

Acknowledgement

National Council of Women of Victoria acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Victoria and recognises the continuing connection to lands, waters and communities. NCWV pays its respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures; and to Elders past, present and emerging.



QUOTE: *Our vision for the future will see volunteering thrive. We are the change makers.* www.volunteeringaustralia.org

From the President, Ronniel Milliken



Ross House



This week is National Volunteer Week AND Law Week for Victoria: 15 to 19 May.

Ahead of Law Week we heard of the advocacy of [Smart Justice for Women](#) calling for legislative change - bail law reform due to the damaging impacts of remand; and [Smart Justice for Young People](#) about raising the age of criminal responsibility to 14. (report p4) We hear the Sisters in Crime's 17th Law Week event: *Boys behaving badly (and what to do about it)* will debate how to combat toxic masculinity and the violence perpetrated against women. [17th Law Week event: Boys behaving badly \(and what to do about it\) – Sisters in Crime Australia](#) (see below).

After 120 years, NCWV Members continue to appreciate and celebrate the vital contribution that they and other volunteers make across suburban, regional and rural Victoria to create social change; and as the backbone of social, cultural and environmental organisations.

Two Committee Members 'decorating' the current window at Ross House (see above), were assisted by 3 passers-by who wrestled the banner into position and clambering up the ladder. Volunteers who learnt about NCWV in the process (see above).

Sisters in Crime's 17th Law Week Melbourne "Boys behaving badly (and what to do about it)"

Friday 19 May, 6.00 for 6.30 pm,

Sisters in Crime Australia is again proud to join forces with the Sir Zelman Cowen Centre, Victoria University. An expert panel, Elena Campbell, Ahona Guha and Sherele Moody, chaired by Bronwyn Naylor will debate how to combat toxic masculinity and the violence perpetrated against women.

Sir Zelman Cowen Centre, Victoria University, Queen St Campus Lecture Theatre G02, 295 Queen St, Melb.

Please book by Friday 19 May, 2 pm. Details [here](#).

Victorian Honour Roll of Women

Thanks to Robyn Bучheri for info about nominations closing on Mon 29 May for the Victorian Honour Roll of Women. The Honour Roll consists of four categories, and is open to any Victorian woman, including trans, gender diverse or sistingirl, who has made a lasting and significant contribution at a local, state, national or international level. About categories and nominating: www.vic.gov.au/victorian-honour-roll-women-program Leadership & Representation Team, Fairer Victoria, Engagement & Coordination, Department of Families, Fairness & Housing: www.dffh.vic.gov.au Questions: womensleadership.fv@dffh.vic.gov.au

NCWV Geelong Branch 77th Annual Luncheon Monday 26th June, 12 noon; St Mary's Sporting Pavilion

Kardinia Park, LaTrobe Tce, Newtown (parking on site)

Speaker: Prof Cassandra Szoek Phd FRACP MBBS BSc University of Melbourne.

Author of "Secrets of Women's Healthy Ageing"

Cost: \$70 per person (advise on dietary requirements)

RSVP June 16: Helen Rodd – 5222 7327;

Anne Parton – 5241 9344

June Council Meeting: Thursday June 1



Robyn Hunter Chief Services Officer

Robyn is involved in the Beyond Blue program: *Youth Live4Life*. This program focusses on Youth, particularly those needing support in rural and regional areas of Victoria.

Join us to find out more about this vitally important program supporting our youth.

Trailblazing Woman War Surgeon Honoured: Dr Vera Scantlebury Brown OBE

Report by Sheila Byard OAM



Barbara Robson, Jane Miller, Deb Colville, Sheila Byard OAM

A pioneering medical professional and Australian war surgeon who was never given official enlistment status has been recognised with a statue in the Avenue of Honour in her hometown in Victoria's central west. Minister for Women Natalie Hutchins joined Golden Plains Shire Council Mayor Brett Cunningham and the Member for Ripon, Martha Haylett in Linton to unveil a statue celebrating the life and achievements of Dr Vera Scantlebury Brown OBE.

The statue is the first public artwork in Linton recognising or representing a woman, one of six artworks commissioned and funded by the Government's Victorian Women's Public Art program, which aims to increase the number of permanent public artworks in the state celebrating women and their achievements.

Born in 1889, Vera was among the first women to study medicine at the University of Melbourne and, shortly after completing her medical residency at the Children's Hospital in 1917, tried to join Australia's war efforts.

At the time, the Australian Army would not allow women doctors, so Vera paid her way to London to work in the Endell St Military Hospital - known as 'the suffragette hospital' because it was almost entirely operated by women - to help treat wounded, injured and sick soldiers transported from France.

Vera would later go on to become the first woman to lead a Victorian government department as the inaugural Director of the Victorian Infant Welfare Scheme. In this role she transformed the voluntary system of the day into the professional, universal maternal and child health system Victoria now has.

The 1.75m statue of Vera was created by bronze sculpture artist and Golden Plains Shire local Lucy McEachern and depicts Vera in the insignia of a military surgeon, which women were prohibited from wearing at the time.



ALGWA: Collaborating to thrive, connect and excel in Local Government, invites people to join them for the 2023 National Conference hosted by ALGWA and the Mornington Peninsula Shire Council from **17-20 May 2023 at RACV Cape Schanck Resort** in Victoria.

The Conference brings councillors and officers together from across Australia, to advance female participation in Local Government and put a spotlight on issues facing women in the sector. Delegates will draw inspiration from thought-provoking presenters, network with other attendees and benefit from the tremendous peer support offered by ALGWA. Information and to book: [ALGWA 2023 National Conference – Cape Schanck, Mornington Peninsula, Victoria \(mornpen.vic.gov.au\)](https://www.algwa.org.au/conference)



Financial Superwomen Workshops are launching in Victoria which may be why you haven't yet heard of this amazing **free** workshop. The workshops are run for females who have been or are currently affected by Domestic or Family Violence. These ladies often find themselves lacking knowledge/confidence around their money/finance hence this workshop; for information and to register: www.financialsuperwomen.net.au

Their passion is through knowledge and support, to empower the female participants to make the right decisions for their future 'to break the cycle'. They do this by covering the following topics:

- Banking
- Money Mindset/Budgeting
- Navigating Financial Hardship
- Renting a Home
- Buying a Home
- Tax & Business
- Broken to Brilliant

The possible participants need to register online for the workshop, they will then receive a call (at a convenient time) to confirm they will receive value from attending plus the details of the location (this is not advertised).

Date: Saturday 27th May – Melbourne

Afghan Afternoon Tea 2:30pm – 5pm was held on Sunday 30 April, Afghan New Year 2023 - Nowroz 140, at the iconic Afghan Gallery, 327 Brunswick St Fitzroy Report by Deborah Towns OAM

NCWV members (see below), including President Ronniel Milliken, Robyn Byrne, Deborah Towns, Sue Whitehead and Sheila Byard, joined 70 others at Afghan Australian Development Organisation's (AADO) event. We were addressed by the special guest, Mahtab Fazl, a former judge and prosecutor of Herat Province, Afghanistan, now living in Victoria, but would love to go back to live and work safely in Afghanistan.

In Australia she is helped by AADO and the Australian Association of Women Judges (AAWJ). AADO's president, Jackie Fristacky AO, interviewed Mahtab about her experiences as a female judge and how she had protected women's rights in Afghanistan. We found out that before the Taliban took power she put men in jail for domestic violence, murdering wives, rape and other crimes. She also supported the education of girls and women.

When the Taliban took over, they immediately released many criminals who were jailed for murder, rape, drug trafficking and other serious crimes. Judges feared for their lives, especially women judges, as they had sentenced many male criminals. According to the Taliban's interpretation of Sharia Law, women cannot judge men. Two women judges were killed. Women judges were sponsored by the AAWJ to come to Australia with 17 living here. Internationally there are other Afghan women judges being helped to live in other countries.

What is the Afghan Australian Development Organisation? The AADO is a voluntary, non-profit, non-government member organisation. Its primary purpose is to implement projects that assist in the reconstruction and sustainable development of communities within Afghanistan. In Australia AADO seeks to support the Afghan community. AADO was established in 2002 by prominent Afghan-Australian, Dr Nouria Salehi AM (Senior Citizen of the Year 2012) following many years of privately assisting Afghans to settle in Australia and raising funds to help families in Afghanistan. In 2022, one of AADO's programs supported girls to be privately educated and qualify to attend university.

For further information and how you could assist with donations please go to their website. <https://www.aado.org.au/>



Mahtab Fazl with Jackie Fristacky



May Council Meeting, 4th May 2023, 12:15pm-2:15pm

The guest speakers were **Elena Pappas the cofounder, Chief Executive and Executive Director of the Law and Advocacy Centre for Women** spoke about Smart Justice for Women; **Anoushka Jeronimus the Director of West Justices Youth Law Program** spoke about Smart Justice for Youth and **Sarah LeFevre the Legal Policy Advisor at the Federation of Community Legal Centres and co-convenor of Smart Justice for Women**. Elena and Sarah are in the centre of this screen grab.

Sarah Lefevre advised that there is a broader Smart Justice Banner which both groups fall under and the purpose of both is to create a fairer and more inclusive criminal justice system, to reduce crime, is human rights focused and rehabilitation focused, one group focused on women and the other young people.

Anoushka Jeronimus co-convenes Smart Justice for Young People in Victoria. She advised that Smart Justice for young people is a collation of 50 organisations who work with young people in conflict with the law, with four key objectives:

- The age of criminal responsibility to be raised to 14;
- A commitment to community-led, place-based initiatives to tackle disadvantage;
- Action to address the disproportionate representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and CALD children and young people in the justice system;
- An approach that acknowledges and takes action against the systemic bias that young people encounter, instead of focusing on individual risk factor.

Before last year's election they developed a policy platform which has 34 election asks. One is a call for a childhood strategy, in Victoria there is a youth strategy which spans young people 12 – 25, what is missing is a strategy for 0-12 years and they're asking for a Minister for children and their families.

Anne Holland the National Children's Commissioner has been also making a call for a Federal Children's Minister. A workplan has also been created. The 34 asks have been broken into Tier 1 the asks that they will spearhead, Tier 2 will use active allies and partners and Tier 3 they will actively support.

Another piece of work to include on NCWV radar is 'raise the age' of conviction to 14 years with no exceptions. Victorian government has raised this to 12 and to 14 years in 4 years, which is deemed by Smart Justice for Youth as unsatisfactory.

Sarah LeFevre, Co-Chair for Smart Justice for Women (SJFW) advised that herself and Elena are co-convenors which is separate to Smart Justice for Young People, but they do share priorities and each other's work and priorities. Smart Justice is a coalition of lawyers, social workers and organisations that work closely with women pre and post release from prison and also policy specialists and academics with a commitment to reducing the criminalisation and increased incarceration of women in Victoria.

There is an urgent need to stem the growth of women in prison in Victoria, as this has more than doubled over the past decade, with the number of Aboriginal women in prison more than tripling. There is a clear link between disadvantage and women's involvement with the criminal legal system. Most women who are drawn into the criminal legal system have experienced trauma, including childhood and adult victimisation, child protection, poverty, sexual abuse, family violence. Without appropriate supports, these experiences can drive women to engage in behaviours that lead to them becoming criminalised. SJFW has identified key reforms required to reverse the increasing incarceration of women, prioritising:

- criminal legal system reform that recognises and responds to the unique needs of women
- urgent investment in safe and affordable housing options for women
- providing adequate resources for health and social services to support women at the first risk of criminalisation.

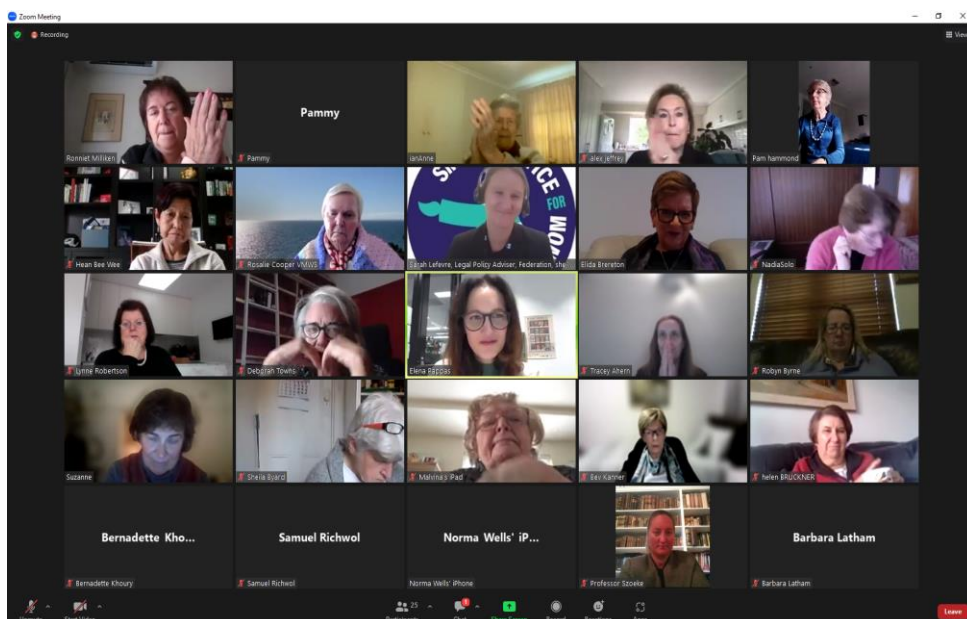
A key factor to the increase in incarceration of women was the change to the 2018 bail laws which has seen a skyrocket of women incarcerated on low level offences, who don't pose a risk to the community, being caught up in these changes. SJFW's priority is to push government to reverse bail laws which will impact immediately on number of women in prison.

Elena Pappas, concurred with Sarah that one of the key aspects that SJFW are focused on is Bail Reform. She explained that it is important that we have a gender lens as women are a minority in the criminal justice system, so it skews the system to profiles of male offenders, which is different from how women present. Women are grounded in the experiences of trauma and studies show they are often the **victims** of violence, family and/or sexual violence.

It is also important to recognise that the majority of women in Australian prisons have children. 54% have at least one dependent child and many women in prison have had children removed from their care, which has a flow-on effect for the children. This can lead to a cycle of criminalisation for the children themselves. If we look after mothers in the system it has a flow-on benefit for the children who can remain in the care of their mothers and be supported in the community. It is important to recognise that a majority of women have been arrested and held on remand whilst waiting for their legal matters to be finalised which directly relates to the Bail Laws. More than half the women have not yet been found guilty or been sentenced. Calls for bail reform are loud across many advocacy groups and is a key ask of Smart Justice for Women.

Sarah LeFevre then spoke about the children of incarcerated parents and of an event that SJFW are running on 15 May as part of Victorian Law week, around the Bail laws and why they need to change, why they are harmful for women and implications they are having on woman. Sarah advised that there was an enquiry in Parliament around children of incarcerated parents and the harms they face, as the *'invisible victims of crime,'* who are left in care or with their family. The government was to respond to this enquiry, however, no response as yet, so a key priority is to push for the response.

A number of things can currently be done for women in prison to help better support their relationship with their children and maintain meaningful family relationships, including improving child friendly spaces in prison, improving technology in cells, regular face to face visits, ceasing use of withdrawing visits as a punitive measure and compliance with guidelines on restraints for pregnant women. These changes can be done without major legislative and policy reform, and go hand in hand with bail reform. Reforming the bail laws will mean less women incarcerated and less children affected. JFW advocate for prison to be last resort and dependent children to be considered when determining the appropriate sentence..



Corrections Victoria (CV) reform initiative: an update-in-brief

Report by NCWV member Connie de Silva who attended: CV Stakeholder presentation: Adult Custodial Corrections System, Safer Prisons, Safer People, Safer Communities

Convenor: Larissa Strong, Commissioner, Corrections Victoria

Context: "Final report: Cultural Review of the Adult Custodial Corrections System, Safer Prisons, Safer People, Safer Communities: www.vic.gov.au/victorian-government-response-cultural-review-adult-custodial-corrections-system."

Some 30 people attended this online event, divided between DJCV/ Public Service staff and external parties. The 45-minute opportunity included an overview of Key Findings, Recommendations & Government Responses to the CV 2023 final report Cultural Review document. The Review is some 800 pages, meticulous and comprehensive. It seems women's health care is no longer in the hands of private providers (but men's health remains privatised on a 5-year contract).

Government Responses include:

| Government Response | |
|--|--|
| Review the use of force policy framework | |
| Develop an ethical decision-making framework for staff | |
| Continue reforms to reduce strip searching requirements | |
| Continue the Separation Reform Project | |
| Implement the DJCS Integrity Strategy | |
| Consult with IBAC and VEOHRC on integrity training program | |
| Review Independent Prisoner Visitor program | |
| | Establish a Lived Experience Reference Group |
| | Replace 106 beds no longer fit for purpose |
| | Open the Aboriginal Healing Unit at DPFC to increase access to culturally safe rehabilitation programs |
| | Open a new closed supervision unit in early 2023 |

Given the depth of the Review, a suggestion came up in discussion for stakeholders to form sub-stakeholder groups based on interest (e.g. 'health' or 'education').

CV Building a Better Future investment: ministerial advice 20 March 2023

Minister for Corrections Enver Erdogan advised that Loddon–Middleton Prison in Castlemaine is part of the Vocational Education and Training (VET) Centre of Excellence program that provides prisoners with the opportunity to obtain civil construction licenses and tickets. The program facilitates employment and pre-apprenticeship pathways in the construction sector, warehousing and traffic control. The Victorian Budget 2022/23 allocated \$37m over 3 years to ensure prisoner access to VET programs that reduce barriers to paid employment upon release. The program, is delivered in conjunction with Bendigo Kangan Institute and major employers in the civil construction industry. It provides prisoners intensive training over 12 15 weeks – focusing on practical skills (such as operating forklifts, skid steers, excavators and elevating work platforms). The program offers pre-release opportunity to meet with employers, the establishment of Employment Hubs and Employment Specialists in Prisons – connecting to employment support and job opportunities. There are five VET Centres of Excellence in Civil Construction and one VET Centre of Excellence in Welding across Victoria's prisons, with a budget close to \$7 million over 4 years to support people in prison return to work.

Victoria's Centre of Excellence VET program helps prisoners

For much of her adult life, Sarah has been stuck in a cycle of drug abuse and incarceration. When the 28-year-old from Melbourne was released from prison last year, she realised she had to, in her words "*sort [her] life out*".

She said she realised getting clean and setting herself up with job prospects was the ticket to a better future.

The Victorian government's VET Centre of Excellence program, started in January 2020, offers prisoners the chance to gain skills to prepare themselves for employment when they are released. There are a range of courses available as part of the program, covering disciplines including welding, warehouse logistics, food handling, food packaging, information technology and printing. Since being released from Dame Phyllis Frost Centre (DPFC) women's prison in Ravenhall in August, Sarah has been using civil construction skills she obtained while incarcerated to turn her life around. "*I entered the system back in 2016, due to drug charges, and possession and trafficking*" she said. "*The last time I went into custody was August 2021. I made sure that I linked in with as many services as possible and got a lot of things sorted in there, since I had the time to properly get clean.*" Sarah is one of 32 former inmates to have already achieved the qualifications and necessary work needed to work on job sites. It's part of the Victorian government's bid to reduce recidivism rates by upskilling inmates, which decreased from 43% in 2021 to 37.5% last year. The VET course program is open to inmates in the last 9 months of their sentence, or non-parole period.

PRISON NETWORK IN-PRISON PROGRAMS

Overcoming depression and anxiety with physical activity. A new [study](#) from University of South Australia, found that physical activity is one of the most effective interventions to manage depression, anxiety and psychological distress. For many years now, *Game on Day* — a day of team competition between our volunteers and the women in prison — has been a highlight of the month at DPFC. The leisure centre is filled with enthusiastic women ready to put their netball and volleyball

skills on display for cheering spectators. We know that this day has such a positive impact on the women who participate and is such a wonderful opportunity to build positive relationships with volunteers and staff. After a 2-year hiatus due to COVID, fitness classes returning brought an audible cheer from women prisoners. We are so grateful for the opportunity to offer these programs. We give a huge shout out to our amazing *Game On Day* volunteers who give up their Saturday once a month. *"We love Fitness Class! It brings a lot of us together. Prison Network bringing that joy in there, it means a lot."*

TARRENGOWER PRISON Masterchef Night



After Tarrengower prison's successful *Soup and Sweets* Cooking night last year, we have made it a regular feature in our program. On Friday night, we hosted a Mexican Cook off, where two teams were each given ingredients, a bit of direction, and full creative license, to create their Mexican delights. The results were delicious and we loved to see a bit of competitive banter among the teams. We also made a much loved lemon slice. We had 29 women attend and they had a fabulous fun filled night together. On the night, we threw in a curve-ball ingredient. Marshmallows!

One team used them in the salsa and the other caramelised them with the meat, creating lots of fun and laughter. The women each received a bag with goodies for them to prepare their own meal later in the week. We would like to thank [Mazon Australia](#) for sponsoring the event, covering the food costs and purchasing 30 food gift cards for post release women.

We are seeking volunteers for our programs — Game on Day and Craft at both DPFC and Tarrengower Prison.

We also have some special volunteering opportunities such as assisting with our Housing Project by helping us turn houses into homes. FOR MORE INFO PLEASE READ OUR [VOLUNTEER INFORMATION PACK](#).

ADVISER NEWS

Education Adviser – Pam Hammond

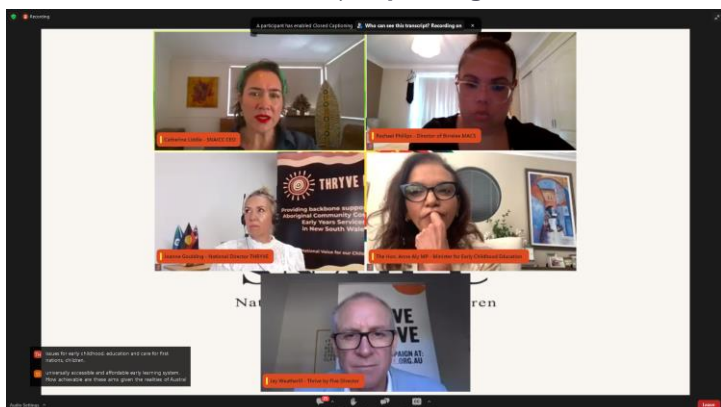
Young Victorians Get their Move on for Education Week: Sunday 14 May to Saturday 20 May 2023

The *Get Your Move On* campaign launched in line with Education Week's theme *Active Learners: Move, Make, Motivate*. Minister for Education Natalie Hutchins launched the latest evolution of the *Get Your Move On* campaign at Altona Secondary College, accompanied by ambassadors Heath Davidson and Moana Hope, while marking the start of Victoria's annual Education Week. Education Week will celebrate students participation in physical activity, hands-on learning and student voices in education. Highlighting that just 15 minutes of activity, 4 times a day can have a lasting and positive impact on student wellbeing and learning engagement, the *Get Your Move On* initiative promotes a range of ideas to get students moving at home and at school – inspiring them to explore different activities to find something they love.

During Education Week, students will have the opportunity to take part in a range of fun, engaging and free activities hosted by a number of community organisations – from virtual storytimes to footy and coding workshops, opportunities are abound to engage young minds and bodies.

More information on *Get Your Move On* can be found at vic.gov.au/get-your-move-on, with further details on Education Week available at vic.gov.au/education-week.

Pam Hammond attended this webinar: **Thrive by Five Webinar with SNAICC** (Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care) **Improving ECEC Access for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Families and Children**



When Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children have access to early childhood education, benefits last a lifetime. They start school ready and access to the same opportunities as non-Indigenous children. However, currently, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are 67% less likely to attend early childhood education than non-Indigenous children and so are 2.5X more likely to be developmentally vulnerable. Despite efforts taken in the past to help close the gap, ATSCI children still face many structural barriers preventing them from accessing the vital care they need in their early years.

Jay Weatherill - Thrive by Five Director outlined barriers, especially the 'activity test'. *'The more we can remove barriers and allow the early educators just get on with the job that they've actually been trained to do to engage in high quality learning and meet the other development needs of children, we can get an excellent system. We need all the other service systems, whether it's in maternal health, child protection, community services, allied health disability services. The only way we're going to be able to do that is to abolish these barriers to access like the activity test.'*

Families are worried about whether they're going to be able to afford this or that, whether they can jump through these administrative hurdles to get access to something their children need. He went on to say: 'We already have challenges in getting people to trust various sorts of services we can't put additional barriers in place and I think it was really powerful ... to acknowledge that during Covid, when we switched off some of these barriers, we actually saw Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families begin to return to these services. Whenever people turn around and talk to me about juvenile justice and all of the challenges associated with what's happening in these communities, we can actually stop these things right before they start by investing in high quality early childhood development. So that we're not dealing with all of the challenges of trying to intervene, to fix up some of the challenges that could have been so much easier dealt with in the early years.'

The Minister for Early Childhood Education, the Honorable Anne Aly MP spoke on the priority for supporting children's development, their future success and the principle that no child born into any form of disadvantage, should have to carry that disadvantage through life. *'Through early childhood education we have an opportunity to change the trajectory and direct the trajectory of children's lives. There are some significant pieces of work already underway to increase first nations children participation in early childhood education and care through targeted and mainstream programs and initiatives.*

The first is the connected beginnings program, which is a key example of what we are doing in partnership with SNAICC and other key partners. We've invested \$81.8 million towards 50 connected beginning sites nationally by 2025. They will support 18,900 first nations children. We're also working with SNAICC to expand the community childcare fund.'

The Minister is most supportive of the reviews that are taking place. The Productivity Commission Review of early childhood education and care, the Early Years Strategy that will look at what aboriginal people have been doing for thousands of years, 'wrapping around the child'. *'It takes a community to raise a child. It's not just about their education, we know that's intrinsically tied to health, to family support, and to all of those other issues that impact on a child's development.'*

Two Years of Free Kindergarten for The Best Start in Life – Media Release

The State Government is encouraging young families to enrol their children in Three and Four-Year-Old Kindergarten for 2024. Minister for Early Childhood and Pre-Prep Ingrid Stitt recently joined former AFL star Bachar Houli at Altona North Children's Service to encourage parents of all cultures and backgrounds to get their applications in for 2024 now. In 2024, Bachar's son will start Three-Year-Old Kindergarten – and his dad spoke of the benefits kinder has had on his family.

Councils with central enrolment processes will begin allocating kinder places in July, with families encouraged to visit local kinders to discuss enrolment options that work best for them and meet staff. Parents should also look for a Kinder Tick.

With Free Kinder, more children and families can access and attend kindergarten, extending the learning that children do at home and saving families up to \$2,500 in fees per child each year. Before starting school, children can attend Three-Year-Old Kindergarten for 5 to 15 hours per week, followed by Four-Year-Old Kindergarten for 15 hours per week.

A survey of Victorian parents with children enrolled in funded kindergarten in 2022 found 94% stated attending kindergarten to be important for their child's education. Research agrees, with play-based learning identified as a powerful way to support a child's learning and development, with two years of kindergarten better than one. Play encourages children to use their imagination, make discoveries while learning to listen, share and take turns. Children also learn about numbers, words and language, develop social and emotional skills, and build essential skills that go on to serve them for life.

To find out more about kindergarten and how to enrol, visit vic.gov.au/kinder or contact your local council

Building A Stronger Kindergarten Workforce – Media Release

Thousands of early childhood teachers and educators are set to join Victoria's kindergarten workforce in coming years, thanks to a \$159 million investment in training and development. Minister for Early Childhood and Pre-Prep Ingrid Stitt visited Merri Community Child Care Centre and Kindergarten in Thornbury to meet Chelsea Ford, one of more than 3,500 teachers who have joined Victoria's kindergarten workforce through government-funded scholarships since October 2018.

With Pre-Prep rolling out from 2025, the Government is also helping key sector partners plan ahead, with up to \$8.5 million in Workforce Planning grants now available to help local governments and Early Years Managers profile their local workforce, forecast future needs and deliver plans to support teacher and educator demand. Immediate support, including targeted financial incentives and access to recruitment agencies, is already available to help early childhood services recruit quality teachers and educators. Eligible professionals can access up to \$50,000 to move to hard-to-staff locations, plus \$9,000 to join or re-join the workforce.

The Government's Free TAFE initiative is boosting the number of early childhood educators available to give children the best start in life, with thousands of students enrolling in the Certificate III and Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care courses since 2020. A range of free career development opportunities is available, including mentoring for first-year teachers, communities of practice for second and third-year teachers, and Early Years Learning Networks for teachers in leadership roles to share expertise. Experienced early childhood teachers and educators can also develop coaching and mentoring skills through a professional learning program starting in Term 2.

Those interested in joining this growing sector can access an Early Childhood Jobs website for available roles, updates, resources from across the sector. <https://www.vic.gov.au/early-childhood-teaching>

Nominations Open for Victorian Early Years Awards – Media Release

With the Victorian Early Years Awards fast approaching, it's time for Victorians to nominate their most innovative, inspiring and dedicated early childhood teachers, educators, organisations and programs. Minister for Early Childhood and Pre-Prep Ingrid Stitt has opened nominations for this year's awards and encouraged Victoria's early childhood professionals and services, parents and carers, and the broader community to nominate those who they believe deserve to be recognised in any of the nine categories. Now in its 18th year, the Victorian Early Years Awards celebrates the outstanding work of our early childhood sector in improving the learning, health and wellbeing of young Victorian children and their families.

In 2023, the awards will celebrate the leadership, outstanding achievement, dedication and innovation of early childhood professionals in a range of categories, including improving access and participation, promoting children's health and wellbeing, supporting parents, and continuity of learning. The importance of Aboriginal inclusion and perspectives in ensuring all early childhood services are accessible to Koorie children and families will also be recognised, with a newly dedicated award commemorating the life and legacy of Yorta Yorta, Wiradjuri woman Auntie Rose Bamblett (1947 to 2022). Outstanding individual contributions will be recognised through the Early Childhood Teacher of the Year award and a new award – Educator of the Year – recognising the contribution educators make to early childhood services and children. All award winners will receive \$15,000 to support their professional development or further develop their program/initiative. All finalists will be considered for the Minister's Award, selected by Minister for Early Childhood and Pre-Prep Ingrid Stitt.

Nominations for the Victorian Early Years Awards close on 14 June, with finalists announced in September. For more information or to submit a nomination, visit vic.gov.au/victorian-early-years-awards.

Adviser Robyn Byrne OAM:

This is a report on the meeting I went to with Minister Ged Kearney about the issues single women are facing in housing, income and what happens when you have an operation and go home to no home support. Minister Kearney is in the process of establishing a reference group — with Ward as its chair — to meet regularly and capture perspectives, from different demographics, on being an older single woman.

Donna Ward says there's a 'singlehood penalty' for women like her. Australia-first research backs her up.



Ms Donna Ward shared her experience at a Melbourne meeting hosted by Ged Kearney, the federal assistant minister for health and aged care, to discuss the challenges faced by single older women without children. Ms Ward says *"the air was wet with emotion"* at the meeting, with some women reporting to her after that they were hearing their experience being publicly articulated for the first time. At 68 years and single, Donna attracts a lot of assumptions.

People around her tend to assume, for example, that she's separated or divorced (she's not), has grown children (she doesn't) and that a single income easily covers the cost of single living (it doesn't). Ms Ward feels that the social and financial implications of being an older single person are not seen, and they're not discussed. There's "a distinct prejudice" against single, older women, she argues. She calls it the "singlehood penalty". *"We're living in an economy now that depends on two incomes to maintain a roof over your head, food on your table, clothes on your back,"* she tells [ABC RN's Life Matters](#).

"We don't have the ability to reveal this life so that people's assumptions can change ... so people can understand what this life is like ... So that we can be seen and embraced as part of the Australian society."

Single women are 'squeezed from both angles' as both employers and families viewed them as more flexible with their time. *'Women who live alone aren't rare. Roughly 16% of Australian women currently live in single-person households, and that number is set to grow'* says Dr Myra Hamilton, associate professor at the University of Sydney's Centre of Excellence in Population Ageing Research. *"The projections suggest that roughly one in four women of reproductive age today won't have children,"* she says.

Dr Hamilton also says there are big misconceptions about older single women in Australia, one is that they must have enjoyed uninterrupted careers because they don't have children. But [2020 research she led into older single women without children](#) contradicts this. Of the 45 single older women Dr Hamilton interviewed, two-thirds had experienced extended career interruption — often because of caring responsibilities. *"Older single women without children are much more likely than any other group to do the caring for an older relative, or a relative with a disability or chronic illness,"* Dr Hamilton says. The research also showed that employers see single older women as more available and expected more from them at work, being asked to stay late, than they did of parents with children.

Housing for single older women emerged as a huge issue among those in Dr Hamilton's research. *"Older single women are the fastest growing group experiencing homelessness in Australia,"* she says. *"Even those that did own their own homes reported feeling very insecure and precarious because they were on one income. They reported struggling to continue paying rates and strata fees and upkeep to their properties ... and [they had] a sense that if something went wrong, without the cushioning effect of a partner, they could very quickly wind up without a home. ... They expressed a very strong fear about*

growing older and not knowing who'd be there to support them in the future," she says. "Many were very worried that they would be forced to move into a residential aged care setting before they were ready."

Ms Ward has written about her experiences in *She I Dare Not Name: A Spinster's Meditations on Life*. She considers herself financially privileged; but even she has watched her personal wealth diminish in the current [cost-of-living crisis](#) and after recent [hits to her superannuation as a result of the COVID pandemic](#). "I just think, 'Oh, my God, if I'm feeling this, what is it like if you're financially vulnerable?'" In December last year, issues around single living are, she says, beginning to gain traction. Ms Ward feels that finally discussion about the challenges of single living is beginning, including at the level of federal parliament. "Having a cultural conversation is the only way we're going to change prejudice and misconceptions,"

OTHER NEWS

Horticulture Jobs Bearing More Fruit – Media Release

The State Government is supporting disadvantaged workers to get into the horticulture industry by recruiting and training 100 green-thumbed people looking to work in nurseries and commercial gardens. Minister for Employment Ben Carroll visited Fleming's Nursery in Monbulk to officially open applications for the \$1.9 million Jobs Victoria Nursery Workforce Project, to place people into roles including retail assistants, truck drivers, process workers and production line assistants. Fleming's Nurseries General Manager Daniel Jansen says their family-run business is proud to be part of the inclusive employment program and welcomes support from Jobs Victoria to find the staff they need. As one of Australia's largest wholesale nurseries for fruit and ornamental trees, Fleming's Nurseries offers good long-term career prospects and plans to create five new jobs for people to work as nursery hands and dispatch workers through the program. These 'earn and learn' roles provide workers with on-the-job training, boosting skills and creating an inclusive workforce community.

Horticulture is an important part of Victoria's economy, generating \$2.5 billion annually and employing more than 24,000 people. With 75% of businesses in the industry looking to expand, this program will help strengthen the skilled workforce.

The Jobs Victoria program is being delivered in partnership with Nursery and Garden Industry Victoria. Jobs will be mostly based in east and southeast Melbourne but there will also be some roles in regional Victoria.

This program will prioritise jobs for people who need additional support to find work, including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, young people, women over 45, and people who are long-term unemployed. Recruits will have guaranteed work for 12 months, and receive pre-employment and on-the-job training, mentoring support and a workplace buddy. For more information visit www.jobs.vic.gov.au or call the Jobs Victoria hotline on 1300 208 575.

Sport Grants Getting More Women and Girls in the Game – Media Release

The State Government is backing sporting clubs across Victoria to get more women and girls in the game, celebrating their huge contribution to Victorian sport. Minister for Community Sport Ros Spence recently announced that 104 community sporting organisations have been awarded grants through the *Change Our Game* Community Activation Grants Program.

Grant recipients will share in more than \$500,000 for events and initiatives that aim to increase participation and enhance gender equality in sport. A variety of activities and initiatives have been funded, from the *Soccer Mums* program offering weekly social, non-competitive soccer to their culturally and linguistically diverse community, to a monthly women-focused coaching development program to build confidence, technical skills and leadership for women volleyball coaches in Victoria. Broadmeadows Basketball Association will deliver the 'No Hoopla' program, an initiative to provide basketball for women. It aims to engage 400 women in one of Victoria's most socially disadvantaged and culturally diverse areas in three free, weekly and flexible basketball programs for all ages and abilities.

Since the program's inception in 2018, the Community Activation Grants has invested more than \$2.4 million in community sports organisations across Victoria. The grants are part of the Government's \$18.8 million investment in the Office for Women in Sport and Recreation – the first of its kind in Australia – and the *Change Our Game* initiative, which is dedicated to levelling the playing field in sport. For more information, visit changeourgame.vic.gov.au.

A New Committee to Support African Communities – Media Release

The State Government has appointed new members to the Victorian African Communities Committee (VACC) to help drive change and respond to the needs of the state's African communities. Member for Cranbourne Pauline Richards has been appointed Chair, following the departure of Josh Bull MP, who was fiercely dedicated to driving positive outcomes for Victoria's African communities. The VACC is an advisory board comprising 13 members of African heritage with expertise in education, employment, health, and inclusion. Members serve a two-year appointment, building on the ongoing work of community organisations and government, supported by Ms Richards as the new Chair.

The appointed members of the VACC are Deputy Co-Chairs Tigist Kebede and Monica Forson, Selba-Gondoza Luka, Adongwot Manyoul, Tawana Basutu, Mahamed Ahmed, Dr Tebeje Molla, Fred Alale AM, Anaab Rooble, Andrew Gai, Dr Stephane Shepherd, Mohamed Semra and Catherine Jonathan. The Committee will support the delivery of the *Victorian African Communities Action Plan* including education, employment, and alcohol and drug education outreach programs. See vic.gov.au/empowering-african-communities-victoria

The Government acknowledges the significant contributions of Dr Apollo Nsubuga-Kyobe, who passed away in November 2022. Dr Apollo was an active member of VACAP and a passionate advocate, academic and leader who played a key role in supporting the settlement of new and emerging communities across Victoria.

“Victoria’s African communities understand their needs better than anyone and the new Victorian African Communities Committee will be central to driving change to better respond to communities’ needs. I look forward to working with members of the VACC to deliver positive outcomes for our state’s African communities.” Minister for Multicultural Affairs Colin Brooks

Sculpture Honours Creativity of First Nations Women



A striking 4.6 metre sculpture paying tribute to First Nations women’s creativity and ingenuity has been officially unveiled outside the Queen Victoria Women’s Centre in Lonsdale Street. Launching the artwork, Minister for Women Natalie Hutchins cut a floral wreath encircling the sculpture which depicts a forearm holding up a woven basket. The unveiling included artists from Ngardang Girri Kalat Mimini - a collective of First Nations women and non-binary artists from across Victoria.

Weaving is a significant cultural practice for First Nations women, and the artwork symbolises the strength and creativity of Aboriginal women in south-eastern Australia who have supported and nurtured families and communities over tens of thousands of years. The basket was made of Victorian grasses with a few rows woven by each artist. It began as a basket about 10 centimetres high and was transformed into the much larger copper coated version.

The six artists who created *Creative Resilience* are Annie Brigdale, Lorraine Brigdale, Janet Bromley, Trina Dalton-Oogjes, Georgia Macguire and Glenda Nicholls. The Ngardang Girri Kalat Mimini artists drew on their networks throughout Victoria in the creation of this work and engaged with a cultural reference group led by Wurundjeri Elder Auntie Di.

“This striking, unforgettable artwork is a fitting testament to the strength and creativity of First Nations women, past and present, and a celebration of First Nations artists. “Creative Resilience calls on us to consider a constant and unbroken thread that stretches back through millennia to honour First Nations women as not only keepers of wisdom and knowledge but as artists and creators.” Minister for Women Natalie Hutchins

Fund Set to Drive Innovative Green Volunteering Projects – Media Release

The State Government is encouraging Victorians to create new ways to protect the state’s precious environment and biodiversity as part of the Volunteering Innovation Fund. Minister for Environment Ingrid Stitt today announced \$812,000 across 30 volunteer groups, including nine youth focused organisations to bring their creative conservation ideas to life.

The Fund is designed to boost volunteering on public land and support community led environment projects.

Threatened Species Conservancy received this year’s Minister’s Award, which recognises applications of particular merit. The group has developed a plan to recruit young volunteers to survey rare and threatened native butterflies in Broadford and Morandini. The survey will engage young people to aid in future conservation efforts of the endangered Bronze Ant-blue, the critically endangered Small Ant-blue and the vulnerable Fiery Jewel butterflies, all of which are known to nest with or near coconut ant nests, by looking for them and cataloguing their populations.

The Wonyip Landcare Group’s plan for an extensive biodiversity survey of the Strzelecki Ranges, utilising both expert advice and citizen science, was the runner up for the award. Other successful projects include new citizen science activities, monitoring of Spider Crabs and Australia’s rarest fungus, engaging migrant and First Nations communities in volunteering, and revegetation of indigenous trees and plants in urban areas.

For more information and a full list of recipients visit parks.vic.gov.au/volunteering-innovation-fund.

Supporting New Mums, Babies and Our Midwives – Media Release

The State Government is expanding maternity services and recruiting the next generation of midwives. Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas visited Kilmore District Health to celebrate International Day of the Midwife and open their new maternity ward. Previously combined with the acute unit, this new dedicated space now provides parents and newborns with specialised care and facilities in what is one of Victoria’s fastest growing communities. Supporting on average 230 births a year, the new maternity ward was delivered to support our midwives meet the demand for maternity services, as part of a \$13.2 million package to help them deliver the very best and safest care. Across Victoria, we’re upgrading maternity units and birthing suites with the new maternity unit and birthing suite now open as part of redevelopment of Shepparton Hospital and construction underway on the new \$500 million Barwon Women and Children’s Hospital.

We’re supporting the Royal Women’s Hospital undertake a pilot aimed at retaining the critical experience of late career midwives while upskilling our newest midwives. Nursing and midwifery is a physical job and the 12-month Late Career Nurses and Midwives pilot will support senior nurses and midwives work a day a week off the ward and in turn use that day and their experience to help develop new midwives and nurses through education support, professional development and

mentorship. As Victoria continues to boom, we know we need to grow our midwifery workforce and our Registered Undergraduate Students of Midwifery (RUSOM) is doing just that. Last year we invested \$9.8 million to expand the program, which has now supported more than 300 midwifery students take up work on maternity wards while studying.

Working under the supervision of experienced midwives, RUSOMs deliver care and support to new and expectant mums and their babies and also provide a range of training to assist them in their studies and give them the most contemporary skills and expertise in patient care.

The RUSOM program has seen participants become more likely to complete their degree, develop greater levels of confidence, require less support once they graduate and seen a third of them receiving ongoing employment at the same health service after graduating.

Our landmark \$270 million *Making it Free to Study Nursing and Midwifery Initiative* is supporting the recruitment.

From Women's Agenda

Residents in the ACT can now access medical and surgical abortions for free — including those without a Medicare card.

Residents will be able to access medical abortions up to nine weeks gestation at a range of medical clinics, including trained GPs, telehealth services (such as [Tele-Abortion](#), or Abortion Online — a Medical Abortion at home, with the Abortion Pill, for women who can't easily access in-clinic abortion services) and [MSI Australia](#) — which offers surgical abortions up to 16 weeks gestation. At this stage, free abortions will [only be available through](#) MSI Australia, while the ACT government works on expanding the initiative to other providers.

ACT Health Minister Rachel Stephen-Smith said that free access to abortions is the “first step” towards expanding people's reproductive rights. *“Abortion is a health service and not being able to access appropriate care in a timely way can have a detrimental impact on a person's mental and physical health as well as socioeconomic consequences.”*

Recommendations from WEET: Minister for Women Senator Katy Gallagher said the federal government is considering new recommendations from the Women's Economic Equality Taskforce (WEET). The taskforce, chaired by Sam Mostyn AO, has identified six recommendations for government action, including:

- * reinstatement of the Parenting Payment (Single) for women with children over eight,
- * abolition of the Parents Next Program
- * abolition of the Childcare Subsidy Activity Test
- * giving superannuation payments to primary carers while they're on paid parental leave.
- * increase the rate of Commonwealth rental assistance to improve women's immediate housing security
- * invest in an interim pay-rise for all early childhood educators and aged care workers, recognising the historic undervaluation of the professions and to retain and attract more workers to the care sectors.

She noted that the six recommendations acknowledged that *“if you start with those most affected by the economy and look at the highly gendered nature of poverty and inequality in this country, it's women.”* *“I'd rather not think of these as welfare payments but think of them as investments in 50% of the population that actually hold up the whole show,”* said Mostyn.

In addition to the six priority recommendations, the Taskforce specified that the government should centre Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in the design and delivery of all policies and programs. Also, the group recommends investing in existing strategies such as Closing the Gap to ensure objectives are met. The Taskforce will provide final advice to the government that looks beyond the budget towards the National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality to be finalised late 2023.



Inquiries and advocacy opportunities

Thrive by Five from Jay Weatherill, Director:

Up to 101,620 women would join or rejoin the workforce if the Childcare Activity Test was abolished - and our economy would get a \$4.4 billion boost! These are just some of the incredible findings of a report by Impact Economics and Policy that was recently released. The report shows that the Activity Test is preventing parents, usually mothers, from joining or rejoining the workforce, and makes one thing very clear; **it's time for this confusing and complicated “test” to be abolished.** I've heard stories from mums who would like to return to work or work more days but can't, from parents who wish their child could have more days in early learning but don't qualify for the subsidies needed to make it affordable, from families who are fearful of inadvertently running up a debt with Centrelink when their hours at work change. The Activity Test is a major barrier to families accessing early learning – in fact, its contributing to 126,000 children missing out on critical early childhood education and care, including single parent families – who are 3 times more likely to have children limited to 1 day a week of early learning and childcare. Parents have to update their activity regularly with Centrelink to ensure they are not overpaid – a nightmare for busy parents with changeable hours. The Activity Test actually discourages people from finding work. As the new report shows, scrapping the test will benefit women, families, the economy and most importantly, children.

That's why I want to hear from you. Because while facts and statistics are critically important for making the case to scrap to the Activity Test, it is real stories from real people that change hearts and minds. [Will you take a moment to share your story about how the Activity Test is affecting you or your family? Click here to tell us now.](#)

Be Part of History

A world-first study tracking the health and wellbeing of Victorians, from birth to old age, has delivered a recruitment milestone of more than 90,000 participants. Murdoch Children's Research Institute's [GenV](#), one of the world's largest-ever birth and parent cohort studies, has seen 35,000 babies (90,000 newborns, mothers and fathers) sign up. GenV is recruiting across every birthing hospital in Victoria.



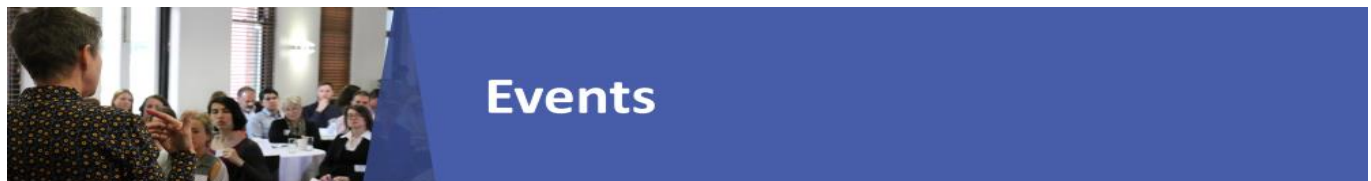
GenV Scientific Director [Professor Melissa Wake](#) said the project aimed to better understand and treat the causes of modern health problems such as obesity, asthma, autism, food allergies and mental illness. *"Families that take part in GenV will make a difference to the future health of generations to come,"* she said. GenV aims to help solve the complex problems facing children and adults and provide the opportunity to better predict, treat and prevent many different conditions. *"Even in its start-up recruitment stage, GenV is already meeting this goal at a speed and scale that might not otherwise have been possible. Collaborators are already testing out new screens that could detect infections and syndromes in the newborn period, providing data on the long-term safety of vaccines in pregnancy and supporting a new registry for children born with hip problems."*

GenV Scientific Director Professor Melissa Wake,
GenV family: mother Saada, son Ali, baby Mya, Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas

Every baby born from October 4, 2021 to October 3, 2023 is invited to join, along with their parents, no matter where they live in Victoria or what language they speak. Participants can sign up to the study in person during their birthing hospital stay or at any time thereafter via a simple, guided online process.

The recruitment team has recorded 70 languages, including Auslan, during the opt-in process. More than 6700 families in GenV do not primarily speak English at home.

Mission Australia Survey: The Youth Survey 2023 is now open. Now in its 22nd year, it's the largest online survey of its kind in Australia and provides an important annual snapshot into the experiences and views of young people aged 15-19. Take the survey, [or share it with a young person](#) so that their views are heard. **Open from March – August.**



[LGBTQIA+ Leadership & Allyship Summit 2023](#) Hybrid options.

Inspiring, celebrating and supporting our community of communities. 31st May & 1st June 2023

LOCATION: Aerial UTS Function Centre

This summit is an opportunity to hear from **LGBTQIA+ leaders** about their learnings and advice for the next crop. It is a chance for allies to share how others can support team members on the path to leadership, and for organisations to discuss the challenges and barriers facing LGBTQIA+ leaders and how to overcome them.

Humanitech Summit

This is Australia's flagship event at the intersection of technology, social innovation, and humanitarian action. Led by Humanitech, an initiative of Red Cross, the 2023 Summit will explore how technology can be used in ways that benefit people and society. A full day of thought-provoking and insightful sessions from leading thinkers at the forefront of change.

Wednesday 17 May 2023, State Library Victoria, [Register Now](#)

MINNIE PEDEN VISIT TO THE JEWISH MUSEUM OF AUSTRALIA AND SYNAGOGUE



Thursday, May 25 11.00 am – 12.30 pm
26 Alma Road, St Kilda

Trams from Flinders Street: Nos. 3 & 67 to Stop 32 Alma Road.
Museum is 50 metres behind the Lighting Shop

Cost: \$15 Bookings to Beverley Kannegiesser: bjkanner@gmail.com m: 0422 508 183



The Austral Salon of Music invites NCWV members to a recital by students of the Victorian College of the Arts Secondary School in the Main Hall, St Peter's, East Melbourne, on 22 May, from 12.30 pm to 1.30 pm.

Three girls in a clarinet/cello/piano trio will perform two trios including the Beethoven Piano Trio Op. 11 and solo items. Cost \$20 Visitors

BYO sandwiches for lunch from 11.45 am. Tea/coffee and biscuits provided.

Collins Street trams except No 48 to Stop No 11.

For more information and map see www.australsalon.org/

Contact Beverley 0422 508 183



Thursday 15 June, 5:30-9:00pm for a fun evening of trivia, when we collaborate with the students at William Angliss Institute, to host our Annual Trivia Night while supporting the work of Travellers Aid.

Venue: Batman's Hill on Collins, The Burke and Wills Suite. 623 Collins Street, Melbourne

Tickets are \$70 per person or book a table of 10 at the discounted rate of \$650 per table. Canapes will be served throughout

and soft drinks provided. Alcoholic beverages are available at bar prices.

BOOK YOUR TICKETS HERE

Our Purposes: *to provide a non-party political, non-sectarian, not-for-profit, umbrella organisation with broadly humanitarian and educational objectives, empowering women and girls; raising awareness of gender equality; act as a voice on issues and concerns of women and girls at State level; develop policies and responses on behalf of women and girls on a State-wide basis; maintain and strengthen the Association's relationship with all members; link with women in Australia and International Council of Women through the National Council of Women of Australia and contribute to the implementation of their plans of action and policies.*

Our motto: *The Preamble to the original ICW Constitution said "We, women of all Nations, in the conviction that the good of humanity will be best advanced by greater unity of thought, sympathy and purpose, and that an organised movement will serve to promote the highest good of the family and of the Nation, do hereby band ourselves together in a federation of women of all races, nations and creeds, to further the application of the Golden Rule to society, custom and law: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."*

National Council of Women of Victoria Meeting dates for 2023

| | | | | | |
|-----------|------------------|----------|--|--------------|---------------|
| May | 4 th | Thursday | May Forum & Council Meeting | 12:00 | Zoom and RH |
| May | 8 th | Monday | Standing Committee Meeting | 16:30 | Zoom |
| May | 18 th | Thursday | Committee Meeting | 10:00 | Zoom |
| June | 1 st | Thursday | Individual Members & Council Meetings | 11:00, 12:15 | Zoom and RH |
| June | 19 th | Monday | Standing Committee Meeting | 16:30 | Zoom |
| June | 15 th | Thursday | Committee Meeting | 10:00 | Zoom |
| June | 26 th | Monday | Geelong Branch Annual Luncheon | 12:00 | Kardinia Park |
| July | 6 th | Thursday | Council Meeting | 17:15 | Zoom and RH |
| July | 10 th | Monday | Standing Committee Meeting | 16:30 | Zoom |
| July | 20 th | Thursday | Committee Meeting | 10:00 | Zoom |
| August | 3 rd | Thursday | Individual Members Annual Meeting; & Council Meeting | 11:00, 12:15 | Zoom and RH |
| August | 14 th | Monday | Standing Committee Meeting | 16:30 | Zoom |
| August | 17 th | Thursday | Committee Meeting | 10:00 | Zoom |
| September | 7 th | Thursday | AGM | 12:15 | Zoom and RH |
| September | 11 th | Monday | Standing Committee Meeting | 16:30 | Zoom |
| September | 21 st | Thursday | Committee Meeting | 10:00 | Zoom |
| October | 5 th | Thursday | Individual Members & Council Meetings | 11:00, 12:15 | Zoom and RH |
| October | 9 th | Monday | Standing Committee Meeting | 16:30 | Zoom |
| October | 19 th | Thursday | Committee Meeting | 10:00 | Zoom and RH |
| November | 2 nd | Thursday | Council Meeting | 17:15 | Zoom and RH |
| November | 13 th | Monday | Standing Committee Meeting | 16:30 | Zoom |
| November | 16 th | Thursday | Committee Meeting | 10:00 | Zoom |
| November | 30 th | Thursday | Annual Luncheon | 12:00 | In person |
| December | 7 th | Thursday | Individual Members & Council Meetings | 11:00, 12:15 | Zoom and RH |