

# **Opening doors: A snapshot of the expanding volunteer program at ECU**

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## **Abstract**

In order to provide better value to all stakeholders, ECU International revisited its key student programs in 2003. Refreshing its approach, it is evolving its Orientation volunteer program and low-cost recreational program into a multi-faceted experience that is inclusive, interactive and responsive to the needs of all participants.

This presentation provides snapshots of the features that are incorporated in the program. The experience is focused on increasing the range and quality of socio-cultural and academic outcomes for international students, opening opportunities to develop long-term social and peer support networks, providing a platform for cultural-exchanges and cross-cultural awareness in all communities. It also offers the University an opportunity to support student-led projects for the wider community that builds a sense of camaraderie and enhances a community spirit.

The approach has achieved many positive outcomes: satisfaction and participation rates have increased with the program now attracting over 180 students each semester.