

MEDIA RELEASE

NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

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Attention: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors



University launches survey of rural Tasmanian volunteers

Researchers at the University of Tasmania need information on the lives and motivations of rural Tasmanian volunteers.

Launching a State-wide survey of volunteer groups and private businesses, Dr Christine Stirling, from the University Department of Rural Health, said the research would help volunteer groups, organisations, and politicians to plan for the future.

“By the end of the project we want to be able to let people know the full extent of volunteering in rural Tasmania, because we believe it is partly hidden from view,” she said.

“For example, we are finding that rural Tasmanians bring many more skills to their volunteering work than they realise.

“They start community enterprises, work to solve social problems and organise around sport and hobbies, and yet because they may not have formal training, they often don’t know how skilled they are.”

The University Department of Rural Health, in collaboration with Volunteering Tasmania, is conducting a two-stage research project to look at the sustainability of volunteering in rural areas.

The second stage of the research is the State-wide survey of small volunteer groups and private businesses.

The researchers are calling for volunteering groups or programs in rural Tasmania to take part in the survey.

“The more people who fill in and return the survey to us, the more information we will have about the extent and viability of volunteering in Tasmania,” Dr Stirling said.

To date, the team has interviewed volunteers in areas such as emergency services, health services, sports, arts and crafts.

Other key areas of interest include understanding how the ageing of our population is affecting volunteering, and whether businesses and corporations in Tasmania support volunteering.

Any volunteer group or program which has not received a survey and would like to participate is urged to contact: Suzanne Crowley on (03) 6226 7374 or email:

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