



MINUTES OF MEETING

2022 Annual General Meeting of the Victorian Women Lawyers Association Inc.

Tuesday 29 November 2022

Meeting commenced: 5:15pm

1. President's welcome

Stephanie Pasharis (**the President**) opened the Annual General Meeting of Victorian Women Lawyers ("VWL") for 2022 with an Acknowledgement of Country.

Acknowledgement of Country

The President acknowledged the Wurundjeri and Boon Wurrung peoples of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we are gathered today, and paid her respects to their Elders, past and present. She extended that respect to any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples present here today.

Reflection on VWL's 2022 achievements

The President was proud to have led Victorian Women Lawyers in 2022 as President, as we transition back to in person events and projects after two difficult years of lockdown restrictions.

This year, VWL's theme was leading, recognising that whilst women comprise of more than 50% of law graduates, we still do not yet have gender equality in leadership within the legal profession.

VWL led conversations exploring the structural and social barriers faced by women in reaching and maintaining leadership roles. We held a number of events in line with this theme, including an interactive workshop on conscious leadership, and events focusing on pay, promotions and performance reviews, and the different pathways to leadership. the President was also delighted to have worked alongside Justitia Lawyers & Consultants to develop the Women Law Firm Owners and Leaders special interest group, which aims to provide women with the opportunity to meet other law firm owners and leaders and share their knowledge.

VWL continued to lead the profession to work towards addressing the disproportionate number of women barristers at the bar through our annual Warren Moot and the launch of our inaugural Witness Examination Competition. VWL continued its partnership with the Women Barristers' Association to hold the Barrister Networking Lunch Series, a networking event working towards equitable briefing at the bar. We also met with legal organisations to discuss their equitable briefing policies.

VWL members were also given the opportunity to lead the next generation of women lawyers through our Law Student Mentoring Program, a program which is particularly special to the President, as it was how she was introduced to VWL, having signed up as a student member in order to participate in the program many years ago.

We also worked to ensure that our events were accessible to all lawyers in the Victorian legal community, not just those lawyers practising in Melbourne's CBD. For the first time, VWL's annual Dame Roma Mitchell Memorial Lunch was livestreamed, and many of our other events were recorded. We also worked with law associations across the State to promote our initiatives, including our Professional Mentoring Program, which this year matched almost 70 mentees and mentors, including many from regional areas.

The President was so proud to have launched a new competition this year: an Expert Witness Examination Competition, which she hopes will grow into a competition that will rival our annual Warren Moot, a now staple in VWL's calendar.

Lastly, she thanked each of us for coming here today. VWL's AGM is a wonderful way to reconnect with your colleagues or meet someone new in the profession. She hopes today's meeting inspires us to join next year, and help us plan our events and projects. VWL's work would not be possible without our passionate volunteers.

Agenda and Voting

The agenda for today's meeting was enclosed with the Notice of AGM.

A reminder that you are ineligible to vote if you are a student or hold an associate membership.

Voting on ordinary items of business, excluding Executive Committee elections, will be by a raise of hands.

For our Executive Committee elections, voting will be by a ballot if required.

2. Attendance and apologies

Attendance and proxy register attached.

Secretary of VWL Linda Hart confirmed quorum had been met and Meeting could continue.

The following were an apology:

- Oriana Torcasio; and
- Stephanie Vejar and Shivani Pillai (the co-chairs of Diversity & Inclusion committee)

3. Minutes of 2021 Annual General Meeting

Minutes for the 2021 AGM tabled and approved as a true and correct record.

Motion: to confirm minutes of 2021 AGM

Moved by: Chair

Seconded by: from floor by Vice President, Sophie Lefebvre

Motion Carried by majority on show of hands

4. Membership fees for the 2023-24 Financial year

Motion: to confirm that the annual subscription for VWL membership fee for each category of members will remain as they currently are for the next financial year, being the year ended 30 June 2024.

Moved by: Chair

Seconded by: from floor by Vice President, Sophie Lefebvre
Motion Carried by majority on show of hands

5. Executive Committee Annual Report

The president invited our Voting Executive members and co-chairs of the VWL sub-committees to discuss the work they did in their respective portfolios.

Immediate Past President and AWL Representative (Vanessa Shambrook)

Vanessa Shambrook (**Ness**) is VWL's 25th Immediate Past President. She commenced by acknowledging the Traditional Custodians of the land upon which I am from, the Bunurong and Boon Wurrung people and pay my respects to their elders, past, present and emerging. I extend that respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples here today.

It has been one of her greatest honours serving my 8th and final year on VWL's Executive Committee as Immediate Past President and she has been both proud and inspired to see our committee continue to champion and work towards a true culture of equality for all women.

Ness was pleased to announce that the Women Barristers' Networking Lunch Series held in collaboration with Women's Barristers' Association resumed this year in person after 3 long years of the pandemic. We held three empowering lunches on the topics of Commercial Law, Family Law and Construction and Property Law. Throughout the Series we helped connect solicitors with briefing power and junior barristers to each other. We felt inspired after hearing from special guest speakers, The Honourable Justice Button of the Supreme Court of Victoria, The Honourable Judge Burt of the Federal Circuit Court and Family Court, and the Honourable Judge Burchell of the County Court of Australia on their paths to the bench and challenging discrimination. A very special thank you to our sponsors of this important series, Svenson Barristers, and those who helped put the lunches together, including Anna Svenson herself, Sounita Viravout, Sophie Lefebvre, and Priya Wakhlu, Vice President of WBA.

Ness said it was also a privilege to serve as Victorian Director of Australian Women Lawyers and providing support to AWL's communications this year. AWL is the national peak body of women lawyers in Australia, whose vision is to be a 'justice and equity champion, advancing women within the legal profession and beyond'.

In August, Ness attended and supported the AWL 2022 Conference in Brisbane, AWL's first in person event in four years. Speakers including The Honourable Chief Justice Susan Kiefel AC and The Hon Mark Dreyfus - Attorney General, among many others. Guests also enjoyed hearing from Steph Tisdell, a Yidinji woman and one of Australia's leading Indigenous female comedians, for the evening gala. The Conference was a wonderful success in getting our voice heard on various topics in the media following and during the conference.

AWL also sought for reform and was consulted on various issues affecting women throughout the year, including equitable briefing, diversity in judicial appointments, the gender pay gap, sexual harassment - which included having our President Leah Marrone appointed to the Respect@Work Council, super on parental leave and human rights abuses in Iran among many other issues.

As this is was Ness's final AGM as a board member of VWL, she wanted to thank all of the women who have supported her in supporting her to a place that she never would have thought possible and lifting her up, so that she may also lift up other women along my journey.

Communications Officer: presented by Roxanne Taylor

In 2022, VWL's online presence and engagement continued. Via our online platforms of Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn, we were able to keep our members up to date and informed about the activities and initiatives of VWL. This included news about our

events, projects, sponsorship, and other issues in the media of particular importance to women and the values that underpin VWL, such as justice, diversity and inclusion, and wellbeing.

In March 2022, we held a book giveaway on VWL's Instagram for International Women's Day to celebrate women's achievements in the law. We invited our followers to tag a woman in law and state why she inspires them, how she helps them to be a better lawyer, or why the legal profession would not be the same without her. Our winning pairs won 2 two books celebrating women, which included one copy of "Empowering Women" by Dr Susie Allanson and Lizzie O'Shea, which VWL subsequently held the book launch for. In NAIDOC week in July 2022, VWL shared Instagram accounts of Indigenous women to amplify and champion First Nations voices.

We also continued our monthly columns in the LIV's Law Institute Journal. This year, our Executive and Sub Committee members drafted articles for the Law Institute Journal on topics including the importance of inclusive language, the gendered nature of "office housework" at work, the legal and ethical implications of emerging technologies and their impact on women, and gender inequity in decision-making and leadership positions.

Each month via our newsletter, VWList, we also shared with our members the latest news and events related to VWL's activities.

We thank our members for their continued support and engagement with VWL's social media and communications platforms this year. Special thank you to Skye Cody too for her assistance in managing VWL's Facebook account this year.

Sponsorship Officer: presented by Bronwyn Montgomery

As Sponsorship Officer Bronwyn extended Victorian Women Lawyers' sincere thanks to our sponsors for their outstanding support in 2022.

This year VWL was pleased to host its Sponsors' Cocktail Celebration in person, after having to postpone the event for two years due to COVID-19 restrictions. The event was held at the stunning ARC ONE Gallery with delicious canapes from Cumulus Inc. This was a wonderful opportunity for VWL's valued sponsors to spend some one-on-one time with VWL's Executive Committee to discuss the calendar for the year and find further ways to collaborate with one another on new and existing events and projects.

We are grateful to its longstanding sponsors, Allens, Clayton Utz, College of Law, Coulter Legal, Foley's List, Justitia Lawyers and Consultants, K&L Gates, KHQ Lawyers, Maddocks, Maurice Blackburn Lawyers, MinterEllison, Nicholes Family Lawyers, and Svenson Barristers for their continued support of VWL. In addition, this year VWL welcomed several new sponsors; Brave Legal, Ethos Migration Lawyers, Stuart Family Lawyers and the Victorian Government Solicitor's Office which we are delighted to be working with. VWL was able to host many more in person events for its members in 2022 than in the last two years, and its sponsors were as enthusiastic as ever when it came to bringing those events to life. In particular, we take this opportunity to thank its sponsors for making the following events possible this year:

1. Allens for hosting the Emerging Technologies Innovation and Law event and the Cultural Diversity and the Law event.
2. Clayton Utz for hosting the Pathway to Leadership in the Legal Profession event.

3. College of Law for hosting the Professional Mentoring Program and Launch event.
4. Coulter Legal for hosting the Confident Conversations: Pay and Promotions event.
5. Justitia for hosting the inaugural Law Firm Owners and Leaders Special Interest Group event.
6. K&L Gates for hosting the Law Student Mentoring Program and Launch event.
7. KHQ Lawyers for hosting the Tough Talks: Navigating Difficult Conversations in the Workplace event.
8. Maddocks for hosting the 2022 Warren Moot and Launch event.
9. Maurice Blackburn for hosting the Return to Work Guide Launch event and partnering with VWL to hold the Empowering Women Book Launch.
10. Nicholes Family Lawyers for hosting the Multi-Disciplinary Approach to the Provision of Legal Services event.
11. The Victorian Government Solicitor's Office for hosting the Diverse Legal Career Pathways in the Public Sector and the Gender Equality Act 2020: Reflections on Implementation and Applying Intersectionality events.
12. Svenson Barristers for hosting the Networking Makes its Comeback and Women Barristers; Networking Lunch Series events.

We would also like to thank the following event sponsors for their significant support:

1. Gatehouse Legal Recruitment, for sponsoring the Dame Roma Mitchell Memorial Luncheon and our Members and Guests Evening.
2. Lex Medicus, for sponsoring the inaugural Expert Witness Examination Competition.

Each year, VWL's Executive and Committees work closely with sponsors and stakeholders to create events and projects which benefit women in the law. We could not have achieved what it has in 2022 without its engaged and committed sponsors. Our ability to provide excellent quality and value membership for its members and to benefit the broader community, is thanks in large part to the financial and non-financial support we receive from our sponsors. VWL congratulates its sponsors on a successful 2022, and looks forward to what 2023 brings.

Community and Membership Engagement Officer: presented by Sounita Viravout

In 2022, VWL has made significant progress in expanding VWL's membership and strengthening engagement of women lawyers and law students from all over Victoria, from diverse backgrounds and to have offerings that accommodates lawyers of varying levels of post admission experience. The connections with our many diverse, suburban, regional and rural law associations and bodies, has meant that our reach to our members and lawyers outside Melbourne metropolitan has been more far reaching and we hope to extend that reach even further looking ahead into 2023.

In 2022, in line with this year's theme of "Leading" I have also had the capacity to organise an event focused on expanding VWL's membership and engagement with senior and Principal level lawyers, by hosting the Women in the Law Doing Law Differently panel discussion and networking event in August of this year. A panel of four women leaders in law who have founded and designed their own NewLaw practices spoke openly and candidly about their experiences and provided insights into doing law differently, helping to create awareness and understanding into other ways of doing law in order to have a career in law that is more sustainable. It was incredible to hear the panellists discuss why they were doing law differently, the importance of doing so, whilst also sharing the challenges. The networking opportunity brought together a

unique group of like-minded women to connect and foster future working relationships and friendships.

Sounita thanked the panellists, - Laura Vickers, Dr Maree Livermore, Fiona Bowd and Marianne Marchesi for their time and involvement with the event.

Special Projects Officer: presented by Joanna Abraham

The Special Projects Portfolio this year was responsible for putting on our Dame Roma Mitchell Memorial Lunch, as well as our biennial Lesbia Harford Oration.

Dame Roma Mitchell Memorial Lunch

On 28 April 2022, in conjunction with the Women Barristers Association and sponsored by Gatehouse Legal Recruitment, we held our annual Dame Roma Mitchell Memorial Lunch, which commemorates the inspirational Dame Roma Mitchell.

This year's lunch was attended by close to 400 people, making it VWL's largest event of the year. Guests were treated to a discussion between Elizabeth Broderick AO, former Sex Discrimination Commissioner, and Michelle Cheng of the SBS, focusing on the topics of leadership and equality. Elizabeth spoke about the challenges facing women lawyers in reaching and maintaining leadership roles, particularly for women of colour or women with a disability.

This event was also live streamed for the first time in VWL's history, which meant that members and guests with caring or other obligations were also able to be a part of it. We aim to continue this offering for future events.

Lesbia Harford Oration

On Thursday, 8 September 2022, VWL was pleased to hold its biennial Lesbia Harford Oration, which honours its namesake with a presentation by an eminent speaker on issues of importance to women. Lesbia was a champion of workers' rights and a pioneer of women in the legal profession.

Held at the stunning State Library of Victoria, the speaker for this year's Oration was Antoinette Lattouf - media personality, diversity advocate, author and mum of two girls. She spoke candidly about her own immigrant journey and her tapestry of experiences which culminated into the publication of her first book, "How to lose friends and influence white people".

It was truly an inspirational morning to hear from a fierce changemaker, who isn't afraid to be her true authentic self, and who uses her voice and platform to amplify conversations regarding intersectional diversity, inclusion and equity.

We were also on the Steering Committee for the "Starts with Us Project" in conjunction with Women's Legal Service Victoria, which is a project by and for the legal and justice workforce in Victoria. The aim of the project is to contribute to the primary prevention of violence against women in Victoria by responding to the gendered drivers of violence against women as they manifest in our workplaces, through an intersectional lens. VWL is proud to have contributed and collaborated on the 2022 Report on Gender and Intersectional Inequality: Power and Privilege in Victoria's Legal and Justice Workforce. Key findings in the report identify critical areas that require genuine action by those who hold power and privilege in the sector, and demonstrates that the needs and experiences of professionals whose careers and wellbeing are harmed by inequalities must be at the centre of all efforts.

Wellbeing Officer: presented by Erin Meeking

In 2022, VWL continued its focus on positive wellbeing, and providing events and resources to provide our membership with the tools and practices for positive wellbeing within the legal profession. This remains a difficult task, given the well-recognised pressures and workload of those working within the legal profession, particularly following the events of the last three years.

In line with this focus, our first Conscious Leadership & the Law Workshop ran in July 2022. The workshop was presented by conscious leadership coach and consultant Artemis Evangelidi (Founder of Aipeia Consulting), and explored the theory and practice of conscious leadership. The workshop also provided tools and practices for emerging conscious leaders in the law seeking to increase their connection, self-awareness, personal accountability and responsibility as leaders in the profession. The event was hosted by Clarence – Workplaces for Professionals.

Throughout the year, VWL also provided wellbeing support and insights through its VWL and social media.

In February 2023, VWL will hold a breakfast panel event on the topic of 'Managing & Preventing Vicarious Trauma in the Legal Profession'. The event aims to provide participants with the knowledge, skills and tools to better recognise the early signs of vicarious trauma and to intervene accordingly, as well as to identify the relevance of vicarious trauma to legal practice. The event will be co-sponsored by the College of Law and Brave Legal.

Mooting Officer : presented by Georgina Long

The Warren Moot was successfully held in person for the first time since 2019. Then Warren Moot was supported by Maddocks, the Supreme Court of Victoria, the Essoign Club and the Women's Barrister Association. Maddocks hosted the launch event, the first three rounds of the moot and their CEO spoke at the Presentation Evening. They are great supporters and made my life very easy. The Supreme Court of Victoria hosted the grand final and it was one of their first external events since the commencement of the pandemic. The Essoign Club hosted the presentation evening after the grand final and waived the venue fee.

The Women's Barrister Association allowed us to use their network to find barristers to draft problems and provide robes to our grand finalists.

The launch event was well attended and we received good feedback about our panel of Justice Warren AC KC, President Emerton and Justice Rofe. We had 11 teams compete in the competition, which worked well despite the odd number. We had 14 judges from the Country Court, Supreme Court and Federal Court involved in the competition. The majority of the teams were students, which I believe is due to the time commitment the competition requires. The grand finalists were excellent and well matched. Our winners were a group of friends who weren't all from the same institution or workplace, which I think is really lovely. The 2022 Warren Moot was an absolute success and 2023 will be even better by having two people across it and the post-covid teething issues having been worked out.

Mentoring and Digital Law Officer: presented by Sophie/Steph on behalf of Oriana Torcasio

Soph mentioned Oriana did an amazing job and continued to stay involve even when she was in France. Oriana provided the following summary:

It was a pleasure to run VWL's Law Student Mentoring Program for 2022 – a program in its 15th year running. This year, we matched over 180 mentors and mentees. The

program provides women law students with the opportunity to gain insight into working in the law, develop valuable networks and share ideas with mentors in the legal profession.

To launch the program, sponsor firm K&L Gates hosted a mentoring workshop on 18 July which focused on building and maintaining effective and motivating mentoring relationships. Mentees and mentors alike left the session with valuable structured mentoring plans and an increased understanding on how to drive action and build fruitful mentoring relationships.

Earlier this year, we also held an event on emerging technologies, innovation and the law in conjunction with the Digital Law Association and Allens, where the panel discussed the legal and ethical issues surrounding emerging technologies, including blockchain, and whether the law can play catch up with the rapid developments in this space.

Diversity & Inclusion Committee: presented by Sophie on behalf of the Co-Chairs Shivani Pillai and Stephanie Vejar

Women in the Law with Diverse Abilities

In May 2022, the Diversity and Inclusion Committee launched the second virtual event of a two-part series - 'Women in the Law with Diverse Abilities', addressing the issues faced by women in the law who have a visible disability or illness. The event was proudly held in partnership with the Disabled Australian Lawyers Association (DALA).

Three women in law with physical disabilities shared their personal experiences including the significant barriers that they have faced and their insights as to how we and workplaces can be more inclusive, supportive and respectful to those with disabilities, including practical advice such as the implementation appropriate, flexible, remote working conditions in the post-covid-19 landscape.

The need for the use of preferential language when speaking about those with disabilities was highlighted, for example using "identity-first" over "person-first" language and the importance of reviewing universal design within the legal sector to accommodate and promote accessibility those with physical disabilities. They have observed that 'society' is still not built for disabled persons and it is evident that so much more is required in terms of policy and infrastructure to address accessibility issues.

Cultural Diversity and the Law

In September 2022, the committee hosted "Cultural Diversity and the Law" hosted by Allens Linkslater who generously sponsored this event. Four women in the legal sector with backgrounds various areas such as in academia and gender violence, the corporate sector, private practice and the Victorian Bar shared their personal journeys in the law including the cultural barriers they have faced, solutions to address unconscious biases and their aspirations for the future of intersectional diversity in the law.

In early 2022, the Diversity and Inclusion Committee published an article for the Law Institute of Victoria Journal, "According to merit? / Considering Intersectionality" authored by Stephanie Vejar, Co Chair.

The co-chairs note that it has been a dynamic year of growth and evolution of our sub-committee as we emerge from Covid-19 restrictions into a space where we can once again engage with each other personally, gather together and champion our cause more effectively in the legal community.

We note that the importance of connecting with others in particular those who face barriers due to their diverse backgrounds. The Diversity and Inclusion Committee looks forward to 2023 and hosting events addressing the experiences of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women lawyers and those in the LGBTQIA+ community within the legal sector. We will continue to advocate, educate and contribute to creating a more inclusive legal sector.

Publications Committee: presented by the Co-Chairs Annaleise Vulin & Greta Marks

The committee is responsible for creating and publishing Portia, which you will receive/have received a copy of tonight.

We are extremely proud of this year's edition. Portia 2022 is a bright and vibrant edition. The cover we have chosen is a stunning portrait titled Hella Tender, by Kim Leutwyler, and the pages are filled with the beautiful portraits by other finalists of the Portia Geach Memorial Award.

This edition includes some speculator features such as a particularly moving interview with Judge Sheela Zarefi Hassas of Afghanistan; an article considering the impact of the media on women in politics; an interview on leadership with two judges of the County Court; and an op ed on work/life balance in the time of the great resignation.

We also have included some incredible book and film reviews in our Arts section and we are very grateful to our committee members who have contributed to this years edition with their summaries of 2022. Toward the end, you will find photos and reflections from the many events held by VWL this year.

We extend an enormous thank you to Nancy Abdalla, Skye Cody, Liz Main, Alana Morgante, Andree Pianta, Shifa Shaikh and Amy Stagg, without whom Portia would not be possible. We are so proud of all your efforts, and how this edition has come together.

Thank you to everyone within the VWL executive committee for their efforts and to the President and Vice President. We hope you enjoy this years edition of Portia.

Law Reform Committee: presented by the Co-Chairs Andrea De Silva & Stephanie Koumbarakos

The Law Reform committee works towards law reform and promoting the understanding and support of women's legal and human rights by preparing submissions, participating in and encouraging discussion in matters of interest to the legal profession.

The Law Reform Committee has had another successful year In 2022, the Committee prepared a number of submissions and articles including the following:

- A submission to the Australian Human Rights Commission on the proposed National Anti-Racism Framework;
- A submission to the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet Review of the Members of Parliament Staff (MOPS) Act 1984 (Cth);
- A response to the consultation draft on the National Principles to Address Coercive Control; and
- An article titled 'Addressing Workplace Inequality' published in the September 2022 edition of the Law Institute Journal.

The Committee's 2020 submission to the Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs Inquiry into Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence was cited in the following reports:

- In January 2022, the Victorian Inquiry into economic equity for Victorian women Final Report, Department of Treasury and Finance; and
- In December 2022, the Victorian Law Reform Commission: Improving the Justice System Response to Sexual Offences: Supplementary Report on 'Grab and Drag' Conduct.

Stephanie thanked Andrea who will be stepping down and Sophie Llyod who will joining as co-chair

Outreach Committee: presented by the Co-Chairs Jacinta Leary & Alana Attard

The Outreach Committee aims to strengthen VWL's engagement with regional, suburban and other members with limited access or connection to Melbourne CBD or the profession, with a focus on enhancing VWL's online offering.

We continued the Confident Conversations series in 2022, with the online event on 'Pay and Promotions' offering the more than 75 attendees practical advice and tips on preparing for performance reviews and negotiating pay rises, promotions and other work arrangements.

We wish to thank Nicole Davidson, Tess Aberline and Bonnie Phillips in helping deliver this important discussion on pay and promotions. The composition of the Outreach Committee is a representative model, comprising members of the profession from across Victoria and at various stages of their legal career

We wish to thank our committee members, Michelle, Sharlene, Raya, Zefy, Laura and Catherine for their time and support and welcome our newer committee members Anna, Eve, Cassandra and Shaniya to help continue the work of the committee. We also wish to acknowledge and thank the work of VWL's Executive and other committees in helping to further to aims of the Outreach Committee.

As we moved towards a resumption of in-person events in 2022, there continued to be an offering of online and hybrid events to enable VWL members, regardless of their location and circumstances, to attend and remain involved. Notably the Dame Roma luncheon was broadened to enable attendance via video link, and we are proud that the VWL continues to extend its offerings to regional and suburban lawyers.

Networking Committee: presented by the Co-Chairs Rhiannon Zarro & Jyoti Haikerwal

The Networking Committee's role is to create opportunities through which women in the legal profession, or who are about to enter the profession, can build strong professional relationships and connections in a supportive environment. We do this by hosting a number of interesting and engaging networking events and panel discussions throughout the year, which aim to highlight the value of forging and maintaining networks for one's career development.

The Networking Committee held its first in-person events since 2019 and we could not have been more excited! We kicked off the year with Networking Makes its Comeback where we had Emily Barnes, Founder and Mediator at Dewberry, and Anna Svenson, Director of Svenson Barristers, speak about building a brand and networking in this new post-COVID world. We thank Emily and Anna for sharing their wisdom and insights with us.

We also held our annual Members and Guests event at Garden State where we had Penny Locaso, author of "Hacking Happiness", contributor to the Harvard Business Review and a TexX speaker, speak about work life balance and what that means for each individual. It was a wonderful night with great atmosphere and new connections made. We thank Penny for speaking and sharing her thoughts about a topic which is so important.

The Co-Chairs, Rhiannon and Jyoti would like to say a very big thank you to all of our wonderful Committee members. Their enthusiasm, imagination and hard-work was the reason that the events held by the Networking Committee were a huge success. We look forward to working with them again in 2023.

Women in Public Sector Committee: presented by the Co-Chair Catherine Dent

The Women in the Public Sector Committee (WIPS) had another strong year. In 2022, following a structural revamp to the committee and changes to work settings, WIPS was thrilled to bring in-person and virtual opportunities to public sector lawyers to connect and grow.

For the first time, WIPS was proud to partner with the Victorian Government Solicitor's Office. We look forward to continuing this strong partnership.

We hosted and co-hosted three insightful events.

Networking in the Public Sector online event

The event began with an inspiring and thought-provoking keynote address delivered by Louise Glanville. Zoom participants then went into break out rooms on Zoom where hosts from the Committee facilitated an icebreaker activities and discussions about working in the public sector.

Diverse Legal Career Pathways in the Public Sector event

Guests heard from our keynote speaker Kylie Kilgour, Deputy Commissioner at IBAC, about her varied career journey from community legal and the not-for-profit sector in NSW and in the UK, into varied roles in the Department of Justice and Community Safety, including legal policy, and then into IBAC. She outlined that career opportunities open up when you're known as someone who is willing to give anything a go. Our excellent panelists discussed their varied careers on the way into law, including Natalie Plumstead (Managing Principal Solicitor, Victorian Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions) discussing her role as a former architect. Natalie spoke about "finding your north star" and knowing what "makes you sing" to determine whether certain opportunities or career choices are right for you. Humaira (Maira) Dad (Legal Counsel, Western Health) discussed the challenges of building a network upon graduating and the tenacity required to seek out opportunities and mentors to guide you throughout your career. Pip Mitchell (Partner, Public Law, Clayton Utz) spoke of seeking out growth and the joy of working with people who really love the law. All of our panelists agreed that mentors have been a fundamental in helping shape their careers, and that they all find job satisfaction in working for government clients, in contributing to work which impacts peoples' lives.

Gender Equality Act 2020: Reflections on implementation and applying intersectionality'

Panel event. We heard from our esteemed panel Dr Niki Vincent, Commissioner Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector (Vic) and Ro Allen, Commissioner Victorian Equal Opportunity & Human Rights Commission and Entsar Hamid, Board Chair, Gender Equity Victoria (GEN VIC), moderated by Sara Dennis, Assistant Victorian Government Solicitor. The panel discussed the development of the Gender Equality Act 2020 (Vic) (Act), implementing the Act in practice, how the Act might drive change in the workplace and wider community and challenges in achieving gender equality.

Throughout the discussion, the panel focused on intersectionality in recognition of the fact that gender inequality may often be compounded by others forms of disadvantage or discrimination experienced due to other characteristics.

The WIPS committee is inspired to continue to build on what has been a prosperous and fruitful year into the future.

Thanked her co-chair for her amazing efforts and welcome incoming co-chair

Work Practice Committee– Isabella and Nina

We formally launched the 'Parental Leave in Practice: A "How To" Guide for Lawyers' with our sponsor Maurice Blackburn Lawyers.

The Committee also launched the VWL's Professional Mentoring Program, sponsored by the College of Law and featuring our Patron the Hon. Associate Justice Ierodionou as well as hearing from a mentor and mentee from last year's program who reflected on the role that mentoring has played in their professional development and careers.

The last event for 2022 was the 'Tough Talks' interactive event, where experienced members of the legal industry provided their perspective on having difficult conversations, including dealing with racism and bullying in the workplace, negotiating a pay increase, making a mistake and rectifying it.

The Work Practices Committee acknowledges that this year has brought some normality back to the legal profession.

However, women in the legal industry continue to face a myriad of challenges. This includes balancing home and work responsibilities and flexible work arrangement, sexual harassment and bullying and as Associate Justice Ierodionou highlighted in her speech at the Professional Mentoring Program Launch, the gender pay gap in the legal industry.

The Work Practice Committee aims to continue to organise events and develop projects that support women to successfully navigate these and other challenges in the workplace.

Thank you to the previous Co-Chairs Mary and Audrey, the Work Practices committee members and VWL executive so supporting us.

Justice Committee: presented by the Co-Chair Zefy

In 2022 the Justice Committee was able to continue to be able to work alongside inspiring individuals to support and create actions to address human rights campaigns for women. In 2022 the committee ran and supported two events. The first event being the DPFC - Stop the Expansion Panel Discussion which looked at the correlation between public housing and the cycle of female incarceration. The second was the book launch of 'Empowering Women: From Murder and Misogyny to High Court Victory', written by Dr Susie Allanson and Lizzie O'Shea, which explores the establishment of safe access zones around abortion clinics in Victoria. The Committee has also planned an event for 2023 being the Women on Boards Event which will explore the legal obligations as voting members on boards and the barriers faced by women in obtaining remunerative board positions.

We would like to thank our panelists and moderators whose passion for social justice continues to drive change and whose bravery to stand up for the rights of women provides inspiration and courage to fight for what we believe in. We would also like to give special thanks to our committee members for their commitment and understanding towards the various issues faced by women persons and their willingness to advocate

and facilitate for a better future where the impact of social justice issues is minimised, if not eliminated.

We are proud of the work done this past year and look forward to re-engaging in hands-on outreach and fundraising projects in 2023 to support social justice for women. We will also continue to facilitate discussions with knowledgeable speakers on topics of importance to our members and the broader community.

6. Treasurer's Report: presented by Elizabeth Cooper

Liz went through the financial statements. The 30 June 2021 financial year was good. We had an amazing year to be back with discounted memberships again. VWL also held free events where there was no charge to encourage people.

The year our membership numbers increased and we have also reached out to more regional firms. Our sponsorship also well represented.

Seminar revenue went up but everything stayed level. Website expenditure continued but we have a good website.

Liz asked if anyone had questions regarding the accounts.

There were no questions.

Motion: *to accept the audited financial statement as tabled at the meeting.*

Moved by: Chair

Seconded by: from floor by Vice President, Sophie Lefebvre

Motion Carried by majority on show of hands

7. Election of VWL Executive Committee

The President declared that all current positions are vacated, and all current members are stood down.

President informed members of the process that first elect officer positions, then ordinary member positions. If we need to conduct a ballot for any position, we will do so in accordance with our Rules of Association. A member who is nominated for a position and fails to be elected to that position may be nominated for any other position for which an election is yet to be held.

Election of Officers of the Association:

- Sophie Lefebvre: President
- Joanna Abraham: Vice President
- Linda Hart: Secretary
- Elizabeth Cooper: Treasurer

Motion: That, there being no other nominations for the positions the members nominated be elected.

Motion: *to accept the audited financial statement as tabled at the meeting.*

Moved by: Chair

Seconded by: raised hand from floor

Motion Carried unanimously on show of hands

Motion: That members approve seven (7) ordinary members of the Executive Committee be elected for the next year

Moved by: Chair

Seconded by: from floor by Vice President, Sophie Lefebvre

Motion Carried by majority on show of hands

Motion has been carried by majority show of hands

Election of VWL Executive Committee

- Roxanne Taylor
- Sounita Viravout
- Maddison Harrington
- Alanna Attard
- Stephanie Vejar
- Isabel Britten-Jones

Nomination received from the floor:

- Megan Lawton

Motion: That, there being no other nominations for the positions the members nominated be elected.

Moved by: Chair

Seconded by: from floor by Vice President, Sophie Lefebvre

Motion Carried unanimously on show of hands

8. Other business

Stephanie Pasharis congratulated our new Executive members on your election.

To outgoing VWL Voting Committee members: Bronwyn Montgomery, Erin Meeking, Georgina Long and Oriana Torcasio, thank you for your passion, enthusiasm and hard work this year.

To all our current and continuing Committee Co-chairs, thank you for organizing many of our wonderful events this year. I look forward to seeing your plans for next year.

Thank you to our outgoing Committee Co-chairs, Anita Nair, Andrea De Silva, Jacinta Leary and Ayan Hurseh, thank you. I know you will remain involved in VWL in the years to come.

And lastly, thank you to our outgoing Immediate Past President Vanessa Shambook, for your many years of dedication to VWL.

VWL's 2022 achievements could not have been possible without our many volunteers who sit on our committees. For those of you here today, I really do encourage you to sign up and sit on a committee. It provides you with such wonderful opportunities to meet inspirational women leaders in the law, diversify your network, and most importantly, have a bit of fun. I look forward to seeing you at our events in 2023.

No other business was raised.

The meeting was closed at 6.30pm

VWL 2022 Annual General meeting Attendance Register

Number	First Name	Last Name
1.	Joanna	Abraham
2.	Isabella	Armao
3.	Daniel	Arthur
4.	Alanna	Attard
5.	Veronica	Belot
6.	Emina	Besirevic
7.	Rebecca	Best
8.	Jordyn	Bethune
9.	Isabel	Britten-Jones
10.	Irene	Chen
11.	Daisy	Chhokar
12.	Elizabeth	Cooper
13.	Humaira	Dad
14.	Abbey	Dalton
15.	Alessandra	Daly-Sutton
16.	Nicole	Davidson
17.	Sasha	Dawson
18.	Andrea	De Silva
19.	Catherine	Dent
20.	Evangelia	Diamantopoulos
21.	Sahar	Dickson
22.	Amanda	Emonson
23.	Shenpaha	Ganesan
24.	Alexandra	Gauci
25.	Nell	Gordon
26.	Rhiannon	Griffiths
27.	Astrid	Haban-Beer
28.	Jyoti	Haikerwal
29.	Gemma	Hannah
30.	Maddison	Harrington
31.	Rachael	Harris
32.	Linda	Hart
33.	Elle	Henriksen
34.	Shannon	Hubert
35.	Jessica	Jacaj
36.	Tamsin	Jowett
37.	Paloma	Kostur
38.	Stephanie	Koumdarakos
39.	Megan	Lawton
40.	Jacinta	Learey
41.	Sophie	Lefebvre
42.	Alexandra	Lioudvigova
43.	Georgina	Long
44.	Helen	Lou

45.	Madeline	Macriyiannis
46.	Greta	Marks
47.	Rachel	Matulis
48.	Quynh Trang	McGrath
49.	Tom	McNamara
50.	Erin	Meeking
51.	Zoe	Michelle Gow
52.	Tessa	Micucci
53.	Nina	Milner
54.	vera	mom
55.	Bronwyn	Montgomery
56.	Stephanie	Pasharis
57.	Katerina	Petkovska
58.	Natalie	Plumstead
59.	Darcy	Powell
60.	Geraldine	Prentice
61.	Claudia	Pullinen
62.	Sarah	Salgram
63.	Brian	Shambrook
64.	Vanessa	Shambrook
65.	Zefy	Souvlakis
66.	Ariella	Stephenson
67.	Anna	Svenson
68.	Roxanne	Taylor
69.	Felicia	Torcasio
70.	Sounita	Viravout
71.	Annaleise	Vulin
72.	Kiara	Wagner
73.	Lauren	Wally
74.	Vanessa	Wilson
75.	Aylin	Yigit
76.	Rhiannon	Zarro

VWL 2022 Annual General meeting Proxy Register

No.	Member	Appointed Proxy
1.	Shivani Pillai	Joanna Abraham
2.	Shaniya Vilash	Joanna Abraham
3.	Sophie Williams	Joanna Abraham
4.	Katrina Ross	Joanna Abraham
5.	Larissa Goldberg	Joanna Abraham
6.	Deeann Croyley	Joanna Abraham
7.	Maddison Harrington	Joanna Abraham
8.	Jennifer Sirca	Veronica Belot
9.	Rebecca Radford	Veronica Belot
10.	Sara Dennis	Veronica Belot
11.	Andrea Robinson	Veronica Belot
12.	Kerry Maikousis	Veronica Belot
13.	Nazia Farhat	Veronica Belot
14.	Eugenie Chung	Catherine Dent
15.	Amanda Emonson	Linda Hart
16.	Sophie Lloyd	Stephanie Koumbarakos
17.	Eve Foster	Jacinta Leary
18.	Cassandra Hurley	Jacinta Leary
19.	Jessica Zhao	Sophie Lefebvre
20.	Lauren Walley	Sophie Lefebvre
21.	Oriana Torcasio	Stephanie Pasharis
22.	Nicolina Sasha Lademann	Stephanie Pasharis
23.	Vera Mom	Stephanie Pasharis
24.	Greta Marks	Stephanie Pasharis
25.	Stephanie Vejar	Stephanie Pasharis
26.	Bianca Quan	Stephanie Pasharis
27.	Stacey White	Stephanie Pasharis
28.	Louisa Ashton	Stephanie Pasharis
29.	Rebekah Glover	Stephanie Pasharis
30.	Madison Pondeljak	Stephanie Pasharis
31.	Ayan Huruseh	Stephanie Pasharis
32.	Quynh McGrath	Stephanie Pasharis
33.	Isabella Armao	Stephanie Pasharis
34.	Katrina Stuart	Roxanne Taylor
35.	Katerina Petkovska	Roxanne Taylor
36.	Kathyrn Schuck	Sounita Viravout
37.	Jessica Jacaj	Rhiannon Zarro
38.	Tessa Micucci	Rhiannon Zarro
39.	Felicia Marie Torcasio	Rhiannon Zarro
40.	Rachael Harris	Rhiannon Zarro

VICTORIAN WOMEN LAWYERS ASSOCIATION INC

ABN 32 198 567 354

FINANCIAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2022

VICTORIAN WOMEN LAWYERS ASSOCIATION INC
ABN 32 198 567 354

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VICTORIAN WOMEN LAWYERS ASSOCIATION INC
ABN 32 198 567 354

STATEMENT BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

The committee has determined that the association is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements.

In accordance with a resolution of the committee of Victorian Women Lawyers Association Inc, the members of the committee declare that the financial statements for the year then ended, a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory notes:

1. present a true and fair view of the financial position of Victorian Women Lawyers Association Inc as at 30 June 2022 and its performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements and the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012; and
2. at the date of this statement there are reasonable grounds to believe that Victorian Women Lawyers Association Inc will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is signed for and on behalf of the committee by:

President



Stephanie Pasharis

Treasurer



Elizabeth Cooper

Dated: 13 November 2022

VICTORIAN WOMEN LAWYERS ASSOCIATION INC

ABN 32 198 567 354

COMPILATION REPORT

TO VICTORIAN WOMEN LAWYERS ASSOCIATION INC

We have compiled the accompanying special purpose financial statements of Victorian Women Lawyers Association Inc, which comprise the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2022, the statement of profit or loss for the year then ended, a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory notes. The specific purpose for which the special purpose financial statements have been prepared is set out in Note 1 to the financial statements. The special purpose financial statements are only suitable for the purpose set out in Note 1 to the financial statements and may not be suitable for any other purpose.

The Responsibility of the Committee

The committee of Victorian Women Lawyers Association Inc is solely responsible for the information contained in the special purpose financial statements, the reliability, accuracy and completeness of the information and for the determination that the basis of accounting used is appropriate to meet its needs and for the purpose that the financial statements were prepared.

Our Responsibility

On the basis of information provided by the committee, we have compiled the accompanying special purpose financial statements in accordance with the basis of accounting as described in Note 1 to the financial statements and APES 315: Compilation of Financial Information.

We have applied our expertise in accounting and financial reporting to compile these financial statements in accordance with the basis of accounting described in Note 1 to the financial statements. We have complied with the relevant ethical requirements of APES 110: Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants.

Assurance Disclaimer

Since a compilation engagement is not an assurance engagement, we are not required to verify the reliability, accuracy or completeness of the information provided to us by management to compile these financial statements. Accordingly, we do not express an audit opinion or a review conclusion on these financial statements.

The special purpose financial statements were compiled exclusively for the benefit of the committee who is responsible for the reliability, accuracy and completeness of the information used to compile them. We do not accept responsibility for the contents of the special purpose financial statements.

**Liddell Weight Services Pty Ltd
Chartered Accountants**

**Level 4
222 Kings Way**

South Melbourne, Vic, 3205



Accountant: Kevin J. Weight

South Melbourne

Dated: 4 November 2022

VICTORIAN WOMEN LAWYERS ASSOCIATION INC
ABN 32 198 567 354

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS AT 30 JUNE 2022

	Note	2022 \$	2021 \$
ASSETS			
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash on hand	2	359,646	326,240
Accounts receivable and other debtors	3	653	946
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		360,299	327,186
TOTAL ASSETS		360,299	327,186
LIABILITIES			
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Accounts payable and other payables	4	8,965	7,912
Other	5	53,476	13,933
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		62,441	21,845
TOTAL LIABILITIES		62,441	21,845
NET ASSETS		297,858	305,341
MEMBERS' FUNDS			
Retained earnings		297,858	305,341
TOTAL MEMBERS' FUNDS		297,858	305,341

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

These statements are unaudited and should be read in conjunction with the attached compilation report.

VICTORIAN WOMEN LAWYERS ASSOCIATION INC
ABN 32 198 567 354

PROFIT AND LOSS STATEMENT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2022

	Note	2022 \$	2021 \$
INCOME			
Interest Received		439	1,666
Donations Received		3	-
Seminar Revenue		25,793	18,077
Membership Fees		32,879	24,145
Sponsorship Income		73,773	55,950
		<u>132,887</u>	<u>99,838</u>
LESS EXPENDITURE			
Accountancy Fees		2,000	2,000
Administration Expenses		24,290	24,775
AWL Membership Fee		2,738	7,202
Brand Expense		-	799
Bank Charges		1,692	1,013
Catering		1,003	529
Committee Expenses		1,279	527
Courier and Postage		313	3,072
Donations		400	-
Function Expenses		63,563	44,533
Gifts		834	-
Insurance		2,373	2,279
Licensing Fees		86	-
Magazines and Publication Expenses		17,161	16,133
Office Expenses		588	1,127
Subscriptions and Memberships		1,950	1,221
Website Expenses		20,100	18,293
		<u>140,370</u>	<u>123,503</u>
NET OPERATING PROFIT (LOSS)		(7,483)	(23,665)
Retained Profits at the beginning of the financial year		305,341	329,006
TOTAL AVAILABLE FOR APPROPRIATION		297,858	305,341
RETAINED PROFITS AT THE END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR		297,858	305,341

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

These statements are unaudited and should be read in conjunction with the attached compilation report.

VICTORIAN WOMEN LAWYERS ASSOCIATION INC
ABN 32 198 567 354

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2022

1. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Financial Reporting Framework

The financial statements are special purpose financial statements prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 Victoria. The committee has determined that the association is not a reporting entity.

Basis of Preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the following Australian Accounting Standards:

- AASB 101: Presentation of Financial Statements;
- AASB 108: Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors;
- AASB 110: Events after the Balance Sheet Date
- AASB 118: Revenue and
- AASB 1031: Materiality.

No other Accounting Standards, Australian Interpretations or other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board have been applied. The financial report is prepared on an accruals basis and is based on historic costs and does not take into account changing money values or, except where stated specifically, current valuations of non-current assets.

The following significant accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous period unless stated otherwise, have been adopted in the preparation of these financial statements.

(a) Income Tax

On the 27th June 2008 a Federal Court decision was handed down ruling that the Victorian Women Lawyers' Association was exempt from liability to income tax on the basis of being a Charitable Institution under subsection 50-5 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997, as amended. As such all previous income tax paid has been refunded and the association is exempt from paying income tax in the future.

Current income tax expense charged to profit or loss is the tax payable on taxable income for the current period. Current tax liabilities (assets) are measured at the amounts expected to be paid to (recovered from) the relevant taxation authority using tax rates (and tax laws) that have been enacted or substantively enacted by the end of the reporting period.

Current and deferred income tax expense (income) is charged or credited outside profit or loss when the tax relates to items that are recognised outside profit or loss or arising from a business combination.

A deferred tax liability shall be recognised for all taxable temporary differences, except to the extent that the deferred tax liability arises from:

- (a) the initial recognition of goodwill; or
- (b) the initial recognition of an asset or liability in a transaction which:
 - (i) is not a business combination; and
 - (ii) at the time of the transaction, affects neither accounting profit nor taxable profit (tax loss).

VICTORIAN WOMEN LAWYERS ASSOCIATION INC
ABN 32 198 567 354

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2022

(b) Revenue and Other Income

Revenue is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable after taking into account any trade discounts and volume rebates allowed. For this purpose, deferred consideration is not discounted to present values when recognising revenue.

When the association receives a capital grant, it recognises a liability for the excess of the initial carrying amount of the financial asset received over any related amounts (being contributions by owners, lease liability, financial instruments, provisions, revenue or contract liability arising from a contract with a customer) recognised under other Australian Accounting Standards.

The association recognises income in profit or loss when or as the association satisfies its obligations under the terms of the grant.

Interest income is recognised using the effective interest method.

All revenue is stated net of the amount of goods and services tax.

Donations and bequests were recognised as revenue when received.

Interest revenue was recognised using the effective interest method, which for floating rate financial assets is the rate inherent in the instrument. Dividend revenue was recognised when the right to receive a dividend had been established. Rental income from operating leases was recognised on a straight-line basis over the term of the relevant leases.

Revenue from the rendering of a service was recognised upon the delivery of the service to the customer.

(c) Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

Receivables and payables are stated inclusive of the amount of GST receivable or payable. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO is included with other receivables or payables in the statement of financial position.

VICTORIAN WOMEN LAWYERS ASSOCIATION INC
ABN 32 198 567 354

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2022

	2022 \$	2021 \$
2. CASH ON HAND		
Cheque Bank Account	56,541	23,604
Debit Card Bank Account	78	48
Investment Bank Account	50,739	50,729
Term Deposit - 519992	<u>252,288</u>	<u>251,859</u>
	<u>359,646</u>	<u>326,240</u>
3. ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE AND OTHER DEBTORS		
CURRENT		
Trade Receivables	32	407
Goods and Services Tax	<u>621</u>	<u>539</u>
	<u>653</u>	<u>946</u>
4. ACCOUNTS PAYABLE AND OTHER PAYABLES		
CURRENT		
Trade Creditors	<u>8,965</u>	<u>7,912</u>
5. OTHER LIABILITIES		
CURRENT		
Prepaid Income	<u>53,476</u>	<u>13,933</u>

These notes are unaudited and should be read in conjunction with the attached compilation report.