

Roles and Responsibilities of Voluntary Committees

As a committee member with Landcare, you play a critical role in fostering sustainable environmental practices, supporting your local Landcare groups, and contributing to the resilience of our communities. This fact sheet provides an overview of your key roles and responsibilities to guide you in your volunteer position. It aligns with the principles of good governance, accountability, and community empowerment, ensuring Landcare's continued success and relevance into the future

Understanding Your Role

As a member of a voluntary Landcare committee or board, your role is to:

- **Set the Vision and Direction:** Shape and support the strategic goals of your group, ensuring alignment with broader Landcare objectives.
- **Govern Effectively:** Ensure transparency, accountability, and compliance with legal, financial, and operational standards.
- **Foster Engagement:** Act as a bridge between the committee, volunteers, and stakeholders, nurturing a collaborative and inclusive culture.
- **Champion Sustainability:** Advocate for practices that restore and protect natural landscapes and promote sustainable agriculture practices while empowering local communities.



Key Responsibilities

Leadership and Decision-Making

- Participate in meetings, ensuring discussions remain focused on the group's priorities.
- Make informed decisions in the interest of the group, balancing immediate needs with long-term goals.
- Monitor progress against strategic plans and annual work programs.

Financial Stewardship

- Approve and oversee budgets, ensuring responsible allocation of resources.
- Maintain financial records and submit reports in line with regulatory requirements.
- Seek and secure funding through grants, sponsorships, and community contributions.

Compliance and Risk Management

- Adhere to all legal and ethical obligations, including Work Health and Safety (WHS) and child safety.
- Identify and mitigate risks to the organisation, volunteers, and the environment.
- Ensure policies and procedures are up-to-date and actively implemented.

Community and Stakeholder Engagement

- Represent your group at public events, fostering partnerships with local government, businesses, and other community organisations.
- Communicate openly with members, volunteers, and stakeholders about projects, goals, and challenges.
- Promote Landcare's mission through advocacy, storytelling, and local media.

Support for Volunteers and Staff

- Provide guidance, mentorship, and recognition for the efforts of volunteers.
- Ensure a safe and inclusive environment for all participants.
- Support paid staff by defining clear roles and maintaining strong working relationships.



Who is responsible for what?

All Landcare organisations should have an executive or management committee, consisting of at least three members aged 18 or over.

The executive committee is responsible for managing the financial affairs of the organisation and ensuring it operates in accordance with its constitution and in line with the objectives and purposes of the Landcare organisation. The executive is also responsible for ensuring that the operation of the group meets any legal requirements placed upon it, such as under the Associations Incorporation Act 2009 (the Act). The committee may employ staff to assist it meet its obligations and to help carry out its business.

President or Chair

The Chair has the role of ensuring the overall operation of the executive and of the group. They chair (facilitate) the meetings, submit an annual report and are called upon to be a 'public face and spokesperson' for the organisation. The Chair is, most commonly, also the point of reporting for staff, and hence needs to be aware of the responsibilities of employers.

Vice Chair / President

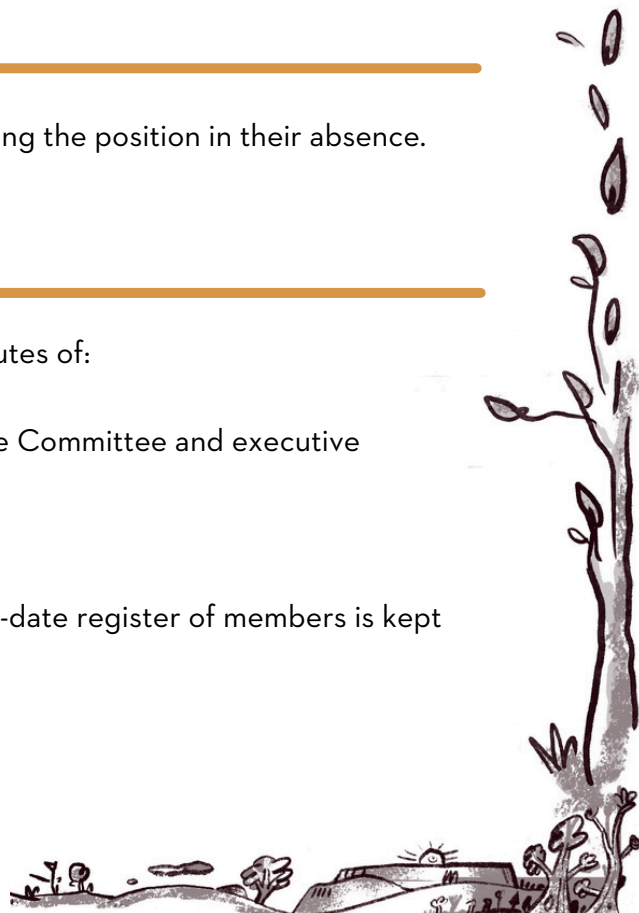
The Vice Chair has the role of supporting the Chair and filling the position in their absence.

Secretary

The Secretary is responsible for ensuring the taking of minutes of:

- All appointments of officer bearers and members of the Committee and executive
- Names of members present at meetings
- All proceedings of meetings.

The Secretary is also responsible for ensuring that an up-to-date register of members is kept and that all governance requirements are met.



Treasurer

The Treasurer has a custodian role over all financial aspects of the organisation and it is their responsibility to ensure they manage the finances and communicate financial matters to committee members in a way in which everyone can understand.

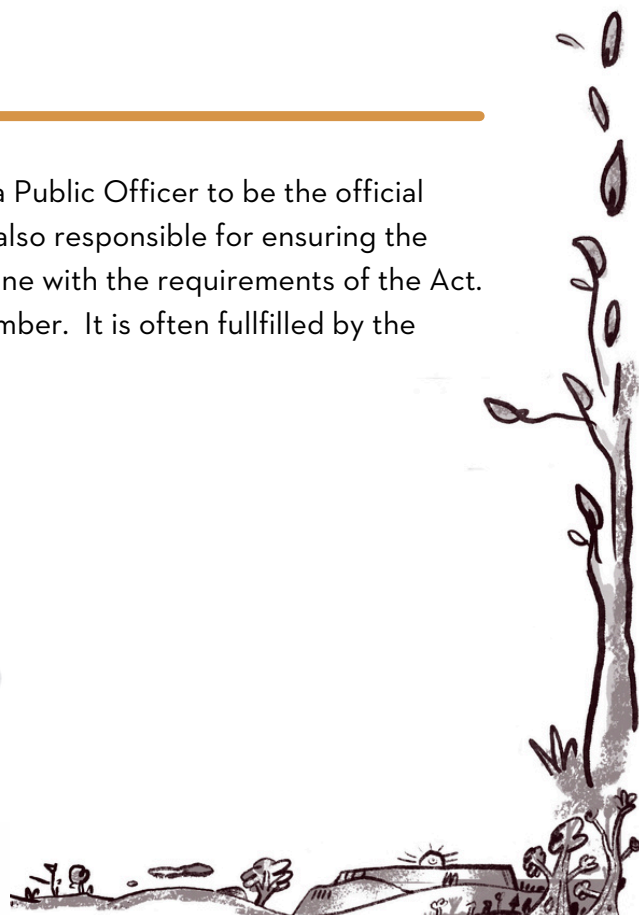
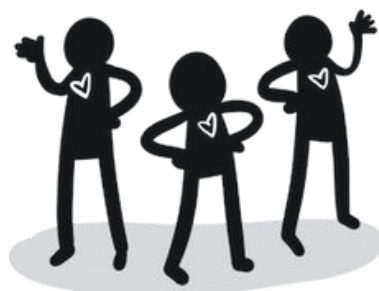
It is an important responsibility of every committee member to be completely satisfied that the group is solvent and operating legally. The treasurer takes that lead but all committee members must be informed, ask questions and understand that it is their legal responsibility to ensure responsible financial management of the organisation. A confident Treasurer will welcome questions asked in good faith. Notably, there isn't a specific law that mandates a treasurer for all community organisations in Australia, but it's generally considered a best practice for financial management.

Executive Members, General Members or Ordinary Members

Executive Members assist the Chair, Secretary and Treasurer to run the group. The number required can be determined by the constitution or by the committee if not specified in the constitution.

Public Officer

All incorporated groups must have an official address and a Public Officer to be the official point of contact for the organisation. The Public Officer is also responsible for ensuring the management of all of the organisation's documentation in line with the requirements of the Act. This position does not have to be filled by a committee member. It is often fulfilled by the Secretary.



5 Tips for Success

Be Prepared: Review meeting agendas and documents ahead of time.

Communicate Clearly: Use active listening and respectful dialogue in discussions.

Stay Informed: Attend or send a representative to briefings or workshops to enhance your skills, knowledge & access to opportunities.

Celebrate Achievements: Acknowledge milestones and successes, building morale and motivation.

Ask for what you need and give what you can: Landcare is a collaborative, self organising system that relies on people to manage their own boundaries and contributions.

Further Resources

- Detailed job descriptions for committee roles can be found in the Gateway Toolbox - Shared Services Hub section - [Hub Information and Templates – NSW Landcare Gateway](#) under the Governance section.
- NSW Landcare Governance Health check and the Trello Board that accompanies it are located in this induction package.
- For further information on the role and responsibilities of executives and management committees, visit [NSW Department of Fair Trading](#)
- For further information regarding the responsible people in a charitable organisation see [ACNC website](#)
- [Our Cat Herder](#) offers great tools to help streamline your board administration. It is available through Shared Services Hub
- [Board Pro](#) is an online program for making governance easy and is available through Shared Services Hub

For more information or support, contact us at the NSW Landcare Enabling Program support team or the Shared Services Hub Manager at sharedserviceshub@landcarensw.org.au

