



STRATEGIC PLAN

2022-2025

 wire

ABOUT US

WIRE is here to progress justice, equity and fairness for women and non-binary and gender-diverse people.



Where we started

Our story began in 1983 when a group of people came together, united by their ambition for women to have more choice in their personal, professional and political lives. They had a vision of a service for women, run by women. WIRE officially opened on 8 March 1984.

What we do

We provide free information, support and referrals on any issue to any woman or non-binary or gender-diverse person.



Through our telephone support line, walk-in centre and online support channels, we deeply listen and provide pathways so that each person can choose the right solution for their wellbeing.



Our direct work with the community informs our advocacy and aims to tackle the systemic, structural and cultural elements of gender inequity and oppression. Together, we create positive change by identifying and dismantling the systems that harm.



We offer professional development training in family violence and financial abuse; acknowledging that people have different levels of understanding of structural and systemic inequities.

Who we work with

We work with individuals, communities, community organisations, non-profit services, public services, the private and philanthropic sectors, and all layers of government.

Where we impact

- Financial abuse
- Legal advice
- Financial wellbeing
- Family violence
- Housing
- Relationships
- Health and wellbeing
- Dealing with conflict
- Employment
- Gender equity



A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Bev Kliger

Having sharpened our focus on researching, designing and delivering evidence-based programs over the last three years, our key focus for 2022-25 is on strengthening our organisation's reach.

Our strategic plan is equal parts practical and ambitious as we strive for a just and inclusive society – from exploring how to best ready ourselves as an organisation, to making sure the voices of women and non-binary and gender-diverse people are not only heard, but understood and acted upon by key decision-makers and stakeholders.

The lived experiences of the people who use our services are fundamental to how we identify emerging issues; never more so than when planning our strategic response. As such, our 2022-25 strategy draws on the insights and experiences of these service users, alongside the contributions of potential service users, our volunteers and staff, our funders, partners and community sector colleagues.

The context within which we operate has also played a part in the development of our 2022–25 strategic response. For example, the increased awareness of the multiple layers and forms of disempowerment, discrimination and marginalisation, have created more demand for flexible and responsive services and programs. Additionally the mounting social and economic displacement and disadvantaged experience is directly linked to the impact of climate change and associated environmental disasters.

Lastly and most importantly for this next phase of our growth, we will build on our past successes. Highlights include – our research into the impact of marginalisation during Australia's lockdown restrictions; increasing access to our information and training from anywhere via online delivery; working collaboratively in advocacy and co-design of projects and services to increase people's financial wellbeing; and working to make private sector services respond and appropriately support victim-survivors of family violence.

On behalf of the Board, I extend a warm thanks to our staff, leaders and volunteers for helping us to shape our priorities for these next three years.



Success story

Our callers are often navigating multiple issues at once—we speak about the fatigue that comes with that. It takes a lot of energy to find housing, employment, overcoming trauma and seeking education. We recognise that it's a lot of work, and retelling your story again and again to different services can also be triggering. But with sheer strength and determination they keep calling—usually several organisations at once. They keep persisting and they look for every opportunity to help themselves and their families.

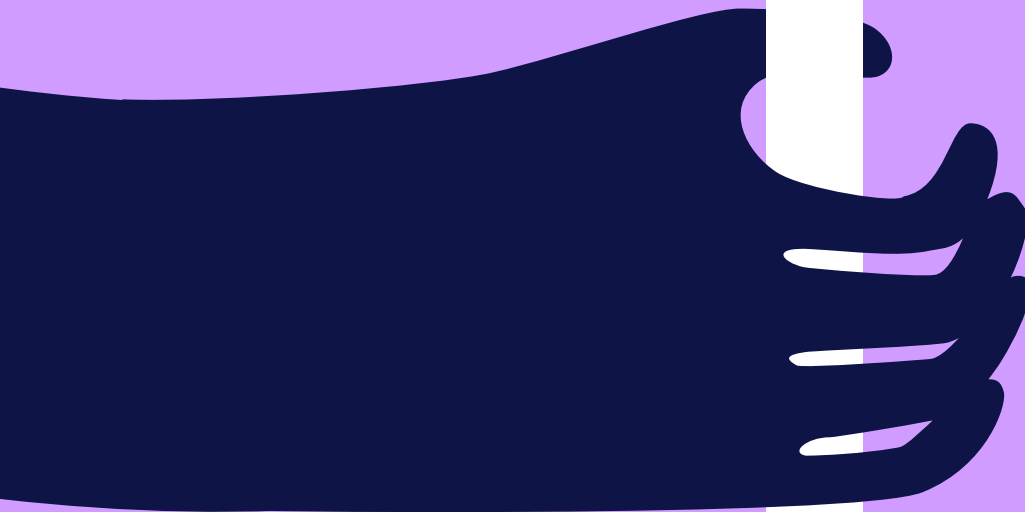
WIRE support worker

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

WIRE acknowledges that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the traditional – and only – custodians of country across Australia. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples continue to maintain their wisdom and rich culture – the oldest continuous culture on the planet – despite having survived genocide, dispossession and colonisation.

We recognise their continued connection to land, waters and culture, and pay our respects to their Elders, past and present.

Sovereignty has never been ceded. This land always was and always will be Aboriginal land.



WHAT WE STAND FOR

VISION

A just and inclusive society where all people can thrive.

OUR PURPOSE

At WIRE we work with women, non-binary and gender-diverse people to address the issues they identify, assist them to make informed choices in their lives, and advocate for structural change to bring about gender equity and social justice.

OUR PRINCIPLES

Our principles are our beliefs, attitudes and behaviours. They underpin how we work as a team, the partnerships we form, and the way we research, design and deliver our programs.

● Human rights and social justice

We recognise the unequal distribution of wealth and power in society, including the inequalities that arise from social structures and systems, and we work towards a world where access to power, resources, decision making and opportunities is equal.

● Courage and leadership

We are courageous in our pursuit of preventing discrimination and marginalisation, and psychological, physical and financial abuse. We challenge the status quo and advocate for changes that advance human rights and social justice outcomes.

● Intersectional feminism

We apply an intersectional lens in recognition of the interaction of multiple factors that reinforce conditions of oppression, discrimination and marginalisation. Factors include, but are not limited to - race, gender identity, class, ethnicity, and ability.

● Person centred and responsive

We believe that people are the experts in their own lives; making their lived experiences central to the decisions we make. We provide access, options and pathways to support peoples' social, psychological, and financial wellbeing.

● Evidence and improvement

We take an evidence-based approach to what we do, how we do it, and the ways we actively seek to improve. Evidence utilised includes the wisdom of lived experiences, research, consultation, and ongoing evaluation.

● Sustainable and interdependent change

We acknowledge the interdependence that exists between the social, built, and natural environments.

● Transparent and accountable

We are transparent in our conduct and hold ourselves to account for delivering high quality services, projects and programs for the people we serve.

● Respectful collaboration and codesign

We value decision-making that is informed by the wisdom of the people who use our services, our volunteers, and our stakeholder communities.

● Curiosity and growth


We encourage curiosity and openness to learning and growth. We help people to learn without blame and respectfully acknowledge peoples' diversity of understanding, or knowledge of, structural and systemic inequities.

INTERSECTIONALITY

Professor Kimberlé Crenshaw, a pioneering scholar and writer on civil rights, critical race theory and Black feminist legal theory, says:

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Intersectionality is a metaphor for understanding the ways how multiple forms of discrimination and disadvantages sometimes compound themselves, and they create obstacles that often are not understood within conventional ways of thinking about anti-racism, or feminism, or whatever social justice structures we have.

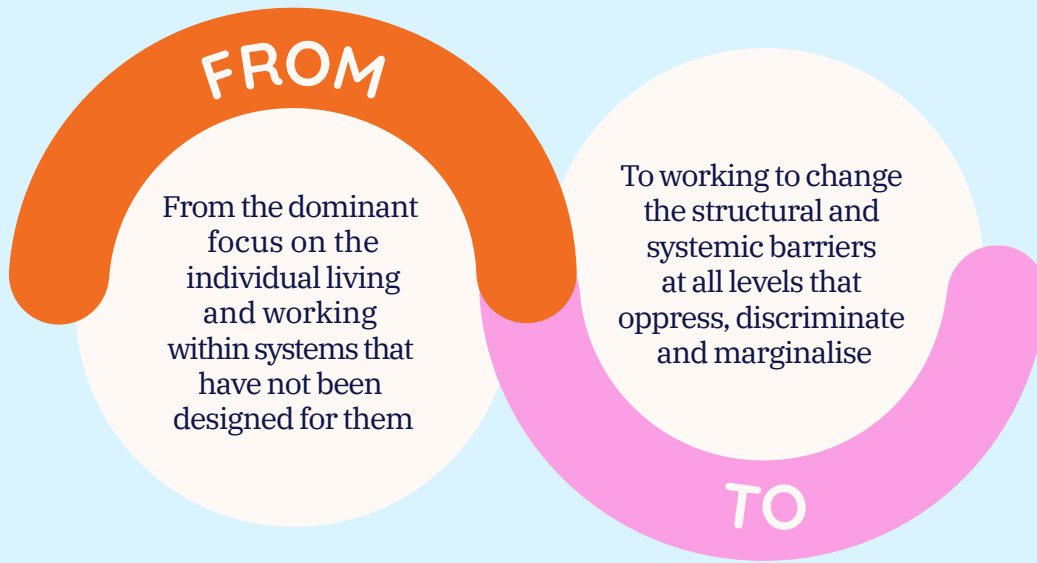


WIRE will work towards embedding an **intersectional feminist approach** within all aspects of its governance and operations.

WHAT MAKES US UNIQUE?

Our work is centred on lived experiences and is underpinned by our gender-informed, strength-based model of service delivery, research and training. To us, our unique ways of working are just as important as the outcomes we seek.

WE SHIFT THE NARRATIVE



BY WORKING AT EVERY LEVEL



STRATEGY OVERVIEW





What we're doing

Deliver a range of practical person-centred programs and 1:1 support.

- Free, relevant and timely individual and group programs
- Drop-in clinics, phone support, online and individual appointments
- Collaborative projects and co-designed programs tailored to people's individual needs
- Service reach extended to regional Victoria

Key focus areas

- Employment
- Financial capability and wellbeing
- Legal systems
- Family violence
- Social connection

What we're doing

Research and communicate people's lived experiences by bringing the theoretical and the practical together.

- Evidence-based content that is easy to understand for key audiences
- Easily accessible content across channels including website, email and social media
- Ongoing evaluation of our research methodology

Key focus areas

- Accessibility
- Inclusion
- Support
- Advocacy
- Digital and data

Success story

Sustainable and Transformative Employment Pathways (STEP)



I'm finally understanding that I've been denying the fact that I have certain skills and abilities, and now my traumatic experiences are not defining me as much... I've gone from not believing that anyone would hire me to turning down jobs. That's pretty significant.

Program participant, name withheld for privacy

Success story

COVID-19 Financial Capability and Intersectionality Project

With support from the Ecstra Foundation, WIRE's 'Too visible, yet not fully seen' research project highlighted how marginalisation was reinforced during Australia's lockdown restrictions—many people were negatively impacted by restrictions, including women, migrants and refugees, temporary visa holders and people with a disability.



What we're doing

Actively influence public policy, laws and other governing systems.

- Engage all levels of government – local, state and federal
- Use our expert voice to reach decision-makers where they are,
- Collaborate and campaign across community, government, philanthropic and private sector organisations

Key focus areas

- Gender equity
- Financial abuse
- Financial wellbeing
- Responsible lending
- Family violence

Success story

Gender Responsive Budgeting

WIRE joined with Gender Equity Victoria (GenVIC) in 2020 to call for gender responsive budgeting and a gender equal recovery from COVID-19 at the state level. The Victorian Government has since announced that a gender responsive budgeting unit would be established within Treasury.

What we're doing

Partner with and train leaders and workers in government, private and community sectors, and community volunteers.

- Codesign tools and programs that are responsive to people's social, economic and cultural needs
- Deliver tailored workshops, training programs and information sessions that improve the interaction between organisations and people
- Continued relationship building with community, philanthropic and private sector organisations

Key focus areas

- Financial abuse
- Financial wellbeing
- Psychological abuse
- Family violence
- Empathic response to victim survivors of family violence

Success story

Community Sector Training



[What I found most useful was]: Acknowledging and making a connection between the emotions that arise from talking about money. Discussions around gender and finance. Being able to address financial abuse on its own, as well as within the broader framework of family violence. Intersection between gender, economic security and family and domestic violence.

ORGANISATIONAL FOCUS

To successfully deliver on this strategy, we've identified the following areas of focus for the organisation.

In defining these areas of focus, we acknowledge the need to provide a healthy and safe workplace that reflects the diversity of women and non-binary and gender-diverse people. We recognise, too, the importance in striking a balance between competing priorities in the immediate and the long term.

Sustainability & Scalability

- Scale up our fundraising, marketing and communications capabilities
- Secure recurrent income from a range of sources including government
- Deliver for-purpose training that underwrites WIRE's unfunded activities
- Embed consistent, reliable and accessible infrastructure and systems

Readiness & Engagement

- Embed respectful and efficient management of staff and volunteers
- Build staff capabilities and expertise to make us future ready
- Institute progressive contracts, position descriptions and effective performance management
- Expand WIRE partnerships within related sectors

BIG THANKS

It took a whole lot of teamwork to bring this strategic plan to life. Thanks to all staff, volunteers and external stakeholders who contributed content, conversations and planning ideas. You are appreciated.



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I am continually learning from my experiences here, both through talking with callers, listening to my co-workers and working as part of a team to support people who so often show such resilience and strength in the face of what can seem like overwhelming challenges, traumas and struggles.”

WIRE volunteer