

Efficiency

LEP23_036_RLC1_6

Meeting the different needs of virtual and in-person supporters

Murrumbidgee Landcare Inc



Understanding the differences between online followers and active participants helps ensure equitable access to information and opportunities

The issue

Social media has brought huge benefits to Landcare, allowing us to reach a far wider audience, and providing a quick and easy means of promoting our activities. But unfortunately not all of these virtual friends have the same commitment as those we have connected with in person.

We discovered this at a number of school holiday workshops we held over the past year, which we had promoted on social media. Activities included weaving, nature journaling and building frog hotels, with all attendees provided with the materials free of charge. Due to the costs of materials, we had strict caps on the number of attendees, meaning all of our workshops quickly booked out. Despite numerous reminders and personal emails to those registered, between 50% and 90% did not actually turn up for the event.



The solution

Some solutions we have developed to avoid such a situation from recurring include:

- Send personal email reminders to registered attendees: This both reminds people of the event, and provides an easy way for them to let you know if they can no longer attend
- Post event reminders on social media: Given that Facebook is the platform on which most people found the event, it makes sense to utilise this form of communication for reminders
- Charge a small workshop fee (eg \$5): Attendance is typically much higher when people have pre-paid to attend
- Charge a refundable workshop fee: Charging a fee which is refunded when they attend the workshop ensures those who attend are the ones who benefit most
- Require commitment through membership: The workshop could be free for Landcare members, but non-members must become a member (and pay the membership fee) to be able to attend
- Run workshops through community groups: Similar to the above solution, running workshops through local groups has been very successful, as people are already part of the network and more committed to attending.



The impact

For workshops where we are providing materials and/or catering which we need to budget for each attendee, we will adjust our promotional plans using the solutions outlined above. Following the events, we will share photos and other details on social media, to continue highlighting the events we offer to a wide audience. In this way, we hope to capture the attention of interested people, and motivate them to engage more closely with us through our direct mailing lists or membership.



This initiative is made possible by the NSW Landcare Enabling Program, a collaboration between Local Land Services and Landcare NSW supported by the NSW Government.