



WELCOME 2018!

Last year was huge at the Trust, and 2018 will be no different! To kick things off, we're moving to a fresh newsletter format; short and sharp. As Executive Director Mary Crooks AO says, "we're a feminist organisation in a hurry—a careful hurry."

In this edition, you'll get a snapshot of our *Economic Security Summer Intensive* with bold thinker Marilyn Waring and others, meet our new Board Directors, read about our policy submissions, VWBT news and more. From the VWT team, thank you for your ongoing support. Onwards and upwards!

SUMMER INTENSIVE

In late January, we held an *Economic Security Summer Intensive* at the VWT. The *Intensive* was headed up by Marilyn Waring and included experts such as Prof. Lyndall Strazdins (ANU College of Health and Medicine), Mary Delahunty (Journalist and former politician) and Angela Priestley (Founding Editor, Women's Agenda).

Together, participants drilled down the blockers to women's economic security that still exist; the undervaluing of unpaid work; the superannuation system; pay

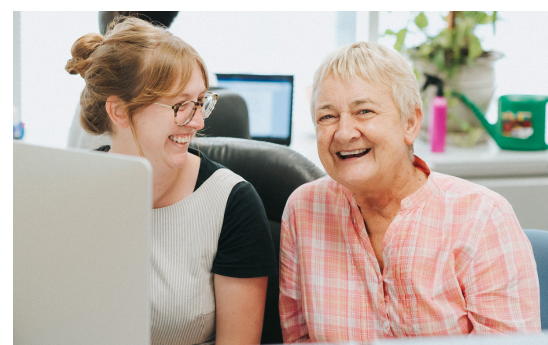
inequality; and the unaffordability and inaccessibility of childcare.

The *Intensive* produced an exciting coming together of ideas for real action on economic security that will be rolled out this year by the VWT. On the 24th January in front of full house at Church of All Nations, Carlton, we gave a taster of our proposed plans for 2018 to remove barriers to women's economic well-being.

Titled *Ideas to Action* and hosted in partnership with the Readings Foundation, the event featured political economist Marilyn Waring in discussion with Richard Denniss (Chief Economist, The Australia Institute). *Ideas to Action* sold out over a week in advance, proving that people are craving nuanced discussion around pay equity, superannuation, childcare, and unpaid work.

In typical VWT fashion, *Ideas to Action* was bookended with all female choir, Prana Mob, who deftly showed off the acoustics of the space. While the discussion may have centered on topics like economics, data, legislation and tax, the 300 strong crowd was energetic and full of anticipation. People are hungry for change.

We are too. No more barriers, no more inequality - it's time.



Top Image: Mary Crooks AO, Marilyn Waring, Mary Delahunty. Right Images (top to bottom): Esther Davies-Brown, Marilyn Waring, Lyndall Strazdins, Marilyn Waring, Sophie Bliss. (Photo credit: Breeana Dunbar Photography)

NEW DIRECTORS

The VWT Board has always featured community leaders who are ambitious in their feminism, ready to take our message of gender equality even further. In times past, we have welcomed one new Board member at a time, however, in this instance we will be extending our warm and enthusiastic welcome to four new Board members at once. Excitement level: high. Covering diverse areas such as women in tech and gaming, female entrepreneurship, rural leadership, community and law, each appointment brings new skills and experience to the Trust, while carrying on the legacy of our dedicated Board members who will be stepping down.

Chair of the VWT Board Alana Johnson said, “the Board of the Victorian Women’s Trust is home to big ideas, leading thinkers and passionate change-makers. As we acknowledge their contribution and farewell Padmini Sebastian, Teresa Tjia and Patricia ni Ivor, we are delighted to welcome our new Board members.”

The new directors include Senior Associate at Maurice Blackburn Lawyers, Azmeena Hussain; Trainer Consultant and Coach to Local Government, Ruth McGowan OAM; Co-founder and CEO of One Roof, Sheree Rubinstein and Game Developer and Activist, Leena van Deventer.

This is an excerpt from the Trust Women Journal. Read the full article here: vwt.org.au/meet-new-board-members/

SMALL GRANTS, BIG VISION

WRITTEN BY BRYONY GREEN
GRANTS AND DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

We all want to be able to put food on the table, support our families and keep a roof over our heads. Just like we all want the work that we do to be respected, seen and valued. And, if any sudden loss of income or unexpected event occurred, we would want some kind of buffer to help us carry on.

For many women in Australia, this is simply not the case. Too many women face significant economic barriers to their well-being and security, their future uncertain.

The fact is economic inequality is all too common. And starts when we are just children with girls on average earning \$9.60 pocket money each week, compared to the boys in her class who receive \$13.00. This pay imbalance only increases as we age.

In fact, throughout a woman’s life, she can face economic inequality at every turn. And the stats make it abundantly clear; women are being paid less for the work they do, they are overlooked (despite higher rates of education) and discriminated against. Similarly, unpaid work in the home is predominately undertaken by women for little or no return. When returning to work, women are faced with childcare costs that are unaffordable for so many. By the time women reach retirement age, on average women have half the amount of superannuation compared with men. They are increasingly likely

to struggle to make ends meet and are at greater risk of homelessness. Today, older women make up the largest increasing cohort at risk of homelessness in Australia.

We also know that there are so many other factors that interplay with women’s economic security such as living with a disability, language barriers, family violence, economic abuse — the list goes on. And without the right support, they can contribute to women being locked out of a dignified retirement, struggling to make ends meet.

This can and must change.

We need to hasten the pace of change, so that in this lifetime women can live their lives with freedom and respect without the burden of financial struggle. This is why we have committed our 2018 Small Grants Program to strengthening women’s economic security.

I’ve worked at the Victorian Women’s Trust since 2012 and in that time I have seen real wins, when it comes to economic security such *Fairwear: the rights of women workers*, *Who Gets the Farm*, *Guaranteed Loan Fund*, *Business Matrix*, *Paradox of Service*, *Breakthrough 2016* and now *Ideas to Action*. As of this year, I have stepped into the role of Grants and Development Manager, following in the footsteps of Carolyn Munckton. We both share a similar passion for collaborating with community groups for social change. I am excited to work closely with many fabulous organisations this year who



are committed to ensuring women can live a life of opportunity, equality and dignity, without financial struggle.

For more information on our grants go to: vwt.org.au/grants

HUMANITAS SUB-FUND LAUNCH

We are delighted to announce the launch of the Humanitas Sub-Fund. Established by long-time supporter Prue Brown, it will support women from African countries including those who are refugees or asylum seekers, enabling them to avail themselves of educational, employment and other economic opportunities in Australia. The event will feature guest speaker Dr. Mimmie Claudine Ngum Chi Watts.

Date: Thursday 19 April 2018

Time: 5:30pm (for 5:45 start)

Location: Footscray Community Arts Centre 45 Moreland St, Footscray

RSVP: bit.ly/HumanitasLaunch

If you would like to find out more about establishing a Sub-Fund with the Victorian Women's Benevolent Trust, please visit: vwt.org.au/establishing-a-sub-fund/

A WHITE HOT FLAME

On the 1st March the Victorian Women's Trust held a sold out launch of *A White Hot Flame*, a biography of Mary Montgomery Bennett (1881-1961) written by historian Sue Taffe.

The event was held at ACMI and also featured the debut screening of *Letters Across the Desert*, a Victorian Women's Trust documentary film by Stu Mannion that captures the powerful advocacy partnership between Mary Bennett and Shirley Andrews.

Get your hands on A White Hot Flame here: publishing.monash.edu/books/whf-9781925523188.html

OUR ADVOCACY

2018 has already seen two finalised policy submissions from the Victorian Women's Trust.

On the 25th of January, Policy Intern Isabelle Hughes and ED Mary Crooks AO produced a policy submission in response to the proposed changes contained in the *Electoral Funding and Disclosure Reform Bill 2017*. The submission focused on the role that current donation laws play in maintaining Australia's masculinist political culture and in weakening the central democratic principle of serving *all* citizens. Isabelle can be seen in the image below happily clicking send on her first submission.

In early February, Policy Officer Casimira Melican and our ED Mary Crooks AO finalised a submission to the *2018 Family Law Amendment (Family Violence and Other Measures) Bill*. The submission discussed the scourge that domestic violence constitutes in our society and the legislative and policy intervention vacuum that has persisted in Australia since federation which has ensure the deeply embedded, systemic and wicked nature of this problem.

A quick update on the 1800 RESPECT Inquiry policy submission discussed in the 2017 Spring newsletter. Pleasingly, VWT concerns about how the triage service model provided by Medicare Health Services has been anecdotally found not to be in line with best practice service models and didn't adequately address the vulnerability and life situations of callers to the 1800 RESPECT service, who are at a greater risk of violence, mental health issues and violence who need to speak to a trauma specialist counsellor at the first point of contact, was recorded in the Committee's Final Report on page 23 (published December 2017).

You can download our full policy submissions here: vwt.org.au/policy-advocacy



VALE ZELDA D'APRANO

We've just heard the sad news that activist Zelda D'Aprano has passed away at age of 90. Zelda was a giant of the women's movement who fought for equal pay for equal work over many decades.

She is pictured here in 1969 after chaining herself to the doors of the Arbitration Court in Melbourne to protest the pay inequities between male and female employees of the Meatworkers' Union. This is just one example of the kind of direct action she took in her lifetime.

Zelda was a fiery inspiration — she will be dearly missed.

Read more about her life and work: australianbiography.gov.au/subjects/daprano/





“PATRIARCHIES SOLICIT WOMEN’S SUBORDINATION AND PARTICIPATION AND OF COURSE INTERPRET WOMEN’S SUBMISSION AS CONSENT.”

- BEA CAMPBELL, *WE REVOLT AT DAWN*

WE REVOLT AT DAWN

The Victorian Women’s Trust in partnership with the SEARCH Foundation hosted an evening with author and feminist luminary Beatrix Campbell in November with journalist and documentary filmmaker Santilla Chingaibe and feminist organiser and writer Karen Pickering, under the fitting title of *We Revolt at Dawn: The death of patriarchy and prospects for gender equality*.

Taking place upstairs at the Athaneum, the 250 strong crowd listened to passionate discussion around unpaid

work, feminism and bringing an end to the patriarchy.

HERE SHE IS RELAUNCH

Since our website relaunch, the *Here She Is* directory has grown enormously, now proudly hosting over 400 profiles. Not only do we urge you and those you know to create a profile on *Here She Is*, we encourage you and organisations that you are a part of to use the directory to find amazing talented women!

Tell all your friends:
vwt.org.au/directory

VWT TOTE BAGS: SELLING FAST

We are very close to selling out of our tote bag collaboration with the feminist artist Frances Cannon. If you’d like to get your hands on one before they run out, head to the link below!

Grab yours: vwt.org.au/shop



WHAT’S YOUR INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY RESOLUTION?

IWD is almost here! To celebrate what we consider NYE for feminists everywhere, we’re writing out our feminist resolutions, readying ourselves for the year ahead. Show your support to women and girls — make your IWD resolution to become a regular Trust donor.

You can donate:
vwt.org.au/donate or 9642 0422.



Donate + support
the Victorian Women's Trust

#FeministResolutions