



2019-20 Annual Report

*W*omenwithdisabilitiesvictoria
empowering women

Our Vision

A world where all women are respected and can fully experience life.

Our Mission

To advance real social and economic inclusion for women with disabilities in Victoria, we will:

- Be a voice for women with disabilities.
- Create opportunities for women with disabilities to be visible and to be heard in their communities.
- Build partnerships to deliver the best results for women with disabilities.
- Engage the community to challenge attitudes and myths about women with disabilities.

Our Values

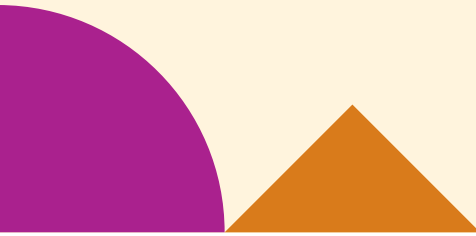
Our values uphold human rights and social justice.

- Equal Opportunity
- Accessibility
- Respect
- Collaboration
- Effectiveness
- Creativity
- Diversity
- Accountability

Our Approach

We will:

- Work with our members' experiences as women with disabilities.
- Provide specialist policy advice and representation to government.
- Create opportunities for women with disabilities to realise their leadership and advocacy potential.
- Adopt a collaborative approach to government and community organisations.
- Build the evidence base to develop and share knowledge and resources to inform best practice.
- Monitor our work and report on outcomes.



Women with Disabilities Victoria acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the first inhabitants and traditional custodians of the lands on which we live and work. We pay our respects to ancestors and Elders, past, present and emerging. The WDV Community is committed to honouring the unique cultural and spiritual relationship Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have with the land and waters, and their rich contribution to society.

CEO and Co-Chair Report



This year has been a mix of great achievements and enormous challenges, not just for us, but for everyone. As we celebrated our 25th year, we found

ourselves pivoting to a fully digital world when the COVID-19 pandemic caused lockdowns across Victoria.

Our Community Inclusion and Women's Empowerment Program has received funding from the federal government for our Enabling Women workshops and our rural Leadership Hubs, allowing us to grow our regional connections to women with disabilities.

The existing Leadership Hubs have undertaken an amazing range of activities, from lobbying for better access to health to running cooking classes. We began to offer online hub meetings to reduce isolation.

The Workforce Development team has been busy delivering training, developing resources and offering advice and consultation through our Experts by Experience, a team of women with disabilities. The shift to online learning has led us to pilot digital versions of our training and resources, with high demand for both.

We've also spoken to government about the very particular effects of the pandemic on women with disabilities – both good and bad. We'd like to thank the Victorian State Government for continuing funding for the Disability Family Violence Crisis Fund, and for their ongoing support to reduce the isolation of women with disabilities at this time.

Leah van Poppel
CEO, Women with Disabilities Victoria



This year the Board of WDV has undergone significant transition, with the departure of Ann-Marie Baker and Sonia Ilievska and Kate Linton at the 2019 AGM, and

Esperanza Torres during this Board term. We would like to thank them all for their dedication over their terms.

The Board has focussed on three key areas for action over the past financial year: Board development, strategic planning for the 2021–2023 period, and ensuring good oversight of the organisation during the COVID-19 pandemic.

We undertook financial literacy training for all Board members and have proactively recruited to build a revitalised [Board](#) – welcome to Susan Stork-Finlay and Andrea Mayne.

Like Boards across the globe we are also providing oversight in a time of great uncertainty. Our initial focus has been on making sure that the Board itself, our staff team and everyone who works with us can come together safely and accessibly online. We are particularly grateful to the [WDV Staff](#), our CEO Leah, and Acting CEO Nadia, for their resilience and dedication during this unusual time.

Even with the distanced nature of strategic planning this year, we were still able to hold a number of planning sessions as a Board to look at our progress against the current plan and hear feedback from Members, Staff and other stakeholders. Thank you to everyone who generously contributed their time and thoughts to this process, especially to Members who completed our member survey earlier in the year. We're excited to be launching the new strategic plan shortly after this AGM, and we look forward to building a better world for women with disabilities alongside all of you into the future.

Saphron Hastie
Co-Chair, Women with Disabilities Victoria

Empower Women

Engage and empower women with disabilities to lead and influence their communities.

At WDV we work to advance real social and economic inclusion for women with disabilities in Victoria, through being a voice for women with disabilities and creating opportunities for women with disabilities to be visible and to be heard in their communities.

This year this was achieved through:

- [WDV Experts By Experience](#) – a Gender and Disability Workforce Development violence prevention initiative funded by the Office for Women. The aim of the group is to provide lived experience, expert representation and consultation in the disability and violence prevention and response sectors and communities to improve the rights, opportunities and services affecting women with disabilities.
- The **WDV Community Inclusion and Women’s Empowerment Team** continues to provide programs that empower women with disabilities to speak up and have a voice about issues that relate to them and other women with disabilities. This year has been another great year of accomplishments.
- [WDV Enabling Women Leadership Where Are They Now? Project](#) was an evaluation of the Enabling Women Community Leadership Program. About 220 past participants of the Enabling Women Program were invited to complete a survey (online via SurveyMonkey or via post), about their experience of the Program.
- **The Spotlight on Invisible Women (SPIW) Project** ensures women aged 50–65 have the opportunity to lead and access advocacy. State-wide consultations and outreach activities are conducted to contact isolated and ‘hard to reach’ older women with disabilities with a focus on regional or rural areas. Through key partnerships this project improves the provision of information to older women with disabilities about the supports available, and collects feedback for national and/or specialist organisations about the needs of older women with disabilities.

- [WDV Leadership Hubs](#) – WDV has three Leadership Networks for Women with Disabilities, which we call Hubs. The Hubs are for women with disabilities who are interested in leadership, advocacy, human rights, and empowerment, as well as local matters impacting on the lives of women with disabilities.
- **The [Our Right to Safety Project](#)** aims to increase women with disability’s access to safe, useful and good practice information about their right to safety and respect. The project uses WDV’s own Our Right to Safety and Respect resources in workshops aimed at building confidence, knowledge and actions for women with disability to identify and seek support if they experience violence and abuse.



“Experts by Experience provides us an experience and space to be with our peers, where we are understood and our views are sort after and validated.”

Experts By Experience group member



Image: Enabling Women Program participants

Experts By Experience

18 women built on their leadership capacity, skills, knowledge and confidence in violence prevention, response and consultation



9 partner organisations

participated across the sector, improving the rights, opportunities and services affecting women with disabilities



Spotlight on Invisible Women Project

111 survey responses received from women aged 50–65



Community Inclusion and Women's Empowerment



1 Enabling Women **Leadership Program**

1 Enabling Women **Mentor Program**

10 participants in the Bendigo Region



Supported by **6 local community organisations**



2 women with disabilities employed to support the program as Co-facilitator and Mentor Coordinator

Enabling Women Leadership Where Are They Now?



Surveys sent out to

220 past participants

65 survey responses received from program participants



Leadership Hubs

4 WDV Local Leadership Hubs

* Gippsland Hub ceased to operate in October 2019

35 meetings across all WDV Local Leadership Hubs



Our Right to Safety Resources sharing project

4 sessions presented on Our Right to Safety Video, Video Guide and Guidelines



Over 60 participants to violence response and community services professionals in Regional Victoria

Average of 15 women attending per meeting

Over 130 participants at sessions on the topic of the importance of regular breast and bowel screening

Influence Services

Educate and build the capacity of service systems and organisation to be accessible to women with disabilities.

WDV has worked to build the capacity of womens health services and violence prevention services to ensure that they are more accessible for women with disability.

Through collaboration and partnerships WDV worked with local government and specialist organisations resulting in improved physical accessibility of premises, communications and events, and ongoing joint violence prevention projects with WDV.

- Forums on **inclusive violence prevention** and participation in advisory groups with Domestic Violence Resource Centre and the cities of Greater Bendigo and Yarra Ranges.
- The [Sexual and Reproductive Health \(AcceSex\) project](#) develops training and resources to improve healthcare workers' knowledge and skills so that they may better address the needs of the sexual and reproductive health of women with disabilities. The training and resources addresses:
 - stigma, behaviours and attitudes that facilitate discrimination and form barriers for women with disabilities
 - increasing access to sexual and reproductive health services
 - violence prevention in the form of reproductive coercion and sterilisation of women with disabilities.
- The [Gender and Disability Workforce Development Program](#) had a busy year developing and delivering training and resources to build the capacity of the disability and social services workforces. These primary prevention initiatives were funded by the Office for Women through the Family Violence Industry Rolling Action Plan.



“I thought it was a fantastic workshop. Although confronting at times due to the very real statistics, I felt very empowered to take action and want to better work towards preventing violence against women with a disability.”

**Women's Health East (WHE),
training participant**

“I enjoyed the way presenters conveyed their messages... I enjoyed the video presented and examples used to illustrate family violence concepts.”

Workforce Development training participant

“This training was a fabulous experience for WHLM, and the key was that it involved all of staff, so an organisation wide knowledge shift could occur.”

**Women's Health Loddon Mallee (WHLM)
training participant**



Image: Gender and Disability Workforce Development Training Facilitators Nicole Lee and Tess Karambelas

Delivery

12
hours

of online training on disability inclusive prevention of violence delivered



18 **staff**

from Womens Health East and Women's Health Loddon Mallee



2 **violence prevention**

auditing toolkits



3
forums

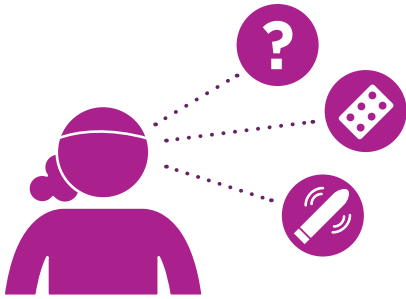
providing advice on Inclusive violence prevention

20
forum participants

Partnership with
8 regional womens health organisations

Ongoing collaboration with
2 organisations

AcceSex



2 **AcceSex workshops**

24 **workshop participants**

75 **training forum participants**

Gender and Disability Workforce Development Program

247
participants

in G&D training programs

184
professional participants

in awareness building programs



A Comprehensive suite of

7
resources



4
handouts



A Gender and Disability Equity
online short course
(pilot program)



4
films produced

Influence Policy

Influence government and the community to recognise and remove barriers to full participation by women with disabilities.

WDV firmly believes in the value of the Victorian Government’s Disability Family Violence Crisis Fund to break down barriers to safety for women and children to escape family violence.

- We **successfully advocated for a funding extension** to the Victorian Government Disability Family Violence Crisis Fund. We had fantastic support from dozens of organisations who work in sectors including disability advocacy, family violence, sexual assault and legal services. This fund is administered by Safe Steps, and we value working with them and Family Safety Victoria to strengthen and continue this fund past its current funded date, December 2020. The fund can pay for disability supports during family violence crisis.
- The **Gender and Disability Workforce Development Program** has done considerable consultation and committee work to increase the representation of women with disabilities and increase the intersectional capacity of organisations in their prevention and response sectors.

- With support from the Municipal Association of Victoria, the Gender and Disability Workforce Development team led WDV’s social media campaign for the [16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence](#). The campaign theme was “Disability Microaggressions: Call it Out,” and consisted of the development of twenty social media graphics which challenged the everyday common experiences of indirect, subtle or unintentional discrimination and inequality that women with disabilities face. The resource “12 Principles of Respectful Communication with Women with Disabilities” was also developed to complement the social media campaign. Graphics and resources were shared on WDV’s social media accounts throughout the 16 Days of Activism, reaching a broad range of sector, government and community stakeholders.



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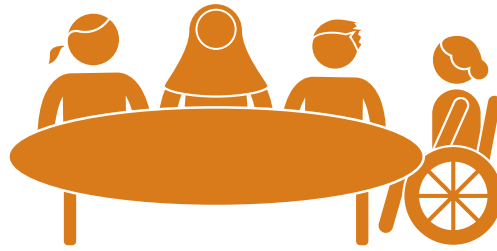
Image: “12 Principles of Respectful Communication with Women with Disabilities” resource

Gender and Disability Workforce Development Program



12 consultation sessions

7 committee working groups



16 Days of Activism



20 social media graphics

3 social media tools used

* Facebook, Twitter and Instagram



Member engagement

130 responses to the member survey



96 new full members



77 members registered to attend the AGM

586 full members

28 eNews issues distributed

4 Violence Quarterly issues distributed



2646 likes



1837 followers



749 followers

Experts by Experience Working Group

The Experts by Experience Working Group is a Gender and Disability Workforce Development, violence prevention initiative funded by the Office for Women. The group aims to provide lived experience, expert representation and consultation of women with disabilities on a range on internal and external disability and violence projects, policies and resources.

In October 2019 a consultation was held with the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to inform the draft capabilities on the Allied health capability framework: disability and complex support needs. A representative from DHHS said that it was important to promote **“choice and control and to work with people with disabilities on projects about them”**. Before, during and after the consultation the representative reported that WDV was “professional and inclusive, worked with the Experts to facilitate the consultation well” and that she felt “honoured and trusted with the stories she heard”. The consultation “represented a number of cohorts, with relevant experiences to the project and highlighted the importance of diversity and intersectionality”. Overall the consultation informed the framework and it’s guiding approaches, and the DHHS representative said that she would **“highly recommend the Experts by Experience”** group.

The Experts by Experience Advocate talked of their experiences and why they think the group is important. One member said, **“on a personal level, I love being in Experts by Experience consultations as it gives me a chance to use my own experiences to make a difference to things that I am using on a day to day basis.**

This particular consultation was all about allied health - what makes a good allied health experience and what makes a negative experience. It was an area where I have a lot of frustration and I can see a lot of problems. But I also have lots of ideas of how to solve these problems. Being able to speak about this directly to people who can do something about it, was empowering. ***I walked out of the meeting with feelings of hope, enthusiasm and positivity.***”

Disclosure: the views within this report are that of the DHHS representative and not DHHS. The same also applies to the Experts by Experience member.



“On a personal level, I love being in Experts by Experience consultations as it gives me a chance to use my own experiences to make a difference to things that I am using on a day to day basis.”

Experts by Experience member



Image: Experts by Experience Working Group

WDV Member Story

“It is one thing to be amongst a group of like-minded ‘able’ people, who acknowledge and express empathy about the challenges that I confront as a woman with a disability in regional Victoria. It is quite another, however, to have the opportunity to listen to, learn from, and share knowledge and experience with a group of people who have encountered similar obstacles and bigotry as me.

Participating in Enabling Women was a most positive experience which has invigorated my passion for social equity. I gained great personal comfort from being surrounded by women who have come up against similar difficulties as me; and the strength, resilience, and love of life these women portrayed has encouraged me to continue to strive for justice and opportunity for myself and others.

I have a strong belief that the most effective way to bring about change is from within, whether that be from within yourself, your family or, your community.

Education, experience, and reflection allows people to view their world, and that around them, from a different perspective, bringing about a transformation in ideas and actions. ***Empowering women with disabilities as individuals and as a collective, to recognise and speak out against discrimination and abuse, and to be able to offer alternatives, will, hopefully, create positive change.***



“I have a strong belief that the most effective way to bring about change is from within, whether that be from within yourself, your family or, your community.”

Linda Nancarrow



Image: Linda Nancarrow (left), 2019 graduate of WDV Enabling Women Program in Bendigo being presented with her graduation certificate from Helen Gwilliam (right) WDV General Manager

Linda Nancarrow is a graduate of the WDV 2019 Enabling Women Program in Bendigo.

Since completing the Program, Linda has finished her Diploma of Community Service, and made a successful return to paid employment with Vision Australia.

Sadly, with the impacts of COVID-19 and required restrictions, her work and many personal aspirations have been put on hold. One thing Linda has recently been focusing on, is picking up the new skill/activity of horse riding.

Brenda Gabe Award Winner

Shakira Hussein

I first envisioned that through the Brenda Gabe Award I would attend and report on interstate hearings of the Royal Commission into the Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with a Disability. COVID-19 had other plans!

The commission itself had always livestreamed its hearings but COVID-19 forced a more comprehensive transition to virtual hearings. While this allowed me to publish a report in The Saturday Paper, I did miss the nuance that came with attending the pre-COVID hearings in-person.

In February, I was shortlisted for the Hazel Rowley literary award for 'Nine Elevenitis', my proposed memoir of post 9/11 politics and my experience of multiple sclerosis. An extract from this work is due for publication in the literary journal Meanjin in March 2021.

Titled 'An Appointment with Nurse Apolcalypse', this extract describes some of the surreal encounters that I had in outpatient clinics and medical centres during the first COVID-19 lockdown earlier this year.

I also published reflections on the first anniversary of the Christchurch attack in The Saturday Paper, on the politics of religious and medical facemasks on the ABC Religion and Ethics website; and my experience as a young live-in housekeeper for an elderly Iraqi Jewish woman in London, for the literary journal Liminal.



None of this would have been possible without the encouragement and resources provided by the Brenda Gabe Award. It has been a real game-changer for me.”

Shakira Hussein, 2019 Brenda Gabe Award Winner



Images: Shakira Hussein (top);
Brenda Gabe.

Acknowledgements

Funders and Partners

- Action Research, Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS)
- Brotherhood of St. Laurence
- Centre for Workforce Excellence Service Design and Reform – Family Safety Victoria
- City of Greater Bendigo
- City of Yarra Ranges
- Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)
- Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria (DVRCV)
- Domestic Violence Victoria
- Family Safety Victoria
- Gender Equity Victoria
- Gross Foundation
- Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV)
- National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA)
- National Disability Services (NDS)
- National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) Quality and Safeguard Commission
- Office for Women – Department of Premier and Cabinet
- Our Watch
- Portland House
- Respect Victoria
- Safe Steps
- The Australian Network on Disability (AND)
- Victorian Women's Trust
- Women with Disabilities Australia (WWDA)
- Women's Health East
- Women's Health Loddon Mallee
- Women's Health Victoria
- Women's Health in the North (WHIN)
- Womens Information & Referral Exchange (WIRE)

WDV Regional Hub Partners

- Cobram Community House
- G21
- Gippsland Women's Health
- South West Advocacy Association

Donors

- Sarah Bethune
- Julie Simpson
- Vivienne Tellefson
- Constantinos Ginis
- Hugh James
- Anne-Marie Bollier



“Our Watch is fortunate to have a formal partnership with Women with Disabilities Victoria. Our work to develop a new resource to support the prevention of violence against women with disabilities would not be possible without the expertise that WDV brings to the project; through a deep knowledge of systemic policy and practice issues, extensive and strong networks, and a lived experience perspective. This is a partnership that we really value and that we know strengthens our work.”

Patty Kinnersly, CEO Our Watch

Financial Performance

The WDV Board, and particularly its Finance & Risk Committee, worked hard this year to update our accounts and to strengthen WDV's financial position.

As a result of the change in accounting treatment that was implemented last year (2018/2019), this year we are able to show you a clearer picture of the position as WDV continues to grow.

- The Profit and Loss Statement shows a deficit (loss) of \$64,833.00 in the 2019/2020 financial year.
- Revenue (money coming in) for this year was \$1,815,846.00, an increase of \$403,845.00 from last year.
- Expenses (money going out) for this year was \$1,880,729.00, an increase of \$373,869.00 from last year.
- Equity (value of WDV) for this year was \$1,330,261.00, a decrease of \$64,883.00 from last year.
- This year Current Assets of \$2,828,662.00, which is equal to 2 times our Current Liabilities of \$1,380,371.00. This is a healthy position.
- Cash reserves increased this year to \$2,762,058.00, an increase of \$567,702.00 from last year.

WDV is in a strong financial position and remains solvent. Meaning, we are able to pay our debts if and when they are due.

Statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income for the year ended 30 June 2020

	2020 \$	2019 \$
CONTINUING OPERATIONS		
Revenue	1,815,846	1,412,001
EXPENDITURE		
Depreciation expense	(23,730)	(24,890)
Client support services	(142,373)	(146,435)
Employee benefits expense	(1,421,744)	(1,796,237)
Other expenses	(292,882)	(287,036)
(Deficit)/Surplus before tax	(64,883)	(842,597)
Income tax expense	-	-
(Deficit)/Surplus for the year	(64,883)	(842,597)
Other comprehensive income	-	-
Total comprehensive (deficit)/surplus for the year	(64,883)	(842,597)



The full financial report can be found on the WDV website <https://www.wdv.org.au/about-us/financial-statements/>

Statement of financial position as at 30 June 2020

	2020	2019
	\$	\$
ASSETS		
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	2,762,058	2,194,356
Trade and other receivables	13,154	16,626
Other current assets	53,450	78,547
Total current assets	2,828,662	2,289,529
NON-CURRENT ASSETS		
Property, plant and equipment	19,671	43,401
Total non-current assets	19,671	43,401
Total assets	2,848,333	2,332,930
LIABILITIES		
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Trade and other payables	1,380,371	779,816
Total current liabilities	1,380,371	779,816
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Provisions	137,701	157,970
Total non-current liabilities	137,701	157,970
Total liabilities	1,518,072	937,786
Net assets	1,330,261	1,395,144
EQUITY		
Retained earnings	1,330,261	1,395,144
Total equity	1,330,261	1,395,144

Statement of changes in equity for the year ended 30 June 2020

	Retained Earnings	Total
	\$	\$
Balance at 1 July 2018	2,237,741	2,237,741
Surplus/(Deficit) attributable to members	(842,597)	(842,597)
Balance at 30 June 2019	1,395,144	1,395,144
Surplus/(Deficit) attributable to members	(64,883)	(64,883)
Balance at 30 June 2020	1,330,261	1,330,261

Cash flow statement for the year ended 30 June 2020

	2020	2019
	\$	\$
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Receipts from operating activities	1,788,899	1,363,767
Payments to suppliers and employees	(1,248,144)	(1,681,695)
Interest received	26,947	48,234
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities	567,702	(269,694)
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Payments for property, plant and equipment	-	(8,682)
Net cash provided by (used in) investing activities	-	(8,682)
Net increase (decrease) in cash held	567,702	(278,376)
Cash at beginning of financial year	2,194,356	2,472,732
Cash at end of financial year	2,762,058	2,194,356

Keep up to date with WDV, join our community



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<https://www.facebook.com/womenwithdisabilitiesvictoria>



Twitter

[@WDVtweet](https://twitter.com/WDVtweet)



<https://www.instagram.com/womenwithdisabilitiesvic/>



<http://www.youtube.com/WDVchannel>

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