

Attract new museum audiences

The following resource is drawn from the workshop titled Community, Collaboration, Change presented by Rebecca Jones as part of the 2015 Standards Program. The workshop focused on attracting new visitors and recruiting museum volunteers. While this resource addresses audience development, it is important to note that the same processes can be used to attract new volunteers.

Step 1: Identify which groups exist in your community

Think widely. Be inclusive.

Some examples are as follows:

- Embroiderers, knitters and other craft groups
- Ethnic groups
- Men's sheds
- Aboriginal groups
- Charities
- Friends of art gallery
- Environment groups such as the local Bushcare or Landcare group
- Local artists and other craftspeople
- Sporting groups
- Recreational groups such as cycling groups
- School and preschool groups

Step 2: Identify which of those visit your museum and which don't

Step 3: Create a shortlist

Starting with a couple of groups with which you would like to build stronger relationships with, develop a list of ideas for events, activities and exhibitions, which could be used to build those relationships.

Examples are as follows:

- Work with patchwork or embroidery groups to recreate significant and fragile textiles.
- Host an event encouraging people interested in sport to bring in their trophies, ribbons and other memorabilia for a short-term display.
- Work with a photography club to recreate historical photographs (e.g. then and now shots) for exhibition in the museum.
- Work with a slow food group to demonstrate how food was cooked traditionally.
- Invite a local cycling group to visit the museum for morning tea during their morning ride.
- Invite the local preschool and provide a dress-up box and a 'touch me' set of artefacts.
- Ask a local ethnic group to translate labels into the community language, and invite them to a small event to thank them.

Step 4: Invite the group to work with you on a nominated project

Start small and build on the interest shown. Respect the contribution and endeavour to make the experience enjoyable with a social element. Be inclusive.

Overall aim

Start small and build on the interest shown. Respect the contribution and endeavour to make the experience enjoyable with a social element. Be inclusive.

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About Rebecca Jones

Rebecca has been working with community museums and volunteers since 1998 including 6 years as Museum Officer with Museums and Galleries NSW where she conducted a range of projects including presenting workshops, operating the VIM and Leg Ups grants programs, implementing the Standards Program and the Regional Museum Advisors Program and curating the coordinating the travelling exhibition, Milkshakes, Sundaes and Café Culture.

She has a deep passion and thorough understanding of volunteer run community museums and is currently Museum Advisor in the South East Region of NSW working within Bega Valley Shire Council. If you would like Rebecca to present her workshop at your museum, her contact details are available on our Consultant's Register.

Some of our VIM grants can fund workshops at your museum, or your attendance at one, so be proactive and talk to us today.