

## 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.*



**NCWV Website:** <https://ncwvic.org.au/>

**QUOTE:** “A surge in misogyny, and a furious kickback against equality, threaten to slam on the brakes, and push progress into reverse. This is unacceptable, immoral, and self-defeating. We must stop it – and we must stop it together.” UN Chief Secretary

## From the President, Elida Brereton



This report comes with a continuing heavy heart as we empathise with our Jewish and Ukrainian Members and friends as wars and deaths continue, and a just and lasting peace still seems far away. We also empathise with all Catholics as they mourn the death of Pope Francis who was a force for peace. Here is part of an article about the Pope's letter to American Catholic bishops.

President Trump was condemning “illegal migrants”, non-mainstream gender people and others at the time:

Usually abstaining from commenting directly on politics of individual countries, Pope Francis made these remarks.

He invoked the Bible's Book of Exodus: ‘*God is always close, incarnate, migrant and refugee*’ pointing out ‘*Jesus was expelled from his own land when his family fled to Egypt to take refuge in a society and culture foreign to his own*’.

To put fake Christians to shame he stated ‘*Jesus loved everyone with a universal love and taught us to see the dignity of every human being without exception. Thus all Christian faithful and people of goodwill are called to consider the legitimacy of norms and public policies in the light of the dignity of the person and his or her rights, not vice versa*’, the Pope wrote.

NCWV has always valued acceptance and tolerance – but also the courage to challenge “the norms” exemplified by

Vida Goldstein and other committed NCWV members in the past, and at this time our fight to provide women with equal medical treatment as received by men, and our commitment to women's pay equality and employment opportunities etc. There has been a stream of articles about medical misogyny, backing up the work of Prof Cassandra Szoek and of NCWA in bringing this bias against the best treatment of women to light.

In Marrakech, Morocco from **23 to 29 June** this year the General Assembly of the International Council of Women -CIF, our head body, will be addressing issues facing women and girls around the world. The resolutions to be debated have been published and they relate to the following:

1. Free and open access to education for girls worldwide
2. Combatting all forms of harassment
3. Enhancing gender inequality and eliminating gender-based violence
4. Promoting equitable world peace with respect for cultural and religious differences
5. For women in diplomacy: a weapon for peace
6. Climate change [and fighting to implement practices to reduce its impact]
7. Empowering women in the Age of new technologies, challenges and opportunities [including the potential threats to women posed by the use of AI]

The NCWA representatives to General Assembly including Hean Bee Wee AM, Elisabeth Newman AM and Prof Casandra Szoek, will be able to play a key role in the decisions to ensure that tangible and do-able decisions are made that enhance the lives of women and girls ---and all society.

A Working Group from the NCWV Committee, comprising Ronni Milliken, Vice-President Guosheng Chen, Sheila Byard, Emma Fu and me, is working on strategic directions for our organisation which we will share with the Committee and membership when we have a final report.

Our May Forum speakers raised concerns from the CSW Conference (see quote above from the UN Secretary), and also the key features and inspiring speakers and workshops.



Dr Deborah Towns OAM has reminded us of the UN History of women's issues. Fifty years ago, United Nations declared that 1975 would be the International Women's Year. The first UN world conference for women was held in Mexico City in 1975.

The Australian women's advisor Elizabeth Reid and the Prime Minister's wife, Margaret Whitlam, attended along with 1,000s of women from all over the world. On returning, a women's conference was held in Australia with 700 women. The UN adopted the World Plan of Action, established organisations including UNIFEM and planned further conferences. The IWY emblem with the ‘dove’ for peace, female symbol and equal sign was launched in 1975, but has been updated to a globe, female symbol and equal sign. 1975 to 1985 was declared the UN Decade for women. In 1995 the Beijing conference was considered a significant event and the outcomes and progress of its 1995 Declaration and Plan of Action are regularly assessed.

## NCWV MAY FORUM, Thursday May 1, 12:00pm, Ross House, 251 Flinders Lane,



UN Secretary-General António Guterres at CSW69 Townhall Meeting with Civil Society. *'Furious kickback against equality must end'*, UN chief tells women activists as conference adopts landmark declaration.

The 69th session of the CSW was held at the UN in New York, 10 - 21 March, 2025. It is 30 years since the UN's [Fourth World Conference on Women](#) and adoption of the [Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action \(1995\)](#). CSW69 examined progress on the Platform for Action, 30 years on.

### The Speakers at this NCWV May Forum were:

**Dr Donnell Davis**, UNAA National President and a Director with Soroptimist International South East Asia Pacific; Board member National Foundation for Australian Women 2013-2017; Founder of Envirobusiness Foundation-Sisters4Sustainability;. She holds a doctorate in urban climate governance, University Southern Queensland, and completed a post doctorate at Stanford University in Innovation, Ethics, design and accelerated interdisciplinary.



Dr Davis spoke about the Pact for the Future, adopted in Sept. 2024, which includes a Global Digital Compact and a Declaration on Future Generations. The Pact covers a broad range of issues including peace and security, sustainable development, climate change, human rights, digital cooperation, youth and future generations, gender, and the transformation of global governance.

There were 159 countries represented, down from 189. Australia had a strong voice and advocacy with 120 delegates, leading in e-safety and youth wellbeing. There were intergenerational conversations, but as 9 – 19 year olds were often neglected, there is a need to focus on their vulnerabilities. Donnell stressed that there are laws in place to protect women and girls in many areas, but not all. There are 5 dangers: Danger, Disease, Distress, Duress, Denied Freedom. <https://asiapacific.unfpa.org/en/adolescents-and-youth> Great Grandfathers words: *'Granddaughters will shape the future'*.

Another vital area – Climate Health, which will disproportionately affect women. Over 39° can be fatal, and pathogenic diseases are aggravated by climatic hazards. Also, 1/3 of Pacific countries are threatened to be inundated.

Donnell will be speaking in Canberra and in Parliament about outcomes of CSW and how Australia can help shape the future.



**Sarah Barnbrook**, a delegate for Soroptimist International of the South East Asia Pacific at CSW69 and a member of NCWV, is a committee member of State of the World's Children (SoWC), Founder of AFK (Away from the Keyboard) Inc, through which she is leading efforts to build safer digital environments while fostering human connection in an increasingly online world. As a teenager, she was targeted and groomed online by an older predator, a manipulation that led to a coerced marriage. Her experience highlights the serious and long-term risks of online grooming and exploitation. Rather than remain silent, Sarah transformed this experience into a powerful platform for change. She is an international Speaker, Author, Not-For-Profit Advocate and was awarded Volunteer of the Year and recognised for Youth Impact at the [Women Changing The World](#) Global Awards in London in 2025. She is a Professional Member of Australian Women in Security Network (AWSN); currently serves as the Company Secretary for the Australian Gender Equality Council (AGEC), and is the Chief Revenue officer at Women 4 STEM.

Sarah expressed similar concerns to Donnell about the future of CSW, as prior to the start, President Trump had black banned some countries from entering USA and had dissolved some departments including the Education Department.

CSW was huge in delegates and sessions. The Australian delegation met regularly to share what they had attended. Sarah was particularly drawn to Emerging Technologies, AI and the effect on children, with violence online and Child Marriage especially daunting. Sarah's workshop was *Unseen Risk of AI for the Girl Child* about which she is passionate. See: [Beautiful.ai - Empowering Women Globally: Reflections on CSW69](#)

Sarah states: *'I am committed to leveraging my experience and expertise to drive meaningful progress through advocacy, education and collaborative action. By amplifying grassroots voices, fostering intersectional solutions and empowering next generation of leaders, we can build a more just and equitable world for all.'*

*'The closing declaration gained consensus, but a lot was lost! We need to stand ground, nothing further to be lost. No time for complacency! We need to hold governments accountable.'*



**NCWV June Council Meeting: 5 June, 12:15pm**  
**Ross House/Zoom – Speaker Dr Ros Otzen,**  
**author of: *Hester Hornbrook and her Ladies: The***  
***Creation of Social Supports in Melbourne 1850s-1870s.***



Ros is a retired educator, having taught at State & Independent schools, including Principal of Korowa Anglican Girls' School from 1991-2003. She was the inaugural President of the Alumni Council of the University of Melbourne.

Ros is a Board member of The Invergowrie Foundation supporting the education of girls & women in Victoria. She was inaugural Chair of the Board of the education arm of MCM (Melbourne City Mission), the Hester Hornbrook Academy, serving our most educationally-disadvantaged young people.

Ros will speak about this era of Melbourne. Hester Hornbrook, an elderly widow, founded both the MCM (1854) and, from 1858-1862, nine schools for poor children whose families could not afford schooling for them. She gathered around her committees of ladies to manage the MCM and the schools. Many of these women were involved in other vital work with orphans, pregnant women, and the elderly. There was no provision for the care of these and others who fell on hard times during the gold rush. Together these women created the basis for social care in Melbourne. They are completely unknown and unacknowledged today.

**New NCWV Members**



Christine has an extensive farming background having been raised on her family's Naracoorte farm then owning & running her own sheep & cattle enterprise in Western Victoria for over 25 years which she sold in 2000.

She has held many positions:

**Women on Farms Gatherings Victoria (WoFG)**, Member since 2000, Chair 2004 & 2024; **WoFG Heritage Advisory Committee Museum Victoria**, Member, Chairman, Secretary; **Powercor and CitiPower**, Rural Customer Consultant (2000-2014) advocating for rural customers with senior management, being the only female member. **Essential Services Commission Victoria** (2000-2014), Rural Customer Consultant; **Energy Safe Victoria** (2005-2013), Rural Consultant; **Bushfire Safety Task Force Group** (2010-2011), Executive Mem; **Country Fire Authority**, extensive involvement from 1973-2013. In her latter years, she was one of Victoria's first female rural Deputy Group Officers, Casterton Fire Brigades Group. Currently member **Soroptimists International** at Ballarat and **Royal Flying Doctors Support Group** Mt Gambier.

Christine worked in the Wimmera/ Mallee regions to help mostly women in GST Implementation with farm bookwork and management program on record keeping of livestock etc. Following her "farming retirement", Christine enjoyed the role of an ENJO Senior Gold Consultant helping women achieve a safe and chemical-free clean environment in their homes and businesses using only microfibre cloths and water.

She has a strong view that women need to be included and encouraged as much if not more, than men, as women so often bring a totally different perspective and can greatly enhance programs and organisations She believes in "leading from within" and has supported women to become more involved.



**Vivienne Nguyen, AM**, BCom, PGDip Economics, MAppFin, Chair, Victorian Multicultural Commission (VMC), connecting multicultural communities to government while drawing on her extensive background in community activism and finance.

Born in Vietnam, Nguyen travelled by boat to Malaysia with her family. When Nguyen was 12, they flew to Melbourne.

Her first senior position in finance came at AMP in 1997. Nguyen joined ANZ in 2004, rising to Group Head of Diversity. She credits this as a valuable experience that helped her develop the leadership skills she uses today. Throughout her career, Nguyen has been devoted to advocating for multicultural communities. She was on the board of the Foundation for Young Australians, was vice-president for Finance and Planning for the Vietnamese Community in Australia, where she helped found the Dual Identity Leadership Program and has developed talented people, many of whom are community leaders today.

**VMC Newsletter, Vivienne Nguyen, AM:**

In reflecting on ANZAC Day, we're reminded of the importance of honouring those who made sacrifices so we may live with the freedoms we hold today. It was so disheartening to witness the booing during the Welcome to Country—designed to unite us in acknowledgement/gratitude. Respect for First Nations people and cultures is not separate from the spirit of ANZAC—it is integral to our shared story. We must uphold and hold firm to the ANZAC values of dignity, inclusion and peace.

We acknowledge the grief felt by many following the tragic death of Abdifatah Ahmed in Footscray. Our thoughts are with his family, the Somali community and all affected. These moments call for compassion and care, supporting efforts of communities to advocate for justice, dignity and safety for all.

I encourage all Victorians to take part in the Government's Multicultural Review, seeking to strengthen social cohesion, combat discrimination and ensure that multicultural policy continues to reflect the needs of our communities. Consultation sessions are taking place across metropolitan and regional Victoria, both in person and online. I invite you to share your voice or make a written submission: Learn more and find a session [here](#). The media release is [here](#).

## ADVISER NEWS

### Education Adviser: Pam Hammond *Repeated from April Newsletter due to school holidays*

The Education Department's [Respectful Relationships](#) initiative is offering free professional learning for early childhood educators (Bachelor, Diploma, Certificate III qualified) in Victorian government-funded kindergarten programs. The online program will run from Monday 5 to Friday 23 May 2025. It aims to strengthen the capacity of early childhood educators:

- To promote respectful relationships, positive attitudes and behaviours within their teaching approach, to enable children to build healthy relationships, resilience and confidence
- To understand the role of gender equality in the prevention of family violence, and learn practical strategies for promoting gender equality in their teaching practice
- To recognise and respond to family violence and build support networks.

They developed the professional learning program in collaboration with world-leading experts from Monash University. The program aligns with the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework and National Quality Standard. The Department is offering a financial contribution to services that need backfill for staff who join this training.

The professional learning program is an item on the [School Readiness Funding Menu](#).

**Program details:** **Dates: Monday 5 to Friday 23 May 2025: Dates: 5, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, 15, 16, 19, and 23 May 2025**

Format: online (one full-day workshop, and one 2-hour, self-paced learning module) **Cost: free.**

To register, visit: [Respectful Relationships in early childhood](#).

For more information, refer to [Respectful Relationships in early childhood](#).

For further enquiries, contact the Respectful Relationships team by email: [respectful.relationships@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:respectful.relationships@education.vic.gov.au)

### Australian Children's Television Foundation (ACTF) Education: Explore Civics and Citizenship

ACTF have launched a pilot version of their new [Civics and Citizenship: Curated Clip Collection](#). This resource is still in development, but the pilot offers a great opportunity to explore key concepts like leadership, democracy and active citizenship at a time when these topics are in the media. Each module includes a short scene from an Australian television series, accompanied by engaging activities that help students dive deeper into the topics, and their role in shaping society.

Civics and citizenship education is more important than ever. There's recognition that students need a better understanding of how democracy works, with research finding many young people are unsure about their rights, responsibilities and the importance of being engaged citizens. This evolving collection provides an interactive, accessible way to learn about civics, with new materials and content being added throughout the year to enrich the experience.

Australian screen stories have the power to make civics come alive by showing real-life situations and relatable characters, helping students connect with complex topics in a way that is both fun and impactful.

**Year Level:** [F-2](#) [3-4](#) [5-6](#) [7-8](#) [9-10](#)

**Learning Area:** [English](#) [Humanities and Social Sciences](#)

**The NCWV's My Vote My Voice** event engages students in civics. A theme is given to students, based on what is topical and of interest to young people, to research and develop a presentation expressing their opinion. The 2025 topic is: ***What is Special about the Australian Democracy***. Students present in the Legislative Council Chamber, Parliament of Victoria, at the Speaker's lectern. They have been excited, engaged and passionate about the experience. **August 22<sup>nd</sup> 9:15am – 12:30**

### Standing Committee Coordinator: Robyn Byrne OAM - Brought to you from [ABC Radio National](#)

I encourage members and friends to listen to the interview with an ex-employee of the **Independent US Institute of Peace** (USIP) after DOGE illegally raided and sacked all employees, and transferred \$25 million to the USA Government.

GUEST: South East Asian Expert and former employee of United States Institute of Peace is interviewed:

<https://www.abc.net.au/listen/programs/latenightlive/usip-raid-lawsuit/105201700>

USIP has filed a lawsuit against DOGE (Department of Government Efficiency) after its Washington headquarters were raided on 17 March 2025. There's an ongoing legal battle over whether President Trump has the authority to dismantle organisations created and funded by Congress. USIP is tasked with promoting conflict resolution and prevention worldwide. It provides research, analysis, and training to individuals in diplomacy, mediation, and other peace-building measures. Established in 1984 by congressional legislation signed into law by President [Ronald Reagan](#), it is nonpartisan and independent, receiving funding through a congressional appropriation to prevent outside influence. It is governed by a bipartisan board of directors with 15 members, which must include the [secretary of defense](#), the [secretary of state](#), and the president of the [National Defense University](#). The other 12 members are appointed by the [president](#) and confirmed by the [Senate](#). It employed around 300 personnel and trained more than 65,000 professionals since its inception.

In 2020 the USIP organised the **Women Building Peace Awards**. The first four winners were Rita Martin Lopidia, South Sudan; Josephine Ekiru, Kenya; María Eugenia Mosquera Riascos, Colombia; and in 2023 [Pétronille Vaweke](#) from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United\\_States\\_Institute\\_of\\_Peace](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Institute_of_Peace)

## Women and Employment Adviser: Dr Deborah Towns OAM

In March the Minister for Women Natalie Hutchins announced a \$5.5 million investment in a new *Safe Workplaces for Women Initiative*, in the hope that it will change culture and attitudes to women in the workplace.

Working in partnership with both employees and employers through Victorian Trades Hall Council (VTHC), the Victorian Chamber of Industry and Commerce (VCCI) and the Working Women's Centre Victoria, the initiative will drive action to make sure people understand their rights, their legal obligations and can access support.

It is hoped that there will be a changed culture to make sure women feel safe, heard and included. One in three workers has experienced sexual harassment in the workplace in the last five years, and face significant barriers in resolving issues.

Victorian Trades Hall Council will deliver safe workplaces training and conduct outreach with women workers to respond to the issues impacting them at work.

The Victorian Chamber of Industry and Commerce will be supported to work with small to medium size businesses to understand their legal obligations and address important gender issues.

The Working Women's Centre Victoria, primarily funded by the Federal Government, will use funding to expand their rural and regional outreach services so that every woman across Victoria can access legal support and services.

NCWV supports these initiatives and will endeavour to track their progress to ensure that businesses and workplaces are moving towards addressing harassment and equity gap issues where needed.

## Honouring Australia's First Women's Cricket Legend



Bendigo local, women's cricket trailblazer and primary school teacher, Barbara Rae, is set to be immortalised in bronze, as part of the State Government's *Victorian Women's Public Art Program*. Minister for Women Natalie Hutchins has announced the statue will have a permanent home in Bendigo – the home of the first women's cricket match to be held in Australia in 1874 between the 'Blues' and 'Reds' at the Easter Fair.

The winning captain and top scorer of the 'Blues team' at just 19 years old, Barbara Rae broke ground in the sport at a time when women required permission to play what was considered a 'male only' game. Playing a significant role in organising the match, she recruited other women to join the teams and ran coaching sessions at local cricket grounds. Now, 151 years since that first match, her leadership and legacy lives on as women's cricket in Australia thrives, with record-breaking crowds and participation.

The sculpture of Barbara Rae is the first of six projects set to be made permanent as part of the public art program, honouring the legacies of those who have forged a path for all Victorian women – reflecting diversity, and highlighting leadership, excellence and service to the community across a range of fields. The program aims to address the under-representation of women in public art, as well as address gendered stereotypes about women's achievements.

*Finding Her* is Australia's first interactive state-wide digital map spotlighting women's commemorative sites. You can read about these public art projects and many more at [Finding Her](#).

For those who attended the **NCWV Pioneer Women' Ceremony in 2024**, or read the **2024 February Newsletter**, you would recall that one of the speakers on Pioneer Women in Sport was Louise Zedda-Sampson who spoke about the first women's cricket teams. See article: <https://ncwvic.org.au/files/2024%20February%20NCWV%20Newsletter.pdf>

## Inclusive Volunteering Awards 2025

## Congratulations to June Anderson and her team!



Congratulations to NCWV member organisation, Women Support Inc (WSI), on receiving the EV Strengthening Communities Inclusive Volunteering Award! The recognition highlights the outstanding role of inclusivity for volunteers who support multicultural background women and acknowledges the leadership as an inclusive volunteering workplace.

*It has been very encouraging and inspiring to read and learn more about the great work that your organisation is doing – especially in relation to the inclusiveness and diversity within your volunteer workforce.*

*We are pleased to announce that **WSI is the recipient as A fully Inclusive Volunteering Workplace – 2025.** Inclusion is a journey, ...*

*We recognise that it's a continuing and vital process we are involved in. The conference and awards recognise your role on this continuum of inclusion.*

*Best regards,*

Adele Braun, EA to CEO& Project Lead, Volunteer Management Activity, EV Strengthening Communities



## OTHER NEWS



**Queen Victoria Women's Centre, 210 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne VIC 3000,** (Access via

QV Square). The Queen Victoria Women's Centre's vision is that all women and gender diverse people have a place where they are welcomed, valued and celebrated and have the power to determine their present and future. Our purpose is to hold and create space for Victorian women and gender diverse people to thrive.

Our values spring from our motto '*for women by women*', the same motto used by the founders of the original Queen Victoria Hospital for Women and Children in 1896, led by Dr Constance Stone, Australia's first registered woman doctor.



is an initiative of the Queen Victoria Women's Centre [QVWC SHOP! Feminist Maker's Store](#)

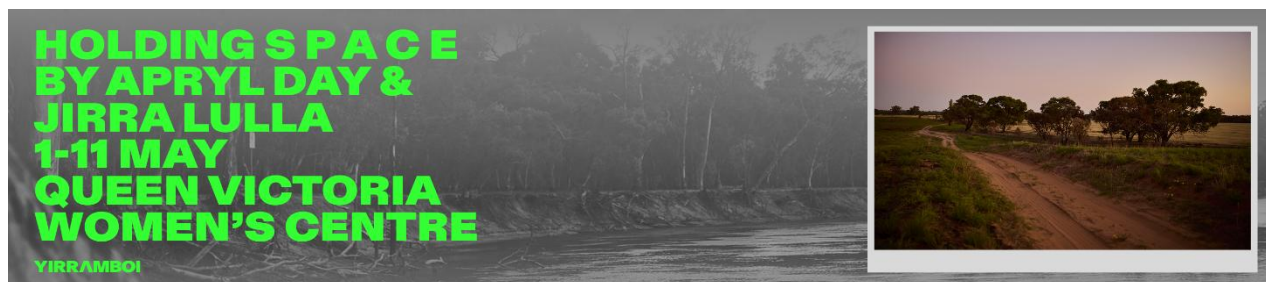
**Open: Tues - Sat: 11am - 6pm:      CLOSED Sun - Mon      Shop      for      Mother's      Day:**

**SHOP OUR MOTHER'S DAY GIFT EDIT**

We are a feminist design store that showcases women and gender diverse artists, designers and makers from across Victoria. We exist to celebrate ethically made and locally crafted goods and the stories they hold.

QVWC SHOP showcases products by more than 100 local women-owned and run small businesses, with an aim to represent a diverse section of the creative community. We are a destination for values-led gifting and offer a curated selection of unique and one-of-a-kind, locally sourced and ethically made gifts, fashion, art, homewares, books, treats and more!

### YIRRAMBOI @ QVWC



QVWC is honoured to exhibit **HOLDING SPACE** a film, photography, and visual art exhibition and installation exploring connections to place and the emotions Country evokes.

Through visual storytelling **Apryl Day** and **Jirra Lulla** say thank you to their Elders, for nurturing connections and passing down knowledge, so future generations always have a place to come home to.

**Free event: 1 - 11 May      Exhibition hours: Daily 9am-5pm**

**Find out more**

Join our Feminist History Walk: The QVWC Feminist Historian in Residence will lead our second 2.5-hour walking tour covering three CBD sites in Melbourne as part of the Australian Heritage Festival.

Learn about three prominent Melbourne women activists Helen Lothian Robertson, Zelda D'Aprano and Dr Constance Stone— feminists who led the way on equal pay and conditions and the provision of professional health care for all women and children. Supported by [National Trust of Australia \(Victoria\)](#) and the Welsh Church. Limited spots.

**Breast Cancer Trials Australia: Gifts Doubled!** Part of our **For Our Mums** Giving Day. We're on a mission to raise \$150,000 in ONE DAY for much-needed breast cancer research—for our mums bravely facing a breast cancer diagnosis and in honour of our mums we've sadly lost.

It's thanks to a few of our generous supporters who have pledged to match donations dollar for dollar, **for 24 hours only!**

**Our Giving Day is Thursday 8 May** so [mark your calendar](#) and stand with us to make a real difference, for our mums.

## Victoria's First Eating Disorder Treatment Centre Now Open

### Media Release

Victoria's first public residential eating disorder treatment centre in Armadale is now complete. Victorian Minister for Mental Health Ingrid Stitt and the Federal Assistant Minister for Health Ged Kearney have opened the new Centre which is named *Ngamai Wilam*. Backed by a \$16.9 million investment from Victoria and \$13 million from the Commonwealth, the new 12-bed centre will be operated by Alfred Health and offer a unique 24/7 residential model of care for Victorians aged 18 and over in a therapeutic, home-like environment.

As a dedicated eating disorder centre, it fills a critical gap for Victorians experiencing eating disorders – moving beyond short-term hospital stays by offering 24/7 residential care with consumers expected to stay for an average of 12 weeks.

The name *Ngamai Wilam* was chosen through a co-design process and reflects cultural stories that symbolise hope, renewal and the promise of new beginnings.

**NCWV supports** this residential centre for those endeavouring to address their eating disorders, also the new health clinic in the Salvation Army premises (see below).

## New CBD Health Clinic to Support Our Most Vulnerable

### Media Release

Premier Jacinta Allan and Minister for Mental Health Ingrid Stitt today joined Commanding Officer of the Salvation Army, Major Brendan Nottle, to officially open the new service at the Salvation Army's Bourke Street location. Operated by the Salvation Army, in partnership with cohealth and Alfred Health, the \$2.9 million clinic will reduce drug harms and give more people the medical and mental healthcare they need.

For more than 100 years, the Salvation Army has supported some of the most vulnerable people in the CBD from their Bourke Street site – and this new clinic continues that legacy with a modern, integrated model of care. The new clinic will make it easier for Victorians to access services including primary care, pharmacotherapy and addiction medicine, social services navigation, and mental health care, referrals, psychiatric assessment and support. Operating five days a week, the clinic offers walk-in appointments, as well as referrals from outreach teams, other CBD support services and through engagement with people using other Salvation Army services.

The clinic is one of several key initiatives to tackle drug harm in Melbourne's CBD, including delivering a new Community Health Hub at 244 Flinders Street. Other initiatives include expanded outreach in the city, Footscray and St Kilda and a new program providing intensive case management for the most vulnerable CBD drug users.



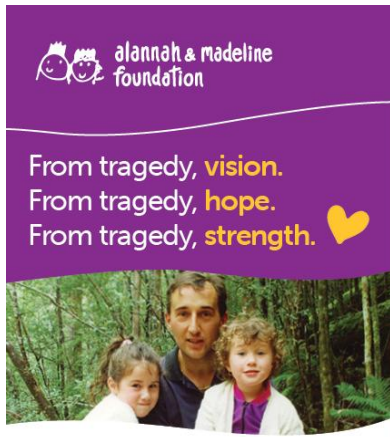
## Consultation on Draft National Plan to End the Abuse and Mistreatment of Older People (2024-2034) Australian Human Rights Commission Submission to the Attorney-General's Department 27 February 2025

This submission is made by the Age Discrimination Commissioner. Enhancing the rights of older people to live free from abuse and mistreatment has been and continues to be a key priority area for the Age Discrimination Commissioner. The Commission's consistent view is that a human rights-based approach to older persons – where human rights norms and principles are integrated into the planning, provision and monitoring of services – is fundamental to addressing systemic problems and enhancing the rights of older people to live free from abuse and mistreatment. The Commission supports the overall vision of the National Plan and commends its commitments to taking a human rights approach, combatting ageism, listening to the voices of older people and diverse communities, and focusing on prevention and early intervention. The Commission also welcomes the National Plan's recognition and acknowledgement of the diverse experiences and characteristics of older individuals.

The Commission welcomes the National Plan's recognition that an older person's experience of abuse and the services available will be impacted by their intersectional experiences of discrimination, disadvantage and stereotyping. However, it is unclear whether the National Plan intends for the needs, interests and concerns of the twelve priority groups listed to be prioritised above those of other groups and the wider community. It is important that the terminology used accurately reflects the intention and proposed actions. If it is the intention of the National Plan to genuinely prioritise these groups, the Commission recommends the inclusion of text to this effect and how this prioritisation would occur in practice.

The Commission welcomes the dedicated focus on First Nations peoples and encourages the Department to take heed of the valuable insights and expertise of First Nations groups, organisations and individuals provided through this consultation process. Given the statistical significance of culturally and linguistically diverse communities in Australia, the Commission also suggests that dedicated focus be given to this group in the form of a short spotlight, similar to the detailed analysis of First Nations Peoples. The Report also comments on the list of Principles and Focus Areas. There are 20 Recommendations.

Download the Draft National Plan 2024-2034 with recommendations: <https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/legal/submission/consultation-draft-national-plan-end-abuse-and-mistreatment-older-people>



On that devastating day, 28 April 1996, we lost 35 innocent lives at the Port Arthur site in Tasmania, including my two precious daughters Alannah and Madeline (aged 6 and 3) and my wife to senseless violence. In the aftermath of this unimaginable tragedy, I, along with a group of passionate volunteers, founded the Alannah & Madeline Foundation. We were driven by the belief that all children should have a safe and happy childhood, free from violence – a belief that still guides us today. As we mark the significance of that day, I'm also proud to celebrate the progress we've made with help from donors. Last year, the Federal Government made a landmark commitment of \$161.3 million towards implementing the National Firearms Register. It is a monumental win for community safety and a reminder of the impact of the firearm reforms that followed the 1996 tragedy.

Thank you as we fight to build a world where all children are free from violence so they can grow up happy, safe and strong. My heartfelt thanks, **Walter Mikac AM**, Founding Patron, Alannah & Madeline Foundation [Home | Alannah & Madeline Foundation](#)

## VCOSS WEBINARS

### What if health professionals were able to prescribe energy?

This is the next **big idea** VCOSS will explore as part of [“Tackling the Energy/Health Hardship Nexus”](#) project webinar series. The webinar will explore links between Energy and Health, sharing local and international initiatives. **Dr Danielle Butler** from **National Energy Action UK**, will talk about the *Warm Homes Healthy Futures* program and how they have established new systemic linkages between the health, housing and energy sectors, to identify and prescribe people into financial support. **Damian Sullivan** from **Brotherhood of St Laurence** will share details of BSL's highly successful retrofitting initiative, *Climate Safe Homes*, which enables people with a chronic health condition or disability to live in a home that is warm in winter and cool in summer. The online session will be held on **Wednesday 7 May from 3-4pm. [Register now](#)**

### Overview of Pre-Prep

We're also pleased to invite you to an overview of the Victorian Government's [Best Start, Best Life reforms](#), with a particular focus on **Pre-Prep**. Participation in high-quality early childhood education is one of the most important ways to prevent and disrupt disadvantage. Four-Year-Old Kindergarten is transitioning to Pre-Prep, with programs across Victoria gradually increasing to between 16 and 30 hours of play-based learning per week, led by a qualified teacher. Access to Pre-Prep will be rolled out for priority cohorts from 2026 to 2028, with all children across Victoria having access to 30 hours of Pre-Prep from 2036. Representatives from the Department of Education's Kindergarten Expansion and Pre-Prep Reform Division will provide an overview of these reforms. Online via Zoom on **Wednesday 14 May from 11.30am-12.30pm – [Register now](#)**



WDV is preparing a submission into a government inquiry about supported employment

The government has written a paper about this, which you can read online (in easy-to-read words and Auslan) [here](#).

We would love to hear from you if you have worked in an Australian Disability Enterprise (ADE) or have supported other women or gender diverse people who have. You can get involved by:

- Completing either our [standard English survey](#) or
- Completing our [plain English survey](#) or
- Registering to attend our Online Focus Group

Both surveys **close to submissions on Friday the 9th of May**. Online Focus Group will be held on **Wednesday the 7 May**. Spots are limited, so be sure to **register before Tuesday the 6 May** if you'd like to have your say. Click on button below:

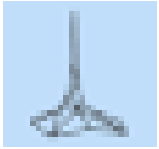
[Register: WDV Online Focus Group](#)

If you have concerns about how your survey or focus group responses will be used, or have any questions, please contact WDV Advocacy Lead, Helen Freris: **Phone Number:** 03 9286 7821 **Email:** [helen.freris@wdv.org.au](mailto:helen.freris@wdv.org.au)

The Victorian state government is working on a policy to speed up **approvals for housing developments that follow certain design principles**. However, "accessibility" is not included as one of these principles.

The Government is asking the public to nominate buildings they think show great design. There are also asking Victorians to rank design principles and suggest any missing principles that are missing from the list. If you would like to have your say, the survey created for this inquiry is open **until Sunday the 8th of June** and can be completed by clicking: [\*\*Complete the Survey\*\*](#)





**Arts Centre Melbourne** <https://www.artscentremelbourne.com.au>

**Arts in Melbourne: YIRRAMBOI Festival 1 - 11 May, 2025**

YIRRAMBOI returns in May for its fifth and boldest iteration — a 10-day feast of artistic expression, deeply rooted in purpose. Shaped by four anchors — Legacy, Joy, Reclamation and Akin — this year's festival delivers its most ambitious program yet. Arts Centre Melbourne hosts World Premieres and Australian Exclusives, breaking preconceived notions of First Nations 'art.' Immerse yourself in powerful stories and performances, cracking open the heart of Narrm to reveal the hum of Country beneath. [Explore the entire program.](#)



**MULTICULTURAL COLLECTIONS AND THE State Library of Victoria (SLV)**

**Date: Saturday 17 May 2025,**

**Time: 12.30 pm to 4.45 pm Cost \$10**

**Venue: CO.AS.IT, Museo Italiano,  
199 Faraday Street, Carlton 3053**

[Click image or here for bookings](#)

This seminar will be held on the eve of International Museums Day 2025. It will feature three informative presentations showcasing the State Library of Victoria's work in building a state collection that aims to represent Victoria's cultural diversity. The presentation on "Victoria's Italians 1900-1945" will be opened by the multiculturalism and inclusion advocate, Dr Teresa De Fazio OAM (MAICD), former Commissioner for the Victorian Multicultural Commission



**THE ALCHEMY OF GOLD 16 - 19 May, around Castlemaine. [Click here or image to book](#)**



The Alchemy of Gold is a special forum which brings together experts, historians and the community to explore how the discovery of gold in Victoria in the 1850s reshaped the state. From a small colony, Victoria was transformed into an economic powerhouse, with gold influencing not just the economy but also environmental, social, and political landscapes.

The Alchemy of Gold is a series of lectures, workshops and field visits. The forum will delve into four key themes:

**Environmental:** The gold rush left a lasting mark on Victoria's landscape, transforming the land through mining and infrastructure development, while also sparking early conversations on conservation.

**Economic:** Gold propelled Victoria to become one of the wealthiest regions in the world, with booming industries, new towns and cities, and growing international connections.

**Social:** Gold brought people from across the globe, leading to a culturally diverse society shaping Victoria's identity today.

**Political:** The movement of people and wealth during the gold rush led to significant political reforms, including the introduction of democratic rights and the establishment of key institutions.

The Alchemy of Gold is organised by local history and community groups including Castlemaine Historical Society, Maldon Museum, Chewton Domain Society and the Castlemaine Pioneers & Old Residents Association.



**Every Monday morning 11am:** Guided walking tours of Flagstaff Gardens

**Fri 23 May:** HSSC [Historical Societies Networks' Leaders](#), seminar.



## Save the date for the MFF Premiere at ACMI,

in the evening, **Thursday 19 June** during **Refugee Week, June 15<sup>th</sup> -22<sup>nd</sup>**. Expert judges are reviewing the shortlist to finalise Official Selection of short films. The selected films will also screen on SBS On Demand in November, for 12-months. Winning films will each receive prize of AUD\$2000, courtesy of our generous sponsors.

## SHRINE OF REMEMBRANCE

SHRINE GALLERIES HIGHLIGHTS TOUR: Uncover the stories behind the Shrine's most intriguing objects this May with a special, limited-time tour in conjunction with the Australian Heritage Festival. The Shrine's Galleries of Remembrance are located below the monument and hold more than 800 artworks and historical objects.

On this 45-minute tour, your guide will highlight some of the key treasures from the collection, along with a few personal favourites, bringing history to life through powerful and unexpected stories.

**Monday 12 May - Sunday 18 May, 11am and 2pm daily. \$10**

**LEARN MORE**



### VICTORIAN ABORIGINAL REMEMBRANCE SERVICE

For over a century, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have proudly served in conflicts and peacekeeping missions involving Australia. Yet for years, their service and sacrifice went unrecognised. Held during Reconciliation Week, the Victorian Aboriginal Remembrance Service invites all Victorians to come together, pay their respects, and honour the legacy of First Nations Defence personnel.

Join us in recognising and reflecting on the vital contributions Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander service members have made, and continue to make, to the Australian Defence Force.

**Saturday 31 May, 11am Second World War Memorial Forecourt**

**LEARN MORE**

## Free, Dedicated Care at New Aboriginal Women's Health Clinic

Aboriginal women across metropolitan Melbourne will soon have access to a new dedicated service providing free, comprehensive and culturally safe care – with the State Government announcing a new Aboriginal women's health clinic. Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas announced First Peoples' Health and Wellbeing (FPHW) will deliver the new clinic from their Thomastown and Frankston locations **from mid-2025**.

The clinic will provide a range of services including screening, diagnosis, management of women's health conditions: pelvic pain, endometriosis, menopause, long-acting reversible contraception (LARC), and termination of pregnancy.

In addition to offering the services at their clinics in the city's north and southeast, FPHW will work closely with services across the state to provide care, referral pathways and education – ensuring location is no barrier to care.

Aboriginal Women's Health Clinic staff will play a key role in service navigation for patients, streamlining access to timely and culturally safe diagnostic and treatment services across the healthcare system. The clinic will also help to address the ongoing health equity and outcomes by increasing patients understanding of their own bodies, fostering self-determination in health and wellbeing, and promoting women's health literacy.



<https://www.aboriginalculturalimmersions.com.au/reconciliation-week>

## Aboriginal Reconciliation Week is May 27th - June 3<sup>rd</sup>


The National Reconciliation Week (NRW) 2025 theme, *Bridging Now to Next*, reflects the ongoing connection between past, present and future. What do we do in National Reconciliation Week?

National Reconciliation Week is a time for all Australians to learn about our shared histories, cultures, and achievements, and to explore how each of us can contribute to achieving reconciliation in Australia.

In a time of rapid change and growing inequality, trust in leadership and public policy has never been more important. That's why we're launching **Trust Women: Lunch Break Sessions**, is a new webinar series designed to break down some of the most important gender equality policy challenges facing Australia today. From February to June 2025, we'll host expert-led discussions on key issues such as nuclear energy, early childhood education, abortion access, housing, youth mental health, and tech-facilitated abuse.

Each session will offer insights from leading thinkers, advocates, and policy experts, helping us better understand the blockers to progress and, more importantly, the pathways forward. [Free, registration essential >](#)


### [Housing Security: Navigating the Crisis in 2025](#)

 **12pm AEST, Tuesday 6 May 2025**

 Free Zoom Webinar [REGISTER >](#) Speakers TBA


**Mary Crooks AO (moderator)** Executive Director, Victorian Women's Trust

### [Youth Mental Health: How Can We Better Support Teens?](#)

 **12pm AEST, Tuesday 27 May 2025**

 Free Zoom Webinar [REGISTER >](#) Speakers TBA

### [AI and Tech-Facilitated Abuse: What Does the Future Hold?](#)

 **12pm AEST, Tuesday 17 June 2025**

 Free Zoom Webinar [REGISTER >](#) Speakers TBA

## WDV's Supported Employment Inquiry

WDV is preparing a submission into a government inquiry about supported employment. The government has written a paper about this, which you can read online (in easy-to-read words and Auslan) [here](#).

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Register: [Snoozarella 2025](#)

**Snoozarella 2025 - 31 May-1 June, Moorabbin & Echuca**

**Girl Guides** state sleepover for Guides aged 5-9 is BACK with two exciting Twisted Science locations, and one full night of STEM-powered fun. A 50% deposit option is available upon registration, but only until midnight TONIGHT!

**REGISTRATIONS CLOSE 11:59PM 12 MAY .**



*President Nonie and members warmly invite you and your friends to attend the 81st Annual Luncheon of the NCWV – Geelong Branch*

**To be held on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> June 2025, 11.30am for noon**

*proceeds supporting Geelong's Lazarus Community Centre. RSVP: June 23 2025*

*Our luncheon will be held in Geelong's newest multi- functional entertainment centre, located within the Shell Club precinct, cnr Bacchus Marsh Road/ Purnell Road, Corio.*

*<https://maps.app.goo.gl/32mFkNU6E9ffWZK77> Melways Map 432 B8 Cost: \$70-00 per person*

*We are privileged to have as our Key Note Speaker Emelia Young, whose groundbreaking research and multidisciplinary work saw her receiving the Ministers Award for Outstanding Leadership in the development of a specialty area that incorporates occupational therapy and maternity care, and nurturing independence and support of the growing number of young parents with disability/ies.*

**Enquiries: Secretary: Barbara Abley AM Email: [rivendell.b@bigpond.com](mailto:rivendell.b@bigpond.com) Mobile: 0419358223**

**Registrations: Anne Parton Email: [ivpanne@inet.net.au](mailto:ivpanne@inet.net.au) phone: 03 52419344**

**\*Please advise dietary requirements, \*names of guests to be seated together. Tables of 8.**

**PAYMENT due by 23rd June 2025**

**Preferred Payment by \*Direct Deposit to BSB 063512 A/C No 10134722**

**\*PLEASE indicate ANNUAL LUNCHEON and YOUR NAME in the Reference Line**

**Enquiries regarding other forms of payments should be directed to:**

**Treasurer, Jan Kinloch OAM Email: [jan@pecs.com.au](mailto:jan@pecs.com.au) Mobile: 0408346691**

**10/15-16 Jewel Place Highton 3216**



**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 2025

Month	Date	Day	Meeting Type	Time	Method
May	12 <sup>th</sup>	Monday	Standing Committee Meeting	16:30	ZOOM
May	15 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday	Committee Meeting	10:00	RHSV
June	5 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday	Individual Members & Council Meetings	11:00, 12:15	Ross Hse/ZOOM
June	16 <sup>th</sup>	Monday	Standing Committee Meeting	16:30	ZOOM
June	19 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday	Committee Meeting	10:00	RHSV
June	30 <sup>th</sup>	Monday	Geelong's 81 <sup>st</sup> Annual Luncheon, Lazarus Community Centre, Geelong	11:30 for 12:00	Melways Map 432 B8
July	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Thursday	Council Meeting	17:15	Ross Hse/ZOOM
July	14 <sup>th</sup>	Monday	Standing Committee Meeting	16:30	ZOOM
July	17 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday	Committee Meeting	10:00	RHS
August	7 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday	Individual Members Annual Meeting; & Council Meeting	11:00, 12:15	Ross Hse/ZOOM
August	18 <sup>th</sup>	Monday	Standing Committee Meeting	16:30	ZOOM
August	22 <sup>nd</sup>	Friday	My Vote My Voice	9:15	Parliament
August	21 <sup>st</sup>	Thursday	Committee Meeting	10:00	RHSV
September	4 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday	AGM	12:15	Zoom/Ross Hse
September	15 <sup>th</sup>	Monday	Standing Committee Meeting	16:30	ZOOM
September	18 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday	Committee Meeting	10:00	RHSV
October	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Thursday	Individual Members & Council Meeting	11:00, 12:15	tbc
October	13 <sup>th</sup>	Monday	Standing Committee Meeting	16:30	ZOOM
October	16 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday	Committee Meeting	10:00	RHSV
November	6 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday	Council Meeting	17:15	tbc
November	20 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday	Committee Meeting	10:00	RHSV
November	27 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday	Annual Luncheon	12:00	William Angliss
December	4 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday	Individual Members & Council Meeting	11:00, 12:15	tbc

This publication is compiled and edited by Pam Hammond, Vice-President NCWV, with support from President, Elida Brereton.