

VEC Public Engagement Charter



VEC
Victorian Electoral Commission **VEC**
Working for
democracy

VEC Public Engagement Charter

Our purpose

The Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) is committed to making it easy for all Victorians to participate in democracy. Community engagement helps us understand people's experiences, reduce barriers to participation, and build trust in our electoral processes.

This charter explains how we engage with communities, the principles that guide our work, and the ways people can access information, provide feedback, and participate in the democratic process.

Why engagement matters

Engagement:

- strengthens public understanding of electoral processes
- encourages participation in elections, especially among underrepresented communities
- ensures transparency, trust, and fairness in the democratic system.

Principles of engagement

Our vision is 'all Victorians actively participating in their democracy'. Engagement with the Victorian public supports us to achieve this vision.

The principles below outline our commitment to Victorians. They describe how we aim to work with communities and stakeholders and guide our actions and decisions. We recognise that experiences may differ, and we are committed to learning and improving.

Our commitment to the public

The VEC follows 5 principles in all engagement work.



Independent

We uphold independence and integrity in every interaction, ensuring people can trust the impartiality of our work.



Respectful

We listen carefully, acknowledge different perspectives, and respond in ways that show people they are heard.



Inclusive

We actively seek diverse voices, recognising that meaningful participation requires reducing barriers and building equitable access.



Collaborative

We work with our colleagues, the public, stakeholders, and community leaders to build stronger trusted democratic outcomes.



Purposeful

We approach every engagement with intention, making it clear why we are reaching out, what people can contribute, and how their input will inform our work.

How we work with communities

Engagement at the VEC is not one-size-fits-all. We tailor our approach to meet the needs of different communities, either through large-scale public campaigns or deeper, location-based partnerships.

Our approach to engagement

We use an engagement stream approach to guide our engagement.

Stream A: location-based engagement

We work within pre-determined locations where communities face the biggest barriers. Activities are designed with the community and guided by data to make sure they are meaningful, effective and can be measured to see how far we have come.

Stream B: partner-led engagement

We reach out to underrepresented groups through trusted partners, like local services or organisations. Engagement is tailored to the group's needs, helping us connect with more people while keeping it relevant and effective.

Stream C: statewide engagement

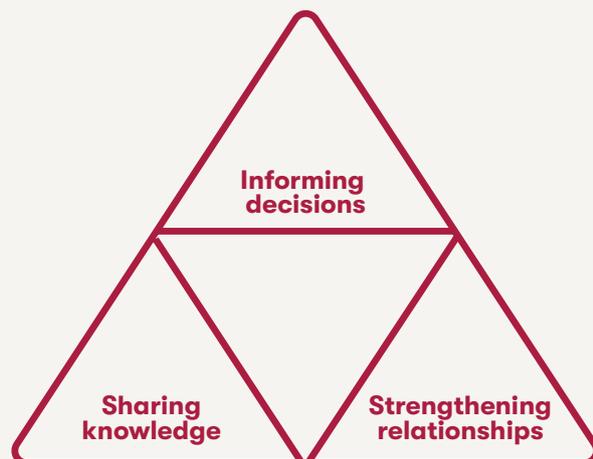
We provide information and resources to everyone across Victoria through campaigns, online tools, and public events. This level of engagement is easier to scale and helps more people access key information.

We use this approach to decide where and how to focus engagement. This helps staff make consistent, evidence-based decisions while staying flexible to respond to changing needs. We consider community needs, participation barriers, potential impact, and available resources when planning engagement. The approach ensures efforts are coordinated across VEC-led activities, partner programs, and communications so resources are directed where they will make the biggest difference.

The engagement triangle

Our work is guided by the engagement triangle, which focuses on:

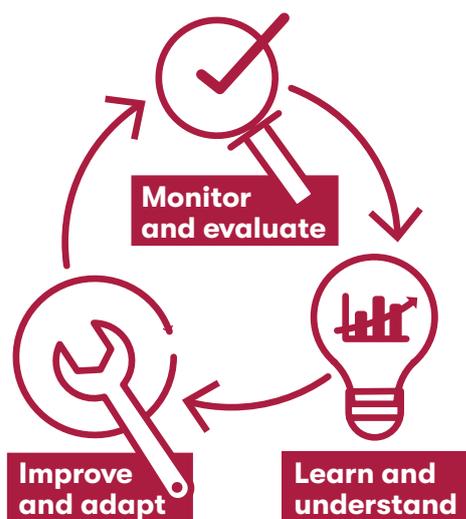
- **strengthening relationships** – building strong relationships with the public and stakeholders by maintaining transparency, impartiality, and consistency
- **sharing knowledge** – providing accessible and clear information that supports people to understand and participate in electoral processes
- **informing decisions** – capturing community insights and using them to inform organisational priorities and practice.



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Monitoring and evaluation

We regularly monitor and evaluate engagement to ensure it is effective and improving over time. Our evaluation matches the level of engagement, from intensive, long-term initiatives to partner-led programs and broad public outreach. This helps us understand if activities are achieving their goals, using resources well, and informing future decisions. Evaluation also ensures accountability and continuous improvement, embedding lessons learned into planning, tools, and strategies. While our primary aim is to increase voter turnout and reduce voter informality, we understand that the reasons behind these patterns are complex. When our monitoring and evaluation show success, it means more Victorians are aware of their voting rights and responsibilities, feel confident to take part, and are supported to meaningfully participate in their democracy.



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