

# Thinking about volunteering for a MAANZ position?

## Here's 5 reasons to say yes!

by Barb Uhlenbruch

### 1 Expanding your tribe

We all know connection with others is healthy and important to us. Humans are inherently social beings. Connecting with people who share a passion for a niche artform means broadening your tribe of people with whom you have something unique in common.

### 2 Learning new skills

One of the many secrets to a healthy life span is learning a new skillset every couple of years. Here are just some of the new skills I've learned from my various volunteer roles with MAANZ

- Approaching galleries with exhibition proposals
- Curating and hanging an exhibition
- Engaging with community groups and running workshops
- Applying for grants
- Zoom - how to host meetings, screen share, chat on the side, add slide show presentations
- PowerPoint presentations- creating, editing, making them engaging
- Excel spreadsheets ....(OK I will admit this is very much a work in progress)
- Logistics

### 3 Being an apprentice for life

You never know what life/skill/art pearls you will learn when you step into a new role and have mentors who have preceded you in that role to guide you when you need it. There are MAANZies out there with extraordinary skill sets who generously share them with new members of the team.

### 4 Stretching out of your comfort zone

I don't think many of us who put up our hand to volunteer do so with a sense of 'yep, no problem, easy peasy'. It is more commonly, 'I am not sure I have the time/skills/energy to do this and someone else would do a far better job'. This is where growth happens, something I have experienced first-hand.

## 5 A genuinely good feeling

MAANZ has given me a lot over the years - I have moved from learning the craft, isolated and knowing no one in the mosaic world to being a respected artist in a vibrant passionate group here and internationally. It is a fine thing now, to be able to give something back and keep this fabulous organisation moving forward.

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*'There are 'MAANZies' out there with extraordinary skill sets who generously share them with new members of the team.'*



Tani Bates, Far North Queensland

*As a volunteer for MAANZ I've had the opportunity to assist with workshops and planning activities, I've been part of conversations and made so many connections that have become friends. I take great pleasure in having a seat at the table with like minded, well intentioned, caring people who are nurturing MAANZ to benefit the wider community. And it's fun.*



Paul Perry, Bundaberg, Queensland

*Volunteering is always a two-way affair for me. I'm glad to share my time, skills and experience with others, especially if it brings benefit to them and/or the wider community. But I find that volunteering always has a payoff for me too. I usually learn something I didn't know, see something I didn't know existed, or make a new friend or network contact. A win-win for all.*



# Volunteering - mental health benefits

Volunteering correlates with greater self-assessed psychological wellbeing, self-esteem, happiness, and satisfaction with life, with lower symptoms of depression and anxiety, and with lower indicators of suicide risk.

Volunteering supports mental health by increasing psychological and social capital.

The key mechanisms which link volunteering activity to better mental health are social interaction and sense of purpose.

These factors encourage a positive emotional state, reduce stress, and create meaningful social roles—all of which correlate with reduced psychological distress.

Mental health benefits are especially pronounced for older people, people experiencing lower levels of life-satisfaction, unemployed people, and people with chronic health conditions.

Volunteering may have distinct benefits for people with disability and people experiencing mental ill-health.

from Volunteering Australia's 2021 report 'Evidence insights:volunteering and mental health'

[Read more](#)



*I have been a part of the MAANZ community for many years. It has always been a great way to meet people who 'get me' (as in other mad mosaicists do!) I periodically put myself forward as a volunteer and get involved in the behind the scenes stuff. It doesn't take a lot of time and I like the feeling of being part of the team.*

Helen Bellino, Phillip Island, Victoria

