

MEDIA RELEASE

Friday 8 April, 2016



Give Happy, Live Happy: National Volunteering Conference provides solutions for the future of volunteering and society

Today was the conclusion to the 2016 National Volunteering Conference. Our final keynote for the Conference Associate Professor Thomas Nielsen, University of Canberra left delegates with an understanding of why their role as a volunteer manager is key to creating meaningful happiness in peoples' lives. Thomas advocates that giving to others, or volunteering, is key to solving the most pressing problems of our times.

As the voice behind the 2016 National Volunteer Week campaign Dr Nielsen reminds us all that volunteering is: a healthy lifestyle choice; a true community builder; one of the strongest predictors we have of increasing our health and happiness; and that volunteer involving organisations are the vehicle for people to volunteer, give and have a meaningful activity in their lives.

"Engaging in generous and altruistic behaviour makes you want to be more generous and altruistic. Volunteering, health, and happiness together create a positive, reinforcing loop: the more you volunteer, the healthier you become, the more you want to volunteer. Volunteering is a true community builder in that sense," Dr Nielsen said.

Over 700 delegates met in Canberra, 6-8 April, at the principal Australian forum for not-for profit leaders, volunteer managers and policy contributors to come together to advance volunteering. Robyn Moore set the scene with an inspiring opening keynote that made delegates both laugh and cry.

Brett Williamson OAM, CEO Volunteering Australia said the 2016 National Volunteering Conference was a very successful event leaving the 700 delegates with the tools to build the future of volunteering through knowledge, networks, leadership and innovation. "Volunteering Australia would like to thank Volunteering ACT for hosting the event, all the Conference supporters including Principal Conference Partner Beyond Bank Australia and of course all the delegates for without them we couldn't hold such a great event," Mr Williamson said.

Over the three-day event delegates gained new skills, learned about innovative programs, and connected with subject experts in an engaging and relevant program. Keynote speakers included Kylee Bates, John Brogden, Brenden Nielson AO and Tobi Johnson, USA.

The panel sessions were very popular tackling the topics 'Why volunteers volunteer?' and 'International forces shaping the volunteering sector in Australia'. Young Australians of the Year 2016, Nic Marchesi and Lucas Patchett were also in attendance and held a packed out Networking Lounge. Another highlight was 'The Great Debate: Which generation makes the best volunteer?' facilitated by the very entertaining Jean Kittson with Generation X coming out on top.

In his closing speech Mr Williamson announced the 2018 National Volunteering Conference will be held in Sydney.

MEDIA ENQUIRIES:

Kylie Hughes, Volunteering Australia
E: kylie@volunteeringaustralia.org
P: 02 6251 4060
M: 0402 497 138

