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Fishability New VOLUNTEER Enquiry Information Guide

Welcome to Fishability

This information guide has been designed to provide you with the information you need to when you first contact Fishability to discuss our volunteering opportunities.

If you have any further questions please contact the Development Officer at Fishability who will be more than happy to assist you.

We hope that you find this guide useful and decide to become a volunteer with our organisation.

Organisation

Overview

Fishability is a not for profit organisation that delivers programs and activities designed to increase the active involvement of people with disabilities into recreational fishing. The organisation was incorporated in 2003. Fishability has since provided recreational fishing opportunities to many members of our community living with disabilities.

Background and History

Fishing is one of the most popular recreational activities in Australia. Every year, over 700,000 Western Australians bait up and cast a line. While so many fishers take for granted the opportunity of heading to the water and casting a line, in 2000 it became evident to a group of people that there were barriers hindering people with disabilities from being able to do the same.

That awareness led the Department of Fisheries Volunteer Fishing Liaison Officer, Mr. Neville Thomas to the development of a program to provide opportunities for people with disabilities to get outdoors and enjoy the excitement and reward of fishing. As the idea caught on the "Fishing for all abilities" concept took form and developed into **Fishability**.

The continued undertaking of the Fishability program is only possible through funding and support by the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, Act Belong Commit and Recfishwest, and by the tireless work of volunteers on the ground.

To view our promotional video with the history, follow the link to; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ATDTLgRTgEA>

Organisational Structure



About

Mission

To enhance the well-being and self-esteem of Western Australians living with disabilities by facilitating quality recreational fishing opportunities and experiences.

Values

Inclusion: We are committed to building fishing communities that are welcoming and inclusive.

Accessibility: We want to create fishing communities where all people are able to access opportunities for development and fulfilment.

Innovation: Actively seeking new ways to deliver effective services to participants and provide support for support workers and volunteers.

Respect: We value practices that uphold the individuality and personal and community choice of participants, volunteers and staff. We appreciate difference as an integral part of our society and value the contribution of all individuals. We support the rights of individuals to make choices and be empowered to make decisions about their own lives.

Introduction to Volunteering

Definition

Volunteering (as defined by Volunteer Australia) is *“time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain”*.

Volunteers have been integral to the Fishability program since its inception. Traditionally Fishability has attracted people with a range of backgrounds and skills, a shared enjoyment of recreational fishing and a desire to help community members with disabilities have the opportunity of participating in recreational fishing.

Our volunteer program brings substantial benefit to:

- Our volunteers by providing them with an opportunity to be involved in the planning and delivering of activities;
- Our organisation by bringing skills and knowledge into the organisation to assist with developing and delivering programs;
- Our participants by providing skilled and trained advisors that assist them to enjoy an independent fishing experience.

Other broader benefits for the volunteer may include:

- The satisfaction gained from helping others;
- Social contact;
- Using or developing skills/experience;
- Staying active.

The contribution of volunteers remains vital to Fishability's operations. Fishability recognises and values the reciprocal nature of the relationship between organisation and individual and is committed to providing a volunteer program which both:

- Supports Fishability's work;
- Meets the expectations and needs of individual volunteers.

Volunteer Rights

As a Fishability volunteer you have the right to:

- Work in a healthy and safe environment;
- Be interviewed and engaged in accordance with equal opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation;
- Be adequately covered by insurance;
- Be given accurate and truthful information about the organisation for which you are working;
- Be provided with a clearly defined role, training opportunities, and appropriate levels of support and management;
- Be reimbursed for approved out of pocket expenses;
- Be given a copy of the Fishability Volunteer Manual and any other documentation that affects your work;
- Not fill a position previously held by a paid worker.

Volunteer Responsibilities

Fishability also asks that its volunteers agree to:

- Participate in a cooperative team effort to achieve the goals of the organisation;
- Be reliable and commit, where possible, to the negotiated commitment of day/s and time so programs can be planned accordingly;
- Keep Fishability informed of changes of address and phone number;
- Be committed to high quality service, and willing to accept positive and negative feedback related to performance;
- Show enthusiasm, loyalty and belief in the work of the organisation;
- Respect the confidentiality of the organisation and participants;
- Agree to work in a safe and healthy way and not jeopardise the health and safety of others;
- Give advance notice when changing circumstances will affect their capacity to volunteer;
- Be non-judgmental and respect the dignity of others;
- Actively support other team members;
- Speak out about concerns that might affect their work relationships or quality of service;
- Abide by any Fishability policies regarding their volunteer activities.

Recruitment

Policy

Our recruitment policy's aim is to fulfil the needs of our organisation whilst meeting the expectations of our volunteers:

- Fishability applies the principles of equal opportunity to its recruitment processes and will not withhold a volunteer job on the basis of race, age gender or religion;
- All prospective volunteers are to make contact with the Development Officer, and attend one jetty and/or one boat activity (if applicable), prior to placement;
- Prospective volunteers are appointed on approval of compliance documentation. Commitment to the mission, values, policies and procedures of Fishability will be looked upon favourably as will the ability to work as part of a team and acceptance of the role and responsibilities;
- Due to the resources required for training it is preferable that prospective volunteers can commit to Fishability at least one day per month for a period of 12 months or more.

Initial Contact

On contacting Fishability, prospective volunteers will be sent the Volunteering with Fishability's information brochure. This brochure contains information about Fishability's activities, volunteering possibilities and how an interested volunteer can register.

Registration

Once a volunteer is familiar with the Fishability program and the role of a volunteer, the registration process can proceed.

- Initially, a prospective volunteer must attend one jetty and/or boat activity (if applicable), to observe the role of a volunteer during a fishing activity. This is also an opportunity for the prospective volunteer to ask any questions about the program and/or volunteer role, discuss the time availability of the volunteer and commitment expected from Fishability, and discuss any special needs or limitations Fishability ought to be aware of. After feedback from the Program Coordinator, the formal application process can begin.
- An application form and Police Clearance form is to be completed;
- A Working with Children Check is to be completed;
- Formal introduction to the program is then made, and arrangements for a uniform will be undertaken.

Clearances

All Fishability volunteers will be required to obtain a Western Australian Police clearance and Working with Children Check.

A *Western Australian Police Clearance* is completed by Fishability staff at no cost to the volunteer.

A *Working with Children Check* requires the following steps to be taken:

- The Development Coordinator will fill out sections of the required 'Working with Children Form';
- The prospective volunteer will complete the remaining sections;
- The completed form is to be processed (with required documentation and payment of \$11) at an Australia Post post office;
- Receipt of payment must be forwarded to Fishability's Development Officer as proof of lodgement which enables the volunteer to commence in their role at Fishability;
- When the clearance is authorised, the volunteer will receive the approved card and accompanying form in the mail. (The Fishability Development Officer will also receive a copy of this authorisation via mail).

Induction

Once a volunteer has been appointed, they will receive the following:

- Fishability Volunteer Manual and Appendix 1 (Policies and Procedures);
- Fishability Induction PowerPoint Presentation;

Volunteer Position Description

Title: Fishability Volunteer

Purpose: To assist in providing independent and enjoyable fishing experiences for people with disabilities.

Responsible to: Program Coordinator

Duties

- Give practical assistance to participants in fishing method, skills and use of Fishability fishing equipment;
- Be aware of current rules and regulations regarding recreational fishing and promote ethical fishing practices;
- Develop relationships with participants to enhance their self-esteem, life skills, create awareness of the environment and have a quality outdoor experience;
- NB: Fishability participants are encouraged to be accompanied by their own support worker who will attend to their personal needs. Fishability volunteers are not expected to perform such duties.

Time Frame

- Volunteers are encouraged to commit to Fishability for an initial term of 12 months.
- Volunteers are expected to commit to at least one activity per month.

Place of Work

Activities are carried out at various metropolitan Perth and regional WA locations. In regards to Perth and Mandurah volunteers, although consideration will be given to where people live, work will not be limited to one specific location.

Skills/Qualifications

- Ability to work well as part of a team;
- Physically fit and able to walk short distances;
- Willing to undertake a Police Clearance;
- Willing to undertake a Working with Children Check.

Personal Attributes

- Empathetic;
- Patient;
- Well-developed interpersonal skills.

Training Offered (not-compulsory)

- On-the-job training and support;
- Specialised training courses as required and available (for example, Recreational Skippers ticket);
- Annual local specialised training offered (e.g. First Aid);
- Annual state Volunteer Conference incorporating training elements.

Volunteers are encouraged to identify training opportunities and discuss with their Program Coordinator or Fishability staff.

Insurance

Volunteers are covered by Voluntary Workers Personal Accident and Public Liability Insurance when undertaking official Fishability activities.

Reimbursement

Volunteers are not paid or otherwise remunerated for their activities unless prior approval by the Executive Officer is made on purchases relevant to the organisation.

Other Benefits

- To have the opportunity to actively participate in advocating for the provision of greater access to fishing areas by people with disabilities;
- To be actively involved in promoting recreational fishing as a pastime which can be enjoyed by the whole community;
- To develop relationships in a social network of like-minded individuals;
- The reward of participating in a mentorship-type role and making a difference to individuals lives.

Other Relevant Information

Volunteers will be issued with a uniform and name badge, which must be worn when carrying out all Fishability activities.

The Fishability Experience

Fishing Activities

Fishing activities are designed to provide a quality hands-on fishing experience providing as much independent participation by participants as possible. All fishing experiences should be enjoyable. Participants also need to be informed of ethical fishing practices and catch care methods to ensure they are responsible recreational fishers.

The Fishability program offers several fishing experiences:

- Jetty fishing around Perth metropolitan platforms;
- Boat fishing from the 'Nev Thomas' in Perth;
- Jetty fishing around Mandurah platforms;
- Boat fishing from the 'Mistral' in Mandurah (an arrangement with the Mandurah Offshore Fishing and Sailing Club);
- Jetty fishing around Albany platforms;
- Boat fishing from the 'Responder' in Albany (an arrangement with the Royal Princess Sailing Club);
- Jetty fishing around Geraldton platforms;
- Jetty fishing around Busselton platforms;
- Schools program at jetties around Perth and regional locations.

Each activity involves the following steps to ensure a memorable and safe fishing experience:

Pre-Activity

- Set up rods and reels and prepare bait. Planning and preparation will assist in the activity running smoothly.

Greeting and Introduction

- Get to know participants and carers;
- Establish what equipment is required by each participant if not already known.

Fishing Activity

- Distribute rods, reels and bait;
- Try to establish what extra needs each participant may have and how you can help provide independence;
- During this time you may need to assist bait-up and cast. You may need to identify fish and remove fish caught. Whether keeping or releasing, all catch care procedures should be followed;
- This is also the time to make conversation. Fostering a friendly, relaxed atmosphere amongst volunteers and participants is key.

Conclusion / Post-Activity

- Accept feedback, positive and negative;
- Collect equipment, and unused bait and deal with it appropriately.

Remember that each participant is an individual and will have different needs; remain flexible in your approach and level of assistance provided.

Uniforms

Volunteers are provided with a uniform when they commence working with Fishability.

This includes:

- A microfibre broad brimmed hat or trucker cap;
- Quick dry long-sleeved polo shirt or cotton long-sleeved shirt;
- Polar fleece zip up or outerwear jacket;

This uniform must be worn during all Fishability activities, as Fishability operates outdoors and adheres to a Sun Smart Policy. This is available on the Fishability website. See [here](#).

Social Gatherings

Several social functions form part of the Fishability experience. This promotes networking and friendships amongst volunteers and Program Coordinators. These include:

- Awards night. This is a formal event held annually in conjunction with the Volunteer Conference to recognise numerous volunteers valued contribution to the Fishability program;
- Occasional lunches, morning teas and coffee catch ups;
- One to two social events per year organised by Fishability staff.

Informal get-togethers are encouraged amongst volunteers in your local region to develop a sense of comradery and promote the Fishability culture of inclusiveness and friendship.

The Next Step

Once you are familiar with the role and responsibilities required of the volunteer, please contact the Fishability Development Officer to begin the formal application process.

We look forward to having you on board!