# ENABLING SUSTAINABLE EMERGENCY VOLUNTEERING: WORK PACKAGE 2 – CHANGING MANAGEMENT PRACTICES
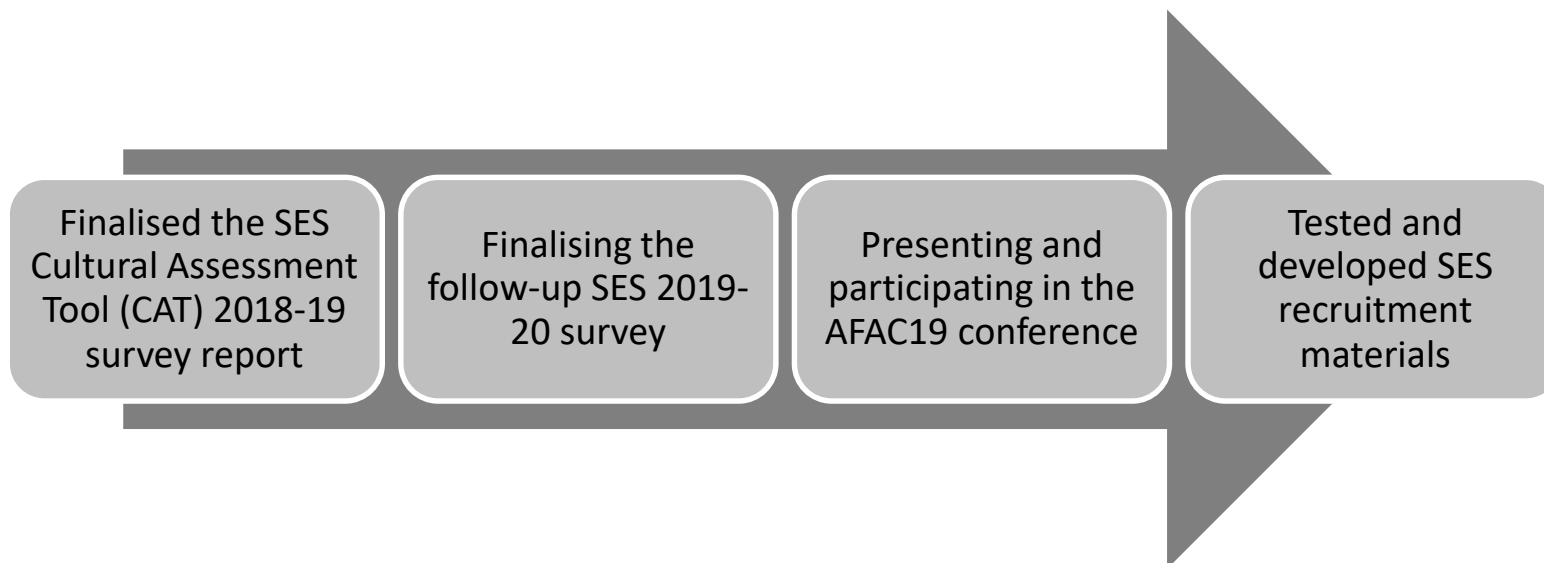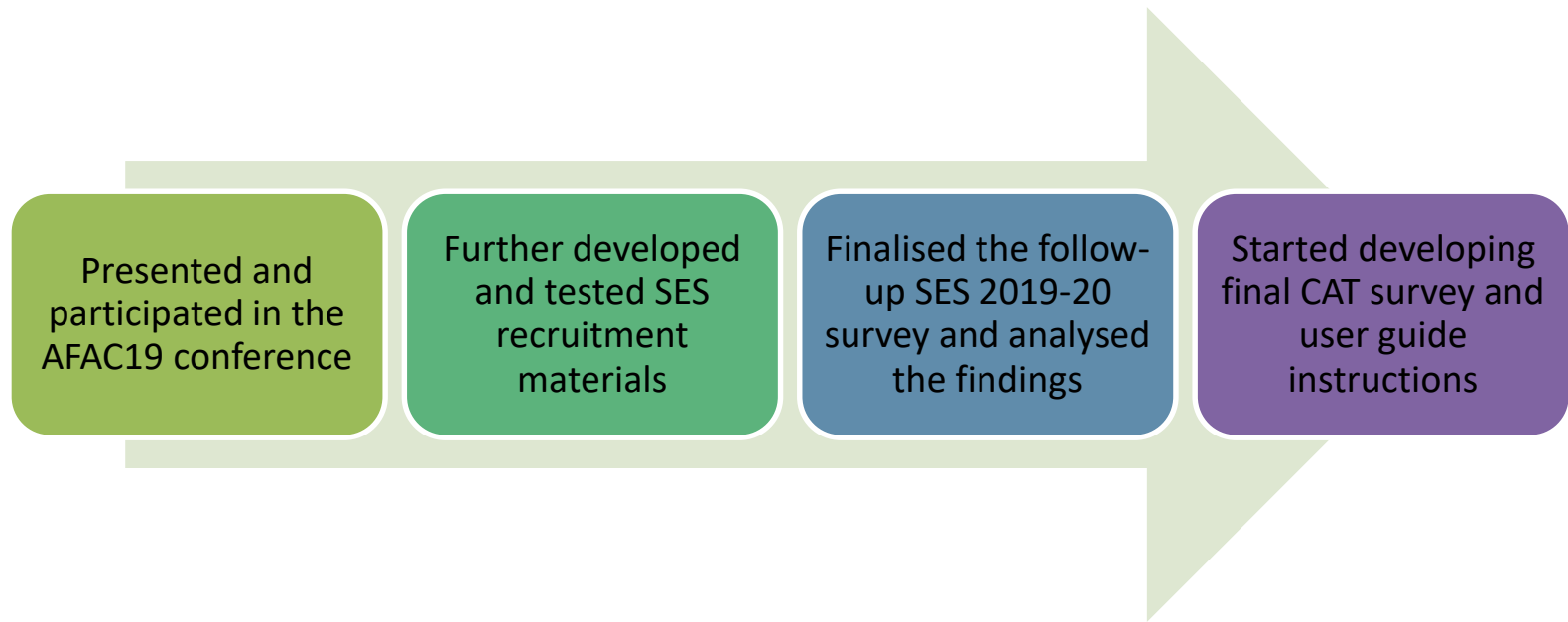
# UPDATES FROM OUR LAST TELECONFERENCE MEETING

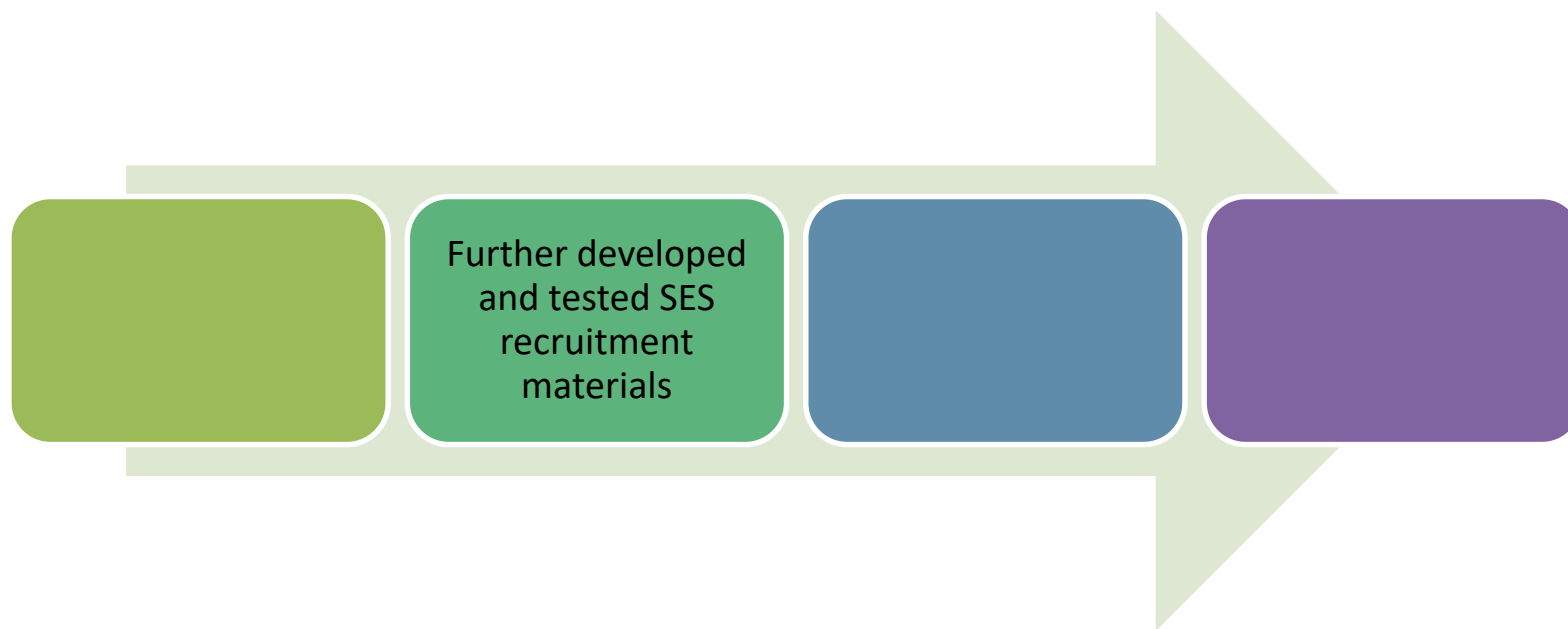Finalised the SES Cultural Assessment Tool (CAT) 2018-19 survey report

Finalising the follow-up SES 2019-20 survey

Presenting and participating in the AFAC19 conference

Tested and developed SES recruitment materials

# WHAT HAVE WE DONE SINCE THEN?

Presented and participated in the AFAC19 conference

Further developed and tested SES recruitment materials

Finalised the follow-up SES 2019-20 survey and analysed the findings

Started developing final CAT survey and user guide instructions

# WHAT HAVE WE DONE SINCE THEN?

Presented and participated in the AFAC19 conference

*Access our AFAC19 conference paper from our project page!*

# WHAT HAVE WE DONE SINCE THEN?

Further developed
and tested SES
recruitment
materials

# RECRUITMENT STUDIES

Using real data to create some content for SES recruitment materials that:

- Are attractive and appealing to potential recruits

- Accurately represents the SES volunteering experience

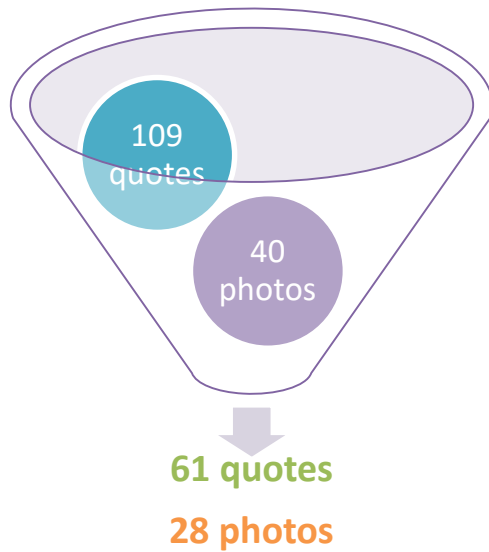- Promotes the diversity of roles and opportunities to potential recruits
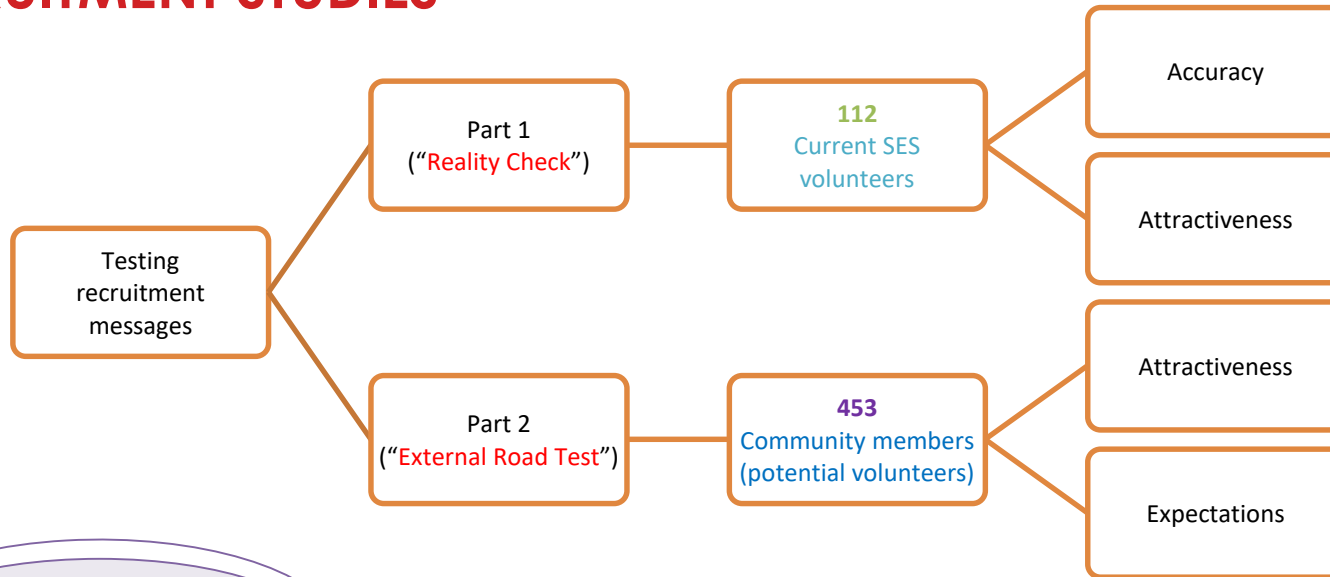
*I want to give back to the community and make our area safer.*

*Other volunteers are my family now!*

*It's just good to get out and feel that you're valued!*

# RECRUITMENT STUDIES

Testing recruitment messages

- Part 1 ("Reality Check")
  - 112 Current SES volunteers
    - Accuracy
    - Attractiveness
- Part 2 ("External Road Test")
  - 453 Community members (potential volunteers)
    - Attractiveness
    - Expectations

109 quotes

40 photos

→ 61 quotes

28 photos

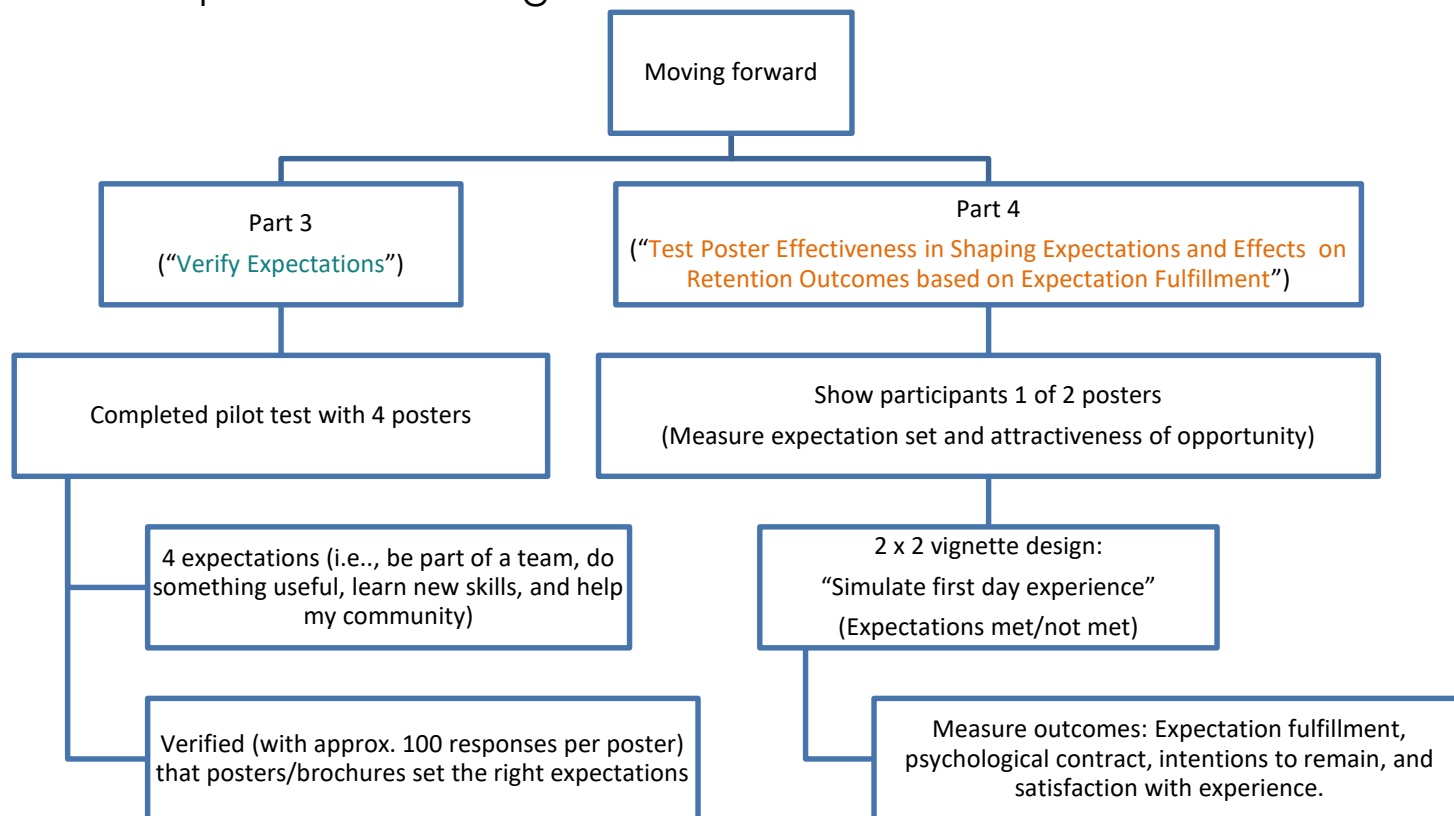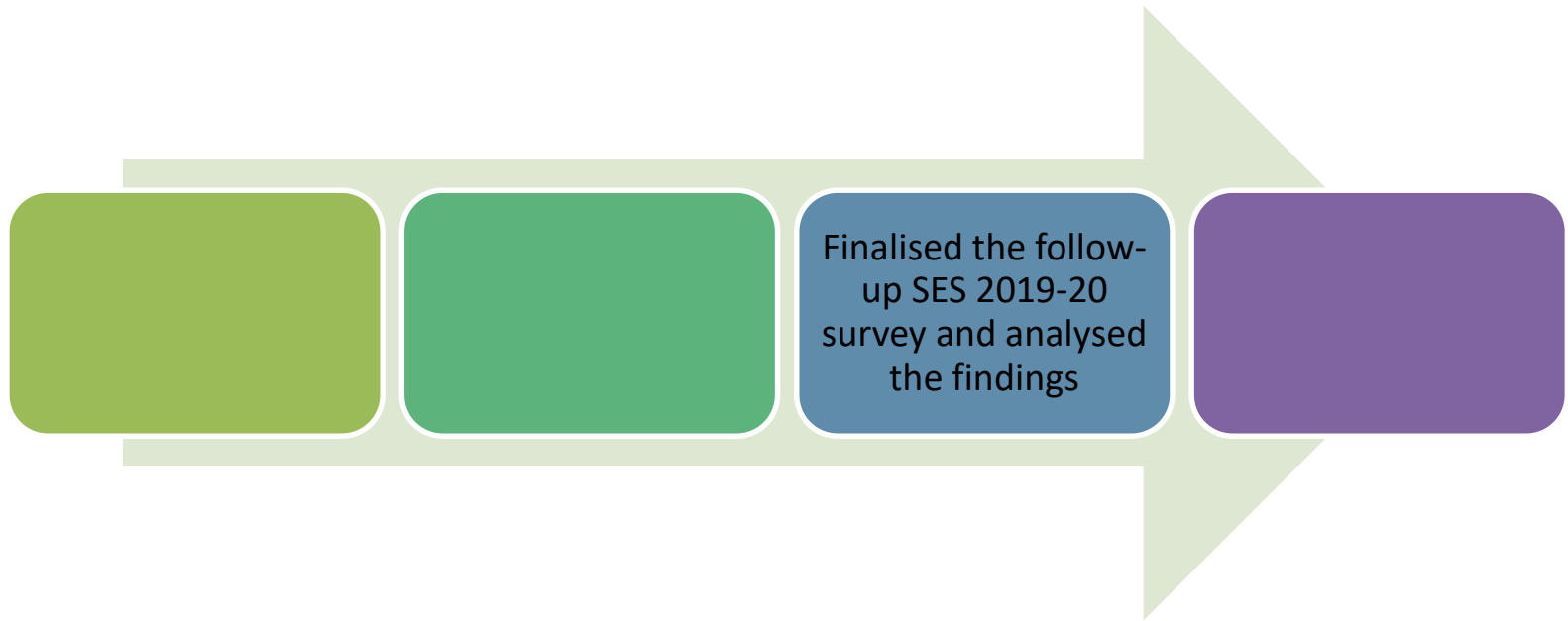| Message No. | Recruitment messages (ranked as attractive by current and potential volunteers, and accurate by current SES volunteers) | Most highly rated expectation for this message |
|---|---|---|
| 93 | This organisation has provided an opportunity to learn skills outside my normal life and work life, and also to improve my own self-confidence. | E14 - Gain various skills |
| 95 | When you successfully complete the job, you get a feeling of gratification that you've done some good. | E4 - Do something useful/worthwhile |
| 55 | It's an absolute honour and privilege to serve the community in the hour of need, when people are at their lowest point. To have the skills, the training, and knowledge to do that is awesome and I'd recommend it to anyone! | E3 - Help my community |
| 70 | It is great to know that you had a part in something that was bigger, better, brighter! | E4 - Do something useful/worthwhile |
| 19 | You get to learn new skills and be challenged. | E14 - Gain various skills |
| 63 | To be a volunteer is about giving back, it's about contributing. | E3 - Help my community |
| 14 | Different people, different skill sets, all working together; it's really good! | E13 - Be part of a team |

bit.ly/wafes19

# RECRUITMENT STUDIES: MOVING FORWARD

**Main aims:**

- Test effectiveness of recruitment messages in example recruitment posters
- Test poster effectiveness and attractiveness
- Test how expectation setting and fulfillment affects retention outcomes

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                          │   Moving forward    │
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**Part 3**
("Verify Expectations")

**Part 4**
("Test Poster Effectiveness in Shaping Expectations and Effects on Retention Outcomes based on Expectation Fulfillment")

Completed pilot test with 4 posters

Show participants 1 of 2 posters
(Measure expectation set and attractiveness of opportunity)

4 expectations (i.e.., be part of a team, do something useful, learn new skills, and help my community)

2 x 2 vignette design:
"Simulate first day experience"
(Expectations met/not met)

Verified (with approx. 100 responses per poster) that posters/brochures set the right expectations

Measure outcomes: Expectation fulfillment, psychological contract, intentions to remain, and satisfaction with experience.

# WHAT HAVE WE DONE SINCE THEN?

Finalised the follow-up SES 2019-20 survey and analysed the findings

# Cultural Assessment Tool (CAT)
## 2019-20 Survey Findings

From September 2019 to mid-February 2020, the University of Western Australia and Curtin University collaborated with the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) to conduct a follow-up survey to obtain information on the current state of volunteering in Western Australia (WA). The survey focused on State Emergency Service (SES) volunteers and investigated on 4 key areas; recruitment, retention, wellbeing, and diversity.

### Participant Information

**Number of Participants:** 226 (11% response rate)
**Average age:** 46.9 years
**Gender breakdown:** Males (55%), Females (43%), Prefer not to say (2%)
**Ethnicity:** 64.2% identified as Australians
**Average SES tenure:** 10.0 years
**Average tenure in current unit:** 10.0 years
**Different roles:** Unit Managers (16.4%), Non-managers (83.6%) across 52 SES units in WA

### Survey Themes:
- Reasons to Stay
- Volunteer Needs
- Volunteer Role and Identity Fit
- Volunteer Wellbeing
- SES Unit Environment
- Intentions to Remain

Based on key findings, the list of key implications are presented below:

### Key Areas of Strength
- Volunteers are thriving through their learning experiences,
- Volunteers overall felt valued and respected for their individual differences,
- Unit leaders are seen very positively in their behaviours towards volunteers, during and outside of call-outs,
- Volunteers had strong social support from team members who are non-leaders.

### Key Opportunities to Improve
- Investigate targeted recruitment to attract members from specific groups,
- Facilitate activities to allow more volunteer autonomy,
- Improve volunteers' identification with DFES,
- Improve feelings of psychological safety, autonomy, and competence for women and volunteers who are non-leaders,
- Improve volunteer inclusivity in unit decision-making processes, and
- Increase how energetic volunteers feel about their roles.

Findings from the CAT 2019-20 survey was also compared to findings from the 2018-19 survey to assess which volunteering areas have improved, are in need of improvement, and which areas have stayed relatively the same:

### Key Areas Maintained
Volunteers across both surveys;
- Felt equally as competent and as socially connected with other volunteers,
- Identified strongly with their role and SES unit,
- Had high levels of role satisfaction,
- Perceived their leaders' behaviours rather positively, and
- Felt valued and respected for their individual differences.

### Key Areas that Improved
Volunteers indicated improvements in;
- Their motivations to continue volunteering (e.g., volunteers felt that they were learning new skills),
- Their identification with DFES,
- Their learning and development (although it was still high the previous year), and
- How much they would recommend the SES to others as a place to volunteer.

### Opportunities to Improve
Volunteers across both years;
- Indicated low levels of autonomy,
- Reported that they did not feel energetic about their roles,
- Had relatively low levels of psychological safety (i.e., not feeling safe about speaking up), and
- They did not feel included in unit decision-making processes.

**Note: The complete survey report will be released on our project page (scan QR code) in August 2020.

*Scan the QR code to access CAT survey reports from our project page!*

bushfire&natural HAZARDS CRC
Curtin University FUTURE OF WORK INSTITUTE
DFES
THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

# WHAT HAVE WE DONE SINCE THEN?

Started developing final CAT survey and user guide instructions
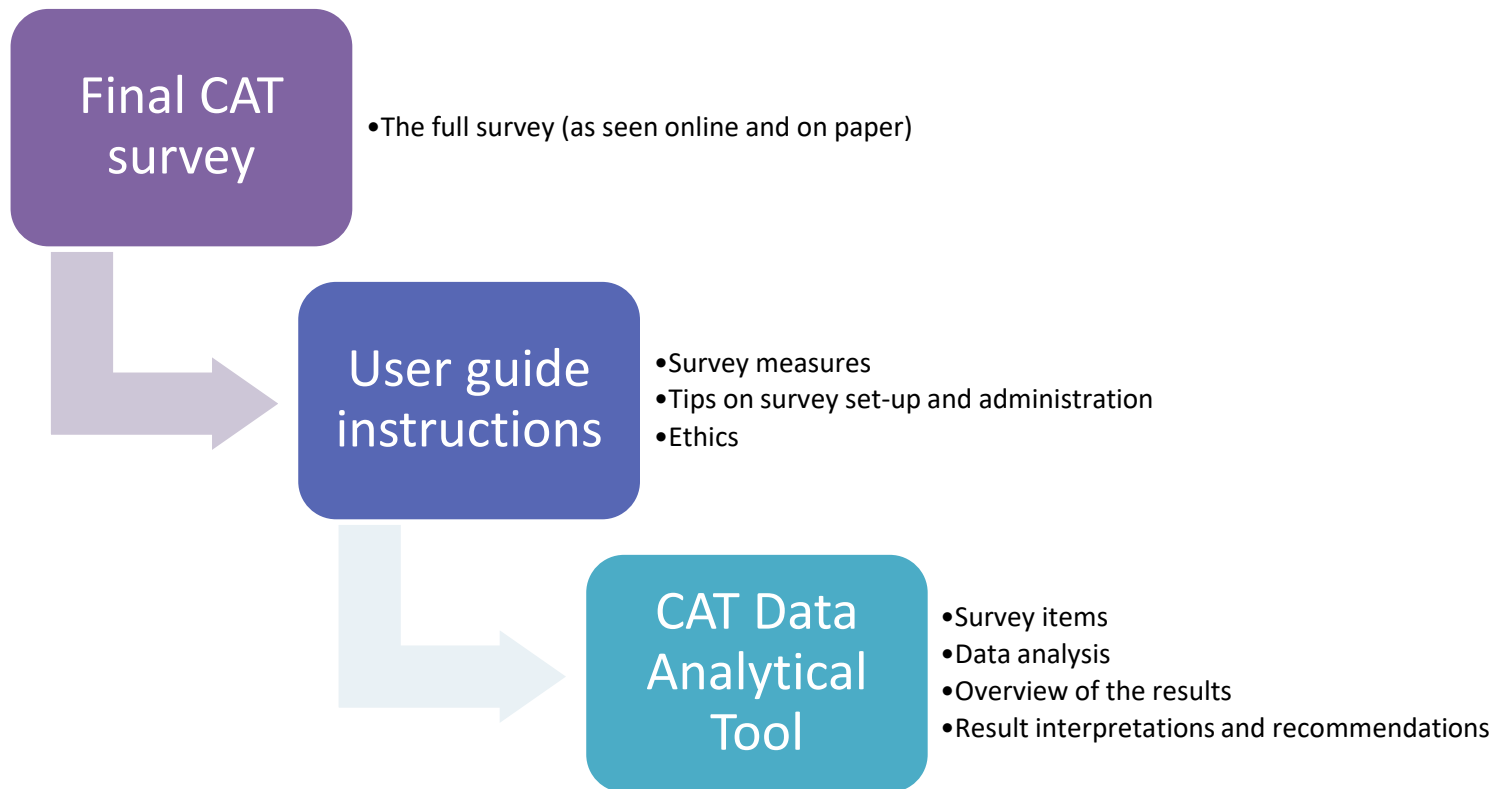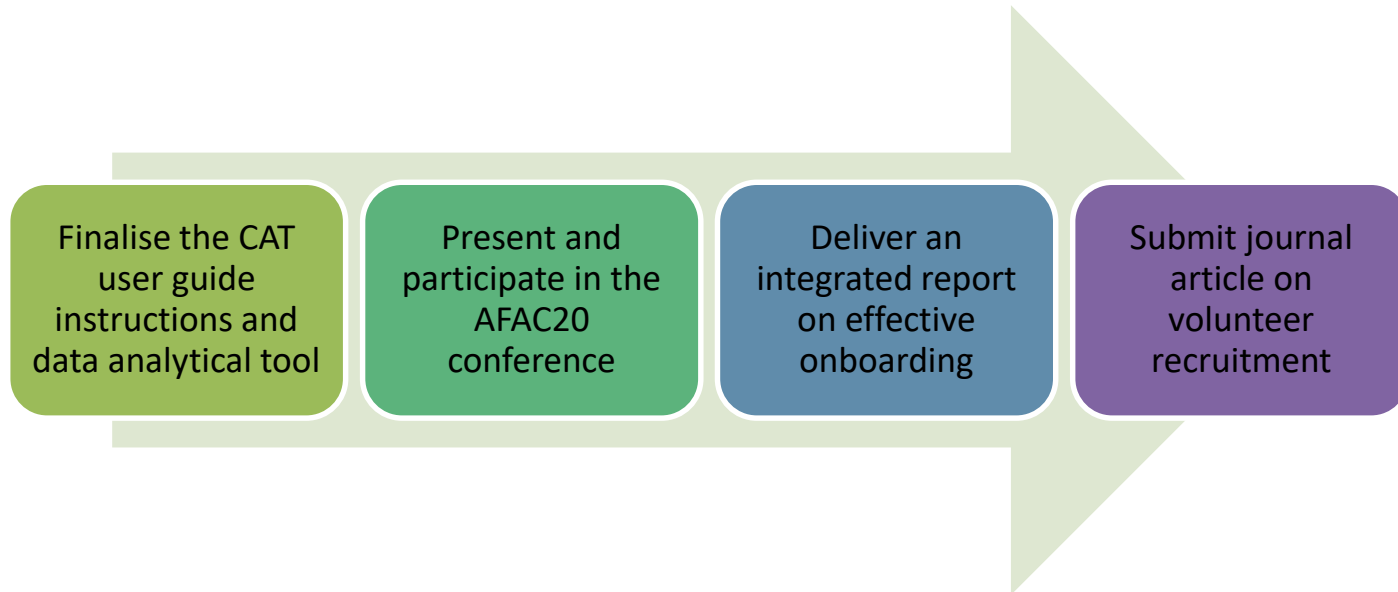
# FINAL CAT SURVEY AND USER GUIDE INSTRUCTIONS

**Purpose:**

Empower and assist end-users (e.g., volunteer managers, district officers) in being able to assess the state of volunteering in their individual BGUs and/or districts via the Cultural Assessment Tool (CAT) survey.

**Final CAT survey**
•The full survey (as seen online and on paper)

**User guide instructions**
•Survey measures
•Tips on survey set-up and administration
•Ethics

**CAT Data Analytical Tool**
•Survey items
•Data analysis
•Overview of the results
•Result interpretations and recommendations

# NEXT STEPS!



Finalise the CAT user guide instructions and data analytical tool

Present and participate in the AFAC20 conference

Deliver an integrated report on effective onboarding

Submit journal article on volunteer recruitment

# THANK YOU!

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