



2025 Annual General Meeting of the Victorian Women Lawyers Association Inc.

Executive Committee Candidate Summary

President

Annaleise Vulin

Dear VWL Members

I've been a member of VWL since 2017, was Publications Co-chair in 2022 and 2023, Secretary in 2024 and am currently the Vice President.

In my 2 years on the Voting Executive, we've began critical discussions on restructuring VWL's sponsorship, reuniting with former external stakeholders, redefining flagship events and broadening ideas on increasing outreach and membership.

I therefore believe that I have the relevant skills and leadership to be VWL's President in 2026. To carry this work through with Shivani Pillai as Vice President and progress VWL's vision and goals.

Thank you for your consideration. Annaleise.

Sapphire Parsons

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Senior Associate, Macpherson Kelley; Co-Chair, VWL Law Reform Committee Impact:

2024: Sector collaboration: Safety Advisor: Respect & Equality in the Legal Sector Project, delivered by Women's Legal Services Victoria.

2024: Leading Australian Women Lawyers national advocacy in collaboration with 12 peak bodies, calling for stronger safety laws to prevent work-related sexual and gender-based harassment.

2024: Securing first safety recommendation in Australian history to regulate sex discrimination, sexual and gender based harassment under safety laws: r. 7(f) in Unlocking the Prevention Potential.

2025: Leading Australia's largest national advocacy, alongside Casey Guilmartin, uniting 20+ peak bodies, global and national experts, in calling on Safe Work Australia for stronger safety laws to prevent work-related gendered violence, discrimination and workplace inequality.

Vice President

Shivani Pillai

I have been a presenter, promoter and active member of VWL for over 15 years. I was the VWL Diversity and Inclusion Co-Chair for approximately 7 years until 2024. I have practised

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law for 30 years from personal injuries to crime including 25 years at the Bar and 3 years as the sole, female Board member (DOJ). I feel my approachable manner, natural leadership style, experience in policy and governance combined with my intersectionality/diversity of culture, age and disability experience will enhance VWL and encourage a collaborative relationship with WBA, our wonderful sponsors, the judiciary and others who share our vision.

Casey Guilmartin

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Associate, White & Case Co-Chair; VWL Law Reform Committee Impact:

2024: Engagement: Involvement across VWL Law Reform Committee for 2 years, including leading events, member engagement and joint authorship of multiple submissions on behalf of VWL.

2025: Collaboration: Alongside Sapphire Parsons in leading VWL's advocacy to Safe Work Australia calling for stronger safety laws to prevent work-related gendered violence and discrimination, thereby engaging with peak bodies across Australia, as well as national experts.

2025: National strategic insight: Strategic insights in meetings with the Australian Human Rights Commission, and other peak bodies in considering discrimination as a safety risk and supporting opportunities for national advocacy on safety reform.

Secretary

Bridget Gertzel

2025: Co-Chair of the VWL Publications Committee 2025, editing and production of Portia, liaising with VWL and external stakeholders and managing multiple deadlines.

2021-2023: As a member of the Law Institute Victoria Young Lawyers Committee, I designed and hosted a Women's Wellbeing event - interviewing panelists, and facilitating live Q&A. In my current role at Rightside Legal I represent victims of childhood institutional abuse. Prior to Rightside, I was an Associate at the County Court Victoria, a Lawyer at PwC and Paralegal at Slater & Gordon. I am passionate about the work of VWL, highly diligent and organised and I would be honoured to serve as Secretary for 2026.

Zefy Souvlakis

I am an Accredited Specialist in Immigration Law, an admitted lawyer of the Supreme Court of Victoria, and a Partner at Ethos Migration Lawyers. I have been a proud member of Victorian Women Lawyers for over 10 years and currently serve as Co-Chair of the Justice Committee, a position I've held for the past three years. During this time, I've had the privilege of leading and supporting initiatives that promote access to justice, equality, and professional growth for women in the legal profession. I'm excited about the opportunity to join the Executive Committee and continue supporting VWL's mission.

Cait Bowman

I'm a compulsory acquisitions lawyer at Hunt & Hunt Lawyers. I've enjoyed playing a role within Victorian Women Lawyers, having served as Co-chair of the Networking Committee in 2025 after contributing as a committee member in 2024. I am committed to supporting connection and engagement within the legal community, coordinating events that support professional development and inclusion across all career stages. I am passionate about creating opportunities for women to collaborate and advance in the law. I look forward to further contributing to VWL's objectives as a member of the Executive Committee.

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Rebekah Glover

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Senior Associate, Kingston Reid; VWL Law Reform Committee

Impact:

2024: Involvement in VWL Law Reform Committee. Over 2 years, led events and submissions on law reform.

2025: Darebin Council Gender Equity Advisory Committee member, advising on issues, policies, programs and services for women and gender-diverse communities.

2025: Collaboration with VWL's Law Reform Committee, as part of Australia's largest national push for stronger safety laws to prevent work related gendered violence and to recognise discrimination as a safety risk.

Treasurer

Nomination required

General Members

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Cassandra Hurley

At DBA Lawyers, Cassandra focuses on areas including board and corporate governance, trustee responsibilities and superannuation, company, tax and trust law. As a member of VWL's Outreach Committee, Cassandra has been involved for the last 3 years initiatives aimed at supporting and connecting women lawyers throughout Victoria... not just the Melbourne CBD. (We aren't 'Melbourne Women Lawyers!') She has moderated events focused on professional development, social media and brand development and building legal networks. Cassandra has represented VWL at online and regional events, most recently including Horsham, Bendigo and Geelong.

Julia Eastoe

I specialise in employment and industrial relations law, currently working in-house within the aviation industry. I have had the privilege of co-chairing the Work Practices Committee since 2024 and have been a member of VWL since relocating to Melbourne from Sydney in 2019. Through our committee we have continued to deliver highly regarded events, including the annual Tough Talks interactive panel discussion and Coming to the Bar. It is a monumental time for the legal industry with focus on progressing workplace rights and the work environment for female and female identifying lawyers. I am looking forward to contributing further to the VWL through an executive position in 2026.

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Apurva Sharma

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Principal & Founder, GPS Lawyers & Consultants

Member, VWL Law Reform Committee

Impact

2025: Intersectional Leadership: Founder, Australian Indian Lawyers Network (AILN).

2025: Engagement: Engagement across events in the Victorian legal and business community, including with the Law Institute of Victoria and Victorian Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Shannon Hubert

Shannon is a family lawyer working in Melbourne's CBD. Shannon holds a Bachelor of Arts and Diploma in Languages from the University of Melbourne and a Juris Doctor from Monash University. She has just completed her second year as Co-Chair of the VWL Networking Committee. A VWL member since 2019 and a Networking Committee member since 2022, she is passionate about creating opportunities for women to connect and grow their networks. Shannon is also interested in exploring sustainable ways to work that promote longevity and tangible balance in the law. Outside of work, she enjoys reformer Pilates, reading and travel.

Alexandra Lioudvigova

I am a fourth year lawyer specialising in public law and regulatory compliance for government agencies. I have been on the Women in Public Sector subcommittee since 2022 and on the executive as a Communications Officer since 2023. I am passionate about fostering connections, developing opportunities for women in the law, and contributing to meaningful change in the profession. It has been a privilege to do so as part of the VWL executive, where I have met so many talented, inspiring people who share this same passion. I would love the opportunity to continue in this role in 2026.

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Deb Hann

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Director, Core EQ; Leading education at senior levels of the Victorian legal sector (prev. Director, Leo Cussen Institute); Member, VWL Law Reform Committee & Member; VWL Work Practices Committee

Impact:

2024: Safety in the legal sector: Consultant for the Respect & Equality in the Legal Sector Project, funded by WorkSafe Victoria and delivered by Women's Legal Services Victoria, collaborating alongside Sapphire Parsons.

2025: Collaboration: Supporting national advocacy led by Sapphire Parsons and Casey Guilmartin as part of VWL's Law Reform Committee, calling upon SafeWork Australia for stronger safety laws to prevent work-related gendered violence and discrimination.

2025: Redefining legal leadership: Redefining legal leadership through industry collaboration, insights and learnings with peak education bodies in the Australian legal sector.