

# EVALUATION OF THE NSW VOLUNTEERING STRATEGY

2012-13:

Bathurst Grows



Ministerial Forum

Theatrette, NSW Parliament House

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(UOW)



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# Today's presentation

1. Background & evaluation methodology
2. Program participation
3. Outcomes
4. Lessons
  - Success factors
  - Challenges and limitations
  - Other lessons



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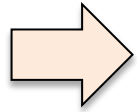
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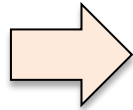
# Background

Aim



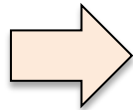
Match participants with community-based volunteering opportunities that help them develop practical work skills that may lead to local paid employment

Target



People with backgrounds of disadvantage, including long-term unemployment

Timeframe



July 2012 – November 2013



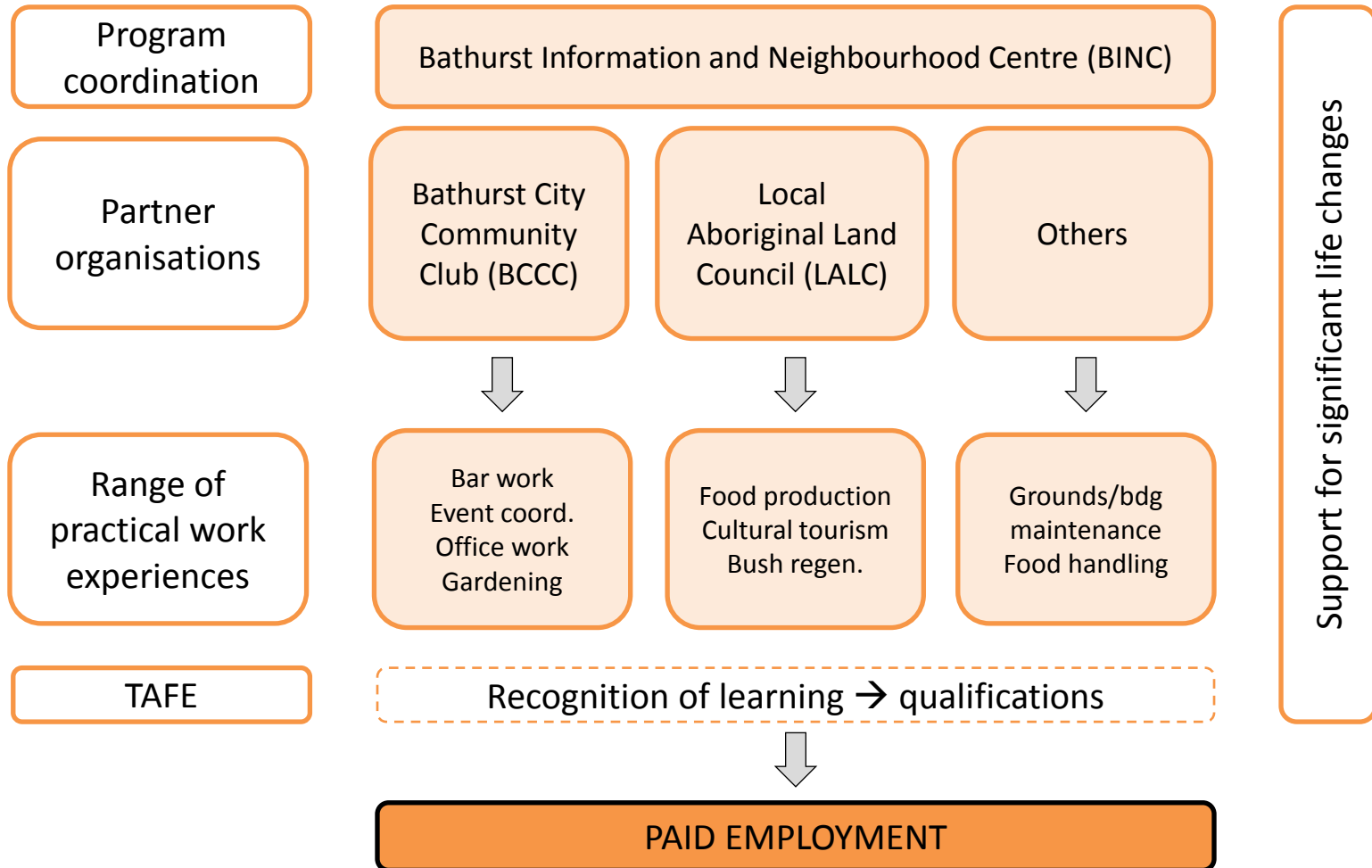
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# Original vision



# Evaluation aims

- Exploratory approach:
  - Proof of concept
  - Lessons for future practice
- Capture a balanced perspective on:
  - Activity/participation
  - Decision making processes
  - Program outcomes: successes and challenges
  - Enabling and limiting factors



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# Methodology

- Analysis of program documentation
- In-depth interviews
  - Stage 1: Program coordinators (n=6)
  - Stage 2: Participants (n=4)



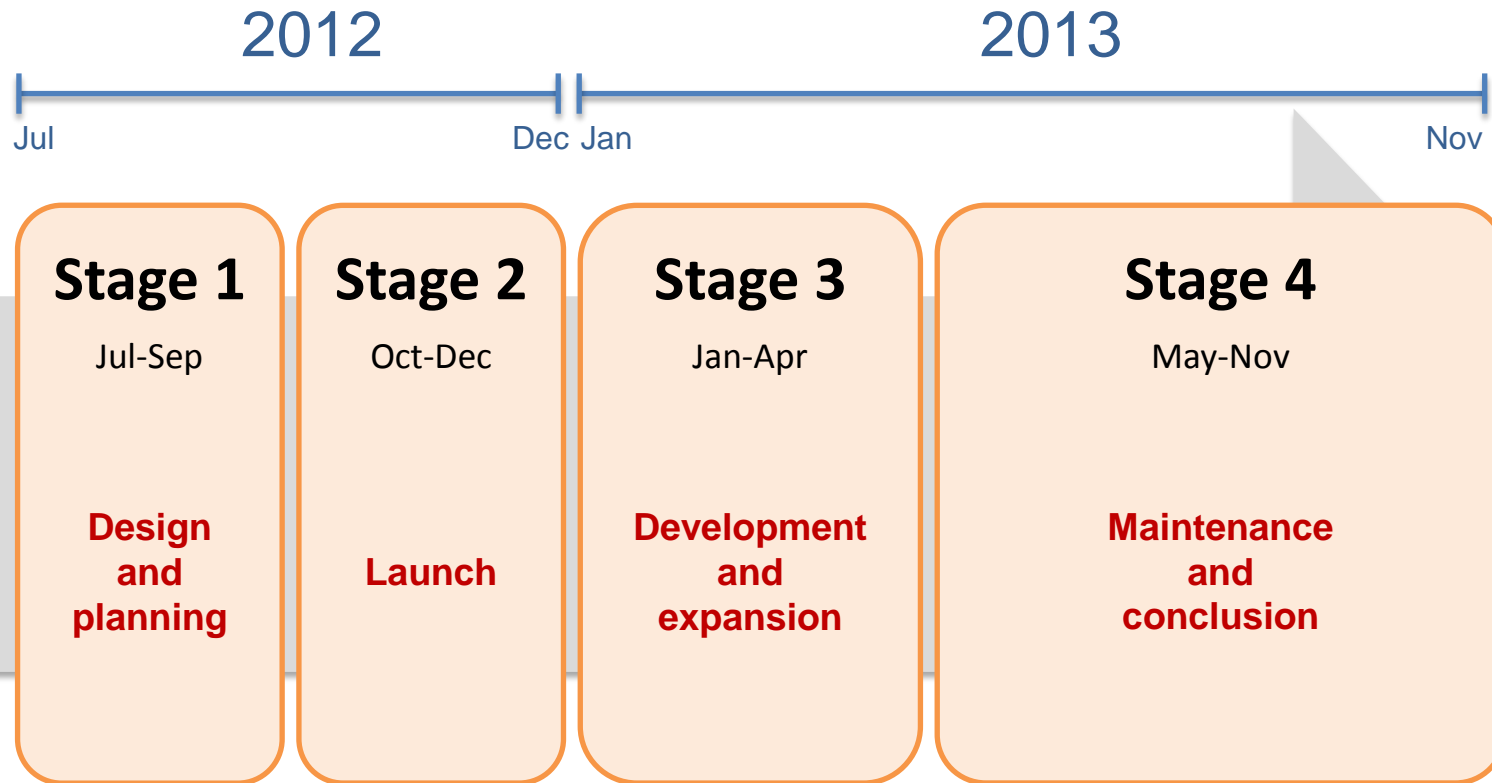
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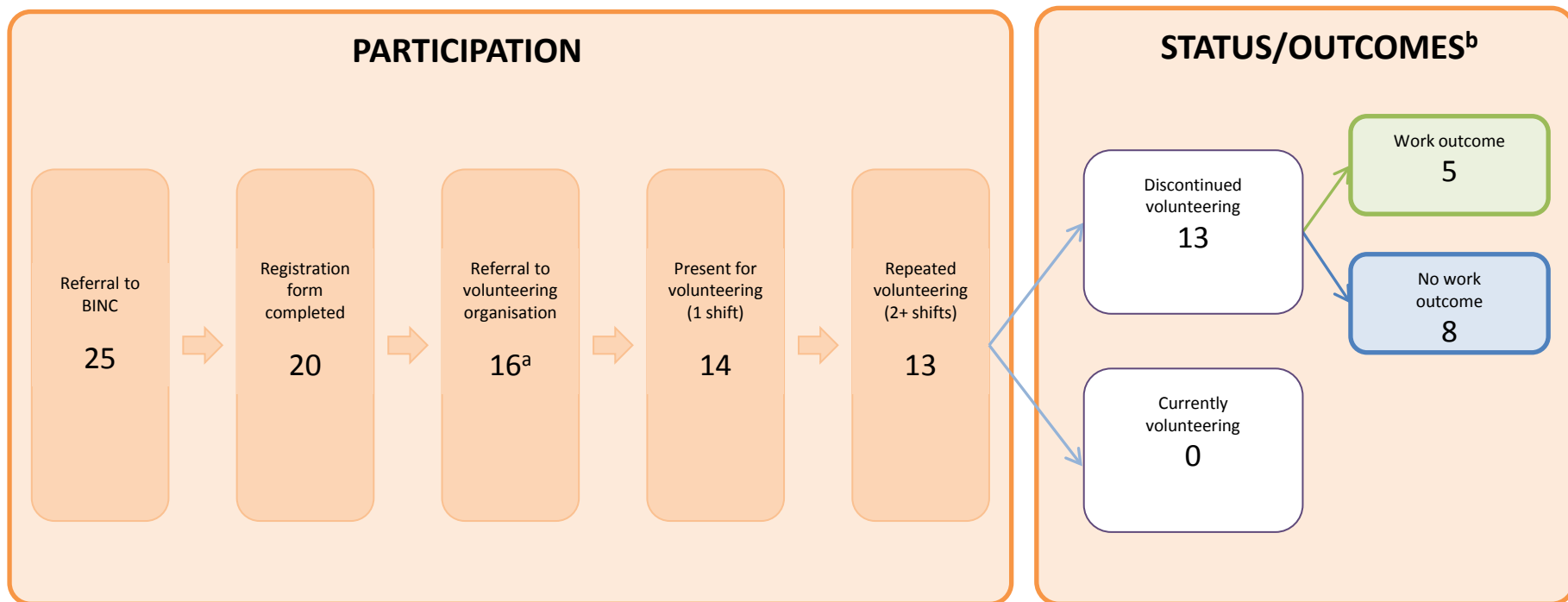


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# Timeline



# Participation

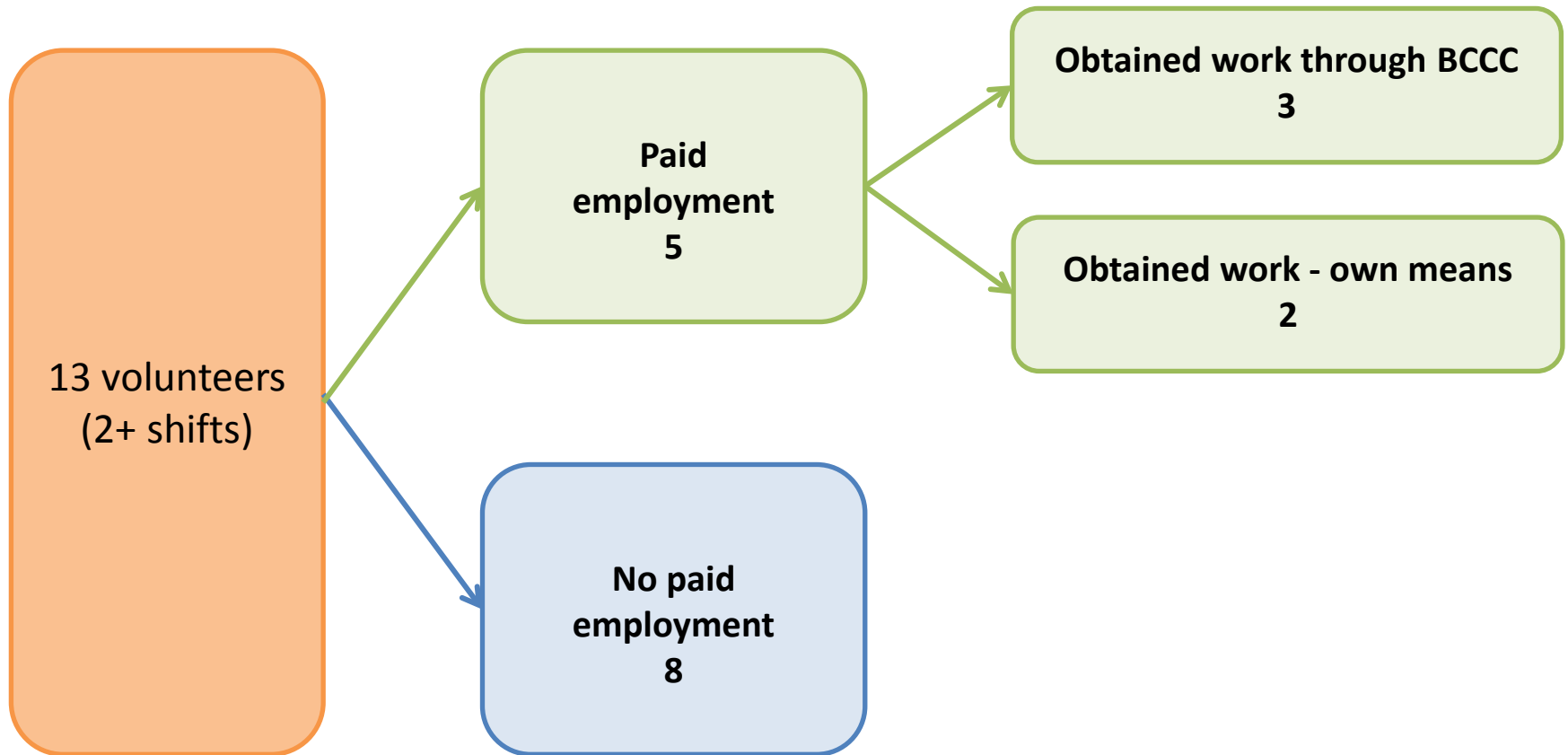


<sup>a</sup> Two participants were referred to a volunteering organisation without completing a registration form

<sup>b</sup> At November 2013



# Employment outcomes



# Participation factors

Triggers



- Ultimately lead to paid employment
- Hoping to obtain on the job experience, references

Supports



- Enjoyable, social work, pleasant colleagues
- Flexibility, catering for personal circumstances

Hurdles



- Change in personal circumstances



# Participation barriers

- Changes in personal circumstances
- Value of volunteering not apparent
- Effort required to present for shifts
- Selective about types of work
- Other, easier, ways to receive Centrelink benefits
- Difficulty accepting direction from manager
- Impact of paid shifts



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# Other outcomes

- On the job training
  - Practical skills and experience, references
- Enabling relationships
  - Advice, transport facilities, access to job interviews
- Social skills
  - Confidence, friendships, part of the community, network of local contacts



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# Value for money

- Employment placement costs
  - 5 participants working, up to \$10-12K per person
- Value of volunteer hours
  - 832 volunteer hours at BCCC, \$14,019 in wages



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# Key success factors

1. Innovative, creative approach to volunteering
2. Effective central project coordination
3. Effective onsite supervision
4. Customisation of the volunteering experience
5. Participant supervision and support:  
(a case-management approach)
6. An enjoyable experience
7. Referral and employment pathways



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# Other enabling factors

- Communication with partners
- Team-based brokerage
- Participant assessment



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# Challenges and limitations

- Target market
- Factors leading to variation from original plan
  - Stakeholder willingness to participate
  - Recognition of prior learning
  - Appeal of different volunteering opportunities



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# Additional challenges

- Timing
- Continuity following staff changes
- Future funding uncertainty
- Factors beyond control of program managers
  - Motivation/abilities of participants



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# Other lessons

- Program conceptualised in two parts
  - Opportunities to gain experience/skills
  - Mapping these to paid local employment
- Use funding allocation to resource work by partner organisations as well as central coordination
- Success stories used to inspire new participants



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# THANK YOU

## DISCUSSION

