

ANNUAL REPORT

2022-23

# EVOLUTION





# Acknowledgement of Country

*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 experienced 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.*

# Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY	2
A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR	4
A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO	5
WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO	6
<b>Our Strategic Plan 2022-25 and Vision</b>	<b>6</b>
2022-23 AT A GLANCE	7
<b>Volunteers have been the heartbeat of our support line</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Trending issues</b>	<b>10</b>
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	11
<b>Community Educations Sessions</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Information Seminars and Workshops</b>	<b>11</b>
PROJECTS	12
<b>The Sustainable and Transformative Employment Pathways (STEP) Project 2022-2023</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Lead for Change</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Intersectional Women's Financial Capability Program</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Money Mindset</b>	<b>16</b>
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICES: TRAINING	17
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICES: CONSULTING	18
FINANCIAL REPORT	19
OUR BOARD	20
OUR STAFF - AS AT JUNE 2023	21
FUNDERS, PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS	22

# A message from the Board Chair

*This year has been a year of celebration – WIRE is 40 years young! WIRE has provided support, information, training, advocacy and advice for many years and continues to evolve to meet the emerging needs of our community. It is hard to believe that it has been four decades since an inspirational group of determined women worked tirelessly, as volunteers, to establish an information and referral service on any issue for women across Victoria.*

WIRE has changed with the times over the past 40 years. We have expanded our mission and vision to encompass all women and gender diverse people. We continue to challenge and take action to eliminate practices and policies that oppress, discriminate and disadvantage women and non-binary, and gender diverse people.

This year WIRE has also experienced positive changes – a new office with light and space, and a new organisational structure. Amid these changes, WIRE staff have maintained their dedication and tireless advocacy and support for the communities and individuals they work with. I want to take this opportunity to wholeheartedly thank the wonderful and inspirational CEO Jade Blakkarly and all the staff and volunteers at WIRE. They ensure that WIRE maintains its positive reputation for responsive, respectful and innovative support, training, education, and advocacy for women, non-binary and gender diverse people.

I'd also like to also acknowledge the work of the Board who have volunteered their skills, expertise and time to WIRE, and thank the Board members who have retired during the year: Uthra Ramachandran, Emma Rae, and Sharon Pask.

Finally, to our partners, donors, and sponsors, your continued support for WIRE has assisted us to continue to work with communities and seek positive change, thank you. I trust that over the next 40 years your collaboration will continue as WIRE confronts abuse, discrimination, oppression and disadvantage faced by women, non-binary and gender diverse people.



# A message from the CEO

*In 1983, a committed group of women came together, united by their ambition for women to have more choice in their personal, working and political lives. In the 40 years since then, WIRE has grown, faced challenges and changes, evolving our practice and our advocacy to reflect new understandings of gender equity and systemic change. Throughout this journey we have always held true to the hope and aspirations of those who first brought us together.*

I first joined the WIRE community in 1998, having just arrived in Melbourne, with two small children, a strong sense of social justice and a keen desire to make a difference. When I returned last year as CEO, on the surface WIRE looked a little different, but the longer I am here the more I see and feel how much the essence of WIRE has been carried by the thousands of women, non-binary and gender diverse people that have been part of this incredible journey so far.

This year saw us need to move, after 12 years at our Spencer Street premises, to a new home at the Donkey Wheelhouse Building on Bourke Street. It was a huge and somewhat hurried transition, but we are now well settled into and enjoying our new space and the connections our move has fostered.

This year we undertook a survey of nearly 1000 people to better understand how the community sees the services we provide, what we could do better, and new opportunities to explore. From these valuable insights, we are now implementing extended hours of the information & support service, increasing our focus on engaging online, and exploring how to better reach more people across regional Victoria.

As we continue to work toward our vision of a just and inclusive society where all people can thrive, we have a shared focus on providing direct support to the women, non-binary and gender diverse people that seek our services, building our connections to and responses with communities, growing and evolving our training, and continuing to raise our advocacy and voice for structural change.

I sincerely want to say a huge thank you to everyone who continues to be part of the WIRE community.

The incredible team of staff and volunteers and Board members who continue to share their knowledge, passionate commitment, skills, humour, feminism, and advocacy to the work and to each other.

To those that work alongside us, individually and in organisations, who offer their skills pro bono, who collaborate in advocacy, who fund us to support our communities, Thank You. Not only does this enable us to keep going, it also reminds us that we are part of a broader community, a 40 year WIRE legacy and that this work toward equity and justice reflects the hopes of many.

To the women, non-binary and gender diverse people and the communities you are part of, Thank You for trusting us with your stories. It is a true privilege to stand together and create spaces across the breadth of WIRE's work, to listen, learn and act together. I am heartened and have great confidence in what we can achieve together over the next 40 years.

# Who we are and what we do:

## Our Strategic Plan 2022-25 and Vision



# 2022-23 at a glance

**\$96,202**

donated by 175 donors

Over  
**150,000**

users visited [wire.org.au](http://wire.org.au)

Over  
**260,000**

page views across  
[wire.org.au](http://wire.org.au)

Most viewed page was

"What is financial abuse?"

**2438 calls**

received by WIRE



Instagram content reached over  
**234,000 people**



Facebook content reached over  
**392,000 people**



Over **2,500 followers** on LinkedIn



YouTube views: **776**

WIRE contacted **5,000** individual women and gender diverse people across Victoria, delivering a wide range of services, plus use of website resources.

**Total assisted: 27,760**

## The five most common reasons for contacting WIRE are:

- seeking legal information and support;
- family violence risk (current or in the past);
- digital literacy and access to safe computers in the Walk in Centre;
- information about separation or divorce;
- housing



Over **53%** of service users disclosed family violence issues (current or in the past).



Delivered over **50** training sessions to over **1500** participants.



**23** staff and **52** active phone support volunteers.



Over **400** phone shifts covered by volunteers (which is over **1,600** hours of phone-based volunteering).

## Information sessions covering topics:

- From Separation to Settlement
- Navigating IVO's
- Financial Wellbeing
- Family Violence
- Excessive Litigation in family law



Community Education Sessions: **55** sessions, with **378** attendees/participants.



**11** Information Seminars, **155** participants



Held **3** Employment Skills Workshops, with **28** participants

# Support Delivered by WIRE

**Manager – Community:** Pai Rittichai (she/her)

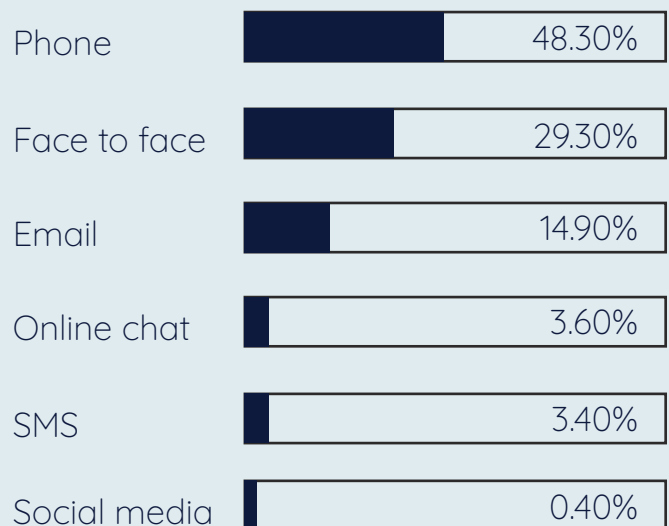
**Service Delivery Coordinator:** Jane O’Hanlon (she/her)

*The one thing that has stayed constant at WIRE is the support phone line. When you contact the WIRE support line, a support worker actively listens and helps you to explore your options for support, referral and information services on any issue. We use an intersectional feminist framework which acknowledges the strength and resilience of the person calling. Our anonymous support service empowers and enables the person seeking support to make choices that work for them and self-advocate. People can contact the support service by phone, email, webchat or in person at the Walk-In Centre.*

Highlights for the Service Delivery team have included moving premises in January to a new space in Bourke Street, Melbourne CBD, close to Southern Cross Station. The new office space has proved to be more accessible for people using public transport and the fact that there is no longer a street presence increases safety for anyone accessing the Walk-In Centre.

In the 22/23 financial year, WIRE has been in contact with over 5,000 individual women and gender diverse people across Victoria via phone, webchat, email, zoom supports and the Walk in Centre. Our website resources have provided 22,760 individual supports.

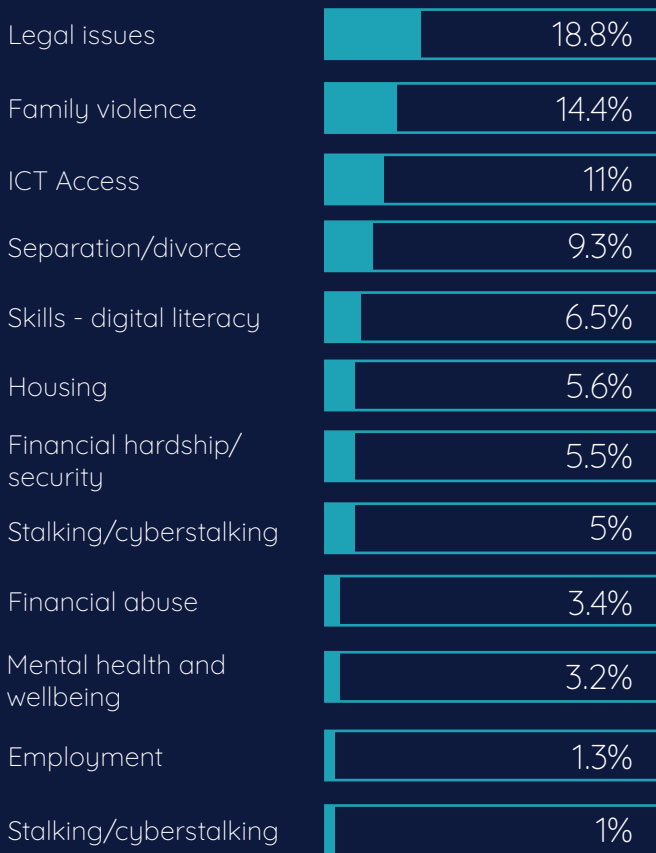
## Method of contact



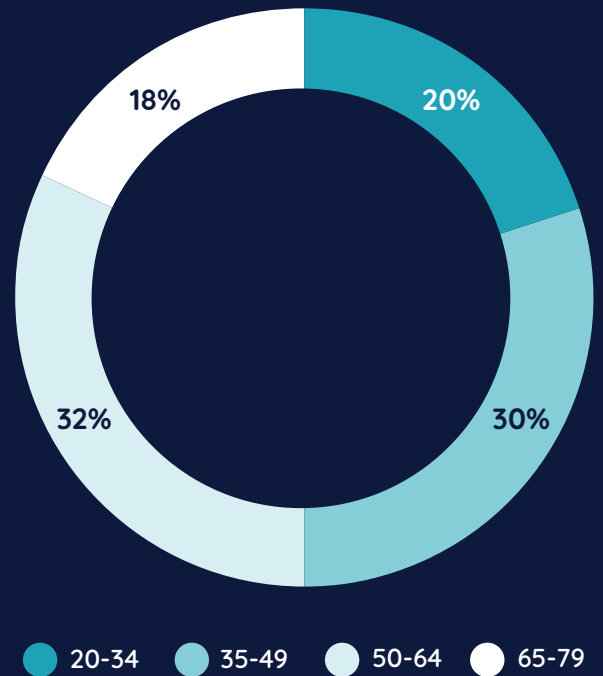
*Priorities for 2024 include expanding our reach to sections of community that have limited access to WIRE services through an extended hours trial and increasing our footprint in regional and rural areas through building meaningful partnerships and collaborating with many expert agencies in our targeted locations.*



### Primary reason for contact



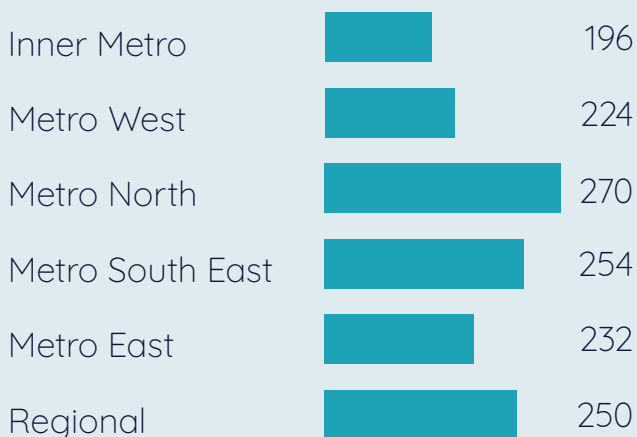
### Age group



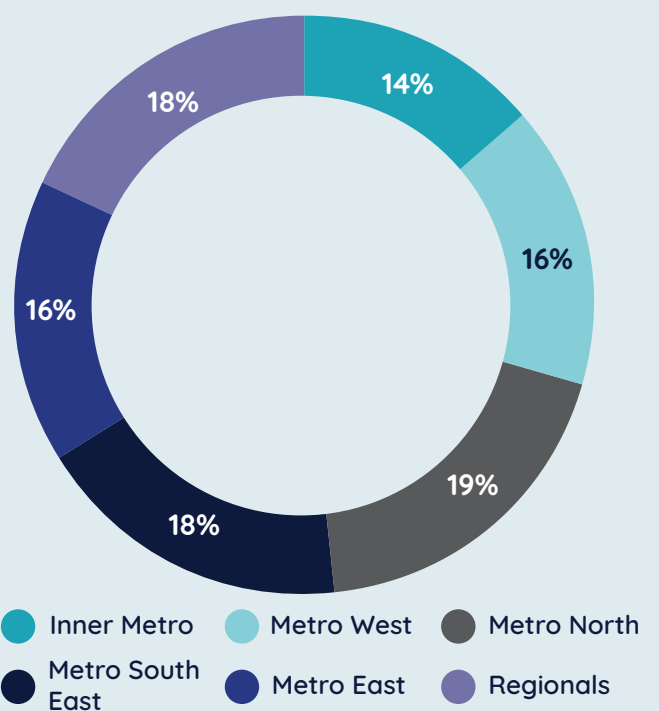
## LOCATIONS

WIRE is a state-wide service, and our strategic goal is to build our regional footprint by partnering with local organisations.

### Location of service users by region



**Total: 5044**



## Volunteers have been the heartbeat of our support line

*The commitment volunteers make to WIRE is significant: from the comprehensive 10-week program, through phone-based training shifts, leading to volunteering on a regular basis. Hundreds of hours are volunteered by individual people who come to WIRE with passion and commitment for the work of listening to and supporting women and gender diverse people in our communities.*

Despite the economic challenges of a cost-of-living crisis as we come out of the COVID pandemic, volunteers continue to contribute significantly to the running of the WIRE support line.

Approximately 400 phone shifts were covered by 50 volunteers (1,600 hours of phone-based volunteering) this year.

This year, we trained 23 people - 20 have completed supervised phone calls. New volunteers did around 2,000 hours of training (class-based & phone room-based).

## Trending issues

From our support service, we continue to hear about:

- Family violence (53% of callers)
- Financial abuse
- Needing to access free or low-cost legal advice
- Homelessness and housing insecurity:
  - People experiencing housing insecurity have increased as access to public and community housing has become more difficult
  - People housed in motels for a limited time are pressured by housing services to find their own accommodation and many prefer to sleep rough rather than moving into shared accommodation because it may be unsafe

- Professionals in the family violence and mental health sector looking for assistance for their clients with complex needs outside of their own expertise
- People with jobs finding that household costs have spiralled, and that mortgage stress has become a significant theme
- People seeking debt help and material aid (food, groceries) have also increased.

Through our community session seminars we hear from participants and sector professionals about:

- A growing need for financial support and financial capacity building for diverse communities such as, women and gender diverse people who have recently migrated to Australia
- Requests for ongoing legal representation for separation matters and dividing assets
- A need for social activities with shared feminist values in rural areas
- A growing demand for programs using facilitation that is informed by our feminist, strength-based and trauma-informed frameworks
- The growing demand for collaborating with other services to provide our seminars state-wide.

People who seek support and information from WIRE are resilient and capable, as evidenced by the strength and courage they show in approaching a support service like WIRE for support, information and/or referrals.



*Phone Room*

# Community engagement

**Community Engagement Lead:** Aiala Morales, she/her

**'Knowledge is power. Information is liberating'** - Kofi Annan

In November 2022, WIRE introduced a new 'Community Engagement Lead' role. This role creates an intentional and purposeful focus on building WIRE's community networks and increasing opportunities for WIRE to share our intersectional expertise on gender equity. This includes increasing understanding of our trauma-informed, intersectional feminist, strengths-based and person-centred framework among community service sector professionals and members of the public.

This work has strengthened our connection with the broader community (particularly in the northern and western metro growth corridors this year in response to the substantial growth in demand) and builds communication pathways between the social services sector, the public and internally at WIRE. This collaborative work enables the programs we coordinate to build women and gender diverse people's knowledge base and capacity to self-advocate, creating a more resilient, empowered community.

The key programs delivered by the Community Engagement Lead created community connections, giving people the confidence to use their knowledge to their best advantage, providing a safe environment for people to talk, share ideas and information and build their understanding on where to receive support.

## Community Educations Sessions

We design sessions that create a safe and supportive space, where participants explore their experiences of seeking support and build practical strategies and resilience when overcoming challenges, providing further opportunity to build awareness of services and skills of self-advocacy and empowerment. Flexibility is key - each community engagement session is tailored to meet the needs of the group (such as working with an interpreter, having a formal presentation or just a chat).

## Information Seminars and Workshops

Our popular Information seminars are hybrid - online and in person, often City of Melbourne Library venues.

The outcome of these programs is increased skills, knowledge, and confidence in accessing services; and increased agency in identifying structural barriers regarding gender equity matters, such as:

- family law,
- separation,
- employment,
- changes in workplace policies,
- mental health support and
- financial capability.

Our next goals are building a strategy that allows WIRE to sustainably provide programs in rural Victoria and increase the diversity of the programs we host.

*"Gave a different perspective of how we can approach and design our training so that it is more purposeful for our staff."*

*Professional, Gender Equity and Intersectionality Presentation*



# Projects

## The Sustainable and Transformative Employment Pathways (STEP) Project 2022-2023

**Project Co-Leads:** Tayla Hansen (she/her) and Bree Allingham-MacLaren (she/her)

The STEP Job Seeker Program empowers family violence victim-survivors to achieve financial independence and wellbeing, with a focus on finding suitable and sustainable employment. Participants are supported to develop their confidence and skills in job seeking, as well as with preparing to enter a new workplace, using a village of support-type model:

STEP Job Coaches provide one-on-one, tailored support

WIRE's STEP facilitators deliver 18 group workshops on topics relating to job seeking and preparing to enter a new workplace.

STEP participants share their expertise, offering knowledge, ideas and support to one another.

Financial Coaches from the Good Shepherd Financial Independence Hub are guest speakers and available to provide free support with working towards financial independence and wellbeing.

WIRE's support workers are available to provide information, referrals and support on other issues that come up.

**To victim-survivors of family violence, “meaningful and appropriate employment” means financially adequate, flexible, adaptable, purposeful, respectful, stable and sustainable work in an empathetic and trauma-informed workplace.**

The program was co-designed with family violence victim-survivors, human resources professionals and WIRE staff, and is based within understandings of the specific barriers that family violence victim-survivors encounter when trying to find and maintain paid work.

Best-practice approaches for working with family violence victim-survivors are used to deliver an effective, appropriate and empowering employment program. These approaches include trauma-informed, strengths-based practice within an intersectional feminist framework. Twenty-four victim-survivors took part in pilots for the STEP Job Seeker Program in its first two years, and across the two programs run, 79% of participants had found employment by the end of the program.

In 2022/2023 an independent evaluation of the program was conducted by the Centre for Multicultural Policy and Program Evaluation. This found that 87% of participants identified that the program addressed their unique needs and aspirations, and also felt more optimistic about their financial future after completing the program.

A knowledge paper was also produced describing approaches used within the program to help victim-survivors find paid work, and what has been learned so far. The paper will be a valuable resource for people working in HR, employment, family violence (and related) organisations considering running employment programs, as well as researchers working in the areas of family violence, financial abuse and employment.

*STEP is a pilot project implemented by WIRE in partnership with CommBank Next Chapter, a program designed to help end financial abuse and support family violence victim-survivors in their financial recovery.*

## Lead for Change

### Project Lead: Nithya Dorairaj (she/her)

Lead for Change is a training program to change community attitudes about gender equity, to create a more equitable, safe society, and gain and maintain positive mental health. Lead for Change workshops centred intersectionality and lived experience to unpack gender and the effects of gendered drivers on the mental health and wellbeing of women, gender diverse and non-binary people as a nudge towards changing community attitudes.

Co-design and adaptive facilitation meant that each Lead for Change workshop was suitable to a range of audiences, meeting the audience where they're at. Lead for Change used an intersectional lens to understand power, location, experience and together with the participants created a toolkit of strategies, vocabulary and storytelling for self-empowerment.

Lead for Change was run in organisations including schools, local sporting clubs, and local councils.

#### Outcomes:

- **83%** of participants 'learnt something new'
- **100%** of participants said the content was 'relevant'
- **100%** felt respected, heard and safe
- **90%** reported understanding the relationship between gender inequality and mental health as a result of the workshop
- **74%** felt more conscious of community attitudes that underpin discrimination and violence against women after the workshop
- **100%** said the workshop enabled them to think about power and leadership differently
- **82%** said they recognise that everyone can do something to lead change in their community
- **85%** felt motivated to change by the workshop
- **70%** said the workshop disrupted their way of thinking and acting in some fundamental way
- **100%** reported increased skills and confidence after the workshop, despite 3% reporting a high level of knowledge and skills to speak up about gender inequality and racism for themselves at the beginning of the workshop.

*Lead for Change was funded by the Liptember Foundation for two years.*

*"Heard, respected and safe. The discussion about speaking up was so valuable - it gave me real tools"*

*Lead for Change workshop participant*

*"I didn't think that I could learn anything new about gender but I learnt so much!"*

*Lead for Change workshop participant*

## Intersectional Women’s Financial Capability Program

**Project Co-Leads: S. Lee and Fatima Muhammad**

*WIRE’s Intersectional Financial Wellbeing project aims to improve financial wellbeing for marginalised women and gender-diverse people through developing and disseminating a set of resources that will encourage essential service providers (such as: banks, utilities, telcos) to embed intersectionality into their policies and practices.*

Essential service providers have significant power over customer outcomes. Discriminatory practices – whether intentional or not – can lead to financial harm for certain groups of people that not only affects their immediate financial wellbeing but can cause long-term disadvantage and mistrust.

While most companies have anti-discrimination policies, these tend to be “single issue” – for example, addressing racism and sexism separately. These sweeping policies are likely to miss the complexity of an individual’s experience and how it affects their financial wellbeing.

To address this gap, the project’s co-leads and reference group co-designed a 2-week diary study of their experiences – positive or negative - with essential services providers. Putting ‘intersectionality’ into action, we were proactive and flexible in making adjustments for people who wanted support in writing their diaries or felt more suited to an interview-style delivery of their stories.

Over 30 participants completed their diaries/interviews. They came from a range of diverse backgrounds and experiences, including participants:

- Aged between 18-24, and 65+
- Identified as gender-diverse and/or LGBTIQ+
- Single parents
- Living with disability or neurodiversity
- 30% came from the Global South
- Several identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- Some had had recently immigrated to Australia
- With experience of family violence, homelessness, incarceration, addiction, or mental health issues.

Based on a preliminary analysis participants found the experience an overwhelmingly positive one, with some saying that they felt empowered, more aware of their rights, and more likely to exercise these rights as a result of their participation.

Complementing this approach several focus groups were conducted, tapping into the dynamic and interactive nature of conversation, with many participants proactively thanking the project leads for creating such a safe, thought-provoking and positive space.

Next steps for this project include analysing the diaries, interviews and focus-group conversations, and converting this wealth of lived experience and wisdom into actionable recommendations for essential service providers via a series of workshops tailored to specific service areas.

Given the high value placed on lived experience in this project, a knowledge paper detailing insights and learnings on intersectional co-design is also being developed.

This paper will contribute to informing and enriching the emerging areas of lived-experience expertise, ethical storytelling and intersectional co-design.

*Intersectional Women’s Financial Capability Program is funded by ECSTRA for 2 years.*

*Intersectionality refers to the ways that gender, race, class, ability, sexuality, and other parts of our identity come together to shape our experiences of the world.*



## CASE STUDY: NOOR, LIVED EXPERIENCE STUDY PARTICIPANT

*So, I'm a single mum of five kids, the youngest is eight and the eldest is 23.*

In my spare time I like to do yoga on Zoom. I don't like going out much. This first time I've been to Southern Cross Station to come here [to WIRE's CBD office]. After this I'm just going to kind of have some just me time and just kind of just do some exploring. I don't know, see where I'll end up. Maybe have lunch just by myself, I've never done that.

I never would have done this before. A lot has changed since I got my divorce. I was married 17 years.

When my [my ex] initiated the court proceedings, I had to get a lawyer. So, I just chose someone that I had heard of, and they wronged me.

They signed and sent in paperwork to the court without my knowledge or my consent. Because they saw me like I was like a broken housewife and took advantage. And they knew, because they wrote my affidavit, it was like 30 pages long, where I described all the types of things I've been through. So, they knew that I was you know, that I was 'broken' at the time when it was still fresh. It felt so disrespectful.

I asked around and got legal advice from Legal Aid, and they said I could file a complaint, which I did. So that was that was kind of like a proud moment for me like to actually speak up about it.

So, after those lawyers, my friend who knows a lot of people recommended another one, and he was amazing. You know how when you've gone through bad and then the good comes, you appreciate it so much, it feels amazing.

He [my ex] was really abusive, in all aspects, financially too... so I had to pay for everything.

I think I'm just still healing. Some days of worse than others.

I've dealt with lawyers, real estate agents, family violence services, some good, some bad.

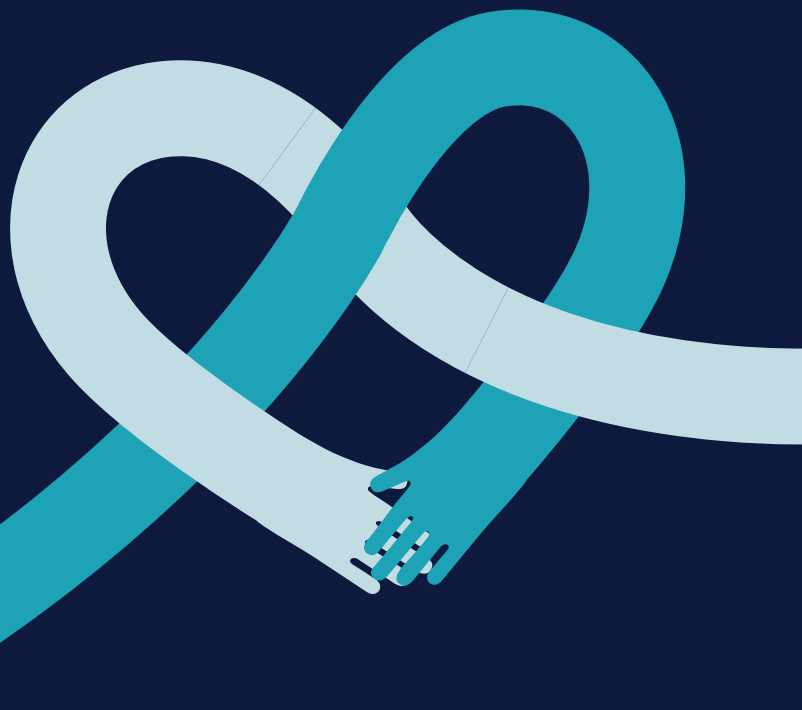
I never really thought that my experiences were like... like anyone would care to hear about it? So, after we did the survey, it just kind of made me more aware that my experiences actually do matter. Like things happen and I just don't really, never would have spoken to anyone about it, but it made me feel like my experiences were valued.

I have had a lot of experiences in my life, and I still am having and, I think I have a lot of Information I'd like to share.

So many things you got to think about before [leaving], it's really, really hard. That's why I would like to help other women, especially, like women in our community. It's very like frowned upon, you know, even just talk to about it, like 'what's a divorce', it's not something that is encouraged.

A lot of women don't talk about it, I think they're afraid of what people would think, or what people would say, like getting shunned by the community. That used to be one of my views but I don't care anymore... I've never said that out loud. Wow.

But I've broke the chain, for me. I'm a good example for my daughters. I remind myself all the time and it just makes me happy.



## Money Mindset

### Project Lead – Money Mindset: (2022) Anasina Grey-Barberio (2023) Joy Mason (ze/zer)

*The Money Mindset project works with multicultural and ethno-specific organisations in Victoria to enable these organisations to provide financial capability workshops to women, gender diverse and non-binary people in the communities they seek to serve. It develops partnerships with multicultural and specific ethnic community organisations, collaborating to tailor appropriate training and resources to build the financial capability of their communities, training suitable community trainers (peer educators) in a 'train the trainer' model, co-delivering training and evaluating the program.*

Building financial capability in these communities is important to reduce their financial, psychological, and emotional dependence and increase their personal agency. Research indicates that these factors may reduce the incidents of family violence.

The outcomes will ensure that women, gender diverse and non-binary people will have ongoing resources within their own cultural community, create new social connections and networks and establish confidence to make empowered decisions about their financial wellbeing and future.

#### Further outcomes:

- Deliver evidence-informed education that is strengths-based, gender and culturally informed financial capability education and support
- Reinforce migrant and refugee women as strong and independent financial decision makers by having an educator that is a migrant or refugee
- Deliver education and support that is cognisant of multiple forms of marginalisation migrant and refugee women may face in addition to racism and sexism such as ageism, ableism and transphobia.

In 2022, the previous project lead reached out to multicultural communities and developed a shared understanding of their needs in relation to the project.

Two forums have provided opportunities for community members to view and discuss WIRE's financial capability resources modules and guide the project around how to modify them to suit their communities' needs. Further forums are planned with a specific focus on regional and rural communities across Victoria.

There has been much to learn and contemplate from the Money Mindset project already:

- What does economic participation and financial future look like to different communities
- How is financial capability information delivered in a way that is meaningful and acceptable to communities and specific individuals
- When women are very caught up in all their responsibilities, including job seeking, how do they find time and headspace to meet with others
- How can WIRE present this project to communities and peer led facilitators, that allows them to see the value to themselves and their community
- Ways to link children/teenagers into the sessions so they too can learn about economic security as they navigate two worlds
- WIRE's working relationships with multicultural and ethno-specific communities that are created from a shared power base, ensuring WIRE as the lead agency aren't seen to be holding all.

The next stage of the project is to involve 6 multicultural communities from across Victoria. Eventually the project will have an ongoing life where peer-led facilitators continue to be a trusted financial resource for their own community with increased skills and knowledge.

*The Money Mindset project is funded by the Office for Women, Victorian Government*





# Professional development services: training

*In our professional development training courses, we share the knowledge and experience gained in from the service delivery program and projects with organisations who provide services to people with lived experience of discrimination.*

Our training courses build capacity in professionals across different industries to embed trauma-informed practices in their organisations and provide better support to people who have experienced a multitude of barriers.

This year we delivered over 50 training sessions to over 1500 participants.

Participants work across a broad range of industries including local and state government, health industry, community sector, finance and banking, psychologists and mental health support workers, retail and essential service providers.

*“I liked the conversational nature of the training, and mixture of talking, videos and group work. The small size of our group assisted with a more open dialogue. The whole training featured frank and open discussion, there was no shying away from issues.”*

*Attendee, Family Violence training*

*“It was wonderful how you were able to adapt your content to our context and take time to understand the work we do.”*

*Attendee, customised ‘Dealing with Difficult Calls’ workplace training*

## What we do:

- Deliver public training sessions
- Tailor our content to the needs of participants, the nature of their job and industry they are in
- Provide both online and in-person sessions
- Raise awareness of gender equity, and build capacity in people to influence structural change

## Our training modules are:

- Dealing with difficult calls and interactions
- Understanding Family Violence
- Understanding Financial Abuse
- Handling disclosures of family violence and financial abuse

## Who they are for:

- People who work in client-facing roles
- People leading client-facing teams
- Human resource professionals
- People passionate about gender equity and practicing trauma-informed service delivery

*“[the trainer] created an environment where the staff felt comfortable to share experiences. The team have been reflecting on changes that they would like to implement already. Thank you.”*

*Attendee, customised workplace training*

# Professional development services: consulting

*We use our deep and intersectional understanding of gender equity to help organisations develop the right policies and procedures to bring about gender equity at their workplaces through our consultancy program.*

We have helped major banks, peak bodies, government agencies and health providers create trauma-informed practices in their operations and service delivery.

What we do:

- Completing gender equity audits
- Assist with developing and implementing gender equity action plans
- Gap analysis of policies and procedures to support gender equity action plans
- Customised workshops to influence cultural shifts and build capacity in staff to support gender equity
- Build understanding of how to support employees experiencing family violence, including policies, procedures & tools

Who is it for:

- For government organisations of all levels
- For medium to large organisations who are required by legislation to have certain policies and procedures that support gender equity
- Any organisation who would like to support gender equity

In the 22/23 financial year, WIRE completed two main Capital Consulting projects:

1. Worked with a financial institution to review their internal policies and helped them develop new resources for supporting their vulnerable customers
2. Consulted with a government agency on their Gender Equity Action Plan. We completed an audit of their policies, assisted them with evaluating their surveys, and ran workshops to engage various intersectional groups to provide a safe space for honest feedback. We also assisted them with writing their Gender Equity Action Plan and facilitated workshops to help implement the plan.

# Financial report

You can read the full audited report [here](#).

*"Volunteering at WIRE is such a great opportunity to build your listening skills and your people skills... It's an honour to hear these people's stories... I find that volunteering is probably my favourite part of each week. It makes life feel a bit more fulfilling."*

*Charlotte (she/they) WIRE volunteer*

*"To be able to give my reflections on what's happened to me really helped me. I've got an accounting, or economic background, and even I faced economic abuse, so it can happen to anyone of us. If anything, family violence is an equal opportunity that doesn't matter if you're rich or poor, if you're black white or brown..."*

*What WIRE does through projects like this, where they respect the time and experience that people with lived experience have, is just brilliant. WIRE genuinely puts their money where their mouth is and I think that makes a world of difference.*

*[Being offered an honorarium] just shows that the person who's giving them this information is being acknowledged and helped as well. So, it's the opposite of data mining where people are just being used to tell a story."*

*Maya, Intersectional Financial Wellbeing research participant*

*"My cohort come to me with lots of barriers and often I don't know where to refer them to, knowing I can refer people to WIRE I feel less pressure as a worker, it's a relief knowing this."*

*Professional - employment service, attendee at Introduction to WIRE session*



# Our board

- **Beverley Kliger** - Chair | she/her
- **Red Dearnley** - Deputy Chair | they/them
- **Niva Sivakumar** - Secretary | she/her
- **Amarjit Saini** - Treasurer | she/her
- **Ching Gee** - Deputy Treasurer | she/her (Sept 2023)
- **Cass Read-Hamilton** | she/her (July 2023)
- **Amanda Bresnan** | she/her
- **Emilie Perrot** | she/her
- **Michaela Moloney** | she/her
- **Sam Nixon** | she/her (July 2023)
- **Sarah Goddard** | she/her

## Board members who also served during 2022/2023:

- **Emma Rae** - Deputy Treasurer | she/her
- **Sharon Pask** | she/her
- **Uthra Ramachandran** | she/her



*Photo of Board taken at 12 Sep meeting*

## Our staff – as at June 2023

Amy	Fabry-Jenkins	she/her	Communications Lead
Ayşe	Bayramoğlu	she/her	Information and Support Worker
Bree	Allingham-MacLaren	she/her	Projects Team Co-ordinator / Project Co-Lead - Sustainable and Transformative Employment Pathways (STEP) Project
Claire	M		Information and Support Worker & External Trainer
Elena	Ashley	she/her	Manager - Operations
Jade	Blakkarly	she/her	CEO
Jane	O'Hanlon	she/her	Service Delivery Coordinator
Joy	Mason	ze/zer	Project Lead – Money Mindset
Juanita	McLaren	she/her	Fundraising Lead
Kareena	Horsman	she/her	Information and Support Worker
Katherine	Cavanagh	she/they	Finance Administrator
Mahsa	Hajjari	she/her	Manager - Development and Partnerships
Nithya	Dorairaj	she/her	Project Lead - Lead for Change
Pai	Rittichai	she/her	Manager - Community
Sayo	Fujita	she/her	Information and Support Worker
Tayla	Hansen	she/her	Project Co-Lead - Sustainable and Transformative Employment Pathways (STEP) Project
Tyrell	Heathcote	she/her	Information and Support Worker

Thank you also to the staff who do not have their name on this list for personal or privacy reasons. Your contribution can still be seen.



# Funders, partners and supporters

*Celebrating 40 years - we cannot even fathom how many people there are to thank.*

We want to express our sincere thanks and appreciation to our funders, partners, supporters, peers and members. Your support is vital to the work we do & have always done.

Your commitment to our work continues to have a significant positive impact on the lives of women and gender diverse people in Victoria.

To our funders—the Victorian Government Department of Families Fairness and Housing, Victorian Government Office for Women, Ecstra Foundation, Liptember Foundation, Commonwealth Bank, Bank Australia, Australian Unity, Victorian Law Foundation —thank you for investing in our projects, programs and service delivery. Your ongoing support makes it possible to continue our important work in the community.

Thank you to our partners who provide invaluable guidance, collaboration and in-kind support: RMIT Jobs & Skills Centre, City of Melbourne Libraries, Ethical Property Australia and Impact Neighbourhoods, WESNET, and Pan Software.

To all the individuals, law firms, and companies who provided pro bono guidance and volunteered their time, including from Pearce Webster Dugdales, Farrell Family Lawyers, Sage Family Lawyers, Nicholes Family Lawyers, Mitchell Family Law, TML Family Law, Aston Legal Group and FLP Financial, Balwyn

To all of our donors, big, small and in-between, your support during these last difficult years has been especially important. Your care and generosity bolster our efforts to advocate for structural change, to bring about gender equity, family violence prevention and social justice.

A special thank you to the donors who matched the funds raised through our Giving Week - Nicholes Family Lawyers, and fey futures.

Thank you, Financial Counselling Victoria, Banking Code Compliance Committee, Professor Roslyn Russell, Banking and Finance Oath, The Centre for Women's Economic Safety Ltd, and Australian Financial Security Authority, for their invaluable collaboration on the Intersectional Women's Financial Capability Program.

Thank you to Gospel Whiskey for choosing WIRE to receive a share of their profits and genuinely engaging with us on how to be a responsible organisation and acknowledging that while alcohol misuse can exacerbate anti-social behaviour, the key drivers of family violence are rigid gender roles and gender inequality.

Thank you to the presenters who gave such thought provoking and passionate presentations to our volunteer training: Harm Reduction Victoria, Vixen Collective, Council to Homeless Persons, Housing for the Aged Action Group, Eastern Community Legal Centre, Women's Legal Service Victoria, Safe Steps, and the individuals Monique, Vincent, Alice, Julia & Lauren.

To all the organisations and job coaches who volunteer their time as part of STEP and our job coaching program, to everyone who participated in advisory and governance groups for our projects and programs - thank you.

To We Are Harvey — thank you for your expertise, curiosity, patience and pro bono time as new staff joined the ongoing brand refresh project.

To University of Melbourne sociology interns Beebs Brownlie and Sherry Zhiyue Zhang for your incredible work cataloguing WIRE's archives and taking a journey through the last 40 years in boxes to help the story come to life! To the many incredible hackers at GirlsInTech Australia's hackathon - thank you for your incredible solidarity and focusing on WIRE! Thank you to the university students who sought ways to make the WIRE website more appealing to young people through the Practera Study Australian Industry Experience program.

To our peers, the Victorian community sector organisations, and peak bodies and reference groups, Safe and Equal, VCOSS, Economic Abuse Reference Group, No to Violence, Financial Inclusion Action Plan (FIAP), Thriving Communities Partnership —thank you for your ongoing passion, advocacy and for working alongside us to accomplish a more just and inclusive society where all people can thrive.

To our staff - thank you for your hard work and unwavering passion that empowers women and gender diverse people. You are creating a better world.

Thank you to the multi-talented Elizabeth Davie for choosing WIRE to receive a dollar from every ticket sold to her excellent feminist-financial-literacy-comedy show the 'Super Woman Money Program' during its 2023 run at The Butterfly Club.

Thank you to every volunteer, past and present.

And thank you to every other individual and organisation who has contributed and helped WIRE along the way to continue this important work with our community.



WOMEN'S INFORMATION  
AND REFERRAL EXCHANGE INC

ABN 98 957 157 895

Victorian Associations Incorporated  
Registration A10000122S

Victorian Registered Fundraising  
License FR0012196