NCWV NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN VICTORIA

Founded 1902 ~

Newsletter **November 2026**

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/

Please like and share NCWV LinkedIn profile: https://www.linkedin.com/company/national-council-of-women-victoria-inc/

QUOTE: ***"United Nations International Day of Tolerance****. Tolerance is neither indulgence nor indifference. It is respect and appreciation of the rich variety of our world's cultures, our forms of expression and ways of being human. Tolerance recognizes the universal human rights and fundamental freedoms of others. People are naturally diverse; only tolerance can ensure the survival of mixed communities in every region of the globe."* General Conference of UNESCO, Paris, 16 November 1995

President's Report – Ronniet Milliken



This UNESCO quote fits very well with our desire to promote tolerance through NCWV programs in 2027 and beyond, as flagged in the October Newsletter.

We look forward to your participation in events in 2027, as ambassadors for Respect and Social Cohesion.

NCWV stands in solidarity with the Hon Helen Haines as she recovers from her injuries. All the best Helen for your recovery, our thoughts are with you and your family.

We endorse this message from the ALGWA President, Cr Karen Foster:

… If you are wondering whether a future in public leadership is worth pursuing, please know this: Your voice matters.

It is more important than ever that women are present in rooms where decisions are made. And we know our communities are better when women lead. … I believe with all my heart that we have a powerful role to play in helping to reshape the nature of political discourse in Australia.

Recently I visited the Northern Territory Parliament (built after WWII), the South Australian Parliament (built in 2 stages - the west wing in 1889 and the east wing begun in the State's centenary 1936 providing hundreds of people with work.

Much like our Pioneer Women's Garden! The Adelaide Centre for Democracy, was teaming with senior school students experiencing the multi – media sensory experience educating them about our unique Australian Federal and State democratic institutions and practices – like voting, and petitions.

In 1894 the South Australian parliament was the first in Australia to extend to women, including Aboriginal women, the right to vote and stand for election. This decision later helped to secure votes for women after the Australian colonies federated. There are two quilt banners displayed inside the SA Parliament celebrating milestone in women's suffrage.

It is not about the bricks and mortar. More about the Civic Engagement by our matriarchs and women of today - Change Makers. These women are celebrated in Old Parliament House in Canberra. NCWV members today and previously include Change Makers - advocating through not for profit organisations and charities and with all levels of government.

We are conscious of our non-party political broadly humanitarian and educational objectives raising awareness of gender equality. On Tuesday 10 November 2026, ahead of the Victorian Election, join our online Town Hall meeting about the Scorecard based on questions about women's health and reproductive healthcare, safety from violence, housing, economic security, aged care, disability supports, girls' education and safety, and more.

We do not endorse political parties or candidates. Our aim is to help voters compare the parties' stated policies and make informed choices. See P. 2 for details and links.



Virtual Town Hall – online, NOT in a town hall!!

Where do the parties stand on the issues affecting women and girls in Victoria? Join NCWV for a Virtual Town Hall as we share our Victorian Election 2026 Scorecard, discuss the responses, and open the floor for questions.

NCWV is non-partisan. We do not endorse political parties or candidates. Our aim is to help voters compare the parties stated policies and make informed choices.

We have invited all currently registered parties to respond.

Tuesday 10 November 2026, 7:00 pm AEDT Register: https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Nt8jRD92RLCY6gLnPMrHAA#/registration

Register: **https://lnkd.in/dtujdfct**

hashtag#VictorianElection2026 hashtag#NCWV hashtag#WomenAndGirls hashtag#VoteInformed

Annual Festive Luncheon, Tuesday 24 Nov., 12:00pm – William Angliss Restaurant, 550 Little Lonsdale St (Spencer St end)



Join us **Tuesday 24 November 2026** for a conversation with **award winning designer Tonya Hinde,** who has a passion for designing with empathy for the people who will use the space. Tonya has contributed significantly to groundbreaking projects such as The Royal Children's Hospital, Perth Children's Hospital, and Orygen Development for Youth Mental Health. Tonya has over 30 years of experience in the Australian architecture industry. **Tonya will speak on: *Creativity and Caring*.**

Members: $60; Non-Members: $70

Tickets via TryBooking:

https://www.trybooking.com/1672406

Please book before 12 Noon, November 20th

This wonderful face-to-face NCWV gathering will begin at 12 Noon with a welcome drink, then a two-course meal, tea/coffee, with much chat, laughter, and sisterhood.

Please bring cash with you as we will be having raffles, the funds from which will be given to the HOPE Network.
Please note: We have no credit card facility.

NCWV Council Meeting November 5 – by ZOOM

Victorian Election 2026: Where do the parties stand for women and girls?

This meeting focused on Sarah Barnbrook's presentation of an election scorecard for Victorian women and girls ahead of the state election. Sarah explained the development process of the scorecard, which evaluates political parties' commitments across 12 key priority areas including women's health, safety from violence, housing security, economic security, and climate and environment.

The scorecard was designed to help voters compare party positions without endorsing any party, with detailed research conducted on responses from registered parties and public policy documents. Sarah demonstrated the visual design of the scorecard and discussed the challenges in accurately representing different types of commitments, including existing services versus future promises. She included examples of how various parties responded to the questionnaire, with some providing written responses while others did not respond. The scorecard will be further discussed at an upcoming town hall meeting on November 10th, with the election scheduled for November 28th.

Women and girls should be able to see what each party is promising before they cast their vote. That is why the NCWV is developing a Victorian Election Scorecard.

To register, see links on P.1.

NCWV endorses the statement for peace adopted on 8 November 2023 at the ICW-CIF Conference in Manila, part of which is shown here.

We, the members of the International Council of Women, are deeply concerned about the suffering and the high costs caused by armed conflicts and the violations of human rights of women and girls in the forms of gender and sexual violence, displacement, other harm, injury and death arising from the increasing conflict and unrest around the world. We, therefore, call for the cessation of all armed conflicts and the re-establishment of peace and security in the world. **Martine Marandel ICW-CIF President.**

HerPlace

In October we launched our unique Finding Her City - Melbourne a self guided audio tour. Walk the city streets to discover commemorative sites of seven inspiring Melbourne Women. Each site is a story stop with a unique audio experience revealing the life and work of these significant women. Visit our new Tour section of the Her Place website to start your journey.

In November we deliver our ***She Leads 2026 Annual In Conversation*** and Panel event at Gadens in the city, Level 13, 447 Collins Street. Melbourne

TICKETS - $110 inclusive of Drinks and Canapés.

She Leads 2026 - What does it take?

THURSDAY 12 NOVEMBER, 5.00PM - 8.00PM

Hear from our guest speakers including Commissioner for Gender Equity in the Public Sector Dr Niki Vincent. There will be opportunities to network and grab some early gifts through our silent auction in time for the festive season. Limited tickets available here.

ADVISER NEWS

Congratulations to NCWV Adviser Child and Family, Dr Rumbi Nyanhoto

Minister for Multicultural and Multifaith Victoria Ingrid Stitt has announced the newest members of the Victorian African Communities Committee (VACC) – an advisory body, which provides critical advice to government on the priorities, needs and aspirations of Victoria's African communities.

11 new community representatives have been appointed to the 13-member committee.

The new and returning members bring a wealth of expertise across sectors including mental health, youth justice, education, disability advocacy and community leadership. One of these new members is Dr Rumbi Nyanhoto.

Rumbi is a social worker and academic with experience across Australia and South Africa, specialising in child protection, family wellbeing, and community development. She is a Senior Lecturer and Course Coordinator at ACAP University College and has published on family issues, including the prevention of family violence.

Alongside her academic work, Rumbi serves as a Family Consultant within the federal family law system and as an Adviser to the National Council of Women of Victoria. She is also a Board Member for the Zimbabwean community in Victoria and the Founder of Safer Family Solutions, which promotes culturally responsive practice for multicultural communities.

Rumbi is also the Founder of the Dr Nyanhoto Foundation, focused on advancing family wellbeing and education for vulnerable children.



Rumbi Nyanhoto



Dr Julie Stevens with NCWA President Fiona Dorman

Congratulations also go to NCWV Coordinator, General Wellbeing, Dr Julie Stevens.

Julie has received promotion to Associate Professor at RMIT University, the second highest level of office in the university system! As Dr Cassandra Szoeke noted: "*As an academic I know how hard these promotions can be, she was nominated over a year ago, a National and International Committee's year long process*!" **Well done Julie.**

Coordinator Social Issues – Dr Yee Man Louie

Digital Inclusion, AI and Women's Safety

Dr Yee Man Louie recently participated as an invited panellist in the COFEM (Coalition of Feminists For Social Change) Online Feminist Learning Exchange, *Who Defines Harm Online?* The session brought together researchers, practitioners and advocates working across online safety and technology-facilitated gender-based violence.

Drawing on research with migrant women who have experienced domestic and family violence, Yee Man highlighted how technology can be both a source of harm and a source of support. The discussion explored how digital inclusion, online safety and the emerging gender gap in AI use are closely connected, and why women's lived experiences should help shape how online harm, risk and safety are understood.

The session reinforced the importance of ensuring that women from diverse backgrounds, including migrant women and victim-survivors of violence, are included in discussions about technology, digital safety and the development of emerging AI technologies. It also highlighted the need for more inclusive approaches to technology design, governance and policy development.

As digital technologies and AI become increasingly embedded in everyday life, these issues are likely to play an important role in shaping the wellbeing, safety and participation of women and girls across Victoria, and align closely with NCWV's ongoing advocacy and policy interests.

Adviser IT, Social Media, Mass Media – Sarah Barnbrook

Gender and AI: Where's the Harm?

I recently attended the Victorian Women's Trust's *Feminism in the Pub* event, where Dr Elise Stephenson, Deputy Director of the Global Institute for Women's Leadership at ANU and the Trust's inaugural Feminist Researcher in Residence spoke. She presented an early look at her research mapping the full landscape of gendered harms in artificial intelligence, work that will be released as a research snapshot and expanded into a white paper early next year.

The session offered something genuinely useful for the Research Circle: a visual "harm map" plotting everything from deepfake abuse and biased recruiting algorithms through to democratic backsliding and environmental harm, arranged by strength of evidence and severity.

For me, this is why prevention matters so much. We need to think beyond the intended purpose of technology and consider how it might affect people whose circumstances, vulnerabilities and experiences are often overlooked.

It was a really worthwhile evening and a reminder that we have more influence over the future of technology than we're sometimes led to believe. We shouldn't have to choose between technological progress and people's safety.

Read more: www.vwt.org.au

Adviser Rural and Regional Women – Chris Rippon

I am very concerned that many of our female backpackers will be severely restricted, but I also am hearing serious concerns from farming families who usually employ backpackers during seasonal work such as fruit picking, grain harvesting, that extra pressure will be back on to the wives of these farmers. I hear of some wives/mothers who will have to leave their off-farm work to contribute towards seasonal labour on their farms due to the backpacker shortage.

The BlazeAid Euroa camp (which has been continuously helping affected farmers of the Jan 9th bushfires) is currently based at Creighton's Creek and was visited by the Governor General and she was most disturbed to hear the concerns raised by BlazeAid, the affected farmers as well as the backpackers. Backpackers in our BlazeAid camps work five consecutive days, then are allowed two days off, with those two days ticked off in the 88 day Visa. So these backpackers actually receive 7 days ticked off on their Working Holiday Maker Visa of which all their 88days of volunteering must be in rural and regional Australia. They are accommodated and given all meals by BlazeAid in exchange for their volunteer work helping farming communities recover from natural disasters across Australia.

I manage the BlazeAid website, "ChatBot" and emails, and I am receiving concerning messages about the future of backpacker support should they be precluded.

The BlazeAid CEO, Melissa Jones, wrote to the Hon Rob Mitchell to ask that Working Holiday Makers be removed from the political conversation around reducing net migration and recognised for their unique and critical contribution they make to regional Australia and disaster recovery.

Environment Adviser - Pam Robinson AM



The 2026 Celebrations acknowledging 40 years of Victorian Landcare come to an end this month on 25 November – as it was on this date in 1986 that the formation of the first Landcare Group nationally was officially launched in Victoria at Winjallok near St Arnaud in Central Victoria.

Prior to that several Australian communities had begun practising 'landcare' type projects decades earlier whether with soil conservation projects or through tree groups – but the launch of Landcare in 1986 evolved to become one of the largest volunteer 'hands on' ways of caring for our land, waterways, biodiversity and communities. From the Victorian initiative, Landcare expanded to become a National Program in 1989.

Landcare plays a leading role in advocating a balance between Australian sustainable land management practices and environmental conservation – and it has actively enabled people of all ages to care for the natural environment in their community. We are fortunate to have NCWV Members across the State, and/or their families, who are Landcare Members.

Having been involved with Landcare since its beginnings and appointed to the first State and National Landcare Advisory Committees, I attended several of the Melbourne and Regional events celebrating the 40 years including the following.

1.State Landcare Awards – 15 October at The Edge theatre, Federation Square. Outstanding individuals, groups and schools were recognised in the 12 Award categories. The latest ***Victorian Landcare & Catchment Management Magazine*** is available with the Award Winners and their stories featured. www.landcarevic.org.au/landcare-magazine

Some of the Winners were: Women in Landcare Award going to Dr Kate Fitzherbert, President of St Andrew Landcare since 2016; Skipton Primary School won the Junior Landcare Award and the Australian Government's Community Partnership Landcare Award went to Ian and Gay Cornthwaite from the Strzelecki Plant Farm.

2.Goulburn-Broken Catchment Management Authority – 23 October, held their event which recognised the long and close relationship between Landcare Groups and the CMAs across the State. More than 70 Landcarers, community members, partners and supporters gathered to celebrate the four decades. While the challenges facing our environment continue to evolve, so too does the passion, innovation, and commitment of the Landcare community.

2.Gecko CLaN – 4 November held its AGM and Celebration of Landcare in Violet Town. The Gecko CLaN is a community Landcare Network which supports 14 Landcare Groups and stretches across Victoria from Yarrawonga to the Strathbogie Ranges, Nagambie, and Avenel (and is centrally based in Benalla).

Similar events will have been held across the State and as well as celebrating and reminiscing. Acknowledging this special year has been all about the future of Landcare and more good community works. The volunteer hours along with community and government relationships shone through. At all events the ongoing involvement of younger people was most heartening. With their enthusiasm and expressed enjoyment at being part of Landcare whether at their school or in their community, it augers well for Landcare in the decades ahead.

Key dates for November and early December which include a mix of Victorian, Australian, and global awareness.

November 13 World Kindness Day – to highlight good deeds in the community focusing on the positive power and the common thread of kindness for good that binds us. Observed in many countries, including Australia, Canada, Nigeria, the UAE, and Singapore. It is an opportunity to acknowledge the World Kindness Day theme, whether by bridging gaps that divide us, or in the instance of the natural environment, which is so important to our wellbeing, it is an opportunity to undertake some small activity that improves and connects us to our local community's environment.

November 18 Climate Systems Hub – Webinar 1pm – 2pm.

(Quote) **"***Land and sea managers face a rapidly changing climate, but finding clear, practical guidance on adaptation approaches can be challenging. Adapt Land & Sea is a first-of-its-kind knowledge platform, connecting biodiversity mangers with the knowledge to integrate climate considerations into their work*". This is also an interesting webinar for all those wanting to know more about climate change approaches being undertaken.
Registrations are now open and can be found by going to info@nesp2climate.com.au

November 26 World Sustainable Transport Day– Sustainable transport – with its objectives of universal access, enhanced safety, reduced environmental and climate impact, improved resilience and greater efficiency – is central to sustainable development. Whether it's for work or for pleasure, the choices we make on how we get from one place to another, (driving, flying, ferrying, biking, scooting and public transportation) can have a large impact on carbon emissions.

World Day of Activity and to see what is happening in your area you go to the website of Environment Education Victoria www.eev.vic.edu.au or check with your local Council.

December 7 – 13 National Coastcare Week – This is an annual event that acknowledges the Australians who are actively restoring, enhancing and protecting the coastline, waterways, habitat and biodiversity of their community.

Environment Victoria has created useful Coastcare information and resources for individuals and groups promoting their support for Coastcare and Landcare.

FECCA NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2026: Many Stories, One Future

Kim Wen, President, Australian Asian Business Women's Association (AABWA), and NCWV Delegate shares her presentation at the FECCA Conference

My presentation, "From Multiculturalism to Intercultural Leadership: A Community-Led Framework for Empowering Diverse Women in Australia," drew on my community leadership experience with the AABWA.

My central message was that while multiculturalism celebrates diversity, intercultural leadership goes a step further — building trust, creating opportunities and empowering women to actively participate, lead and contribute to Australian society.

I introduced a simple Participation Ladder: Access → Connection → Participation → Leadership → Contribution → Influence, highlighting that meaningful inclusion should be measured not only by participation, but also by opportunities for leadership and decision-making. I also encouraged greater collaboration between government, businesses, researchers and community organisations to develop and evaluate practical, community-led leadership pathways.

NCWA – Presentation at the AGM

At the 2026 NCWA AGM, Australia's Human Rights Commissioner, Lorraine Finlay spoke. Lorraine mentioned during this presentation, the Commissions disappointment that Australia had only accepted 39% (128/332) of the recommendations in the recent fourth Universal Periodic Review (UPR), the lowest acceptance rate since Australia commenced participation in the process. Australia's 39% acceptance rate is significantly lower than the global average and ranks among the lowest participation baselines in the UN review process. According to data compiled by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the Australian Human Rights Commission, the benchmark metrics demonstrate how Australia's position compares globally:

- The Global Average: On average, UN member states accept approximately 73% to 76% of all recommendations received during the UPR process.
- High-Performing Comparisons: In similar recent cohorts of the fourth UPR cycle, many peer nations achieved substantially higher alignment. For example, during comparable review sessions, Spain accepted 93.5% of its recommendations, Sweden accepted a clear majority, and countries like Armenia and Lesotho surpassed 90%.
- The Lower Tier: The lowest acceptance rate recorded in recent 4th cycle adoption groupings was Grenada at 60.2%. The discrepancy primarily stems from the Australian government categorising recommendations on specific hot-button issues—such as raising the minimum age of criminal responsibility to 14, introducing a national Human Rights Act, phasing out fossil fuels, and processing asylum seekers offshore—as "noted" rather than "accepted".
- Australia's Historical Trajectory: This 39% figure also marks a sharp internal decline for the nation:
    - 2021 (3rd UPR Cycle): The previous Coalition government accepted 51% of recommendations.
    - 2026 (4th UPR Cycle: Represents the lowest acceptance rate since the UPR process began 20 years ago.

Lorraine put this through a gender lens and the table below is the result. This is an analysis of those recommendations that would most likely have a gendered impact. It provides insight into where advocacy effort may be required in the future.

From a gender equality perspective, the response is mixed. While the Government accepted recommendations to continue efforts to advance gender equality, address gender-based violence and improve access to sexual and reproductive healthcare, several significant gaps remain: Assessment of the five recommendations not accepted.

Issue	What the Australian Government currently has in place	Is it sufficient?
1. Violence against women	The National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children 2022–2032, state and territory criminal laws, specialist services and the Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Commission.	Not yet. The 2026 Commission report identifies continuing problems in the justice system and responses to sexual violence. Stronger investigation, consistent accountability and access to redress remain necessary. Health, Disability & Ageing Dept.
2. Forced sterilisation & reproductive autonomy	State and territory guardianship, consent and medical laws, alongside disability rights protections. The Disability Royal Commission recommended stronger legislative safeguards.	No. Protections remain inconsistent. The Government's October 2026 progress report confirms further work is required on prohibiting non-therapeutic sterilisation. Health, Disability & Ageing Dept.
3. Housing and homelessness	The National Agreement on Social Housing and Homelessness, Housing Australia Future Fund, crisis accommodation initiatives and new Homes for Australia: A National Plan released in May 2026.	Partially. There is now a substantial national policy framework, including targeted support for women escaping violence. The outstanding issue is whether it delivers enough safe, affordable and secure housing, especially for vulnerable women. Treasury.
4. Climate justice	The National Adaptation Plan, National Climate Risk Assessment and existing climate mitigation and disaster resilience measures.	Partially. The Adaptation Plan explicitly recognises disproportionately vulnerable groups, but this does not full resolve concerns about gender-responsive climate policy, human rights accountability and protection of vulnerable Pacific communities. DCCEEW.
5. National Human Rights Act	The Australian Human Rights Commission, federal anti-discrimination laws, parliamentary human rights scrutiny and Australia's international treaty commitments.	No, if the benchmark is comprehensive, enforceable protection. Existing laws provide important safeguards but do not create a general federal obligation for public authorities to act compatibly with human rights. Australian Human Rights Commission.

Implications for NCWA: The response highlights the distinction between supporting gender equality through existing policies and committing to stronger structural reforms, accountability and enforceable human rights protections.

Source: Australian Human Rights Commission – Response to Australia's Human Rights Review

OTHER NEWS

Our 2027 ***Hope On The Wall*** calendar brings together artwork by women in prison and women who have returned to the community. At Christmas, we will once again gift calendars to women in prison, bringing colour to otherwise bare walls and artwork created by women who know what it is like to be there. Those same artworks will hang in homes and workplaces across the community. And this year, every calendar purchased will help fund a new Art Program, bringing women together to create, connect and tell their stories through art. Giving more women that moment of discovery: *I can do this*.

Our *2027 Hope On The Wall* calendar is available now. $25.00

With every page you turn, you're helping women move closer to a brighter future. All the artwork in this beautiful, purpose-made calendar is by women in and released from prison, and our Lived Experience Advisory Panel, as well as women in prison, provided ideas and guidance.

The calendar is ready to hang and features 12 pieces of artwork. It includes a page of recipes that can be made in prison (or home). Digitally printed in Australia, A4 sized paper and opens up to double this size with staple binding.

Warm regards, Amelia Pickering, CEO.

Turning pre-loved into re-loved so every child thrives.

Our Village, the exciting new chapter in the story of St Kilda Mums, Geelong Mums, and Eureka Mums, *is a grassroots charity working on a state-wide scale. The concept is simple: Our Village accepts donations of pre-loved nursery and baby items, has over 600 volunteers sort, clean, refurbish and safety check every item, then partners with health professionals and social workers to rehome these essentials to vulnerable babies and children across Victoria. Instead of being discarded into landfill, good quality, safe items can now provide many more families with years of use.*

In Victoria, more than 800,000 people live in poverty. This includes over 215,000 children, who are the age group most at risk (VCOSS 2024). Too many children are growing up without the essentials most families take for granted: a safe place to sleep, a car seat, a pram, clothing, books and toys. The absence of these basic items is a structural barrier that entrenches disadvantage, compromises safety and wellbeing, undermines children's dignity and limits their future outcomes.

While the challenge is complex, the solution is not. Evidence shows that early provision of basic essentials reduces disadvantage and child protection involvement, strengthens family stability, and supports engagement with early-childhood services. That's why Our Village exists. To provide the essentials that enable babies and children to thrive, while also reducing waste and creating meaningful volunteering opportunities.

There are lots of ways to get involved with Our Village - you can donate pre-loved items, volunteer or make a financial contribution. This Christmas, Our Village wants to ensure 303 children to have ALL the essential items they need to thrive and will shortly be launching their Festive Appeal. ***Donations can be made at www.ourvillage.org.au***



Our Village positively impacted 19,489 babies and children supported across all 79 Victorian LGAs.

They rehomed 66,196 essential items, including cots, car seats, prams, clothes, books and toys – with a second-hand value of $7.7 million and diverted over 200,000kg from landfill.

For every $1 invested, Our Village delivers $2.40 in community value.

Our Village - turning pre-loved into re-loved, so every child thrives.

Anna, Youth Housing Support Officer



You are invited to a **Members Forum** for **16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence** (16 Days of Activism). 16 Days of Activism is a world-wide campaign that is led by UN Women.
Every year, from 25 November – 10 December, extra focus is given to trying to end violence that affects women and gender diverse people.
This year, the theme for 16 Days of Activism is ***'Ensure Justice. Protect Survivors. End Impunity'***.

At our Members Forum for 16 Days of Activism, we will:

- Learn more about 16 days of Activism
- Discuss this year's theme, and what it means for disabled women and gender diverse people
- Hear from you – what key things you want people to know about this year's theme.

Ideas will be used by WDV to create a poster and social media posts, that tells the public what our members think is important about this year's theme.

Date: Tuesday, 10 November

Time: 11:30am – 1:00pm (Including a 10-minute break)

Where: Zoom Register for the 16 Days of Activism Forum

For more information, or help to register, please contact us via email - hubs@wdv.org.au / phone - 03 9286 7813.



Institute of Community Directors

For many years, bipartisan support and relatively predictable political relationships provided a degree of certainty for organisations engaging with government. But as political dynamics continue to shift, how can organisations navigate this changing environment and what does it mean for those working on the ground?

Webinar: Tired of Political Change? Don't Lose Focus

This webinar will explore potential scenarios for the upcoming Australian elections. We'll cover:

- **Majority vs minority government:** What different parliamentary outcomes could mean for policy, funding and government engagement.
- **Slim majorities:** How narrow margins can affect decision-making, negotiations and policy priorities.
- **Hung parliaments:** What happens when no party can secure a majority and how this can shape government formation and influence.
- **The rise of independents and alternative parties.** How a more diverse parliamentary landscape can create new opportunities and challenges for organisations.
- What **New Zealand's recent election** means here in Australia.

Regardless of the election result, organisations need to be prepared to navigate the political landscape, identify emerging opportunities and understand where their priorities fit.

Register today

Date: **Thursday 12 November;** Time: **1pm–2pm AEDT;** Format: **Zoom; FREE!**

Aged Care Complaints Commissioner launches *Let's talk about complaints*



The newsletter *Let's talk about complaints* provides practical information about aged care rights, raising concerns and making complaints, to help older people feel more confident in speaking up. Visit Let's talk about complaints on the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission's website to read the first edition and subscribe.

The Aged Care Complaints Commissioner, Treasure Jennings, has launched *Let's talk about complaints*, a new regular newsletter. Issue one is now available. It is designed to help older people, their families and supporters better understand their rights and the complaints process in aged care.

Department of Health, Disability and Ageing. 1300 76 50 50 nationalseniors.com.au

Visit the website

COTA Wise Helpline: 1300 135 090 | **Seniors Rights Victoria Helpline:** 1300 368 821

COTA Australia led the successful consortia of organisations to fund different models of navigation that would help people understand and engage with the aged care system. Evaluation at: Aged Care System Navigator Measure | Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing

The findings from these trials informed the design of the Care Finders program. COTA Australia created a number of Care Finder resources to assist Care Finders in their work. Local Care Finders can help older people who need extra, intensive support to access aged care services and supports in the community. Find your local care finders here.

Bankwest Curtin Economics Centre (BCEC) and the Workplace Gender Equality Agency new report:

Gender Equity Insights 2026: Unlocking Australia's Workplace Potential explores the career pathways, workplace structures and leadership transitions that continue to shape gender pay gaps across Australia. The new report looks beyond headline figures to examine who enters management, who advances, who leaves, and how the rewards of work are distributed. The findings reveal both progress and persistent challenges:

- Women now hold 25.9 per cent of CEO positions, up from 15 per cent in 2015
- Women occupy 36 per cent of board seats but chair just 21.5 per cent of boards
- The national full-time base salary gender pay gap has fallen to 15.8 per cent
- The total remuneration gender pay gap remains higher at 21 per cent

Employers could unlock a lucrative stream of talent by focusing their attention on 'good flexibility' according to the report. BCEC's analysis shows the key factors associated with women leaving management roles include uneven distribution of caring responsibilities and a lack for flexible work offerings for both women and men at key moments in their careers. Employers with women CEOs and Key Management Personnel are more likely to have flexible workplace strategies, giving them a competitive advantage. Report co-author and BCEC Director Professor Alan Duncan said the findings called for a closer look at the whole career pathway. "*Women are being promoted at higher rates than men at several points in the pipeline, yet that advantage disappears by the time we reach the most senior positions*," Professor Duncan said. *"Promotion rates tell us who is taking the next step. We need to understand who keeps progressing through successive leadership tiers – and who stays."*

WGEA CEO Christine Castley OAM said analysis shows "… *what the data tells us about where that pattern changes along the way, why and what employers can learn from it. Good workforce data can show employers where talent is progressing, where it is being lost and where they may be overlooking capability they already have*."

Women's employment following the birth of their first child varies considerably according to the industry they worked in. Report co-author and BCEC Senior Research Fellow, Dr Silvia Salazar, said sharing care is also part of the workplace story, with only 11 per cent of organisations having a target to increase men's use of parental leave.

A Closer Look at Pregnancy Discrimination

Too many pregnant women are still facing "sham redundancies", as detailed in Four Corners. A new report reveals just how it's happening. Three reforms could help change that**.**

The first is productivity. How can we make better use of the skills/experience already in our workforce to lift living standards?

The second is about creating workplaces that work for families. Paid parental leave, accessible early childhood education and flexible workplaces are all essential to these discussions.

The third is the need for more enforceable protections against pregnancy and parental leave discrimination. Pregnancy discrimination has been unlawful for decades. Women already have legal rights when they become pregnant, take parental leave and return to work. Yet discrimination persists. This is an issue of ***fairness.*** But also an ***economic*** issue.
Debates about workplace flexibility often focus on the costs to employers, it should also focus on what pregnancy discrimination costs Australia. Increasing women's workforce participation and productivity could add billions to the economy. Enforcing existing protections for new mothers, must be part of any serious productivity agenda.
Large numbers of women report experiencing discrimination during pregnancy, parental leave or when returning to work. Many are made redundant, demoted to a less senior role, or not allowed to work flexibly.
Reforms are needed. Stronger penalties, faster access to justice and better information about workplace rights are practical reforms that would make a real difference.

Australian Muslim Poll

Australia's Special Envoy to Combat Islamophobia in Australia has launched the **Australian Muslim Poll**, a national initiative delivered in partnership with Deakin University that will capture the diverse experiences, perspectives and wellbeing of Muslims across Australia.
The Australian Muslim Poll is Australia's first nationally representative, annual study of its kind. It will build a robust evidence base to better understand Muslim communities and inform policy, community programs and public discourse with high-quality, data-driven insights. https://www.oseci.gov.au/news/article/launch-first-national-australian-muslim-poll

It will run across 2026–2027, with the first findings expected in September 2027, to be shared through reports, events and briefings.



Welcoming Multicultural and Multifaith Victoria

MMV officially commenced on 1 October, marking the beginning of a new chapter in Victoria's multicultural story. It is an exciting opportunity to strengthen how government listens to, works with and supports multicultural and multifaith communities across our state. As MMV takes this step, Louise Perry is reflecting on the important role that migrant and refugee communities play in shaping modern Australia and Victoria. The recently launched book *Three Shocks* by journalist, economist and demographer George Megalogenis, explores some of the major social and economic changes that have influenced Australia's modern identity.

Louise reflected: "*One key focus is Australia's status as an English-speaking nation where migrants and children make up the majority of the population. In Victoria, culturally and linguistically diverse communities continue to drive growth and enrich communities. Behind these statistics are the stories of people who have chosen to make Victoria home. People who have helped build our industries, established businesses, strengthened our institutions, shared cultures and traditions, and improved every aspect of community life.*"

"*Creation of MMV reflects this, ensuring that multiculturalism is not confined to a single government portfolio. It touches every aspect of Victorian life, from education, health and transport to business, industry and economic development. Ensuring multicultural and multifaith communities have a strong voice in shaping that future is at the heart of MMV*".

Australian Human Rights Commission

President Hugh de Kretser's message:

Belonging: Migration and human rights in Australia.

Dear friends,

People who have migrated to Australia over the generations – who have chosen to build a life here and call this place home – have made enormous contributions. Migration has made Australia stronger, socially and economically. It has fuelled our success. It is a core part of who we are. Because migration is fundamentally about people, it is also deeply connected to human rights. Human rights aren't earned through citizenship, nationality or migration status. They belong to every one of us, no matter who we are, or where we are. Citizens, permanent residents, temporary visa holders, people seeking asylum, refugees, stateless persons – are all entitled to have their human rights protected. Human rights law provides an essential foundation for fair and responsible migration policies.

Read the full message

A digital duty of care for Australia

The Commission has welcomed the Australian Government's plans to introduce a digital duty of care to make online services safer for Australians. Our submission explains that an effective digital duty of care will promote human rights including the right to safety, children's rights, the right to privacy and the right to equality. But there are also risks that if it is not carefully calibrated and supported by robust safeguards, it unjustifiably restricts human rights such as freedom of expression and privacy.

SBS seeks community feedback on language services

SBS is inviting people to help shape the future of its multilingual audio services through the 2026 Language Services Review. Conducted every 5 years, the review will help determine which languages SBS services over the next 5 years and how content is delivered across radio, podcasts, television and digital platforms. Community feedback is open until 13 November 2026 at the SBS Language Services Review website link below.

Read more

Human Rights Awards | 10 December - Commission's 40th Anniversary

Save the date for the Australian Human Rights Awards on Thursday 10 December. This is the night to celebrate Australia's human rights heroes - people who work for social justice, to promote and protect human rights and make a difference in everyday lives. We hope you can join in person in Sydney or online for the Awards ceremony.

This year's Awards night will coincide with Human Rights Day and celebrate the Commission's 40th anniversary.

Human Rights Day and Awards keynote address - Dr Graeme Innes AM, Chancellor of CQUniversity and has recently been appointed Chair of the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) Board. Building a fairer Australia takes courage, persistence and people willing to speak up. That's the message Dr Graeme Innes AM will bring as keynote speaker.

When: **Thursday 10 December 2026**

Where: **University of Technology Sydney Great Hall, Broadway, Sydney.**

Cost: **$50-70** **The ceremony will also be livestreamed nationally via Zoom**

Find out more and book: Australian Human Rights Awards 2026

ANROWS: Safety and the freedom to participate, Dr Tessa Boyd-Caine ANROWS CEO

Women should be able to participate in public life without threats, intimidation or violence.

Yet for many women, particularly those in leadership and public-facing roles, abuse remains persistent.

Research from Women for Election shows the impact online abuse is having on women's willingness to stand for election, seek higher office and encourage others to do the same.

When women's participation is constrained, our communities lose valuable voices, experience and leadership.

The attitudes that enable violence and disrespect towards women don't appear in isolation. They are reflected in the online spaces young people navigate, public conversations, and excuses that continue to minimise violence against women.

Earlier this month, I attended the Sydney premiere of The State of Man, which explores the influence of the manosphere on boys and young men, and visited Sweethearts at Sculpture by the Sea, an artwork confronting the narratives often used to excuse domestic violence.

Both remind us that preventing violence requires … challenging the beliefs, attitudes and social norms. *And both were examples where ANROWS has worked in partnership to ensure that these important contributions to public understanding are informed by the evidence to drive change. Whether through research, public art, documentary storytelling or community conversations, we need to create opportunities for people to recognise these harms, question harmful attitudes and support a future where women can participate fully, safely and equally in every part of public life. Violence and abuse against women are sustained not only by harmful behaviours but by the attitudes, narratives and excuses that enable them.*

Plan International - *Until we are all equal* *Call: 137526*

October saw the release of Plan annual *State of the World's Girls Report*. This year's report, *Change Her Forecast*, focuses on the impacts of climate change on girl's sexual and reproductive health and rights – impacts that have, until now, gone largely unrecognized. It adds to the growing evidence of the devastating effects that climate change is having on girls around the world, and the unique challenges they face. You can read the full report here.

The primary research was conducted through a large-scale survey in five countries – Bangladesh, Kenya, Peru, Senegal and Zimbabwe – involving 5,000 girls and young women aged 15-24, and through face-to-face conversations with 139 girls and young women across the same five countries.



Global Food Security and Ukraine: Past and Present

Ukraine's place among the world's leading grain producers makes its fields, ports and shipping routes central to global food security. The 1932-1933 Soviet famine in Ukraine, the Holodomor, revealed the devastating human consequences when control of food is used as an instrument of coercion, subjugation, and power.

Today, Russia's blockade and disruption of Ukraine's Black Sea ports, attacks on agricultural infrastructure and pressure on farmers have again turned food production and trade into instruments of war - with consequences reaching far beyond Ukraine.

Join AIIA Victoria for an expert panel exploring the historical parallels, threats to Ukrainian agriculture, and the global consequences of disrupted grain supplies amid the war in Ukraine.

When: Thursday 26 November 2026; 5:30pm for 6:00-7:00pm Panel discussion, moderated by Olga Maxwell

Level 13, 356 Collins Street, 356 Collins Street, Melbourne, VIC 3000, Australia Hybrid options available

Get Directions and Download the event flyer here.

https://aiiavic.glueup.com/event/global-food-security-and-ukraine-past-and-present-196354/

Register Now

NCWV Pioneer Women's Annual Ceremony, Sunday February 7th 2027, 11:00am

Conducted early February in the Pioneer Women's Memorial Garden, King's Domain, Melbourne to celebrate pioneering women in Victoria. Topics recently: Pioneer Women: in Education; in Sport; in Aviation; and in February 2027:

Pioneer Women in Trades, Mechanics, Construction, including the first women's garage and taxi service.

On 17 September (1926), Alice Anderson, 29, died from a gunshot wound to her head in her auto garage on Cotham Road in Kew, Melbourne. Alice avoided the conventional careers for women of the 1920s and opened "Alice Anderson Motor Service", offering petrol, vehicle repairs, a driving school, and chauffeuring. She had just returned from a successful 2414km (1500 mile) journey to the Northern Territory in a baby Austin. LORETTA SMITH is a Melbourne-based writer, public speaker and life coach. Her bestselling biography *A Spanner in the Works: The extraordinary story of Alice Anderson and Australia's first 'all-girl' garage* (Hachette, 2019) has been optioned for a TV series and inspired the play *Garage Girls,* performed to a sell-out audience La Mama Theatre in 2023. The play toured regionally throughout Victoria in 2024.

Save the date and Join the NCWV, Sunday February 7, from 11 – 2:30.

Bring a picnic and enjoy this beautiful location.



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 polices 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 2026

Month	Date	Day	Meeting Type	Time	Method
November	5th	Thursday	Council Meeting	17:15	ZOOM only
November	9th	Monday	Standing Committee Meeting	16:30	ZOOM
November	19th	Thursday	Committee Meeting	10:00	RHSV
November	24	Tuesday	Annual Luncheon	12:00	William Angliss
December	3rd	Thursday	Individual Members & Council Meetings	11:00, 12:15	Ross House/ZOOM
December	17th	Thursday	Committee Meeting	10:00	RHSV
February	4th	Thursday	Council meeting	12:15	TBA
February	7th 2027	Sunday	Pioneer Women's Ceremony	11:00	King's Domain

NCWV is Inviting expressions of interest to work with the current editor on the Monthly Newsletter. Please contact with a CV to: info@ncwvic.org.au

This publication is compiled and edited by Pam Hammond, Convenor of IMs, with support from President, Ronniet Milliken