

MEDIA RELEASE

Australians Volunteer Nearly 14 Million Hours Each Month To Help Animals In Need

CANA celebrates the heart and dedication of animal welfare volunteers this National Volunteer Week 2025

AUSTRALIA: May 2025: As National Volunteer Week (May 19 - 25) approaches, national animal welfare charity [Companion Animal Network Australia \(CANA or Australia CAN\)](#) celebrates the volunteers who are the lifeblood of its member agencies across the country and highlights the positive impact volunteering has on animals, communities and the volunteers themselves.

More than [6 million people](#) volunteer through organisations across the nation, with [18.3%](#) volunteering for animal welfare causes, according to Volunteering Australia. Australians are also estimated to contribute over 165 million* volunteer hours each year to support animal shelters.

“National Volunteer Week is a perfect time to reflect on the incredible contributions volunteers make, not just to animals in need, but also to the wider community and themselves,” says Trish Ennis, CEO of CANA.

“From walking dogs and fostering vulnerable pets to raising funds and providing vital behind-the-scenes support, volunteers from all walks of life play a crucial role in improving the lives of rescue animals and helping them find loving homes.”

CANA members provide rescue, shelter, re-homing, fostering, health care and enrichment services to more than 50,000 animals every year, and include the Animal Welfare League QLD, Dogs’ Homes of Tasmania, Sydney Dogs and Cats Home, Saving Animals From Euthanasia Inc (WA) and Lort Smith Animal Hospital in Victoria.

Beyond the vital support volunteers provide to animal shelters, the benefits of giving back reach deeply into the lives of the volunteers themselves.



Credit AWL Queensland

According to [Volunteering Australia](#), volunteering fosters social interaction, boosts mood and helps reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety. Giving back also strengthens relationships, encourages learning and deepens a sense of belonging within the community.

“We see older Australians, particularly retirees, thrive through the purpose and connection that volunteering in animal welfare provides,” says Ms Ennis. “Their kindness helps transform the lives of animals, and in return, many volunteers tell us the animals transform *their* lives, too.”

DO YOU WANT TO BE A VOLUNTEER?

If you've ever considered volunteering, now is the perfect time to get involved! Visit [CANA's website](#) to find an animal welfare member near you and learn how you can help.

"Not everyone can give time, but they may wish to support volunteers through donations to fund resources, training or supplies. You can make a tax-deductible gift to the [Australia CAN Foundation](#) where funds are shared among our member organisations across the country. You can also fundraise to support CANA or one of our members in your state," says Ms Ennis.

To learn more or get involved, visit <https://australiacan.org.au>

END

MEDIA CONTACT

Caroline Zambrano

PR Manager, Companion Animal Network Australia

0403 550 730 | media@australiacan.org.au or petjourn@gmail.com

IMAGES: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1a4xwuCrLIWCANRv_6CB7ePYPdvsUYU-P?usp=sharing

* **166.1 million volunteer hours per year in animal welfare.** This figure is based on national volunteering data showing that 18.3% of Australia's 6 million volunteers support animal welfare causes. Volunteers estimate they contribute an average of 151 hours each year—adding up to around 13.8 million hours every month spent helping animals in need.

Editor's notes:

- National Volunteer Week 2025 theme is Connecting Communities.
www.volunteeringaustralia.org/get-involved/nvw/
- 18.3% of volunteers in Australia work for animal welfare organisations.
www.volunteeringaustralia.org/wp-content/uploads/Volunteering-in-Australia-Volunteering-Experiences-by-Sector-May-2023.pdf
- Volunteers aged 18 – 29 are more likely to volunteer for animal welfare organisations than average, accounting for 37.8% of volunteers in this sector.
www.volunteeringaustralia.org/wp-content/uploads/Youth-Volunteering-Factsheet-2023.pdf
- Volunteers aged 55 – 69 do account for approximately 24.9% of the volunteering population, and those aged 70 and over account for around 28%.
www.volunteeringaustralia.org/wp-content/uploads/Volunteering-Australia-Key-Volunteering-Statistics-2024-Update.pdf
<https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/australias-welfare/volunteers>
- Volunteers estimate that they spent 151 hours volunteering on average
<https://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/wp-content/uploads/Ongoing-trends-in-volunteering-in-Australia-November-2023.pdf>

About Companion Animal Network Australia

Companion Animal Network Australia (Australia CAN or CANA) is a registered charity representing the companion animal welfare work of our member organisations across the country: Animal Welfare League QLD, Lort Smith (VIC), Sydney Dogs and Cats Home, Dogs' Homes of Tasmania and Saving Animals From Euthanasia Inc (WA). Our members provide rescue, shelter, re-homing, fostering, health care and enrichment services to more than 50,000 animals every year.

Through national campaigns, partnerships and initiatives, we advocate for the human-animal bond and promote responsible pet ownership. We use our national voice to lobby for the humane treatment of all companion animals and we rally support for our member programs that deliver high welfare standards. Australia CAN national campaigns include Pets in Aged Care, Rent with Pets and Pets in Business. To discover more, visit www.australiacan.org.au