



**YOUTH
ENGAGEMENT
IN LANDCARE
HOW-TO KIT**

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This kit is jointly funded through Landcare Australia and the Australian Government National Landcare Programme, and written by Megan Rowlatt.

WELCOME

Are you a young person keen to get involved in Landcare or a Landcare group keen to connect with young people? Well you've come to the right place!

This document focuses on ways to engage the 18-35 demographic (and of course those who may not fall into this but are still young at heart!) and has been prepared in consultation with Megan Rowlett who has been working and volunteering in natural resource management since 2007. Megan is the founder and coordinator of Illawarra Intrepid Landcare, a Landcare group for young people, which has been running since 2009.

Illawarra Intrepid Landcare has over 120 members, hundreds of followers on social media, and has inspired a number of similar initiatives. The group has worked with over 26 different conservation and Landcare groups, creating unique experiences which are fun, educational, and benefit the local environment. These projects are not your average Landcare projects though.

They have a twist of excitement and adventure and incorporate anything from white-water rafting, to exploring caves, swimming in local water holes, to hiking up mountains!

If you're reading this kit, you're obviously keen to have more young people involved in Landcare in your area, and that's great! We will give you useful tips and guidelines on how to structure your approach to engaging the next generation of Landcarers using inspiration from around the nation to get your creative juices flowing.

The reality is however, there is no secret one-size fits all solution to engaging the next generation into the Landcare movement -and that's the exciting part! You will find lots of inspiration in the following pages –successful stories, and examples of passionate young people wanting to make a difference. But the beauty of it is that you can take as much of this information as you need, and start something that works for you, as many communities across Australia have.



LET'S GET STARTED!

WHERE DO I START?

Whether you are an existing Landcare group or network looking to run projects that will engage young people, or a young person looking to start your very own Landcare adventure, there are a number of things you need to consider before you start.

1. **Identify a local leader**
2. **Know your community and demographic**
3. **Make connections**



1. IDENTIFY A LOCAL LEADER

The key to a successful youth Landcare group or project is having a young local leader or group of leaders driving it.

This needs to be someone dedicated and passionate about encouraging and inspiring other young people in the local community.

If you are looking to drive a youth initiative, but have not yet identified a local leader, you may consider approaching a variety of youth networks in your area to pitch the idea. Consider local youth centres, high school environment groups, university environment clubs and societies. Perhaps there is a young person already involved in Landcare locally you could ask, or other young people working on environmental projects who could potentially step up as young Landcare leaders.



WHO'S ALREADY DOING THIS?



The Gold Coast Landcare Leadership Retreat for Students was held in early 2015 with the aim of inspiring, informing and mobilising a small group of ten youth through a diversity of activities which promoted leadership skills, sparked the imagination and inspired the Landcare ethos.

The retreat was held in partnership with many organisations on the Gold Coast and invited a range of inspirational guest speakers. As a result of the retreat, 10 young locals have now designed an entire package of opportunities for young people to get involved in on the Gold Coast. From mass tree planting events, to school sustainability programs, scuba diving marine debris clean ups and beach clean-ups, the group now has a jam-packed calendar of opportunities for young people in the area.

In March 2015, Gold Coast Intrepid Landcare was formed. Inspired by Illawarra Intrepid Landcare, the group, is made up of a collective of diverse, young passionate Gold Coasters and is co-led by University students. The success of the initiative lies with the fact that it has been designed and led by young people.

-Naomi Edwards, Gold Coast
Young Landcare Ambassador

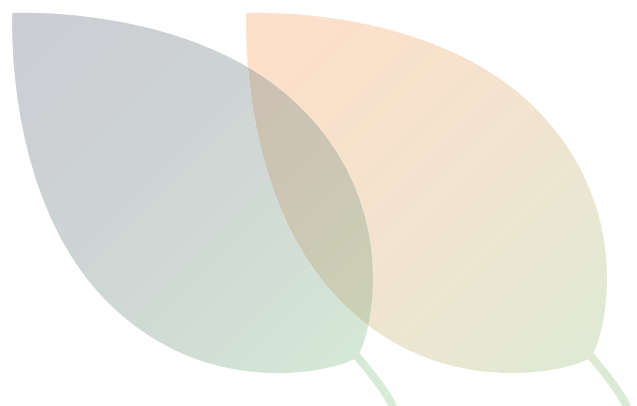
2. KNOW YOUR COMMUNITY AND DEMOGRAPHIC

Before you do anything you need to identify what your community has to offer in terms of potential young volunteers.

- What Landcare networks and projects already exist in your area that you can connect with?
- Who are the young people in your community? Are there students, farmers, disadvantaged youth, young professionals, young indigenous people, a mix of all of the above?

Once you decide on whom you want to work with, you need to discover what their interests are and what type of projects will be attractive to them.

- What are their interests and drivers?
They could be outdoor adventure, cultural awareness, environmental science, plants, bush tucker, wildlife, socialising with other young people, getting access to remote areas, photography, exploring, wanderlust, learning new skills in bush regeneration, hiking, camping, or indeed all of the above?
- What does your community and landscape have to offer? What exciting adventure activities can you tap into? What other networks or local knowledge can you work with to create exciting and engaging projects?
- Is there a local farmer or Landcare group running an exciting project you can help with? Can they offer a twist to the project like a free overnight camping experience and a BBQ or country meal, or a guided activity such as kayaking, hiking to a historical site only the locals know about, or an adventurous activity like caving?
- Think about ways you can merge conservation activities with other interests the group may have and what young people are passionate about in your community!



STILL NOT QUITE SURE? WHY NOT SURVEY THE COMMUNITY?

A great way to get a real sense of what your community of young people would potentially like to experience or where their interests lie, is to send out a survey or engage a focus group to capture this information. You can use free online survey tools or get a group of young people together and have a chat with them to see what makes them tick!



WHO'S ALREADY DOING THIS?



PASSION MASHIN'

The idea of “Passion Mashin” was first delivered as a workshop to volunteer Landcare and Bushcare groups in 2011. Les Robinson has since rolled out a number of workshops across the country to help inspire groups to re-think how they engage the community into their projects.

“Passion Mashin” takes the traditional model of what Landcare groups do and introduces the processes of “reinvention” and “disruption” so that groups redesign what the Landcare experience is for volunteers, making it is more relevant, interesting and appealing to new and existing members. Groups identify what other passions exist in the group and are then encouraged to think outside the box and package programs to suit the interests of the volunteers as well as benefit the local environment at the same time. Les highlights the need to go beyond improving marketing and communication of Landcare groups, and encourages people to think about what will keep volunteers coming back on another level.

“Passion Mashin” is a fantastic tool for existing networks and groups to use, and the concept can easily be included in the design and development of a new community youth group, starting with the question; ***“What are young people passionate about in your community?”***

3. MAKING CONNECTIONS

There are many groups working on conservation projects or activities which may appeal to young people in your area.

Regional and local Landcare facilitators are a great starting point to identify who to connect with in your community, and you can also search the National Landcare Directory on www.landcareonline.com.au to find groups working near you. Local councils often manage local volunteer groups, and could connect you with local projects as well.

Some other networks may include:

- Farmer groups
- Birder groups
- State National Parks organisations
- Landcare groups or networks
- Walking groups
- Bushcare groups
- Kayaking and water sports groups
- High schools
- Scouts or Girl Guides
- Greening Australia
- Conservation Volunteers Australia
- Student networks
- University clubs
- Abseiling and outdoor recreation groups
- Umbrella Landcare organisations who might be delivering exciting region-wide projects



WHO'S ALREADY DOING THIS?



The Illawarra Intrepid Landcare group has connected with many groups and organisations to deliver diverse projects for young people. At Illawarra Intrepid Landcare, working and collaborating with partner organisations is at the centre of what we do. We are all about collaboration and adding value to existing projects, but also tapping into the wealth of knowledge experienced volunteers can offer a younger generation. To date we have collaborated with over 26 different organisations to deliver diverse and interesting projects for young people. Organisations include other Landcare and Bushcare groups, local, and state government bodies, farmers, outdoor adventure groups, and other conservation organisations. One recent project we ran was an outback Dubbo farm experience, which was planned and delivered in collaboration with Little River Landcare and the Tourle family who run a sheep farm. The Tourles provided the expertise, our accommodation, information sharing about farm management and conservation efforts they had been involved in. Little River Landcare invited other group members along so we could meet other farmers in the region and hear about the way they manage their land and how Landcare works in that region. We learnt about sustainable land management, animal management, Landcare in rural areas, and our rich Australian heritage.

-Megan Rowlett, founder & coordinator
Illawarra Intrepid Landcare/Young Landcare Ambassador

TYPES OF PROJECTS YOU CAN DO

Now we are getting into the fun stuff - deciding on what types of projects you can actually run! The opportunities are endless and it all depends on what you want to do, who you are going to do it with, what resources you have and the demographic you want to work with. These are just some ideas, and may inspire you to come up with your own:

1. WORKING WITH UNIVERSITIES

You may be an established network looking to engage young people from the local university to work on your project, or a University looking to set up a Landcare group on campus. Either way, there are communities doing this across Australia with success!

READ MORE!

 [www.landcare.nsw.gov.au/
groups/uni-callaghan-landcare](http://www.landcare.nsw.gov.au/groups/uni-callaghan-landcare)

 Uni Callaghan Landcare Facebook group
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1407059179533138/>

WHO'S ALREADY DOING THIS?

Uni Callaghan Landcare, Newcastle NSW

Uni Callaghan Landcare was established in 2014 and is relatively new on the Landcare scene. The energetic group is based in Newcastle, NSW, and supported by the Tom Farrell institute (which supplies tools and resources to the students). Projects are all based on Callaghan campus, aiming to improve the local environment at the university. Occasionally the group attends and hosts events off campus. The group hosts a variety of activities including bushland education walks, workshops, and planting days throughout the year. Activities are tailored around university semesters, when students have the most free time.

“Uni Callaghan Landcare is a student based volunteer group that aims to improve our local environment on campus and provide a base for socialising and building networks with like minded people who share a passion for the environment. I love being part of the Landcare group. Not only do I gain valuable practical experience but I feel a great sense of achievement after being part of a successful event. I encourage everyone, no matter your background or experience, to get involved and be the change you wanna see in the environment!”

-Jess Styan, President Uni Callaghan Landcare



2. OUTDOOR ADVENTURE LANDCARE

If there are young people living in your area who already love to enjoy the great outdoors, chances are they'd relish the opportunity to volunteer some time to making sure the outdoors remain great! This is where outdoor adventure comes in. These projects provide a unique experience that offers a combination of enjoyment and reward. It allows people to make a difference, while having FUN!



READ MORE!

 www.illawarraintrepidlandcare.org.au

 @iilandcare

 facebook.com/illawarraylandcare

 @iilandcare

WHO'S ALREADY DOING THIS?

Illawarra Intrepid Landcare, Illawarra region NSW

Illawarra Intrepid Landcare is a team of young adventurous volunteers, aged late teens to thirties which ventures out once a month assisting different Landcare, Bushcare and other conservation groups in the Illawarra and across NSW.

The “no-pressure, come as you please” approach sees volunteers come and go with a database of over 120 members who contribute periodically to projects. Volunteers not only learn about environmental management issues, but also benefit from networking opportunities, build on social skills and develop a more sound understanding of environmental challenges the Illawarra region and Australia is facing. The group does anything from creek restoration, bush regeneration, tree planting, seed collection, weed removal, and fencing, to vegetation and weed mapping, and wildlife monitoring activities. The twist is that these activities are partnered with some sort of outdoor adventure activity such as hiking, swimming, kayaking, and exploring caves and often in places the volunteers would not normally get to visit! The group is even branching out and working on an annual international conservation project.

“It’s an exciting and dynamic way to connect young people to the environment and each other. Our model allows people to give something back without the long-term commitment that can often deter young volunteers. We cater to the adventurous nature of this generation and embrace their creativity and desire to learn about the Australian landscape, history and culture in the design of our projects.”

-Megan Rowlatt

3. YOUNG FARMERS

Farming sustainably is a huge part of Landcare, however it is more connected with the traditional type of Landcare group set-up. Thinking of different ways to engage the younger farmer involves them with Landcare without asking them to sign up to regular meetings in a format that may not interest them. Like all the other examples, it's about making Landcare work for them.



READ MORE!

 www.katanninglandcare.org.au

 facebook.com/landcare.katanning

 [@landcarekat](https://twitter.com/landcarekat)

WHO'S ALREADY DOING THIS?

Katanning Landcare – Kontiki Tour

Inspired by a lack of young farmers at field days and workshops, Katanning Landcare has delivered its very own regional Kontiki tour for six of the last ten years.

Engaging young farmers aged 18-35 working in agriculture in the Katanning area of Western Australia, the event covers a range of agribusiness, sustainable farming, and Landcare topics.

Young farmers hear from guest speakers, and get a holistic view of the agriculture industry on and off-farm. This includes: visits to local farms where they learn about a range of sustainable farming and Landcare topics from salinity control to weed management; tours of facilities such as the live export sheep preparation feed lot in Fremantle, and grain testing facilities; and guest speakers covering anything from mental health to business goal setting and off farm income.

The event doesn't hold back on the fun parts though! There are plenty of games, food and quizzes on and off the bus to get the young farmers well networked and having a great time.

“What's really great about the Kontiki Tour format is that it allows young farmers and Landcare to build a relationship with each other that has no need or expectation for commitment beyond the event. It means that the young people can have a positive experience with Landcare, then carry on with their lives until they're at a stage where they're ready to get involved more seriously – possibly many years later. It plants seeds for the future.”

- Ella Maesepp
Katanning Landcare


4. CLEANING UP THE COAST

Another example of combining a fun activity or hobby with lending a hand to care for the environment, by engaging young people who love our coastline, is speaking to a captive audience. Nobody wants to visit a dirty beach or see an unhealthy marine environment. By combining what they love doing with helping preserve the outdoor environments they enjoy, it's a win-win situation.



READ MORE!

 www.responsible.runners.org

 facebook.com/ResponsibleRunners

 [@RespRunners](https://twitter.com/RespRunners)

 [@responsible.runners](https://instagram.com/responsible.runners)

WHO'S ALREADY DOING THIS?

Responsible Runners, Australia-wide

Whether you run, walk, skip, or jump, Responsible Runners invites everyone from the community to join every week on beaches across Australia for a fit and fun 30 minute clean-up to protect our marine environment and meet cool new folks. Volunteers then stick around afterward to help sort out recyclables and collect data for Tangaroa Blue's Australian Marine Debris Initiative.

Since September 2012 Responsible Runners have run over 500 clean-ups removing over 1 million pieces of marine debris from our coastal environment, including 300,000 cigarette butts and tens of thousands of recyclable drink containers, plastic straws, bottle caps, cutlery, and heaps more! They are creating waves all the way to Parliament, urging state and federal leaders to pass strong legislation to support a drink container deposit scheme and eliminate plastic bags. Responsible Runners is now even working with local businesses to cut out waste before it begins, and volunteers can easily get involved with Responsible Cafes too!

People from all walks of life keen to see Australia's beaches cleaned up are welcome to join one of Responsible Runners existing locations or start their own as there are always beaches in need of attention with the rising tide of plastic and marine debris entering our oceans every year.



SO NOW WHAT?

DESIGNING AND PACKAGING A PROJECT

You can find a project design template as part of the resources supporting this kit. Once you have decided on the type of project you want to do, and who in the community you would like to work with, you are ready to sit down and design your first project to invite participants to.

The following list will help you move through what you need to consider when designing a project.

- Contact the organisation you would like to work with to brainstorm ideas together.
- Work on identifying a site which is suitable and safe. If you can, meet on site beforehand so you have an idea of what the site looks like and do a Risk Assessment to make sure the site is safe to work.
- Identify tasks that are easy enough for volunteers to handle.
- Make sure you have all the appropriate permissions in place to carry out your project from the land owner or manager.
- List what tools you will need and if you don't have them, see if you can borrow them.
- Decide on the time and date you will work – make sure this date and time doesn't conflict with any other local sporting or social events which may impact the numbers of people turning up. Will it be on one day or overnight?
- Decide on exact meeting point – decide on a location, street address, information of any tricks to getting there if signage is poor.
- List contact phone numbers for coordinators you are meeting up with in case you cannot find them on the day.

- Establish if there is access to amenities and drinking water.
- Find out what recreational activities are near-by that could be of interest to the volunteers.
- Decide what you will do in combination with the hard yakka, e.g. an outdoor adventure activity, a BBQ, game of football or cricket, swim at the local water hole or surf at the beach.
- If it is an overnight project, what equipment will the partner group be able to supply, and where will you sleep? What will your volunteers need to bring e.g. sleeping gear, tent?
- Find out what food will be available, what you will supply, and what your volunteers need to bring?
- Are there car-pooling options or other transport you can facilitate?
- What are the travel times to and from the event?

Make it clear to any project partners what information you want them to share with the volunteers on the day so they can prepare, i.e. will they handle the safety brief on the morning or will you? Will you get them to tell you all about the history, the work that's been done, or about any cultural heritage?

Have a timetable of activities listed and share this with any project partners and organising volunteers to make sure your event runs smoothly.



PROMOTING YOUR EVENT

Once you have established your project and designed the timetable for the day or weekend, you need to start thinking about how you will communicate and promote this to young people in your community. Are there groups you can visit and give a talk to prior to your event to encourage interest in the project, such as university clubs, outdoor adventure groups etc. You should also consider local media and of course social media.

As well as promoting the event or project to encourage people to come along, don't forget to take photos or video at the event, so you can show people how well it went afterwards! This will make great promotional material for your next event!

MEDIA RELATIONS

The Landcare group media kit is available for download from the group resources section of the Landcare Australia website. This kit will give you hints and tips about writing a media release, and other promotional ideas.

You should consider targeting:

- Local newspapers
- Local radio stations
- Local television networks
- Local community groups, clubs, school and societies that publish newsletters

You can investigate the most suitable radio programs and publications that are aimed at your target audience and base your promotional activities around these.



SOCIAL MEDIA

A social media for Landcare Groups kit is also available in the group resources section of the Landcare Australia website and will give you some useful hints and tips about setting up engaging social media profiles.



In order to set up a Facebook event, your group or network will need to set up a Facebook page or you can use another parent Landcare network to host this information in the interim.

Setting up a Facebook page is really easy and is a great way to showcase the work that your organisation is doing. It's free, and it's a great way to build an online audience.

You will need to keep it updated with content that will keep your followers interested and also be sure to answer queries or respond to comments in a timely fashion. This can be time consuming and will require a dedicated volunteer to take on this responsibility.

To help keep your page fresh, think about taking photographs or videos at group events and sharing them on your profile. You can also link to websites that share interesting news from your local area, or other organisations that may be of interest to your members.

Many Landcare groups have jumped on the social media bandwagon, with Facebook being the most popular for many networks.



Twitter is another, hugely popular social media tool that can be used by your group or network. Creating a Twitter profile for your group is a great way to connect with like-minded people who operate in a similar sector.

Twitter is a social networking service on which its users can post updates or 'tweets' of up to 140 characters. These updates can include photographs and links to other websites.

With access to smart phones, it's easy to post short and snappy updates about projects your group or network are working on and keep up to date with what other similar groups are doing. Follow people who are involved in your sector and they will follow you back to keep up to date with your activities.

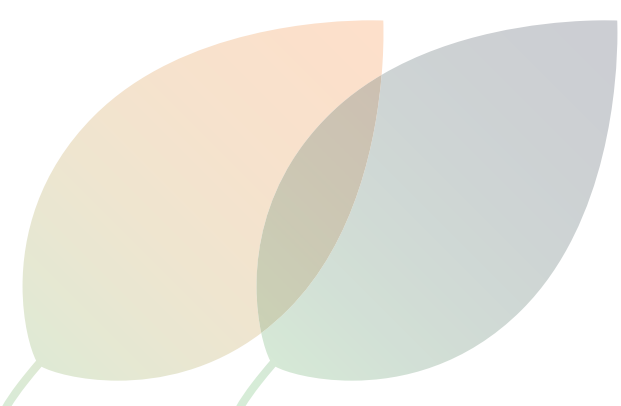
You can search hashtags and draw attention to your activities using popular hashtags too! Don't forget to keep an eye on #landcare and #younglandcare in particular!





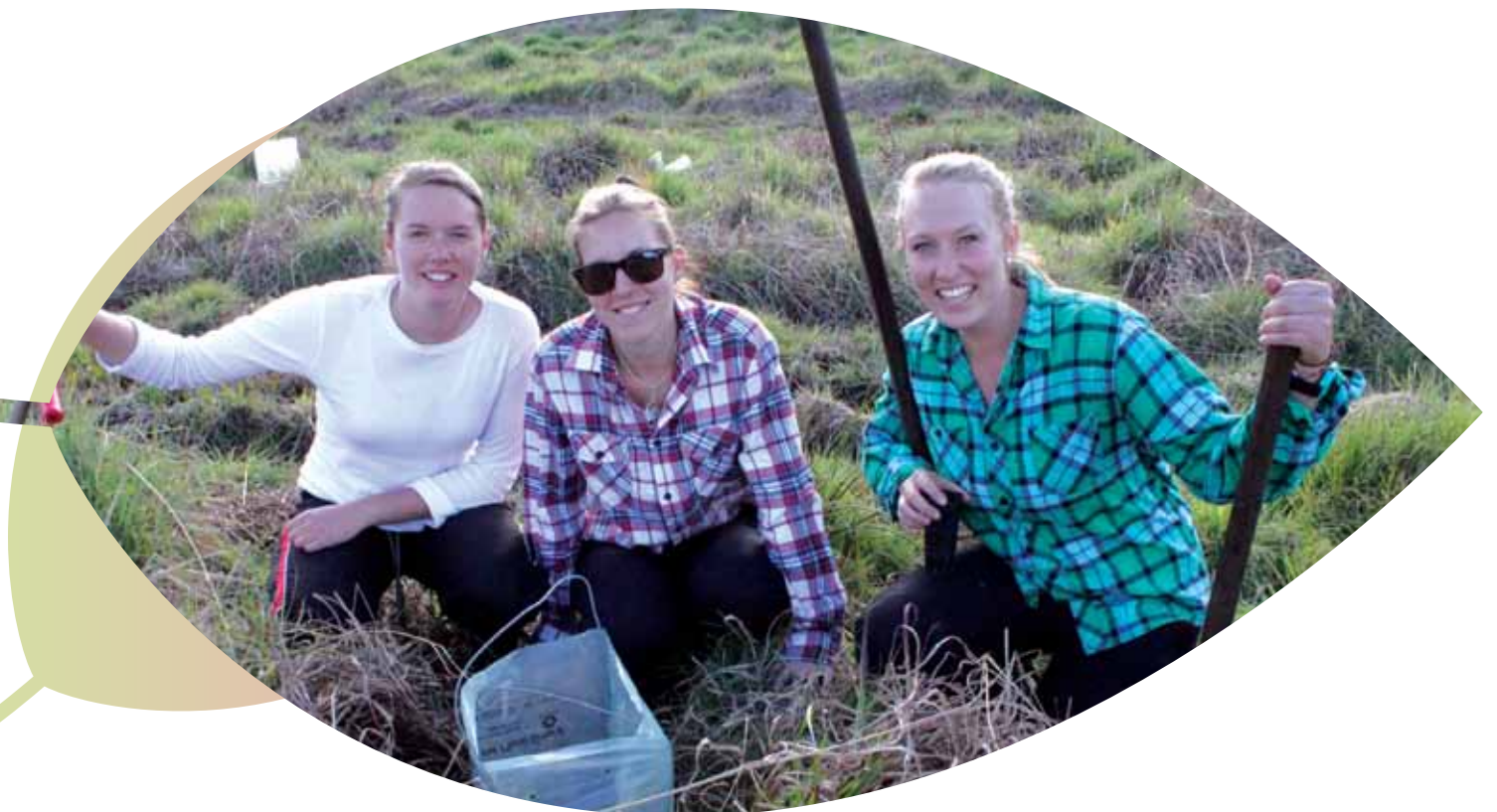
Instagram is a photo-sharing platform, hugely popular with young people and becoming increasingly popular amongst the Landcare network, with a number of groups now using the social media platform as a visual story telling tool to attract followers from all over the world and in their local community.

With the use of popular and individually created hashtags, such as **#landcare** and **#younglandcare**, and by liking, commenting on and following other account users, groups can attract like-minded people and high profile networks to their accounts to learn more about what they are capturing in the field, and the types of projects volunteers can get involved in.



DON'T FORGET THE IMPORTANT STUFF

Volunteer safety and record keeping is a serious business. You need to make sure you have all the processes in place to ensure a safe work environment for your volunteers. There are some great resources available online, but your nearest umbrella Landcare group or state Landcare body should be able to advise you about the most up to date information regarding volunteer safety in Landcare in your region.





KEEPING TRACK OF NUMBERS

Make sure you are clear on how you want people to register whether this is through a Facebook event or by RSVP to an email address. You need to keep track of numbers attending your event to make sure you can cater for them. You also want to be able to communicate with registered volunteers if the event needs to be postponed due to weather or for some other reason.

Provide a phone number for volunteers to contact you in-case they are running late, need directions or need to let you know they cannot make it.

INSURANCE

Insurance is delivered differently in districts all over Australia, and it all depends on the structures that are in place to support groups.

Some groups are covered by their umbrella Landcare group. Other groups become incorporated and get their own insurance which in some areas is covered by membership fees with state bodies.

Some council areas have support programs which offer insurance for volunteers working on public land, or you may need to raise funds to insure your own group if these structures are not in place.

Consult your umbrella Landcare group, State Landcare body or Landcare Facilitator for your region for information about your options for insurance.

VOLUNTEER REGISTRATION FORMS

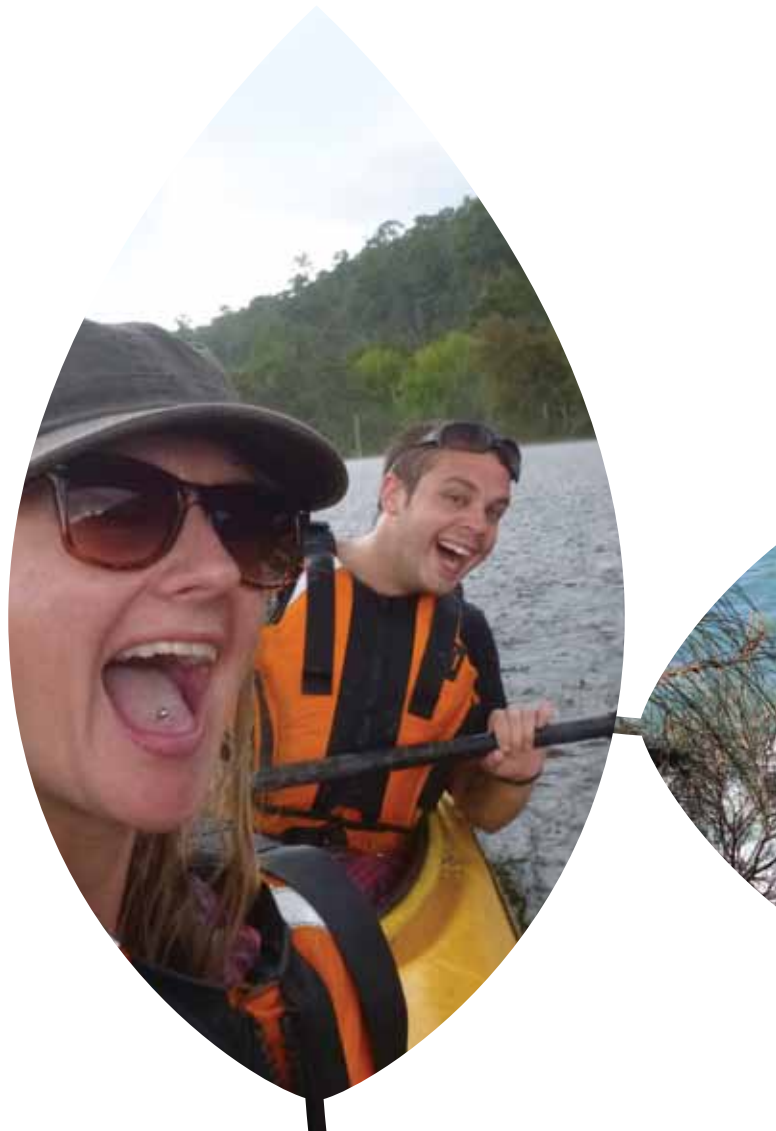
Registration forms, while not compulsory, are used by many networks to collect information about volunteers to ensure their health and well-being is considered to the highest standard.

The registration forms can also act as a permission for your group to use any photos/video or audio captured on the day unless otherwise discussed with the volunteer.

Registration forms allow volunteers to disclose any injuries or issues you may need to consider when delegating duties out in the field, i.e. if someone is allergic to bees or has an EpiPen that needs to be accessed in an emergency, this is important information to have.

You can also capture emergency contact information so relatives and friends can be contacted in the event of an emergency.

Any registration forms need to be stored in a safe and secure place to protect the privacy of registered volunteers.



SITE SAFETY INDUCTIONS AND RISK MANAGEMENT

Before you do any work on site with your volunteers, it is important that you carry out a site safety induction to inform the volunteers about the risks on that site.

You can go over this with your project partner or the landowner prior to the event taking place.

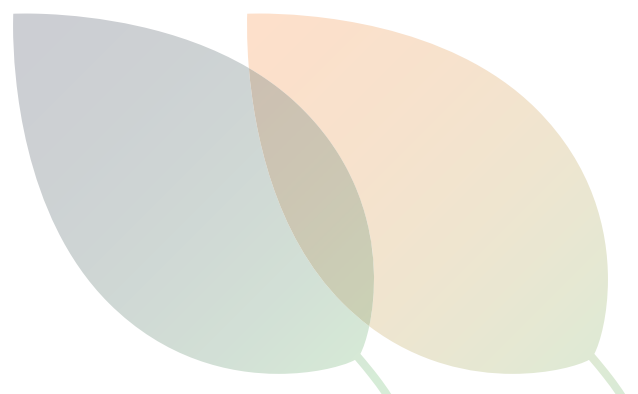
You will need to declare all risks, make sure volunteers are aware of how to minimise harm to themselves and others while working, what the hazards are and how to avoid them, and any protocol that needs to take place around this e.g. disposing of sharps, what to do if there is a snake in the area etc.

Make sure all volunteers are aware of where the first aid kit is, where they can access emergency phone numbers for people if they are needed, and what information to give emergency services if needed.

FIRST AID

It is important that at least one person on the project is First Aid qualified and that you have a first aid kit on site.

If you have no mobile reception, make sure you work out a way that you will communicate to emergency services and make sure you have the appropriate devices to do this.



YOU'RE READY TO GO!

So now you know what type of project you would like to run, how to get it up and running in your community, how to engage your target audience, and the important aspects to consider before you get started.

The resources accompanying this kit will help get you prepared.

We'd also love to hear all about your project and to share your story!





Be sure to keep in touch by liking Landcare Australia on Facebook and following us on Twitter and Instagram. Use the #landcare and #younglandcare hashtags when promoting your project so the broader landcare community can see what you've been up to, and we can share your stories with our followers!

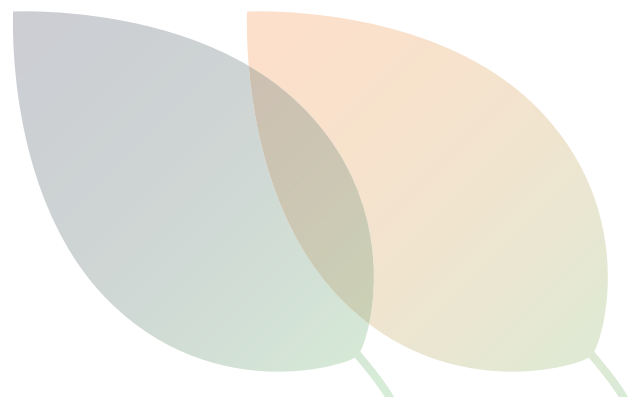
 www.facebook.com/landcareaustralia

 www.twitter.com/landcareaustr

 www.instagram.com/landcareaustralia

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www.landcareonline.com.au

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