



NOVEMBER 2018

## WHAT A YEAR!

And we're almost at the finish line, in more ways than one. In this final edition of the Trust Newsletter for 2018, you'll hear about all the exciting development for several of our major projects, read up on our inspiring Sub-Fund grants, and so much more.

Thank you so much for your ongoing support throughout the year. I hope your festive season is a cracker!

**Mary Crooks AO**  
Executive Director

## CLUB RESPECT HAS LAUNCHED!

*Club Respect*, a new digital platform for sporting clubs, was launched at celebratory event at AAMI Park on the 24th Oct. Developed out of a ten year partnership between Nirodah and the Victorian Women's Trust, *Club Respect* is geared towards activating all sports clubs to be the benchmark of respectful behaviour in their community.

It was a lively and happy affair with lots of small children dressed in team uniforms running about, while

parents, coaches, and sporting greats chatted and mingled.

Around 150 people gathered for the official launch in Edwin's Cafe at AAMI Park stadium, ready to hear from guest speakers Shelley Ware, co-host of the Marngrook Footy Show; Brent Silva, General Manager, NRL Victoria; the Hon. Natalie Hutchins MP, and more.

**Want to make your local club safe and fun for everyone?**

Visit [www.clubrespect.org](http://www.clubrespect.org) and find out how.

## DESTINATION EQUALITY

*"Accommodation within a patriarchal order has won social and material reward but it is insufficient to achieve equality. The required social transformation can only come about through non-acceptance, and disturbance, of our patriarchal status quo."*

This is an excerpt from Mary Crooks AO's essay *Destination Equality* from the collection *Frailty and Hope in a World of Uncertainty*; Future Leaders.

**Read more:**  
[bit.ly/Destination-Equality](http://bit.ly/Destination-Equality)



Top Image: Sporting super stars from Mernda Dragons Rugby League Club Inc., Heidelberg United FC Juniors, and Eastern Raptors Rugby League Club. Right Images (top to bottom): Vanessa Vyse, Committee Member, South Eastern Titans RLC; Nova Peris OAM; Milly Lafau, Committee Member, South Eastern Titans RLC; and Shelley Ware, co-host of the Marngrook Footy Show, Kesh Sharma, Sophie Bliss, Mary Crooks AO, The Hon. Natalie Hutchins MP, Paul Zappa (Photo credit: Breeana Dunbar Photography).





# 2018 SUB-FUND GRANTS

## SUPPORTING WOMEN & GIRLS



### CHRIS FRIDAY SUB-FUND

Elizabeth Morgan House  
Aboriginal Women's Services Inc (EMH)  
Aboriginal LGBTI forum and workforce training  
\$6,535

Aboriginal LGBTI community service-users tend to silo their identity, either seeking care as an Aboriginal person or as someone who identifies as LGBTI. This disconnect prevents Aboriginal LGBTI people receiving the holistic care they need. This project will guide and train Aboriginal community organisations and Aboriginal liaison workers to improve service experiences and strengthen referral pathways between Aboriginal and LGBTI organisations.



### ESSIE BURBRIDGE SUB-FUND

Fitted for Work Limited  
*Closing the Gap-Finding Solutions*  
\$10,000

*Closing the Gap—Finding Solutions* provides practical support and outreach to women and girls at the individual and community level. The project explores socio-economic integration challenges and will encourage participants to improve their educational and employment opportunities. Participants will assess their skills and competencies and identify their goals and future aspirations.



### FAY MARLES EQUAL OPPORTUNITY SUB-FUND

WEstJustice Community Legal Centre  
*Migrant Women at Work - Diversity & Equal Opportunity Empowerment Project*  
\$8,815

Building on the success of WEstjustice's award winning employment program, WEstjustice will develop a Multilingual/ Multicultural Peer Educator Network (MMPEN) for migrants who WEstjustice has trained. This program will reduce inequality and discrimination at work with targeted education and legal services for migrant workers, and advocacy campaigns.



### PRUE MYER SUB-FUND

Banksia Gardens Community Services  
*Girls' Circle Project - Broadmeadows*  
\$10,000

The *Girls' Circle Project* is a creative self-development program for girls from disadvantaged areas in the Broadmeadows area. Women living on the Banksia Gardens Public Housing Estate and older girls provide mentoring support for the younger *Girls' Circle* participants. The project will build confidence, involve parents, whilst recognising and celebrating girls' achievements.

The Trustee for Raise Foundation  
*Bump - Mentoring at-risk Young Mothers*  
\$8,000

*Bump* will help young parents living in Geelong who are pregnant or parenting, vulnerable and at-risk, by providing a weekly mentoring and support on her parenting journey. Delivered by a local volunteer mother, this program will assist young parents to return to work. With the support of a dedicated counsellor, this program will empower participants to develop resilience and greater confidence in their parenting abilities.

Women's Health Grampians  
*Unstoppable*  
\$5,000

*Unstoppable* will give women from culturally diverse backgrounds the opportunity to share skills, and increase the number of girls and women participating in decisions and change-making in their schools, communities and the broader

society. The women will step up and co-present, co-facilitate, event-manage and share practical life-skills in projects co-designed by the girls and women.



### CON IRWIN SUB-FUND

Creative Partnerships Australia  
*Bits and Bods Web Series (Genitals and Virginity Episodes)*  
\$10,000

Currently, sex education in schools leaves teens uninformed and uncomfortable talking about sex. Existing sexual and reproductive health (SRH) interventions don't focus on teen girls. *Bits and Bods* is an innovative web series that provides girls with inclusive and accurate information about sex, bodies and relationships that normalises talking about sex when they are forming sexual habits.

Somebody's Daughter Theatre Company (SDTC)  
*Welcome to the Family*  
\$9,237

Following the 2018 production *What Will It Take*, SDTC will deliver workshops within the Dame Phyllis Frost Centre. The workshops will engage women who have experienced discrimination, family violence and homelessness, culminating in the production of a song/film clip written and performed by women inside the prison walls, telling their own stories through the arts.



### HUMANITAS SUB-FUND

Positive Women Victoria  
Peer support training for African women living with HIV  
\$2,000

The project will build the skills and confidence of African women living with HIV to act as volunteer peer support workers for other HIV positive women in their communities. This program will increase access for African women living with HIV to high-quality and culturally appropriate peer support and helping individuals to obtain greater social, health, education and employment opportunities.



### FLEUR SPITZER SUB-FUND

Family Life  
*Catch Up Women's Engagement Tool Kit*  
\$9,539

Family Life completed Phase 1 and is in Phase 2 of the *Catch Up* project, securing futures for older women. This grant will support Phase 3 of the project—a practical Tool Kit, to build awareness of women's concerns, empower help-seeking, and guide women in navigating available information and services.





**JOAN HUDSON  
SUB-FUND**

Council of Single Mothers and their Children Inc.  
*Single Mothers Speak Out*  
\$8,530

This project will train single mothers to advocate for themselves and their children to shift public policy and the narrative of single mothers. With training and peer-support single mothers can improve financial, safety and social outcomes for their families. This approach will enable single mothers to address the entrenched disadvantage single mothers and their children face in the media, their communities and public policy.



**LOULA RODOPOULOS SUB-FUND**

Global Reconciliation  
*Positive Thinking - Learning to Lead* project  
\$6,197

Global Reconciliation will partner with African Family Services (AFS) to run two leadership workshops. AFS provide African women with a safe space to share their stories and experiences. The project will prepare the women to manage the mental and emotional pressures of both family and work life in Australia, further developing their skills as leaders in their community.



**JEAN MCCAUGHEY SOCIAL JUSTICE SUB-FUND**

Victorian Women's Housing Association trading as Women's Property Initiatives  
*Document a Model for Older Women's Cohousing Inclusive of Social Housing*  
\$11,000

Co-housing has been shown to contribute to better health in older age creating a safe and welcoming community. Women's Property Initiative (WPI) is working with WinC to develop a cohousing community for older women in Daylesford that aims to prevent homelessness by providing affordable housing to ageing women; creating a supportive 'family' of women; strengthening community connections; and offering a model for other housing projects.

Below Image: 2017-2018 Grants recipient, Edmund Rice Community and Refugee Services (Breeana Dunbar Photography)



**Create a Sub-Fund of your own! Find out more from our grants team: 9642 0422 or [grants@vwt.org.au](mailto:grants@vwt.org.au)**



## GRANT STORY

# From Inside the Farm Gate

By Claire Duffy, VWT Grants Officer

In 2017, the Victorian Women's Benevolent Trust gave grants to projects that focused on regional Victorian women. We were pleased when the Western District Health Service proposed to invite women farmers to share their experiences of thriving and surviving farm life.

What happens when life comes crashing down on the other side of those farm fences we drive past on country highways? The Western District Health Service asked women farmers to reveal how exactly they manage when disaster strikes the farm. Seventeen women recorded their stories and the result is an exhibition of video stories capturing moving, inspirational and heartbreaking experiences and the ways each woman managed to survive and eventually thrive.

"This workshop provided me with confidence, comfort and a sense of wellbeing I didn't expect to gain. For the first time since my husband passed away I found myself able to revisit photo albums, put into words my grief, and realize what helped me navigate my new path on the farm and in life."

What shows through in many of these stories is the way in which women farmers, sometimes referred to as invisible farmers are not always considered by their male counterparts to be capable, knowledgeable or

worthy of the top jobs. And yet, each story reveals a woman who has navigated the aftermath of natural disaster, partner suicide, or financial crisis, and found the resilience and nous to adjust to difficult circumstances when not even they knew whether they were capable of it.

Allison admitted, 'I had to develop cunning and subterfuge to work around him' when her husband developed frontal lobe toxicity from a lifetime of petro-chemical exposure on the farm and in his hobbies. He could no longer perform the duties he had always done, and Allison found novel ways to not only get on with the job of keeping the farm going but also to include her husband so that he was still a vital part of the family and the farm.

Elizabeth wants us to know that, although we'll never meet her, she will always deliver the milk we drink - but she can't do it without her dogs. In a quavering voice she describes the way her working dogs 'just seem to know when to turn on the charm' when she is feeling down.

Sally is a pig farmer who grew up in a country town and after marrying a farmer managed to adjust to the demands of farm life. She found that her cooking skills apparently weren't up to community standards, nor was she given credit for her skills on the land. When it came to mustering cattle in 40-degree heat, she was the one trudging on foot through the paddock while her husband sat in the comfort of their ute. And when she turned her hand to rouseabouting in a sheep-shearing shed it was Sally who was

given the lowliest job of collecting and sorting the dags. Sally may not have been born on a farm, but she reckons 'The pull of the country always brings you back home'.

These stories, and more, from women in rural Victoria talk of resilience, shared responsibility and community caring.

One viewer commented: "I actually learnt that you have to keep going, resilience. Rural women have that, a lot of them don't give themselves credit for what they can actually do, but when their husbands are against them they can actually somehow pick up the pieces and keep the whole farm scene/environment going."

There is value in listening to women who are resilient and who have overcome tough times. There is a power in storytelling that heals not only those hearing the stories but also those telling them.

This was such a wonderful experience. It was very healing to be in such a group of people. Those with stories to share and those with skills to share melded into an accepting support network of friends who provided sounding boards and comfort."

*From Inside the Farm Gate exhibition has toured through Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania as well as being included in postgraduate education for Health and Agriculture professionals.*

**Check it out:** [www.farmerhealth.org.au/inside-farm-gate](http://www.farmerhealth.org.au/inside-farm-gate)



MORE TRUST NEWS



“What free products will do is help our society to become much more open and communicative and positive about menstruation.”

- MARY CROOKS AO  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

since its launch in May. Victorian child psychologist Dr. Simon Crisp, got in touch with the Trust to share his thoughts on the initiative, “I am thrilled we have these invaluable resources that *Rosie in the Classroom* has developed to support young women.”

“Never before has there been such a need to inform and empower young women about the issues Rosie has tackled so well,” said Dr. Crisp.

“Every adult, and especially teachers involved with young women should know about, and use, these excellent resources. Well done *Rosie* for helping equip the next generation of women with such relevant wisdom.”

Download the free lesson plans now:  
[rosie.org.au/rosie-in-the-classroom/](http://rosie.org.au/rosie-in-the-classroom/)

POLICY SUBMISSIONS

In 2018, the Victorian Women’s Trust has written 4 submissions and one letter of endorsement for Government at both a state and federal level.

These submissions have focused on electoral reform including the Australian electoral donations system and electorate naming process as well as submissions of family violence legislation.

Our most recent submission was to the Victorian State Government *Gender Equality Bill* 2018. We have been heartened by the Victorian Government’s commitment in recent years to improving the status of

Top Image: Gen Bush (Breeana Dunbar Photography) Right Page: 2017-18 Small Grants recipient, The Big Issue, Australia. (Images provided by The Big Issue, Australia)

Victorian women and girls in our community, starting with the Royal Commission into Family Violence, the development of the Victorian Government Gender Equality Strategy *Safe and Strong*, and now, the drafting of the *Gender Equality Bill*.

In our submission we chose to address the discussion paper questions where we believed our experience as a women’s organisation can value-add to this important discussion surrounding the intention, implementation, inclusion and evaluation of the proposed legislation. We stressed the importance of adequate resources; sustained political commitment; careful evaluation and adjustment of the principles; and compliance obligations in the Bill to ensure it has the best chance of propelling Victorian society toward the full realisation of gender equality.

We wrote that, “Government has a key role in ensuring that cultural change is encouraged and that positive behaviours and attitudes supporting women are reinforced going forward. It is crucial that cultural attitudes which contribute to and normalise inequality and disrespect towards women in our society are eliminated to ensure that women and girls can live



productive and fulfilling lives.”

You can download our full policy submissions here:  
[vwt.org.au/policy-advocacy](http://vwt.org.au/policy-advocacy)

COMING UP NEXT!

Currently, the Trust is preparing a submission to the Australian Human Rights Commission Inquiry into workplace sexual harassment with

submissions closing on Jan 31 2019. We encourage our readers to make a submission to this Inquiry.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU:

If you have any ideas for the Trust’s submission please feel free to contact our Research & Policy Officer Casimira Melican at [casimira@vwt.org.au](mailto:casimira@vwt.org.au) as soon as possible.

FREE THE PERIOD

By now you have probably heard the news that Victorian Labor has made a pledge to provide free menstrual products in schools.

Upon announcement, Miki Perkins, a journalist from *The Age* got in touch with the Victorian Women’s Trust to find out our response to the proposed policy.

“What free products will do is help our society to become much more open and communicative and positive about menstruation,” said Mary Crooks AO, Executive Director, VWT.

The Labor proposal indicates policy steps in the right direction. It also comes at a very exciting time for the Trust. Our writing team of Mary Crooks AO, Karen Pickering and Jane Bennet are currently putting the final touches on a new Trust document that will break down menstrual taboo in Australia. This document promises to be a game changer for women and girls across the country.

Watch this space!

Read the full article:  
[bit.ly/FreeTamponsandPads](http://bit.ly/FreeTamponsandPads)

VOLUNTEER UPDATE

We are blessed to have such a dynamic group of volunteers with us at the Trust this year. Currently we have volunteers undergoing

research, writing blogs for the *Trust Women Journal* and capturing community stories from our grantees, volunteers and friends, assisting the grants department, our social media team, and Trust events.

We can happily announce that we have three student placements over summer! We welcome Alissa Tin Choi (University of Melbourne), Bianca Whiteside (Deakin University) and Georgia Jenkins Smales (University of Melbourne). Bianca and Georgia have been volunteering with the Trust for a number of months, and have chosen to do a student placement at VWT as part of their degrees.

Thanks to all of our volunteers for your hard work – we couldn’t do it without you!

ROSIE IN THE CLASSROOM

*Rosie in the Classroom* is officially out in the world! It is an educational resource kit available to teachers to help talk about the difficult but important topics. Topics such as respect in relationships, sexting, and mental health should be incorporated into the curriculum so that all teenagers are aware of their rights and can encourage respect within their school community. Each module includes a downloadable free lesson plan and video which can be screened in class.

Lesson plans are available to download from the Rosie in the Classroom webpage, which has been viewed nearly 4,000 times



ANNOUNCEMENT: SMALL GRANTS NOW OPEN

Do you have an idea for a social change project that will create a safer world for women and girls?

For our next Small Grants round, we welcome applications that focus on **safety for women and girls**. We are particularly keen to support safety projects that work with diverse communities such as Aboriginal communities; CALD communities; LGBTIQA\* communities; older Victorians; and Victorians with a disability and/or mental illness.

Applications open:  
Monday 26 November 2018

Applications close:  
Midnight Friday 22 February 2019

\*We welcome applications from organisations that work with women identifying and non-binary people.



Give a gift that gives back.

Visit [www.vwt.org.au/shop](http://www.vwt.org.au/shop)



**NEW!**

**\$25**

excl. postage

Alice Lindstrom  
x VWT Tea Towel  
LIMITED EDITION

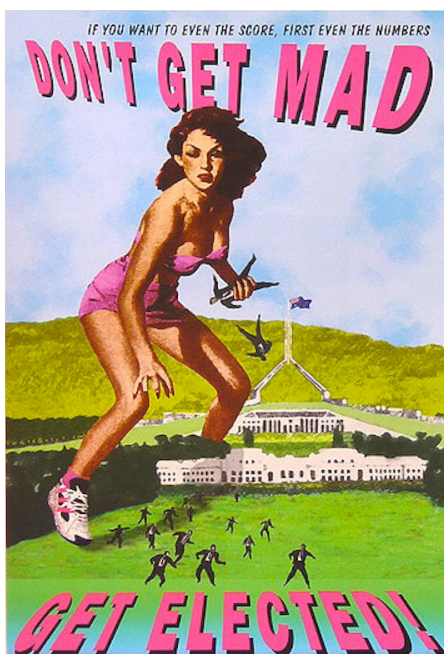
Gosh, this is exciting.

Local artist, **Alice Lindstrom**, has put her glittering talents towards creating a bespoke VWT tea towel, *When She Rises, We All Rise*.

Screen printed on linen/cotton, this is a must have for all the dishy people in your life. Better yet, all funds raised go towards supporting our work in advocating for a brighter future for women & girls.

Available now! Head to: [www.vwt.org.au/shop](http://www.vwt.org.au/shop)

@AliceLindstrom



**\$20** incl. postage

Get Elected! A2 Poster by Carol Porter

It's the poster that's been firing women up on all sides of politics. Would suit a bedroom, boardroom or any room you like. Remember, don't get mad, get elected!



**\$35** excl. postage

Frances Cannon x VWT Tote Bag

Created by local artist, Frances Cannon, featuring an illustration that celebrates the power of feminist friendship. Stocks are dwindling, so snap one up while you still can.

**This festive season, wear your feminist values, pop them in a frame or put them to work with a trusty Alice Lindstrom tea towel!**

**Every purchase supports our work in creating a better tomorrow for women & girls.**

Hurry, the VWT shop must close Tuesday 17 December 2018.

Orders placed after 17 Dec will be processed January 2019. Happy holidays, everyone!