by sporting clubs, health service delivery, emergency services and environmental groups.
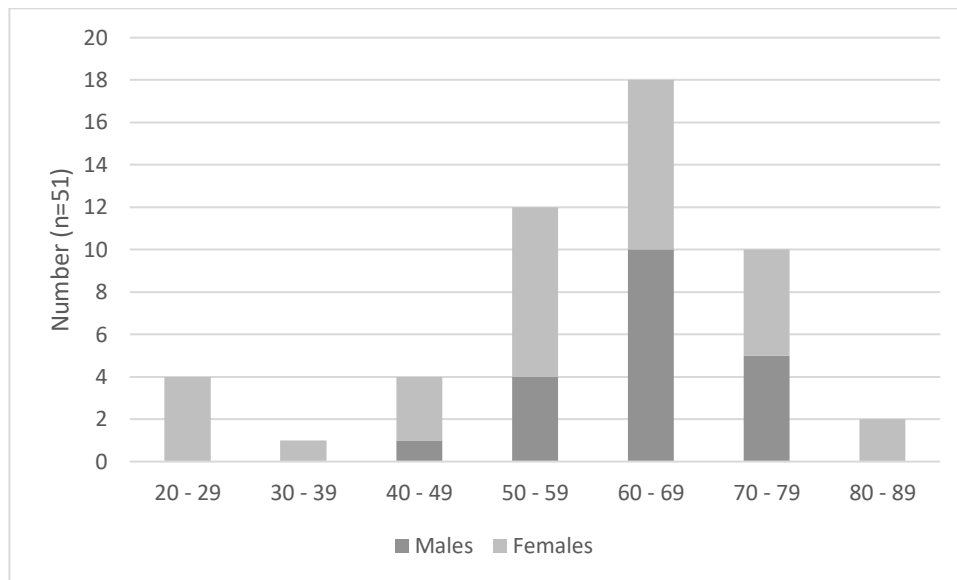
Figure 4.1: Profile of focus group participants (age and gender)

4.3 Examination of the data

The focus groups data is presented under themes that were developed during the coding process as related to the research objectives. As described in Chapter Three, NVivo software was used to group and code all comments from focus group participants under specific themes. The data is presented with the frequency by which an issue was discussed by participants, supported by direct quotations which articulate the opinions and sentiments of the participants. Direct quotes are confidentially attributed to individual focus group participants with discrete codes that identify them as either a regular member (RM) or committee member (CM) of a GA (Appendix 7). Regions are identified with the letters B (for Burnside), T (for Tanunda) and O (for Onkaparinga). For example, a focus group participant in Tanunda who was a committee member could be identified as TCM1. The activity type of each association that was represented can also be found in Appendix 7.

4.3.1 Benefits and reasons for serving on committees

Committee members were asked why they joined their management committees and what they most enjoyed about their work (Figure 4.2). Some regular members had been

committee members in the past and their reasons for serving were explored with follow-up questions. The most frequent reason reported for joining committees was to have fun and meet new people. There were 46 (out of 133) comments coded within this theme, indicating that enjoyment was an important factor for committee participation. A committee member from Onkaparinga (OCM8) said, "we have a really good group of people who I've met through doing this … and I get a buzz out of it". A Burnside committee member (BCM1) agreed, saying "… it's nice being able to meet people out of work, so it is just getting back into a community and finding a social group". And Tanunda committee member (TCM6) concurred, "it started off purely selfishly, I wanted to meet people, I wanted to feel I was part of a community–now I don't know how to get out of it!".

Figure 4.2: Reasons for joining committees

Enjoyment was followed closely by gaining satisfaction from a sense of responsibility as an important benefit of committee membership, with 43 out of the 133 comments coded as such within this theme. Self-satisfaction was strongly aligned with having a sense of responsibility to the association and wanting to see it succeed. "I get a real buzz when people say 'that was great', [lots of] self-satisfaction", said an Onkaparinga committee member (OCM8). The outcome of helping people and the local committee was a strong motivating factor, as reflected by Tanunda committee member (TCM5):

> I thought what a great way to be able to give back, and that's what volunteering is to me, to give back to the community. I get a lot of satisfaction … you're helping other people who need help and I think that's most important.

A number of participants mentioned that by being on the committee they could influence outcomes for the association and make things happen. They were able to use their skills,

develop themselves and others and younger people were able to use the experience to help their career. One Burnside committee member (BCM4) said, "… keep learning, keep your mind ticking over, so that's why I enjoy it", and a Tanunda committee member (TCM7) concurred, "it gives me a chance to use my skills in an organisation that needs ongoing support". An Onkaparinga committee member (OCM8) offered this contribution:

> The one thing I love about volunteering [on the committee] is it causes you to get out of your shell, to become a public speaker and think, you are public speaking without even knowing it and that's one thing I like about volunteering – you can look at people's eyes and faces where there are some people that can't speak, so it brings a lot of your personality out.

Influencing the direction of the group was another way of using their skills and achieving self-satisfaction, as Tanunda committee member (TCM9) said, 'I want to make sure that things are happening'. And as Burnside committee member (BCM6) offered, "… you sort of see that you can do something don't you, and that's what you do". Some committee members were motivated by change, as a young Burnside committee member (BCM5) said, "I was frustrated with the governance and the structure in place and rather than complaining about it I wanted to change something about it, so I got involved'. An Onkaparinga committee member (OCM3) pointed out:

> I have some organisational skills and I like to see the organisation working … I want it to keep on working well so I like to put my oar in and take part, and you have to take ownership if you want it to work properly.

Helping to build their career was mentioned by a few participants, and comments were similar to those about building skills. A regular member in Tanunda (TRM6) said if she joined a committee it would, "help me find a job", and she also offered this perspective about encouraging young people on committees:

> It's about getting young people involved in organisations, to have it in their heads that it would look good on their resume and they'll gain a lot from it personally. But also, it will be of value to them on their CV because kids are time poor too, and they are trying to get to an endpoint and have to think about how to use their time wisely.

4.3.2   Barriers to joining committees

Regular members were asked why they do not join committees, and committee members were asked why they thought people did not join committees (Figure 4.3). Some of the non-committee members had been members of committees in the past, so they came to the discussion with some first-hand experience. The primary barrier to joining committees was the misuse of power and internal politics, followed by a lack of time, red tape, alienation and burnout.
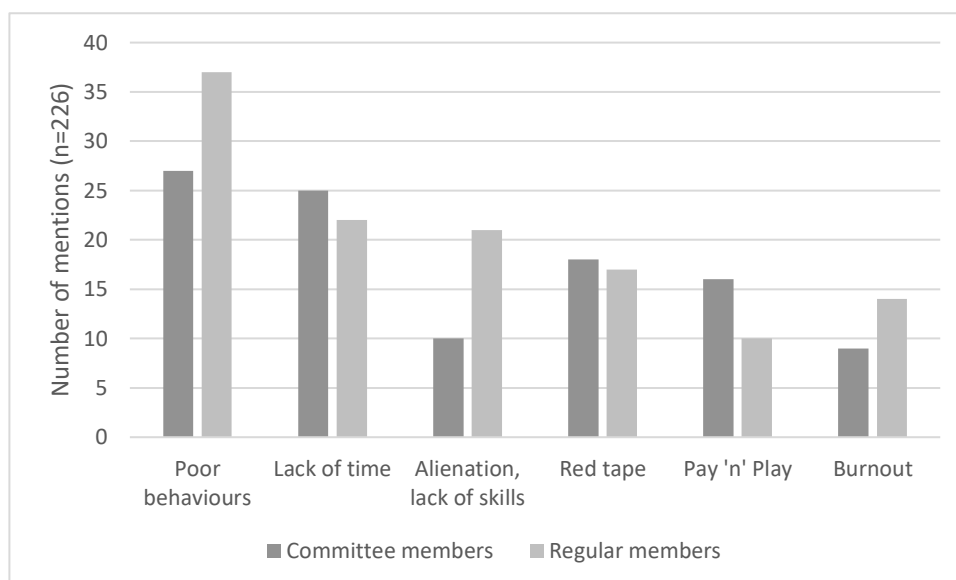
Figure 4.3: Barriers to joining committees

4.3.2.1 Poor behaviours as a barrier

Recent research in Australia has identified poor behaviours in the workplace, including bullying, as impacting volunteers as well as paid employees (Paull & Omari 2015). Negative volunteer experiences are also a barrier to future volunteering patterns (Brudney & Meijs 2013; Warburton & Paynter 2006). In the focus groups, poor behaviours, including bullying and malpractice, was the most commonly reported barrier to joining committees by committee and regular members with 64 mentions. It was by far the most frequently mentioned reason given by the regular members with 37 mentions. Some regular members had negative committee experiences in the past, and some had the perception that committees were old-fashioned in the way they operated. The mental anguish that participants experienced through their committee work was quite disturbing, as a regular member (BRM8) from Burnside reported:

> I've had a lot of committee experience over the past seven years or so, and the politics can be so draining, and I'm just shying away from it now. I've got a life to live you know, I want to be able to sleep at night without worry, worry, worry, and, people who lie and backstab, they are poisonous on committees–and they tend to gravitate towards positions they see as powerful too.

Another regular member from Burnside (BRM4) in her 20s offered this reason why she avoided joining her committee:

> There was one particular person who has been a very senior member of that organisation for a very long time, and they're quite a powerful member of the organisation and also of the music community … it's a very small community and who you know is how you get everything. So for me, I wanted to avoid this person as much as possible, because I knew that they didn't treat people very well and I thought that if I had as little to do with them as possible.

Others concurred with poor behaviours being an important obstacle to joining committees. An Onkaparinga committee member (OCM5) commented, "… if you've got a couple of really strong personalities in a group it will actually put off a lot of people from joining". A Tanunda regular member (TRM2) said:

> A lot of it can be small-mindedness and can be the fact that people see themselves as chairperson and therefore one must cow-tail to that person … so there can be a lot of corruption if that's a word to use, within a community structure and it depends upon the committee and the strength of people on that committee to ensure that it is a fair and equitable committee for their organisation.

A regular member from Onkaparinga (ORM2) reported:

> [R]ightly or wrongly, as I grew up [I] had this perception that committees were full of little people who liked to play politics and it was their little fiefdom, and anyone who came in with new ideas was going was going to be soon taken care of, and that was my perception.

His perception was validated when he learned of new members' experiences at other sporting clubs: "they were leaving their club because of the politics–the people who were on the committee, they couldn't stand them anymore, they were just playing petty games". A Tanunda committee member (TCM1) offered a similar insight, "[i]f you're too outspoken or come in real heavy, they all duck for cover and take-off". Two Tanunda regular members concurred, with (TRM5), saying that "people join with the best of intentions but sometimes they get distracted along the way with the power or obsession with it", and (TRM4), contributing "[d]on't override others opinions, which is a killer". Other focus group participants shared these observations:

> I think perhaps why people stay away from meetings is because there have been bad experiences where someone hasn't been controlled, where the talker is always the talker and the bully is always the bully, so people avoid it *(TCM3).*
>
> Behaviour is important, all-encompassing, being very respectful of each other *(BRM2).*
>
> The top three are co-operating with others, and if you can't cooperate you might as well go home, don't over-ride other opinions which is a killer, and be willing to contribute ideas *(BRM4).*

Committee members also reinforced negative perceptions of serving on a committee. A committee member in Tanunda in her 40s (TCM4), observed that some of this negative perception of committee work comes from committee members who downplay their roles, "[w]hen we spoke about the committee, we all pretty much said that 'well no one else will do it', and we sort of spoke about it in a negative way to be honest, and people hear that!" Another participant (TCM5) at the same focus group concurred:

Yes, I when we were going around the table we were rather portraying the committee persons as a disease because we all were apologetic, saying I'm doing this because no one else will do it, and I'm trapped in it now, I don't know how to get out-it does sound rather undesirable!

4.3.2.2 Lack of time as a barrier

Ongoing changes in society, including the lack of free time, was the second most mentioned barrier reported by both cohorts (24 percent of references). It is important to note that regular members were already members or volunteers with their associations, so this could be why lack of time was *not* the primary barrier to joining committees. Most explanations for not having enough time to volunteer for committee roles were family and paid work commitments, with some participants mentioning other volunteer roles taking up much of their time. As one Tanunda focus group participant said,

> Last year we were very encouraged that we had a younger person, a person who I think is in her early 30s, came on to the committee I thought terrific, we finally got somewhere, and she took on a couple of jobs, she organised the questions for a quiz night and that sort of stuff, but she's only been to about 50 percent of the meetings, she's married, she's got a full-time job, her husband works and so on, she's got kiddies, she can't make a meeting cause the kids have a sports event, and these are the practical difficulties (TCM6).

Lack of time is highly reported to be a barrier to volunteering (Holmes & Slater 2012; Oppenheimer, M et al. 2015; Sundeen, Raskoff & Garcia 2007; Warburton & Crosier 2001), so it is not surprising that lack of time is also a barrier to volunteer committee work. This barrier was mentioned across all the focus groups, with committee member OCM4 from Onkaparinga saying, '[t]he old fallback is time, and I've heard this many times, I haven't got time'. Regular members and committee members contributed similar comments:

> I think that what I've noticed in clubs and committees over ten or 20 years is that the reason that young people don't get on them is they just don't have the time, and the reason that the club membership in sporting clubs is falling is just the lack of time, it's a changing world and it's very difficult bringing up a family, work commitments, everything (ORM2).

> The time factor–unless you are over 60 years old, volunteer work doesn't count for anything, nothing at all. They have so many requirements that take up so much of your time, … and that time could be better spent contributing to the community and build your skills at the same time which would then transfer to a future career, but they don't want to do it that way I guess, so that's definitely an issue (ORM4).

> This is why a lot of younger people are reluctant to become involved in committees, they may want to but ask themselves if they can I give the time necessary turn up to all the meetings and do all the things I should be doing, so I think it's a very real problem–I don't know how you overcome it (TCM6).

Some participants felt that lack of time was just an excuse used as a smokescreen and raised the issue of a possible decline in social networks across generations (Putnam 2015). As a Burnside committee member (BCM8) said, "[n]ow we weren't any less busy

than people today are. We all had families, jobs you know, children, we were doing everything and yet we still volunteered. Today people just step back and say no". A regular member from Onkaparinga (ORM7) summed up this perception well when he said, "[i]t might depend on what you might get out of it because often you'll find time if you're really enjoying something you'll make the time. You'll go without sleep or whatever". A Burnside committee member (BCM6) linked the lack of time barrier to a broader shift in attitude that she has observed in volunteering:

> I wonder whether perhaps there has been a shift in attitude to volunteering across the board, just about every person I talk to says it's harder to get volunteers, it's harder to get people involved in schools, in volunteer co-curricular activities … as time goes on, the number of people who want to, or can give that extra time [is decreasing], because people are multi-tasking already.

4.3.2.3 Red tape as a barrier

The third most substantial barrier to joining committees was the phenomenon of 'red tape' which had 35 mentions combined from committee and regular members. In its 2014 report into charity reporting, Ernst and Young defined red tape as "obligations that are excessive, unnecessary or confusing" (Ernst & Young 2014, p. 3). Recent surveys commissioned by Australian government agencies and Volunteering Australia cited red tape as a barrier to volunteering and frustration to current volunteers (Knight & Gilchrist 2014; Price Waterhouse Coopers 2016; State Emergency Service 2013). Red tape has been well documented in the literature as a major barrier to volunteering (Ernst & Young 2014; Haski-Leventhal, Meijs & Hustinx 2009; Obar, Zube & Lampe 2012; Sharpe 2003; Warburton & McDonald 2009).

The evidence of red tape raised in the focus groups ranged from macro-level regulations from state and local governments to self-imposed antiquated committee procedures embedded in constitutions. As in other states of Australia, incorporated associations in South Australia need to comply with state government laws around governance, record keeping and office bearers (*Associations Incorporation Act 1985*). In addition, local government authorities in South Australia require adherence to public health laws such as food handling and public liability insurance and risk management procedures when using public buildings and spaces (*Work Health and Safety Act* 2012). Grant-giving bodies request reports and adherence to specific funding criteria which creates additional work and complexity for committee members (*Grants SA Guidelines* 2017). These examples of red tape are a significant issue for committees of grassroots associations who do not have the benefit of paid staff and often have few committee members with expertise in these

areas. Participants spoke of many examples of rules that they described as 'red-tape' imposed by government authorities:

> … before you take a group out for a walk you have to do a risk assessment–it's just gone to absurdity (BCM3).

> … by the time you've done the health hazards, the food handling, risk assessments, you're snowed under with the red tape you know (OCM2).

> Once you start getting Council grants, you have to meet certain criteria … you've got to think twice about morning tea [because it's] supposed to be healthy. That morning tea used to be a treat, can't do that anymore, Council has put a stop to that (OCM7).

> All they really want to do is go in there, dig up the dirt, put plants in, look after it, and that's it- but the rules say you're not to do dig here and not to use this type of implement and that's frustrating (TRM3).

Committees are required under the *Associations Incorporations Act 1985* to have a constitution that lays out the rules of operation for that association (Government of South Australia 1985). Sometimes these are required under law, but sometimes these rules are added by committees who are under a misconception that they are required to do so. Often the rules are superfluous and create barriers. For historical reasons and a reluctance to change and update, some committees bring this unnecessary bureaucracy upon themselves. The culture of committees, too, can be formal, as described by three regular member participants in Onkaparinga: "you can't just slip in a random comment about something, you always have to put it on the agenda beforehand" (ORM4), "[i]t was all so officious and rule-bound" (ORM6), and "[y]ou couldn't touch their precious constitution, couldn't change a bloody word, even if it had 100 spelling errors in it, they couldn't even be corrected" (ORM3). These participants were turned off by outdated behaviours and policies of committees they had observed or been a part of. As a committee member in Onkaparinga observed, "[p]eople are not on committees for rules and regulations, and they don't bring those skill sets into the operations. So they get scared about joining a committee" (OCM3). Another committee member summed up, "[o]fficialdom steps in and says, 'you will', and they all say, 'sorry not interested'" (OCM2).

However, both committee members and regular members acknowledged the need for good governance:

> You have to do a simple amount of compliance work, you do have to have a meeting, you do have to have minutes, you do have to have a treasurer to look after the money (TCM8).

> There are certain formal rules that are required, particularly where there is money being handled. The constitution will say there will be a treasurer or a committee … and there will be a quorum etc. So there are some things you just can't get around and I think that is for good reason too, from a transparency point of view … or they are just going to have 'Rafferty's Rules'[1] (ORM3).

Whether these rules and regulations come from an external government authority or imposed by the committee themselves, they need to be recognised as a significant barrier to committee work. As these two participants pointed out:

> People are on not on the committees for the rules and regulations and they don't bring those skill sets into the operations, so they get scared about joining a committee. They are there to do the woodturning or the fundraising, and they don't see it as their role to take on a management role because they're scared about it (OCM3).

> If it's a formally run committee, then you need to know the protocols for committees and how to second a motion, and how to address the chair and all those kinds of things, and if you haven't been trained in that it can be a bit daunting (TRM6).

4.3.2.4 Alienation and other barriers

Another leading barrier, reported by regular members, in particular, was a lack of self-confidence to be on management committees. This, in turn, led to a sense of alienation and 'not feeling good enough' to nominate themselves for committee positions. The younger participants mentioned this feeling of alienation and were exasperated by what was perceived as old-fashioned and boring meeting procedures. As a young regular member of an Onkaparinga group reported:

> I've been to a few of the committee meetings although I'm not on the committee, it does seem very, very formal so it's a little bit daunting … just having to be so structured and formal about everything, you can't just slip in a random comment about something, you have to always put it on the agenda beforehand, you have to email someone beforehand if you want to discuss something (ORM4).

---

[1] "Rafferty's rules" is a term commonly used in Australia and New Zealand meaning an absence of rules (Collins English Dictionary 2019)

Another young participant from Onkaparinga elaborated further, highlighting how old-fashioned meeting procedures can be a barrier to joining committees:

> If you were new to the game and you didn't understand that language and the procedure, you weren't really to know how to get your point across. They said that there are first things and second things, and if you haven't heard of that before you'd say 'what's going on'? And if you had another point that perhaps hadn't been thought of before, then it had to wait … you couldn't do it because it was ridged, it is a bit of a spectacle (ORM6).

The lack of self-confidence was suggested by all generations in the focus groups who might have felt they did not have the skills for committee work or for some of the older participants who did not feel confident with new technology:

> I guess I'm not completely sure how advanced they want you to be on the committee in a way … so I feel as though maybe my lack of experience would be a reason for me to not feel like I could suggest to volunteer for the committee." But for me, it's kind of been that thing of I'm not really sure if I'm good enough to be on the committee (BRM4).

> When you're retired, you subconsciously put yourself on the scrap heap, society does, not individuals, and then you think alright, I'd like to get involved in that but you feel your own self-conscious steps in and stops you (OCM9).

> Unfortunately, I have no computer skills, and this limits me a lot, because everything is online, all our agendas and notices, our accounts. I am lucky that my son lives with me and he relays them back to me, but I can't sit down and send a message to all the other members (BRM6).

Combined, the lack of confidence and the alienation felt by meeting procedures create a significant barrier to committee work, especially by those who are not currently committee members. The following quotes summarise those perceptions well.

> I've sat in many committee meetings that just are so daunting, is a good word, because it was all so officious and rule-bound (ORM6).

> A lot of people go into it and say, yeah I'll go on the committee, but when they get there they're really not sure how to do it … there really is a lack of training (TCM10).

> There are legitimate reasons why people don't go on committees, but there are others that lack that self-confidence and really need to be encouraged to emerge from their comfort zone (TRM3).

> People feel a bit scared about being on committees, feel that they don't know what's expected of them, they don't like the idea of being held accountable if things go wrong (OCM3).

Lack of skills by members of committees can also be a deterrent from retaining those committee members who do have requisite skills. This can often put too much pressure on committee members that do have the skills and can lead to unwarranted levels of stress. This mainly applies to skills around leadership, governance and information technology. Some focus group participants described their frustration in this way,

I think sometimes you get people on a committee that are not competent in their role and it's fairly frustrating. I was getting annoyed with that and I should have realised that they were just volunteers (BRM1).

Not having the grounding say in computer skills … databases, and Facebook–not knowing any of those … these days you need to be able to do it. And that's very difficult for people to accept (TRM2).

The skills of the chair, to stop the waffling and getting to the point … that would be part of the chair's responsibility (BRM3).

A lot of people go into it [the committee] … but when they get there they're really not sure how to do it … there really is a lack of training (TCM6).

People need the opportunity for training, on how to be a treasurer, how to run meetings, training in shortcuts you can use in being the secretary, training in how to apply for grants (ORM3).

Other barriers included the phenomenon that has been penned 'pay and play' (Holmes & Slater 2012) that describes participants who join a club or association in order to receive benefits such as playing in a band or having access to craft supplies. These members are not willing to join committees or volunteer for tasks that help the association, and as a Burnside committee described them, "they enjoy everything but they don't want to do any work" (BCM4). As one Onkaparinga committee member observed:

They [regular members] just want to breeze in and breeze out … everybody wants this instant thing, nobody wants to like put any work in almost, it's like I want all the gratifications, I want everything to happen now you know … but somebody else is doing a lot of work so that you can have it now. And I don't understand how you fix that really. It's beyond me (OCM8).

This barrier, along with a lack of skills, is directly associated with burnout faced by volunteers and committee members who are left 'carrying the can'. These volunteers are now refusing to join committees due to heavy workloads experienced the past. As a Tanunda regular member bluntly stated, "[i]'ve been there done that; I don't want to do it. Simple as that, I don't want to do it" (TRM4). Committee member participants offered these comments regarding the stress of high workloads:

The committee is exhausted because we just recycling those who are in it. No one wants to go on it–they enjoy everything but they don't want to do any work (BCM4).

If I think about the [name of club] committee, there are not that many people on it, and that means that the workload is very, very high for those who are, which turns other people off from volunteering (TCM3).

The above barriers are all linked to declining membership, which leads to a very small pool of people available to serve on committees and share the workload. The experiences shared by focus group participants demonstrate that, in many cases, just a few people are

left 'carrying the can' and it is causing high levels of stress and burnout. These phenomena are discussed in more detail in Chapter Seven.

4.3.3 Factors for committee success

To explore what factors helped committees and their organisations to succeed, participants were asked their opinion as to what attributes made a successful committee and what were the most important tasks that committee members performed. Participants responded with more attributes than tasks, which were centred around behaviours that formed a good organisational culture. Participants also mentioned specific policies that successful committees enacted which led to good governance for the organisation. Combined during the coding process into 'Factors for committee success', the top five factors were slightly different between committee members and regular members (Figure 4.4).
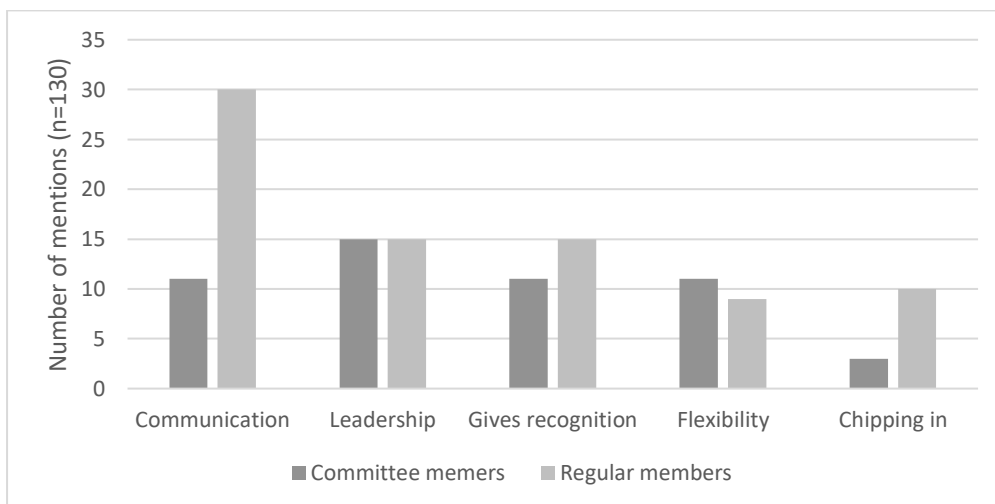
Figure 4.4: Factors for committee success

The regular members reported that good communication was by far the leading success factor. Many experienced poor communication between their committee and regular members that led to poor morale. Committee members cited good leadership as the most critical factor for success, which led to high morale across organisations. The other top success factors were evenly reported and included recognising and looking after members, having the ability and flexibility to change with the times, and a willingness for members to help the organisation as required.

4.3.3.1 Good communication as a success factor

Studies reveal that good communication is essential in grassroots associations, as it helps reduce uncertainty in volunteer roles and creates positive interpersonal relationships (Kramer, Meisenbach & Hansen 2013). Furthermore, good communication leads to increased commitment within voluntary organisations especially when members can participate in decision-making (Knoke 1981).

Focus group participants echoed these sentiments, particularly the regular members who vented frustration with examples of poor communication which left them feeling confused and disconnected with their committees. Participant ORM6 wanted her committee to "take on what other members are saying … the people you are there to represent and make decisions for". In the same focus group, a fellow participant articulated the point in this way:

> I think they have to be very good listeners … if there are issues within the rank and file of the club, it's important that the committee is approachable and willing to listen and to bring those issues or ideas to the committee because I think the grassroots issues are very important to any sort of organisation and any committee who thinks they know all the answers, or all the issues, is very naïve (ORM2).

Committee members had similar views about good communication, with Burnside committee member BCM8 saying that inclusive behaviour was necessary, "making sure [the] rest of [the] organisation is aware of activities of the committee". In the same focus group, BCM3 concurred, stating that members must "[c]ommunicate what the committee/club requires, [because]often people don't know".

Some communication problems were linked to behavioural issues, with participants recollecting instances of poor communication that led to poor behaviours, such as "not just over-talk everybody–they don't hear what other people have to say" (BRM7), or "don't just think that your idea is the best one–let's talk about it, debate the pros and cons" (BRM2). The same participant expanded this way:

> You have to have good communication skills. You've got to know how to treat people and if you don't know, you're right behind the eight ball, so you've got to make sure that you treat people how you would like yourself to be treated (BRM2).

It can be assumed that the reason why communication was more of an important issue for regular members is that committee members know what is going on in an organisation by the nature of their leadership roles and by participating in the decision-making process by attending committee meetings. The experiences of committee members, or on the other

hand where they regularly communicate with each other, is different from the experiences of regular members who are not generally part of the decision-making process.

4.3.3.2 Good leadership as a success factor

In addition to good communication, proper leadership conduct was frequently mentioned by participants as an essential attribute for successful committees. Good committees displayed positive leadership behaviours such as providing direction, treating people fairly and providing adequate and timely recognition for those around them. Participants responded thoughtfully about the need for guidance from their leaders:

> I think if you go look at all the successful organisations, probably 85 percent of the reasons why they are successful is the leadership, that top person, if you haven't got the strength they go downhill (BCM3).

> What I found in my limited knowledge of committees, is that it is very good to have a strong president who comes to meetings prepared and runs a meeting very well, so that he clips me around the ear every now and again when I wander off in conversation (ORM2).

> I reckon if you haven't got a good chairman at a meeting, it just runs Rafferty's rules and everybody says 'well, why have I come here?' (TCM1).

Other participants recognised that good leadership did not necessarily mean a top-down authoritarian style but encompassed inclusive and consultative forms of behaviour:

> A meeting needs to be well run, it needs a purpose and people need to be able to contribute (TCM3).

> Someone mentioned leading from behind, I think that's a really powerful way to lead, just being there and making sure it's all happening (TCM4).

> If you're too outspoken or come in real heavy, they all duck for cover and take off. I'm not a great believer of the person at the top cracking the whip; you're all in it together, you all work together. I think you are there as a team … you've got the makings of a good club (TCM1).

Some participants mentioned successful committees as one where new ideas are encouraged and demonstrate flexibility in management style:

> It's important that the committee is approachable and willing to listen … any committee who thinks they know all the answers or all the issues is very naïve (ORC2).

> I think open-mindedness, a willingness to listen to other people's ideas, even if you don't agree with them necessarily [is important] (BRM5).

> At the moment [the committee] seems to have a lot of potential because people are feeling [that they] are being heard, and I feel that the way to get people involved in anything is to let them feel that they are in charge and that they are part of the process (TCM9).

Giving fellow committee and regular members recognition for a job well done was seen as another critical factor in the success of committees. As identified in Chapter Two, positive behaviour by volunteer leaders has been acknowledged and well documented in studies

involving GAs (Boehm & Staples 2006; Nichols 2005; van Puyvelde et al. 2017).

Recognition was especially crucial for regular members in the focus groups:

> You have to have good communication skills, you got to know how to treat people and if you don't know, you're right behind that eight ball, you know, so you've got to make sure that you treat people like how you would like yourself to be treated (BRM7).

> Noel Coward said, "everybody needs jam", everybody needs to be told when they've done a good job, everybody needs to be recognized and you need to recognise not just the committee but out there in the rest of the club – everybody needs to know who has achieved what, isn't that fantastic (BCM6).

> I think that's really important to volunteers, always thanking committee members and others for the jobs well done, and communicate to others outside the work that the group undertakes so getting known (BCM3).

> Giving praise to other committee members–if they feel valued it might help (TRM4).

4.3.3.3 Helpful culture as a success factor

Having a positive culture where regular members, as well as people on committees, were willing to help was also identified as an essential factor for success. Resembling the camaraderie of the Cityside Lawn Bowling Club featured in the 2002 Australian film *Crackerjack*, focus group participants cited examples of successful GAs having a high proportion of members who shared the workload (Moloney 2002). Onkaparinga committee members thought it was important for people to be, 'willing to participate', 'willing to contribute, 'working with others', and, 'willing to take on tasks'.

Regular members in the focus groups said similar things, stating that it was important for members to be "willing to contribute ideas" (TRM4), to "be reliable to follow through on action points" (TRM6), to "do what you say you will do" (BRM8), and "attend meetings, share work, be cooperative" (BRM3). A regular member in Onkaparinga summed it up nicely by saying, "[i]f you've got too many people who don't finish the job they are given to do, nothing happens!" (ORM3).

Rolling up one's sleeves, pitching in to help, or the 'volunteering principle' have all been considered an important and integral part of the Australian way of life (Oppenheimer, M 2001, p. 2). Having these attributes form the foundation of a committee's culture was obviously valued by many of the focus group participants, many of whom were distressed by the appearance of a decline in this form of altruism.

4.3.4 Reasons for committee difficulties

Committee members provided more comments than regular members regarding some of the specific challenges faced by committees. This is perhaps due to their first-hand

experience of serving on committees and, therefore, could be anticipated in the findings (Figure 4.5). The top two reasons given by focus group participants were directly related. The first was the issue of committees being driven by a few people displaying oligarchic behaviour, and the second reason was that committee positions could not be filled which could then cause the oligarchic behaviour.
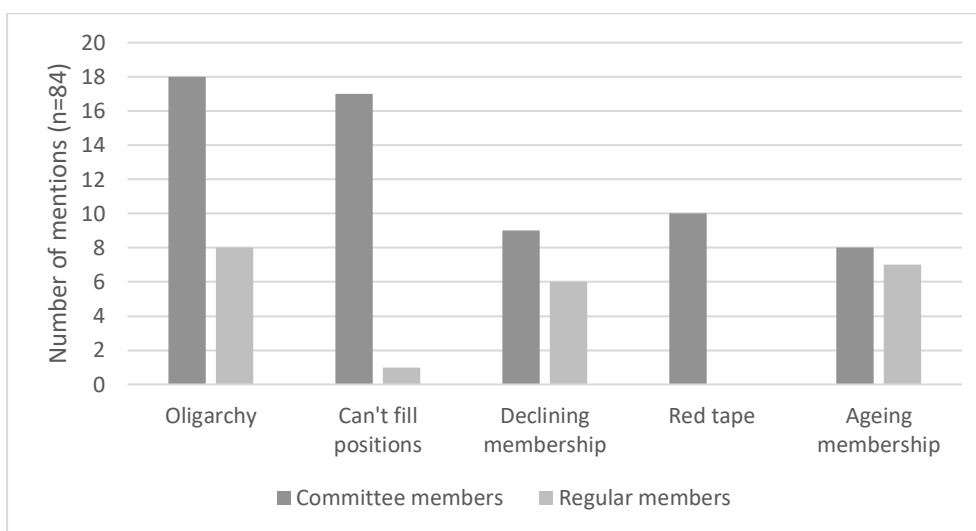
Figure 4.5: Reasons for committee difficulties

4.3.4.1 Oligarchies

One of the early studies on the impact of the 'iron-fist' of oligarchies was explored by Robert Michels (1915) in his study of political parties where he argued that the decision-making powers in an organisation were vested in very few people. Oligarchic behaviour in voluntary associations has been the focus of numerous studies that suggest that centralised power widely exists in this sector (Cnaan 1991; Enjolras & Waldahl 2010; Harris 2015; Knoke 1986; Perkins & Poole 1996; Rothschild & Leach 2008). Findings suggest that oligarchies in volunteer associations can also be caused by member apathy and a lack of interest in joining committees (Baggetta, Han & Andrews 2013; Cnaan 1991; Knoke 1981; Oliver 1984; Osterman 2006; Pearce 1980). In this study, focus group participants said the following about oligarchies on committees, although not mentioning the word specifically:

> I'm not sure if we have covered this, there are also problems with committees who have closed shops, where they won't let other people into it, they run the place OK, but there are a lot of other skills that could be brought in but they keep swapping positions around and are controlling (OCM3).

> I think one thing that clubs often suffer from is [a] bit of a clique of committee members, and it's elite and the rest of the members aren't' worthy, and I reckon if you can break that barrier down, I reckon that will go a long way (BCM2).

As indicated earlier, a significant challenge to grassroots associations that have a concentration of power with the same people serving a committee year after year includes the 'burnout' of existing committee members. This, in turn, leads to inflexibility, which is a barrier to any prospective committee member (Baggetta, Han & Andrews 2013). Focus group participants provided many examples of inflexibility within GA committees:

> I was frustrated with the governance and the structure in place (BCM5).

> The person who's looked after the equipment … she's so set in her ways that they can't cope (OCM5).

The issues of oligarchic behaviour and inflexibility may be related to committee members who are experiencing burnout may not have the energy to try new ideas. These dilemmas were reflected in all three of the committee member focus groups:

> It really got driven on the back of a couple of individuals who just worked tirelessly, you know, 40, 50, 60 hours a week (BCM1).

> The younger people they like to hold their meetings at night and I haven't got the energy anymore to attend a night meeting and stay up discussing things until ten or some terribly late hour and I don't like driving the long distance at night (TCM10).

Similar sentiments were shared by participants in the regular member focus groups:

> They alienate people because there is only one way of doing things, and that can be very tricky (BRM7).

> We sometimes don't give new people a chance, like I was just in the craft group meeting and there were four or five new faces and no one asked them if they'd like to, nor looked at them, and the same people have a job, so I think you have to be careful (ORM5).

> The same person has been in the chair for 25 years, and there is nothing in the constitution to make him resign, and it's pretty frustrating for people if they feel like they have something to offer (TRM5).

While committee members recognise the problems of oligarchies, many felt exasperated at the lack of interest from regular members in joining committees so that oligarchies could be prevented. In the words of focus group participants, "[n]o one wants to go on–they enjoy everything, but they don't want to do any work" (BCM4), "[n]o one is getting up and saying look, I'll help out" (OCM1), "I have heard lots of excuses for people not taking positions" (OCM7), and "[i]f the mothers, fathers, family members haven't grown up with a community ethic for helping in the community, it doesn't happen" (TRM4). Pearce (1980) noted that there is much less personal benefit in volunteer leadership roles as compared to paid executive roles, and volunteer leadership roles can actually generate negative experiences. As Burnside members said, "too much gets left to the members on the committee" (BCM1), and "it's a lot of hard work and there's not a lot of thanks" (BRM7).

4.3.4.2 Red tape

While red tape was previously identified as a barrier to committee participation, it was also identified as a reason for committee difficulties. Many focus group participants lamented the introduction of more red tape into grassroots associations forced upon them by increased government regulation, by insurance companies, by grant criteria and even through self-inflicted constitutional requirements. Research into voluntary organisations has demonstrated that bureaucratic red tape introduced by government regulation and policies from the 1990s onwards has hampered the sustainability of both GAs and larger non-profit organisations (Ford 2017; Haski-Leventhal, Meijs & Hustinx 2009; Ockenden & Hutin 2008; Sharpe 2003). In commenting on how a local government authority requires public liability insurance in order to comply with a small grant, OCM7 said "[w]hat you pay in public liability insurance, it's a killer. And that's what's killing some organisations". New government regulations in regards to health, safety and child protection were also having an adverse effect on associations according to these focus group participants:

> I have to write a yearly roster for our BBQs–Council must know who our volunteers are (OCM1).

> If you're making cakes and selling them, thou must do a course in food handling (TRM3).

> And you need police clearance just to pack clothes in the back of the Vinnies room (BCM4).

4.3.4.3 Can't fill positions: declining and ageing membership

An inability to fill positions on committees was linked to a general decline in association membership and an ageing membership. These two issues are related, with many participants observing that young people are not joining associations. This, in turn, gradually reduces the total number of memberships, making the general pool of willing committee members much smaller than in the past. This confirms Robert Putnam's (2000) argument about the decline of the 'long civic generation' and others who found that older volunteers were more committed to volunteering than younger generations (Onyx & Warburton 2003; Warburton & Paynter 2006). One Burnside committee member said, "[o]ur club was a very big club back 32 years ago, it's now down to about 45 members" (BCM4). Another committee member in Burnside agreed, saying "I wonder whether perhaps there has been a shift in attitude to volunteering across the board" (BCM6). Regular members expressed similar sentiments, such as "[w]e need younger members, which we seem unable to attract" (BRM1), and:

> Nowadays we seem to be getting older and older, and there are very few younger ones who are coming along who are willing or have the time to put in to be in leadership roles to do these things. And that worries me a bit (BRM3).

Committee members in the Onkaparinga and Tanunda focus groups had similar concerns. As OCM7 said, "[c]ommittees haven't got new blood, younger blood, coming through". Some participants expressed their concerns about the physical and mental barriers that arise with ageing, with comments such as:

> Increasing age of members and number of members with dementia (BRM8).

> I can handle some of the basics, but when it starts to get to the social medium I can read it, I can do quick answers, but that's about it (BRM8).

> I think it's like funerals-I've done a lot of them in the choral society. The average age is 70, so we're forever going to somebody's funeral (ORM3).

Tanunda committee member, TCM6, summed up the issue by saying, "I think that what exercises all of our minds, in every group I've been involved in, is how to get younger people involved and I don't know what the answer is". There was a common concern across all focus groups about the ageing population in Australia, with the view that there would be fewer people with the health and ability to become members, never mind taking on volunteer leadership roles. There is an opportunity, however, to promote volunteering to Australians as they get older and demonstrate how it can benefit their health and wellbeing (Warburton 2014). It became apparent that many of the reasons for committee difficulties, including the phenomenon of an ageing population, are interrelated and can lead to barriers to committee work as described previously in section 4.3.2.

4.3.5 Committee Recruitment Strategies

The most successful recruitment strategies reported by both committee members and regular members was the direct approach, or the old 'tap on the shoulder' (Figure 4.6). This was especially the case for committee members as most were recruited in this way.
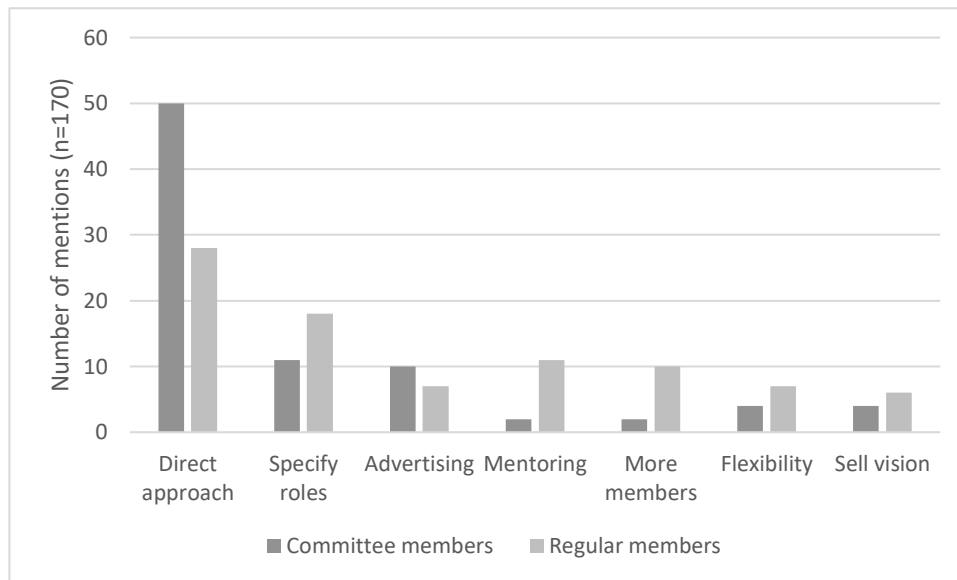
Figure 4.6: Committee recruitment strategies

Word of mouth and personal approaches have been widely reported as significant reasons why people volunteer in Australia. It is, therefore, no surprise that these focus group participants reported this as the most common method of recruiting committee members in grassroots associations (Pearce 1993; 2016), even though this practice encourages homogeneous organisations (Warburton & Paynter 2006). Participants in all focus groups reported that the direct approach was standard practice:

> Every single one that I've been involved in, I've been asked by someone I couldn't say no to … I've never put myself forward (BCM7).

> In some ways, it's a bit flattering to be asked-invited along into the inner circle (ORM2).

> Direct approach–personally speaking to people who you think might be interested (TCM9).

Having specific job roles was the second most suggested strategy, notably by regular members who were afraid of over-committing themselves and the perceived high workload of serving on a committee. The critical link between a specific volunteer role and the aspiration and skills of the volunteer is also confirmed in the literature (Holmes et al. 2015; Netting 2008). Focus group participants explained the importance of clarifying committee responsibilities this way:

> I have found that telling people that the job they will do will be small and discrete encourages volunteering. So that means having a lot of people on the committee each with a small role. Then office bearers feel they are not going to be overloaded (TCM10).

> I think I'd be more interested in being on a committee if I knew what I was getting myself in for, again, having had positive and negative experiences being on a committee, I want to be well informed before I got myself into that position again (TRM5).

Advertising committee roles in association newsletters, social media and community newspapers were regularly suggested by participants. The literature also indicated that publicising opportunities in this way promoted organisations more generally, building their reputation and standing in the community (Boezeman & Ellemers 2008). A committee member from Tanunda supported this view by saying:

> You have to have some way of publicising what you're doing because it makes your members feel worthwhile (TCM6).

> Advertise the work done by the organisation to entice people to become general members or volunteers, leading up to becoming committee members (TRM5).

Regular members suggested additional ways of recruiting committee members, such as increasing the pool of members generally, mentoring members who might be interested, increasing flexibility and selling the benefits of being on a committee to members:

> If you don't have a good size membership, you're not going to get from that membership the committee people that you need, so it's really about building the general membership (TRM1).

> Mentor new members if you want them to stay the distance and take on increasing role. Shadowing–demystifying the whole committee operation (ORM5).

> Break down those barriers with this perception thing about being on a committee, particularly for younger people. 20 or 30 years ago I would have much rather stick a poker in my eye than being on a committee, because of my perceptions (ORM2).

> Open-mindedness–willingness to look for new ways to do things so that we get more younger members (ORM5).

4.4 Chapter summary

An important finding of the focus groups was that poor behaviours in committees, which include personality clashes, bullying behaviours, internal politics and governance malpractice, could be major barriers to people who may be considering volunteering on a GA committee. This outranked 'lack-of-time' as the largest barrier to joining committees, especially by regular members who were yet to commit to serving on a committee. This finding is directly related to the main reasons people give for joining committees in the first place. Individuals agreed to take up committee positions for personal satisfaction, enjoyment and making new friends. If major barriers are not addressed, such as the misuse of power, it is logical to expect that people will not join committees that experience these problems as they are seeking a positive experience from their volunteering. Most grassroots associations operate at a local level, and it does not take long for word of

mouth to publicise committee problems across a community. It can be assumed, too, that many committees are unaware of their reputations due to the 'group think' that comes with oligarchic behaviours. Hence the significant barrier of misuse of power could go unnoticed in many grassroots committees.

The issue of ageing (of both committees and regular members) was also raised and confirms the 2016 *Volunteering in South Australia* survey data. Focus group participants consistently reported that the mean age of their committees is getting older, so much so that some report that they physically, and even mentally, are not able to carry out committee tasks anymore. For example, one ageing committee member (who forgot to attend the practice focus group) reported that he regularly forgets appointments and tasks, but cannot get anyone to take over his role. This was causing great concern to some of the contributors. Although it is outside the scope of this thesis, the ageing population and increasing diagnosis of dementia are areas worthy of further study.

Some participants also suggested that young people were not 'joiners' of associations, and those that are just want to 'pay and play', which means they are joining community bands, sport and craft groups, but do not want to take responsibility for running the clubs (Holmes & Slater 2012). Committees could be well served by identifying the barriers faced by younger potential committee members, such as offering more flexibility and reviewing outdated meeting procedures.

The focus group data reveals a set of cause and effect relationships concerning the issues facing grassroots associations today. When discussing barriers to joining committees and committee difficulties, focus group participants often talked as though they were one and the same. This was the case for the theme of red tape, which is both a barrier to joining and a difficulty for existing committee members. Conversely, the reasons why people served on committees were often factors for success, such as enjoyment and a sense of satisfaction which help give organisations a good reputation and high membership levels.

From the focus group data, it could be surmised that improving committee culture and policies should increase the benefits of serving on a committee. This, in turn, will help increase the number of association members which will improve the recruitment pool of new committee members. Conversely, ignoring committee difficulties could lead to increased barriers faced by individuals when they consider joining committees, which

could cause a decline of committee nominations and accelerate the overall and eventual decline of grassroots associations.

The following chapter will examine the survey results, exploring the issues raised in the focus groups in more detail. It will use the quantitative data provided by 1,500 respondents to explore the research objectives of this thesis, particularly around membership and leadership trends, the barriers to committee nomination and possible strategies to recruit potential leaders of grassroots associations.

CHAPTER 5:   EXAMINATION OF SURVEY FINDINGS

I see a very bleak future ahead for many sporting clubs and volunteer groups. These groups can no longer self-fund or supply the volunteers to do the valuable work required in their communities (survey respondent)*.*

5.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the findings of an online survey completed by members and volunteers from not-for-profit associations, most of whom were from grassroots associations (GAs) in South Australia (see Appendix 9). The methodology for the survey, including the survey design, sampling techniques and its limitations, were detailed in Chapter Three, and the development of the survey questions was informed by the focus group findings (Chapter Four). The survey and the data collection process received ethics approval from the Social and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee of Flinders University in June 2016 (see Appendix 1). The survey was well received, with 1,509 respondents who, in addition to answering the 26 quantitative questions, also shared over 4,600 open-ended comments adding significant qualitative data that further enriched the study.

This chapter commences with a description of the total survey sample and examines, in detail, the characteristics of the respondents from GAs. The discussion is then framed around the thesis research objectives to explore the trends in membership and volunteering in GAs, leadership trends, barriers to both leadership and membership, attributes of successful committees, motivations that provide a path to leadership, and recruitment strategies that can be used to enlist new members and potential leaders.

5.2 Description of respondents - total sample

5.2.1 Demographics of survey respondents

Seventy-five percent of respondents from the returned sample (n=1241) identified themselves as being from GAs, and 25 percent were from associations with at least one paid staff member, described as paid staff associations (PSAs). Of the respondents from PSAs, almost fifty percent were very small non-profit organisations with between one to four staff members.

Just over half of the returned sample (n=1298) were female (55.7 percent). This ratio is similar to findings that 58 percent of volunteers in South Australia are female (Harrison Research 2016a). However, when specifically examining respondents from GAs in this survey, there was a more equal gender balance with females at 53 percent and males at 47 percent.

Regarding the roles of the respondents, 78.5 percent of the returned sample (n=1346) identified themselves as a committee member of their association. Of these, 53.5 percent were female, and 46.5 were male. When examining the respondents from GAs only, the gender difference is slightly smaller, but with most of the committee members still female at 52.6 percent (see Figure 5.1). This gender diversity is skewed towards males in larger Australian charities, where women make up 40 percent of committee or, as often called, board positions (*Board Diversity Index* 2018). However, this is in stark contrast to the corporate sector in Australia, where only 27.7 percent of the top 200 companies listed on the Australian Stock Exchange have female board members (Australian Institute of Company Directors 2018). Women are much more likely to be part of board and committees in non-profit associations and GAs than in private and public companies.

Figure 5.1: Grassroots Associations – Roles and Gender

The respondents of the total sample were mostly from older age segments of the population. This result is similar to the profile of volunteers in South Australia where the largest age group is 65 to 74 (Harrison Research 2016b). Committee members were a higher proportion of the 40–49 age group, and a much more significant portion of the 50–59 age group than the regular member cohort (Figure 5.2). It appears that respondents in this sample began to give up leadership roles from the age of 60. This is also the time

when more regular members seemed to be leaving associations as well. The adverse effects of ageing may become a factor in later years, especially from age 70, which may cause people to reduce their participation in GAs.
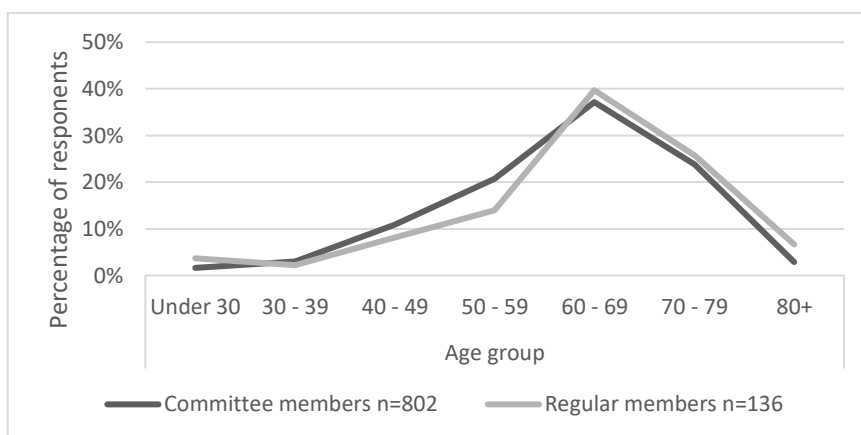
Figure 5.2: Age group and association roles – Grassroots associations

The survey data showed that fewer females are part of associations as they get older as compared to males where there is a much higher percentage of men that get involved from the age of sixty (Figure 5.3). Younger members of associations, those under 60, are more likely to be female. The reason for this anomaly could be that women are more active in associations during child-raising years, but then 'burn out' as they get older. However, it does not appear that this lifecycle issue of GA participation has been addressed in the literature. More men may be joining GAs after retirement, but this does not explain why women, who are also retired, lose interest in later life. It could be that older women, as grandparents, are doing more childcare duties for their adult children. Women live longer than men, which makes this anomaly even more curious. A Chi-square test of independence showed a significant relationship between age and gender in the grassroots associations and that these two variables are associated in some way. (The observed Chi-square value of 57.24 is greater than the critical value (12.59) at alpha 0.05. It is therefore possible to reject the null hypothesis that the variables are not related, with the associated probability (p) equal to 0.00).
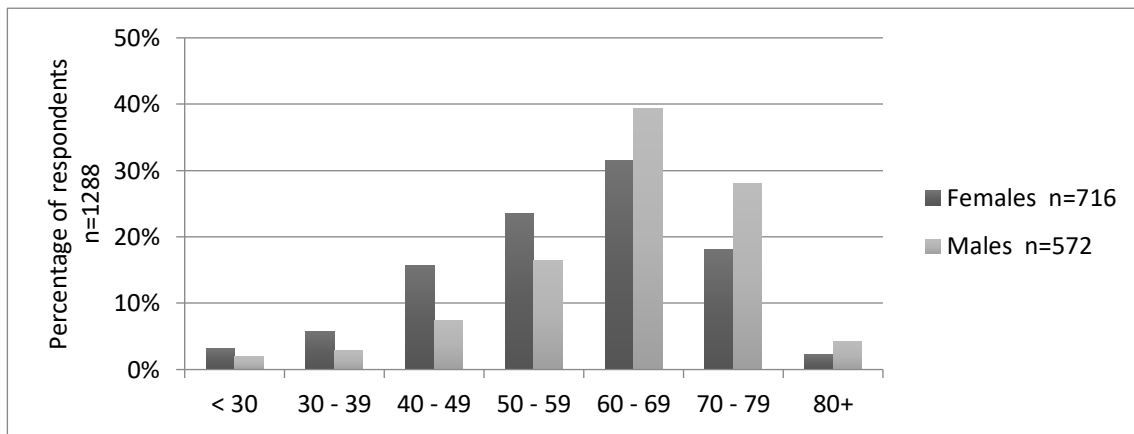
Figure 5.3: Description of Survey Sample – Age groups and gender

Female survey respondents offered the following comments that could partially explain this phenomenon:

> A major threat of the ageing profile is that longer-term members have undertaken all existing club roles and responsibilities a multiple of times and they now feel that they have done their terms.

> I am keeping our organisation going, but would like to move on. I continue because I know no one else will do it.

> [They] feel they are too old and have been there done that.

> Long retired, too tired and busy to participate.

Not many male respondents contributed comments relating to this issue, but some comments were similar:

> As the members are seniors, they think that they have been there done that.

> Members are generally of retirement age or older, and 'have been there, done that' and rely on the younger members to take the lead. Which doesn't necessarily happen.

Despite this surprising finding, the survey data demonstrated that the vast majority of GA members and leaders in South Australia are over the age of fifty. It confirms the fact that older Australians are the leaders of GAs, and this trend is not sustainable in the long term.

5.2.2 Associations in the survey sample

Sixty-one percent of the total respondents were from organisations based in the metropolitan areas of Adelaide. The representation of regional South Australia in this survey (at 38.5 percent) was higher than the 2016 census which showed that 23 percent of South Australians reside in regional areas (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016).

Compared to the total sample, GA respondents from regional and rural areas were more represented, with 42.5 percent from regional areas and 57.5 percent from metropolitan Adelaide. This comparison correlates with the findings from Harrison Research (2016a), which found that residents in regional areas are highly engaged in formal volunteering (at 58 percent).

The range of core activities of associations in the total sample was well represented (Table 5.1). The choice of activities in the survey question was modelled on the 25 core-activity categories used by the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission (ACNC) Annual Information Statement (Cortis et al. 2016). Following a frequency analysis, groups with less than ten respondents were grouped based on similarity. In both metropolitan and regional areas, respondents were well represented in sport, cultural, civic and environmental associations. The core activity that was most served was sport, which included respondents from organisations such as local football, tennis or bowling clubs. This was true of both metropolitan (52.7 percent) and regional associations (47.3 percent). The next most represented activities were culture and the arts, civic, environmental, community development and recreation pursuits. The spread of activities was quite different to charities who report to the ACNC, with most of those being religious and educational institutions (Cortis et al. 2016). This is most likely because the survey employed purposive sampling to associations in South Australia and was open to organisations who were not necessarily registered with the ACNC which principally records larger associations with paid staff.

Table 5.1: Description of total survey sample: Core activities of associations

ACNC field	Adelaide Metro		Regional		Total	
	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %
Sport	168	52.7%	151	47.3%	319	100.0%
Culture and the arts	100	59.5%	68	40.5%	168	100.0%
Civic, Advocacy & Gov Service	102	61.1%	65	38.9%	167	100.0%
Animals & Environment	100	62.5%	60	37.5%	160	100.0%
Other recreation and social club activity	91	61.5%	57	38.5%	148	100.0%
Community Dev & Research	87	60.8%	56	39.2%	143	100.0%
Social services	59	78.7%	16	21.3%	75	100.0%
Health	39	73.6%	14	26.4%	53	100.0%
Education	35	71.4%	14	28.6%	49	100.0%
Aged care activities	31	72.1%	12	27.9%	43	100.0%
Emergecy & Social relief	22	55.0%	18	45.0%	40	100.0%
Religious activities	17	73.9%	6	26.1%	23	100.0%
Other (please specify)	2	100.0%	0	0.0%	2	100.0%
Employment and training	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Political party activities	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Total	853	61.4%	537	38.6%	1390	100.0%

Most respondents were from associations that were well-established, with 72 percent of the organisations in the total sample established for over 20 years (Figure 5.4). GAs were younger, with 57 percent of them operating for under 40 years compared to 46 percent of PSAs. Twelve percent of GAs had been established for ten years or less, compared to eight percent of PSAs.
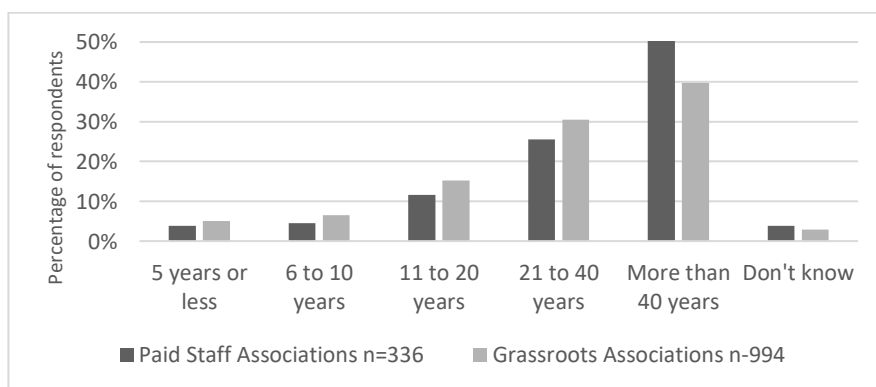
Figure 5.4: Age of associations

A clear majority of respondents were very active members of their associations (Figure 5.5). This may be due to the sample bias towards committee members who, due to the nature of their positions, may be more committed to their organisations than regular members. Respondents from GAs volunteered more frequently than those from PSAs, with 81 percent of respondents from GAs volunteering at least once a week compared to 76 percent from PSAs. However, a Chi-square test did not show a significant relationship between volunteering frequency and association type (x^2 (2) = 3.302, p=0.192). The questionnaire allowed for 12 categories and these were collapsed into three variables indicating high frequency (at least once a week), medium frequency (at least once a month) and low frequency of volunteering (several times, or at least once a year).
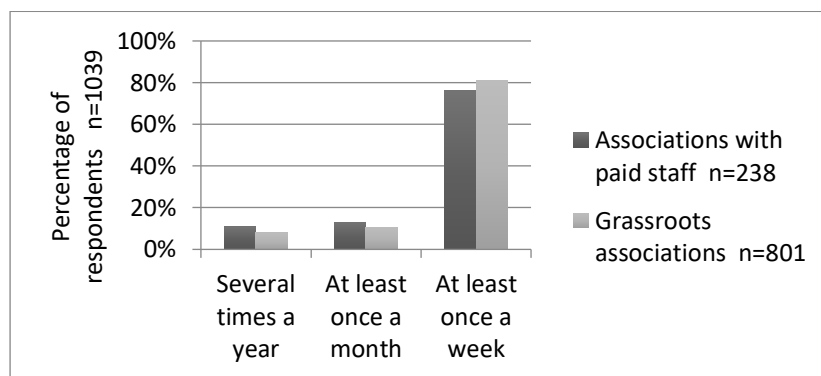
Figure 5.5: Frequency of volunteering

The survey asked respondents who (or what) was helped by their association's activities in the last 12 months (Figure 5.6). There were 27 categories to choose from based on the ACNC survey, and respondents could select all categories that applied to their organisation. Most respondents felt they helped everyone in the population, with 56 percent of respondents choosing the general community category. Other popular activities included assisting people in need including the elderly, women, youth and children. Popular pursuits included helping the environment, promoting the arts and culture, and supporting people to pursue a recreation interest. Less frequently mentioned activities related to trade unions and professional associations, and helping victims of crime, offenders, and political parties.
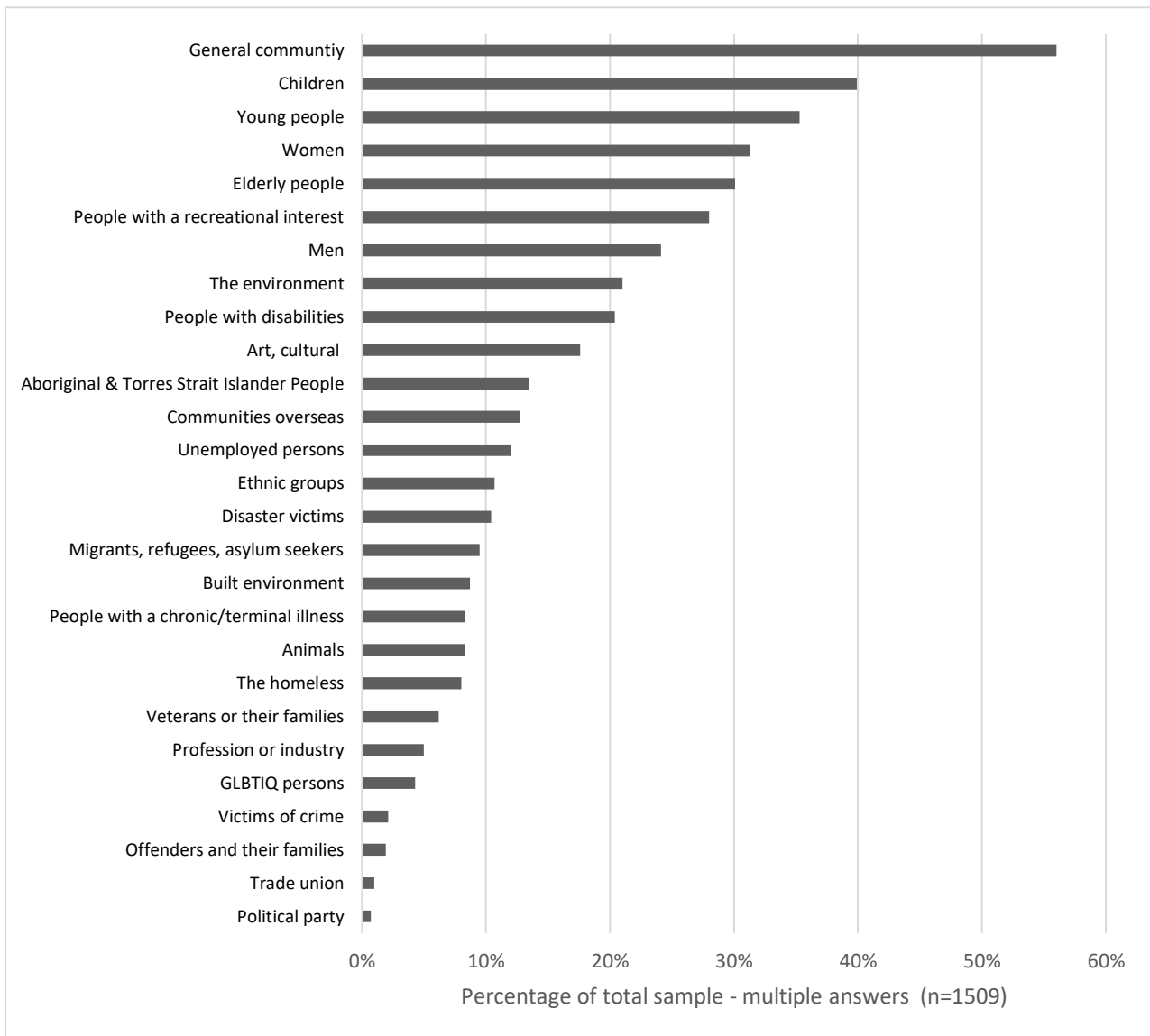
Figure 5.6: Who (or what) was helped by associations (entire sample)

In addition to asking who was helped by the associations, the survey asked respondents to what degree their associations were focused on members versus those external to their organisation. While most respondents believed that their associations helped members and non-members alike, GAs had a higher percentage of respondents who felt that their associations helped only members, which is understandable given the nature of many GAs being self-help or hobbyist style groups.

Confirming Smith's (2000) definition of grassroots associations, most of the GAs represented in the survey were small, with 65 percent having fewer than 100 members (Figure 5.7). Conversely, most of the associations with paid staff were large, with 57 percent having more than 100 members and volunteers.
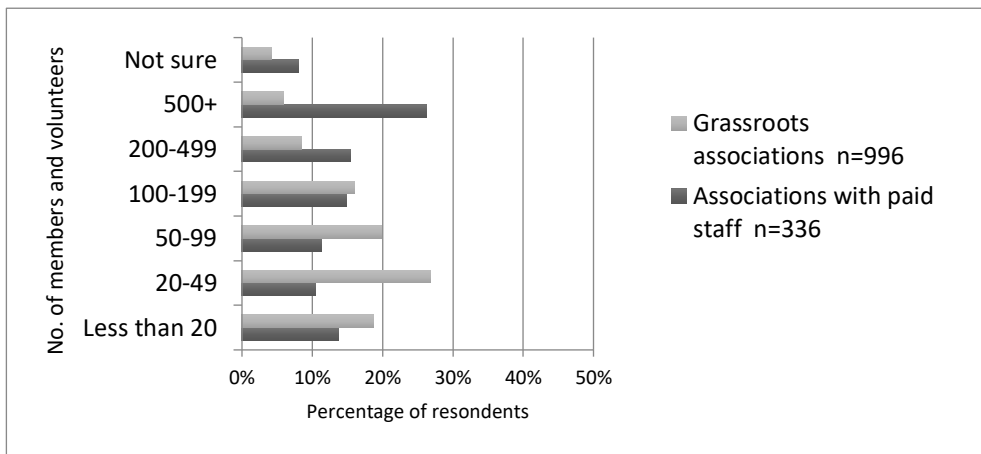
Figure 5.7: Number of members and volunteers

The data shows that, at the time of this study, GAs in South Australia were small, very diverse in their purpose and had a long history of serving their communities. The survey respondents were very active in their associations, and many of the GAs helped members and non-members alike, supporting a broad spectrum of people who benefit from their activities.

5.3 Membership and volunteering trends in grassroots associations

To establish if the membership numbers of GAs were declining or increasing in the last five years, respondents were asked questions using a Likert scale if their associations were experiencing declining membership, increasing membership or somewhere in-between (Figure 5.8). The survey preamble defined a member as "a person who is connected to an organisation through a joining fee, mailing list or another registration process". Respondents from GAs were more likely to report a decline in membership than those from PSAs, with 35 percent of GAs reporting a reduction versus 28 percent of PSA respondents. Those from PSAs were more likely to report increasing membership at 45 percent compared to 34 percent of GA respondents. Thirty percent of GAs and 23 percent of PSA respondents had not noticed any significant change in membership numbers. A Chi-square test showed a significant relationship and correlation between membership trends and association type. (The observed Chie-square value (16.635) was greater than the critical value (5.991) at alpha 0.05. It was possible to reject the null hypothesis: the associated probability (p) was equal to 0.00).

Figure 5.8: Association membership trend comparisons (entire sample) (Q11)

When examining GAs only, a high proportion of both committee members and regular members noticed a decline in membership (Figure 5.9). A Chi-square test showed that there was not a significant correlation between the two cohorts, with similar observations of membership trends made between the regular members and committee members. (The observed Chi-square value (0.984) was lower than the critical value (3.841) at alpha 0.05. It was not possible to reject the null hypothesis: the associated probability (p) was equal to 0.321).

Figure 5.9: Association membership trends in last five years (GAs only) (Q11)

To investigate trends in new member recruitment, respondents were asked if their organisations were having difficulty recruiting new members (Figure 5.10). The answers were significantly different to the previous question where respondents were asked to consider their membership levels over the past five years. Sixty percent of respondents from GAs agreed that their organisations were having difficulty recruiting new members compared to 45 percent of PSA respondents. A Chi-square test showed a positive and

significant correlation between association type membership recruitment (the observed Chi-square value (11.941) was greater than the critical value (3.841) at alpha 0.05. It was possible to reject the null hypothesis: the associated probability (p) was equal to 0.001.). Although both cohorts reported difficulty in recruiting new members, it appears that GAs were experiencing significantly greater difficulty in recruiting new members than associations that have the benefit of paid staff. When selecting GA respondents only, 61 percent of both committee members and regular members agreed that their associations had trouble recruiting new members.
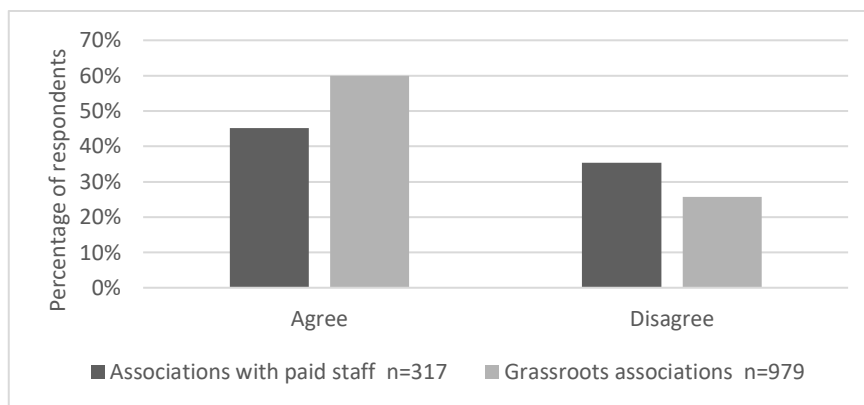
Figure 5.10: Difficulties in recruiting new members (entire sample) (Q12)

The survey also asked respondents if their associations were having trouble recruiting new volunteers, defined as 'a person giving time without payment to an organisation' (Figure 5.11). The data showed a similar trend to the recruitment of members, with 66 percent of respondents from GAs agreeing that their association was having difficulty recruiting new volunteers, compared to 54 percent of PSA respondents agreeing with this statement. This similarity in results may be because members of GAs were also volunteers. Volunteer recruitment appeared to be a significant issue for most respondents, and an acute problem for the small GAs. A Chi-square test showed a positive correlation and significant relationship between membership trends and association type (the observed Chi-square value (20.431) was greater than the critical value (3.841) at alpha 0.05. It was possible to reject the null hypothesis: the associated probability (p) was equal to 0.00).
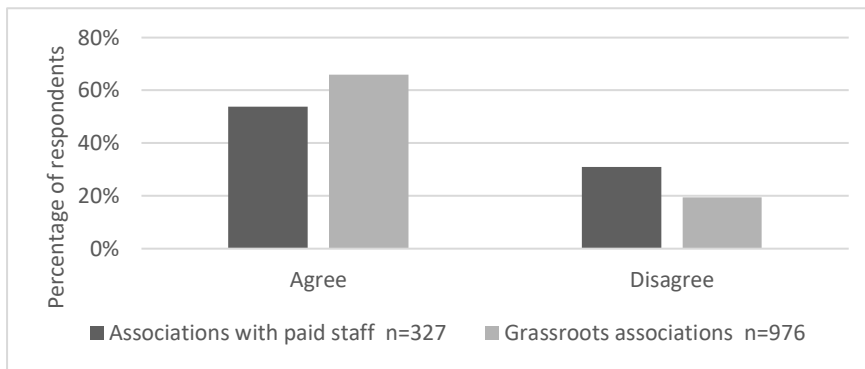
Figure 5.11: Difficulties in recruiting new volunteers: comparing grassroots and paid-staff associations (entire sample) (Q13)

Committee and regular members of GAs were mostly in agreement that their associations had difficulty recruiting volunteers, with committee members slightly more likely to strongly agree, as illustrated in Figure 5.12.
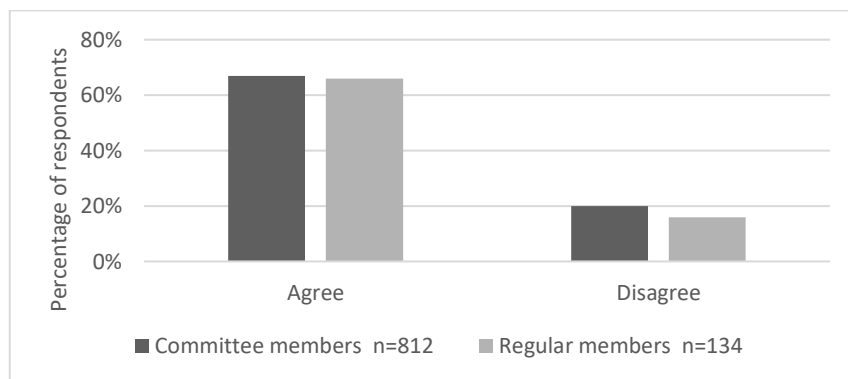
Figure 5.12: Difficulties in recruiting new volunteers: Comparing committee members and regular members (GAs only) (Q13)

When asked in an open-ended question to identify challenges faced by their association, a word-frequency count showed the top challenges were the need for more members and volunteers. It was common for respondents to report that their biggest problem was a declining membership base. When analysing the responses after coding, most comments related to declining membership and volunteers with 373 mentions (Figure 5.13).

Figure 5.13: Word map of association challenges (Q23)

Many respondents took advantage of the opportunity presented to them in the survey to vent their frustrations about the current state of their association. They offered comments such as the need for "an inquest", "more community spirit", "brain transplants", "lazy people getting off their butt to help instead of grizzling", and the need for, "a very large explosion in the area to wake everyone up!" Other responses of a general nature included some unwelcoming and pessimistic outlooks:

> I have pondered the sad notion that maybe the group should close but then reform in the future in maybe another format. Would the work done by the organisation be missed?

> I see a very bleak future ahead for many sporting clubs and volunteer groups. These groups can no longer self-fund or supply the volunteers to do the valuable work required in their communities. Governments at all levels must recognise this ASAP. Volunteer Days are an excellent thank you but provide little support to the sporting/volunteer groups.

There were, however, a few comments from respondents belonging to successful associations who contributed comments such as, "we are not experiencing challenges, we have a great community spirit and involvement with many resources available to us". Some associations were experiencing growth, but were still struggling with not having sufficient 'people power' to cope with the demand:

> Inability to cope with growth: we have been attracting community attention but we all work while volunteering; sometimes new active members launch interesting projects but are unable to make them happen; somehow they expect someone else to follow-up on their ideas which may add too many responsibilities for those committed to carrying on actions.

Although the survey provided some examples of healthy and robust associations, the data overall demonstrates that most GAs are having difficulty recruiting new members and volunteers and that the level of concern of this sustained trend is very high. The following section turns to an examination of the leadership trends within GAs.

5.4 Volunteer leadership trends in grassroots associations

Most respondents agreed that their associations were having difficulty recruiting new management committee members (Figure 5.14), and the issue was much more significant to GAs as compared to PSAs. Sixty-seven percent of respondents from GAs agreed that they had observed this trend, compared to 49 percent of respondents from PSAs. It appears that PSAs have less of a problem recruiting leaders, with thirty-six percent of PSA respondents disagreeing that their associations were having difficulty recruiting new committee members compared to 21 percent from GAs. Respondents from PSAs were slightly more likely to be non-committal on the issue, with 12 percent neither agreeing or disagreeing compared to 10 percent of respondents from GAs. A Chi-square test showed a significant relationship between leadership recruitment trends and association type (the observed Chi-square value (36.207) was greater than the critical value (3.841) at alpha 0.05. It was possible to reject the null hypothesis: the associated probability (p) was equal to 0.00).
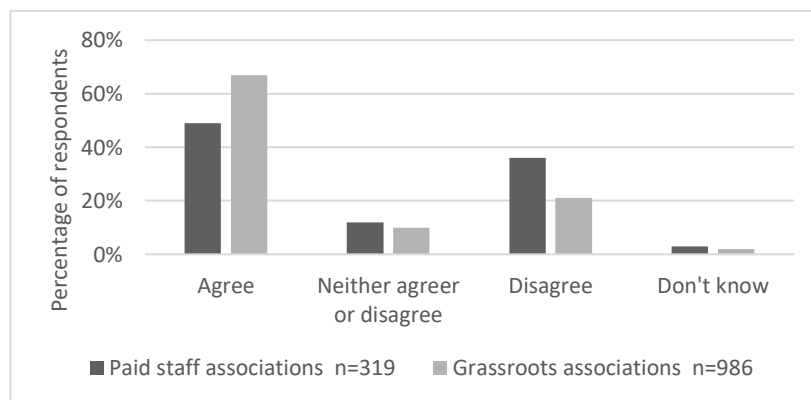
Figure 5.14: Difficulties in recruiting new volunteer leaders: Comparing respondents from GAs and PSAs (total sample) (Q14)

When comparing responses from committee members and regular members from GAs only, the survey found that 70 percent of committee members observed that their associations were having difficulty recruiting new volunteer leaders (Figure 5.15). Sixty-three percent of regular members also agreed, but they were also more likely to be non-

committal on the issue, with 15 percent neither agreeing or disagreeing. Twenty-one percent of both committee and regular members did not agree with the proposition that their associations were having difficulty recruiting new committee members. A Chi-square test, however, did not show a significant relationship between leadership recruitment trends and someone's role in an association (the observed Chi-square value (0.025) was lower than the critical value (3.841) at alpha 0.05. It was not possible to reject the null hypothesis: the associated probability (p) was equal to 0.876).
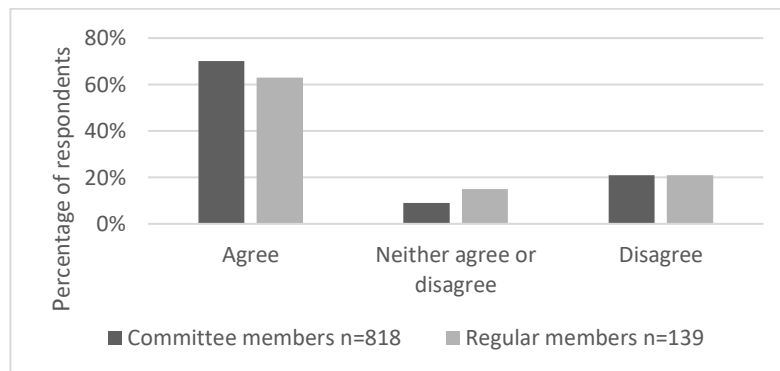
Figure 5.15: Difficulties in recruiting new volunteer leaders: Comparing committee members and regular member respondents (GAs only) (Q14)

In the open-ended comments, respondents mentioned the difficulty in attracting volunteer committee members as well as regular members and volunteers. Respondents wrote, "[o]ur biggest challenge is getting, then keeping, new leaders", and, "I think it is a common problem to attract new members and volunteers due to the pace and lifestyle of today". Another respondent offered this observation about the issue of recruiting committee members:

> Most people are happy to volunteer their services, but most are not ready to commit on a regular basis. People become anxious that becoming a volunteer will infringe on their lifestyle choices.

Consistent with the challenge of recruiting new volunteer leaders, respondents from the total survey sample were speaking with one voice in their views that there is a minimum turnover of leadership in their associations which may lead to oligarchical behaviour (Figure 5.16). Seventy-eight percent of respondents from GAs and 66 from PSAs agreed that their associations have mostly the same individuals serve on their committees year after year. When examining respondents from GAs only, 80 percent of committee members and 75 percent of regular members agreed with the proposition that there is static leadership amongst their committees.
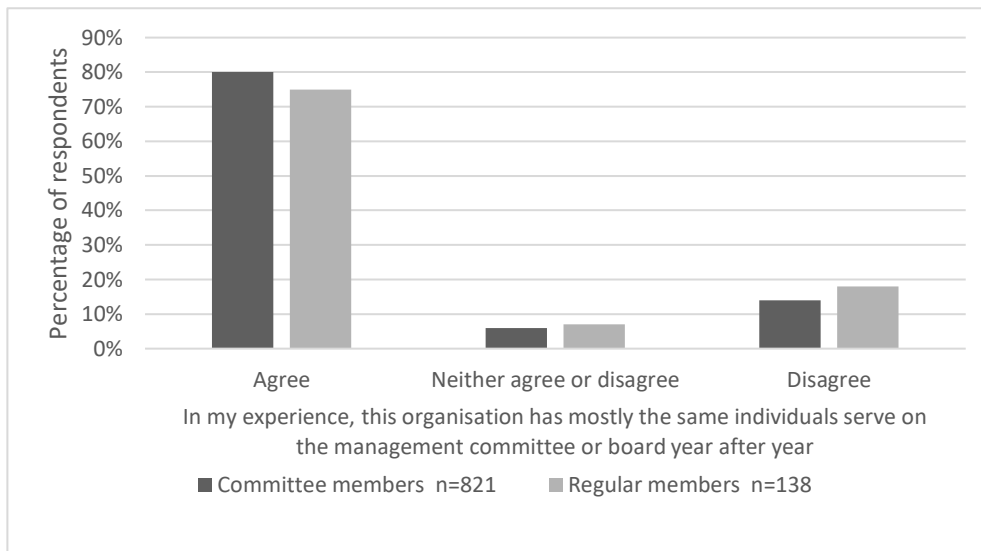
Figure 5.16: Oligarchic tendencies in grassroots associations: Comparing committee member and regular member respondents (GAs only) (Q15)

There were a number of comments made by survey respondents regarding oligarchic behaviours, such as:

> Strong minded, dedicated people are usually the backbone of organisations. But then they will often feel they have 'ownership', and that makes it hard for others or the group as a whole to embrace change. Even worse are organisations that don't have that sort of dedication and collapse. Difficult to find that balance.

> It's hard to change a culture when same people have done things for years.

> Seeing some of the old "guard" move on. Culture has to change - but that is usually met with eye rolls - and "what's wrong with us"? They won't change, and they don't appear to want to change. Poor conduct ties up a lot of time and energy, making some roles too big to attract new people.

The survey data shows that there is a tendency for the leaders of GAs to develop oligarchical behaviours. This is linked to the minimal turnover in GA leaders over time, which most respondents noted. This will be discussed in detail in Chapter Seven of this thesis, which analyses, in depth, the barriers that GAs create themselves, often unwittingly, at the organisational level.

5.5 Barriers to volunteer leadership in grassroots associations

Respondents from GAs were asked why they thought people did not wish to serve on their association's management committee. The questionnaire listed twelve barriers on a seven-point agreement Likert scale, based on barriers discussed in the focus groups and the literature relevant to barriers to volunteering (English & Peters 2011; Holmes & Slater 2012; Merrill 2006; Price 2002; Sundeen, Raskoff & Garcia 2007).

As shown in Figure 5.17, the two leading barriers, both with 78 percent of respondents in agreement, were a lack of time and not wanting the weight of responsibility that committee work entails. Other leading barriers were the lack of self-confidence to put themselves forward due to shyness and/or lack of confidence (62 percent) or skills (55 percent), a dislike of meetings (61 percent), over-commitment to other organisations (59 percent) and a dislike of politics and personality conflicts (45 percent).
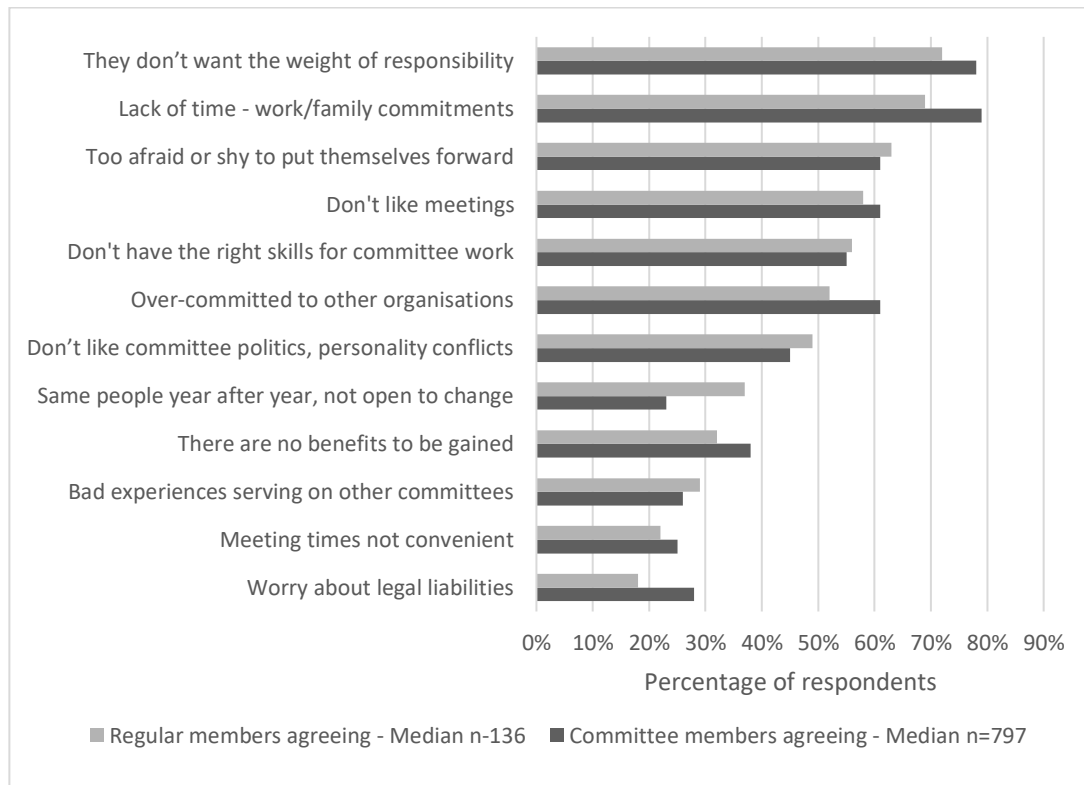
Figure 5.17: Barriers to joining committees (GAs only) (Q16)

When comparing the results between committee and regular member respondents, committee members and regular members agreed on most of the barriers to committee work. There were some significant differences, however, with 37 percent of regular members agreeing that oligarchies were a barrier compared to only 23 percent of committee members (same people year after year, not open to change). Also, 69 percent of regular members agreed that lack of time was a barrier, compared to 79 percent of committee members. A third significant disparity was that 28 percent of committee members, compared to 19 percent of regular members, thought that people did not join committees because of the concern about legal liabilities. This reveals that committee members have a different perception of some the significant barriers affecting the decisions of regular members when they contemplate standing for committee positions. A

103

Chi-square test showed a significant relationship between the opinions of committee members and regular members regarding some of the barriers to committee nomination, including not wanting the weight of responsibility, the lack of time, concern for legal liabilities and committee oligarchies that are resistant to change (see Appendix 12).

The following sections of this chapter will describe in detail the survey data regarding the above barriers, including the 2,960 text-based comments offered by respondents. The sections are grouped around a series of themes including community apathy, ageing members, lack of time, red tape, lack of skills, financial issues, issues specific to rural communities and poor behaviours.

5.5.1 Community apathy

Some committee member respondents used the opportunity of participating in the survey to vent their frustration regarding members being apathetic and not stepping up to leadership positions. Community apathy was raised by 303 respondents as a major challenge, not only to their association but, more broadly, for Australian society in general. They complained about the lifestyle of younger generations, suggesting that they were "more self-centred", with a "lack of awareness of the positive influence that being part of a community organisation could bring", and that "no one likes to do the boring bits−especially clearing up after concerts". One responded about an association that tried episodic recruitment strategies, and complained about how it did not work:

> In 15 years we have had about 100 'once-off' adult volunteers, none of whom have returned as active volunteers or members. It is a moral dilemma, in that they know the need and necessity for help, but will not act on it.

Respondents believed that laziness was a significant reason why people were not joining committees. They were despondent about the perceived decrease of civic responsibility, which supports Putnam's (2000) finding that there has been a decline in civic engagement. Committee members shared comments such as,

> People just want to stay at home and surf the net or watch TV. Rampant apathy, lazy no motivation.

> The biggest problems are self-interest and apathy. No-one seems to be interested in contributing to the community and environment outside their family unit. The sense of community which created the group has disappeared, apparently due to national political and cultural shifts away from collective responsibility and action.

> Too preoccupied and self-centred with their own world to give back to the community.

> Not the same sense of community commitment as has existed in the past.

> Most members want what they can get from society without any responsibility.

> We as a people need to learn to be a bit less selfish.

Committee members also complained about the 'pay 'n' play' phenomena (Holmes & Slater 2012), with members wanting the benefits of joining an association without putting in any effort into leadership or coordinating tasks, or not offering to help out:

> Most people are happy to advise on how things should be done, but when invited to take responsibility for the area of suggestion don't want to put in time or effort.

> Leave it to the same few time after time.

> Why volunteer [for committees] when you can sit back and do nothing? People who don't volunteer on a committee level always have a lot to say which disappoints and frustrates me.

> Most of the membership feel they have done enough by just signing up.

> Pay fees and don't think they need to do anything else. It is easier to let someone else do it while still reaping the benefits.

Some committee members attributed this apathy to the different values and interests of the younger generations. This aligns with volunteering trends towards individualisation, where people prefer short-term projects and do not develop organisational ties because they simply do not want them (Wilson, J 2012). Survey respondents, who were mostly in their 50s to 70s, tried to explain this by contributing comments such as, "[young people are] too preoccupied and self-centred with their own world to give back to community", "[there is] not the same sense of community commitment as had existed in the past", and, "I find the younger generation generally is all about me first and that the community stuff comes a poor last". Other respondents were equally vehement about the issue:

> It all comes down to the next generation developing a more giving attitude. The pressure of modern life is alleged to be one of the leading causes of people not volunteering, but I think it has more to do with selflessness or otherwise within the community.

> Again, there does not appear to be a magic bullet, we have tried all sorts of things such as social events, varying meeting times for meetings and working bees etc. again to no avail. The current generation of young adults appear to be apathetic and seem to assume that the older generation will always continue.

When examining the barriers from the survey by age groups, there were some generational differences in the data which explained why respondents were not nominating for committee positions (Figure 5.18). Given the difference in sample size between age groups, a Chi-square test of independence was done and this indicated there was no significant relationship between age groups and barriers, apart from a resistance to use social media for recruitment by committee members over the age of 50 (see Appendix 13). Taking this into account, however, 94 percent of the under 50s designated lack of

time as the primary barrier compared to 75 percent of the participants over 50. Younger people were more concerned with the weight of responsibility and skills levels required. The dislike of group politics and personal conflict were rated more highly by younger survey respondents as a barrier, as were negative experiences of committee work. Forty-seven percent of the under 50s saw no benefits in being part of a management committee compared to 36 percent of the over 50s.

The chart shows "Percentage of respondents" on the x-axis (0% to 100%) against barriers to committee work. Legend: Over 50s n=766; Under 50s n=142. Categories listed top to bottom: Don't have time, Don't want responsibility, Don't have the right skills, Some too shy, Don't like meetings, Don't like politics/conflict, No benefits, Had bad experiences in past, Same people serve year after year, Worry about legal liabilities, Meeting times not convenient.

Figure 5.18: Barriers to committee work: Age group comparisons

It has been argued that today's younger generations are experiencing pressures and complications that their Baby Boomer parents did not have to deal with (Bussey 2003). These include increasing education costs, rising accommodation prices, barriers to social welfare benefits and lack of job security. The loss of privacy through social media and global issues, such as the fear of climate change and security, also create insecurity amongst young people. Combined, these issues may contribute to young people feeling alienated especially if they hear feedback such as they are 'selfish'. Taking this into account, young people may feel that society is not giving back to them, so they may not feel the need to contribute through volunteering. Another consideration is that young people probably have different interests than their predecessors around issues and activities that did not exist in previous generations. Hence, their perceived lack of interest in traditional GAs is part of the natural life cycle. The perspective of young people in

regards to their joining and leading of GAs are discussed in more detail in Chapter Six, which examines the macro-environmental factors that have a significant impact on the members and leaders of GAs.

5.5.2 Lack of time

As in the focus groups, the 'time-poor' issue was often raised in survey comments as a leading barrier to committee work, with respondents complaining of exacting paid work commitments where "people are now working so hard to keep their heads above water that there is little time to volunteer". This was especially evident in rural areas. Some committee members expanded on the issue with the following comments:

> Small rural communities are in volunteer overload. It is mind boggling the hours that people put in just to maintain our BASIC facilities. Plus, we all run farms and some of the wives work off the farm as well, it's a constant struggle of juggling business, kids, school buses and volunteer rosters.

> It is a huge commitment of one's time and many of our members have grandchildren to look after and/or travel. Employment demands are greater these days.

> People don't want to commit themselves as they are afraid it may involve too much time and work, and leave it to others.

Other observations about the time barriers and volunteering were made in these open-ended comments:

> Challenge is to find ways of motivating residents, who already work long hours, to give some additional time and effort to the community.

> Working all weekend and computer games, reduced free time for the general population has reduced our pool of possible new members.

> People are now working so hard to keep their heads above water that there is little time to volunteer.

However, some thought that lack of time was merely an excuse, with one respondent saying, "I think that these days it's very easy for people to say they are too busy. But what does that really mean−their time is more important than others? If you really want to do something you will make time to do it!"

This raises the question that the lack-of-time excuse could be a smoke screen for other hidden issues or barriers that cannot be clearly identified or offered freely. As with the other barriers, this will be explored in more detail in Chapter Six.

5.5.3 Red tape and financial issues

Respondents further elaborated on the effects of red tape, which was mentioned 227 times in the open-ended comments. Committee members said that it made their work too complicated, took too much time and was a significant impediment:

> Red-Tape overload, I have been on the committee for 13 years, and it is now an all-year-round job to comply with Government regulations. The government (State & Federal) seem to have forgotten that we are all unpaid volunteers and that we first need to hold down a career/employment, family and then volunteer.

> People are fed up with the red-tape that has been foisted on volunteers.

> Clubs have been dragged into too many legislative requirements, and it makes volunteering difficult. The red tape needs to be reduced and let Clubs focus on getting kids into sport and trying new experiences.

> Our traditional fund-raising activities are being impacted by regulatory impositions - e.g. completing 'food safe' certificates in order to hold a barbeque.

> People do not want to get involved due to child protection. You have to be very careful not to touch a child.

> Government stop asking for more and more information and let us get on with delivering services

Within the open-ended comments, respondents had some excellent suggestions on how governments and other institutions could implement changes that would help GAs deal with red tape. Some ideas were practical, such as removing stamp duty on property transfers when associations amalgamate. Other ideas involved reshaping funding support such as providing blanket insurance for all GAs and the assets they manage. They suggested that governments could provide a central hub for governance advice and technical support, along with easier access to small amounts of financial assistance to "take the pressure off volunteers and maintain the basics". Respondents also suggested that the media has a role to play, with many respondents complaining about the high cost of advertising and the "need for positive messages about the benefits of giving back to society". Many suggested that schools, universities and councils could make their meeting rooms and facilities more accessible, with comments such as:

> In my opinion, public schools are used by many so why should [country high school] charge some sports clubs and not every single person from the community who uses it.

> Better access to free workspace and IT would help. For example, if councils and universities could provide meeting/training/conference areas at no cost, we could engage with more communities, as well as shift our locations around to be more equitable.

One suggestion was to introduce "a kind of ombudsman" who would take up issues that are affecting GAs. Another respondent suggested the need to train magistrates in the law

relating to associations as, without any other intervention, the courts are the last resort for internal disputes. This idea seems to have gained some traction in South Australia, as Volunteering SA&NT called for a 'Not-for-Profit and Volunteering Advocate' in its 2018 state election policy proposal, which would be an independent statutory position to advocate for volunteers and the not-for-profit sector more broadly (Volunteering SA & NT 2018).

Financial issues were also a significant challenge for GAs, and this was mentioned 394 times by survey respondents in open-ended comments. In 2017, South Australians were paying the highest electricity prices in the world, and these costs do not escape GAs (Potter & Tillett 2017). Many respondents complained that the costs of running their associations were rising ahead of inflation while, at the same time, government grants and sponsorships were decreasing. Government charges, such as police clearance checks, were proving to be a barrier for association volunteers with one respondent reporting, "we ask people to volunteer, then tell them that they need to pay for their police or Families SA clearances to work with children–usually do not see them again". Respondents also expressed a lack of moral support, especially from local governments and peak bodies, with increased red tape and policy changes. They expressed these frustrations in many ways:

> Cash flow–everything is getting more expensive, little or no assistance from the major sports means all income has to be raised by volunteers.

> Easier access to funding whereby the funding body actually 'understands' what life in somewhat rural isolation means and how it looks and how we join together to help each other.

> The number of hours required to apply for a small grant isn't worth it.

Many respondents stated that more funds were needed to either advertise for more members or to hire staff to do the work that more members used to do, as one respondent wrote that they needed "money, volunteers and exposure to the community to increase membership".

5.5.4 Lack of skills

One hundred and seventy survey respondents provided comments regarding the issue of lack of skills and self-confidence being a barrier to volunteer leadership. Committee members said, "[some people] feel they are inadequate to the task", and, "a lack of confidence and self-belief is a significant factor". Other respondents expanded on the problem, expressing a need for new strategies or finding new members with different skill

sets. For example, some respondents wrote about the need to "find new dedicated members with the right skills", and, "get skilled volunteers who can add to existing ideas and bring new technologies into play". Some thought that a clarification of job roles would break down this barrier, saying that leaders "have too much ownership", "the tasks are too onerous", and, "there are no role descriptions … [they] might feel they don't have the required experience". The problem of an ageing membership not keeping their skills up to date was raised, with some saying that some older volunteers make it difficult for the association when they do not use technology:

> The increasing use of digital technology leaves many ageing volunteers in a tailspin. Some do not even have a computer or mobile phone, let alone any knowledge of the internet. This means that important notices, meeting minutes etc. have to be printed and separately delivered to these valued volunteers, taking time and effort - not begrudged, but is a factor in workload.

> Our Treasurer insists on preparing detailed, handwritten ledgers when a spreadsheet that can be emailed to members would be appreciated by most.

> Too many elderly take on positions and have no computer skills.

> Understanding of social media and how to use it effectively to stay in touch with the younger generation.

The ramifications of new technology, lack of skill development and the generational divide on GAs are linked and will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Six.

5.5.5 Ageing members

The problem of young people not joining committees was compounded by burnout and health concerns that accompany old age. Respondents spoke of the issue of an ageing membership and a decline in the number of new members: "this organisation will not exist in its current form in five years," and, "the demise of our association is visible in the near future if new blood is not forthcoming". Others said:

> Small organisations (like ours) can be sustainable but on a knife-edge, once something gives, can quickly spiral down. Very hard to counter the decline, and once gone, it is a genuine loss to the community.

> [I'm] too sick to be able to participate, too old.

> Our membership is mainly retired women, many who have served on the committee, but feel they are not up to it anymore. Many of our members are in their upper 70s and 80s.

> At the current rate of ageing and with no newer members, this organisation will not exist in its present form in 5 years.

> With an average age of 77, some of our members are not in A1 physical condition!

Physical and mental health was a recurring theme in the data, with both focus group participants and survey respondents observing that as committee members get older, they lose physical and mental capacity which is an inhibitor to their participation in GAs. This is addressed in more detail in Chapter Eight, which examines the micro barriers that are preventing people from serving on GA committees.

5.5.6 Barriers experienced by rural communities

Some reports from respondents living in rural areas were very despondent. They spoke of the adverse effects of reducing populations and economic decline, which is depleting the local volunteering pool:

> We are a very small rural community teetering on the edge of oblivion. The cost of maintaining our hall the only public space for many miles gets higher and higher each year. As volunteers, we already contribute heavily to keeping our community organisations alive. Too often we are being asked to contribute to 'events' further afield with no mutual return. Applying for grants has become increasingly difficult and too often don't suit our needs. The Stronger Communities' Grant was a nightmare which we did not have the personal resources as volunteers to access - our internet was too slow to apply online as requested. The word 'volunteer' has lost its dictionary meaning - giving service freely. One is supposed to have a certificate that costs one time & money to plant a tree these days!

> A passion for an organisation creates great leadership and can take an organisation to great heights. But in a small country town, such leaders are few and far between. Where do we go from there when the leader needs to leave?

Rural communities, much more than their urban counterparts, rely on volunteers for essential services and the maintenance of infrastructure (Winterton 2014). As with the other barriers, this issue is discussed in more detail in Chapter Six.

5.5.7 Poor culture and behaviours

The findings in this study supported the vital importance of positive organisational culture, with forty-five percent of respondents reporting that they would not join a committee because they did not like committee politics or personality conflicts, 26 percent indicated that they would not join due to terrible experiences in the past, and 25 percent agreed that the same people served on their committee year after year and were not open to change. Forty-nine percent of regular member survey respondents agreed that people did not volunteer for committees because they did not like committee politics or personality conflicts. Also, 29 percent of this cohort had bad experiences servicing on committees in the past.

Within the open-ended comments, 286 respondents from the total survey sample elaborated on poor organisational culture and personality conflicts, with many complaining

of bullying, controlling and outdated leadership styles and groupthink. They talked about 'problem people' and committees being resistant to change. Committee members shared these comments:

> There are some nasty individuals who make it unpleasant for others.
>
> Abuse from inconsiderate members who are selfish or narcissistic.
>
> Being a small country town personalities can clash.
>
> Others see no reason why they should join [the committee] because it seems this little group have discussed it and made decisions before the meeting anyway.
>
> There is one committee member who is too powerful. She is well-meaning, but I think she is driving people away.

Regular members offered similar comments such as, "this committee is all out for themselves", "strong personalities of serving committee members are detrimental", and, "some are there for their own ego trip rather than for the good of the club and committee". Other opinions included:

> Committee culture is bureaucratic and looks to the past 'glory days' as the road to the future.
>
> People go on committees with good intentions, then get criticised.
>
> It's just too hard to continue to bash your head against the wall, and nobody listens, or you are discriminated against and bullied.
>
> The committee. They are out of touch and thwart every effort I make to change anything.

Sometimes gender issues were mentioned amongst the comments, such as:

> It's all males who actively discourage women to apply for leadership roles, and if they do, they are discriminated against and bullied.

Respondents had similar comments about the problem of poor cultures, including "I've gone to another club and the atmosphere is a lot better", "people who lie and backstab, they are poisonous on committees", and:

> Overpowering personalities [are] unwilling to accept new ideas … dysfunctional individuals, power play, put-downs, harassment, rudeness, innuendo, malicious libelous gossip to isolate people to their own benefit.
>
> It's hard to change an organisation's culture if they don't want to change - people who drive the requirements end up giving up and leaving as it's just too hard to continue to bash your head against the wall and nobody listens, or you are discriminated against and bullied.
>
> I'm shocked about how good and reasonably argued points can be attacked with vitriol and personal comments. So I won't be on the committee again, although I'm exactly what the committee desperately needs, and prior to me agreeing to be on the committee, they had my key position unfilled because they couldn't attract anyone to it.

The large number of comments and high levels of emotion expressed by survey respondents regarding poor behaviour by leaders provided valuable new data in the study of GAs. It may be that the barriers and difficulties experienced by leaders of GAs are so vast and intractable that many of them are not coping and resorting to poor behaviours that create a downward spiral. A final observation about barriers to leadership was made by a committee member who wrote, "this is the $64K question. If we knew, we would accommodate the problem!"

5.6 Attributes of successful grassroots association committees

Figure 5.19 shows a horizontal bar chart titled with attributes and percentages:
- Positive attitudes and enthusiasm n=962
- Recognition and respect of fellow members and volunteers…
- Good communication n=959
- Effective leadership n=940
- Flexible attitudes, changing with the times n=958
- Members able to complete agreed tasks n=957
- Strong advocacy for cause n=957
- Having clear job roles & delegation of tasks n=961
- Good governance, policies and procedures n=958
- Effective conflict resolution n=955
- Regular meeting attendance n=962
- Members having the appropriate skills n=958
- High visibility for org/ brand recognition n=957

x-axis: 0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90%

Percent of respondents rating attribute as important - multiple answers

Figure 5.19: Attributes of successful committees (GAs only) (Q17)

The survey asked both leaders and regular members from GAs what attributes were needed for successful committees and the question provided 13 characteristics to rate on a five-point Likert agreement scale (Figure 5.19). The attributes presented were based on the outcomes of the focus groups, as shown in Chapter Four and the literature relevant to associations (Boehm & Staples 2006; Cnaan & Park 2016; Knoke 1981; Kramer, Meisenbach & Hansen 2013). The highest rating attribute was 'positive attitudes and enthusiasm', with 84 percent of respondents rating it as important. 'Recognition and respect of fellow members and volunteers' were also favoured attributes with 82 percent rating it as important. 'Good communication' (79 percent) and 'effective leadership' (75 percent) were also rated as important attributes for successful committees, and 58 percent reported that having 'effective conflict resolution' was also essential. The least important

attribute was 'brand recognition', with only 38 percent of respondents rating this as important.

The open-ended comment box invited respondents to add additional attributes for successful committees. There were quite a few remarks relating to behaviours, with many complaining about personal experiences with poor leadership. For example, committee members saying that "committees need people without personal agendas", "looking at the big picture and what's best for all", "the ability to negotiate and work through problems and not take everything over", and, "have a strong facilitator that allows everyone to express their views". In a similar vein, a regular member suggested the right motivations were necessary, and "not coming on to the committee for personal or self-serving interests".

Linked to effective leadership were comments about successful committees having recognition and respect for fellow members. Committee members said cooperation was needed, with suggestions such as, "ability and willingness to respect and consider others", "recognition of jobs well done", and "respecting others". Reinforcing this theme, one committee member said, "[I'm] leaving as the new President wants to do everything herself". Regular members had similar comments, such as "treat each member as having something to contribute", and "[have] a good understanding of all volunteer contributions and how they interact and not just the work they do". Good communication was also highlighted, with committee members saying things like, "good communication is essential, as I find many members do not know how to listen to others and lack the skills to effectively negotiate", and, "understanding of group behavior and communication styles [is important], ability to focus on issues, not personalities".

Having clear job roles and the ability to complete tasks was mentioned by respondents, with some offering comments such as, "[delegate] specific tasks to avoid over commitment and burnout", and, "members should be able to complete agreed tasks … and call for help if unable to do so". Some suggested that members could be upskilled to help with committee workloads with one committee member proposing:

> I believe support and willingness to help a new committee member is very important. Their initial role on the committee should be that of a learner and the taking on of new tasks gradually as they learn them.

A regular member commented that it was essential to have people with a variety of skills on a committee: "[our] committee brings together people with different skills, so the right balance can determine the enjoyment of working together".

There were quite a few comments, especially by regular members, suggesting that flexibility was an essential attribute for committees, such as having "imagination, open-mindedness", "willingness to change", "inclusiveness", and "[being] open to recruiting new members with different skills and characteristics". They also warned against "collusion and group think" and highlighted the need to "view diversity with perspective and critical thinking as vital components". One committee member suggested that it was important to be "open-minded" and, "not use conservative outdated knee-jerk attitudes to ostracise people".

Some respondents used this opportunity to share good news stories about their associations. They spoke of the joy and satisfaction that their involvement brought and that clubs "run on passion" and that "all volunteers, committee members or not, do it because we love it". A number of the respondents were proud to be in clubs with a long history, "my organisation is celebrating 100 years of service–our simple motto is 'we serve'". Others shared success stories such as:

> I believe our club is successful because of our (my) constant Facebooking, monthly newsletter, and anything which gets our club news out to the public - this has raised awareness and got us, new members. We also have many hard-working awesome volunteers. We have a fun attitude - nothing should be boring or repetitive. We have wonderful guest speakers at meetings. I could go on!

> Members of [craft group] are the happiest and grounded group of people to be met anywhere.

> Ours is a small association in a village of approximately 120 with another 80 or so outlying - almost without exception; everyone is willing to participate and assist for the betterment of [town name] - it's as good as it gets!

> I love the club which I belong to, and volunteering has given me so great opportunities that I would never dream of. However, if you don't have a good spine (committee), none of this can happen!!

Some general comments about volunteering and community participation were also given, such as "volunteers do an excellent job–where would Australia be without them?" One respondent mentioned that loyalty to fellow volunteer committee members was a motivating factor for serving on committees, saying "I would have resigned many times but did not want to let my fellow volunteers down or create even more voluntary work for them. Belief in the organisation is secondary". One committee member from a new association mentioned that they were flexible, "[w]e are a small young organisation still developing. We manage it by informal methods ... more flexible and take up less of our time than a formal board or committee. With time available, we get more done". And another said, "[t]hose who are on the committee are generally believed to be doing a good job–so if [they are]

prepared to accept nomination [they] are voted in without ado!" Another respondent summed up the concept of dedication nicely by saying, "I think I got a few things off my chest−probably some more to put in but need to go and do some volunteer work!"

5.7 Motivations to serve on a committee

Respondents who were committee members in grassroots associations were asked about what motivated them to join their current committee (Figure 5.20). The survey presented eleven motivations to rate on a five-point Likert importance scale. The motives given were based on the outcomes of the focus groups (Chapter Four) and the literature relevant to associations (Baggetta, Han & Andrews 2013; Nesbit, Rimes, et al. 2017; Posner 2015). Ninety-five percent of respondents reported that interest in the organisation's cause or purpose was a substantial or somewhat important motivator. This was closely followed by the opportunity to put their skills and experience to good use, with 91 percent of respondents reporting that this was important or somewhat important. Of lesser importance was the chance to influence outcomes (64 percent), general education and learning more about the cause of the association (both at 59 percent), and having a sense of identity (57 percent). The least significant motivators for most respondents were the opportunity to explore different career options and learn new skills (19 percent) and making new contacts that might help their business or career (14 percent), but this might reflect the small numbers of younger committee members participating in the survey.
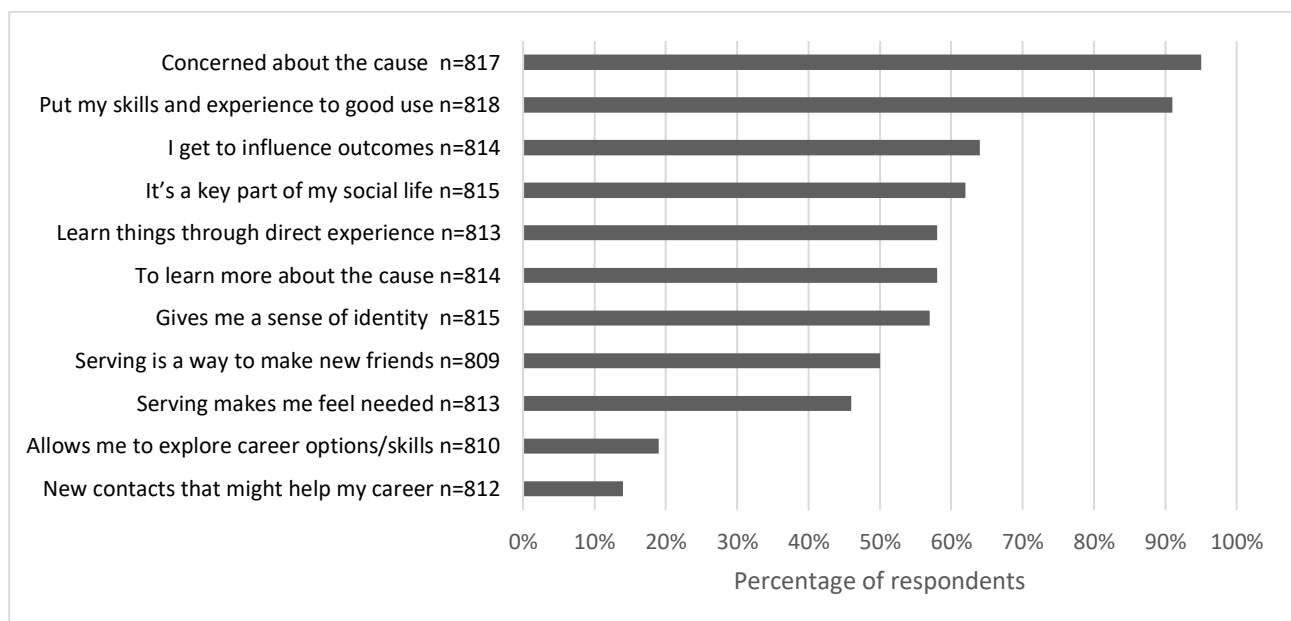
Figure 5.20: Motivations to serve on committees (GAs only) (Q20)

116

The motivations were slightly different for younger committee members, with more of the under 50s agreeing that it was important to make new career contacts (27 percent) as well as exploring different career options and learning new skills (34 percent). This correlates with a fewer percentage of younger committee members motivated by social life (50 percent versus 62 percent of the total sample) and a way to make new friends (45 percent versus 50 percent). Although younger committee members did feel that the ability to influence outcomes was a strong motivator, 53 percent agreed that this was important compared to 64 percent of the total sample of committee members. Altruism was still the highest motivating factor for the younger committee members, with 93 percent choosing the cause and purpose of the organisation as the most significant motivating factor for serving on a committee, which is close to the result of 95 percent of the committee member sample.

5.8 Recruitment strategies for volunteer leaders

A list of committee member recruitment strategies was presented to respondents from GAs, asking them to rate them on a seven-point Likert agreement scale (Figure 5.21). No strategy rated less than 49 percent. However, specific behaviours were ranked the highest, starting with being clear about what is involved with 80 percent of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that this strategy would be effective. Mentoring new members and volunteers was a close second with 76 percent of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with this approach. However, when examining only the strongly-agreed ratings, mentoring was the highest at 34 percent. Other recruitment strategies that had 70 percent or higher of agree/strongly-agree responses were increasing enjoyment and fellowship (74 percent), having a healthy and inclusive organisational culture (73 percent), inviting people to attend events and functions (71 percent) and raising the profile of the organisation to increase association membership (72 percent).
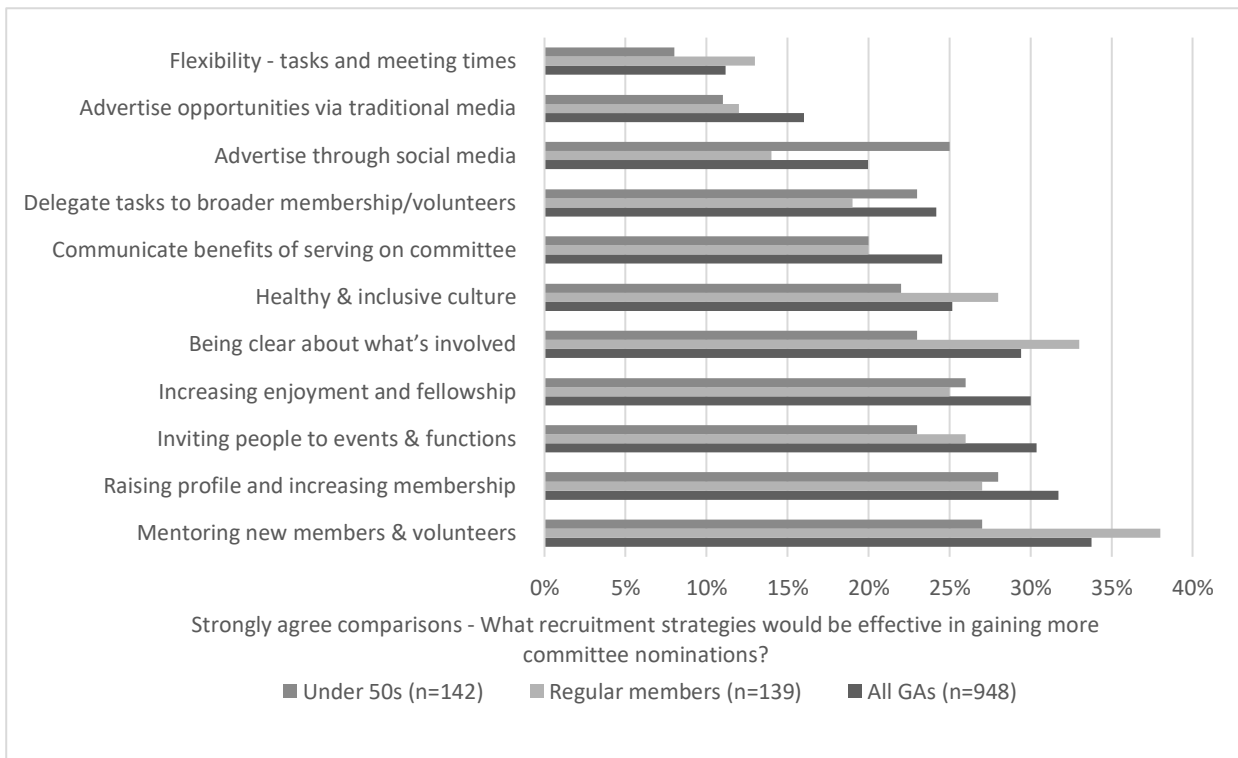
Figure 5.21: Recruitment strategies: Respondent type comparisons (GAs only) (Q18)

There were some differences when comparing the total sample of GA respondents with regular members of associations and respondents under the age of 50. Examining the strongly-agree responses only, regular members rated some strategies higher such as mentoring new members and volunteers (by four percent), being clear about what is involved (by four percent), having a healthy & inclusive culture (by three percent), and being flexible with tasks and meeting times (by two percent). Respondents under 50 years of age differed from the total sample and regular members, with more agreeing that advertising through social media was important, rating this five percent more highly. However, although the under 50s still rated most recruitment strategies as important, they thought some strategies were less critical compared to the total sample including mentoring new members and volunteers (by seven percent), inviting people to events and functions (by seven percent) and being clear about what is involved (by six percent). It is clear that in order to attract the younger generations to membership and leadership positions in GAs, different recruitment strategies will need to be considered including the use of social media and increased flexibility in organisational cultures. Generational differences and problems of an ageing membership were mentioned 259 times by survey respondents in open-ended comments, and these differences will be further discussed in Chapter Six of this thesis.

Respondents contributed 63 open-ended comments to the question of recruitment, where they were given the opportunity to provide additional suggestions on strategies that could increase committee nominations. When asked what changes would help their association work better, there were 1,090 open-ended responses provided by respondents. Many took the opportunity to vent about problems in their association, expressing thought such as "we do the majority of the strategies mentioned but still find it hard to get new committee members", "we need new blood", "I'll be giving up my role on the committee soon–perhaps leave the organisation", and,

> [Another member and I] communicated a whole range of ideas for improvement to the committee members. Nothing changed, and only one of the ideas was presented for consideration to the club. The other person left, and ultimately, so did I.

Committee members gave several comments that built on strategies already listed in the question, such as "talk to people", "change meeting times", "use word of mouth", "mentor new members", "delegate tasks with clear roles and responsibilities", "update social media", "promote the organisation more widely", "invest in advertising", and, "use personal approach". Other suggestions that were new and not listed in the questions included more consultation with members such as, "talking to members and knowing your member's interests and strengths", and "talk to people about what is happening and what is needed". Some suggestions were more about the big picture and how associations could work together to benefit the whole community, with comments such as "align and work with other relevant organisations", "instil strong community development–see the bigger picture", and,

> There has been a tendency in recent times to try and attract new volunteers with the 'what's in it for me' approach. Wrong. People volunteer to help out the organisation, the benefits follow after that.

> We've tried inviting people to attend special membership drives, but the most effective way is contented, lively members whose commitment is contagious.

There were a few comments reporting successful recruitment strategies. Committee members wrote, "our small association has no difficulty in filling vacancies", "we have a large number of members who volunteer for jobs but are not on the committee–a right balance", "we have a couple of under 25s join the committee, and we have really seen them blossom", and, "we simply do not have problems … our enthusiasm is what encourages volunteers to join us". Regular members with positive reports wrote, "most of these strategies are currently in use, and this is why it is good to belong to this group" and, "[the committee] is welcoming and inclusive … when time allows, we will be increasing our

involvement". Some respondents contributed overarching comments such as, "good leadership will address all of the above", and, "every organisation should be prepared to fall over if there is no longer the need for the group".

Forty-nine respondents put forward ideas for tangible changes that could be implemented by governments and associations themselves. A popular suggestion was for a better focus on strategic planning within associations, which would assist associations to focus on priorities and conduct better meetings. Respondents expressed a need for strategic planning in this way:

> I will leave my position on the committee at the AGM which will happen shortly. I was co-opted onto the committee to develop policies etc. as I have expertise in this area. After four years, I am still very frustrated that the majority of members still do not understand the importance of a strategic plan, nor do they appreciate the amount of work that is needed to keep a complex organisation moving forward. It's still very much a 'this is the way we've always done it' committee.

> Separate the 'nuts and bolts' stuff from strategic planning and devolve specific tasks to sub-committees. A great deal of meeting time is off-agenda and are too varied in scope. [At the] last meeting, discussions swung from our long-term viability to how many sausages were needed for a barbeque! It's one of the endearing characteristics of a community organisation, but it is endlessly frustrating.

> I think it's important for organisations to have strategic plans, with tangible goals, targets and indicators of achievement, and that these be reviewed regularly. And they should be fun and energising.

> Our organisation first has to understand that they have challenges, and have the courage to have meaningful conversations about the future of the club.

Related to strategic planning, some comments were associated with strengthening ties with other community groups and more involvement with local communities, which could lead to associations making strategic changes that would consolidate programs or change the focus of services allowing more flexibility to address community needs. Other suggestions were related to committee operations, such as succession planning, spreading the workload more equitably by introducing project-based committees or amalgamating teams, having fewer meetings, using technology better and simplifying membership requirements. Other comments relating to strategy included:

> Developing projects that will involve new members, keeping their interest.

> Change constitutions to widen membership, evaluate membership fees and to be more flexible with office terms.

> Introducing events in school holidays so that families can attend.

> Discuss the challenges of sustaining organisations, share ideas on how to overcome them.

> Break large roles into smaller ones and give each person a job that they are happy with.

Several respondents suggested that cultural change was vital for the sustainability of their associations. Most of the comments were related to inflexible and antisocial behaviours and the need for more inclusion and new ideas. Two respondents expressed it this way:

> We need to see some of the 'old guard' move on. The culture has to change - but that is usually met with eye rolls—and 'what's wrong with us?!' They won't change, and they don't appear to want to change. Poor conduct ties up a lot of time and energy, making some roles too big to attract new people.

> Taking on new ideas in a club can provide challenges but also generate enthusiasm. It is important that new ideas are discussed and agreed to.

Respondents called for committees that displayed leadership, had a diversity of skill sets or "committee volunteers with 21st-century experience". They thought it was important that volunteer leaders were willing to change, try new things and to create a "culture in which everyone believes that they have a role to play", to appreciate the needs of the "modern generation" and to provide a pathway for regular members to "air concerns" with committees. They called for committee members to "let go of tired old ways" that are "no longer in demand these days" and make changes that would make clubs more attractive and efficient. One respondent contributed this example:

> The [squash club] has been running for over 30 years without a formal board structure. All matters are discussed either on the night of a match or via e-mail, and all members are invited to contribute to all decisions.

Respondents rated behavioural and operational changes higher than traditional forms of recruitment, such as traditional advertising, as effective recruitment strategies. There were noted differences of opinion between committee members and regular members, and also between different generations, which are discussed in more detail in Chapter Six of this thesis.

5.9 Chapter summary

When examining membership levels at the time when this survey was undertaken, involvement in GAs appeared to be stable with an equal number of respondents reporting that membership levels were decreasing, increasing and staying the same. However, when looking forward, respondents from GAs overwhelmingly agreed that their associations were having trouble recruiting new members and volunteers. When examining the open-ended comments, 60 percent of GA respondents reported difficulties in member recruitment and 66 percent expressed difficulty in recruiting new volunteers.

This may be related to the growing phenomena of 'pay 'n' play' (Holmes & Slater 2012), where members will join an association solely for the benefits, such as the use of a sporting facility or playing in a band, without doing any coordination work or nominating for leadership positions.

When asked about leadership trends, more than two-thirds of respondents from GAs agreed that their associations were having difficulty recruiting new management committee members. This reduced pool of potential committee members may be contributing to GA committees becoming oligarchical, with the vast majority of respondents agreeing that their associations were led by the same people year after year. When asked why people do not join volunteer committees, respondents from GAs most often reported a lack of time as the significant barrier, which is consistent with barriers to volunteering in general (Pope 2005; Sundeen, Raskoff & Garcia 2007; Warburton & Crosier 2001). The other main obstacles included fear of responsibility, lack of self-confidence and poor behaviours culminating in toxic committee cultures. The open-ended comments expanded on the quantitative findings in this survey, and additional barriers were mentioned that related to changing community attitudes, ageing of members and alleged apathy in younger generations. The problem could be circular, with oligarchic behaviours instilling poor habits in committees, which perpetuate a lack of confidence in potential leaders or confirm the 'time-poor' barrier. Since a major motivation to serve on committees was enjoyment, it suggests the idea that if the reputation of a committee is negative, a potential nominee might 'not have time' to join it.

Respondents were asked what attributes would make a successful committee. The clear majority of respondents from GAs nominated behavioural characteristics such as positive attitudes and respect of fellow members, effective leadership and good communications. The open-ended comments supported these findings, with many respondents discussing the importance of a healthy culture and strategic planning. It appears that if committees can improve their culture, barriers for people willing to consider committee positions would be reduced. Another motivating factor that influenced volunteers to join committees was an active interest in a cause, so it stands to reason that associations that communicate well with their members and have a high profile will attract new volunteer leaders who can put their skills to good use.

The most popular recruitment strategies for committee participation were also behavioural and were related to barriers that were discussed earlier in the survey. Eighty percent of

respondents agreed that being clear about what is involved in committee work would be a valuable recruitment tool. This could address the time-poor barrier in that potential volunteer leaders would have some idea of the time commitment required for volunteer leadership roles. The strategy of mentoring potential leaders was also rated highly, which would address the fear of responsibility and confidence barriers. Raising the profile of the association would appeal to potential leaders who believe in the cause or purpose of the group, as well to those who want to influence outcomes. The open-ended comments supported the quantitative findings, with many respondents suggesting that strategic planning was needed in GAs and that consulting with members on the operations and future of the association would be beneficial.

The fact that behavioural and cultural changes were mentioned more frequently than operational changes (such as more publicity) means that recruiting new leaders will be a challenging task for associations. When asked in the open-ended comments what were the significant challenges facing associations, the need for more members and volunteer leaders was the leading issue. The significant issues respondents discussed regarding these problems appeared to be ageing memberships and community apathy, along with financial pressures. The challenges seem to be circular, with declining memberships contributing to economic pressures, which reduces the resilience and capacity of associations with fewer members joining or staying.

Relationships with governments and parent bodies were mentioned at length, with increasing red tape possibly the result of a lack of connection and communication between GAs and governments, including local councils. For example, government grants and regulations increasingly require associations to have access to information technology including high internet speeds and the appropriate skills to use technology. Many committees with ageing members do not have these skills, or the technology, to comply with or access grants. Survey respondents provided many examples that highlighted a disconnect between government policies and the needs of GAs. The challenges appear to be acuter for rural and regional associations, with quite a few heartfelt examples showing associations in crisis, and governments not understanding the pressures they face.

Community apathy was raised 258 times in the open-ended comments, and the resentment expressed by many respondents regarding this was alarming, echoing Putnam's (2000) forewarnings about significant social change that began in the late twentieth century. With the introduction of social media networks in the 2000s, people may

be finding different ways to communicate with each other and advocate for causes rather than joining associations (Spagnoletti, Resca & Lee 2015).

Respondents contributed ideas on how associations can deal with change and reinvent themselves through strategic planning and cultural change. They gave specific examples of how governments could make specific policy changes that make sense, such as simplifying funding criteria and removing stamp duty on buildings during association mergers. It was heartening to read reports of some associations in good health, although those comments were in the minority. These associations seemed to be more willing to be flexible, plan well for the future and have healthy cultures. It appears that although membership levels in the past five years have been maintained, respondents from GAs are very concerned about their future. The sheer volume of open-ended comments, and the passion in which they were expressed, demonstrate that members of GAs, especially volunteer leaders, are very concerned about the future of their associations and the effect on the services and existence of social capital of local communities if they were no longer in existence. Perhaps the challenges for grassroots associations are more complicated than simply addressing barriers at the association level.

The next three chapters will discuss these problems in more detail, as they analyse in depth the macro, meso and micro barriers that are preventing people from joining and leading grassroots associations.

CHAPTER 6:   MACRO BARRIERS TO MEMBERSHIP AND LEADERSHIP

People's lifestyles are different to what they were 20 years ago. They work different hours, varying hours, and the amount of sport and other activities that they can go and watch has changed. People do not actually have to be a part of a committee. Its enormous compared to what it was, and that's driving people away from joining organisations (committee member focus group participant from Onkaparinga).

6.1 Introduction

It has been established from the data presented in previous chapters that grassroots associations (GAs) in South Australia are forecasting a significant decline in membership numbers, volunteer participation and leadership position nominations. The following three chapters will synthesise the barriers to leadership around three constructs: the macro-level barriers that affect both members and leaders of GAs on a societal, government and economic level (Chapter Six); meso-level barriers which are generated at the organisational level (Chapter Seven); and micro-level barriers faced by people at an individual level when considering leadership positions in GAs (Chapter Eight).

The previous chapters presented new data collected from focus group participants and survey respondents that revealed numerous barriers to the leadership of grassroots associations (GAs) at the environmental or macro level. The barriers were often described as impediments to membership, as well as leadership, as leaders are usually recruited from the membership ranks of GAs. Such barriers included increasingly complex regulation and 'red tape', a perceived generational divide in regards to altruism, gender issues affecting volunteer participation, the impact of modern technology on traditional modes of communication, the decline of rural communities, and the rise of an individualist culture in Australian society (Figure 6.1). Many focus group and survey participants were particularly frustrated with these environmental issues as they felt a lack of control over them and, in many cases, an inability to adapt to change and modernise their practices.
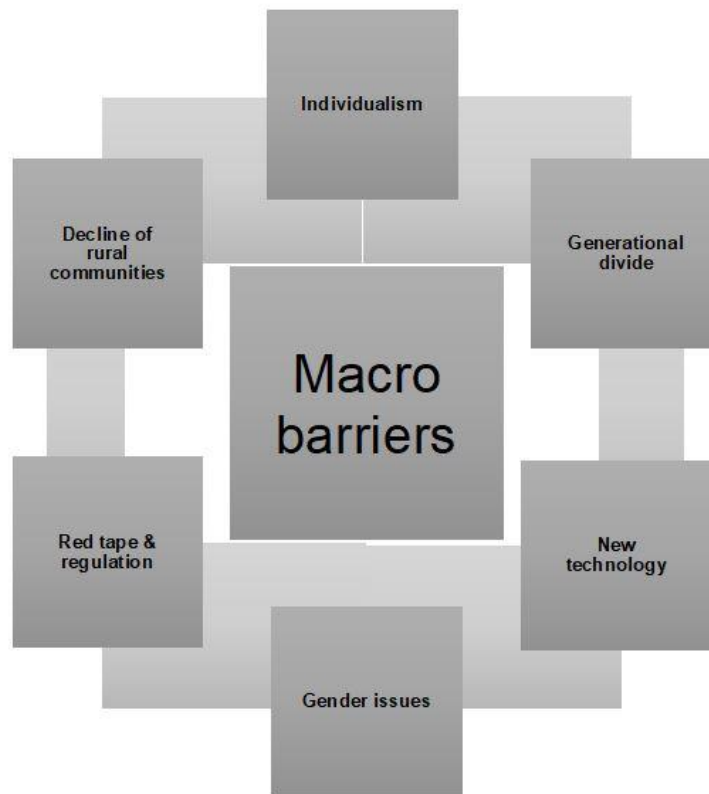
Figure 6.1: Macro Barriers to GA membership and leadership

The literature demonstrates that these macro-scale changes are indeed impacting on the sustainability of associations and civic participation (Eklund, Oppenheimer & Scott 2016; Pusey 2003; Putnam 2000; Raysmith 1998). Using the data from this thesis, this chapter will discuss, in detail, the key macro-barriers that are affecting GAs as they arose in the data, and consider how they deter new members from joining GAs, and also inhibit existing members from taking on leadership roles.

6.2 Regulation and Red Tape

The beginning of the twenty-first century saw increased regulation for incorporated associations including grassroots associations (GAs). This regulation has grown substantially and been influenced by many factors including the insurance crisis of 2001, increasing litigation, elevated aversion to risk, and the outsourcing of government services. In combination, these factors transferred risk from governments to the not-for-profit sector through new forms of service level agreements and grant processes. This contributed to the professionalisation of the non-profit sector and helped to create a new volunteering infrastructure in Australia and other eastern countries (Maher 2015). However, this

professionalism brought with it increased compliance costs that smaller grassroots associations cannot absorb as quickly as the larger not-for-profit organisations.

In 2001, an insurance crisis hit Australia with the collapse of HIH insurance, which had a significant share of the public liability market. HIH was the second largest insurance company in the country, and its considerable losses initiated a royal commission which uncovered escalating claims and subsequent fraud and mismanagement that occurred to cover up the financial difficulties of the company (Owen 2003). The collapse of HIH reduced the capacity of the industry to supply public liability insurance and significantly increased insurance premiums for GAs (Merritt 2007). The collapse also made it difficult for some GAs to access insurance, particularly those involved in high-risk activities such as pony clubs and working with children (Mason, A 2002; Naulty 2018). This was in addition to regulations being relaxed for the legal profession in the 1990s allowing for advertising and 'no win–no pay' remuneration (Mason 2002). In the 1996 White Sands Quarry case, the High Court found that landowners were responsible for everything that happened on their property, which generated the universal requirement for public liability insurance for anyone hiring a community hall (Naulty 2018). Furthermore, the 1991 National Safety Council Case in Victoria demonstrated that volunteer directors were just as liable as paid directors when its chairman was found liable to creditors for $97 million (McGregor-Lowndes 2014). Combined, this multitude of factors led to a situation where many GAs found it difficult to obtain insurance. This, in turn, made it increasingly challenging to recruit skilled committee members who sought to be covered by directors' insurance. As McGregor-Lowndes (2014) found, the number of volunteer directors of Australian non-profits declined as the number of remunerated directors increased. GAs are voluntary and do not pay committee members a salary. These insurance issues have had a more significant negative impact on GAs than larger associations who have the resources to fund both staff and board members.

At the same time as the insurance crisis, governments began to outsource welfare services to reduce costs. This action devolved the responsibility for risk management to non-profit organisations and private companies, who were then provided with operational grants through tender processes to deliver programs previously undertaken by governments (Bedford 2015; Rochester et al. 2016). Modelled on the UK experience where funding was becoming more prescriptive and linked to specific targets and outcomes closely aligned with government expectations, governments in Australia

introduced grants with new types of service agreements which included 'value for money' performance measures and targets. (Aiken & Harris 2017; Dalton & Butcher 2014; Hutchison & Ockenden 2008; Zimmeck 2010). This neoliberalist trend also occurred in the USA, which forced many non-profit organisations to adopt market-oriented business practices and metrics in their accountability to governments (Jensen 2017). Some researchers saw this as a devolution of responsibility which created an uneven balance of power between governments and the non-profit sector (Carr 2002; Onyx, Cham & Dalton 2016). In any case, most tenders were out of reach of small GAs which had no paid staff or volunteers with appropriate skills, and GAs were largely excluded from this process (Dalton & Butcher 2014). In 2000, new requirements further compounded compliance associated with the introduction of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) which required the non-profit sector to have an Australian Business Number if they wished to apply for government grants, even if they were not needed for their day-to-day operations. All this increased compliance came at a cost. In its report into regulatory and reporting burdens on the charity sector, Ernst & Young calculated that the Commonwealth Government imposed, on average and per organisation, between $27,000 and $38,000 per annum of 'red tape' regulatory and reporting obligations that were deemed unnecessary or confusing (2014).

This practice of transferring risk and tax compliance has impacted on GAs which only ever receive small grants. For example, the requirement for responsible service of alcohol, criminal history checks and risk management plans may well be needed but are deemed onerous by some (Nichols et al. 2015). Based on the feedback from focus group participants and survey respondents, and current South Australian Government grant application forms (*Grants SA Guidelines* 2017), governments have embraced a 'one-size-fits-all' template for all grant agreements for the entire not-for-profit sector, including GAs. Instead of drafting agreements with minimal red tape, they have adapted complex service agreements originally designed for significant expenditure to the administration of small grants aimed at GAs. In this study, survey respondents offered many examples, including local government demands such as 'Food Safe' certificates for holding barbeques in public parks.

On top of complex legal and grant requirements, the courts are upholding negligence claims in the strictest terms which forced the introduction of criminal history checks and increased regulations for workplace safety (Mason, A 2002). The effect on the ground for

GAs is the need for extra insurance, increased accounting and management skills, and access to information technology which is not available in many cases. The impact of these developments has dramatically affected GAs, demonstrated by the fact that almost 80 percent of GA survey participants agreed that people did not want the weight of responsibility of legal requirements which come from serving on committees. In addition, 55 percent of survey respondents reported that people did not feel they had the right skills to be on a committee and 25 percent of them agreed that people were worried about legal liabilities. Perversely, this can result in confusion and an over compliance by GAs, with individuals often forced to get multiple police clearance documents if they volunteer for more than one organisation (Ford 2017).

In addition to compliance requirements, a growing concern over risk management is now front and centre in government grant application criteria, where little consideration is given to the capacity of GAs when compared to associations with paid staff (PSAs). GAs do not necessarily have the professionalism (which is the presence of business practices such as written procedures and rules), skill base, time and technological resources to complete detailed and complicated application forms and write official reports (Brueckner, Holmes & Pick 2017). For example, the small grant application process for amounts of less than $5000 from the South Australian Department for Communities and Social Inclusion is complex and requires the completion of an online form that requires an internet connection (*Grants SA Guidelines* 2017). It is a lengthy process and, to be eligible, GAs must be incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Act 1985 and have an Australian Business Number. Those associations who comply with a 'quality management system' are preferred, which is a system whereby organisations implement formal procedures to achieve high-quality outcomes. There is a tick-box approach for the project outcomes that align with government priorities and target groups. Supporting evidence is required such as letters of support, formal partnerships, surveys and reports as well as lengthy project descriptions and a detailed budget with a requirement for written quotes to be uploaded with the application.

This process is often overwhelming for GAs, many of whom choose not to apply for these grants due to their complexity. As one survey respondent said, "the application processes can be time and resource prohibitive … the number of hours required to apply for a small grant of $2500-5000 isn't worth it". The list of successful grantees from May 2016 (Round 58) confirms this view. Eighty-seven percent of these small grants were given to

associations with the resources of paid staff (Department for Communities and Social Inclusion 2017). Dalton and Butcher argue that the gradual rise of 'Big Charity' in Australia is reducing the amount of government funding to smaller non-profits because they have a disproportionate amount of influence on government policy. They support the view that "a significant, and disproportionate share of income derived from government contracting flows to large, employing organisations" (2014, p. 13), and,

[i]mplicit in this critique is a fear that a relatively small cohort of very large nonprofits are crowding-out the majority of smaller organisations – not only with respect to their capacity to compete for a slice of the funding 'pie', but also with respect to their capacity to gain the ear of policy makers" (2014, p. 3).

It stands to reason that if governments are only consulting with large non-profits and not hearing the voices of grassroots associations, that the needs of smaller associations would be missed when developing grant criteria such as the 2017 grant program cited above. This point is significant, as one would assume, that small grants would be aimed at grassroots associations and not the larger non-profits who are the majority recipients of these grants.

Other government grant programs demand additional compliance requirements such as training in food handling, risk management plans, criminal history checks and the serving of 'healthy' food. Warburton and McDonald (2009) argue that recent changes in the regulatory environment have had an overwhelming effect on older volunteers who may not have the relevant experience and training. In many instances, these requirements are not legally compulsory and introduce unnecessary red tape for GAs. However, sometimes these requirements have been lawfully declared and arise from coronial or royal commission recommendations. Examples include the mandatory training of volunteer firefighters and criminal history checks for volunteers working with vulnerable people (Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse 2015; South Australian Coroner 2008).

The volunteering infrastructure in Australia has been funded by governments to help navigate these growing legal and regulatory requirements by providing training and support to not-for-profit organisations. In Australia, the volunteering infrastructure includes Volunteering Australia based in Canberra, peak bodies in each state, and around 100 volunteer support centres based in local communities across Australia (Maher 2015). They collectively produced the *National Standards for Volunteer Involvement*, which is a comprehensive policy and guidebook on how to manage volunteer programs (*Volunteering*

Australia Website 2017). State peak bodies and local volunteer centres offer training programs on how to implement the National Standards, as well as on volunteer management, governance, productive meetings, risk management, grant writing, customer service, communication skills and conflict management amongst others.

Although this support in navigating and managing red tape would be beneficial to many grassroots associations, access to this support is promoted to a membership base within the volunteer infrastructure which, in most cases, is limited to organisations who have insurance and designated persons responsible for managing volunteers. Thus, most GAs are excluded (Southern Volunteering 2017; Volunteering SA & NT 2017). As in the UK, the volunteering infrastructure in Australia is dominated by larger incorporated associations with paid staff, who "tend to favour a formalised approach to volunteering more akin to the service delivery and philanthropic modes of volunteering than to alternative conceptualisations" (Rochester et al. 2016, p. 224). These 'alternative' types of organisations, such as GA civic associations and leisure groups, have been found to resent this "growing influence of managerialism" and would see the National Standards developed by the volunteering infrastructure as adding layers of unnecessary red tape (Brueckner, Holmes & Pick 2017, p. 31). In an interview with the CEO of Volunteering SA & NT, it was explained that insurance cover and formal volunteer management was required for association membership to promote best practice (by protecting volunteers and the public), and to safeguard the organisation from liability claims when it advertised volunteer positions through its website (O'Loughlin 2017).

Many survey respondents suggested more training was needed to address the growing demands of professionalism. The volunteer infrastructure does offer such training, but survey respondents were unaware of the programs. It is evident that GAs are operating below the radar of the volunteer infrastructure, the vast bulk of whom are unaware of the potential services and support available to them. Likewise, the volunteer infrastructure appears to be unaware of the significant need for training by the leaders and the membership base of grassroots associations. Data from both the focus groups and survey demonstrate that volunteer leaders of GAs would welcome more training to cope with the increased professionalism of their operations.

Based on the analysis of the data provided in this study, it is evident that GAs increasingly have to balance the need for professionalism while, at the same time, mitigate red tape related barriers faced by potential volunteer leaders. Complex insurance policies, risk

management procedures and complicated grant applications all bring extra costs and burdens to GA committees. Considering the importance of GAs to Australian society, it is surprising that this is not recognised by governments or the volunteer infrastructure. As Rochester et al. warn, "there is a real danger that too much formalisation will damage the spirit and characteristics of volunteering" (2016, p. 230).

6.3 Generational Divide

In previous chapters, the data revealed that younger people were not putting their hands up to join or lead GAs. In fact, both focus groups participants and survey respondents expressed alarming concerns regarding community apathy among younger Australians. This echoed Putnam's forewarnings about significant social change that began in the late twentieth century, when he found that successive generations were investing less time in community groups and that "active involvement in face-to-face organizations has plummeted" (2000, p. 63). As most of the focus group participants and survey respondents were over fifty years of age, it was unsurprising that some blamed the decline in civic participation on the generational divide. This reflects Putnam's (2000) findings on the 'long civic generation', who formed associations following the war years to build communities and create social cohesion, versus later generations who merely joined mailing lists. However, some younger focus group participants and survey respondents were critical of what they saw as old-fashioned behaviours displayed by older committee members who, in their view, did not change with the times and appeared to be inflexible or unable to adapt to changing environments. As Lein observed, "volunteers today have less tolerance for projects that waste their time because they are badly led, or because their skills and experience are grossly underutilised" (2010, p. 194). This is a circular problem facing some GAs who unwittingly becoming oligarchical, with ageing members forced to remain in committee roles as fewer younger people are willing to take their place.

Some younger focus group participants under the age of 40 criticised the antiquated practices of GA committees, with several participants complaining that committees were not flexible or adapting to changing times. This feeling was expressed with statements such as "[my committee is] all so officious and rule-bound" (ONC6), "it does seem very, very formal" (ONC4), and "you need to know the protocols of committees ... it can be a bit daunting" (TNC6). If these comments by young focus group participants reflect the views of most young people, it reveals that they either reject these protocols or, alternatively, they may be missing out on civic education at schools or through programs such as the

132

now-defunct Junior Australian Red Cross program (Oppenheimer, M 2014). However, as expressed by an older focus group participant from the Barossa Valley, sometimes generational differences manifest themselves in practical considerations such as older people not wanting to meet in the evenings when younger people are available.

There is debate as to whether people from different generations are intrinsically distinct, having shared experiences that permanently shape their view of the world as suggested by generational theory, or merely going through various life stages that all generations experience such as marriage, child rearing and retirement (Huntley 2017; Scott, J 2000). Rotolo and Wilson (2004) argue that sociodemographic trends, such as the rise of feminism, could explain the change of volunteering behaviour across age group cohorts. However, through a longitudinal study, Jennings and Stoker (2004) argued that there are specific generational differences when it comes to social trust, which has led to a reduction in civic engagement by members of Generation X who came of age in the 1980s and 90s. Their data suggested that members of this generation are 50 percent less likely than previous generations at the same age to be members and office bearers of non-school related community associations (Jennings & Stoker 2004). Scott confirms this, drawing on Mannheim's (1952) theory that generational value clashes occur between generations due to formative experiences such as social change and significant events in history (Mannheim 1952; Scott, J 2000). Wuthnow (1998) found generational differences in civic engagement emerging in the 1990s with young people preferring more irregular and short-term forms of participation than older generations in the USA. This finding was supported by the survey data in this thesis, with 83 percent of GA respondents under 30 agreeing that being flexible with tasks and meeting times would be an effective committee recruitment strategy, compared to 75 percent of all GA respondents. A recent study in Holland, which included a survey of 572 volunteers over the age of 50, found that their volunteering roles were a vital part of their identity, which may explain why older volunteers may be more passionate about volunteering than younger people (van Ingen & Wilson 2016).

There is support in the literature that concurs with survey respondents' view that young people have different values than older generations, which may reflect their disengagement in GAs. In his study of 'middle Australia' in the late 1990s, Pusey (2000) found that the average Australian was "much more individualist and oriented towards personal challenges and achievement" than previous generations. Others believe that

modern youth are no less altruistic than older generations, but there is more fluidity in their commitments as they were brought up with rapid societal changes including divorce, frequent moving and great choice in how they spend their time and with whom (Veludo-de-Oliveira, Pallister & Foxall 2015). Mackay writes that younger generations have "grown up with the idea of impermanence; change is the air they breathe" (Mackay, Hugh 2014a, p. 80), and, "[t]hey are as community-minded as anyone else; they'll be as willing to volunteer as anyone else; but their terms will be different" (Mackay 2014a, p. 81). Huntley (2017) concurred but goes further, arguing that members of Generation Y are less satisfied with life, with more barriers to success than their parents due to prohibitive costs of housing and more competition for professional careers with more of them being university educated.

Twenge (2010b) supported this view, suggesting that when it came to altruistic work values, there were no significant generational differences between the Baby Boomers and Generations X and Y. However, the Generation Ys were less likely than Boomers to go into paid work that directly helped others and were less inclined to accept positions with responsibility (Twenge 2010b). Twenge (2010a) also found that members of Generation Y had less of a work ethic and were more individualistic than previous generations, which is why those born since 1982 have been labelled the 'entitled generation'. Conversely, a recent neuroscience study by Ronald Dahl (2018) found that the part of the brain that is responsible for judgement and insight, the frontal lobe nerve cells, are not fully connected until the mid-twenties. Thus, Dahl (2018) asserts that young people are incapable biologically of understanding how their behaviour can affect others.

A trend is emerging with the growth of Facebook groups which make it easy for people to freely join a multitude of associations without the need for face-to-face meetings (Ferree 2015). Willson suggests that new technology is becoming a dominant mediating tool in social relationships and that "we need to rethink our understandings and practices of community" (2006, p. 3). There is also an apparent generational difference in the use of technology with younger people preferring to use online engagement in political activism (Warren, Sulaiman & Jaafar 2015). They are more likely to join online advocacy groups and to use social media to find and exchange information than going to face-to-face meetings (Evans, Halupka & Stoker 2014; Onyx, Cham & Dalton 2016). This was supported by a survey respondent who, when asked what challenges were faced by their association, wrote "[there is] declining membership as community ages and younger

people have a broader range of alternative options including technology/social media". In their investigation into social capital after the 9/11 terrorist attack, Sander and Putnam (2010) found that more young people were getting involved in volunteering with a renewed sense of civic conscience, even before the advent of Facebook and Twitter in 2004. They observed that adults were engaging differently, with more use of social media, but that face to face communication was still important, observing that the Obama campaign still relied on door-knocking despite the rapid uptake of social media.

> In a world where Facebook 'friendship' can encompass people who have never actually met, we remain agnostic about whether Internet and social entrepreneurs have found the right mix of virtual and real strands to replace traditional social ties. But technological innovators may yet master the elusive social alchemy that will enable ongoing behaviour to produce real and enduring civic effects. If such effects do come about, they will benefit young and adult Americans alike – and fortify the civic impact of our new 9/11 generation (Sander & Putnam 2010, p. 15).

When tracking activist groups in the USA, Han, Sparks and Towery similarly found that although more people were called to action with online tools, face-to-face initiatives, or 'offline activism' maintained people's engagement for longer periods of time (2017, p. 25).

It is clear, therefore, that the evidence found in this study is supported by the literature that suggests that younger people are not joining formal associations and, in particular, do not want leadership positions. As Wells observed, "[y]oung citizens no longer inhabit the world that made participation in classic membership organizations attractive a century ago, and the practices of late-twentieth century "checkbook" membership appear never to have been satisfying as civic action" (Wells 2015, p. 6). The evidence in Australia does show that young people are still volunteering (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2014; Harrison Research 2016a) but are doing so in new ways that use technology and in contexts that offer more flexibility (Dean 2014; Hewitt 2017; Rochester, Colin et al. 2016; Sander & Putnam 2010). If younger generations are just as altruist than their older cohorts, the data from this study clearly shows that they are not joining GAs or stepping up to their leadership ranks. If young people are joining GAs as members, they may be joining as 'free-riders' and expressing their altruism in other ways through formal volunteer programs that provide more professionalism, flexibility and inclusiveness.

6.4 New Technology

Australians of all ages are embracing new technology, giving grassroots associations a vast amount of tools that can be used to address the barriers of time availability, disability and geographic boundaries (Merrill 2006). New technology provides tools for grassroots

associations to share information, educate, persuade and organise themselves much faster than in traditional forms of communication such as newsletters (Onyx, Cham & Dalton 2016; Willson 2006). Social media can help maintain social ties as it has been demonstrated that internet users know more of their neighbours and have a higher awareness of local community-based activities than non-users.

> When people with bridging ties use communication media, such as the Internet, they enhance their capability to educate community members and to organize, as needed, for collective action. Internet users that have broad networks attend more local meetings and events. … Social media is a tool for increasing face-to-face interaction and social capital It also increases communication across community groups. (Kavanaugh, Reese, et al. 2005, pp. 119-20)

The number of Australian households with access to the internet reached 7.7 million in 2014–15, representing 86 percent of all homes (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2015). Around the world, social media is increasingly used for civic engagement and advocacy (Obar, Zube & Lampe 2012). Much of the literature supports the view that the use of social media by individuals and organisations increases social capital by encouraging communications and the sharing of information (Hercheui 2011; Mesch 2008; Spagnoletti, Resca & Lee 2015). Both focus group participants and survey respondents acknowledged this access to online technology, reporting that new technology was both a barrier and an opportunity to the running of their organisations. For some, the resistance to using new technology such as social media, or even 'old technology' such as email, was a key barrier to committee work. As Wells found in his study into the communication methods of 60 large civic associations in the USA, "many civic groups remain entrenched in a mass media information paradigm–and so fail to communicate in ways that resonate with young people" (2013, p. 615). Some participants blamed this on generational differences, with comments such as "[m]any of the volunteers are older and are unwilling or unable to adapt to technology that might assist" (survey respondent in her 50s).

Some focus group participants were aware of their lack of technological skills and did admit that it was holding them back. A Burnside focus group regular member participant in her 70s said, "Unfortunately I have no computer skills, and this limits me a lot because everything is online, all our agendas and notices, our accounts" (BRM6). Others were resentful of new technology, saying things like "I think the world was a much better place before Facebook and Twitter and all those horrible things ... I regard all those things as being an excuse for not communicating at a personal level so I don't think that you should use that tool as a way of getting someone to say yes I want to join the committee!" (Tanunda committee member in his 60s, TCM5).

Many participants and respondents relayed the inevitable fact that new technology was here to stay and that members of GAs needed to keep their skills up to date. When asked about opportunities, survey respondents contributed comments such as "more adoption of technology, increase in use of technology", "launch a website and facebook page", "we need to adopt current technology and tools to be more effective in communication", and, from a respondent under 30, "teaching current members in the use of computers, emails and electronic equipment". Some comments were about the opportunities that new technology can offer GAs. Seventy-seven percent of survey respondents agreed that advertising opportunities through social media would be useful in gaining more committee nominations. When asked about what resources were needed for their groups, survey respondents offered suggestions such as, "having a tech-savvy person who would be willing to operate our Facebook page", and, "launch of a website and Facebook page to aide broader recruitment and communication". One survey respondent reported that her organisation was already using technology successfully saying, "I believe our club is successful because of our constant Facebooking … this has raised awareness and got us new members".

Some participants mentioned Facebook Groups, a product of Facebook that allows people to join an online group with others of similar interest, which can be joined openly or by invitation. One survey participant, who was a member of a Facebook group on Australian plants, used this group to engage with others from all over Australia but did say this reduced the need to join a face-to-face association, saying "[group name] as a whole needs to readdress its future … they get the information they want from the knowledgeable people in the Facebook group". This phenomenon has been supported by Barnes and Nelson (2014), who argued that associations are no longer unique providers of expertise for their members, and members who are 'tech-savvy' will source information from multiple sources.

In an auto-ethnographic study using a sample of Australian university students, Dighe (2010) found that the use of Facebook groups enhanced member engagement with tools that shared information and online conversations. She found that these groups facilitated face-to-face meetings and events which helps build social capital (Dighe 2010). However, her study also found that only a few members of the group took an active role in posting information or administrating the site, which revealed that their "lack of personal investment made their membership fragile" (Dighe 2010, p. 105). This is similar to

grassroots associations who meet face-to-face, where the '80-20' Pareto Principle rule consistently demonstrates that within groups, 80 percent of the work is done by 20 percent of the members (Murimi 2017). This ratio was confirmed by one focus group participant who stated, "I think generally speaking there is an 80-20 rule which means that you'll always get 20 percent of the people doing 80 percent of the work". Members of online groups who are geographically scattered and do not know each other offline are less likely to actively participate in discussions (Kavanaugh, Carroll, et al. 2005).

In a multinational study, Howard and Gilbert (2008) found that people who were active participants in face-to-face groups (membership associations) engage more in civic affairs, are more satisfied with life and are more trusting than those who not involved in associations. Due to the ease and speed of communication between people simultaneously, however, they did recognise that face-to-face interaction is less relevant today with the arrival of electronic communication (Howard & Gilbert 2008). In a similar vein, Rainie and Wellman (2012) argued that "networked individualism was the new operating system" (p. 7), and that people were not isolating themselves on the internet as they were now "networking as individuals rather than embedded in groups" (p. 6). They summed up their theory by claiming that "people are not hooked on gadgets—they are hooked on each other" (2012, pp. 6, 7).

However, in their study using a large sample of adults across the USA, Gil de Zúñiga and Valenzuela (2011) found that although online social networking complemented face-to-face interactions, the more people interacted in person, the more likely they would participate in civic activities. The study also revealed that those involved in online conversations had a much stronger attachment to civic involvement due to the communication being text-based, purposeful and focussed (Gil de Zúñiga & Valenzuela 2011). Acknowledging that face-to-face communication is not a requirement of social capital, Putnam (2004) stated that face-to-face interaction is essential and that it is "probably correlated with density of ties and with degree of reciprocity" meaning that people who know each other offline are more likely to have friends in common that help build more give-and-take relationships than online networks (Putnam, personal communication with Rice, in Katz et al. 2004, p. 324)

It is well documented that having strong interpersonal connections provides health benefits and that face-to-face relationships are good for wellbeing (Colorafi 2016). The *General Social Survey of Australia*, however, found that weekly face-to-face contact with family or

friends living outside the household is declining, falling from 79 percent in 2010 to 76 percent in 2014 (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2015). Pinker argued that due to the convenience of the internet, people have less social interaction in day-to-day activities such as shopping, working and even university lectures, with many students never needing to leave their bedrooms. He argued that "[j]ust as the sidewalk vanished … the post office, newsstand, bookstore and video stores–all places where we crossed paths just a few years ago–are becoming obsolete" (Pinker 2014, p. 13). In support of this observed trend, a time-diary study by Nie, Hillygus and Erbring (2003) found that people who spent more than five hours per week online saw less of their family and friends, and had less face-to-face time with family, friends and colleagues.

The issue of people spending more time with their smartphones and less time with their families and friends was picked up by Australian journalist Anne Hyland, who described this trend as people being "busier now Instagramming our meals than playing tennis with a friend" (2015, p. 53). Many social researchers believe that this increasing dependence on electronic communication, instead of face-to-face interactions, is bad for the health, happiness and longevity of individuals (Pinker 2014). This theme is reinforced by Australian social researcher Hugh Mackay, who wrote that online communities might be distracting us from local neighbourhoods, and that:

> The richness of face-to-face communication feeds our relationships and deepens our intimacy. The loss of it reduces a relationship to an exchange of news bulletins or perfunctory declarations of friendship that imply we don't actually value each other highly enough to spend time together (2014a, p. 189).

Generation Ys, in particular, have spent their entire lives in a digital environment and prefer online communication (Bolton et al. 2013). Even now, there is an ever-growing number of virtual volunteering opportunities available where you never have to speak to anyone in person (*DoSomething.Org* 2017). Governments and funding bodies, too, are imposing the use of technology on GAs with the advent of online application forms and reporting tools. Furthermore, social media products such as Facebook Groups are offering many benefits to GAs and may prove to be the new 'disruptive innovation' for grassroots associations, allowing people to meet and interact online with others with similar interests from around the globe without the need for face-to-face communication (Christensen 2015). The passive nature of Facebook group participation, however, demonstrates that online groups, on their own, may not be as powerful as GAs who augment online tools with face-to-face communication.

The data from this study reveals that technology is playing a growing role in the management of GAs as it is now embedded in the everyday life of most Australians. Those GAs who embrace online communication tools, such as Facebook Groups and email, may be more likely to survive in the long-term. There is no doubt that face-to-face interaction is still crucial for societal and personal wellbeing. GAs who want to maintain this personal contact, increase their membership base and attract new leaders will embrace new technology especially for communication, retention and recruitment purposes. They will also need to be open to the next digital phase, whatever that might be.

6.5 Gender issues

Although the issue of gender was not at the forefront of the data in this study, it was raised by some focus group participants and survey respondents as an important theme to consider. When discussing time availability for volunteering, some participants attributed the fact that more women were now in the paid workforce and this has reduced the time available for both partners in a household to volunteer in associations, because both had to spend more time with household tasks and family duties during their free time. This has been supported in the literature, which found that uptake of full-time employment by women has reduced their volunteering by more than 50 percent in the United States (Putnam 2000). This is because women are more likely to continue to do most of the childcare and housework at home which limits their availability to volunteer (Taniguchi 2006; Tiehen 2000). Hugh Mackay agrees that the increased number of dual-income households is reducing available hours for volunteer work, suggesting that "[b]oth partners are absent from their local neighbourhood by day and busy with domestic matters at weekends" (2014a, p. 32).

The survey data from this study found that 78 percent of all GA respondents agreed that lack of time because of work and family commitments was a barrier to serving on committees. This is supported by the literature where time pressures are often mentioned as a significant barrier to volunteering (Haski-Leventhal et al. 2017; Holmes & Slater 2012; Tiehen 2000). When investigating only committee member respondents, 81 percent of females agreed with this proposition compared to 77 percent of male respondents. Within the cohort who agreed, 16 percent of women 'strongly agreed' compared to 10 percent of men. The survey data demonstrates that women may be more aware of the time-poor barrier because they are most likely to experience first-hand the burdens of family commitments and housework that dominate their free time (Rotolo 2000a). Survey

respondents offered comments such as, "more women work now so the time for leisure activities is diminished and therefore serving on committees is another time pressure", and, "it's very difficult to get younger women [to volunteer] due to their family commitments". This theme was supported by contributions from focus group participants who said:

> Once upon a time, in a small town, you had no trouble getting volunteers, but now with both parents working children at school, they do not have the time to be on a committee a voluntary thing (TNC4).

> The whole pattern has changed. There aren't any women out there who are not working and so the ones that were available to volunteer for the school canteen and all those sorts of things, and they've disappeared (BCM6).

With most of the survey respondents over 50 years of age, it was not surprising that the issue of childcare for grandchildren came up (Taniguchi 2006). This may be one of the factors contributing to the drop-out rates of women on committees after the age of 60. Women make up the majority of committee members up to the age of 59, with participation rates falling sharply into their 70s. Focus group participants and survey respondents said this of the issue:

> And looking after the grandchildren. Picking them up from school, being the carer while mum and dad are working - the grandparents down here play a large part in family life and looking after the little ones (TRM3).

> It is a huge commitment of one's time and many of our members have grandchildren to look after (survey respondent).

When examining other significant barriers to volunteering on committees, the survey data revealed little gender difference between respondents' observations, who agreed equally that people did not want the weight of responsibility, that people did not like committee politics or personality conflicts, and that people were too shy to put themselves forward. Women and men did differ slightly in their observation that some people feel that they do not have the right skills to be on a committee, with 56 percent of women agreeing with this statement versus 53 percent of men agreeing.

When reporting on the benefits of committee work, men and women equally said that volunteering on a committee was a key part of their social life, that they were able to put their skills to good use and were genuinely concerned about their organisation's purpose. However, men and women had different motivations for serving on committees. Slightly more women than men believed that volunteering on a committee gave them a sense of identity, made them feel needed, was a way to make new friends and help their business

or career. More men than women believed that it was important that they were able to influence outcomes, which reinforces the findings of research that shows that there are some gender differences in prosocial behaviour (Soutschek 2017).

As previously noted from the survey results, slightly more women than men volunteered on GA committees, at 52.6 percent. This is a much smaller gender gap than the total population of volunteers, with 62 percent of board and committee members being female (Harrison Research 2016b). When comparing the frequency of volunteering between female and male committee member respondents, 85 percent of both men and women in this study reported that they volunteered at least once a week, which is much higher than the 52 percent of surveyed South Australians who reported that they volunteered on boards or committees at least once a week (Harrison Research 2016b).

Some survey respondents pointed to the need for more gender diversity on committees, with one suggesting the need for "more female inclusivity at a local level", and another suggesting, "more emphasis needs to be put into including opinions of women in all aspects of the organisation–a sea change of thought for the mainly male membership. This is being very gradually implemented by younger members". While the survey results show slightly more females participating in GA committees than males, there are probably more gender differences in specific sectors such sporting associations and service clubs that have traditionally been dominated by male leaders (Fyall & Gazley 2015). It is in those associations where more attention to gender differences could be beneficial, especially in rural areas where workload issues are felt more acutely by volunteer leaders, as described in the next section.

6.6 Decline of rural communities

Rural communities rely on the contribution of volunteers much more than their urban counterparts, with 38.6 percent of adults in rural communities volunteering compared to 29.7 percent in urban areas (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2014; Davies, Lockstone-Binney & Holmes 2018). This is largely because volunteers provide essential social capital and services that would otherwise not exist (Atherley 2006; Cocklin 2003). Due to population decline and the rise of economic rationalism, volunteers in rural areas in both Australia and overseas, increasingly fill service provision gaps following the withdrawal of government services and business facilities (Brueckner, Holmes & Pick 2017; Halseth & Ryser 2007; Winterton & Warburton 2014; Zappalà 2000). Others propose that there is

more social cohesion in rural communities and volunteering is expected to provide a 'moral order' (Winterton 2014; Wuthnow 1998). As Bernard Salt observed, "there's nowhere to hide in communities with just 1500 residents—if there's a cake stall on or a working bee at the school, everyone has to do their bit" (2011, p. 101).

Focus group participants in the Barossa Valley echoed the literature, offering comments that describe the strong community spirit of rural Australia. For example, "I've been a volunteer I suppose since my teens, living in a small country town where everybody pitches in and volunteers" (BRM4). A few survey respondents said similar things about community life in rural areas, such as "volunteering for an organisation in country areas helps to stay involved in the community and gives you a healthy outlook on life by mixing with people", and "almost without exception, everyone is willing to participate and assist for the betterment of [town name] - it's as good as it gets!"

However, the vast majority of comments from rural focus group participants expressed concern about declining population, increased red tape and the decreasing number of people volunteering for leadership positions. This, in turn, is increasing the workload for the volunteer leaders who remain and the literature confirms these concerns (Brueckner, Holmes & Pick 2017; Pick, Holmes & Brueckner 2011; Winterton 2014). The literature also confirms that young people are leaving rural areas and that these communities are becoming more reliant on older volunteers who resent the increasing encroachment of professionalism (Brueckner, Holmes & Pick 2017; Davies, Lockstone-Binney & Holmes 2018; Winterton & Warburton 2014). Focus group participants described these concerns with comments such as, "there's not that many people on it [the committee] and that means that the workload is very, very high for those who are on it, which turns other people off volunteering" (TCM3), and, "I'd love to give up the position, but nobody else is there to give it to" (TCM10). A newcomer to the Barossa reported that she was inundated with invitations to join committees, reporting that "I wanted to network, get to know people … everyone started asking me to be the secretary of this, will you join this committee and do that, and I got overwhelmed with everything in the end" (TNC6).

Most regional focus group participants volunteered with multiple associations, and the survey results highlight increased workload pressures for volunteers in the country. Sixty-four percent of regional respondents reported that they believed over-commitment to multiple associations was a major barrier to volunteering on committees, compared with 54 percent of urban respondents. Red tape brought about by legal and regulatory obligations,

especially in the area of government grants and risk management, was a significant contributor to increased workloads. Thirty percent of rural survey respondents were worried about legal liabilities when serving on committees, compared to 24 percent from urban areas. In addition, poor infrastructure in rural areas also contributes to workload pressures.

Both focus group participants and survey respondents lamented the fact that young people were leaving rural communities, and this made it harder to recruit new volunteers and committee members. This is confirmed in the literature (Atherley 2006; Winterton 2014). Despite this, there was no significant difference in the age distribution of volunteer leaders in urban and rural areas, with 64 percent of volunteer leaders aged 60 and over in both urban and rural areas. However, slightly more rural than urban respondents reported that they experienced difficulty recruiting new volunteers for their associations and observed trouble recruiting new committee members. One survey participant complained about being "forced to move his wife and children off the farm to go to high school" due to fewer schools in rural areas, and others noted that once young people were off to the city for education and employment, few came back. Survey participants contributed comments such as, "with declining rural populations it's hard to see anything helping", "if we do attract younger members we only have them for a few years", "many go to Adelaide for tertiary education and don't return to the country", "as a country town, employment and studies takes many to the city", and, "a lot of kids leave the country after school and this is the age group we are trying to engage".

The impact of volunteer disengagement may be more acute in rural and regional areas which are more reliant on volunteer organisations and their volunteer leaders. One respondent offered this observation, "passion for an organisation creates great leadership and can take [them] to great heights. But in a small country town, such leaders are few and far between. Where do we go from here, when the leader needs to leave?". In the year 2000, Joy Noble recognised many barriers faced by rural volunteers, especially in emergency services where they spend countless hours training at the expense of critical farm work. She wrote, "[t]he questions need to asked as to whether country people can be expected to keep up this level of volunteering at a time when regional services are being withdrawn or downsized, and when many residents are experiencing financial hardship" (Noble 2000, p. 158).

Findings from both the focus groups and survey demonstrate that volunteer-led associations in rural communities feel the impact of the generational divide, gender issues, new technology and increased red tape more acutely than associations in urban communities. The leaders of these associations are living in communities that are experiencing steady population decline and less government and business services. Given that these communities heavily rely on volunteers for many essential services, especially in emergencies and natural disasters, many of their volunteer leaders are experiencing acute stress with fewer young people available to step up and take their place.

6.7 Rise of Individualism

A consistent concern expressed by focus group participants and survey respondents was the general decline of altruism and voluntary participation across society. Participants expressed concerns about community apathy regarding the common good, decreased involvement in community groups and more focus on the needs of the individual. Many noted social scientists propose that individualism, the ideology that emphasises self-interest over the common good, has been on the rise in Western societies since the 1980s (Eckersley 2012; Putnam 2015; Rochester, Colin et al. 2016). Others believe that it may have caused long-term damage to volunteering as it diminishes collectivism, social compassion and altruism (Dean 2015). Ricard explained that individualism had positive aspects, such as fostering initiative and creativity, but could "very quickly degenerate into irresponsible selfishness and rampant narcissism to the detriment of the well-being of all" (2015, p. 9). Hustinx and Meijs (2011) linked rising individualism to the trend of volunteers preferring short project-based tasks with multiple organisations, hence only developing weak ties to organisations. They observed that "the new generation of volunteers negotiate the shape and substance of their engagement according to their own

preferences and needs" (Hustinx & Meijs 2011, p. 9).
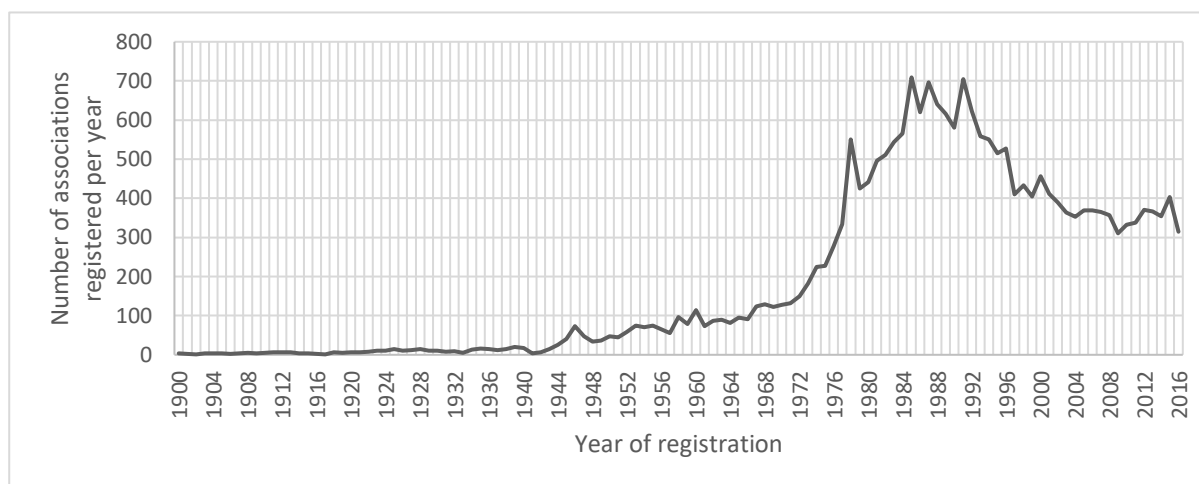
Figure 6.2: Registration trends of South Australian Associations
Source: Office of Consumer and Business Services (2016)

As highlighted in Figure 6.2, the peak of association registrations in South Australia was in the mid-1980s, perhaps due to the influences and impact of the Whitlam Government and its policies like the Australian Assistance Plan (AAP). This plan stimulated the formation of new GAs by empowering local communities to work together and implement local solutions to entrenched social and economic problems (Pusey 2003; Raysmith 2006). Oppenheimer (2012) suggested a direct correlation between the AAP and the creation of a broad range of voluntary organisations, and that over 30% of them had their origins in the 1970s with the growth of new forms of volunteering in social action, women's rights, heritage protection and the conservation movement.

As the economic recession worsened in the 1970s, individualism was promoted by right-wing think tanks such as the Heritage Foundation in the US and the Centre for Independent Studies in Australia, inspired by economist Friedrich von Hayek amongst others (Norington 2003; Wilson, DS 2015). With a move to Thatcherism and Reaganomics, governments across Australia steadily replaced the community development approach with competitive tendering of government services, introducing a hands-off approach to service delivery in the 1990s. This led to the further professionalisation of the not-for-profit sector who were contracted by governments to deliver social services (Pusey 2003).

Along with other Western countries, Australia entered into 'welfare pluralism' where governments became facilitators and regulators (Rochester et al. 2016, p. 221). This was

done by outsourcing many services to both non-government and private organisations through competitive tendering, forcing volunteer-involving organisations to become more formalised (Rochester et al. 2016). This practice of contracting-out favours larger organisations who have the support of paid staff and, in doing so, locked out smaller GAs who traditionally provided volunteer labour in partnership with government agencies (Noble 2000). Despite the steady increase in the state's population since the 1960s, this formalisation coincided with the decline of new association registrations in South Australia. Raysmith attributed this trend to a "decline of civil society, of community and social responsibility and the associated growth of individualism" (1998, p. 3) meaning that societies became more focused on the needs of individuals themselves, rather than the wellbeing of the community as a whole.

The resentment expressed by many focus group participants and survey respondents, who noted a decline in civic participation and community apathy through their own observations, was alarming. This resentment echoed Putnam's (2000) forewarnings about significant social change that began in the late twentieth century. In the focus groups, this trend was often expressed as a 'changing society', which manifested as communities of time-poor citizens who were not joining GA committees. Most explanations for not having enough time to volunteer or to take on leadership positions were family and work commitments, but one older focus group participant thought this was an excuse, saying "we weren't any less busy than people today are … today people just step back and say no" (BCM8). Other participants noted a shift in attitude to volunteering reporting that many associations were having difficulty recruiting volunteers, with one participant saying, "people are not getting involved in groups these days because they are more self-interested" (OCM3).

Many survey respondents echoed the views of focus group participants, expressing frustration at people not stepping up in general, providing comments such as "people don't want to commit themselves as they are afraid it may involve too much time and work, and leave it to others". Respondents were also concerned about general apathy in their communities with 259 open-ended comments relating to this issue. Such comments included, "[there is] not the same sense of community commitment as existed in the past", and, "the biggest problems are self-interest and apathy … apparently due to national political and cultural shifts away from collective responsibility and action". A focus group participant from Onkaparinga put it this way:

> There is a lot of apathy. People's lifestyles are different to what they were 20 years ago. They work different hours, varying hours, and the amount of sport and other activities that they can go and watch has changed. People do not actually have to be a part of a committee. Its enormous compared to what it was, and that's driving people away from joining organisations (OCM7).

The data from this study and the literature shows that people are becoming disengaged from joining and leading GAs. Rising individualism may be a contributing factor, or it may be that people are volunteering and contributing to society in different ways. Joining membership-based associations, with all the associated obligations, may seem old-fashioned and time-consuming to modern Australians in the twenty-first century. Perhaps like in the USA, Australians may be joining associations like a tennis club to participate for recreation and contribute to causes through advocacy groups with paid staff that are not reliant on a membership base. As Skocpol (2003) found in the USA, advocacy groups that started during the great social movement of the 1970s saw a new way of organising themselves. There, people abandoned membership-based associations during the 'civic transformations' of the 1970s, in favour of new mailing-list advocacy groups who were professionally managed from one central location and for the most part abandoned membership programs:

> Some older membership associations ended up participating and expanding their bases of support, yet the groups that sparked movements were more agile and flexibly structured than pre-existing membership federations. What is more, many of the key groups were not membership associations at all. They were small combinations of nimble, fresh-thinking, and passionate advocates of new causes *(Skocpol 2003, p. 138)*.

However, this does not explain why the 'free-riders' of associations, such as those who join tennis clubs only to play, are not stepping up as volunteer leaders to help keep these types of clubs operating. Perhaps, like in the USA, Australians are experiencing the fragmentation of communities at a local level and reduced ideals of personal responsibility (Schlozman et al. 2015). It may be just easier to leave this work for others to do or pay someone to do it.

6.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter explored in detail the macro-level issues that are creating barriers to both the members and leaders of GAs. It drew on the data from focus group participants and survey respondents who identified red tape, new technology, generational differences, gender issues and the rise of individualism as important factors that are having a broad and negative impact on GAs. When combined, these issues create significant barriers that inhibit people from joining and then leading GAs.

The introduction of complicated red tape and compliance requirements has forced the professionalisation of associations, which has caused resentment from GA leaders due to time and skill demands that are generated. The rise of new technology is undoubtedly having an impact on how GAs are run and how they communicate with members. Leaders of GAs who do not adapt to the new technology are putting their organisations at a disadvantage. The data reveals that young people are not putting their hands up to become volunteer leaders of GAs, perhaps because they expect the use of new technology, more flexibility and episodic opportunities. The data also demonstrates that women are active leaders of associations, but drop out when they are older which may be related to family caring obligations or burnout, which was frequently mentioned by many female leaders. Many rural volunteer leaders also mentioned burnout, and increased pressure on them has amplified their stress which is compounded by the lack of proper infrastructure in rural towns and regions. With the rise of individualism, these barriers all combine to create a harsh environment for volunteer leaders to navigate. The data showed that the barriers were felt across GAs in all sectors, most acutely in emergency services, sport, aged care and social services which are areas that are experiencing the most increase in regulation and red tape. The next chapter will explore the barriers that GAs create themselves at an organisational level, which may also be inhibiting potential members and leaders coming forward.

CHAPTER 7: MESO BARRIERS TO MEMBERSHIP AND LEADERSHIP

What's with the first and seconds? If you had another point that hadn't been thought of before it had to wait─you couldn't just discuss it (regular member focus group participant from Onkaparinga).

7.1 Introduction

This chapter will examine how grassroots associations themselves are creating barriers at the organisational (meso) level that are preventing people from joining their associations and dissuading members from stepping up to volunteer leadership positions (Figure 7.1). Brudney and Meijs (2013) propose that there is a 'volunteer commons' in communities and that volunteers form a common pool of 'volunteer energy'. They suggest that if volunteers are misused, or ill-treated by just a few organisations, they will give up volunteering altogether (2013, p. 2). They go on to say that,

> abuse of the resource by organizations through mismanagement harms the prospects of other users (organizations) of obtaining and harnessing volunteer energy because volunteers become less interested and willing to continue contributing their time (Brudney & Meijs 2013, p. 4).

From the data collected in this study, the volunteer commons theory may apply to grassroots associations (GAs) in Australia, where people are not joining associations or nominating to be volunteer leaders of GAs due to poor behaviours and outdated practices performed by GA associations themselves. These meso barriers include poor organisational cultures and behaviours, inflexibility in management practices, unnecessary red tape, not embracing new skills or new technology and unequal workloads. As validated by the data, these self-inflicted barriers are preventing many individuals from joining associations and are, thus, reducing the pool of potential leaders. This research supports Joy Noble's observation that, "[v]olunteers have choices, and few will remain in an organisation if the experience is not positive" (2000, p. 159).

Figure 7.1: Meso barriers to GA membership and leadership

7.2 Poor organisational cultures and behaviours

Volunteer committee members drive the strategic planning and operations of GAs, and, from this, organisational cultures are developed. The culture of an association will subsequently drive behaviours, and it is well accepted that poor cultures in an organisation will lead to poor behaviours (Doherty, Patterson & Van Bussel 2004; Hoye 2006; Paull & Omari 2015). The data from this study supports this view, with many focus group participants and survey respondents reporting that poor organisational cultures and bad behaviour were significant barriers to association membership and leadership. Research has also found that the retention of new volunteers was highly dependent on enabling recruits to feel welcome in organisations (Handy & Cnaan 2007). Associations with poor organisational cultures often suffer from committee oligarchies that purposefully make themselves exclusive. However, sometimes oligarchies are formed due to a reduction in general membership which means they do not have enough members willing to nominate.

Ninety-four percent of survey respondents agreed that mentoring new members would be an effective recruitment strategy to gain more committee members, and 90 percent agreed that raising the general profile of the organisation and increasing membership would also be useful. To do this, GAs need to recognise that being open to new members and new talent is essential for their ongoing sustainability. After all, 62 percent of survey respondents who were committee members of GAs agreed that socialising was a significant motivating factor for joining their committee, and 50 percent agreed that it was a way to make new friends. Studies have established that enjoyment, pleasure and socialising with others were significant motivating factors that influenced people's decision

to volunteer (Nesbit, Moldavanova, et al. 2017; Netting 2008; van Schie et al. 2015). Conversely, the literature also confirms that negative experiences and bullying are a disincentive to volunteering (Brudney & Meijs 2013; Paull & Omari 2015; Warburton 2006).

The data suggested that many GA committees have entrenched organisational inflexibility in the way they operate. Although this may often derive from the GA's culture, rigidity may occur because committees believe that specific processes are a legal requirement, the past history of the association or habits of individual committee members. Seventy-five percent of GA survey respondents agreed that being flexible with tasks and meeting times would be a useful recruiting strategy for committee members, and sixty-three percent agreed that having flexible attitudes and being willing to change with the times was an essential attribute for successful committees. As described in Chapter Four, focus group participants provided many examples of inflexibility within GA committees. When asked what changes would help their associations work better, survey respondents contributed comments such as "listen to new ideas", "being contemporary", and "the capacity to keep up with change". Some respondents provided comments such as "younger people are put off by the format of formal meetings etc". As described in the previous chapter, comments such as these may also reflect generational differences, particularly around the formality of meeting procedures and uses of technology.

In any event, associations that demonstrate flexibility are probably more likely to be more sustainable. For example, in recent years the Uraidla Country Show committee in rural South Australia changed the dates of its annual show from February to November to avoid the fire season, and from a Saturday to a Sunday to prevent clashes with community sport, all of which reinvigorated participation and attendance (Liebelt 2017). This is in stark contrast to other country shows which have closed entirely such as in Renmark, Orrorroo and Lipson (Buckby 2017; Lush 2011). People may not join GA committees if they are inflexible and not prepared to change with the times. Based on the data collected in this study, if the forward outlook of a committee is in trouble, so is the association.

7.3 Instituting unnecessary red tape

Inflexibility in the operations of GAs may also lead to the introduction of unnecessary red tape. As discussed in Chapter Six, much of the red tape faced by GAs is required by governments and the legal system. This increasing red tape has introduced new professionalism in many not-for-profit organisations who have increased their numbers of

professional paid staff. As a result, however, the demands of professionalism have cascaded down to smaller GAs who do not have the benefit of any paid staff. This lack of expertise often means that it is not clear which compliance tasks are required in any given situation, and which ones are not.

To protect members from liability and to receive government grants, GAs sometimes incorporate to form an association that has a single legal identity. In South Australia, legislation of this nature has been in force since 1890, and "has proved of great benefit by providing a means whereby churches, schools and other non-trading institutions may become incorporated so that the property of the institution … is vested in the corporation" (Rowe 1956, p. 1216). With incorporation comes personal liability protection for committee members which legally separates them from the entity. With incorporation, however, comes legal obligations including having an agreed set of rules or constitution, appointment of a committee to 'administer the affairs of the association', a public officer who is the central contact point for the association, a common seal that serves as the signature of the association, the keeping of financial records and the recording of minutes (*Associations Incorporation Act 1985*).

The South Australian *Associations Incorporation Act 1985* has extra legal provisions that are required for 'prescribed associations' which have annual receipts of over $500,000 (*Associations Incorporation Act 1985*). These include requirements such as annual general meetings and audited annual returns. These extra requirements, however, are often practised by GAs even if they are not legally required to do so (Table 7.1). For example, minutes are required to be signed by a person who 'presided' at a meeting under the Act for all associations, but there is no legal requirement for specific roles in a committee such as president, secretary and treasurer. Only two positions are officially required, and they are the public officer and a position "who has the management and control of the funds and other property of the association" (*Associations Incorporation Act 1985*, p. 20). The Office of Consumer and Business Services advises associations to "settle on a workable number of officeholders, and various titles may be used to describe them" (Office of Consumer and Business Services 2011a, p. 7).

Annual general meetings and election of officers are a common aspect of the governance landscape with many GAs, but while these practices constitute good governance, they are not legally required. Associations often include these activities into constitutions based on example rules published by the Office of Business Services that are more relevant for

prescribed associations (Office of Consumer and Business Services 2011a). GAs often have constitutions that require monthly committee meetings, audited financial reports, formal meeting and voting procedures, and the appointment of dedicated committee office holders that are elected to these positions generally for a 12-month period. These practices may not be necessary or practical for small GAs and, in many cases, create unnecessary red tape and barriers for people who may want to join committees. The Government of South Australia compounds this problem by providing incorrect information on its website concerning the governance of associations such as the need for a secretary, and guidebooks that do not specify between actual legal requirements and suggested proper governance procedures (*Organisation types: Incorporated Associations,* viewed 28 Sept 2017).

Table 7.1: Requirements of Associations

Requirement	Incorporated Associations	Prescribed Incorporated Associations
Accounting records	X	X
Annual general meetings		X
Audited financial statements		X
Committee report of personal benefits		X
Common seal	X	X
Due diligence requirements of officers		X
Elections	X	X
Management committee	X	X
Monthly meetings		
Periodic return		X
Public officer	X	X
Reasonable care requirements of officers	X	X
Required number of committee members		
Rules of association or constitution	X	X
Signed minutes by presiding member at a meeting	X	X
Someone who has management and control of funds and property	X	X
Specified position names such as Chairperson/President, Secretary, Treasurer		

Source: Associations Incorporation Act 1985

It is understandable how professionalism has crept into the operations of some GAs (Hill & Stevens 2011; Maier, Meyer & Steinbereithner 2016). This formalisation can include the introduction of job descriptions, codes of conduct, screening and training procedures. People are becoming more aware of their legal rights, and the Australian system of common law means that GAs need to be more aware of their obligations in regards to

public health and safety (Gaskin 2005; Volunteering Australia 2003). It has been argued, however, that often GAs do not have the capacity for formality, and this puts them at a disadvantage when it comes to grant funding even though GAs make up a vast majority of the non-profit sector (Nichols et al. 2015). In the United Kingdom, this difficulty was taken up by the Sport and Recreation Alliance who lobbied for a government investigation into red tape, which resulted in the 2011 *Red Card to Red Tape* report that recommended reducing bureaucratic rules for small sporting associations (Nichols et al. 2014).

In many cases, however, the leaders of GAs do not have the skills or experience to deal with this new landscape. GAs have over-reacted to the demands of modern red tape by introducing unnecessary procedures in their management practices such as requiring every volunteer to have a police clearance even when they do not work with vulnerable people (Rochester et al. 2016). In doing so, many GAs are interpreting regulations on their own, sometimes incorrectly (Bedford 2015, p. 465). As one focus group participant said, "[p]eople are not on committees for rules and regulations [and], don't bring those skill sets" (OCM3).

As explained above, the *South Australian Associations Incorporation Act 1985* requires higher compliance standards for prescribed associations (those with greater than $500,000 turnover) compared to GAs. The Office of Consumer and Business Services (OCBS) does not clearly differentiate between the two in its publications, so it is understandable that GAs over-formalise their operations when there is no need to. This is instituting unnecessary red tape for their committees and members. For example, in the OCBS publication, *An example of rules for an Incorporated Association*, the template provided is designed for prescribed associations and is far too complicated for small GAs. It includes clauses for annual returns, the appointment of an auditor and unnecessary proceedings for GAs such as monthly meetings (Office of Consumer and Business Services 2011a). Focus group participants offered the following examples how committees of GAs are misinterpreting the legal requirements for non-prescribed associations:

> … you need to know the protocols for committees and how to second a motion, and how to address the chair and all those kinds of things, and if you haven't been trained in that it can be a bit daunting (BRM6).

> I guess the kind of way that it runs does seem a little bit daunting, just having to be so structured and formal about everything, you can't just slip in a random comment about something, you have to always put it on the agenda beforehand, you have to email someone beforehand if you want to discuss something (ONC4).

Criminal history checks were frequently mentioned by focus group participants and survey respondents as a barrier to volunteering. While these are a legal requirement for volunteers working with children and vulnerable people, some associations are forcing all their volunteers to be checked even when not required (Volunteering Strategy for SA Working Group Three 2014). This may be due to the complexity of new legislation and a risk-averse approach by GAs and government bureaucrats due to a lack of understanding. As one focus group participant from Burnside shared, "you need police clearance just to pack clothes in the back of the Vinnies [charity shop] room" (BCM4). After being bombarded with over 64,000 requests for criminal history checks for volunteers in 2015, this issue was addressed by the South Australian Volunteering Strategy by publishing a flowchart that specifies when criminal history checks are required for volunteers (*Briefing note for Estimates Hearing, South Australian Parliament*; Department for Communities and Social Inclusion 2015). The publication was followed by public information sessions and may result in a decline of criminal history checks from 2017.

While some GAs are over-governing themselves, there is still a need for good governance in small associations. Fifty-nine percent of survey respondents agreed that having good governance, policies and procedures was an important attribute for successful committees. As one focus group participant from Onkaparinga said:

> There are certain formal rules that you are required that committees are required to observe, particularly where there is money being handled, so I mean there is often no options there, there will be the constitution will say there will be a treasurer or a committee, there will be x number of committee members and there will be a quorum etc., so there are some things you just can't get around and I think that is for good reason too, from a transparency point of view, and I think if the general group are to think that the committee is doing the right thing then they need to be at least aware that there are certain rules that need to be observed by that committee, they are just going to have 'Rafferty's rules' (ONC3).

While there is an obvious need for good governance, it appears that many are unwittingly creating rules in their constitutions which are above and beyond what is legally required. Ninety-one percent of survey respondents who were committee members from GAs reported that putting their skills to good use was a significant motivating factor for joining their committee, and 64 percent said that the ability to influence outcomes was also important. This indicates that if there is too much unnecessary red tape or superfluous committee procedures, it will create a barrier to people joining GAs and their committees because it conflicts with primary motivations for joining committees in the first place.

7.4 Not embracing new technology or new skills

Comments from both focus group participants and survey respondents indicated that not adopting new technology, or not having the appropriate skills to lead, could be causing an inflexible culture within GA committees. Lack of skills could also be holding back GAs from keeping on top of compliance tasks associated with red tape. Eighty-seven percent of survey respondents felt that having members with proper skills was an important attribute for a successful committee. Focus group participants shared many observations on the lack of appropriate skills in committees, and the lack of computer skills was also a significant concern for both focus group participants and survey respondents.

It has been noted that the changes in technology and the introduction of the internet is one of the most significant changes to society in human history (Schwab 2017). This has meant retraining for essential communication and services on a massive scale across society for the vast majority of Australians. GAs, therefore, would not be immune to this change and those who have committee members who keep developing their skills are at an advantage. As discussed in Chapter Six, the volunteering infrastructure in Australia offers many training seminars for volunteers. The organisations within the volunteering infrastructure could easily partner with Connecting Up Australia or public libraries who already provide low-cost and free training in information technology across South Australia, and promote this training to members of GAs, their leaders and would-be leaders.

7.5 Unequal workloads

As discussed in Chapter Six, many focus group participants and survey respondents complained about unexpected high workloads when joining committees. This is caused by a combination of various factors. These include the growing trend of people not participating in committees which leaves an increased workload for those who are left, more red tape demanding more time and effort, and reduced productivity when committee members do not embrace new technology or keep their skills up to date. In many cases, as reported by 59 percent of survey respondents, committee members over-extend themselves to multiple associations. As discussed in the previous chapter, growing individualism may too be having an impact on the willingness of people to help in general. Both focus group participants and survey respondents shared many experiences regarding the stresses of high workloads that result in burnout.

GA leaders who are aware of the risk of high workloads can alleviate this barrier by spreading tasks among not only committee members, but also to the general membership. This process would be enhanced by clarifying and delineating the work involved in specific tasks, which would provide more information to prospective volunteers (Allen & Mueller 2013; Souza & Dhami 2008). Hustinx and Meijs called this practice 'flexibilisation', where organisations create roles which are small and less complex therefore requiring less training and orientation (2011, p. 12). Eighty-eight percent of GA survey respondents reported that delegating tasks to the broader membership would be a useful recruitment strategy in gaining more committee members, and 94 percent agreed that being clear about what was involved in committee work would be useful. Some focus group participants who were not committee members said they were perfectly happy to be responsible for discrete tasks without being on the committee. As one regular member from the Barossa said, "they're happy to help [but] they don't want to take a position" (BRM4). As discussed earlier, it may be that GA leaders are unwittingly creating unnecessary tasks due to a misunderstanding of legal requirements, not taking advantage of new technologies or not encouraging different ways of working. High workloads are a barrier to committee work and, in many situations, these high workloads appear to be self-inflicted.

7.6 Chapter summary

Many of the issues identified at the meso or organisational level in this chapter, were directly related to macro-barriers and environmental factors discussed in Chapter Six. For example, the introduction of unnecessary red tape at the GA level was directly related to red tape and regulation imposed by governments and insurers at the macro level. Similarly, the reluctance by some committee members of GAs to embrace new skills and technology is directly related to the developing new technologies now available at lightning speed, which many leaders of GAs find hard to keep up with. Generational and gender differences, combined with increased red tape and new technology, manifest themselves in GAs at the meso level with inflexible work practices and poor behaviours being brought about by increased stress. Combined, these pressures are turning people away from GAs and increasing the workload for those volunteer leaders who stay.

Both focus groups and survey respondents reported a decline in membership and volunteering in their associations, and they indicated that this was leading to a decrease in the number of potential volunteer leaders. As a Barossa focus group participant pointed

out, "if you don't have a good size membership, you're not going to get [the] committee people that you need, so it's really about building the general membership" (BRM1). To build a strong membership base, GAs need to nurture new and prospective members. In one of the few early studies of associations, Harris observed that "[o]n one hand, association leaders, just like leaders of other organizations that involve volunteers, have to pay close attention to motivating and managing members to ensure that tasks essential to organizational survival are accomplished" (1998, p. 151).

Most humans feel a need to be included in groups (Hargreaves-Heap & Zizzo 2009). As Hugh Mackay wrote, "Belonging is one of the deepest sources of human fulfilment. Welcoming someone into a group is, therefore, one of the most warmly appreciated of the gifts we can offer each other. Knowing I belong implies that I am taken seriously; I am connected; I am supported" (2014a, p. 22). However, belonging to a group also brings with it challenges, especially for small GAs. Harris proposed that when conflict arises in small associations, its pain can be amplified and they can be disposed to factionalism. "For example, small size and assumptions about informal friendly relationships may limit the capacity of individuals and the organisation as a whole to tolerate bad feelings among individuals" (Harris 1998, p. 150). This may mean that people in committees often reveal more about themselves due to the intimate nature of small groups, and may feel more exposed as they get to know each other. When interpersonal conflicts occur, the disputes are amplified more than in larger groups and domino into negative impacts on the entire group. It is not surprising, therefore, that increased stress brought about by external factors bring about more conflict within GA committees.

However, there were examples in the data where some GAs leveraged the macro changes in society as an opportunity to grow their associations. They cited examples of using social media to enlarge their membership base and to promote events. Others mentioned instances of using inclusive strategic planning techniques to help their association take advantage of changing moods to do things differently and grow their base. Although not found in data from this study, some GAs, such as the Kensington Residents Association in South Australia, targeted new immigrants for membership, people who happen to be younger than the general population and eager to join local associations to make new friends and embed themselves in their new communities (Hugo 2011; Jozaei 2017).

This chapter exposed many barriers that GAs themselves are imposing at an organisational level in addition to the many environmental factors or macro barriers being

imposed. The next chapter will examine the obstacles that individuals have placed upon themselves in regards to joining associations and committee participation.

CHAPTER 8: BARRIERS AT THE MICRO LEVEL

I feel as though maybe my lack of experience would be a reason for me to not feel like I could suggest to volunteer for the committee (regular member focus group participant from Burnside).

8.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the micro barriers within the control of the individual that are preventing members of GAs from stepping up and taking leadership roles in their associations (Figure 8.1). The discussion is framed around the concept of 'volunteerability' developed by Meijs, Ten Hoorn and Brudney (2006). Similar to the term 'employability', which is used to describe how job-ready an individual is, volunteerability is a framework that describes personal traits that individuals need to have in order to volunteer (McQuaid & Lindsay 2005). It is organised around three constructs, which are the willingness, capability, and availability to volunteer. In the context of this study, the framework helps to address the question of what makes a person willing and able to volunteer on a GA committee (Meijs et al. 2006, p. 39). Using data from the focus groups and survey, the three constructs of volunteerability will be discussed in this chapter and, in doing so, explore the barriers to GA leadership at the micro level.
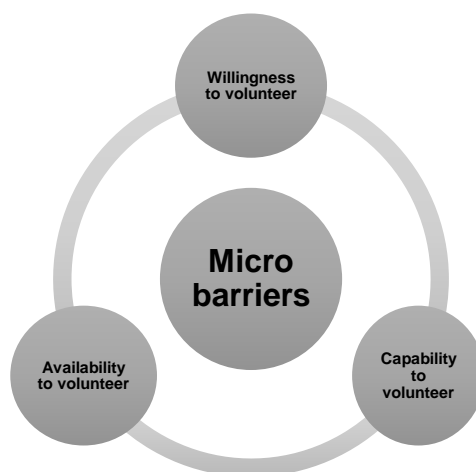
Figure 8.1: Micro barrier constructs to GA membership and leadership

8.2 Willingness to volunteer

The first construct of the volunteerability framework is the willingness to volunteer. This includes an individual's motivation to volunteer, attitudes towards volunteering and personal values, such as benevolence and universalism (Haski-Leventhal, Meijs & Hustinx

2009). In the first in-depth study comparing volunteers and non-volunteers using the framework of volunteerability, Haski-Leventhal et al. (2017) found that volunteers had higher ratings than non-volunteers for both motivational traits and values. Unsurprisingly, the study also found that volunteers had much higher supportive beliefs towards volunteering compared with non-volunteers (Haski-Leventhal et al. 2017).

In this thesis, focus group participants who were regular members of GAs were asked what prompted them to volunteer with their association, and GA committee members were asked what motivated them to volunteer on committees (Figure 8.2).

Figure 8.2: Motivating factors of focus group participants

Committee members were generally more engaged with this question than regular members, hence the higher volume of responses from this cohort. Committee members were more responsive to motivations that included a sense of responsibility to serve, gaining satisfaction, developing others, influencing outcomes and enjoyment/making new friends. As a focus group participant from Burnside said:

> I think it's just the fact that you know that can do it, you can see the possibilities, you can see what could happen, you can see how things could be better if … so that's how you get involved (BCM6).

Although regular members also reported being motivated by enjoyment, they more frequently mentioned helping their career and using/building skills as a motivating factor for joining their association. As one regular member focus group participant from a Barossa arts group said, "I want the time to practice my music and composing, not being assigned extra duties" (TRM6). This supports the trend in 'pay 'n' play' and 'free rider' behaviour within associations, where people join a GA for the benefits they receive and not contribute to its ongoing sustainability (Hemming 2011; Holmes & Slater 2012).

However, in their in-depth study of volunteering commitment, Hartenian and Lilly (2009) argued that motivations to volunteer are intertwined and that most people volunteer for a variety of reasons that help both themselves and others, and are not necessarily mutually exclusive. They pointed out that "personal reasons [for volunteering] are not necessarily selfish … the number of people who volunteer for strictly altruistic reasons is likely to be small when compared to those who have egoistic reasons" (Hartenian & Lilly 2009, p. 98).

Survey participants who were committee members were asked what motivated them to serve on their organisation's committee and as described in Chapter Five, 95 percent of respondents were interested in the cause or purpose of their association, 91 percent wanted to put their skills to good use and 64 percent wanted to influence outcomes. As active volunteers, they demonstrated a strong willingness to volunteer within the framework of volunteerability. Unlike the focus groups, survey respondents who were regular members of GAs were not asked motivational questions, so comparisons could not be made with committee members around motivations. However, all survey respondents were volunteers or members of GAs, so it can be assumed that they had a general willingness to volunteer.

As discussed in Chapter Six, both focus group participants and survey respondents had much to say about non-volunteers and individualism. They observed that fewer people were joining GAs, and many who did were, in their view, 'free riders' who took advantage of association services without volunteering to help with tasks. Sixty percent of survey respondents from GAs agreed that their associations were having trouble recruiting new members and 66 percent agreed that their associations were having difficulty recruiting new volunteers. In addition, there were 303 references to individualism from survey respondents, such as:

> The apathy of general community–leave it to others, only take the benefits.

> People these days seem to lack the ability or desire to make commitments, and these are required in groups.

Focus group participants offered similar comments:

> I wonder whether perhaps there has been a shift in attitude to volunteering across the board (BCM6).

> I got the records of the old cricket club, and one thing that struck me was the number of times they had quite fiercely fought elections for spots on the committee. We haven't' had an election for years! If we have two vacancies, we have to spend six months to fill them … something has changed in the attitude of people (TCM8).

Hugh Mackay identified people who were moving into new neighbourhoods as being either isolationist, keeping their distance (Who am I? What will become of me?) or willing to get involved in their new communities (Who are we? What kind of society do we want to become?). He wrote, "not liking what they find, they may decide to opt out rather than to try to exert some positive influence" (Mackay, Hugh 2014a, p. 288). As one focus group participant said, "I [could] be a cause champion for advocacy and lobbying, but it would have to be something I felt very strong about" (TRM2).

There is a growing unwillingness to volunteer, especially for GA committees. Being willing to volunteer is the first step to becoming a volunteer and understanding the motivational constructs as described in the volunteerability conceptual framework is important. Altruism, values and instrumental motivations are all part of the willingness construct and understanding these motivations go part way in getting behind the 'lack of time' reason often given by people who do not volunteer.

8.3 Capability to volunteer

The capability to volunteer is about the skills and knowledge needed for specific volunteer roles which are real or perceived (Haski-Leventhal et al. 2017). Many potential volunteers do not believe that they have the skills to volunteer, which is why capability is also about an individual's self-confidence (Haski-Leventhal et al. 2018). Examples of volunteer roles that require particular skills include firefighting in emergency services or counselling for Lifeline. These organisations have paid staff and offer on the job training to build the skills of volunteers. GAs also have roles that require certain skills for volunteers including coaching, driving and serving on committees. In many cases, however, GAs do not have the resources to provide training to potential volunteers, so this construct of the volunteerability concept is an important one for GAs to consider.

Of the survey respondents who did not serve on committees, 56 percent agreed that people did not join committees because they felt they did not have the right skills, and 63 percent believed that people were too shy to put themselves forward for a committee role. Survey respondents offered 71 comments regarding the issue of capability, which indicated a high level of concern for the need for more skills arising from increased professionalism and expectations from government authorities, as discussed in Chapter Six. When asked what challenges were facing their associations, survey respondents and focus group participants suggested that skills could be improved in grant writing,

governance, conflict management and meeting procedures. They also discussed the need for skilled committee members and, interestingly, they suggested that a lack of self-confidence was holding back members from nominating for committees.

The data provide valuable insights into the capacity of individuals who serve, or consider serving, on GA committees. The evidence also shows that potential leaders may be holding themselves back due to a lack of confidence in a particular skill set. The comments above clearly suggest that leaders of GAs lack capacity over a broad range of skills in multiple areas such as governance, information technology and communications. There needs to be a balance between recruiting new committee members who possess the right skills, and offering training to existing members so that they can build confidence and nominate for leadership positions. This view is supported by Sharpe (2006), who found in her case study of a Canadian recreation group that reduced organisational capacity had a significant impact on the ability for it to achieve its mission and mobilise the effort of its members.

In addition to the concern around skills, many focus group participants and survey respondents relayed that they were experiencing reduced capacity due to the mental and physical problems associated with ageing. There were 315 comments offered by survey respondents referring to the difficulties arising from an ageing membership. Examples of physical limitations such as the inability to move tables and chairs when setting up a room, or the inability to drive to venues at night, reduced an individual's capacity to volunteer. This issue was commented on by several focus group participants. In an Australian study of volunteers over the age of 50, Warburton, Paynter and Petriwskyj (2007) found that ageing was associated with reduced confidence, which can bring about a sense of feeling devalued and, therefore, avoiding some volunteering opportunities.

An important aspect that could be better emphasised in the capability construct of volunteerability is the health problems arising from ageing. When measuring volunteerability in their survey of 696 Australian non-volunteers, Haski-Leventhal et al. found that just over half of respondents cited health as a barrier to volunteering, which was higher than the red tape barrier of background checks (2017, p. 15). However, when describing capability, Haski-Leventhal et al. described it as including "actual skills, perceived skills and perceptions of the skills required to volunteer" (2017, p. 6). While health may form part of a person's perception of their skills, the definition of the capability construct could expand on an individual's health due to its significance. The capacity to

volunteer, the second construct of the volunteerability framework, includes an individual's skill, knowledge and their self-efficacy. Data from this study confirms that the lack of skills and confidence is a barrier to GA leadership. The data also uncovers another aspect of an individual's capacity to volunteer, which is their health status. As the vast majority of GA leaders are ageing, this is an important feature to consider in regards to an individual's capacity to become a volunteer leader.

8.4 Availability to volunteer

The volunteerability framework describes the availability construct as a person's amount of free time to volunteer, their perception of having time or their emotional availability to volunteer (Haski-Leventhal, Meijs & Hustinx 2009). As demonstrated in the literature discussed in Chapter Two, lack of time is the most reported barrier to volunteering (GHK Holding Limited 2010; Harrison Research 2016a; Sundeen, Raskoff & Garcia 2007). Sixty-nine percent of survey respondents from this thesis, who were regular members of GAs, reported that lack of time was a barrier to serving on committees. This narrowly lost to the highest barrier which was not wanting the weight of responsibility. Focus group participants from this thesis were concerned about the time barrier when trying to recruit committee members, and it was the second most mentioned barrier following poor behaviour by others.

The data confirmed that lack of time was indeed a real issue when considering a person's availability to volunteer. People are working more extended hours, more than required by their employers, and both partners are working when raising families to cover increasing housing costs, power bills etc. (Findlay & Thompson 2017). Child care (and elder care) arrangements are fraught with complexity (Wade 2014), and employers expect more productivity in the workplace than in the past, even though productivity in Australia has doubled over the last 30 years (*Productivity Commission Productivity Update* 2017).

Lack of time, however, could be a proxy reason for other factors that discourage people from volunteering. In their study comparing volunteers and non-volunteers using the volunteerability framework, Haski-Leventhal et al. found that volunteers reported having more available free time than non-volunteers in a typical week, despite similar external time commitments such as work and childcare (2017, p. 14). The study also found that over half of non-volunteers surveyed would volunteer if it fitted in their schedule, if they could stop at any time without consequences, could do it whenever they wanted and for a

short, defined periods of time (Haski-Leventhal et al. 2017, p. 15). This indicates that the lack-of-time reason for not volunteering, as reported in many studies, may be a smokescreen for other reasons or, "may be more of a perceived barrier than an actual one and may be a proxy for other barriers such as lack of interest" (Haski-Leventhal et al. 2017, p. 16).

The Haski-Leventhal et al. survey revealed external barriers to volunteering that included carer and childcare responsibilities, and found more people would volunteer if they could do it as part of paid work (2017, p. 16). External issues impact on people's time, or at least on their perceived lack of time. Interestingly, people are spending more time watching television in their spare time rather than volunteering. So indeed, there may be more behind the lack of time barrier than first thought (Robinson et al. 2017; Rochester et al. 2016). The 'hustle and bustle' of modern life could be impacting on people's energy levels, as a more sedentary lifestyle combined with external pressures for many people brings with it less physical activity and reduced vitality (Bowlby & Lloyd Evans 2011; Strazdins & Loughrey 2008). Maybe people are just too exhausted to volunteer, especially for leadership roles, in GAs.

8.5 Chapter summary

This chapter reviewed the key aspects of the volunteerability framework, which is a valuable tool to analyse an individual's willingness, capability and availability to volunteer. It can also be used to examine specific barriers that members of associations face when considering leadership positions within a GA.

In regards to willingness, leaders of GAs may wish to consider how benevolent or altruistic a potential committee member is, or how interested they are in the cause or purpose of the association. Willingness is the starting point for volunteering, and a significant challenge for any association is to find altruistic leaders in a time of increasing individualism. As discussed previously, increased expectations around professionalism and the growing use of new technology in GAs is demanding increased skill levels of committee members. The capability of potential volunteer leaders will be a growing issue, and it raises the question of how leaders of GAs can keep their skills up to date, find leaders with appropriate skills and develop potential leaders and their confidence in an age of increased complexity. The real or perceived availability of time to volunteer is a persistent issue and cannot be ignored by GAs. As discussed in previous chapters, GAs that introduce more flexibility and

episodic leadership opportunities may be more sustainable in the long-term. New and innovative ways to fill the leadership gaps that address the lack-of-time issue may reduce some barriers to volunteer leadership in GAs.

The results from this chapter provided essential insights into applying the volunteerability framework which describes the willingness, capacity and availability measures that individuals require to volunteer. The following chapter provides recommendations on how new opportunities can be embraced at multiple levels to help make GAs more sustainable into the future. The recommendations will address the macro barriers discussed in Chapter Six, and provide suggestions on what governments and other institutions can do to make the external environment more supportive of GAs. It will also address the findings from Chapter Seven by recommending what GAs can do at the organisational level to recruit more committee members. The recommendations will take into account the constructs of volunteerability framework outlined in the current chapter so that changes made at the macro and meso levels are relevant to the needs of individuals at the micro level.

CHAPTER 9: WHAT CAN BE DONE

Strengthening the capability of people to lead others, especially in volunteer organizations, would benefit not just the people directly involved, but also those who benefit from their services and ultimately society at large (Posner 2015, p. 896).

9.1 Introduction

Committee members of grassroots associations (GAs) are groups of people, sometimes even strangers, coming together for a common cause. With that comes advantages and disadvantages of working with people, similar to what one would see in a workplace except that grassroots associations do not have the same command and control systems (Wilson, JQ 2010, cited in Andrews et al. 2010; Harris, M 1998). Unlike most for-profit and many not-for-profit organisations, these GAs do not have the support of HR managers or easy access to training opportunities to smooth the journey for their volunteer leaders. In fact, committee members of GAs rarely receive any formal training in leadership or management and "at best, volunteer leaders might be able to find practitioner-oriented manuals or workshops to provide them with direction in their positions" (Nesbit, Rimes, et al. 2017, p. 923).

This chapter offers a range of integrated interventions that all levels of government, the independent sector, the volunteering infrastructure and grassroots associations themselves can implement to help them become more sustainable in South Australia (Figure 9.1).
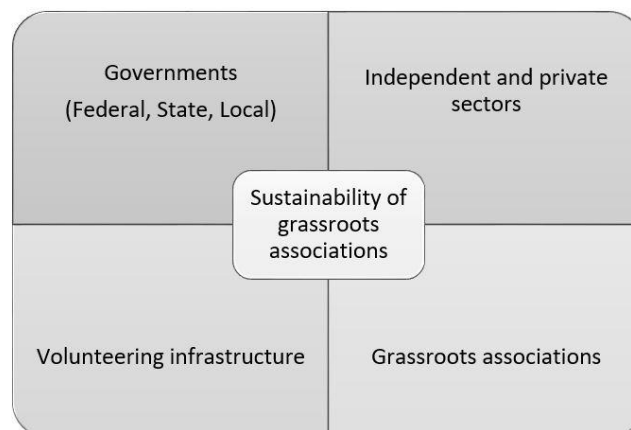
Figure 9.1: Integrated interventions

These ideas have emerged through the research undertaken during the thesis and reflect outcomes from the detailed analysis contained in earlier chapters. The interventions hope to address many of the barriers facing leaders of GAs today including regulation and red tape, generational differences and individualism, and the rise of new technology. Many of these themes are global in nature and beyond the control of GAs and even governments. However, it is argued here that there are interventions that can be implemented by multiple change agents and, when integrated, could provide a more supportive environment that will build the capacity of GAs and encourage more people to become involved in their committees.

As evidenced through the chapter, many interventions are co-dependent on one another (Table 9.1). The interventions also rely upon the recognition by GAs themselves that change needs to occur within their associations, and, therefore, explores how this can be achieved through the application of a recruitability framework. The chapter will conclude with suggestions on how the strategies can be implemented at a national, state and local level. Although written for an Australian audience, these interventions can also be modified and applied internationally.

Table 9.1: Interventions by sector

State & Federal Government	State Government	Local government	Private/ independent sector	Volunteering infrastructure	Grassroots associations
Establish long-term sources of funding to the volunteering infrastructure to enable more training & support to GAs. Simplify grant applications to make more accessible. Create an alternative form of incorporation for social enterprises – the For Benefit Corporation. Re-introduce civics training in national school curriculums.	Fund free criminal history checks for volunteers and allow them to be transferable. Remove stamp duty on insurance for GAs Simplify grant applications to make them more accessible. Office of Consumer and Business Services to develop new constitution examples and information material relevant to GAs; contribute to new training content; update database and provide updated information to GAs. Create an office for the Volunteer Advocate to have jurisdiction over volunteer rights and dispute resolution, or expand the role of other small business support agencies. Office for Women to encourage women to become GA leaders, promote to Premier's List. Increase funding to volunteering infrastructure to deliver an integrated capacity building program for GAs in a partnership approach with all stakeholders. Include traditional infrastructure as well as ConnectingUp, Uniting Communities Law Centre, etc. Expand the Star Club program from sport associations to all GAs	Volunteer coordinators and community development staff to provide capacity building support for GAs. Host capacity building program in partnership with all stakeholders, as well as business enterprise centres, regional development boards, service clubs and other local networks. Offer technology training in public libraries specifically designed for GAs. Promote GA opportunities to youth through leadership programs and link to GA capacity building program.	Connecting Up to provide IT services to GAs. Insurance companies to simplify information and application process for GAs. Private foundations, insurance companies and local businesses such as Get on Board be approached to fund and partner in training program for GAs. Media be approached to promote training program for GAs. University students to help with GA strategic planning (eg MBA students), in partnership with Leaders Institute Marketing sector to develop a promotional campaign to improve the branding of GAs and to encourage people to get involved. Private foundations be approached to fund capacity building program.	Address barriers to membership services to make them more accessible to GAs and advocate on their behalf. Increase GAs awareness of the implications of government policy & legislation and equip them with better choices Consult with stakeholders to jointly design the capacity building training program, building on similar initiatives such as the 'Supporting Community Leadership Workshop Program' offered by Adelaide Hills Council. Deliver training program for GAs with integrated content. Partner with new players such as ConnectingUp, Our Community, MeetUp, Vollie, Get on Board and Pro-Bono to improve capacity building resources and access to technology for GAs.	Encourage members to attend capacity building workshops, such as episodic opportunities. Promote positive and supportive cultures - Identify and address poor behaviours. Mentor new members. Spread workload to general membership. Introduce more flexibility, change meeting procedures to suit young people. Embrace new technology such as Facebook groups & MeetUp.com.

9.2 Integrated interventions to address red tape

The data in this thesis revealed that increasing regulation and red tape are having a negative impact on GAs as they inhibit people from volunteering to serve on their committees in any capacity. Examples of the most hindering forms of red tape include the increasing costs of compliance and insurance, unclear and confusing requirements for incorporation, changing work health and safety rules, risk management requirements, complex grant application processes and a convoluted structure to obtain criminal history checks. With an increasingly litigious society in Australia, many volunteer leaders are giving up their roles and walking away. In doing so, they leave behind only the most dedicated committee members who try to keep their associations afloat with limited resources and flagging morale.

Concerning the cost of compliance, there will be some changes with the election of a new Liberal government in South Australia in 2018. The new government announced it would implement a recommendation from peak body Volunteering SA&NT that would exempt volunteers from paying a fee for criminal history checks (Liberal Party of South Australia 2018; Volunteering SA & NT 2018, p. 10). In the financial year 2016-17, there were just over 26,000 volunteers who applied for a police clearance a cost of $58 each which is the highest fee in Australia (*Briefing note for Estimates Hearing, South Australian Parliament*). Most other states and territories do not charge volunteers for these checks. The data in this study also demonstrated that GAs find the process of obtaining a criminal history check confusing and unnecessarily complicated. In 2016, the previous government of South Australia introduced legislation that will allow the portability of the 'working with children' checks for five years and create a centralised assessment unit which will eliminate the current two-tiered system of individuals having to apply for separate national and state screenings (*The Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act* 2016). These positive changes need to be communicated to all GAs in South Australia.

Insurance could be made more affordable with some targeted initiatives. For example, stamp duties on insurance policies for GAs could be eliminated by the South Australian Government. Although state governments were meant to withdraw stamp duties when the Goods and Services Tax (GST) was introduced in 2000, many duties remained in force (Gittins 2003). Stamp duty on insurance policies is calculated on the premium and GST combined, meaning that insurance policies include taxes of 20 percent making them unaffordable for GAs. The cost of policies would be reduced when associations in the

same risk category join forces to purchase over-arching insurance as Tennis Australia did for community tennis clubs (Tennis Australia 2018). However, this would be difficult to implement if they do not have a national structure or peak body. In South Australia, the Local Government Association (LGA) is helping GAs obtain insurance through its Local Community Insurance Services division (LCRS), which is a brokering service that specifically caters for small community groups by providing insurance cover and associated training (Naulty 2018). However, this service is not promoted by the national volunteering infrastructure which is sponsored by multinational insurance broker AON, promoted by Volunteering Australia to its members as its 'approved insurance broker' (*Volunteering Australia Website* 2017). AON, however, does not provide the most affordable policies to GAs. For example, when the Kensington Residents Association in South Australia sought insurance quotes for an event for 500 people in a local park, the quotation of $445 from AON was almost double the price offered by LCIS, who quoted $232 (Personal communication, Kensington Residents Association 2017). This partnership arrangement between Volunteering Australia is a potential conflict of interest as it is not in the best interest of small GAs or any non-profit organisation. As all tiers of government and the volunteering infrastructure are required to work together to make insurance more affordable, the issue needs to be addressed in an integrated fashion.

GAs will often seek funding from governments, especially local councils, to fund core activities and events. However, authorities limit access to these grants through strict criteria that prohibit the funding of ongoing costs such as insurance cover and administration costs. For example, the South Australian Government's small grants program and Natural Resource Management grants will not fund core expenses such as insurance, telephone, internet, police checks and promotion (*Grants SA Guidelines* 2017; *Community NRM Action Grants Guidelines* 2017-18). In a local government example, the City of Norwood, Payneham & St Peters does not allow funding for operating costs which includes insurance and other core expenses (*Community Funding Program Grant Criteria* 2018). These exclusions exist despite the requirement from these same authorities for GAs to have insurance, police checks for volunteers and the completion of grant applications online which necessitates access to high-speed internet. The Australian Government, however, also funds community groups through its *Families and Communities Program*, and this program does allow for expenses directly related to service delivery, such as insurance and information technology, but excludes subsidies for ongoing administration costs. This is confusing for GAs, especially as the grant criteria

document is 20 pages in length (*Strengthening Communities Grant Guidelines* 2018). A recent survey of 1,200 representatives from not-for-profit organisations across Australia found that grants that fund core costs of association are becoming harder to get with much data required in application forms. Over 54 percent of the respondents in this survey reported that they were forced to abandon the application process entirely. The same study also found that larger organisation are 'scooping up' many of the small grants on offer (*Grants in Australia: Annual research findings for Australian grant seekers and grant makers* 2017, p. 6). This confirms Dalton and Butcher's findings which revealed that most government funding goes to the "cohort of organisations towards the 'larger' end of the size spectrum" (2014, p. 26). Having such limited and confusing funding criteria severely limits the capacity of GAs to run their associations and displays a major misunderstanding of the support they require by state and federal governments. As Ware pointed out, small community groups feel quite isolated in their voluntary work which is often done in their spare time, and feel exasperated by a lack of understanding by government authorities who 'fail to provide a sense of equality' and often demand too much of volunteer leaders (2014, p. 395).

The data collected in this thesis also demonstrates that leaders of GAs find the process of applying for grants difficult and time-consuming. As previously discussed, many grants do not fund the recreational nature of many GAs despite their crucial role in building and sustaining social capital in local communities. In 2017, the South Australian Government negotiated with some peak bodies in the non-profit sector, including Volunteering SA & NT, to review funding contracts across all sectors (2017). The aim of the *South Australian Not-for-Profit Funding Rules and Guidelines* is to have standard agreements across all state government departments and to make them simple and less onerous on community groups (*Communique to the Sector* 2017; *South Australian Not-for-profit Funding Rules and Guidelines* 2018). Even though Volunteering SA & NT is a partner in this review, there is still a risk that the needs of GAs will not be met as they are generally not the primary constituency of the volunteering infrastructure. For example, in the new funding guidelines, there are still requirements for an ABN, internet application forms and excessive insurance that are all problematic areas for GAs. As McCabe, Phillimore and Mayblin found in their literature review of 'below the radar' organisations in the UK, most government funding bypasses these groups in favour of larger associations with GAs not be aware of government grants or understand 'often complex eligibility criteria' (2010, p. 14). Also in the UK, Hutchison and Ockenden advocated for the volunteering infrastructure

to better acknowledge the difficulties that small organisations have and to "concentrate on influencing policy on their behalf" (2008, p. 44). Like in the UK, Australia can improve by simplifying grant application and criteria processes to better meet the needs of GAs.

9.3 Integrated interventions to improve the culture of GAs

The data in this study also found that poor behaviours and unhealthy cultures are driving leaders away from serving on GA committees. The State Government could provide mediation, advocacy and support services for GAs by creating an office for the Volunteer Advocate, or an Ombudsman for Volunteers, which would have jurisdiction over volunteer rights and dispute resolution, as well as advocacy in areas such as insurance, grant processes and criminal history checks (O'Loughlin 2013; Watson 2013). As the editor of *The Advertiser* in South Australia wrote when advocating for an intermediary, "In every organisation there can be personality clashes, disagreements over policy, emotions can run high and individuals can feel as though they are being victimised or bullied … a third party intervention would be a relief to all" (Mansell 2013). Having such a statutory authority would increase advocacy for volunteers, and address issues such as criminal charges being laid on a volunteer driver after a vehicle accident in western Sydney (Oppenheimer, M & Edwards 2011). Volunteering SA&NT called for a similar initiative in its 2018 state election proposal for a Not-for-Profit and Volunteering Advocate (Volunteering SA & NT 2018). This position could advocate for the entire non-profit sector as well as volunteers. The proposal recommended additional functions for the Advocate, including capacity building and workforce development of the non-profit sector, mediation and conflict resolution services, educational resources, representing the issues of volunteers and the non-profit sector to ministers and providing independent advice to government.

These functions are similar to a plethora of existing services provided by all levels of government to small business, defined as enterprises employing between zero to nineteen staff, including the SA Industry Advocate, Small Business Commissioner, regional development authorities and local business enterprise centres (Small Business Centre 2017). An example of a government agency dedicated to small business extending services to GAs occurred in 2001 when the Office for Volunteers entered into an agreement with the Office of the Employee Ombudsman for the Ombudsman to provide mediation services to volunteers as well as employees in the paid workforce (Office for Volunteers 2018). However, the functions of the Employee Ombudsman were superseded with the creation of the Australian Fair Work Ombudsman in 2009 when the majority of

states handed over industrial relations powers to the Australian Government (*Fair Work Ombudsman Annual Report* 2018).

State government funding for community mediation services is now channelled through a competitive tendering process and is currently provided by Uniting Communities Law Centre Mediation Service. This service provides mediation and conflict resolution services to the NFP sector but is not well known, perhaps because service providers have changed with each tender offering. Their largest client base is people on a low income with strata corporation difficulties, but they have assisted some sporting groups in the past. Funding has been reduced over the years and, as of 2018, they were down to 1.8 full-time equivalent staff from a high of six in the early 1990s (Personal communication, *Uniting Communities Law Centre Mediation Service* 2018). As their function allows for mediation support and conflict resolution services to GAs, this service needs much better promotion and more funding.

The Office of the Small Business Commissioner in South Australia was established in 2012 to advocate for the small business sector, provide dispute resolutions services and to improve the sector's capacity (Small Business Commissioner South Australia 2018). In a similar vein, the Industry Advocate was established in 2017 to encourage government and industry to purchase goods and services from local businesses and to build the capacity of South Australian companies (SA Industry Advocate 2018). It also has a role to recommend policy changes and procurement reforms that would remove barriers to allow for local industry growth, such as the reduction of red tape. In addition to the above advocacy authorities, the State Government also supports small business in regional areas through eight regional development boards funded through the government agency, Regional Development South Australia (Regional Development South Australia 2018). The eight authorities (RDAs) have individual bureaucracies across 11 regional centres which are also funded by the Australian Government and all regional councils. Each RDA has its own board and CEO, and sets annual work plans. For example, RDA Barossa supports local food industry initiatives, a yearly survey, career coaching, networking events and a Future Leaders Program. In the metropolitan areas of South Australia, many local governments are supporting businesses by employing business development staff and funding regional enterprise centres such as the Eastside Business Enterprise Centre in Prospect, South Australia (*Business Enterprise Centres Incorporated*). Like RDAs, these metropolitan

centres are funded by the Australian Government and local councils to provide mentoring programs, workshops, networking opportunities and educational resources.

As of 2017, the South Australian Government invested $11.9 million per annum in the above support services to small business which is far beyond the $390,000 provided to the state's volunteering infrastructure (Barlow 2018). In addition, the $11.9 million of state funding to small business does not include the allocation granted to business enterprise centres and regional development boards, which have joint funding agreements through federal, state and local government partnerships (Regional Development Australia 2018). Supporting small business is an important priority, as they contribute $34 billion to the South Australian economy (2017). However, it has been estimated that volunteers contribute almost $5 billion to the South Australian economy and deserve additional support (Ironmonger 2011). On a national scale, it has been found that volunteering contributes more to the Australian economy than mining, with its monetary contribution valued in 2002 at more than $200 billion a year (O'Dwyer 2012). An alternative to creating a stand-alone not-for-profit and volunteering advocate would be for the South Australian Government to expand the role of existing support services for small business to the non-profit sector. Business and the non-profit sectors have similar structures in their legal form, training requirements and need for capacity building. Both sectors create employment and positive social outcomes. It could be argued that by integrating their support services it would be beneficial to both the economy and social capital of the state. With the introduction of new social enterprises, it is logical to bring these two sectors closer together to create exponential benefits to the entire South Australian community.

9.4 Integrated interventions to address the generational divide and individualism

The data from this study shows that young people are altruistic and volunteer, but they want to do things differently from previous generations. Allyson Hewitt, a visiting Canadian Thinker in Residence for the Don Dunstan Foundation in South Australia, believes that young people want careers that match their values in what she calls the purpose economy, "those people and organisations that seek to make both money and impact" (Hewitt 2017, p. 52). One intervention at the national level which could attract young people to become more active in the purpose economy would be for the Australian Government to amend the *Corporations Act 2001* to allow for social enterprises to register as benefit companies. Social enterprises, or benefit companies, are initiated by entrepreneurs who have a dual

purpose of earning personal income while, at the same time, helping others or promoting a cause.

Social enterprises have been defined as "organisations led by an economic, social, cultural or environmental mission consistent with a public or community benefit", and, as of 2015, there were approximately 20,000 of them operating in Australia with a combined turnover estimated at $22 billion per annum (*Report of the Reference Group on Welfare Reform to the Minister for Social Services* 2015, p. 172). In 2015, a working party was established by social enterprise certifier B Lab Australia with pro-bono assistance from law firm Clayton Utz, to lobby for a new legal form of social enterprises called the benefit company (B Lab Australia & New Zealand 2018; Paramanathan 2016). Such a legal form would cover enterprises "that generate earned income but give top priority to an explicit social mission [to pursue goals such as] eliminating homelessness, fighting drug addiction, reducing deaths from malaria, producing renewable energy" (Sabeti 2011). This is needed because, under the current *Corporations Act 2001*, company directors are bound to make decisions on what is best for the shareholder and not third parties such as charities or causes (Morrissy 2016). Incorporated associations are not an appropriate legal form for social enterprises because their directors are not allowed to earn a personal income (*Associations Incorporation Act 1985*). Other jurisdictions have enacted legislation to protect company directors in social enterprises, including most states in the USA (For-Benefit Corporations) and the UK (Community Interest Companies). In the USA, more than 5,000 social benefit corporations have formed since 2010, raising more than $1.5 billion from investors (Williams, W 2018).

Since the B Lab working party submitted their report to government in 2016, there has been some progress with the proposed amendment to the *Corporations Act 2001* with hopes that new legislation would be introduced in 2018 (Syme 2018). The Australian Government did, however, fund social enterprise development in 2016 but that program has since ended (*Social Enterprise Development and Investment Funds* 2018). Allowing entrepreneurs to start new businesses that support both employment and altruistic causes, with the added protection of an appropriate legal form, has great potential to unlock the talents of future leaders. One example of a South Australian social entrepreneur who would benefit from this legislation is Amy Orange from Harvest Fair. Ms Orange established her limited propriety company not only to earn an income but to train disadvantaged women in cooking and deliver healthy food to people in need and to sell in

supermarkets. Harvest Fair does not meet most government grant criteria and also misses out on various business support programs because her enterprise is not 'high tech', is regionally based and cannot provide matching funds. She believes that being a benefit company would "reinforce the point that you don't have to be a charity organisation to incorporate public good into your business model" (Orange 2018).

The data in this study also demonstrated that young people do not like the formalities of traditional association committees and would welcome alternative approaches to governance in incorporated associations. To address this, the State Government could revise communication materials that guide the development of constitutions and rules of associations under its administration of the *Associations Incorporations Act 1985*. As discussed in Chapter Seven the State Government, through its Office of Consumer and Business Services, produces information booklets that are 'one-size-fits-all' even though legislation governing associations is quite different depending on the size of the association. For example, prescribed associations who have an annual turnover of $500,000 or more have separate reporting and accountability requirements to that of GAs. Because this is not spelled out in the information booklets published by the State Government, leaders of GAs have introduced unnecessary rules in their associations that do not pertain to them, such as audited financial statements. This could easily be remedied by publishing tailored communication materials depending on whether an association is prescribed or not. In addition, as previously discussed in Chapter Three, the database containing the contact information for associations is extremely out of date.

Through random sampling of the database, it was discovered that most of the association public officers listed in the database are probably no longer with their association, and most of the addresses are out of date. There is no system of regular contact with associations on this database which makes communicating with incorporated GAs extremely difficult. As discussed previously, a different department of the State Government funds ConnectingUp to manage an online community information directory which has more up-to-date contact information for GAs. However, this list does not contain the incorporation status of associations, or whether or not they are prescribed. It would be advantageous if these two arms of the State Government worked together to update the contact details of associations so that updated and relevant communication materials could be sent to them.

The data revealed that a vast majority of GAs were struggling to find new committee members and had difficulty with communication. Yet, at the same time, the data also suggested that GA committees were slow to take advantage of the benefits of new technology that could improve recruitment and communication for their associations. As discussed previously in Chapter Six, Facebook groups have proven to be an excellent tool to help with general communications, member recruitment, event management and promotions. Another up and coming application is a competitor to Facebook called *MeetUp*, which is an online platform where GAs can recruit members and promote face-to-face events with the additional service of training videos for community organisers (*MeetUp.com* 2018; Hempel 2017). To help attract skilled committee members, GAs could also sign up with the Australian social enterprise *Vollie*, which is an online volunteering platform where skilled volunteers are matched with not-for-profits to donate pro-bono professional services (*Vollie: Change, your way* 2018). GAs could also post their committee vacancies on the website *Go Volunteer,* which is published by Volunteering Australia and hosted on the employment website *Seek (Go Volunteer).* As explained previously, however, not many GAs would be allowed to use this website due to a requirement to have personal accident and public liability insurance and to formally agree with Volunteering Australia's definition of volunteering. The definition states that "volunteering is time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain", which would exclude some social enterprises (Volunteering Australia 2016). There is an opportunity for volunteering infrastructure to review their access requirements for Go Volunteer to be more accessible to GAs, as other volunteer recruitment websites do, such as Pro-Bono Australia, OurCommunity, Idealist, Do-it and Volunteer Match (*Do-it* 2018; *Idealist.com* 2018; *Our Community* 2018; *Pro Bono Australia* 2018; *Volunteer Match: Registering an international organization* 2018).

We live in a time of rapid and ongoing technological change, and the offerings for GAs also continue to change. Thus, it is understandable that some leaders of GAs are reluctant to change from the old ways of doing things, such as relying on local papers for free publicity and relying on email for communication. The reality is, however, with the introduction of social media, Australians are relying less and less on obtaining information from print media. In South Australia, community newspapers such as *The Messenger* have been consolidating, reducing print runs and ceasing some delivery demographics (Washington 2017). Personal modes of communication have also been changing and, for some time now, young people have been increasingly using text messaging services and

Instagram instead of email (Moulds 2007). If GAs want to attract more young people to their associations, they should consider adapting to new technology to make themselves more visible and accessible. However, the volunteering infrastructure also has a role in relaxing its membership requirements to make their services more accessible and of use to GAs.

9.5 Integrated interventions to build the capacity of GAs

In a recent study evaluating capacity building programs designed for GAs, Sobeck (2008) found that they were extremely cost-effective and informative for participants. She found that those who attended "were more likely to engage in planning, use evaluation strategies, have grant writing knowledge and more awareness of opportunities" (Sobeck 2008, p. 49). Similarly, Keddy argued that increasing the capacity of community leaders is a very effective strategy for building the 'human infrastructure' of communities in a sustainable way (2001, p. 48). In their UK study of 'below the radar' organisations, Phillimore and McCabe (2015) argued that policymakers could provide visible capacity building support by identifying good practice, connecting them to networks, offering free training in health and safety, providing grants to cover insurance costs and making sure there are free public spaces where groups can meet.

Local governments are very well placed to identify and support GAs in their districts, as they are the tier of government that is closest to local communities. In fact, in South Australia, it was local government who produced community information directories before the introduction of the online directory and councils were subsidised by the State Government to do this. Now the funding is given to *Connecting Up* which manages the online *SA Directory of Community Services* with the help of volunteers (*South Australian Community Services Directory* 2016; *Connecting Up Inc.* 2017). The directory is available to all South Australian GAs, and the search function enables users to find organisations and services in their local area. Another advantage of the online directory is that it gives GAs a pseudo website if they do not have one themselves. As of February 2018, the directory had 47,315 listings and, in addition to GAs, it included government offices, hospitals and doctors, aged care facilities, schools, churches and some private businesses such as employment services and martial arts academies.

The change to the online directory led to unintended consequences. When some local governments defunded their community information programs, it led to an unsystematic

approach in retaining contact with GAs. In the past, when councils employed community information officers, they were responsible for producing the directories which enabled them to keep in touch with local GAs and ensure that contact details were kept up to date. Now that the directories are electronic, it is the responsibility of GAs themselves to keep details up to date in the directory rather than the responsibility of council staff. It is likely that many GAs do not know about the availability of the directory or how to update their details. When testing the accuracy of the online directory, the researcher found that it was more up to date than the government's list of incorporated associations, but still missed many GAs, and contact details were not necessarily current. In addition, the name of the directory is misleading, as it contains more than just community services organisations which may inadvertently create a barrier to its use. Local councils have the opportunity to re-engage with the community information process and encourage their community groups to register with the online directory. Having an up-to-date listing of GAs in each council area could be the first step towards an integrated education and capacity-building program for GAs in each council area in South Australia. This need for capacity building was repeatedly brought up in the data, highlighted by one focus group participant in Tanunda saying, "I'd be more interested in being on a committee if I knew what I was getting myself in for. Having [had] both positive and negative experiences being on a committee, I want to be well informed before I got myself into that position again" (TRM5).

An example of a capacity building program for GAs in a local council is the Supporting Community Leadership Workshop Program coordinated by the Adelaide Hills Council (*Supporting Community Leadership Workshop Program* 2018). Workshop topics include 'Community Group Essentials', Developing a Grant Application', 'Social Media and Communications', 'Resilient Leaders' and a workshop on how to navigate the child protection requirements. The Adelaide Hills Council is a semi-rural area in South Australia on the perimeter of metropolitan Adelaide, and the program recognises the importance of the leaders of GAs as it aims to "help unlock the potential of our brilliant local people" (Brochure, *Supporting Community Leadership Workshop Program* 2018). The Onkaparinga Council, covering the southern suburbs of Adelaide, runs a program that develops local individual leaders entitled 'Leadership Onkaparinga' (*Leadership Onkaparinga* 2018). Course topics include leadership, community planning, strategic relationships, community engagement, media awareness and presentation skills. Although this program does not specifically target GAs, many participants are on committees of local GAs and those associations particularly benefit from the involvement of their leaders.

A related initiative is run by the regional city of Murray Bridge, located in the mid-north of South Australia, which runs a community networking program called the 'Connect 4 Action' program (Grimm 2017). Although not a formal training program, it aspires to build the community's capacity by bringing together community groups from a wide range of sectors to network and share ideas.

In a similar vein, the State Government supports sporting clubs in South Australia, most of which are GAs, through its Star Club development program run by the Office for Recreation and Sport (Office for Recreation and Sport 2017). The program offers online assessment tools, training and resources aimed to build the capacity of clubs. There are 2,000 clubs registered in the program, and it is supported by paid field officers who assist clubs to become formally recognised as a 'Star Club'. This helps them obtain grants from the State Government and "is a signal to the wider community that the club is well managed" (Government of South Australia n.d.). Areas of support include administration, group culture, legal requirements, financial management and volunteer support through a sub-program called 'VStar'. This volunteer management program is delivered online and helps sporting clubs find, back and keep volunteers with the help of various tools, information and templates (*V Star: A volunteer management tool for sport and recreation clubs/associations* 2018). There is an opportunity to expand this program beyond sporting clubs to all GAs in South Australia, as most of the topics offered in the program are common to all GAs apart from the management of coaches.

The volunteering infrastructure also offers a wide variety of workshops on how to manage volunteers, and some of the workshops are on leadership and governance. Volunteering SA & NT offer workshops on how to recruit board members delivered by a private enterprise start-up called *Get On Board* (*Volunteering SA & NT*). As the name would suggest, however, the workshops are aimed at associations with paid staff who have 'boards' rather than 'committees'. The workshops cost between $60 and $75, with members of Volunteering SA & NT able to attend at a discount. Volunteering SA & NT also offer free webinars on volunteer recruitment, but these are also designed for organisations with paid volunteer coordinators (Rogers 2018). Ellis and McCurley (2007) recognised that there is a serious schism between the volunteering infrastructure and the leaders of all-volunteer groups. They argued that there are missed opportunities to engage with GAs and offered numerous suggestions, such as including them in the communication databases, inviting GA leaders to attend meetings with their traditional membership base,

including them in conferences by scheduling targeted sessions and making them affordable and honouring them specifically during National Volunteer Week (Ellis & McCurley 2007). Hutchison and Ockenden also argued that the volunteering infrastructure could provide small organisations with better support, noting that their study participants in the UK "were keen to stress the need for greater recognition of the work of smaller community-based organisations, more support for their increased sustainability and better awareness of the challenges they face" (2008, p. 45).

Other independent organisations offer workshops for GAs and non-profit organisations in specific genres. For example, Connecting Up offers workshops and an online learning hub on a variety of technology topics as well as in generic areas such as public relations, marketing, fundraising in the digital age, brand story crafting, networking and one specifically for GAs entitled *Building a Cause Community Using Social Media* (*Connecting Up Inc.* 2017). In addition, there are many online resources and training videos published by Australian organisations such as Our Community, Institute for Community Directors and Pro-Bono Australia that could be useful to GAs (*Institute of Community Directors Australia* 2018; *Our Community* 2018; *Pro Bono Australia* 2018). There are international organisations that offer online resources as well as training videos such as Energize, Meet Up, Whole Whale, the Centre for Association Leadership and even Facebook (*The Centre for Association Leadership* 2018; *Energize Incorporated* 2018; *MeetUp.com* 2018; *Whole Whale* 2018; Zuckerberg 2017). Public libraries in Australia offer free access to Lynda.com, which is a library of worldwide training videos on a wide range of subjects include a comprehensive series in non-profit management, how to work with volunteers and even one webcast on how to document a volunteer job (*Lynda.com* 2018). Although most of these resources are targeted to associations with paid staff, much of the subject matter would be of benefit to GAs.

Educational institutions, too, support the not-for-profit sector and, in many instances, this support could be expanded to GAs. The Australian Curriculum has civics and citizenship in its content, which covers the Australian political and legal system. It details how citizens can participate in civic life through volunteering, the process of public submissions and how to "use democratic processes to reach consensus on a course of action relating to a civic or citizen issue and plan for that action" (*The Australian Curriculum* 2018). There is little detail, however, on how to form an association, chair a meeting or the responsibilities of members, which may be why young people do not feel they have the skills to join the

committees of GAs. In its 2018-19 pre-budget submission, Volunteering Australia advocated for more resources to be made available for schools when implementing the Civics and Citizenship section of the curriculum, which would include activities such as examining the constitution of a volunteer group and action learning where students could participate in a community project with a local group (Volunteering Australia 2018). At a tertiary level, there are many programs where students can earn credit by volunteering through a placement or internship, but these are often limited to non-profit organisations who have adequate insurance, such as the program offered by the University of South Australia (*University of South Australia: Volunteering* 2018). The University of Adelaide does allow their MBA students, as part of their course, to develop strategic plans with GAs as well as larger non-profit organisations (personal communication, Scanion 2017).

While all these online resources, workshops and support programs presumably have positive outcomes, and despite their shared constituency, it appears that these organisations may be working in isolation. This topic is an opportunity for further research. If all training providers were to work together in an integrated approach with increased government support, there would be cascading benefits for GAs. The State Government, through increased funding of the volunteering infrastructure and alignment of existing services, could support such educational programs across South Australia. They could be delivered in partnership with councils, regional development boards, business enterprise centres and the volunteer infrastructure. To be successful, they need to be developed with the requirements of GAs in mind and delivered through the already existing *Volunteering Strategy for South Australia* (*Volunteering Strategy for South Australia* 2018).

The *Volunteering Strategy for South Australia* was initiated in 2014 following a motion passed at the National Volunteer Conference held in Adelaide in 2013, which called for an integrated approach to reaching the state volunteer participation target of 70 percent of the South Australian population (Mex 2014). Founding partner organisations in the strategy included the State Government, the Local Government Association (LGA), Business SA and Volunteering SA & NT. Representatives from the four partners signed a memo of understanding in 2014 which established a governing Partnership Board and four working groups to implement the strategy's priorities which was the first of its kind in Australia (*Volunteering Strategy for South Australia* 2018). As of 2017, 41 people were members of strategy working groups on a volunteer basis. A representative from each of the partners chaired each working group, supported by part-time project managers funded by the

partners. Initial achievements included a new state government policy for working with children checks and education program, a research report into costs and benefits of mutual obligation volunteers, the creation of the WeDo application for smartphones to record volunteer hours, and some social media promotion for volunteering (Skipper 2017).

The first independent review of the strategy found that two of the founding partners, Business SA and the LGA, questioned their involvement as it was not aligned to their core business or expectations, and the funding requests were 'ad-hoc' and not aligned to annual budget cycles (Skipper 2017). Most of the recommendations of the review were adopted and included a reduction in the number of working groups to two to reduce overlap, a reduction in the number of projects, a clarification of the reporting relationships, the inclusion of an annual budget and increasing communication to stakeholders (Skipper 2017). A new independent chairperson was appointed to the Volunteering Strategy Partnership Board in December 2017, and new working groups will be appointed in 2018. This could provide an opportunity for needs of the volunteer leaders of GAs to be recognised, with capacity-building programs delivered across the state involving all partners of the volunteering strategy.

In 2017, on a national level, the Australian Senate passed a motion that called for a National Volunteering Strategy based on the South Australian model (Kakoschke-Moore 2017). This would be an excellent opportunity to ensure that the volunteering infrastructure is adequately funded across Australia to provide better support to GAs. The Australian Government subsidises the South Australian volunteering infrastructure for referral services, and, in 2017, this funding amounted to $590,000 (Appendix 11). Unfortunately, the beneficiary of most of the services and resources that are derived from this funding are larger associations who have paid volunteer managers. The service agreements that relate to this funding should be amended to ensure that GAs are communicated to and have easy access to services that arise from this funding such as volunteer referral and affordable workshops that address their needs.

9.6 What grassroots associations need to do

If a capacity building program was established for GAs through the *Volunteering Strategy for South Australia* and supported by a national strategy, GAs themselves need the motivation to participate in the program. This means that the leaders of GAs must recognise the need for further education so that they can adapt to a changing world. The

theory of recruitability proposes that associations need to have specific components in place in order to attract volunteers. These include: (1) how *accessible* an association is to people who want to volunteer; (2) if they have adequate financial and human *resources* to recruit, support and retain volunteers; and (3) adequate *networks and cooperation* with governments, business and other associations that would increase both their accessibility and resources which would, in turn, increase their profile and capacity to recruit volunteers (Haski-Leventhal, Meijs & Hustinx 2009). Thus, associations who are better at attracting and supporting volunteers have greater 'recruitability' than associations who neglect the interests of volunteers. Brudney and Meijs go further with their theory of the volunteer commons, suggesting that if too many volunteers in a community have poor experiences volunteering in just one or two organisations, it has a negative impact on the recruitability of all organisations in a community (Brudney, J. L. & Meijs 2013).

The components of recruitability provide a useful framework for analysing if a GA needs to build its capacity to attract and retain volunteers and, in particular, future volunteer leaders. The first component, *accessibility*, was an issue at the forefront of the data in this study. Haski-Leventhal et al. (2009) suggest questions that associations can ask themselves including whether or not people are aware that they need volunteers, if they can be easily contacted (physically or technically), and if it is welcoming to diverse populations including young people or those with a disability. They suggest that accessibility can be enhanced with improved marketing and creating alternative forms of participation such as online volunteering. They indicate that simple things, such as making sure that the association can be reached by telephone or email and responding to correspondence (Haski-Leventhal, Meijs & Hustinx 2009).

What is missing from this theory is an explicit reference to the importance of a positive culture, which is also a critical part of accessibility. Kramer argues that small community groups need to pay more attention to the orientation of newcomers into their groups, as "successful assimilation of newcomers and current members influences the organisation's ability to gain new members" (Kramer 2011).

Data in this study suggests that having a positive culture is one of the most important attributes of a successful GA and is crucial to attracting potential leaders. Since one of the most important motivators for committee work is enjoyment and making friends, it is obvious that having a positive and welcoming culture is a cornerstone of an accessible GA. In fact, having a positive culture enables the leaders of GAs to be open to new

members from diverse populations and welcoming the new ideas that they bring. This focus could address many of the suggestions that arose in the data, including role clarity, embracing new technology and adopting new ways of operating. For example, Kiwanis International changed their bylaws to attract younger members, employing strategies such as reducing the length of meetings, ceasing the practice of fining for non-attendance and developing programs that were inclusive of family members (Eystad 2001). In South Australia, the Country Women's Association is building their profile by changing perceptions, with one member quoted in the state newspaper saying "every time I mention I'm a member … I have to explain to them it's not old ladies sitting around a table knitting, it's young people talking, having fun and making connections" (Jones 2017, p. 22). When testing the recruitabilty framework in a collective case study of exemplar volunteer-involving organisations in Australia, Holmes et al. (2018) proposed that the internal environment could be an additional dimension within the accessibility component, recognising that successful organisations had a positive and welcoming culture for its volunteers and were better at retaining them.

The second factor in recruitability, the *availability of resources*, was an issue that was repeatedly brought up in the data. Haski-Leventhal et al. explain that this component includes not only financial and physical resources, but also human resources such as "having the right volunteer workforce, training its staff and encouraging its volunteers" (2009, p. 142). Although written with paid staff organisations (PSAs) in mind, the issue of resources within this theory is relevant to GAs but in a different context. Volunteers within GAs require training and support but, unlike PSAs, they need to generate these resources themselves as there are no 'volunteer managers' to do this for them. As the data in this study clearly demonstrated, it is a circular problem. If the leaders of GAs do not encourage, support and train new members, they will get fewer people willing to join their association. As membership levels decline, so do committee nominations and the human resources of GAs are further diminished. The data suggested that GAs would benefit from having committee members with skills not only in governance, strategic planning and finance, but also in communications and people skills so that new members feel welcome and can put their skills to good use. Trexler (2014) demonstrated the importance of this in a volunteer context, where in a collective case study of volunteer involving organisations in the USA she found that the level of the emotional intelligence of volunteer managers was an essential factor in the retention of volunteers.

The third component of recruitability, *networks and cooperation*, is about how well an organisation works with external parties such as governments, business and other not-for-profit organisations. Haski-Leventhal et al. believe that if this is done well, organisations can improve their accessibility, resourcing and volunteer levels "by pooling resources and sharing knowledge and expertise" (2009, p. 143). In their study of small community groups in the UK, McCabe and Phillimore (2012) found that having strong networks with a variety of organisations was a significant tool for success, as these extensive connections enabled access to support and specialised skills.The need for GAs to have networks that also enable partnering was found to be especially acute in rural areas (Halseth & Ryser 2007). For example, in the context of GAs, if committee members are well connected with their local council, they will be aware of small grants and other resources available to them. Connections with local businesses could also provide cash and in-kind support, and relationships with other local associations could mean more cooperation in the achievement of shared objectives. Putnam calls this 'bridging social capital', where the multiplier effect happens when people from diverse groups and backgrounds pool their resources and work together for the common good, which creates more social capital than if a group works in isolation (2000, pp. 22-3).

Holmes et al. (2018) developed the recruitability matrix, which is a tool that volunteer-involving organisations can use to establish how well they are positioned to attract volunteers or become more 'recruitable'. Questions in the matrix include:

- Do you accept all who want to volunteer?
- Is your cause/organisation well known and attractive to potential volunteers?
- How easy is it to contact/visit the volunteer manager/supervisor, by phone, visit, website, email, Facebook, etc.?
- Is your organisation easily accessible? Is there adequate signage? Are your contact details easy to find on your website's homepage?
- Is your organisation welcoming to all volunteers regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status and religious affiliation?
- How long does a potential volunteer wait for the volunteer program to make contact in a meaningful way?
- How long does your recruitment/induction process take? Is it an informal induction process?
- Do potential volunteers need to have a specific interest or expertise to volunteer with you?
- Is there a third party involved in the recruitment process such as a volunteer centre? (Haski-Leventhal et al. 2018)

Although designed for PSAs, the tool poses questions that are relevant to GAs, especially around their accessibility. For example, if the term 'volunteer' was changed to 'member',

and the term 'volunteer manager' replaced with 'committee member', the questions would be very relevant to GAs and could help them develop strategies to recruit more members to their associations. These questions are valuable when using the recruitability theory as a framework to identify interventions for change. Sourced from the data in this study, Table 9.2 articulates this by providing a summary of what specific interventions GAs can make within their associations, to help them gain more members and committee members.

Table 9.2: GA interventions for improved recruitability

Recruitability components	Suggested interventions
Accessibility	Improve organisational culture, encourage positive attitudes, mutual support and respect.
	Participate in training programs to learn from others on various aspects on leading associations.
	Welcome new members with a positive attitude, encourage diversity.
	Improve communication.
	Welcome and respect new ideas.
	Introduce flexibility in operations and programs to allow for episodic participation and virtual roles.
	Reduce unnecessary red tape.
	Embrace the tools of new technology.
	Identify what tasks are necessary and what can be disbanded.
	Divide workloads into manageable tasks that can be delegated to regular members.
	Promote the association more widely, including the use of social media. Make sure the contact information is up to date and easy to find. Register with directories and volunteer centres where possible.
	Respond promptly to enquiries.
Resources	Participate in training programs to build capacity.
	Apply for new grants and pursue partnership opportunities.
	Mentor new members and committee members to build their skills.
	Consider technology to recruit skilled members such as MeetUp, Go Volunteer and Vollie.
	Join support organisations such as Whole Whale, Energize or Our Community to access resources and build skills. Join a volunteer resource centre if able to do so.
Networks and cooperation	Reach out to meet and build relationships with other associations, businesses and local councils.
	Learn from other associations, be open to working on joint projects.
	Attend workshops not only to build skills but to build relationships.

One of the most salient aspects of the interventions described in the above table is that it encourages the association leaders themselves to recognise that change is needed within their leadership ranks and that this means, in many cases, the changing of their

behaviours is required. As the data and literature demonstrate, if the culture of an association is poisonous, the leaders are unlikely to recognise their own shortcomings and not seek help or change (Ellis & McCurley 2005; Paull & Omari 2015). Most of the interventions are dependent upon the willingness of leaders to do things differently. As McGregor-Lowndes pointed out regarding organisational cultures, "Leadership from governors [boards] is a key tool for fostering a culture that does not tolerate bullying and encourages mutual support to prevent its effects" (2014, p. 37). The biggest challenge for GAs facing a decline of members and leader nominations is first to recognise that there is a problem and that the root of the problem might be poor organisational culture and negative behaviours. Almost all the interventions listed in the above table require leaders with an open mind and a willingness to change. As Barnes and Nelson remind us, "by looking ahead and breaking with tradition when necessary, associations can cultivate membership growth and engagement" (2014, p. 15).

9.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter set out to recommend new interventions that will increase the capacity of GAs and help make them more sustainable in the longer term when implemented in an integrated partnership approach. The interventions are grouped around the major barriers faced by GAs including red tape, poor organisational cultures, individualism and the generational divide, capacity building and what GAs can do themselves to become more recruitable. The findings indicate that while a few of the interventions on their own would be successful, they need to be delivered in a partnership approach between multiple parties to work most effectively.

In regards to red tape, governments can reduce costs of criminal history checks and stamp duties, while simultaneously the volunteering infrastructure could partner with insurance companies who provide decreased premiums for GAs. At the same time, governments can recognise insurance costs in grant criteria and make grant processes more accessible. These interventions all need to be implemented together in an integrated partnership approach, and ideally along with a capacity building program so that the issues regarding red tape can be explained to the leaders of GAs.

Building the capacity of GAs can also improve their internal cultures and governments, and the volunteering infrastructure can have an important role to play with new policy initiatives. Establishing a new volunteer advocate at the state government level, or

expanding the role of existing small business support services, would provide GAs with strong baseline support currently enjoyed by small business. The well-established networks of regional development boards, business enterprise centres, local councils and volunteer centres could easily be expanded to help GAs, and the volunteering infrastructure could integrate their capacity building programs across these networks to expand their reach to GAs. To deliver capacity building programs to GAs, they first need to be found and identified. The State Government, LGA, Connecting Up and the volunteering infrastructure should work together to update their associated databases to ensure that GAs receive up-to-date information and access training opportunities. This training can be in the form of face-to-face workshops with associated online resources, and can be developed through a plethora of existing resources and programs such as Star Club and Whole Whale. When implemented, however, care must be taken not to 'talk down' to leaders of GAs, with research showing that informal and community-based learning may be more appropriate than the classroom approach used in the UK's *Community Organisers* program, for example (McCabe & Phillimore 2012). Linking a capacity building program with the Australian Curriculum and tertiary volunteering programs, for example, would further strengthen its reach and impact.

Younger generations want to lead organisations with a social benefit but may want to do this differently from traditional associations. The Australian Government can recognise social enterprise through new legislation, and this can be promoted through existing networks and capacity building programs as described above. The *Volunteering Strategy for South Australia*, and the proposed *National Volunteering Strategy*, could be ideal platforms for implementing an integrated capacity building program for GAs. Importantly, however, the leaders of GAs themselves first need to be open to change and new ideas before participating in these capacity building programs. In doing so, some of their barriers may be overcome and their associations will become more sustainable. As Barnes and Nelson state, "the associations that can adapt and be open to new ideas and innovations will survive and flourish. Associations that cannot will go away" (2014, p. 16).

CHAPTER 10: CONCLUSIONS

"The end result is that you shouldn't go to any annual general meetings!"
(committee member focus group participant from Tanunda)

10.1 Introduction

This thesis provides a substantial and original contribution to knowledge by generating and uncovering important new data on the state of grassroots associations in South Australia and their governance. It found that these groups make up the vast-majority of the percentage of the third sector, yet are virtually ignored by governments and the volunteering infrastructure. Most alarmingly, this study found that these vital groups are not only struggling to find replacement leaders, but many them are struggling to survive. The study also unveiled new trends in membership association volunteering and recommended innovative policy solutions that could build the capacity of GAs to help them flourish.

By linking existing data sets and the literature, the thesis also establishes, for the first time, the quantitative value of grassroots associations (GAs) in Australia and, importantly, their significant contribution to social capital. Utilising direct input from members and leaders of GAs, the study produced original data that demonstrated that many of these small associations are facing significant barriers to their survival, especially when it comes to attracting leaders. While challenging, the barriers may not be insurmountable if given attention by external bodies such as governments and the volunteering infrastructure. If grassroots associations themselves are willing, there are many opportunities to implement the evidence-based interventions presented in this thesis within existing state and national volunteering strategies.

Using a case study approach, the thesis set out to 'check the pulse' of grassroots associations in South Australia, and explore what needs to happen to encourage more of their members to become leaders. Even though there is scant data on GAs in Australia, this study uncovered the important fact that they vastly outnumber non-profit organisations with paid staff (Australian Productivity Commission 2010; Cortis et al. 2016; Office of Consumer and Business Services 2016). If each GA had an average of 25 members, it would mean that up to 750,000 residents of South Australia would be a member of a GA, which represents 44 percent of the state's population (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2018).

In addition to their sheer number, the activities of GAs are also significant. For the first time, this study identifies the immense variety of endeavours that GAs undertake in South Australia. These activities include improving people's health and wellbeing, fitness, recreational pursuits, arts and culture, education and community service; all of which develops necessary social capital in communities (Coffé & Geys 2008; Putnam 2000; van Deth et al. 2017). Importantly, this study also establishes that a significant majority of GAs assist the general population within communities in addition to providing benefits to their members.

With volunteering participation rates declining in Australia, the thesis investigated how this decline was impacting GAs in South Australia and, in particular, how the reduction in volunteering was affecting the unpaid leaders who serve on these committees (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2014). Within the case study framework, the study utilised a mixed methods research approach and, uniquely, was able to compare the views between regular members of associations and their leaders with demographic variables providing detailed levels of analysis. The study was both exploratory and explanatory, and focused on the contemporary and real-life phenomenon of the decreasing number of GA leaders in South Australia. The findings of this thesis, from data triangulated and analysed from multiple sources, could justifiably be replicated and generalised for other states in Australia and perhaps the western world (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2012; Yin 2003).

The findings of this study concluded that there are significant barriers preventing people from joining and leading associations, and these were presented within three inter-related constructs in the discussion chapters of the thesis (Figure 10.1).
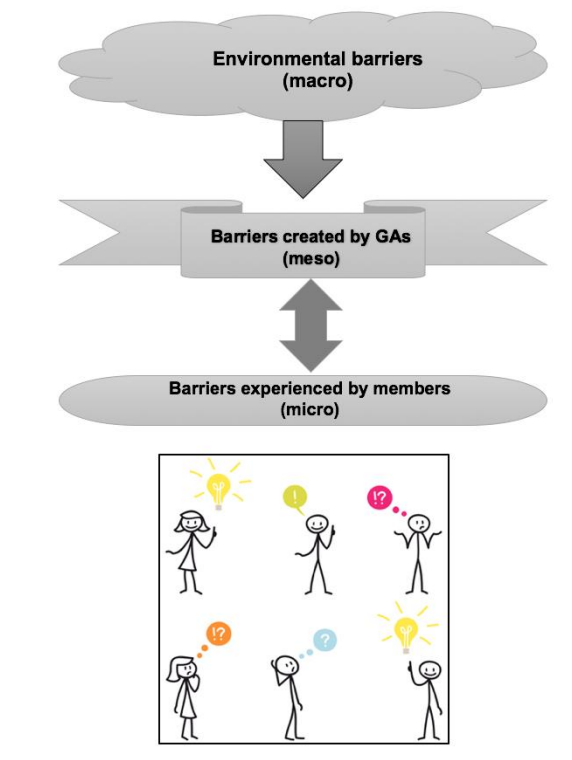
Figure 10.1: Hierarchy of barriers to GA leadership

The first of these constructs were the barriers at the macro or environmental level that are beyond the control of GAs but, nonetheless, have a significant impact on their operations. The second construct included barriers that GAs are inadvertently creating themselves at the meso or organisational level. Barriers were also described at the micro or individual level which can prevent people from participating in, or leading, GAs.

The conclusions presented in this chapter are organised around the four research objectives of the thesis. The questions were, first, to establish if the membership numbers of grassroots associations were declining in South Australia (RO1); secondly, to investigate leadership nomination trends within grassroots associations and any degree of concern (RO2); thirdly, the reasons why members of grassroots associations choose to nominate as leaders and the barriers faced by people considering leadership positions (RO3); and, finally, to identify intervention and recruitment strategies that could encourage more members to nominate for volunteer leadership positions in grassroots associations (RO4). After addressing each of the research objectives, the chapter will conclude with a summary of the study's original contribution to knowledge and opportunities for further research.

10.2 Are memberships of grassroots associations in decline in South Australia? (RO1)

In 2014, data from the *Australian General Social Survey* found that volunteering rates declined in Australia, as did participation in sport, recreation and civic associations (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2014). As this study established that most of these types of groups and associations are GAs, it can be assumed that participation rates in GAs are probably falling as well and, by extension, their membership numbers. In South Australia, this trend was supported by the fact that the number of newly incorporated associations had been falling since the 1980s (Office of Consumer and Business Services 2016).

In an Australian first, and perhaps a world first, this study directly asked members of GAs about the membership trends of their associations and their level of concern. The study's survey of over 1,500 association representatives found that while membership levels were stable as of 2016, there was overwhelming concern that GAs were having trouble recruiting new members and volunteers. In comparison, survey respondents from PSAs who had the benefit of paid staff were much more likely to report increasing memberships in their associations.

This could confirm the trend of people continuing to join associations for specific membership benefits, labelled by researchers as 'pay 'n' players' or 'free-riders' (Holmes & Slater 2012; Howard & Gilbert 2008). These are people who, for example, may wish to have the rights to play tennis at a local sporting club, or play an instrument in a community band, without having to contribute to any coordination work or leadership responsibilities that help keep associations sustainable. It begs the question, how can these associations who do not have resources to pay staff, survive without volunteer leaders or even people willing to help coordinate activities?

10.3 Leadership trends in grassroots associations (RO2)

As no organisation can function without some form of leadership or coordination, it was alarming to find that a significant majority of GA survey respondents reported that they had difficulty recruiting committee members, and that the vast majority reported minimal turnover of leadership in their associations, meaning that the same people were probably serving on committees year after year. Committee members are the real doers in GAs and are the ones who organise rosters, events, communications and make things happen (Masaoka 1999). The focus group participants, both committee members and regular

members, expressed grave concerns about the lack of people nominating to serve on volunteer committees. Likewise, survey respondents repeatedly expressed similar concerns in a vast array of open-ended comments. It is not known if this is a new trend or not, as data on grassroots associations is scant, especially in South Australia. It may be that GAs have always struggled with people not nominating for leadership roles. For the first time, however, this study sets a benchmark for leadership trends in Australian GAs. It found that in South Australia at least, the numbers of people nominating for volunteer leadership positions in GAs are falling and the level of concern amongst their members is very high. The level of concern was so high that many participants in this study feared for the very survival of their association.

10.4 What are the benefits and barriers of volunteer leadership? (RO3)

Most focus group and survey participants who were committee members had both altruistic and egocentric motives for serving, such as concern about the cause and putting their skills and experience to good use. Secondary motivations included the ability to influence outcomes, enjoyment and socialising. These reasons mirrored the literature regarding the motives of members joining associations (Holmes & Slater 2012; Inglis & Cleave 2006).

However, when it comes to the reasons why people *do not* volunteer, the literature is scarce and almost non-existent on the reasons why people *do not* volunteer as leaders of GAs (Haski-Leventhal et al. 2017). This study reveals, for the first time, the significant barriers that people face when they consider volunteering for a GA committee in Australia. Importantly, the study's survey data showed that from regular members' point of view, the fear of responsibility was a more significant barrier than the customary lack-of-time justification for volunteering. Focus group participants expanded on the weight of responsibility theme in great detail, with numerous regular members citing poor organisational cultures in committees as the major inhibiting factor that stopped them from nominating for a leadership role.

The burden of responsibility presented itself in many forms at the macro and meso level. At the macro level, the study identified these barriers as regulation and red tape, generational divides, the rise of individualism, new technology, gender issues, and the decline of rural communities. When combined, these macro barriers are having a severe negative impact on GAs and, for the most part, are beyond their control. To compound the

situation, the data in this study suggested that GAs were creating barriers themselves at the organisational level. These included inventing their own red tape by retaining superfluous rules and inflexible work practices, not adapting to new technologies, not being receptive to new ideas or member diversity, and developing toxic cultures that turned people away. When faced with these barriers, the data indicated that regular members of GAs are turning away from leadership roles. If they do consider stepping up, the data also showed that individuals might experience internal barriers such as a lack of confidence, lack of skills and the physical and mental effects of ageing.

10.5 Interventions and recruitment strategies (RO4)

Another innovation in this study was the unearthing of numerous suggestions, from members of GAs themselves, of what interventions could help GAs become more sustainable. While many of the aspects of macro barriers are beyond the control of any organisation, there are opportunities for GAs to embrace strategies to help them adapt to change. As outlined in Chapter Nine, there are also interventions that can be implemented by all tiers of government, the independent and private sectors, and the volunteering infrastructure that, when combined and integrated, can help build the capacity of GAs. For this to happen, the value of grassroots associations needs to be better appreciated by the aforementioned players, recognising the weaknesses of the current bias towards larger non-profits. With the existence of volunteering strategy partnerships at the state and national level, there is the opportunity to implement these interventions in an integrated way through a partnership approach.

However, if the leaders of GAs are not open to change or new approaches to their organisational cultures, interventions offered by external bodies will not be effective. As the recruitability framework suggests, for GAs to be able to attract new volunteers and members, they need be accessible to people, have adequate resources to support volunteers and members, and have sufficient networks to build positive relationships with fellow associations, governments and the volunteering infrastructure (Holmes et al. 2018). It would be of great benefit to GAs if their leadership ranks were more aware of the impact that poor cultures have on the sustainability of associations, and the flow-on effects to general volunteer participation rates in communities overall (Brudney & Meijs 2013). This study offers new knowledge on the impact of organisational cultures on GAs and the specific barriers facing people who consider joining and leading GAs in South Australia. When this knowledge is shared more widely and understood, leaders of GAs may gain a

greater understanding of why their associations may be in decline. With this acknowledgement, leaders of GAs may be more willing to embrace change and take advantage of capacity building initiatives offered by external bodies through strategic partnerships.

10.6 Opportunities for further research

The literature has already noted that academic research into grassroots associations is underdeveloped. Perhaps they do not generate enough academic interest because they are deemed insignificant at an organisational level, do not get collected in reporting mechanisms, and are out of the sphere of the volunteering infrastructure (McCabe & Phillimore 2012; Milofsky 2008; Mohan 2012; Nesbit, Rimes, et al. 2017; Smith, Stebbins & Grotz 2017; Wollebæk 2009). Given the number of members and volunteers who participate in grassroots associations, it is surprising that there is so little research on their leaders who have such an enormous impact on the direction of these groups (Nesbit, Rimes, et al. 2017). As Posner observed, "strengthening the capability of people to lead others, especially in volunteer organisations, would benefit not just people directly involved, but also those who benefit from their service and ultimately society at large" (2015, p. 896).

Individually, they may be small but, combined, grassroots associations are significant in numbers and important contributors to Australian society. Further research could contribute to their sustainability in Australia, especially by collecting and analysing more data on their real economic and social contributions and undertaking additional studies in other Australian states. More research could be done on how, or if, grassroots associations in Australia are evolving and changing to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century. Importantly, much more research needs to be done on the future leadership of grassroots associations, and how younger generations may want to enable these associations to evolve and adapt for the future in new ways so that Australia can continue to benefit from their vital contributions to society.

7157 SBREC Final approval notice (21 March 2016)

Human Research Ethics

Mon 3/21/2016 11:38 AM

To:Christel Mex <mex0001@flinders.edu.au>; Melanie Oppenheimer <melanie.oppenheimer@flinders.edu.au>;

Importance: High

Categories: Red category

Dear Christel,

The Chair of the Social and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee (SBREC) at Flinders University considered your response to conditional approval out of session and your project has now been granted final ethics approval. This means that you now have approval to commence your research. Your ethics final approval notice can be found below.

FINAL APPROVAL NOTICE

Project No.:	**7157**

Project Title:	The Sustainability of Grassroots Associations: Creating a 'Better Tribe'

Principal Researcher:	Ms Christel Mex

Email:	mex0001@uni.flinders.edu.au

Approval Date:	20 March 2016	Ethics Approval Expiry Date:	**30 April 2019**

The above proposed project has been **approved** on the basis of the information contained in the application, its attachments and the information subsequently provided.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF RESEARCHERS AND SUPERVISORS

1.   Participant Documentation
Please note that it is the responsibility of researchers and supervisors, in the case of student

projects, to ensure that:

·   all participant documents are checked for spelling, grammatical, numbering and formatting errors. The Committee does not accept any responsibility for the above mentioned errors.

·   the Flinders University logo is included on all participant documentation (e.g., letters of Introduction, information Sheets, consent forms, debriefing information and questionnaires – with the exception of purchased research tools) and the current Flinders University letterhead is included in the header of all letters of introduction. The Flinders University international logo/letterhead should be used and documentation should contain international dialling codes for all telephone and fax numbers listed for all research to be conducted overseas.

·   the SBREC contact details, listed below, are included in the footer of all letters of introduction and information sheets.

This research project has been approved by the Flinders University Social and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee (Project Number 'INSERT PROJECT No. here following approval'). For more information regarding ethical approval of the project the Executive Officer of the Committee can be contacted by telephone on 8201 3116, by fax on 8201 2035 or by email human.researchethics@flinders.edu.au.

2.   Annual Progress / Final Reports
In order to comply with the monitoring requirements of the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (March 2007)* an annual progress report must be submitted each year on the **20 March** (approval anniversary date) for the duration of the ethics approval using the report template available from the Managing Your Ethics Approval SBREC web page. *Please retain this notice for reference when completing annual progress or final reports.*

If the project is completed *before* ethics approval has expired please ensure a final report is submitted immediately. If ethics approval for your project expires please submit either (1) a final report; or (2) an extension of time request and an annual report.

Student Projects
The SBREC recommends that current ethics approval is maintained until a student's thesis has been submitted, reviewed and approved. This is to protect the student in the event that reviewers recommend some changes that may include the collection of additional participant data.

Your first report is due on **20 March 2017** or on completion of the project, whichever is the earliest.

3.   Modifications to Project
Modifications to the project must not proceed until approval has been obtained from the Ethics Committee. Such proposed changes / modifications include:

·   change of project title;
·   change to research team (e.g., additions, removals, principal researcher or supervisor change);
·   changes to research objectives;
·   changes to research protocol;
·   changes to participant recruitment methods;
·   changes / additions to source(s) of participants;
·   changes of procedures used to seek informed consent;
·   changes to reimbursements provided to participants;
·   changes / additions to information and/or documentation to be provided to potential participants;
·   changes to research tools (e.g., questionnaire, interview questions, focus group questions);

·   extensions of time.

To notify the Committee of any proposed modifications to the project please complete and submit the *Modification Request Form* which is available from the Managing Your Ethics Approval SBREC web page. Download the form from the website every time a new modification request is submitted to ensure that the most recent form is used. Please note that extension of time requests should be submitted prior to the Ethics Approval Expiry Date listed on this notice.

Change of Contact Details

Please ensure that you notify the Committee if either your mailing or email address changes to ensure that correspondence relating to this project can be sent to you. A modification request is not required to change your contact details.

4.   **Adverse Events and/or Complaints**

Researchers should advise the Executive Officer of the Ethics Committee on 08 8201-3116 or human.researchethics@flinders.edu.au immediately if:

·   any complaints regarding the research are received;
·   a serious or unexpected adverse event occurs that effects participants;
·   an unforeseen event occurs that may affect the ethical acceptability of the project.

Kind regards
Andrea

Mrs Andrea Fiegert and Ms Rae Tyler

Ethics Officers and Executive Officer, Social and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee

Andrea - Telephone: +61 8 8201-3116 | Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday

Rae – Telephone: +61 8 8201-7938 | ½ day Wednesday, Thursday and Friday

Email: human.researchethics@flinders.edu.au

Web: Social and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee (SBREC)

Manager, Research Ethics and Integrity – Dr Peter Wigley

Telephone: +61 8 8201-5466 | email: peter.wigley@flinders.edu.au

Research Services Office |Union Building Basement

Flinders University

Sturt Road, Bedford Park | South Australia | 5042

GPO Box 2100 | Adelaide SA 5001

CRICOS Registered Provider: The Flinders University of South Australia | CRICOS Provider Number 00114A

This email and attachments may be confidential. If you are not the intended recipient,

please inform the sender by reply email and delete all copies of this message.

Focus Groups

COMMITTEE MEMBER
QUESTIONING ROUTE

Opening

- Purpose of the study
- Sustainability of grassroots associations
- Focus groups (2 sets)
- Survey
- Provide more understanding for my thesis

Ground rules

- Looking for a range of ideas and perceptions
- Everyone to have a say
- Discussion – bounce off each other – ideas can emerge
- Variety of insights and experiences
- Tape recording & confidentiality
- Speaking up, no talking-over
- Tea and coffee/ toilets

1) Introductory question

- Tell us who you are, what committees you volunteer on, and what you most enjoy about this work & what motivated to join your committee?

2) Key questions

3.1   Describe the current state of interest of people wanting to join your committee?

3.2   Thinking of those who you have approached to join your committee but did not accept, what do you think may have been the reasons why?

3.3   On the paper in front of you, circle three of the most important tasks that committee members do.

3.4   On the next paper in front of you, jot down the top three attributes that good committee members should have.

3.5   On the paper in front of you, jot down recruitment strategies, or operational changes, that could be effective in gaining more committee volunteers.

3) Ending Questions

4.1   Have we missed anything?

4.2   All things considered, is there anything we should have talked about but didn't?

4.3   Thank-you, gifts and next steps

Focus Groups

NON-COMMITTEE MEMBERS
QUESTIONING ROUTE

Opening

- Purpose of the study
- Sustainability of grassroots associations
- Focus groups (2 sets)
- Survey
- Provide more understanding for my thesis

Ground rules

- Looking for a range of ideas and perceptions
- Everyone to have a say
- Discussion – bounce off each other
- Variety of insights and experiences
- Feel and think about an issue
- Ideas can emerge from the discussion
- Trends and patterns
- Tape recording & confidentiality
- Speaking up, no talking-over
- Tea and coffee/ toilets

4) Introductory question

- Tell us who you are, what groups or clubs you are a member of or volunteer for, and what you most enjoy about this activity.

5) Transition question

- What are your perceptions about volunteering as a committee member in your association or club?

6) Key questions

3.6 What are the main reasons why you don't currently volunteer on a committee?

3.7 What skills do you think are needed for being a committee member?

3.8 (Show hand-out of committee tasks).

Which of these committee tasks interest you? And what would it take for you to volunteer for those tasks?

What are the three most important tasks that committee members undertake? (Please indicate with a Capitol "I")

3.9 On the NEXT paper in front of you, jot down three of the most important attributes that good committee members have.

3.10 On the same paper in front of you, jot down recruitment strategies, or operational changes, that could be effective in gaining more committee volunteers.

Ending Questions

4.4 Have we missed anything?

4.5 All things considered, is there anything we should have talked about but didn't?

4.6 Thank-you, gifts and next steps

Date

Dear Secretary

Re: The Sustainability of Grassroots Associations: Creating a Better Tribe

This letter is to introduce Ms Christel Mex who is a PhD student in the social science discipline at the School of History and International Relations at Flinders University.

She is undertaking research leading to the production of a thesis on the subject of the sustainability of grassroots associations in Australia.

She would like to invite your association to assist with this project by inviting members of your association to participate in a focus group.

Flinders University has partnered with Volunteering SA&NT, Curtin University, Macquarie University and the William Angliss Institute in this Australian Government funded research project that will study what can encourage individuals to volunteer as committee members in grassroots associations.

The principal researcher is looking for current committee members and current ordinary members from your association, who are over the age of 18, to participate in a focus group if your association:

- has been incorporated for at least ten years; and
- has no paid staff.

The interview will last no longer than 1.5 hours and refreshments will be provided. An information sheet about the project and the participant's involvement is attached.

Be assured that any information provided will be treated in the strictest confidence and none of the participants will be individually identifiable in the resulting thesis, report or other publications. The participants are, of course, entirely free to discontinue their participation at any time or to decline to answer particular questions.

Since Ms Mex intends to make a tape recording of the interview, she will seek the participant's consent on the attached form to record the interview in order to use the recording (or a transcription) in preparing the thesis, report or other publications, on condition that the participants name or identity is not revealed, and to make the recording available to her supervisors on the same conditions. It may be necessary to make the recording available to secretarial assistance (or a transcription service) for transcription, in which case the participant may be assured that such persons will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement which outlines the requirement that the participant's name or identity not be revealed and that the confidentiality of the material is respected and maintained.

Please forward this email to your membership and committee, and they can let the researcher, Ms Christel Mex, know if they are able to attend a focus group, indicating the one they plan to attend:

For Committee Members: Date/ time/ location
For Ordinary Members: Date/ time/ location

Ms Mex can be contacted by email at mex0001@uni.flinders.edu.au or by phone on 0401 126 173. The focus groups will take place in a council-owned meeting room in your local area.

Any enquiries you may have concerning this project should be directed to me at the address given above or by telephone on 8201 2322 or email at melanie.oppenheimer@flinders.edu.au. Thank you for your consideration in this very important study.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Melanie Oppenheimer
School of History and International Relations
Flinders University

Ms Christel Mex
PhD Candidate
School of History & International Relations

Flinders University
Bedford Park SA 5042

GPO Box 2100
Adelaide SA 5001

Tel: +61 401 126 173
Mex0001@flinders.edu.au

Web www.flinders.edu.au

CRICOS Provider No. 00114A

FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Title: *The Sustainability of Grassroots Associations: Creating a Better Tribe*

Researcher:
Ms Christel Mex, PhD Candidate
School of History and International Relations
Flinders University
Ph: 0401 126 173

Supervisors:
Professor Melanie Oppenheimer
School of History and International Relations
Flinders University
Ph: (08) 82012322

Professor Susanne Schech
School of History and International Relations
Flinders University
Ph: (08) 8201 2489

Description of the study:
This focus group is part of a PhD project entitled *The Sustainability of Grassroots Associations: Creating a Better Tribe.* The project will investigate grassroots associations and their capacity to successfully recruit and retain volunteer leaders, who are committee members and office bearers. The project is part of an Australian Research Council funded project and is supported by Flinders University's School of History and International Relations.

Purpose of the focus group:
Two focus groups will be held in three council areas in South Australia, with committee members and ordinary members, from a cross-section of service and advocacy associations that have been incorporated for at least ten years and do not have the benefit of paid staff. You will be asked questions about your perceptions of grassroots associations and if they are experiencing any leadership recruitment and succession issues. The findings from the focus groups will be used to develop a measure to assess the capacity of volunteer-involving organisations to successfully recruit and maintain volunteer leaders and committee members.

inspiring
achievement

What will I be asked to do?
You are invited to attend a focus group with about ten participants. The session will take about 1.5 hours and will take place in a council-owned meeting room. The group interview will be recorded using a digital voice recorder to help with looking at the results. Once recorded, the interview will be transcribed (typed-up) and stored as a computer file and then destroyed once the results have been finalised. This is voluntary.

What benefit will I gain from being involved in this study?
The sharing of your experiences will help understand what motivates people to volunteer as committee members, what prevents some from doing so, and what can be done to help more people volunteer for leadership positions in grassroots associations.

Will I be identifiable by being involved in this study?
We do not need your name and you will be anonymous. Once the interview has been typed-up and saved as a file, the voice file will then be destroyed. Any identifying information will be removed and the typed-up file stored on a password-protected computer that only the researcher (Ms Christel Mex) and her Supervisors will have access to. Your comments will not be linked directly to you.

Be assured that any information provided will be treated in the strictest confidence and none of the participants will be individually identifiable in the resulting thesis, report or other publications. The participants are, of course, entirely free to discontinue their participation at any time or to decline to answer particular questions.

Written consent
Since Ms Mex intends to make a tape recording of the interview, she will seek the participant's written consent on a University form to record the interview in order to use the recording (or a transcription) in preparing the thesis, report or other publications, on condition that the participants name or identity is not revealed, and to make the recording available to her supervisors on the same conditions. It may be necessary to make the recording available to secretarial assistance (or a transcription service) for transcription, in which case the participant may be assured that such persons will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement which outlines the requirement that the participant's name or identity will not be revealed and that the confidentiality of the material is respected and maintained.

Are there any risks or discomforts if I am involved?
Other group members may be able to identify your contributions even though they will not be directly attributed to you. The researcher anticipates few risks from your involvement in this study. If you have any concerns regarding anticipated or actual risks or discomforts, please raise them with the investigator.

How do I agree to participate?
Participation is voluntary. You may answer 'no comment' or refuse to answer any questions and you are free to withdraw from the focus group at any time without effect or consequences. A consent form accompanies this information sheet. If you agree to participate please read and sign the form and present to the researcher Ms Christel Mex or email mex0001@uni.flinders.edu.au.

How will I receive feedback?
Outcomes from the project will be summarised and given to you by the researcher if you would like to see them.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet and we hope that you will accept our invitation to be involved.

This research project has been approved by the Flinders University Social and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee (Project number 7157). For more information regarding ethical approval of the project the Executive Officer of the Committee can be contacted by telephone on 8201 3116, by fax on 8201 2035 or by email human.researchethics@flinders.edu.au
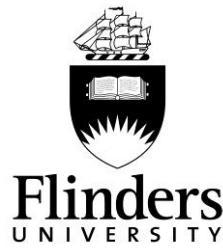
CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH

FOCUS GROUP

The Sustainability of Grassroots Associations

I …..

being over the age of 18 years hereby consent to participate as requested in the Information Sheet for the research project on *The Sustainability of Grassroots Associations.*

1.   I have read the information provided.

2.   Details of procedures and any risks have been explained to my satisfaction.

3.   I agree to audio recording of my information and participation.

4.   I am aware that I should retain a copy of the Information Sheet and Consent Form for future reference.

5.   I understand that:

- I may not directly benefit from taking part in this research.

- I am free to withdraw from the project at any time and am free to decline to answer particular questions.

- While the information gained in this study will be published as explained, I will not be identified, and individual information will remain confidential.

- I may withdraw at any time from the session or the research without disadvantage. Given the nature of the group discussion, while it will be possible for participants to withdraw during the focus group, it will not be possible for the recording to be stopped.

- The researcher will respect confidentiality and anonymity at all times, although she will have no control over other participants in the group. Verbal agreement between all participants will be sought prior to the commencement of the session that they will maintain the anonymity of other members and the confidentiality of the discussion.

- Any information provided will be treated in the strictest confidence and none of the participants will be individually identifiable in the resulting thesis, report or other publications. The participants are, of course, entirely free to discontinue their participation at any time or to decline to answer particular questions.

- I understand that the interview will be recorded in order to use the recording (or a transcription) in preparing the thesis, report or other publications, on condition that my name or identity is not revealed. I understand that it may be necessary to make the recording available to secretarial assistance (or a transcription service) for transcription, in which case I am assured that my name or identity will not be revealed and that the confidentiality of the material is respected and maintained.

6. I agree to the transcript being made available to the Supervisors of the Researcher on condition that my identity is not revealed.

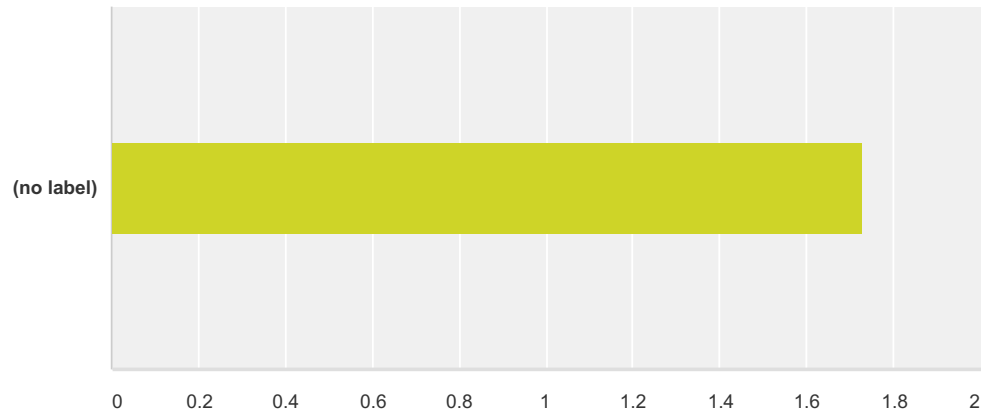**Participant's signature………………………………… Date…………………...**

I certify that I have explained the study to the volunteer and consider that she/he understands what is involved and freely consents to participation.

Researcher's name: Ms Christel Mex, PhD Candidate

Researcher's signature……………………………….. Date…………………….

Q1 How likely are you to recommend this focus group to others?

Answered: 15   **Skipped: 0**

	Extremelylikely	Very likely	Neutral	Very unlikely	Extremely unlikely	Total	Weighted Average
(no label)	53.33% 8	26.67% 4	13.33% 2	6.67% 1	0.00% 0	15	1.73

Q2 Do you have any comments or suggestions?

Answered: 13   **Skipped: 2**

#	Responses	Date
1	I think everything was covered on the day, I really can't add to the questions put forward.	8/26/2016 2:33 PM
2	Just enjoyed total session, trust you got enough info from us all Christel to help with your thesis xx Dot	8/25/2016 3:55 PM
3	Other groups have the same problems how to encourage the younger generation to participate or step up to take a senior roll. John	8/24/2016 11:01 PM
4	not sure how to answer Q1 but I found it to quote the old TV show 'Laugh-in -"veery interesting". It was interesting to see that while we all came from different directions, we had almost the same needs, wants and outcomes to make our own groups function better. Improved communication and better listening skills both inside and outside our groups would help I'm sure - in particular I/we must learn to listen to and consider other people's point of view. I'd be happy to participate again with a different 'focus' if required - I got something out of it. I enjoyed it and consider the voucher a bonus not a prerequisite to participate - I'm sure my wife will put it to good use. Nice to have met you -it was an enjoyable afternoon. cheers. John.	8/24/2016 10:51 PM
5	None about the focus group, but I did neglect in my written comments about recruitment to add that I tell potential committee members that we keep face to face meetings to the absolute minimum as an inducement to join the committee. A lot of business can be dealt with by email. I have found this inducement works.	8/17/2016 10:03 PM
6	Christel, thank you for organising the tea/coffee and biscuits, I came straight from work, and was very grateful for a coffee :)	8/17/2016 12:57 AM
7	Christel's facilitation encouraged and allowed all those present to participate. I found the experience very positive and affirming.	8/16/2016 11:39 PM
8	Plenty of expression time during the session time. No assumptions made by the coordinator. She encouraged free talk and invited the quiet ones to participate.	8/16/2016 11:16 PM

9	No suggestions but all of my life I have avoiding inviting others to be volunteers and I just know that I will not change at 78	8/16/2016 10:51 PM
10	I feel I had lots more to share with you and the group of satisfying things I have achieved through volunteering.	8/16/2016 10:48 PM
11	The focus group meeting was very interesting, well run and relevant. 10 guests is about the max number for every-one to have a say in the time frame.	8/16/2016 6:33 PM
12	No, I think the focus group I participated in was well run, and gave evryone attending the full oportunity to 'have their say'!!	8/16/2016 5:14 PM
13	I enjoyed hearing other volunteers' comments - we are all going through the same problems!The Barossa Council has a Volunteers' Officer - perhaps she could offer some useful comments.	8/16/2016 5:11 PM

Focus Group Participant Case Properties and identifiers

- **51 Participants**
- **Organisational type based on ACNC categories**
- **22 participants volunteered for more than one organisation**

	Onkaparinga Committee Members (10) – Monday 22 Aug 2016 at 3pm 6 females, 4 males			
F	Other recreation/ social club	50s	OCM1
M	Other recreation/ social club	70s	OCM2
M	Other recreation/ social club	60s	OCM3
M	Employment and training	60s	OCM4
F	Culture and arts	50s	OCM5
F	Civic and advocacy	60s	OCM6
F	Other health service delivery	60s	OCM7
F	Other health service delivery	60s	OCM8
M	Other recreation/ social club	70s	OCM9
F	Civic and advocacy	50s	OCM10

	Onkaparinga Non-Committee Members (8) – Monday 29 August 2016 at 3pm 5 males, 3 females			
M	Civic and advocacy	70s	ONC1
M	Sport	50s	ONC2
M	Other recreation/ social club	60s	ONC3
F	Culture and arts	20s	ONC4
F	Civic and advocacy	60s	ONC5
F	Other health service delivery	20s	ONC6
M	Other health service delivery	60s	ONC7
M	Emergency and relief	60s	ONC8

	Tanunda (Barossa) Committee Members (10) – Monday 15 Aug 2016 at 5:15pm 5 males, 5 females			
M	Other recreation/ social club	70s	TCM1
M	Culture and arts	60s	TCM2
F	Culture and arts	50s	TCM3
F	Sport	40s	TCM4
M	Civic and advocacy	50s	TCM5
M	Culture and arts	60s	TCM6
F	Civic and advocacy	50s	TCM7
M	Civic and advocacy	60s	TCM8
F	Culture and arts	50s	TCM9
F	Culture and arts	60s	TCM10

Tanunda (Barossa) Non-Committee members (7) – Tues 16 Aug at 5pm
1 male, 6 females

M	Civic and advocacy	60s	TNC1
F	Civic and advocacy	50s	TNC2
F	Emergency and relief	70s	TNC3
F	Emergency and relief	80s	TNC4
F	Culture and arts	60s	TNC5
F	Culture and arts	40s	TNC6
F	Social services	80s	TNC7

Burnside Committee Members (8) – Mon 18 July at 7:15pm
4 males, 4 females

M	Sport	40 s	BCM1
M	Civic and advocacy	70s	BCM2
M	Environment	70s	BCM3
F	Other recreation/ social cub	60s	BCM4
F	Sport	20s	BCM5
F	Sport	50s	BCM6
M	Culture and arts	50s	BCM7
F	Civic and advocacy	60 s	BCM8

Burnside Non-Committee Members (8) – Mon 26 Sept at 5:15pm
6 females, 2 males

F	Civic and advocacy	70s	BNC1
M	Culture and arts	50s	BNC2
F	Sport	70s	BNC3
F	Culture and arts	20a	BNC4
M	Sport	60s	BNC5
F	Culture and arts	40s	BNC6
F	Other recreation/ social club	70s	BNC7
F	Other recreation/ social club	30s	BNC8

Parent Code	Sub Code	Definition	Examples
Barriers to joining committees	Alienation	Low self-esteem lack of confidence. Feeling that they don't have the skills to be on a committee.	"I feel as though my lack of experience would be a reason for me not to volunteer for the committee" (BNC5). "the way that it runs does seem a little bit daunting, just having to be so structured and formal about everything (ONC4)
	Boring meetings	Perception or actual experience of poorly managed meetings that did not inspire or accomplish goals.	"There is too much talk and not enough action I reckon" (ONC8). "I left a couple of committees over the years because they just chewed up my time has been wasted" (TCM2)
	Burn-out	Feeling of unending commitments to the organisation, high workloads and repetitive tasks with no end in sight.	Have been on committees for many years in the past and am tired of it - I had enough, want to do other things. Time to give someone else a go. (BNC3)
	Lack of Interest	No interest in doing committee work, desire to spend time doing other things.	I couldn't be bothered. None of the committee roles interest me at all. (BNC2) " I think fundamentally it comes back to apathy" (TCM8)
	Lack of time	Generally busy doing many other things - broad bucket.	"Yes, that's a common theme, "I can't do that, I haven't got time" (BCM8)
		Too busy with family commitments.	"they're tied up with families, children, got to take the kids to sports and things like that" (TCM5)
		Too busy with employment or study	"I'm still studying so its time restraints" (BNC5); "if you're working an 8 hour day and then travelling an hour each end of it, well that's ten hours out of your day plus a little time at home. Its understandable" (TCM6)
		Other voluntary roles - Busy doing other volunteer jobs.	there are too many other things on, people joining other things" (BCM4)
	Like to participate, not lead	The 'pay 'n' play phenomena where members are happy to join an organisation to enjoy the benefits, but not be on the committee or take responsibility for an activity	"they enjoy everything but they don't want to do any work" (BCM4)
	Committee Politcs	Bad experiences in the past with personalities on committees, internal conflicts, dislike of certain people on committees.	"a clique of committee members, and it's a bit elite " (BCM1); "the politics can be so draining … I want to be able to sleep at night without worry worry worry" (BNC1)

Parent Code	Sub Code	Definition	Examples
	Red tape	Government rules, committee rules, formalities due to the association act regulations or association constitution.	"One of the other problems these days I think is the intrusion of OH&S and things like this" (BCM3); "Now from the hierarchy down, we're told not to do that anymore for whatever reason that is not acceptable" (OCM10)
	Poor health or ageing	Need to resign from committees or can-not join them due to poor health, often caused by ageing. No longer able to do the tasks required.	"the driving it's never going to happen due to medical reasons." (BCM4); "had to give that away because my hearing deteriorated" (ONC3); "a lot of the older fellas as they got older they dropped out, they didn't like going out at night its too cold or you know they like to go to bed with the chooks" (TCM5)
Benefits of committee work & membership	Developing others	Getting satisfaction from developing others	"I love motivating people, helping them develop" (BCM1); " my satisfaction is getting people, training them up, getting them out performing and seeing gradually the standard of performance getting better" (TCM2)
	Enjoyment & new friends	Find enjoyment by serving on a committee and making new friends	"I enjoy it because um I like meeting people from this area" (BCM4); "I joined that to meet people, make friends and very soon became something that I enjoyed more and more" (TCM4); "get a kick out of being involved" (TNC1); "I enjoy the work." (TCM10)
	Helps my career	Develop job skills and business contacts	"hopefully it might help me find a job" (TNC6); "They want to know who the contact people are and to do business" (TCM3)
	Able to influence outcomes	Joined committee to take part or lead in achieving outcomes.	"I wanted to change something about it, so I got involved" (BCM6); "you have to take ownership if you want it to work properly." (OCM3)
	Satisfaction, responsibility	Gains a sense of satisfaction from committee work. Feels a sense of responsibility to contribute.	"I felt it was time to give something back to the group" (OCM5); "It gives me a chance to give back to the community, and you get a kick out of being involved and helping other people."(TNC1)
	Use & build skills	Fills a need to use existing skills, and to learn new skills.	"Keep learning, keep you mind ticking over, so that's why I enjoy it." (BCM4); " I have some organizational skills and I like to see the organisation working efficiently " (OCM3)
Committee Recruitment	Adverting/ the media	Using the media through free publicity or paid advertising.	"we do a lot of work with the press, television and radio, telling them what's happening" BCM3

Parent Code	Sub Code	Definition	Examples
	Direct approach	Asking someone directly, 'tapping on the shoulder'.	"Every single one that I've been involved in, I've been asked by someone I couldn't say no to." (BCM7)
	Offer flexibility	Being open to change, eg. episodic roles and being flexible with meeting times	"Open-mindedness – willingness to look at new was to do things so that we get more younger members" (ONC5)
	Increase general membership	The more members and organisation has, the larger the pool to recruit committee members.	"Well one way to get new committee members is to get new members into the organisaiton." (ONC3)
	Last one standing	No one else volunteering for the task at hand.	"I think initially for my lacrosse club it was initially because no one else said they would do it." (BCM5)
	Sell the vision/ Branding	Good promotion of the purpose of the organisation and what it achieves.	"you have to have some way of publicising what you're doing because it makes your members feel worthwhile." (TCM6); "Talk up the positives of committee" (OCM8)
	Specific job roles	Being clear about committee roles and tasks.	"Be highly specific as to what is required." (BCM)
	Spread workload	Allocation of tasks fairly across members.	"you don't over work them and don't under work them." (BCM3); "sharing positions helps because we're all retired and a lot of us travel." (BNC1)
	Make it fun	Enjoyment of committee work is important motivator.	"Make committee meetings a pleasure to attend – include some social time." (TCM7)
	Mentoring	Experienced committee members looking after and training new committee recruits	"Mentoring new members if you want them to stay the distance and take on increasing role, shadowing – demystifying the whole committee operation." (ONC5)
	Social media	Use of social media in member and committee recruitment	"as a recruiting tool probably a third of our membership base is coming from facebook" (TCM2)
	Build skills	Promote the benefits of building skills through committee work	"Emphasis learning and applying the knowledge, enriching themselves & group." (BNC5)

Parent Code	Sub Code	Definition	Examples
Factors for success	Advocacy	The organisation advocates strongly for a cause.	"We are pushing a cause, I think that's most important. So being a champion is a very large part of what you do I think." (TCM6)
	Chairing and leadership	Strong leadership that steers the organisation.	"If you go look at successful organisations, probably 85% of the reasons why they are successful is the leadership, that top person, if you haven't got the strength they go downhill." (BCM3)
	Changing with the times	Willingness to try new approaches and adapt to change.	"We've had ideas for new things and a couple of the younger ones have come up with ideas for using technology and they are great ideas, so I'm actually quite excited." (TCM7)
	Communication	Good communication between committee members and the general membership.	"Effective communication – listening as well as being able to get a point across." (ONC6); "understanding of others, active listening" (ONC4)
	Delegation, skill mix	Delegation of tasks that are broken down into manageable segments, utilising a wide variety of skills.	"Do not micromanage" (BCM6); "I think you also need to have people with different skills, as well as defined roles" (ONC7); "we are trying is to break things down, people want to help - they just don't want to get a whole heap of work, " (TCM3)
	Good governance	Committee respects good governance procedures and complies appropriately with legal frameworks.	"have a strong constitution with proper decision-making processes." (BNC8); "accountability to members and regulatory bodies, to be the glue of the organisation, and represent to the community the ethos and values of the organisation." (TNC2)
	Inclusive decision making	Respect for fellow members and allowing them to be part of the decision process.	"Aim to entice & keep younger members – implement new ideas & opportunity to be heard." (BNC6); "They feel that they are being heard and the way to get people involved in anything is to let them feel that they are in charge and that they are part of the process." (TCM7)
	Increasing membership	A growing organisation is a sign of good health.	"...obviously lots of new people then people get involved because they can see the momentum building," (BCM1)
	Positive attitude, enthusiasm	Positive behaviours and enthusiasm will attract committee participation.	"Willing to give 100%" (TCM5); " I was quite impressed with the people and they really wanted to help the club and there was no politics, and they were really all working as a team." (ONC2)

Parent Code	Sub Code	Definition	Examples
	Recognise, look after members	Recognition of others, making sure people know that their contributions are valued.	"Make sure you follow up frequently on new members to make sure they are happy." (BCM2); "Thanking committee members and 'others' for a job well done!" (BCM)
	Willing to participate	Having a membership that volunteers to complete tasks on a reliable basis.	"Reliability is a big one, people need to know they can count on the committee and the members to turn up and do the right thing" (BNC6)
Reasons for difficulties	Ageing membership	Committee members getting older and younger people not nominating.	"Committees haven't got new blood, younger blood, coming through" (OCM7)
	Apathy, laziness	People not interested in joining, not willing to help. Loss of altruism.	"No one wants to go on it – they enjoy everything but they don't want to do any work" (BCM4); "members haven't grown up with a community ethic for helping in the community, it doesn't happen." (TNC4)
	Burn-out, high work load	High work load for committee members which is causing burn-out.	"the committee is exhausted because we just recycling those who are in it." (BCM4); "the work load is very very high for those who are on it, which turns other people off from volunteering." (TCM3)
	Can't fill positions	Lack of volunteers and members who are willing to join the committee.	"we have found it quite difficult to replace people." (OCM5); "they have so many problems, they are a club of 32, and they cannot get anyone on the committee." (OCM1)
	Declining membership	Loss of members and volunteers.	"Our club was a very big club back 32 years ago we started. Its now down to about 45 members" (BCM2); "I think the grassroots problem is (the lack of) volunteers across the board" (OCM6); "Just about every person I talk to says its harder to get volunteers." (BCM6)
	Getting too old to do the work	Age-caused loss of mobility and other disabilities that prevent volunteering.	"we have a lot of older people pull out now because they're too old and can't get around" (TCM5)
	Lack of skills, tools, training	Not having people with the right skills on a committee can cause problems.	"Unfortunately I have no computer skills, and this limits me a lot, because everything is online, all our agendas and notices, our accounts." (BNC4); "I think if you don't know what you're doing you kind of flounder a bit, so no one knew quite exactly how and what they were doing." (ONC6)

Parent Code	Sub Code	Definition	Examples
	Oligarchy, driven by a few	Committees that have the same people serve year after year, either because people don't nominate or they don't encourage new people to join.	"it really got driven on the back of a couple of individuals who just worked tirelessly, you know, 40, 50, 60 hours a week" (BCM1); "There are also problems with committees who have closed shops, where they won't let other people into it, ... they keep swapping positions around and are controlling." (OCM3)
	Red tape	Government rules and regulations, internal governance procedures are causing unnecessary burdens.	"you set off with the best of intentions ... by the time you've done the health hazards, the food handling, risk assessments, you're snowed under with the red tape." (OCM2)
	Unsuitable people on committee	Volunteers who are a poor fit within a committee causing difficulty.	"it's all very well to try to get people involved, but sometimes you have people who want to be involved who are not appropriate for that particular situation and that's quite difficult because you could be accused of discrimination ... the people who are just not the right people for the job but want it desperately, and I think that's a really difficult situation for people on committees or in groups to deal with. (OCM8)
	Committee politics	See politics, in Barriers to joining committees	

The Sustainability of Grassroots Organisations

This is a very important South Australian study on volunteering - and thanks for participating in this survey.

You have received the survey because you are currently a member or volunteer in a club, community organisation or association in South Australia.

Funded by the Australian Research Council, the aim of the study is to understand what motivates people to volunteer on management committees, what prevents some from doing so, and what can be done to encourage people to nominate for committees in small grassroots associations.

This survey is estimated to take 15 minutes to complete and your responses will remain strictly confidential. If you wish to change an answer in the survey, press 'Prev' to take you to the previous page, _not_ the 'back' button.

As a small token of our appreciation, you may choose to provide your contact details at the end of the survey to participate in a draw to win a set of publications on volunteer engagement donated by Volunteering SA&NT, or the book "The Power of Humanity: 100 Years of the Australian Red Cross 1914-2014" by Professor Melanie Oppenheimer.

Flinders University Human Research Ethics Committee has approved this study (project no. 7157). Should you wish to discuss the study with someone not directly involved, in particular, any matters concerning the conduct of the study or your rights as a participant, you may contact the Executive Officer of the committee on (08) 8201 3116 or email human.researchethics@flinders.edu.au.

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this survey, we define:

- An **organisation** as an association or group of people that come together for a common purpose, and may or not be incorporated.
- A **member** is a person who is connected to an organisation through a joining fee, mailing list or other registration process.
- A **volunteer** is a person giving time without payment to an organisation

* 1. Are you a member or a volunteer for the organisation that received or sent you this survey?

○ Member

○ Volunteer

○ Both a member and a volunteer

○ Neither a member nor a volunteer

○ Not sure

Flinders UNIVERSITY ADELAIDE • AUSTRALIA **The Sustainability of Grassroots Organisations**

Flinders UNIVERSITY ADELAIDE • AUSTRALIA **The Sustainability of Grassroots Organisations**

2. Over the last 12 months, how often have you usually volunteered for this organisation?

○ At least once a week through all/most of the year

○ 2 - 3 times a month through all/most of the year

○ At least once a month through all/most of the year

○ Several times through all/most of the year

○ Regularly once a year

○ At least once a week through season/part of the year

○ 2-3 times a month through season/part of the year

○ At least once a month through season/part of the year

○ Several times through season/part of the year

○ Less regularly

○ It varies

○ Other (please specify)

[   ]

Flinders UNIVERSITY ADELAIDE • AUSTRALIA **The Sustainability of Grassroots Organisations**

3. Approximately how long has your organisation been operating?

○ Less than one year

○ One to 5 years

○ 6 to 10 years

○ 11 to 20 years

○ 21 to 40 years

○ More than 40 years

○ Don't know

4. Please identify the area in South Australia where you believe your local organisation is based - e.g. your management committee or board meetings are usually held there.

○ Adelaide CBD

○ Eastern Adelaide

○ Northern Adelaide

○ Southern Adelaide

○ Western Adelaide

○ Adelaide Hills

○ Barossa LIght and Lower North

○ Fleurieu Peninsula and Kangaroo Island

○ Eyre Peninsula and Western SA

○ Far North

○ Limestone Coast

○ Murray Mallee

○ Yorke Peninsula and Mid North

○ Interstate

○ Overseas

○ Other (please specify)

[ ]

The Sustainability of Grassroots Organisations

5. Please identify the region/s where you believe that your organisation serves or holds activities (select all that apply)

☐ All of South Australia

☐ Adelaide CBD

☐ Eastern Adelaide

☐ Northern Adelaide

☐ Southern Adelaide

☐ Western Adelaide

☐ Adelaide Hills

☐ Barossa Light and Lower North

☐ Fleurieu Peninsula and Kangaroo Island

☐ Eyre Peninsula and Western SA

☐ Far North

☐ Limestone Coast

☐ Murray Mallee

☐ Yorke Peninsula and Mid North

☐ All states in Australia

☐ South Australia and one or more other states

☐ Overseas

☐ Other (please specify)

[   ]

The Sustainability of Grassroots Organisations

6. What do you believe is your organisation's **core** activity? (Choose one activity)

○ Animal Protection

○ Aged care activities

○ Civic and advocacy activities

○ Culture and the arts

○ Economic, social and community development

○ Emergency and relief

○ Employment and training

○ Environmental activities

○ Government services (Federal, State, Local)

○ Grant-making activities

○ Higher education

○ Hospital services and rehabilitation activities

○ Housing activities

○ Income support and maintenance

○ Mental health and crisis intervention

○ Political party activities

○ Primary and secondary education

○ Religious activities

○ Research

○ Social services

○ Sport

○ Other education

○ Other health service delivery

○ Other recreation and social club activity

○ Other (please specify)

7. Who (or what) was helped by your organisation's activities in the last 12 months? (select all that apply).

- [ ] Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people
- [ ] Animals
- [ ] Art, cultural activities
- [ ] Buildings/ the built environment
- [ ] Children
- [ ] Communities overseas
- [ ] Disaster victims
- [ ] Elderly people
- [ ] Ethnic groups
- [ ] The environment
- [ ] Gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgenger, intersex persons
- [ ] General community
- [ ] Men
- [ ] Migrants, refugees or asylum seekers
- [ ] People at risk of homelessness/ the homeless
- [ ] People with disabilities
- [ ] People with a chronic or terminal illness
- [ ] People with a recreational interest
- [ ] Political party
- [ ] Pre/post release of offenders and their families
- [ ] A profession or industry
- [ ] Trade union members
- [ ] Unemployed persons
- [ ] Veterans or their families
- [ ] Victims of crime
- [ ] Women
- [ ] Young people
- [ ] Others not listed. Please describe below:

The Sustainability of Grassroots Organisations

8. In your estimation, what percentage of this organisation's activities help non-members?

○ The organisation only helps members

○ Some of the activities help non-members (about 25%)

○ About half of the activities help non-members (about 50%)

○ Most of the activities help non-members (about 75%)

○ All activities help both members and non-members

○ Not sure

9. In your estimation, what is the approximate number of formal members **and** volunteers of this organisation? (formal meaning that there is a registration process and/or joining fee)

○ 0

○ 1-4

○ 5-19

○ 20-49

○ 50-99

○ 100-199

○ 200 - 499

○ 500+

○ Not sure

The Sustainability of Grassroots Organisations

10. In your estimation, what is the number of staff members (full or part-time), who are paid a regular salary, and employed directly by your organisation in a coordinating or administrative role?

(If your orgainsation is part of a state or national network, this question refers to your local chapter)

- ◯ 0
- ◯ 1-4
- ◯ 5-19
- ◯ 20-49
- ◯ 50-99
- ◯ 100-199
- ◯ 200+
- ◯ Don't know

Flinders UNIVERSITY ADELAIDE · AUSTRALIA **The Sustainability of Grassroots Organisations**

11. In the last five years, I believe that this organisation has experienced

Declining membership	Somewhat declining membership	No significant change in membership numbers	Somewhat increasing membership	Increasing membership	Don't know
◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

12. In my experience, this organisation has had difficulty recruiting new <u>members</u>

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree or disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

13. In my experience, this organisation has had difficulty recruiting new <u>volunteers</u>

Stronly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree or disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Flinders UNIVERSITY ADELAIDE · AUSTRALIA **The Sustainability of Grassroots Organisations**

Well done!

You're about half-way through the survey. Some of the questions coming up are a little bit detailed, but are very important for gaining an in-depth understanding of the research questions.

So its important that you finish - and you're almost there!

Flinders UNIVERSITY ADELAIDE · AUSTRALIA **The Sustainability of Grassroots Organisations**

14. I have observed that this organisation is having difficulty recruiting new <u>management committee or board</u> members.

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree or disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

15. In my experience, this organisation has mostly the same individuals serve on the management committee or board year after year.

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree or disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

16. Why would people **not wish** to serve on this organisation's management committee or board? (Based on your experience, please indicate the level of agreement for each statement below)

	Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree or disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
There are no benefits to be gained from being on the committee or board	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
They don't have time due to work or family commitments	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Over-committed to other organisations	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
They don't want the weight of responsibility	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
They don't like meetings	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The same people serve on the committee year after year and are not open to change	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
They don't like committee politics or personality conflicts	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Feel they don't have the right skills to be on the committee	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Had bad experiences serving on other committees in the past	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Worry about legal liabilities from serving on committees	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Meeting times are not convenient	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Some are too afraid or shy to put themselves forward	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Additional reasons

17. What attributes are needed for a successful management committee or board?
(Based on your experience, please indicate the level of importance for each attribute)

	Important	Somewhat important	Neither important nor unimportant	Somewhat unimportant	Unimportant
Effective leadership	○	○	○	○	○
Recognition and respect of fellow members and volunteers	○	○	○	○	○
Positive attitudes and enthusiasm	○	○	○	○	○
Strong advocacy for cause	○	○	○	○	○
Good communication	○	○	○	○	○
Having clear job roles & delegation of tasks	○	○	○	○	○
High visibility for organisation and brand recognition	○	○	○	○	○
Good governance, policies and procedures	○	○	○	○	○
Flexible attitudes, changing with the times	○	○	○	○	○
Members able to complete agreed tasks	○	○	○	○	○
Members having the appropriate skills	○	○	○	○	○
Regular meeting attendance	○	○	○	○	○
Effective conflict resolution	○	○	○	○	○

Additional attributes (please specify)

18. What recruitment strategies would be effective in gaining more management committee/board nominations for your organisation? (Please indicate your level of agreement for each strategy)

	Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree or disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Flexibility with tasks and meeting times	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Having a healthy and inclusive organisational culture	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Being clear about what's involved	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Increasing enjoyment and fellowship	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Mentoring new members and volunteers	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Raising the general profile of the organisation and increasing membership	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Inviting people to attend events and functions	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Communicate the opportunities through traditional media	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Advertise through social media	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Delegate some tasks to the broader membership and/or volunteers	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Communicate the benefits of serving on a committee	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Additional strategies (please specify)

[ ]

The Sustainability of Grassroots Organisations

* 19. Are you currently a member of the management committee, or board of management, for this organisation?

○ Yes

○ No

The Sustainability of Grassroots Organisations

Well done, you're almost finished!

Just a few more questions to go - thank you so much for keeping going.

The Sustainability of Grassroots Organisations

20. Please indicate to what extent each motivation below **influences <u>your</u> decision to serve** on this organisation's management committee or board. *(Please select one answer per row)*
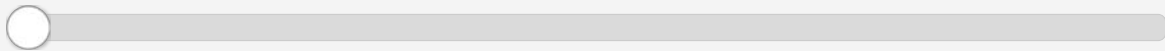
	Important	Somewhat Important	Neither important nor unimportant	Somewhat unimportant	Unimportant
It's a key part of my social life	○	○	○	○	○
I am genuinely concerned about the cause/purpose of the organisation	○	○	○	○	○
Volunteering on the committee gives me a sense of identity	○	○	○	○	○
To learn more about the cause for which I will be working	○	○	○	○	○
I get to influence outcomes	○	○	○	○	○
I can make new contacts that might help my business or career	○	○	○	○	○
It allows me to explore different career options and learn new skills	○	○	○	○	○
I lets me learn things through direct, hands on experience	○	○	○	○	○
Serving on the committee makes me feel needed	○	○	○	○	○
Serving on the committee is a way to make new friends	○	○	○	○	○
I can put my skills and experience to good use	○	○	○	○	○

Additional motive
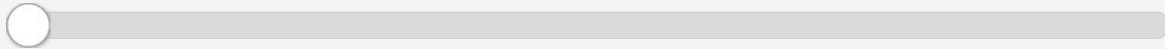
21. How long do you think you will stay with this committee or board? (please indicate by sliding the indicator from 0 (meaning you will leave very soon) to 7 (meaning that you will stay forever)

| 0 | Haven't considered my tenure | 7 |

22. How often have you felt like quitting this committee or board? (please indicate by sliding the indicator from 0 (meaning never) to 7 (meaning often)

| 0 | Never thought about it | 7 |

Flinders UNIVERSITY ADELAIDE · AUSTRALIA **The Sustainability of Grassroots Organisations**

23. In your opinion, what are the challenges faced by your organisation in general?

24. If your organisation is experiencing challenges, what resources are required to overcome them?

25. What changes would help your organisation work better?

26. Is there anything else that you wish to add?

27. What is your age group? (this information is important for finding trends or patterns in the final survey results).

○ Under 20

○ 20 - 29

○ 30 - 39

○ 40 - 49

○ 50 - 59

○ 60 - 69

○ 70 - 79

○ 80+

○ Prefer not to answer

28. What is your gender?

○ Female

○ Male

○ Prefer not to answer

Other

[   ]

29. Statistical analyses of the data will require the researchers to mathematically control for a "clustering effect" (such as when students are clustered under schools, patients are clustered under hospitals or like in this case, members/volunteers clustered under an organisation).

Could you please provide us with the name of the organisation you belong to so correct statistical analyses can be undertaken? As mentioned before, your results WILL NOT be reported on the individual organisation level.

Name of organisation who sent you this survey:

Flinders UNIVERSITY ADELAIDE • AUSTRALIA   **The Sustainability of Grassroots Organisations**

---

30. As a small token of appreciation, you may choose to enter your contact details to participate in a draw to win a set of publications on volunteer engagement donated by Volunteering SA&NT, or the book "The Power of Humanity: 100 Years of the Australian Red Cross 1914-2014" by Professor Melanie Oppenheimer. Winners will be notified by email or telephone by 1 March 2017. You are under no obligation to enter and your personal details will remain confidential.

Name	
Organisation	
Address	
Address 2	
City/Town	
State/Province	
ZIP/Postal Code	
Email Address	
Phone Number	

APPENDIX 9

Thank you for completing this survey. If you would like to receive a copy of the research findings, or have any questions about the project, please contact:

Ms Christel L Mex, PhD Candidate
School of History & International Relations
Flinders University

Email: Mex0001@uni.flinders.edu.au

Data Requirements Table

Research question/objective: To establish if the membership numbers of grassroots associations are declining.			
Type of research: Descriptive, although will consider differences between grassroots associations and associations with paid staff			
Investigative questions	Variable(s) required	Detail in which data measured	Question number
To establish if the membership numbers of grassroots associations are declining.	Member/ volunteer/ leader on a Grassroots Association	Q10 – number of paid staff = 0 (First of 8 categories)	Q10
	Member/ volunteer/ leader in an association with paid staff	Q10 – number of paid staff = >1 or don't know (7 categories)	Q10
	Opinions on declining or increasing membership	Five-point Likert scale, Declining Membership to Increasing Membership (& Don't Know)	Q11
	Opinions on difficulty recruiting new members, Opinions on difficulty recruiting new volunteers	Seven-point Likert scale, Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree (& Don't Know)	Q12 Q13
	Open-ended questions regarding challenges & resourcing	Text box	Q23, 24
Research question/objective: Investigate trends in the number of committee nominations in grassroots associations and any degree of concern.			
Type of research: Descriptive, although will consider differences between grassroots associations and associations with paid staff			
To establish if the number of committee member nominations in grassroots associations is declining.	Opinions on the difficulty in recruiting new committee members	Q10 – number of paid staff = 0	Q10
		Q10 – number of paid staff = >1 (7 categories)	Q10
		Seven-point Likert scale, Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree (& Don't Know)	Q14
To establish if there are oligarchy concerns	Opinions on the degree of committee oligarchy	Seven-point Likert scale, Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree (& Don't Know)	Q15
From a committee member perspective, their future tenure	Opinions on the tenure of future service	Sliding scale (will leave very soon to stay forever)	Q21 – How long do you think you will stay with this committee or board?
From a committee member perspective, their satisfaction	Opinions on likelihood of quitting.	Sliding scale (never feel like quitting to often feel like quitting)	Q22 – How often have you felt like quitting this committee or board?

Research question/objective: Investigate why members of grassroots associations choose or choose not to join committees and whether this relates to previous volunteer experiences.			
Type of research: Explanatory, testing Volunteerability and Recruitability Theory. Will consider differences between grassroots associations and associations with paid staff			
Explore the major barriers to joining volunteer committees and boards, from the perspective of both committee members and regular members.	Committee/board members	Q19 = Yes	
	Regular members	Q19 = No	
	Grassroots associations	Q10 – number of paid staff = 0	
	Associations with paid staff	Q10 – number of paid staff = >1 (7 categories)	
	Level on agreement on 12 barriers identified from focus groups and theory	Seven-point Likert scale, Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree (& Don't Know). Plus comment box for additional barriers.	Q16 – Why would people not wish to serve on this organisation's management committee (12 barriers listed)
Research question/objective: Identify recruitment strategies that could encourage more members to nominate for volunteer leadership positions in grassroots associations.			
Type of research: Explanatory, testing Volunteerability and Recruitability Theory. Will consider differences between grassroots associations and associations with paid staff			
Explore the major success factors that successful committees have. (Attributes that committees can focus on)	Committee/board members	Q19 = Yes	
	Regular members	Q19 = No	
	Grassroots associations	Q10 – number of paid staff = 0	
	Associations with paid staff	Q10 – number of paid staff = >1 (7 categories)	
	Level of importance of 13 committee success factors identified from focus groups and theory	Five-point Likert scale, Important to Unimportant. Plus comment box for additional attributes	Q17 – What attributes are needed for a successful management committee or board?
Identify recruitment strategies that would be effective in gaining more committee nominations	Level of agreement on 11 committee recruitment strategies identified from focus groups and theory	Seven-point Likert scale, Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree (& Don't Know). Plus comment box for additional barriers.	Q18 – What recruitment strategies would be effective in gaining more mgmt committee/board nominations for your organisation?
	Open-ended questions regarding challenges & resourcing		Q 25 – What changes would help your organisation work better? (text box)
Motivations that influenced decisions to join committees	Level of importance of 11 motivations identified from focus groups and theory	Five-point Likert scale, Important to Unimportant. Plus comment box for additional motivations.	Q20- Please indicate to what extent each motivation below influences your decision to serve on this organisation's management committee?

	State (DCSI)	Federal (DSS)
VSA&NT - Sector Support & Advocacy	$ 260,000	
VSA&NT - Discretionary grant	$ 50,148	
VSA&NT - Adelaide VRC		$ 111,011
VSA&NT - Eyre Peninsular		$ 44,404
VSA&NT - Port Augusta		$ 88,809
VSA&NT - Riverland		$ 66,607
Limestone Coast VRC	$ 5,000	$ 60,000
Northern Volunteering	$ 37,000	$ 100,000
Southern Volunteering	$ 37,000	$ 120,000
Totals	$ 389,148	$ 590,831

Barriers to committee volunteering
Chi-square Test of Independence (95% significance level)

Barrier	Committee members agreeing N=797	Regular members agreeing N=136	Observed Chi-square (χ^2)	Degree of Freedom	p Value	Interpretation
They don't want the weight of responsibility	634	98	3.855	1	.05	**Significant**. The observed Chi-square value (3.855) is greater than the critical value (3.841) at alpha 0.05. It is possible to reject the null hypothesis: the associated probability (p) is equal to 0.05.
Lack of time – work/family commitments	638	95	7.173	1	0.007	**Significant**. The observed Chi-square value (7.173) is greater than the critical value (3.841) at alpha 0.05. It is possible to reject the null hypothesis: the associated probability (p) is equal to 0.007.
Too afraid or shy to put themselves forward	490	86	0.151	1	0.697	**Not significant**. The observed Chi-square value (0.151) is lower than the critical value (3.841) at alpha 0.05. It is not possible to reject the null hypothesis: the associated probability (p) is equal to 0.697.
Don't like meetings	482	78	0.472	1	0.492	**Not significant.** The observed Chi-square value (0.472) is lower than the critical value (3.841) at alpha 0.05. It is not possible to reject the null hypothesis: the associated probability (p) is equal to 0.492.
Over-committed to other organisations	478	71	2.895	1	0.089	**Not significant**. The observed Chi-square value (2.895) is lower than the critical value (3.841) at alpha 0.05. It is not possible to reject the null hypothesis: the associated probability (p) is equal to 0.089.
Don't have the right skills for committee work	438	75	0.002	1	0.967	**Not significant.** The observed Chi-square value (0.002) is lower than the critical value (3.841) at alpha 0.05. It is not possible to reject the null hypothesis: the associated probability (p) is equal to 0.967.
Don't like committee politics, personality conflicts	358	68	1.209	1	0.272	**Not significant.** The observed Chi-square value (1.209) is lower than the critical value (3.841) at alpha 0.05. It is not possible to reject the null hypothesis: the associated probability (p) is equal to 0.272.
There are no benefits to be gained	308	44	1.958	1	0.162	**Not significant.** The observed Chi-square value (1.958) is lower than the critical value (3.841) at alpha 0.05. It is not possible to reject the null hypothesis: the associated probability (p) is equal to 0.162.

Worry about legal liabilities	220	25	5.101	1	0.024	**Significant**. The observed Chi-square value (5.101) is greater than the critical value (3.841) at alpha 0.05. It is possible to reject the null hypothesis: the associated probability (p) is equal to 0.024.
Bad experiences serving on other committees	203	40	0.937	1	0.333	**Not significant.** The observed Chi-square value (0.937) is lower than the critical value (3.841) at alpha 0.05. It is not possible to reject the null hypothesis: the associated probability (p) is equal to 0.333.
Same people year after year, not open to change	184	51	12.808	1	0.000	**Significant**. The observed Chi-square value (12.808) is greater than the critical value (3.841) at alpha 0.05. It is possible to reject the null hypothesis: the associated probability (p) is equal to 0.000.
Meeting times not convenient	199	30	0.531	1	0.466	**Not significant**. The observed Chi-square value (0.531) is lower than the critical value (3.841) at alpha 0.05. It is not possible to reject the null hypothesis: the associated probability (p) is equal to 0.466.

Barriers to committee volunteering
Age group comparisons
Chi-square Test of Independence (95% significance level)

Barrier	Under 50s strongly agreeing n=142	Over 50s strongly agreeing N=948	Observed Chi-square (χ^2)	Degree of Freedom	p Value	Interpretation
Flexibility - tasks and meeting times	12	94	0.251	1	0.616	**Not significant**. The observed Chi-square value (0.251) is lower than the critical value (3.841) at alpha 0.05. It is not possible to reject the null hypothesis: the associated probability (p) is equal to 0.616.
Healthy & inclusive culture	31	208	0.00	1	0.985	**Not significant**. The observed Chi-square value (0.00) is lower than the critical value (3.841) at alpha 0.05. It is not possible to reject the null hypothesis: the associated probability (p) is equal to 0.985.
Being clear about what's involved	32	248	0.485	1	0.486	**Not significant**. The observed Chi-square value (0.485) is lower than the critical value (3.841) at alpha 0.05. It is not possible to reject the null hypothesis: the associated probability (p) is equal to 0.486.
Increasing enjoyment and fellowship	37	248	0.00	1	.992	**Not significant**. The observed Chi-square value (0.00) is lower than the critical value (3.841) at alpha 0.05. It is not possible to reject the null hypothesis: the associated probability (p) is equal to 0.992.
Mentoring new members & volunteers	38	283	0.297	1	0.586	**Not significant**. The observed Chi-square value (0.297) is lower than the critical value (3.841) at alpha 0.05. It is not possible to reject the null hypothesis: the associated probability (p) is equal to 0.586.

Raising profile and increasing membership	40	261	0.016	1	0.901	**Not significant**. The observed Chi-square value (0.016) is lower than the critical value (3.841) at alpha 0.05. It is not possible to reject the null hypothesis: the associated probability (p) is equal to 0.901.
Inviting people to events & functions	33	255	0.506	1	0.477	**Not significant**. The observed Chi-square value (0.506) is lower than the critical value (3.841) at alpha 0.05. It is not possible to reject the null hypothesis: the associated probability (p) is equal to 0.477.
Advertise through social media	35	153	4.186	1	0.041	**Significant**. The observed Chi-square value (4.186) is greater than the critical value (3.841) at alpha 0.05. It is possible to reject the null hypothesis: the associated probability (p) is equal to 0.041.
Delegate tasks to broader membership/volunteers	33	196	0.309	1	0.578	**Not significant**. The observed Chi-square value (0.309) is lower than the critical value (3.841) at alpha 0.05. It is not possible to reject the null hypothesis: the associated probability (p) is equal to 0.578.
Communicate benefits of serving on committee	29	204	0.041	1	0.839	**Not significant**. The observed Chi-square value (0.041) is lower than the critical value (3.841) at alpha 0.05. It is not possible to reject the null hypothesis: the associated probability (p) is equal to 0.839.
Advertise opportunities via traditional media	15	151	2.153	1	0.142	**Not significant**. The observed Chi-square value (2.153) is lower than the critical value (3.841) at alpha 0.05. It is not possible to reject the null hypothesis: the associated probability (p) is equal to 0.142.

REFERENCE LIST

PRIMARY SOURCES

Government publications

Associations Incorporation Act 1985, Government of South Australia, Adelaide, South Australia, 1985.

Australian Bureau of Statistics 2010, *Voluntary Work Australia*, 4441.0, Canberra, ACT.

—— 2011, *Census of population and housing: Socio-economic indexes*, 2033.0.55.001, Canberra, ACT.

—— 2014, *General social survey summary results*, 4159.0, Canberra, ACT.

—— 2015, *Household use of information technology in Australia*, 8146.0, Canberra, ACT.

—— 2016, *Australian Census 2016*, Canberra, ACT.

—— 2017, *Australian Demographic Statistics*, 3101.0, Canberra, ACT.

Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission 2016, *Charities and Fundraising Factsheet*, ACNC, viewed 8 June 2016, <http://www.acnc.gov.au/ACNC/FAQs/FAQ_Fundraising.aspx>.

The Australian Curriculum 2018, The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, viewed 2 March 2018, <www.australiancurriculum.edu.au>.

Australian Productivity Commission 2010, *Report into the contribution of the not-for-profit sector*, APC, Canberra, ACT.

Charities Act 2013, Australian Government, Canberra, ACT, <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2013A00100>.

The Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act, 2016, Government of South Australia, Adelaide, SA.

2015, *Does a volunteer require a criminal history report*, by Department for Communities and Social Inclusion, Government of South Australia.

—— 2017, *Previously funded CBSA projects*, viewed 28 September 2017, <https://www.dcsi.sa.gov.au/services/grants-for-organisations/previously-funded-projects>.

Department for Communities Western Australia 2012, *The Western Australian Smaller Volunteer Groups Survey*, Department for Communities, Western Australia, Perth, Western Australia.

Department of Social Services 2015, *Report of the Reference Group on Welfare Reform to the Minister for Social Services*, Commonwealth of Australia.

Department of Treasury 2017, *State Budget 2017-18 Agency Statements Vol 4*, Government of South Australia, Adelaide, SA.

Fair Work Ombudsman Annual Report 2018, Australian Government, viewed 24 February 2018, <www.fairwork.gov.au>.

Grants SA Guidelines 2017, Department for Communities and Social Inclusion, viewed 28 September 2017, <https://dcsi.smartygrants.com.au/1718Minor>.

Hugo, G 2011, *A significant contribution: The economic, social and civic contributions of first and second generation humanitarian entrants*, Australian Government, Department of Immigration and Citizenship, Canberra, ACT.

Office for Volunteers 2011, *The economic value of volunteering in South Australia*, by Ironmonger, D, Government of South Australia.

Office for Recreation and Sport 2017, *Star club development program online assessment tool*, Government of South Australia, viewed 12 January 2017, <https://www.recsport.sa.gov.au/starclub/index.php>.

Office of Consumer and Business Services 2011a, *An example of rules for an incorporated association*, Consumer and Business Services, Government of South Australia, Adelaide, South Australia.

—— 2011b, *How to incorporate, A guide to the Associations Incorporation Act 1985*, Department of Consumer and Business Services, Government of South Australia, Adelaide, Australia.

—— 2016, *List of incorporated associations in South Australia, unpublished data*, Adelaide, SA.

Organisation types: Incorporated Associations, 2017, Government of South Australia, viewed 28 September 2017, <https://www.sa.gov.au/topics/family-and-community/community-organisations/types/incorporated-associations>.

2015, *Working with children checks report*, by Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, Commonwealth of Australia.

Small Business Centre 2017, *Annual Small Business Statement*, Government of South Australia, Adelaide, SA.

South Australian Coroner 2008, *Wangary Fires Inquest Final Report*

State Emergency Service 2013, *South Australian Emergency Service exit survey, unpublished report*, State Emergency Service, Government of South Australia, Adelaide, SA.

Work Health and Safety Act, 2012, Government of South Australia, Adelaide, South Australia.

Institutional publications

Australian Institute of Company Directors 2018, *Gender diversity progress report*, Sydney, NSW.

Barnes, J & Nelson, J 2014, *Exploring the future of membership*, ASAE Foundation, Washington, DC.

Cocklin, C 2003, *Community sustainability in rural Australia: A question of capital?*, Centre for Rural Social Research, Wagga Wagga, NSW.

Communique to the Sector 2017, Community Centres SA, viewed 18 February 2018, <https://www.communitycentressa.asn.au/documents/item/988>.

comScore 2015, *Report: U.S. Digital future in focus*, Reston, Virginia.

Cooper, K & Macfarland, C 2012, *Clubbing together: The hidden wealth of communities*, ResPublica Trust, United Kingdom.

Cortis, N, Young, A, Powell, A, Reeve, R, Simnett, R, Ho, K & Ramia, I 2016, *Australian Charities Report 2015*, Centre for Social Impact and Social Policy Research Centre, University of New South Wales.

Dahl, R 2018, *This is why teenagers seem rude and selfish*, World Economic Forum, viewed 9 February 2018, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2018/01/we-misunderstand-adolescent-brains-science/>.

Elson, PR, Spyker, C & Rogers, D 2010, *Bowing Out: A data-base analysis of the voluntary deregistration of Canadian charities: A statistical report on the analysis of voluntary deregistration of Canadian charities 2002-2008*, Institute for Nonprofit Studies, Mount Royal College, Calgary, Alberta.

Ernst & Young 2014, *Research into Commonwealth regulatory and reporting burdens on the charity sector*, Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission, Canberra, ACT.

Evans, M, Halupka, M & Stoker, G 2014, *The power of one voice - power, powerlessness and Australian democracy*, The Institute for Governance and Policy Analysis, Canberra, ACT

Flatau, P, Zaretzky, K, Adams, S, Horton, A & Smith, J 2015, *Measuring outcomes for impact in the community sector in Western Australia*, The University of Western Australia, Centre for Social Impact, Perth, WA.

Gaskin, K 2005, 'Reasonable care? Risk, risk management and volunteering in England', *Volunteering England and the Institute for Volunteering Research*.

GHK Holding Limited 2010, *Volunteering in the European Union*, Brussels.

Grants in Australia: Annual research findings for Australian grant seekers and grant makers, 2017, Our Community Pty Ltd, Melbourne, VIC.

Harrison Research 2014, *Volunteering in South Australia*, Office for Volunteers Adelaide, South Australia.

—— 2016a, *Volunteering in South Australia*, Office for Volunteers, Adelaide, SA.

—— 2016b, *Volunteering in South Australia, unpublished data*, Office for Volunteers, Adelaide, SA.

Hedley, R & Rochester, C 1992, *Understanding management committees: A look at volunteer management committee members*, The Volunteer Centre UK, Hertfordshire, UK.

Hutchison, R & Ockenden, N 2008, *The impact of public policy on volunteering in community-based organizations*, Institute for Volunteering Research, London, UK.

Knight, PA & Gilchrist, DJ 2014, *Australian charities 2013: The first report on charities registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission*, ACNC, Melbourne, VIC.

Masaoka, J 1999, *All hands on board: The board of directors in an all-volunteer organization*, BoardSource, Washington, DC.

McCabe, A & Phillimore, J 2012, *All change? Surviving below the radar: Community groups and activities in a big society*, Third Sector Research Centre, University of Birmingham, UK.

—— 2013, *Seeing and doing: learning, resources and social networks below the radar*, University of Birmingham.

McCabe, A, Phillimore, J & Mayblin, L 2010, *Below the radar activities and organisations in the third sector: A summary review of the literature*, Third Sector Research Centre, University of Birmingham, UK.

Ockenden, N & Hutin, M 2008, *Volunteering to lead: A study of leadership in small, volunteer-led groups*, Institute for Volunteering Research, London.

Oppenheimer, M & Edwards, A 2011, *Protection of voluteers in the workplace: A pilot study of GREAT Community Transport (GCT) Inc. Blue Mountains and Penrith, NSW*, UNEPrint, Armidale, NSW.

Owen, N 2003, *The failure of HIH insurance: A corporate collapse and its lessions*, The HIH Royal Commission, Canberra, ACT.

Powell, A, Cortis, N, Ramia, I & Marjolin, A 2017, *Australian Charities Report*, Centre for Social Impact and Social Policy Research Centre, UNSW, Australia.

Price Waterhouse Coopers 2016, *State of volunteering in Australia: Help create happiness*, Volunteering Australia, Canberra, ACT.

Sauer, JH 2002, *Volunteerism: A survey of New York AARP members*, American Association of Retired Persons, Knowledge Management, New York, NY.

Schneider, JA 2004, *The role of social capital in building healthy communities*, Policy paper produced for the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Baltimore, Maryland.

Skipper, A 2017, *Review of the Volunteering Strategy for South Australia*, Adelaide, SA.

Soteri-Proctor, A 2011, *Little big societies: Micro-mapping of organisations operating below the radar*, Third Sector Research Centre, Birmingham, UK.

Volunteering Australia 2003, *Running the risk? Risk management tool for volunteer involving organisations*, Volunteering Australia, Melbourne, VIC.

Volunteering Australia 2018, *Pre-Budget Submission*, Volunteering Australia, Canberra, ACT.

Volunteering SA&NT 2018, *SA State Election 2018 Volunteering Sector Proposals*, Adelaide, SA.

Volunteering Strategy for SA Working Group Three 2014, *Investigation on the transferability of criminal history record checks across organisations and jurisdictions*, Adelaide, SA.

Wanwimolruk, M 2014, *Volunteerism: Alive and well or dying quietly?*, Royal New Zealand Plunket Society, Auckland, NZ.

Warburton, J & Paynter, J 2006, *Barriers and benefits of volunteering for seniors*, National Seniors Productive Ageing Centre, Brisbane, QLD.

Zappalà, G 2000, *How many people volunteer in Australia and why do they do it*, The Smith Family, Syndey, NSW.

Interviews and personal communications

Barlow, A 2018, *Personal communication with researcher regarding SA Volunteer Infrastructure Funding*, Adelaide, SA.

Briefing note for Estimates Hearing, South Australian Parliament, personal communication with researcher dated 27 July 2017.

Buckby, M 2017, *Email from Malcolm Buckby to researcher, Secretary of the Agricultural Societies Council of South Australia*, Adelaide, SA, 9 January 2018.

Jozaei, H 2017, *Letter of support for Kensington Residents' Association*, in possession of the author.

Kensington Residents Association 2017, *Personal communication with researcher containing event insurance quotes, 8 August 2017*.

Naulty, G 2018, *Personal inteview by researcher*, Local Community Insurance Services, Adelaide, SA, 15 February 2018.

O'Loughlin, E 2017, *Personal interview with reseacher, CEO Volunteering SA&NT*, 16 December 2017

Office for Volunteers 2018, *Email to researcher*, Adelaide, SA, 15 March 2018.

Orange, A 2018, *Personal interview with Amy Orange by researcher*, 2 March 2018.

Scanion, D 2017, *Personal interview by researcher*, Adelaide, SA, 29 September 2017.

Syme, C 2018, *Email communication with researcher*, 23 February 2018, Email.

Presentations, speeches, press releases

Kakoschke-Moore, S 2017, *Senate motion calling for a National Volunteering Strategy*, Open Australia, viewed 26 February 2018, <https://www.openaustralia.org.au/senate/?id=2017-06-15.24.2&s=national+volunteering+strategy#g24.3>.

Liberal Party of South Australia 2018, *Election platform: Screening of volunteers*, Media release, Adelaide, SA.

Porter, C & O'Dwyer, K 2016, *Retention of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission*, ACNC Press Release, Canberra, ACT, 14 March 2016, <http://www.acnc.gov.au/>.

Rogers, C 2018, *Webinar: Finding new volunteers*, Volunteering SA & NT, 26 June 2018.

Rowe, CD 1956, *Second reading speech, Associations Incorporation Bill, 25 October 1956*, Parliament of South Australia.

Soutschek, A 2017, *The female brain reacts more strongly to prosocial behaviour*, Universtiy of Zurich, viewed 12 Oct 2017, <http://www.media.uzh.ch/en/Press-Releases/2017/female-brain-and-prosocial-behaviour.html>.

Websites

Australian Bureau of Statistics 2018, *Population clock*, viewed 18 April 2018, <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs%40.nsf/94713ad445ff1425ca25682000192af2/1647509ef7e25faaca2568a900154b63?OpenDocument>.

B Lab Australia & New Zealand 2018, *The Benefit Company*, viewed 28 February 2018, <https://www.benefitcompany.org>.

Board Diversity Index 2018, Women On Boards, viewed 30 June 2018, <https://www.womenonboards.net/en-AU/Resources/Boardroom-Diversity-Index>.

Business Enterprise Centres Incorporated, Polaris Business and Innovation Centre, viewed 24 February 2018, <http://becaustralia.org.au>.

The Centre for Association Leadership 2018, American Society of Association Executives, viewed 2 March 2018, <https://www.asaecenter.org>.

Community Funding Program Grant Criteria 2018, City of Norwood, Payneham & St Peters, viewed 18 February 2018, <http://www.npsp.sa.gov.au/our_community/community_funding_program_grants>.

Community NRM Action Grants Guidelines 2017-18, Adelaide & Mt Lofty Ranges NRM Board, viewed 18 February 2018, <http://www.naturalresources.sa.gov.au/adelaidemtloftyranges/get-involved/grants-and-funding/action-grants-schools-communities>.

Connecting Up Inc. 2017, viewed 25 Feb 2017, <https://www.connectingup.org>.

Do-it 2018, Do-it Foundation, viewed 23 April 2018, <http://doittrust.org>.

DoSomething.Org 2017, Do Something, Inc., viewed 25 October 2017, <https://www.dosomething.org/us>.

Energize Incorporated 2018, viewed 2 March 2018, <https://www.energizeinc.com>.

Facebook products 2017, Facebook Inc., viewed 24 October 2017, <https://newsroom.fb.com/products/>.

Gazetteer of Australia Place Name Search 2019, Geoscience Australia, viewed 15 January 2019, <http://www.ga.gov.au/placename>.

Go Volunteer 2018, Volunteering Australia, viewed 2 March 2018, <https://govolunteer.com.au>.

Idealist.com 2018, Action Without Borders, viewed 2 March 2018, <www.idealist.org>.

Institute of Community Directors Australia 2018, Our Community, viewed 2 March 2018, <https://www.communitydirectors.com.au/icda/>.

Leadership Onkaparinga 2018, City of Onkaparinga, viewed 19 February 2018, <http://onkaparingacity.com/onka/living_here/community/leadership_onkaparinga.jsp?sstat=920289>.

Lynda.com 2018, LinkedIn, viewed 2 March 2018, <https://www.lynda.com>.

MeetUp.com 2018, viewed 17 February 2018, <www.meetup.com>.

Our Community 2018, Our Community Pty Ltd, viewed 2 March 2018, <https://www.ourcommunity.com.au>.

Pro Bono Australia 2018, viewed 2 March 2018, <https://probonoaustralia.com.au/volunteer/>.

Productivity Commission Productivity Update 2017, Australian Productivity Commission, viewed 6 January 2017, <https://www.pc.gov.au/research/ongoing/productivity-update/2017>.

Regional Development Australia 2018, viewed 15 March 2018, <https://rda.gov.au/my-rda/sa.aspx>.

Regional Development South Australia 2018, Government of South Australia, viewed 24 February 2018, <https://www.regionaldevelopmentsa.com.au>.

SA Community: Directory of Community Services 2016, ConnectingUp and the Government of South Australia, viewed May 2016, <http://sacommunity.org>.

SA Industry Advocate 2018, Government of South Australia, viewed 24 February 2018, <https://industryadvocate.sa.gov.au>.

Small Business Commissioner South Australia 2018, Government of South Australia, viewed 24 February 2018, <https://www.sasbc.sa.gov.au/about_us/our_services>.

Social Enterprise Development and Investment Funds 2018, Australian Government, viewed 20 February 2018, <https://www.jobs.gov.au/social-enterprise-development-and-investment-funds>.

South Australian Community Services Directory 2016, Government of South Australia, Data SA, viewed 30 November 2016, <https://data.sa.gov.au/data/dataset/516bf594-b677-4621-9b92-e3dba602920d>.

South Australian Not-for-profit Funding Rules and Guidelines 2018, Government of South Australia, viewed 17 April 2018, <http://www.dcsi.sa.gov.au/services/community-services/south-australian-not-for-profit-funding-rules-and-guidelines>.

Southern Volunteering 2017, *Southern Volunteering Membership*, Southern Volunteering (SA) Inc., viewed 28 Feb 2017, <http://www.svsa.on.net/index.htm>.

StarClub n.d., Government of South Australia, viewed 9 August 2018, video clip, <https://www.starclub.sa.gov.au/index.php>

Strengthening Communities Grant Guidelines 2018, Australian Government, viewed 18 February 2018, <https://www.communitygrants.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/11_2016/families_and_communities_program_strengthening_communities_guidelines-overview.pdf>.

Supporting Community Leadership Workshop Program 2018, Adelaide Hills Council, viewed 8 February 2018, <http://www.ahc.sa.gov.au/ahc-events/Pages/Community-Group-Essentials-Workshop.aspx>.

SurveyMonkey 2016, *SurveyMonkey*, viewed 23 May 2017, <https://www.surveymonkey.com>.

Tennis Australia 2018, *National Insurance Program*, viewed 18 February 2018, <https://www.tennis.com.au/clubs/national-insurance-program>.

Uniting Communities Law Centre Mediation Service, 2018, viewed 14 February 2018, <https://www.unitingcommunities.org/financial-legal-services/mediation-services/>.

University of South Australia: Volunteering 2018, viewed 2 March 2018, <https://i.unisa.edu.au/students/experience-unisa/unisaplus/volunteering/#/>.

V Star: A volunteer management tool for sport and recreation clubs/associations 2018, Government of South Australia, viewed 26 February 2018, <https://www.vstar.sa.gov.au/video.php>.

Vollie: Change, your way 2018, viewed 8 February 2018, <www.vollie.com.au>.

Volunteer Match: Registering an international organization 2018, viewed 2 March 2018, <https://vmhelp.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/articles/214623128-Registering-an-international-organization>.

Volunteering Australia Website 2016, *Definition of Volunteering*, Volunteering Australia, viewed 19 April 2016 2016, <http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/policy-and-best-practise/definition-of-volunteering/>.

—— 2017, viewed 7 July 2017, <https://www.volunteeringaustralia.org>.

Volunteering SA & NT 2018, viewed 25 February 2018, <www.volunteeringsa-nt.org.au>.

—— 2017, *Volunteering SA & NT Membership*, Volunteering SA & NT Inc., viewed 20 Feb 2017, <http://www.volunteeringsa.org.au>.

Volunteering Strategy for South Australia 2018, viewed 26 February 2018, <http://www.savolunteeringstrategy.org.au>.

Whole Whale 2018, viewed 2 March 2018, <https://www.wholewhale.com>.

World Atlas – Map of South Australia 2019, viewed 4 January 2019, <https://www.worldatlas.com>.

Zuckerberg, M 2017, *Building global community*, Facebook, viewed 16 October 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/notes/mark-zuckerberg/building-global-community/10103508221158471/>.

SECONDARY SOURCES

Books

Agard, KA 2011, *Leadership in nonprofit organizations: A reference handbook*, vol. 1, Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA.

Bellah, RN 1985, *Habits of the heart: individualism and commitment in American life*, University of California Press, Berkeley.

Bryman, A 2016, *Social research methods*, Fifth edn, Oxford University Press, Oxford, UK.

Carr, A 2002, *Grass roots and green tape: Principles and practices of environmental stewardship*, Federation Press, Leichhardt, NSW.

Charles, JA 1993, *Service clubs in American society: Rotary, Kiwanis, and Lions*, University of Illinois Press.

Chetkovich, CA & Kunreuther, F 2006, *From the ground up: Grassroots organizations making social change*, Cornell University Press, New York.

Cnaan, RA 2008, *Handbook of community movements and local organizations*, Springer, New York, NY.

Creswell, JW & Clark, VLP 2007, *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*, Sage Publications, California.

Eklund, E, Oppenheimer, M & Scott, J 2018, *The state of welfare: Comparative studies of the welfare state at the end of the long boom, 1965-1980*, Peter Lang Ltd., Oxford, England.

Hemming, H 2011, *Together: How small groups achieve big things*, Hachette UK, London.

Huberman, AM & Miles, MB 2002, *The qualitative researcher's companion*, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA.

Huntley, R 2017, *Still lucky: Why you should feel optimistic about Australia and its people*, Penguin Random House, Australia.

Huxley, A 1962, *Island: A novel*, Chatto & Windus, London.

Keppel, G & Zedeck, S 1989, *Data analysis for research designs*, Macmillan, New York, NY.

Kenny, S, Taylor, M, Onyx, J, Mayo, M 2015, *Global prospects for active citizenship*, Policy Press, Bristol, UK.

Knoke, D & Wood, JR 1981, *Organized for action: Commitment in voluntary associations*, Rutgers University Press.

Krueger, RA & Casey, MA 2014, *Focus groups: A practical guide for applied research*, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA.

Kvale, S & Brinkmann, S 2009, *Learning the craft of qualitative research interviewing*, Sage Publications, Thousands Oaks, CA.

Lee, TW 1999, *Using qualitative methods in organizational research*, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA.

Lyons, M 2001, *Third sector: The contribution of nonprofit and co-operative enterprises in Australia*, Allen & Unwin, St Leonards, NSW.

Mackay, H 2014a, *The art of belonging*, Pan Macmillan, Sydney.

Maloney, WA & Rossteutscher, S 2007, *Social capital and associations in European democracies: A comparative analysis*, Routledge, London.

Mannheim, K 1952, *Essays on the sociology of knowledge*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London.

Marsh, C & Elliott, J 2008, *Exploring data: An introduction to data analysis for social scientists*, Polity, Cambridge UK.

Mason, D 1996, *Leading and managing the expressive dimension: Harnessing the hidden power source of the nonprofit sector*, Jossey-Bass Publishers, San Francisco.

Merton, RK 2008, *The focused interview*, Simon and Schuster, New York, NY.

Michels, R 1915, *Political parties: A sociological study of the oligarchical tendencies of modern democracy*, Hearst's International Library Company, New York, NY.

Milofsky, C 2008, *Smallville: Institutionalizing community in twenty-first-century America*, Tufts University Press, Medford, Massachusetts.

Musick, MA & Wilson, J 2007, *Volunteers: A social profile*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, Indiana.

Neuman, W 1997, *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative,* Allyn & Bacon, Needham Heights, CA.

Oppenheimer, M 2008, *Volunteering: Why we can't survive without it*, UNSW Press, Sydney.

—— 2014, *The power of humanity: 100 years of Australian Red Cross 1914-2014*, Harper Collins, Sydney, NSW.

Oppenheimer, M & Warburton, J 2014, *Volunteering in Australia*, The Federation Press, Sydney, NSW.

Pallant, J 2016, *SPSS Survival Manual*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, NSW.

Pearce, JL 1993, *Volunteers: The organizational behavior of unpaid workers*, Routledge, London.

Pinker, S 2014, *The village effect: How face-to-face contact can make us healthier and happier*, Atlantic Books, London.

Pusey, M 2003, *Economic rationalism in Canberra: A nation-building state changes its mind*, Cambridge University Press, England.

Putnam, RD 2000, *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community*, Simon & Schuster, New York.

—— 2015, *Our Kids: The American dream in crisis*, Simon & Schuster, New York, NY.

Rainie, L & Wellman, B 2012, *Networked: The new social operating system*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Ricard, M 2015, *Altruism: The power of compassion to change yourself and the world*, Hachette Book Group, New York, NY.

Rochester, C, Paine, AE, Howlett, S, Zimmeck, M & Paine, AE 2016, *Volunteering and Society in the 21st Century*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, Hampshire.

Saldaña, J 2015, *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*, Second edn, Sage, London.

Salt, B 2011, *The big tilt: What happens when the boomers bust and the Xers and Ys inherit the earth*, Hardie Grant Books, Prahran, Victoria.

Saunders, M, Lewis, P & Thornhill, A 2012, *Research methods for business students*, 6th ed., Pearson Education Ltd, Harlow, England.

Scheier, I 2003, *When everyone's a volunteer: The effective functioning of all-volunteer groups*, Energize, Inc., Philadelphia, PA.

Schwab, K 2017, *The fourth industrial revolution*, Crown Publishing, New York, NY.

Skocpol, T 2003, *Diminished democracy: From membership to management in American civic life*, University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, OK.

Smith, DH 2000, *Grassroots associations*, SAGE Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA.

Smith, DH, Stebbins, RA & Grotz, J 2017, *The Palgrave handbook of volunteering, civic participation and nonprofit associations*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, NY.

Stewart, DW & Shamdasani, PN 2014, *Focus groups: Theory and practice*, vol. 20, Sage Publications, Newbury Park, CA.

Symon, G & Cassell, C 2012, *Qualitative organizational research: Core methods and current challenges*, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA.

Tocqueville, A. de (2000 [1835-1840]), *Democracy in America*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, IL.

Tourangeau, R 2013, *The science of web surveys*, Oxford University Press, New York, NY.

Warburton, J & Oppenheimer, M 2000, *Volunteers and volunteering*, The Federation Press, Leichhardt, NSW.

Ward, N 1709, *The secret history of clubs*, J. Phillips, London.

Wells, C 2015, *The civic organization and the digital citizen: Communicating engagement in a networked age*, Oxford University Press, New York, NY.

Willson, MA 2006, *Technically together: Re-thinking community within techno-society*, Peter Lang Publishing, New York, NY.

Wilson, DS 2015, *Does altruism exist? Culure, genes and the welfare of others*, Yale University Press, New Haven, CT.

Wuthnow, R 1998, *Loose connections: Joining together in America's fragmented communities*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Yin, R 2003, *Case study research: Design and methods*, Sage, Thousand Oaks, California.

Ziersch, AM, Baum, F, MacDougall, C & Putland, C 2005, *Neighbourhood life and social capital: The implications for health*, Elsevier Ltd., Oxford.

Book chapters

Becker, HS 1995, 'Moral entrepreneurs: The creation and enforcement of deviant categories', in NJ Herman (ed.), *Deviance: A symbolic interactionist approach*, Rowman and Littlefield Lanham, Lanham, MD, pp. 169-78.

Boulton, C 2015, 'In defense of "slacktivism": How KONY 2012 got the whole world to watch', in D Coombs & S Collister (eds), *Debates for the digital age: The good, the bad, and the ugly of our online world [Volume One]*, Praeger, Santa Barbara, CA, pp. 321-332.

Bourdieu, P 1986, 'The Forms of Capital', in JG Richardson (ed.), *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education*, Greenwood Press, New York, pp. 241-58.

Bowers, KM 2014, 'Servant leadership practices in a volunteer-led organization', in R Selladurai & S Carraher (eds), *Servant Leadership: Research and Practice*, Business Science Reference, Hershey, PA, pp. 71-91.

Chua, V & Erickson, BH 2017, 'Associations and social networks', in DH Smith, RA Stebbins & J Grotz (eds), *The Palgrave handbook of volunteering, civic participation, and nonprofit associations*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, NY, pp. 198-205.

Cnaan, RA & Handy, F 2005, 'Towards understanding episodic volunteering', in *Vrijwillige Inzet Onderzocht*, Netherlands, vol. 2, pp. 29-35.

Cnaan, RA, Milofsky, C & Hunter, A 2008, 'Creating a framework for understanding local organizations', in RA Cnaan & C Milofsky (eds), *Handbook of community movements and local organizations*, Springer, New York, NY, pp. 1-19.

Darlington, T 1995, 'Trustees, committees and boards', in JD Smith, C Rochester & R Hedley (eds), *An introduction to the voluntary sector*, Routledge, Londong, UK, pp. 209-22.

Florin, P, Chavis, D, Wandersman, A & Rich, R 1992, 'A systems approach to understanding and enhancing grassroots organizations', in RL Levine & HE Fitzgerald (eds), *Analysis of Dynamic Psychological Systems*, Plenum Press, New York, vol. 2, pp. 215-43.

Hedley, R 1995, 'Inside the voluntary sector', in JD Smith, C Rochester & R Hedley (eds), *An introduction to the voluntary sector*, Routledge, London, UK, pp. 97-111.

Kendall, J & Knapp, M 1995, 'A loose and baggy monster', in JD Smith, C Rochester & R Hedley (eds), *An introduction to the voluntary sector*, Routledge, London, UK, pp. 65-94.

Kunreuther, F & Edwards, M 2011, 'Grassroots associations', in M Edwards (ed.), *The Oxford handbook of civic society*, Oxford University Press, New York, NY, pp. 55-67.

Lien, L 2010, 'Matching the supply and demand of volunteers', in W Cheng & S Mohamed (eds), *The world that changes the world: How philanthropy, innovation and entrepreneurship are transforming the social ecosystem*, John Wiley & Sons, Singapore, pp. 191-207.

McGregor-Lowndes, M 2014, 'Volunteering and recent government reforms', in M Oppenheimer & J Warburton (eds), *Volunteering in Australia*, Federation Press, Annandale, NSW, pp. 26-38.

Mesch, GS 2008, 'Online communities', in RA Cnaan & C Milofsky (eds), *Handbook of community movements and local organizations*, Springer, New York, NY, pp. 227-42.

Morris, A & Staggenborg, S 2004, 'Leadership in social movements', in DA Snow & SA Soule (eds), *The Blackwell companion to social movements*, Blackwell Publishing Ltd, Mablen, MA, pp. 171-96.

Nesbit, R, Moldavanova, A, Cavalcante, CE, Jochum, V & Lin, N 2017, 'Conducive meso- and micro-contexts influencing volunteering', in DH Smith, RA Stebbins & J Grotz (eds), *The Palgrave handbook of volunteering, civic participation and nonprofit associations*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, NY, pp. 607-31.

Nesbit, R, Rimes, H, Smith, DH, Akhter, S, Akingbola, K, Domaradzka-Widla, A, Kristmundsson, OK, Malunga, C & Sasson, U 2016, 'Leadership and management of associations', in DH Smith, RA Stebbins & J Grotz (eds), *The Palgrave Handbook of Volunteering, Civic Participation, and Nonprofit Associations*, Palgrave Macmillan UK, London, pp. 915-49.

—— 2017, 'Leadership and management of associations', in DH Smith, RA Stebbins & J Grotz (eds), *The Palgrave handbook of volunteering, civic participation and nonprofit associations*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, NY, pp. 915-49.

Netting, FE 2008, 'Including and excluding volunteers: Challenges of managing groups that depend on donated talent', in RA Cnaan & C Milofsky (eds), *Handbook of Community Movements and Local Organizations*, Springer, New York, NY, pp. 410-25.

Nie, N, Hillygus, S & Erbring, L 2003, 'Internet use, interpersonal relations and sociability: Findings from a detailed time diary study', in B Wellman (ed.), *The Internet in Everyday Life*, Blackwell Publications, Malden, MA, pp. 215-243.

Noble, J 2000, 'The future of volunteering: A volunteer's perspective', in J Warburton & M Oppenheimer (eds), *Volunteers and volunteering*, Federation Press, Sydney, pp. 150-61.

Oppenheimer, J 2012, 'A new generation of volunteer', in M Oppenheimer (ed.), *Volunteering: Why we can't survive without it*, University of New South Wales Press, Sydney, NSW, pp. 117-120.

Ostrower, F & Stone, MM 2006, 'Governance: Research trends, gaps, and future prospects', in WW Powell & R Steinberg (eds), *The nonprofit sector: A research handbook*, Yale University Press, New Haven, CT, pp. 612-28.

Pusey, M 2000, 'Middle Australians in the grip of economic 'reform' … Will they volunteer?', in J Warburton & M Oppenheimer (eds), *Volunteers and volunteering*, Federation Press, Sydney, NSW, pp. 19-31.

Reisch, M & Guyet, D 2008, 'Communities as "big small groups": Culture and social capital', in R Cnaan & C Milofsky (eds), *Handbook of Community Movements and Local Organizations*, Springer, New York, NY, pp. 163-78.

Robinson, JP, Gershuny, J, Smith, DH, Fisher, K, Lee, C-W & Stebbins, RA 2017, 'Leisure and time-use perspectives on volunteering', in DH Smith, RA Stebbins & J Grotz (eds), *The Palgrave handbook of volunteering, civic participation and nonprofit associations*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, NY, pp. 126-44.

Rothbauer, P 2008 'Triangulation' in Given, LM 2008, *The Sage encyclopedia of qualitative research methods*, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA, pp. 892 – 894.

Rothschild, J & Leach, D 2008, 'Avoid, talk, or fight: Alternative cultural strategies in the battle against oligarchy in collectivist-democratic organizations', in RA Cnaan & C Milofsky (eds), *Handbook of Community Movements and Local Organizations*, Springer, New York, NY, pp. 346-61.

Schlozman, KL, Verba, S, Brady, HE 1999, 'Civic participation and the equality problem', in T Skocpol and MP Fiorina (eds), *Civic Engagement in American Democracy*, Brookings Institution Press, Washington, DC, pp. 427 – 459.

Schneider, JA 2008, 'Small nonprofits and civil society: Civic engagement and social capital', in R Cnaan & C Milofsky (eds), *Handbook of Community Movements and Local Organizations*, Springer, New York, NY, pp. 74-88.

Smith, DH 2010, 'Grassroots associations', in H Anheier & S Toepler (eds), *International Encyclopedia of Civil Society*, Springer, New York, pp. 804-10.

Soteri-Proctor, A, Smith, DH, Pospíšilová, T, Roka, K & Yu, P 2017, 'Local or grassroots associations: Micro-associations', in DH Smith, RA Stebbins & J Grotz (eds), *The Palgrave handbook of volunteering, civic participation, and nonprofit associations*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, pp. 807-35.

Sundblom, D, Smith, DH, Selle, P, Dansac, C & Jensen, C 2017, 'Life cycles of individual associations', in DH Smith, RA Stebbins & J Grotz (eds), *The Palgrave handbook of volunteering, civic participation, and nonprofit associations*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, NY, pp. 950-71.

Tschirhart, M 2006, 'Nonprofit membership associations', in WW Powell & R Steinberg (eds), *The nonprofit sector: A research handbook*, Yale University Press, New Haven, CT, pp. 523-41.

van Deth, JW, Edwards, B, Bădescu, G, Moldavanova, A & Woolcock, M 2017, 'Associations and social capital', in DH Smith, RA Stebbins & J Grotz (eds), *The Palgrave handbook of volunteering, civic participation, and nonprofit associations*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, NY, pp. 178-97.

van Puyvelde, S, Cornforth, C, Dansac, C, Guo, C & Smith, DH 2017, 'Governance, boards, and internal structures of associations', in DH Smith, RA Stebbins & J Grotz (eds), *The Palgrave handbook of volunteering, civic participation, and nonprofit associations*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, NY, pp. 894-914.

Warburton, J 2014, 'Volunteering and ageing', in M Oppenheimer & J Warburton (eds), *Volunteering in Australia*, Federation Press, Sydney, NSW, pp. 106-16.

Winterton, R 2014, 'Volunteering in rural and regional Australia: Trends and implications', in M Oppenheimer & J Warburton (eds), *Volunteering in Australia*, Federation Press, Sydney, NSW, pp. 142-53.

Zimmeck, M 2010, 'Government and Volunteering: Towards a history of policy and practice', in C Rochester (ed.), *Volunteering and Society in the 21st Century*, Palgrave Macmillan, London, pp. 84-102.

Conference presentations

Burke, M, Kraut, R & Marlow, C 2011, 'Social capital on Facebook: Differentiating uses and users', in *Proceedings of the SIGCHI conference on human factors in computing systems*, pp. 571-80, Vancouver, BC.

Cleave, S & Doherty, A 2005, 'Understanding volunteer and non-volunteer constraints: A mixed-method approach', paper presented to Eleventh Canadian Congress on Leisure Research, Nanaimo, BC.

Dalton, B & Butcher, J 2014, 'The rise of big charity in Australia', paper presented to Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA), Denver, CO.

Holmes, K, Haski-Leventhal, D, Lockstone-Binney, L, Meijs, L & Oppenheimer, M 2015, 'Identifying potential volunteers: Introducing the convertibles', paper presented to ARNOVA, Chicago.

Mex, CL 2014, 'How the stars aligned for volunteers in South Australia: The partnership journey that created the Volunteering Strategy for South Australia', paper presented to 23rd IAVE World Volunteer Conference, Gold Coast, QLD.

Raysmith, H 1998, 'Taking the community's counsel', paper presented to Symposium organised by Turn the Tide, Port Melbourne, VIC.

—— 2006, 'Victorian Council of Social Services 1980-85: A coming of age', paper presented to Australian Universities Community Engagement Alliance, Melbourne, VIC.

Smith, DH 2008, 'Accepting and understanding the 'dark side' of the nonprofit sector: one key part of building a healthier civic society', paper presented to Annual conference of the Associaiton for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA), Philadelphia, PA.

Ward, P 2016, *Using focus groups in research: More than just a fashion statement?*, Flinders University, Adelaide, SA, seminar series.

Theses

Bowers, KM 2012, 'An exploration of the leadership behavior of volunteer leaders', PhD Thesis, Indiana Wesleyan University.

Dighe, S 2010, 'Facebook groups: a community building tool?', Master of Arts thesis, La Trobe University.

Maher, A 2015, 'The evolution of the volunteering infrastructure and Volunteering Australia: Its impact on the history and development of volunteering in Australia 1970-2012', PhD Thesis, Flinders University, South Australia.

Trexler, W 2014, 'The role of volunteer resource managers' emotional intelligence in management practices which foster volunteer retention', Master of Science thesis, North Carolina State University.

Journal articles

Aiken, M & Harris, M 2017, 'The "hollowing out" of smaller third sector organisations?', *Voluntary Sector Review*, vol. 8, no. 3, pp. 333-42.

Allen, J & Mueller, S 2013, 'The revolving door: A closer look at major factors in volunteers' intention to quit', *Journal of Communtiy Psychology*, vol. 41, no. 2, pp. 139 - 55.

Andrews, KT, Ganz, M, Baggetta, M, Han, H & Lim, C 2010, 'Leadership, membership, and voice: Civic associations that work', *American Journal of Sociology*, vol. 115, no. 4, pp. 1191-242.

Atherley, KM 2006, 'Sport, localism and social capital in rural Western Australia', *Geographical Research*, vol. 44, no. 4, pp. 348-60.

Baggetta, M, Han, H & Andrews, KT 2013, 'Leading associations: How individual characteristics and team dynamics generate committed leaders', *American Sociological Review*, vol. 78, no. 4, pp. 544-73.

Baumgartner, FR & Walker, JL 1988, 'Survey research and membership in voluntary associations', *American Journal of Political Science*, vol. 32, no. 4, p. 908.

Bedford, KD 2015, 'Regulating volunteering: Lessons from the bingo halls', *Law & Social Inquiry*, vol. 40, no. 2, pp. 461-90.

Bendle, LJ & Patterson, I 2009, 'Mixed serious leisure and grassroots organizational capacity: A study of amateur artist groups in a regional Australian city', *Leisure Sciences*, vol. 31, no. 3, pp. 272-86.

Boeckmann, R & Tyler, T 2002, 'Trust, respect, and the psychology of political engagement', *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, vol. 32, no. 10, pp. 2067-2088.

Boehm, A & Staples, L 2006, 'Grassroots leadership in task-oriented groups: Learning from successful leaders', *Social Work With Groups*, vol. 28, no. 2, pp. 77-96.

Boezeman, EJ & Ellemers, N 2008, 'Volunteer recruitment: The role of organizational support and anticipated respect in non-volunteers: Attraction to charitable volunteer organizations', *Journal of Applied Psychology*, vol. 93, no. 5, pp. 1013-26.

Bolton, RN, Parasuraman, A, Hoefnagels, A, Migchels, N, Kabadayi, S, Gruber, T, Komarova Loureiro, Y & Solnet, D 2013, 'Understanding Generation Y and their use of social media: a review and research agenda', *Journal of Service Management*, vol. 24, no. 3, pp. 245-67.

Bowlby, S & Lloyd Evans, S 2011, 'Between state and market: The non-profit workforce in a changing local environment', *Social Policy and Society*, vol. 10, no. 3, pp. 417-27.

Browne-Yung, K, Ziersch, A, Baum, F, Gallaher, G 2013, 'Aboriginal Australian's experience of social capital and its relevance to health and wellbeing in urban settings', *Social Science & Medicine*, vol. 97, pp. 20 – 28.

Brudney, JL & Gazley, B 2006, 'Moving ahead or falling behind? Volunteer promotion and data collection', *Nonprofit Management and Leadership*, vol. 16, no. 3, pp. 259-76.

Brudney, JL & Meijs, L 2009, 'It ain't natural: Toward a new (natural) resource conceptualization for volunteer management', *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, vol. 38, no. 4, pp. 564-81.

—— 2013, 'Our common commons: Policies for sustaining volunteer energy', *Nonprofit Policy Forum*, vol. 4, no. 1, p. 29.

Brueckner, M, Holmes, K & Pick, D 2017, 'Out of sight: Volunteering in remote locations in Western Australia in the shadow of managerialism', *Third Sector Review*, vol. 23, no. 1, p. 29.

Bussey, M 2003, 'Youth voices: Young Queenslanders and values in a time of structural ageing', *Foresight*, vol. 5, no. 6, pp. 34-42.

Cadena-Roa, J, Luna, M & Puga, C 2012, 'Associational performance: The influence of cohesion, decision-making, and the environment', *Official journal of the International Society for Third-Sector Research*, vol. 23, no. 4, pp. 993-1013.

Catano, VM, Pond, M & Kelloway, EK 2001, 'Exploring commitment and leadership in volunteer organizations', *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, vol. 22, no. 6, p. 256.

Cnaan, RA 1991, 'Neighborhood-representing organizations: How democratic are they?', *The Social Service Review*, vol. 65, no. 4, pp. 614-34.

Cnaan, RA & Park, S 2016, 'The multifaceted nature of civic participation: A literature review', *Voluntaristics Review*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 1-73.

Coffé, H & Geys, B 2008, 'Measuring the bridging nature of voluntary organizations: The importance of association size', *Sociology*, vol. 42, no. 2, pp. 357-69.

Colorafi, K 2016, 'Connected health: a review of the literature', *mHealth.*, vol. 2, p. 13.

Crawford, S, McCabe, SE & Pope, D 2005, 'Applying web-based survey design standards', *Journal of Prevention & Intervention in the Community*, vol. 29, no. 1-2, pp. 43-66.

Cuskelly, G & Boag, A 2001, 'Organisational commitment as a predictor of committee member turnover among volunteer sport administrators: Results of a time-lagged study', *Sport Management Review*, vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 65-86.

Davies, A, Lockstone-Binney, L & Holmes, K 2018, 'Who are the future volunteers in rural places? Understanding the demographic and background characteristics of non-retired rural volunteers, why they volunteer and their future migration intentions', *Journal of Rural Studies*, vol. 60, pp. 167-75.

Dean, J 2014, 'How structural factors promote instrumental motivations within youth volunteering: a qualitative analysis of volunteer brokerage', *Voluntary Sector Review*, vol. 5, no. 2, pp. 231-48.

—— 2015, 'Volunteering, the market, and neoliberalism', *People, Place & Policy Online*, vol. 9, no. 2.

DeCuir-Gunby, JT, Marshall, PL & McCulloch, AW 2011, 'Developing and using a codebook for the analysis of interview data: An example from a professional development research project', *Field Methods*, vol. 23, no. 2, pp. 136-55.

DeGolier, S 2002, 'The birth of the Minnesota Association for Volunteer Administration: A new direction for professional organizations in our field', *e-Volunteerism: The electronic journal of the volunteer community*, vol. II, no. 2, viewed 9 June 2016, <https://www.e-volunteerism.com/quarterly/02oct/02oct-mava>.

Doherty, A, Patterson, M & Van Bussel, M 2004, 'What do we expect? An examination of perceived committee norms in non-profit sport organisations', *Sport Management Review*, vol. 7, no. 2, pp. 109-32.

Dunn, J, Chambers, SK & Hyde, MK 2015, 'Systematic review of motives for episodic volunteering', *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, vol. 27, no. 1, pp. 1-40.

Dwyer, PC, Bono, JE, Snyder, M, Nov, O & Berson, Y 2013, 'Sources of volunteer motivation: Transformational leadership and personal motives influence volunteer outcomes', *Nonprofit Management and Leadership*, vol. 24, no. 2, pp. 181-205.

Eaton, M 2010, 'Manufacturing community in an online activist organization: The rhetoric of MoveOn organisations' e-mails', *Information, Communication & Society*, vol. 13, no. 2, pp. 174-92.

Eklund, E, Oppenheimer, M & Scott, J 2016, 'Developing a community soul: A comparative assessment of the Australian Assistance Plan in three regions, 1973–1977', *Australian Journal of Politics & History*, vol. 62, no. 3, pp. 419-34.

English, L & Peters, N 2011, 'Founders' syndrome in women's nonprofit organizations: Implications for practice and organizational life', *Nonprofit Management and Leadership*, vol. 22, no. 2, pp. 159-71.

Enjolras, B & Waldahl, RH 2010, 'Democratic governance and oligarchy in voluntary sport organizations: The case of the Norwegian Olympic Committee and Confederation of Sports', *European Sport Management Quarterly*, vol. 10, no. 2, pp. 215-39.

Farmer, SM & Fedor, DB 1999, 'Volunteer participation and withdrawal', *Nonprofit Management and Leadership*, vol. 9, no. 4, pp. 349-68.

Ferree, R 2015, 'Facebook groups improve volunteer communications', *Journal of Extension*, vol. 53, no. 1, pp. 1-3.

Findlay, P & Thompson, P 2017, 'Contemporary work: Its meanings and demands', *Journal of Industrial Relations*, vol. 59, no. 2, pp. 122-38.

Fischer, CS 2005, 'Bowling alone: What's the score?', *Social networks*, vol. 27, no. 2, pp. 155-67.

Fyall, R & Gazley, B 2015, 'Applying social role theory to gender and volunteering in professional associations', *Official Journal of the International Society for Third-Sector Research*, vol. 26, no. 1, pp. 288-314.

Gil de Zúñiga, H & Valenzuela, S 2011, 'The mediating path to a stronger citizenship: Online and offline networks, weak ties, and civic engagement', *Communication Research*, vol. 38, no. 3, pp. 397-421.

Glover, T 2004, 'Narrative inquiry and the study of grassroots associations', *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, vol. 15, no. 1, pp. 47-69.

Goss, KA 1999, 'Volunteering and the long civic generation', *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, vol. 28, no. 4, pp. 378-415.

Hager, M, Galaskiewicz, J, Bielefeld, W & Pins, J 1996, 'Tales from the grave: Organizations' accounts of their own demise', *The American Behavioral Scientist*, vol. 39, no. 8, pp. 975-94.

Halseth, G & Ryser, L 2007, 'The deployment of partnerships by the voluntary sector to address service needs in rural and small town Canada', *Official Journal of the International Society for Third-Sector Research*, vol. 18, no. 3, pp. 241-65.

Han, H, Sparks, AC & Towery, ND 2017, 'Opening up the black box: Citizen group strategies for engaging grassroots activism in the twenty-first century', *Interest Groups & Advocacy*, vol. 6, no. 1, pp. 1-22.

Handy, F & Cnaan, RA 2007, 'The role of social anxiety in volunteering', *Nonprofit Management and Leadership*, vol. 18, no. 1, pp. 41-58.

Hankinson, P & Rochester, C 2005, 'The face and voice of volunteering: a suitable case for branding?', *International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing*, vol. 10, no. 2, pp. 93-105.

Hargreaves-Heap, SP & Zizzo, DJ 2009, 'The value of groups', *American Economic Review*, vol. 99, no. 1, p. 295-323.

Harris, M 1998, 'Doing it their way: Organizational challenges for voluntary associations', *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, vol. 27, no. 2, pp. 144-58.

Harris, ME 2015, 'Organizational challenges of community associations: Applying nonprofit research to real-world problems', *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, vol. 44, no. 4, pp. 796-813.

Hartenian, L & Lilly, B 2009, 'Egoism and commitment: A multidimensional approach to understanding sustained volunteering', *Journal of Managerial Issues*, vol. 21, no. 1, pp. 97-118.

Haski-Leventhal, D & Bargal, D 2008, 'The volunteer stages and transitions model: Organizational socialization of volunteers', *Human Relations*, vol. 61, no. 1, pp. 67-102.

Haski-Leventhal, D & Meijs, L 2011, 'The volunteer matrix: Positioning of volunteer organizations', *International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing*, vol. 16, no. 2, p. 127-137.

Haski-Leventhal, D, Meijs, L & Hustinx, L 2009, 'The third party model: Enhancing volunteering through governments, corporations and educational institutes', *The Journal of Social Policy*, vol. 39, no. 1, pp. 139-58.

Haski-Leventhal, D, Oppenheimer, M, Holmes, K, Lockstone-Binney, L, Alony, I & Ong, F 2018, 'The conceptualization of volunteering among nonvolunteers: Expanding using the net-cost approach to expand definitions and dimensions of volunteering', *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly Special Issue*, pp. 1-22.

Haski-Leventhal, D, Meijs, LC, LockstoneBinney, L, Holmes, K & Oppenheimer, M 2017, 'Measuring volunteerability and the capacity to volunteer among non-volunteers: Implications for social policy', *Social Policy & Administration*, pp. 1-29.

Hercheui, MD 2011, 'A literature review of virtual communities: the relevance of understanding the influence of institutions on online collectives', *Information, Communication & Society*, vol. 14, no. 1, pp. 1-23.

Herman, RD 2005, 'Board members of nonprofit organizations as volunteers', *The ARNOVA Occasional Paper Series: Emerging areas of volunteering*, pp. 77-91.

Hidalgo, MC & Moreno, P 2009, 'Organizational socialization of volunteers: The effect on their intention to remain', *Journal of Community Psychology*, vol. 37, no. 5, pp. 594-601.

Hill, M & Stevens, D 2011, 'Volunteers who manage other volunteers and the professionalisation of volunteer management: implications for practice', *Voluntary Sector Review*, vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 107-14.

Holmes, K, Haski-Leventhal, D, Lockstone-Binney, L & Maher, A 2018, 'Operationalising recruitability: Organisation's ability to recruit and retain volunteers', Publication forthcoming.

Holmes, K & Slater, A 2012, 'Patterns of voluntary participation in membership associations: A study of UK heritage supporter groups', *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, vol. 41, no. 5, pp. 850-69.

Hooghe, M 2003, 'Participation in voluntary associations and value indicators: The effect of current and previous participation experiences', *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, vol. 32, no. 1, pp. 47-69.

Howard, MM & Gilbert, L 2008, 'A cross-national comparison of the internal effects of participation in voluntary organizations', *Political Studies*, vol. 56, no. 1, pp. 12-32.

Howlett, S 2010, 'Developing volunteer management as a profession', *Voluntary Sector Review*, vol. 1, no. 3, pp. 355-60.

Hoye, R 2006, 'Leadership within Australian voluntary sport organization boards', *Nonprofit Management and Leadership*, vol. 16, no. 3, pp. 297-313.

Hustinx, L 2010, 'I quit, therefore I am?', *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, vol. 39, no. 2, pp. 236-55.

Hustinx, L, Cnaan, RA & Handy, F 2010, 'Navigating theories of volunteering: A hybrid map for a complex phenomenon', *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, pp. 410-34.

Hustinx, L & Lammertyn, F 2003, 'Collective and reflexive styles of volunteering: A sociological modernization perspective', *Voluntas*, vol. 14, no. 2, pp. 167-87.

Hustinx, L & Meijs, L 2011, 'Re-embedding volunteering: in search of a new collective ground', *Voluntary Sector Review*, vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 5-21.

Inglis, S & Cleave, S 2006, 'A scale to assess board member motivations in nonprofit organizations', *Nonprofit Management and Leadership*, vol. 17, no. 1, pp. 83-101.

Jennings, MK & Stoker, L 2004, 'Social trust and civic engagement across time and generations', *Acta Politica*, vol. 39, no. 4, pp. 342-79.

Jensen, PR 2017, '"People can't believe we exist!": Social sustainability and alternative nonprofit organizing', *Critical Sociology*, vol.44, no. 2, pp. 1-14.

Johnson, PE 1990, 'Unraveling in democratically governed groups', *Rationality and Society*, vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 4-34.

Katz, J, Rice, R, Acord, S, Dasgupta, K & Davd, K 2004, 'Personal mediated communication and the concept of community in theory and practice', *Annals of the International Communication Association*, vol. 28, no. 1, pp. 315-71.

Kavanaugh, A, Carroll, JM, Rosson, MB, Zin, TT & Reese, DD 2005, 'Community networks: Where offline communities meet online', *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, vol. 10, no. 4, pp. 1-23.

Kavanaugh, A, Reese, DD, Carroll, JM & Rosson, MB 2005, 'Weak ties in networked communities', *The Information Society: An International Journal*, vol. 21, no. 2, pp. 119-31.

Keddy, J 2001, 'Human dignity and grassroots leadership development', *Social Policy*, vol. 31, no. 4, pp. 48-51.

Keen, S 1999, 'Associations in Australian history: Their contribution to social capital', *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, vol. 29, no. 4, pp. 639-59.

Kero, P, Lee, D 2016, "Likert is pronounced 'LICK-urt' not 'LIE-kurt' and the data are ordinal not interval", *Journal of Applied Measurement*, vol 17, no. 4, pp 502 – 509.

King, D 2017, 'Becoming business-like: Governing the nonprofit professional', *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, vol. 46, no. 2, pp. 241-60.

Kitzinger, J 1994, 'The methodology of focus groups: The importance of interaction between research participants', *Sociology of Health & Illness*, vol. 16, no. 1, pp. 103-21.

Knoke, D 1981, 'Commitment and detachment in voluntary associations', *American Sociological Review*, vol. 46, no. 2, pp. 141-58.

—— 1986, 'Associations and interest groups', *Annual Review of Sociology*, vol. 12, pp. 1-21.

Kramer, M, Meisenbach, R & Hansen, G 2013, 'Communication, uncertainty, and volunteer membership', *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, vol. 41, no. 1, pp. 18-39.

Kramer, MW 2011, 'A study of voluntary organizational membership: The assimilation process in a community choir', *Western Journal of Communication*, vol. 75, no. 1, pp. 52-74.

Kreutzer, K & Jager, U 2011, 'Volunteering versus managerialism: Conflict over organizational identity in voluntary associations', *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, vol. 40, no. 4, pp. 634-61.

Kristofferson, K, White, K & Peloza, J 2014, 'The nature of slacktivism: How the social observability of an initial act of token support affects subsequent prosocial action', *The Journal of Consumer Research*, vol. 40, no. 6, pp. 1149-66.

Kropf, ME & Blair, J 2005, 'Eliciting survey cooperation: Incentives, self-interest, and norms of cooperation', *Evaluation Review*, vol. 29, no. 6, pp. 559-75.

Lee, E, Kim, YJ & Ahn, J 2014, 'How do people use Facebook features to manage social capital?', *Computers in Human Behavior*, vol. 36, pp. 440-5.

Leonard, R, Onyx, J 2003, 'Networking through loose and strong ties: An Australian qualitative study', <u>*Voluntas*</u>, vol. 14, no. 2, pp. 189-203.

Locke, M, Ellis, A & Smith, JD 2003, 'Hold on to what you've got: The volunteer retention literature', *Voluntary Action*, vol. 5, no. 3.

Maas, SA, Meijs, L, Brudney, JL & van Baren, EA 2015, 'Episodic volunteering and beyond: Designing episodic volunteering for retention', *Academy of Management Proceedings*, vol. 2015, no. 1, p. 16794.

Macduff, N 2005, 'Societal changes and the rise of the episodic volunteer', *The ARNOVA Accasional Paper Series*, vol. 1, no. 2, pp. 49-61.

Mackenzie, N & Knipe, S 2006, 'Research dilemmas: Paradigms, methods and methodology', *Issues in Educational Research*, vol. 16, no. 2, pp. 193-205.

Maier, F, Meyer, M & Steinbereithner, M 2016, 'Nonprofit organizations becoming business-like', *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, vol. 45, no. 1, pp. 64-86.

McQuaid, RW & Lindsay, C 2005, 'The concept of employability', *Urban Studies*, vol. 42, no. 2, pp. 197-219.

Meijs, L & Brudney, JL 2007, 'Winning volunteer scenarios: The soul of a new machine', *International Journal of Volunteer Administration*, vol. 24, no. 6, pp. 68-79.

Meijs, L & Hoogstad, E 2001, 'New ways of managing volunteers: Combining membership management and programme management', *Voluntary Action*, vol. 3, no. 3, pp. 41-62.

Meijs, L, Ten Hoorn, EM, Brudney, JL & Goodman, M 2006, 'Improving societal use of human resources: From employability to volunteerability', *Voluntary Action*, vol. 8, no. 2, pp. 36-54.

Merrill, MV 2006, 'Global trends and the challenges for volunteering', *The International Journal of Volunteer Administration*, vol. 24, no. 1, pp. 9-14.

Mex, CL 2018, 'Stepping up or stepping out? Recruitment and retention of volunteer leaders in grassroots associations', *Third Sector Review*, vol. 24, no. 1, pp. 71-96.

Mohan, J 2012, 'Entering the lists: what can we learn about the voluntary sector in England from listings produced by local infrastructure bodies?', *Voluntary Sector Review*, vol. 3, no. 2, pp. 197-215.

Morrissy, S 2016, 'Benefit corporations: A sophisticated and worthy reform', *Governance Directions*, vol. 68, no. 1, p. 4.

Murimi, MW 2017, 'Volunteerism: A win-win undertaking', *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behaviour*, vol. 49, no. 2, pp. 89-90.

Newton, K 2001, 'Trust, social capital, civil society, and democracy', *International Political Science Review*, vol. 22, no. 2, pp. 201-14.

Nichols, G 2005, 'Stalwarts in sport', *World Leisure Journal*, vol. 47, no. 2, pp. 31-7.

Nichols, G, Taylor, P, Barrett, D & Jeanes, R 2014, 'Youth sport volunteers in England: A paradox between reducing the state and promoting a Big Society', *Sport Management Review*, vol. 17, no. 3, pp. 337-46.

Nichols, G, Wicker, P, Cuskelly, G & Breuer, C 2015, 'Measuring the formalization of community sports clubs: Findings from the UK, Germany and Australia', *International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics*, vol. 7, no. 2, pp. 283-300

Obar, JA, Zube, P & Lampe, C 2012, 'Advocacy 2.0: An analysis of how advocacy groups in the United States perceive and use social media as tools for facilitating civic engagement and collective action', *Journal of Information Policy*, vol. 2, pp. 1-25.

Oliver, P 1984, 'If you don't do it, nobody else will: Active and token contributors to local collective action', *American Sociological Review*, vol. 49, no. 5, pp. 601-10.

Onyx, J, Cham, L & Dalton, B 2016, 'Current trends in Australian nonprofit policy', *Nonprofit Policy Forum*, vol. 7, no. 2, pp. 171-88.

Onyx, J & Leonard, R 2010, 'The conversion of social capital into community development: An intervention in Australia's outback', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research,* vol. 34, no. 2, pp. 381 – 397.

Onyx, J & Warburton, J 2003, 'Volunteering and health among older people: A review', *Australasian Journal on Ageing*, vol. 22, no. 2, pp. 65-9.

Oppenheimer, AJ, Pannucci, CJ, Kasten, SJ & Haase, SC 2011, 'Survey says? A primer on web-based survey design and distribution', *Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery*, vol. 128, no. 1, pp. 299-304.

Oppenheimer, M 2001, '"We all did voluntary work of some kind": Voluntary work and labour history', *Labour History*, no. 81, pp. 1-11.

—— 2005, 'Voluntary action and welfare in post-1945 Australia: Preliminary perspectives', *History Australia*, vol. 2, no. 3, pp. 82.1-16.

Oppenheimer, M, Warburton, J & Carey, J 2015, 'The next 'new' idea: The challenges of organizational change, decline and renewal in australian meals on wheels', *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, vol. 26, no. 4, pp. 1550-69.

Osterman, P 2006, 'Overcoming oligarchy: Culture and agency in social movement organizations.', *Administrative Science Quarterly*, vol. 51, no. 4, p. 622-49.

Park, N, Kee, KF & Valenzuela, S 2009, 'Being immersed in social networking environment: Facebook groups, uses and gratifications, and social outcomes', *CyberPsychology & Behavior*, vol. 12, no. 6, pp. 729-33.

Paull, M & Omari, M 2015, 'Dignity and respect: important in volunteer settings too!', *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal*, vol. 34, no. 3, pp. 244-55.

Paull, M & Redmond, J 2011, 'Succession in community organisations: Newcomers and the "purple circle"', *Third Sector Review*, vol. 17, no. 2, pp. 1-14.

Paxton, P & Rap, R 2016, 'Does the standard voluntary association question capture informal associations?', *Social Science Research*, vol. 60, pp. 212-21.

Pearce, JL 1980, 'Apathy or self-interest? The volunteer's avoidance of leadership roles', *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, vol. 9, no. 1, pp. 85-94.

Perkins, KB & Poole, DG 1996, 'Oligarchy and adaptation to mass society in an all-volunteer organization: Implications for understanding leadership, participation, and change', *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, vol. 25, no. 1, pp. 73-88.

Phillimore, J & McCabe, A 2015, 'Small-scale civil society and social policy: The importance of experiential learning, insider knowledge and diverse motivations in shaping community action', *Voluntary Sector Review*, vol. 6, no. 2, pp. 135-51.

Pick, D, Holmes, K & Brueckner, M 2011, 'Governmentalities of volunteering: A study of regional Western Australia', *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, vol. 22, no. 3, pp. 390-408.

Pope, J 2005, 'Volunteering in Victoria over 2004', *Australian Journal on Volunteering*, vol. 10, no. 2, pp. 29-34.

Posner, BZ 2015, 'An investigation into the leadership practices of volunteer leaders', *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, vol. 36, no. 7, pp. 885-98.

Price, B 2002, 'Social capital and factors affecting civic engagement as reported by leaders of voluntary associations', *The Social Science Journal*, vol. 39, no. 1, pp. 119-27.

Prouteau, L & Tabariés, M 2010, 'The unpaid leaders of French voluntary associations', *Annals of Public and Cooperative Economics*, vol. 81, no. 1, pp. 131-66.

Ritter, P, Lorig, K, Laurent, D, Matthews, K, Schonlau, M & Riva, G 2004, 'Internet versus mailed questionnaires: A randomized comparison', *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, vol. 6, no. 3, pp. 1-8.

Rochester, C 1999, 'One size does not fit all: Four models of involving volunteers in small voluntary organisations', *Voluntary Action - London Institute for Volunteering Research*, vol. 1, pp. 8 - 20.

Rotolo, T 1999, 'Trends in voluntary association participation', *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, vol. 28, no. 2, pp. 199-212.

—— 2000a, 'A time to join, a time to quit: The influence of life cycle transitions on voluntary association membership', *Social Forces*, vol. 78, no. 3, pp. 1133-61.

—— 2000b, 'Town heterogeneity and affiliation: A multilevel analysis of voluntary association memership', *Sociological Perspectives*, vol. 43, no. 2, p. 271.

Rotolo, T & Wilson, J 2004, 'What happened to the "long civic generation"? Explaining cohort differences in volunteerism', *Social Forces*, vol. 82, no. 3, pp. 1091-121.

Sabeti, H 2011, 'The for-benefit enterprise', *Harvard Business Review*, vol. 89, no. 11, pp. 98-104.

Sander, TH & Putnam, RD 2010, 'Still bowling alone? The post 9/11 split', *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 21, no. 1, pp. 9-16.

Schlozman, KL, Jones, PE, You, HY, Burch, T, Verba, S & Brady, HE 2015, 'Organizations and the democratic representation of interests: What does it mean when those organizations have no members?', *Perspectives on Politics*, vol. 13, no. 4, pp. 1017-29.

Schneider, SK & George, WM 2011, 'Servant leadership versus transformational leadership in voluntary service organizations', *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, vol. 32, no. 1, pp. 60-77.

Scott, J 2000, 'Is it a different world to when you were growing up? Generational effects on social representations and child-rearing values', *British Journal of Sociology*, vol. 51, no. 2, pp. 355-76.

Scott, JK & Johnson, TG 2005, 'Bowling alone but online together: Social capital in e-communities', *Community Development*, vol. 36, no. 1, pp. 9-27.

Sharpe, EK 2003, 'It's not fun anymore: A case study of organizing a contemporary grassroots recreation association', *Society and Leisure*, vol. 26, no. 2, pp. 431-52.

—— 2006, 'Resources at the grassroots of recreation: Organizational capacity and quality of experience in a community sport organization', *Leisure Sciences*, vol. 28, no. 4, pp. 385-401.

Shi, Y, Dokshin, FA, Genkin, M & Brashears, ME 2017, 'A member saved is a member earned? The recruitment-retention trade-off and organizational strategies for membership growth', *American Sociological Review*, vol. 82, no. 2, pp. 407-34.

Singer, E & Couper, MP 2008, 'Do incentives exert undue influence on survey participation?: Experimental evidence', *Journal of Empirical Research on Human Research Ethics*, vol. 3, no. 3, pp. 49-56.

Smith, DH 1992, 'A neglected type of voluntary nonprofit organization: Exploration of the semiformal, fluid-membership organization', *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, vol. 21, no. 3, pp. 251-69.

—— 1997, 'Grassroots associations are important: Some theory and a review of the impact literature', *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, vol. 26, no. 3, pp. 269-306.

Smithson, J 2000, 'Using and analyzing focus groups: Limitations and possibilities', *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, vol. 3, no. 2, pp 103 – 119.

Sobeck, JL 2008, 'How cost-effective is capacity building in grassroots organizations?', *Administration in Social Work*, vol. 32, no. 2, pp. 49-68.

Soteri-Proctor, A, Phillimore, J & McCabe, A 2013, 'Grassroots civil society at crossroads: Staying on the path to independence or turning onto the UK Government's route to localism?', *Development in Practice*, vol. 23, no. 8, pp. 1022-33.

Souza, K & Dhami, M 2008, 'A study of volunteers in community-based restorative justice programs', *Canadian Journal of Criminology and Criminal Justice*, vol. 50, no. 1, pp. 31 - 58.

Spagnoletti, P, Resca, A & Lee, G 2015, 'A design theory for digital platforms supporting online communities: A multiple case study', *Journal of Information Technology*, vol. 30, no. 4, pp. 364 - 80.

Strazdins, L & Loughrey, B 2008, 'Too busy: Why time is a health and environmental problem', *New South Wales Public Health Bulletin*, vol. 18, no. 12, pp. 219-21.

Sundeen, RA, Raskoff, SA & Garcia, MC 2007, 'Differences in perceived barriers to volunteering to formal organizations: Lack of time versus lack of interest', *Nonprofit Management and Leadership*, vol. 17, no. 3, pp. 279-300.

Taniguchi, H 2006, 'Men's and women's volunteering: Gender differences in the effects of employment and family characteristics', *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, vol. 35, no. 1, pp. 83-101.

Tiehen, L 2000, 'Has working more caused married women to volunteer less? Evidence from time diary data, 1965 to 1993', *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, vol. 29, no. 4, pp. 505-29.

Toepler, S 2003, 'Grassroots associations versus larger nonprofits: New evidence from a community case study in arts and culture', *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, vol. 32, no. 2, pp. 236-51.

Trzcinski, E & Sobeck, JL 2012, 'Predictors of growth in small and mid-sized nonprofit organizations in the Detroit metropolitan area', *Administration in Social Work*, vol. 36, no. 5, pp. 499-519.

Tschirhart, M & Gazley, B 2014, 'Advancing scholarship on membership associations: New research and next steps', *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, vol. 43, pp. 3-17.

Twenge, JM 2010a, 'Generational differences in work values: Leisure and extrinsic values increasing, social and intrinsic values decreasing', *Journal of Management*, vol. 36, no. 5, pp. 1117-42.

—— 2010b, 'A review of the empirical evidence on generational differences in work attitudes', *Journal of Business and Psychology*, vol. 25, no. 2, pp. 201-10.

Valeau, PJ 2014, 'Stages and pathways of development of nonprofit organizations: An integrative model', *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, vol. 26, no. 5, pp. 8894-1919.

Valenzuela, S, Park, N & Kee, KF 2009, 'Is there social capital in a social network site?: Facebook use and college students' life satisfaction, trust, and participation', *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, vol. 14, no. 4, pp. 875-901.

van der Meer, T, te Grotenhuis, M & Scheepers, P 2009, 'Three types of voluntary associations in comparative perspective: The importance of studying associational involvement through a typology of associations in 21 European countries', *Journal of Civil Society*, vol. 5, no. 3, pp. 227-41.

van Ingen, E & Wilson, J 2016, 'I volunteer, therefore I am? Factors affecting volunteer role identity', *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, vol. 46, no. 1, pp. 29-46.

van Puyvelde, S, Huybrechts, G, Willems, J, Jegers, M, Bidee, J, Vantilborgh, T & Pepermans, R 2015, 'Optimal membership size and the governance of grassroots associations', *The Social Science Journal*, vol. 52, no. 2, pp. 141-7.

van Schie, S, Güntert, S, Oostlander, J & Wehner, T 2015, 'How the organizational context impacts volunteers: A differentiated perspective on self-determined motivation', *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, vol. 26, no. 4, pp. 1570-90.

Veludo-de-Oliveira, TM, Pallister, JG & Foxall, GR 2015, 'Unselfish? Understanding the role of altruism, empathy, and beliefs in volunteering commitment', *Journal of Nonprofit & Public Sector Marketing*, vol. 27, no. 4, pp. 373-96.

Vie, S 2014, 'In defense of "slacktivism": The human rights campaign facebook logo as digital activism', *First Monday*, vol. 19, no. 4, pp. 1-13.

Warburton, J 2006, 'A feeling of worth: The relationship between volunteering and health in later life', *Voluntary Action*, vol. 8, no. 2, pp. 3-15.

Warburton, J & Crosier, T 2001, 'Are we too busy to volunteer? The relationship between time and volunteering using the 1997 ABS Time Use Data', *Australian Journal of Social Issues*, vol. 36, no. 4, pp. 295-314.

Warburton, J & McDonald, C 2009, 'The challenges of the new institutional environment: An Australian case study of older volunteers in the contemporary non-profit sector', *Ageing and Society*, vol. 29, no. 5, pp. 823-40.

Warburton, J, Paynter, J & Petriwskyj, A 2007, 'Volunteering as a productive aging activity: Incentives and barriers to volunteering by Australian seniors', *Journal of Applied Gerontology*, vol. 26, no. 4, pp. 333-54.

Ware, A 2014, 'Exploring grassroots groups and local government relationships: benefits and challenges for current times', *Voluntary Sector Review*, vol. 5, no. 3, pp. 391-7.

Warren, AM, Sulaiman, A & Jaafar, NI 2015, 'Understanding civic engagement behaviour on Facebook from a social capital theory perspective', *Behaviour & Information Technology*, vol. 34, no. 2, pp. 163-75.

Wells, C 2013, 'Two eras of civic information and the evolving relationship between civil society organizations and young citizens', *New Media & Society*, vol. 16, no. 4, pp. 615-36.

Wilson, J 2012, 'Volunteerism research', *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, vol. 41, no. 2, pp. 176-212.

Winterton, R & Warburton, J 2014, 'Healthy ageing in Australia's rural places: The contribution of older volunteers', *Voluntary Sector Review*, vol. 5, no. 2, pp. 181-201.

Winterton, R, Warburton, J & Oppenheimer, M 2013, 'The future for Meals on Wheels? Reviewing innovative approaches to meal provision for ageing populations', *International Journal of Social Welfare*, vol. 22, no. 2, pp. 141-51.

Wollebæk, D 2009, 'Age, size and change in local voluntary associations', *Acta Sociologica*, vol. 52, no. 4, pp. 365-84.

Wollebæk, D & Selle, P 2002, 'Does participation in voluntary associations contribute to social Capital? The impact of intensity, scope, and type', *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, vol. 31, no. 1, pp. 32-61.

Wollebæk, D & Strømsnes, K 2007, 'Voluntary associations, trust, and civic engagement: A multilevel approach', *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, vol. 37, no. 2, pp. 249-63.

Young, DR 1989, 'Local autonomy in a franchise age: Structural change in national voluntary associations', *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, vol. 18, no. 2, pp. 101-17.

Young, K 2011, 'Social ties, social networks and the Facebook experience', *International Journal of Emerging Technologies and Society*, vol. 9, no. 1, pp. 20-34.

Zhai, RL, Watson, J, Gilchrist, D & Newby, R 2017, 'Non-profit vulnerability: An exploratory study', *Financial Accountability & Management*, pp. 373-90.

Newspapers, magazines, online articles, radio, film

Bianchini, G 2017, *The difference betwen meaningful communities and Facebook groups*, 22 June 2017, NewCo Shift, <https://shift.newco.co/tbt-the-difference-between-meaningful-communities-and-facebook-groups-d8bb2141a363>.

Blanke, HG 2006, 'The volunteer as leader', 2 January 2006, *e-Volunteerism*, viewed 20 June 2016, <www.e-volunteerism.com>.

Caneva, L 2017, *Negotiations begin over new SA not-for-profit funding contracts*, 15 November 2015, Pro Bono Australia, viewed 18 February 2018, <https://probonoaustralia.com.au/news/2017/11/negotiations-begin-new-sa-nfp-funding-contracts/>.

Christensen, C 2015, 'What is disruptive innovation?', December 2015, *Harvard Business Review*, viewed 20 September 2017, <https://hbr.org/2015/12/what-is-disruptive-innovation>.

Eckersley, R 2012, 'Whatever happened to western civilization: The cultural crisis, 20 years later', *The Futurist*, Nov-Dec 2012, pp. 16 - 22.

Ellis, S & McCurley, S 2005, *What volunteers do to each other is not always pretty*, January 2005, Energize, Inc., viewed 15 December 2016, <www.e-volunteerism.com>.

—— 2007, *The other half of the volunteer world*, October 2007, Energize, Inc, viewed 15 December 2016, <www.e-volunteerism.com>.

Eystad, M 2001, *Focus on membership development: Three organizations share effective techniques*, April 2001, Energize, Inc, viewed 15 December 2016, <www.e-volunteerism.com>.

Ford, M 2017, 'We need just one police check', *The Advertiser*, 18 June 2017, Opinion, p. 76.

Gittins, R 2003, 'Happy birthday GST, and many happy tax returns', *The Age*, 25 June 2003.

Grimm, N 2017, 'Murray Bridge Council runs community group networking program', *Murray Valley Standard, Murray Bridge, South Australia*, 6 June 2017.

Hempel, J 2017, *WeWork is buying MeetUp amid an increasingly discconnected world*, 28 November 2017, Wired, viewed 17 February 2018, <https://www.wired.com/story/why-wework-is-buying-meetup/>.

Hewitt, A 2017, 'Finding purpose to lure our young guns', *The Advertiser*, 30 September 2017, p. 52.

Hyland, A 2015, 'The death of real face time', *Australian Financial Review*, 4 July 2015.

Jin, KX 2017, *Our first communities summit and new tools for group admins*, Facebook, viewed 16 October 2017, <https://newsroom.fb.com/products/>.

Johnson, T 2016, 'What must Australian volunteerism lose to win?', 12 January 2016, *ProBono Australia*, viewed 1 June 2016, <http://probonoaustralia.com.au/news/2016/01/what-must-australian-volunteerism-lose-win/>.

Jones, E 2017, 'How the CWA has scone from strength to strength', *The Advertiser*, March 19, 2017, pp. 22 - 3.

Liebelt, D 2017, ABC Radio Adelaide, Adelaide, SA, 5 November 2017, Radio interview.

Lush, D 2011, 'In the past decade, many country shows have come close to closing', *Stock Journal*, October 13, 2011, p. 20.

Mackay, H 2014, 'The art of belonging: Community - "Social cohesion is never about our religious beliefs or where we came from"', *The Age*, 4 October 2014.

Mansell, M 2013, 'It's time we looked after our volunteers', *The Advertiser*, 3 September 2013, Editorial.

Mason, A 2002, *The insurance crisis is a public liability*, 15 March 2002, The National Forum, viewed 6 October 2017, <http://onlineopinion.com.au/view.asp?article=1900>.

McCorvey, J 2018, 'How Meetup CEO Scott Heiferman used a staff uprising to create a better product', November 2016, *Fast Company Magazine*.

Merritt, C 2007, 'Liability of flawed law reform', *The Australian*, 14 April 2007.

Crackerjack 2002, G Stick & M Molloy, Sydney, NSW. Distributed by Roadshow Entertainment (movie).

Moulds, J 2007, *SMS and IM replacing emails*, 19 November 2007, Telegraph Media Group Limited, viewed 28 February 2018, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/markets/2819755/SMS-and-IM-replacing-emails.html>.

Norington, B 2003, 'Think tank secrets', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 12 August 2003.

O'Dwyer, L 2012, 'Volunteers worth more to Australia than mining', 28 August 2012, *Pro Bono Australia News, 28 August 2012,* viewed 17 April 2018, <https://probonoaustralia.com.au/news/2012/08/volunteers-worth-more-to-australia-than-mining/>.

O'Loughlin, E 2013, 'Do our volunteers need an ombudsman?', *The Advertiser*, 3 September 2013.

Oppenheimer, M, Haski-Leventhal, D, Holmes, K, Lockstone-Binney, L & Meijs, L 2015, 'Where have all the volunteers gone?', 24 September 2015, *The Conversation*, no. 24, <theconversation.com>.

Paramanathan, P 2016, 'Introducing the Social Benefit Company - a new legal structure for Australian social enterprises', 9 January 2016, *Chuffed*, <chuffed.org>.

Potter, B & Tillett, A 2017, 'Australians pay highest power prices in world', *The Australian Financial Review*, 5 August 1017.

Seetharaman, D 2017, 'Facebook has new vision beyond connecting, and it thinks groups are key: New focus seeks to build more community and bring the world closer together', *Wall Street Journal Online*, 22 June 2017.

Wade, M 2014, 'Childcare funding needs major overhaul, says researchers', *The Syndey Morning Herald*, March 31, 2014.

Washington, D 2017, 'News Corp cuts number and delivery of Messenger newspapers', *InDaily*, 7 July 2017.

Watson, C 2013, 'Push to protect volunteer rights', *The Advertiser*, 3 September 2013.

Williams, T 2016, 'Parent group has been a class act but bell is tolling', *The Advertiser*, 25 October 2016.

Williams, W 2018, 'Globabal B corps unite as a force for good', 2 February 2018, *Pro Bono Australia News*, viewed 19 February 2018, <https://probonoaustralia.com.au/news/2018/02/global-b-corps-unite-force-good/>.

Woods, M & James, D 1994, 'The Annual General Meeting', 23 February 1994, *Yorke Peninsula Country Times, South Australia*, p. 25.