



Financial Year  
**2021–2022**

# Year in Review

Melbourne Women's Fund is a Charitable Fund Account  
within Lord Mayor's Charitable Fund ABN 63 635 798 473.



**MELBOURNE  
WOMEN'S  
FUND**

In the spirit of reconciliation, Melbourne Women's Fund sincerely acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as First Australians and Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia. We value and respect their connections to land, sea and community.

We pay our respect to Elders past and present, and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

About, Vision and Mission	06
Co-Founders' Message	08
Executive Officer's Message	09
Grants Committee	10
8th Annual Grant Awards Finalists	12
2021 Grant Awardees	16
Membership Engagement Committee	18
Next Gen Committee	20
Delivering meaningful impact	22
Marketing Committee	24
Events Committee	26
Governance	30
Information Technology	31
Financial Report	32
Thank you	34

\$1.24m

Raised to support vulnerable women and girls (grants and endowment fund combined) since 2014

\$980,000

Granted to 43 non-profit organisations since 2014

\$264,294

In Endowment Fund at June 30, 2022

\$5,910

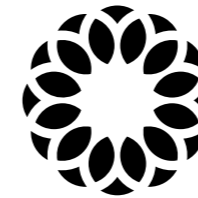
Non-membership donations raised in FY21-22 (included in 2022 grants pool)

\$143,000

Raised in FY21-22 and granted in November 2022

142

Members at June 30, 2022



Melbourne Women's Fund is a Giving Circle that brings together members' financial, intellectual, professional and personal resources to support non-profit organisations in Melbourne that address issues undermining the quality of life and futures of women and their families.

We are 100% volunteer-run and 100% of our donations go to non-profit organisations.

Social media reach growth in past year

in 898 +21%

ig 190 +76%

f 675 +2%

✉ 577 +16%

# About Melbourne Women's Fund

## Our Vision

A future where vulnerable women and families in Melbourne thrive

## Our Mission

To enable members to be part of informed, democratised giving where their power is amplified through the collective benefit they provide to vulnerable women and families in Melbourne

### Our members make our good work happen while:

- Amplifying their donation's power through our collective
- Supporting disadvantaged women and families in Melbourne and learning about non-profits that assist them
- Knowing their giving is directed to rigorously assessed organisations
- Having a say in which non-profits receive their funding through their votes, and
- Being a part of a community that shares their social impact values.

Melbourne Women's Fund is a Charitable Fund Account within Lord Mayor's Charitable Fund ABN 63 635 798 473. Donations over \$2 are tax-deductible. Membership is by an annual tax-deductible donation and non-tax-deductible administration fee to Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation.

We welcome anyone 18+ years old who is interested in a future where vulnerable women and families in Melbourne thrive.

A member must donate in each financial year to continue their membership. Their membership lasts until June 30th of the financial year following the financial year in which they made their last donation.

To learn more about Melbourne Women's Fund membership, please visit our website at [melbournewomensfund.org](http://melbournewomensfund.org) or scan the QR code here.



To learn more about giving circles with Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation, go to [lmcf.org.au/ways-to-give/collaborate-with-us/donate-giving-circle](http://lmcf.org.au/ways-to-give/collaborate-with-us/donate-giving-circle)

# Our 2020–2023 Strategic Objectives

Throughout our Year in Review, watch for the icons to identify activities associated with each of our strategic objectives!



## Increase philanthropic funding through collective giving

- Create financially accessible membership entry
- Sustain and grow membership to ensure a collective giving pool of funds
- Build a member-based endowment fund
- Build sponsorships and partnerships with organisations aligned with our interests



## Engaged, informed philanthropists

- Provide democratic participation into how grants are distributed
- Deliver opportunities to learn about focus areas and NFPs addressing them
- Provide opportunities to engage in MWF management
- Provide opportunities to network with, and learn from, experienced philanthropists



## Empower NFPs

- Provide informed and collaborative grant funding to empower NFPs to deliver their missions
- Provide pro bono support in grant seeking
- Help build awareness of finalist NFPs
- Encourage additional financial and pro bono assistance from members



## Diverse women philanthropic leaders

- Provide leadership and succession opportunities in MWF management
- Provide networking opportunities with other philanthropic professionals
- Provide opportunities to represent MWF at industry events



## A collective giving leader

- Stay informed about and apply philanthropic best practice
- Maintain a robust, yet compassionate, grant-making process
- Share information
- Measure and evaluate our processes and community impact
- Participate in philanthropic events, particularly relating to collective giving

We have three membership categories:

### Next Gen

18-30 years old (inclusive of age 30)

**\$500** annual donation

+ \$65 admin fee

### Standard

31+ years old

**\$1,000** annual donation

+ \$132 admin fee

### Life

**\$25,000**

no admin fee

Melbourne Women's Fund is a charitable fund account within Lord Mayor's Charitable Fund ABN 63 635 798 473. Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation, as trustee of the Fund, ensures that all charity law, financial and compliance requirements are met.

All donations and membership administration fees are made via the Foundation's secure online donation form. [lmcf.org.au](http://lmcf.org.au)

### About Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation

Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation is Australia's largest independent community foundation. We support the not-for-profit sector through our grants program and provide a range of philanthropy options for our donors including individual, community and collective giving.



## Co-Founders' Message



**Gillian Hund OAM**  
Co-Founder

**Pat Burke OAM**  
Co-Founder

## Welcome to our FY2021–2022 Year in Review!

Giving circles (such as Melbourne Women's Fund) are traditionally volunteer-based organisations that can only operate successfully if two important features are in place. Firstly, that people join and renew memberships through making their annual donations and, secondly, that many then provide further support by actively becoming involved through either serving on committees, engaging in advocacy of our mission and/or providing further pro bono support to the organisations that are funded.

In this year's message we wanted to especially pay tribute to the many volunteers that keep Melbourne Women's Fund viable and vibrant! Without their many talents and their commitment to stepping up to all the tasks needing to be managed such as events, grant-making research, website and social media management, governance, policies and more we would not have been able to raise nearly one and a quarter million dollars in donations, since launching in 2014.

Therefore, this is a 'shout out' to these hugely supportive Executive Committee members starting with **Christine Darcas** who has magnificently served as our Executive Officer in a pro bono capacity for the last three especially challenging years. We are indebted to her deft guidance as we all negotiated the minefield of coping with Covid and keeping members fully informed of changes to the way we achieved our goals.

**Amanda Thornton** has served as our estimable Grants Chair, guiding and refining all processes so that our grant applications are streamlined and the committee can work together very effectively. **Louise Potter** our Events Chair has brought her talents and 'can do' approach to our events, both the virtual and in-person ones we held with her usual grace and style. **Jo Crawshaw** prudently managed our

Finances, keeping our budgeting in order in collaboration with Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation. **Kate Harvey** (CTO) has transformed and contemporised our website and digital capacity. **Emma Nickson's** design skills have been fully utilised in all our social media, invitations and other collateral, such an important area as our public face of MWF. **Emily Jenkins** has been keeping our NextGen members engaged with events and helping with their philanthropic learning. Finally, behind the scenes we had the calm efficiency of our Governance Lead **Carmel Collins** who has provided valuable oversight, ensuring our approach to all Governance matters, including our policy development and minute-taking, are high calibre.

We also wish to warmly thank members who served on our six committees. They are the backbone of our giving circle as they volunteer many hours to their roles so that everything we do appears seamless! Without all members giving of time, talent and treasure, we would not achieve our strategic objectives.

Many thanks,

## Executive Officer's Message



**Christine Darcas**  
Executive Officer, Pro Bono

## "Individually, we are one drop. Together, we are an ocean."

**Ryunosuke Satoro**

This statement represents the compelling nature of giving circles: through the power of the collective, they offer concerned individuals from a range of backgrounds the opportunity to make a meaningful contribution to community impact.

It's amazing to consider that we are now eight years old and still persevering. Since our 2014 birth by Co-Founders Gillian Hund OAM and Patricia Burke OAM as a Charitable Fund Account of Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation, we have continued to strengthen our operations and underlying governance, developing and maturing to become a well-established entity.

Over that period, I have been heartened by how our giving circle is creating ripple effects for our community's benefit.

At our core are our members. They provide the lion's share of our grant funds and donate their dedication and passion as volunteers to keep us operating. A 100% volunteer organisation tends to have a tenuous nature, and we're not immune to that. But our members' ongoing commitment has allowed us to continue, keeping us agile and relevant in the face of Covid and empowering us to emerge into the 'post-Covid world' still ready to meet challenges.

Our members are also our greatest advocates, performing a key role in generating those wonderful ripples. Their word-of-mouth is the primary way people hear about us. It's often thanks to member advocacy that organisational sponsors or partners join our community. With the gobsmacking increase in venue and catering costs, their support has been crucial, allowing us to continue delivering our educational and social events at accessible prices.

But we're increasingly witnessing special, unexpected ripples. More non-members are donating funds out-of-pocket or conducting fundraising events on our behalf, contributing the proceeds to our grants pool. In 2019, a private ancillary fund led the way in using our grants assessments process to help direct their giving. We now know that several large donors attend our awards event, then quietly reach out to finalists about further support. More broadly, we know our grants process helps inform and guide our members' individual giving, with a heartening 51% of respondents in our 2022 membership survey saying they had increased their other community giving because of their membership.

This is in addition to the beneficial connections—be they professional and/or new friendships—our members, guests and non-profit finalists make amongst themselves through our activities.

On the surface, the concept of a giving circle can seem simplistic. Scratch the surface, however, and more is involved than meets the eye. You'll see this in the following pages. Although this report primarily addresses the 2021-22 Financial Year, we include the results of our Grant Awards Celebration in November 2022. So much of our work throughout the financial year is geared towards the success of our granting in November that it feels right to show the results of that effort here.

But using terms like 'effort' and 'work' doesn't give credit to the fun we also have. One of Covid's great lessons is the importance of fun and laughter. These are certainly present at our events, but also exist personally amongst our volunteers. I am so grateful for the warmth, support and fun I've experienced through Melbourne Women's Fund. It is indeed a privilege to be part of this special community.

# Grants Committee



## Chair

**Amanda Thornton**

## Deputy Chairs

**Diane Carey**  
**Kate Eddy**

## Members

**Caroline Rhodes**  
**Sarah Davies**  
**Susan Feldman**  
**Taylor-Jayne Manning**

The new grants year commenced with a sense of hope and excitement that our Grants Information Evening and Grant Awards Celebration would be returning to in-person events, once again bringing our members and potential grantees together to truly connect.

With this sense of optimism and opportunity, the Grants Committee reflected on our previous lockdown years: what we learned, what to keep, what to change, and what to explore in 2022.

The committee always looks to strengthen our abilities and effectiveness. Mindful that non-profits would likely be weary from the flow-on effects of the Covid pandemic, we pared back our application process to one-stage and reduced the written information required. We continued to include an Activity Implementation, Evaluation and Budget Plan, giving applicants the opportunity to demonstrate how thoroughly they have considered the steps, timing and overall feasibility of their proposed initiative.

To give as many eligible non-profits as possible the opportunity to apply, we continued to have an open grants round model, which was widely promoted. We also made a comprehensive Application Pack available on the MWF website, which 126 potential applicants accessed.

Thanks to the number of MWF members renewing or joining in FY21/22, plus our non-member donations, we were able to again deliver a \$75,000 Signature Grant and increase the Nurturing Grant to \$40,000. We were also pleased to increase the runners-up Merit Awards to \$7,000 each.

Our return to a one-step grant application process this year, plus reduced work required to submit an application, resulted in a competitive pool of largely high-quality, well-aligned submissions. We received 14 applications for the \$40,000 Nurturing Grant, and 18 for the \$75,000 Signature Grant. Of these, 57% were from small, localised non-profits with an annual revenue of less than \$500,000. A further 21% reported an annual revenue between \$2m and \$5m.



Through their annual survey, members selected Employment and Economic Empowerment, Homelessness, and Education as their three top focus areas for our 2022 grants round. Family Violence was a close fourth option. Due to its pervasiveness as an underlying cause or challenge amongst the top three focus areas, we included it as a focus area as well.

Applicants' initiatives often addressed multiple focus areas, a striking reminder to us of how intertwined, prevalent, and fundamental these issues are for women and their families in our community. They concentrated on the following areas: Employment and Economic Empowerment 44%, Homelessness 31%, Education 44%, and Family Violence 53%. Beneficiaries included: First Nations Australians 25%, Immigrants & Refugees 41%, Older Women 22%, Women together with their children 38%, and Women in their youth, 22%.

As always, it was both a responsibility and an honour to shortlist our six finalists for 2022, present their initiatives and organisations to MWF members at the Grants Information Evening and support finalists' preparation for the 8th Annual Grant Awards Celebration. It was inspiring and a joy to share this with MWF members in-person.

We look forward to sharing the work of our 2022 finalists with you in the future, and encourage you to continue to learn, share and amplify their stories and impact by following MWF social media channels LinkedIn, Facebook and Instagram.

## Appreciation and Acknowledgement

The Grants Committee team this year welcomed Caroline Rhodes and Susan Feldman. Our sincere thanks to departing members, Jo Cavanagh OAM and Fiona Reed. MWF is fortunate to have the continuing interest, energy, expertise and perspectives of members who join the Grants Committee. We are all around the table equally, sharing and learning together, collectively aiming to do our best for all.

We are also grateful for the extra help we received this year from guest application assessors MWF Executive Officer Christine Darcas, MWF Next Gen Chair Emily Jenkins, and MWF member Frances Millane. Our thanks also to MWF member, Kirsten Bartlett, who again provided outstanding presentation training for our finalists.



In January 2023, Amanda Thornton will have finished her three-year tenure leading the Grants Committee—completing a total of six years as a Grants Committee member. Amanda has played a fundamental role in the design and implementation of our high-calibre grants process.

**“MWF is a great example of philanthropy in action: abundant evidence of time, ties, and talent combined, in this instance, with a relatively small individual contribution of treasure (i.e., cash) that will collectively enable so much to be done.”**

**MWF member, Pandora Kay**

8<sup>TH</sup> Annual Grant Awards Finalists



Nurturing Grant  
\$40k

Community Bank  
Elwood

**B** Bendigo Bank



Audio Visual Dynamics



Project

## The Road Home Project

Focus Area

### Homelessness

This project aims to provide a roadmap and ongoing support networks that enable vulnerable women to successfully exit homelessness.

First Step provides addiction, mental health and legal services to assist recovery and positive community engagement for people with addiction and substance abuse related issues.

[firststep.org.au](http://firststep.org.au)



Project

## Take the First Step: Family Violence Peer Education Project

Focus Area

### Family Violence

This project aims to train bi-cultural women as peer leaders to improve safety and access to legal and other services for diverse women experiencing family violence.

NCLC provides equal access to justice to meet the needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged people in Melbourne's North-West through provision of legal services, community legal education, and law reform.

[northernclc.org.au](http://northernclc.org.au)



Project

## Delivering home havens to empower women survivors

Focus Area

### Family Violence

This project aims to assist women with setting up their home "havens" so that their immediate needs are prioritised and they can move forward with the dignity and respect they deserve.

You Matter supports women and families escaping family violence through the provision of furniture and other household items necessary to set up a new home and begin a new life.

[youmatter.org.au](http://youmatter.org.au)

# 8<sup>TH</sup> Annual Grant Awards Finalists

**Signature Grant**  
\$75k

Community Bank  
Elwood

**Bendigo Bank**



**Audio Visual Dynamics**



Project

## Pathways out of the Justice System

Focus Area

### Homelessness, Family Violence

This project aims to provide pathways out of the justice system for vulnerable women with a focus on women at risk of homelessness and those experiencing family violence.

LACW supports women who are in or at risk of entering the criminal justice system, providing legal representation, preventative case management, and access to therapeutic services.

[lacw.org.au](http://lacw.org.au)



Project

## Remade for trade – supporting women’s pathways to non-traditional trades

Focus Area

### Employment and Economic Empowerment

This project aims to overcome barriers to employment opportunities and entrance for women living with disadvantage or in vulnerable situations.

Tradeswomen Australia Community Foundation works to increase the representation of women in skilled trade roles, aiming for gender equality and empowerment of women of all life experiences to attain long-term financial security.

[twacf.org](http://twacf.org)



Project

## Women Supporting Women: Peer Support Program

Focus Area

### Family Violence

This project aims to empower culturally and linguistically diverse women who are victim-survivors of family violence to overcome barriers to recovery.

Wellsprings for Women is a women’s only centre providing a range of programs and services that support and build women’s capabilities, self-determination and health and wellbeing.

[wellspringsforwomen.com](http://wellspringsforwomen.com)



# Project Update 2021 Grant Awardees

This update is based on these organisations' interim reporting.



**2021 Signature  
Grant Awardee**

**fitted for work**

Project

## Women's Economic Empowerment Program

This project aims to provide a suite of opportunities to develop a workforce of 300 women ready to be placed into employment through Fitted for Work's recruitment social enterprise, She Works.

Despite Covid's challenges, Fitted for Work has so far assisted approximately 190 Melbourne women through this program. Each has received customised support to boost their preparation to find the right job, including putting together their own professional wardrobe, writing their resume and LinkedIn profile, interview practice, recruitment workshops and a program to build confidence, resilience and social connection; digital skill building and advanced technical learning to up-skill/re-skill to enter tech or tech-enabled roles; retail work experience; career and workforce information sessions and site visits; recruitment services and work placements through She Works; and, post-placement support and mentoring.

Participants, like Rosana\*, have built their confidence and skills, as well as accessed sustainable employment and mentoring support:

**"I had a cheerleader team behind me and supporting me throughout the journey to get an amazing job opportunity. The job is even more than what I was expecting. Instead of thinking the job was too much, FFW made me think that was right, deserved and I was ready for it."**

\*Names changed to protect identity



**2021 Nurturing  
Grant Awardee**

**The  
Social  
Studio**

Project

## Designing Our Futures – Women's Empowerment Scholarships

This project focuses on addressing and enhancing educational and employment opportunities for refugee and migrant women. It aimed to engage 10 young women from refugee or migrant backgrounds in further education, and to provide them with the skills, confidence and qualifications necessary to create secure futures.

The Social Studio has so far exceeded their target engagement, bringing 18 students into their 24-month Certificate III in Clothing Production. Some students have been placed in casual work and full-time employment. Weekly English as an Additional Language has been provided to those who need language support, as well as additional workshops in illustration, print and garment design, and production for public events.

Participants like Alia\*, who arrived in Australia from Somalia as a child, developed her skills, excitement and ambition as a result of the training and support she experienced at The Social Studio, including a job working on garment quality and control with a fashion wholesaler and beginning her own fashion start-up:

**"I've loved my time [at The Social Studio] so far. When I first came here, honestly, I felt nervous... I came here to obviously learn how to sew but it was more a change of career for me... I immediately felt welcome. It's not your regular teacher-student relationship, they're more connected."**

# Spark! Grants

The concept of Spark! Grants is to have families, individuals or any entity—corporate, philanthropic or otherwise—leverage our rigorous assessment of non-profits when considering their own giving. From the funders' perspective, this approach facilitates their ability to decide what organisations to donate to while supporting vulnerable women and families in Melbourne. By donating directly to the non-profits, they also realise the tax-deductible benefits. From the non-profits' perspective, Spark! Grants increase the potential for them to receive unrestricted funding.

**Spark! Grants have evolved over the last couple of years, creating a less structured, but powerful, ripple effect.**

In 2019, we were thrilled and grateful when a major family foundation decided to be our inaugural Spark! Grant funder. This foundation generously granted another \$30,000 across several of our 2022 finalists. Additionally, we've heard through some of our finalists that other large donors in the audience reached out to them directly. This is the kind of ripple effect from collective giving that we aspire to create and hope will continue developing.

Interested in becoming a Spark! Grant donor?  
Please reach out to us at:  
[info@melbournewomensfund.org](mailto:info@melbournewomensfund.org)

# Membership Engagement Committee



## Chair

**Christine Darcas** (Acting)

## Committee

**Bianca Moore**  
**Gillian Fawcett**  
**Melinda Jones**  
**Kim Downes**

## Additional Outreach Support

**Gillian Hund, OAM**  
**Patricia Burke, OAM**

Our members are the core of our giving circle's existence. They are essential to our efforts to improve the well-being of vulnerable women and families in Melbourne. They not only provide our grant funds, but also donate their dedication and passion as volunteers to help deliver our strategic objectives. Overall, they create a special community that helps make philanthropy accessible and welcome to all.

We were relieved by, and grateful for, our record number of 142 members at 30 June 2022, an increase of eight members (6%) versus 134 at 30 June, 2021. This was due to an increase in our standard members—largely recovering that cohort's decrease during Covid—and a new Life member, while our Next Gen membership stayed stable at 10 members.

We're often asked about our membership's movement. Since 2018, our membership has ranged from 126 to 142. However, we lose approximately 15% to 20% percent of our members annually, while simultaneously gaining the same number of new members, and hopefully more, to balance that loss. Reasons for joining align with the five things members value most listed below. Reasons for leaving run the range, including financial, health, change in giving priorities and more personal reasons. Our constant challenge is to reduce the number of departing members, while increasing our number of new members.

This movement demonstrates the importance of continued member commitment, advocacy and stewardship to keep Melbourne Women's Fund strong.

**"I joined Melbourne Women's Fund as I really liked the fact that the members can vote as to how and to whom the funds are allocated. You can also see how one such donation makes a significant difference to an organization and even better they keep MWF updated on how they are going. It is also a great opportunity to meet many people from different walks of life. I fully intend to continue my membership of this giving circle."**

**Founding MWF Member,  
 Christine Coonan**



With the end of Covid lockdowns, the committee was finally able to reactivate crucial in-person outreach individually and through live events. It also tracks membership status and associated donation revenue with Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation, sends out renewal reminders, welcomes new members and ensures they're aware of events, thanks new and renewing members, records all relevant data in the CRM, reaches out to possible new members, designs and implements the Annual Membership Survey and conducts all other member-related communications. While largely behind the scenes and administrative, this committee's work is fundamental to our sustainability.

In February 2022, we conducted our annual membership survey, adding extra metrics to gauge how well we are performing to our strategic objectives. We feature some of the survey's highlights below. We were especially surprised and heartened by the 51% who said they have increased their other community giving because of their MWF membership.

This ripple effect is special evidence of how powerful collective giving can be in building broader giving for our community's benefit.

The committee's other major achievement for FY21/22 was participating in the establishment of our new CRM system thanks to our Chief Technology Officer, Kate Harvey, with member Lynne Umbers. With training from Kate, we have climbed the learning curve, solidly establishing the CRM system as an effective means of consolidating much of the committee's administrative requirements.

### Appreciation and Acknowledgement

Several generous women contributed to this committee during FY21/22. Our thanks to Bianca Moore, Gillian Fawcett, Melinda Jones and Kimberly Downes, all of whom are moving on to other adventures.



## Member survey highlights

43% response rate

### Top 5 things people value most about their MWF membership:

- 86%** Amplifies the power of their donation
- 79%** Supports disadvantaged women and families in Melbourne
- 77%** Ensures giving is directed towards rigorously assessed organisations
- 61%** Provides learning about non-profits assisting women and families in Melbourne
- 59%** Provides voting on which non-profits receive MWF's annual grants

### Top 4 things members desire from MWF events:

- 79%** Learn about nonprofits assisting vulnerable women and families in Melbourne
- 69%** Learn from sector experts about issues affecting the wellbeing of women and families in Melbourne
- 55%** For physical events, support a social enterprise (for example: catering, venue provision)
- 50%** To interact with other people who share their interests in philanthropy

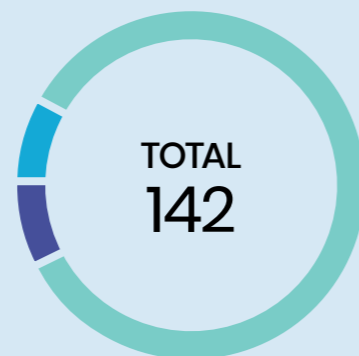
### As a result of their MWF membership:

- 93%** Have a greater understanding of issues affecting vulnerable women and families
- 51%** Have increased their other community giving
- 36%** of those who work in, or aspire to work in, the philanthropic sector have progressed their career

**54%** Were introduced to MWF by another member

## Member Category Comparison

FY 20-21 → 21-22



# Next Gen Committee



Chair

**Emily Cooke**  
(formerly Emily Jenkins)

## The MWF Next Gen membership category gives people 18–30 years of age the opportunity to learn about, and participate in, philanthropic giving.

Emily Cooke continued as the Next Gen Committee Chair, applying her experience as National Manager of Not-For-Profit and Philanthropic Services at Macquarie Bank and former Chair of the International Women’s Day Committee (UN Women National Committee Australia) to engage aspiring young philanthropists in Melbourne.

Our Next Gen members are a group of inspiring and passionate young people intent on learning about the power of collective giving, sharing their philanthropic endeavours and insights, and using their voices and MWF votes to empower their ability to support vulnerable women and families in Melbourne.

Next Gen members enjoy all the benefits of a Standard Membership at a 50% discount. This is to encourage and enable younger people to join MWF and help develop a new generation of passionate and connected philanthropists.

In FY21/22, we worked to support our Next Gen members in growing their relationships and networks within MWF and beyond, while also learning more about the non-profit and philanthropic sectors.



This included a major initiative to create a mentoring program. We paired each interested Next Gen member with an MWF member, or MWF non-member colleague, established in the Next Gen member’s philanthropic interest area to support and encourage that Next Gen’s personal and professional goals. Special thanks to MWF Co-Founder and Chair, Patricia Burke OAM, for her assistance in arranging these productive matches.

Once Covid restrictions eased, we also conducted social activities, such as a painting class and dinners, to help our Next Gen cohort get to know each other and to reach out to other young people interested in sharing giving insights and experiences. We also saw a number of Next Gen members’ careers successfully transition into the non-profit and philanthropic sectors through their newly formed, inspiring relationships and network.

In the year ahead we are excited to continue growing our Next Gen members and their networks, social activities and the mentorship program, whilst also looking to provide workshops on individual giving strategies.



“Being a Next Gen member has allowed me to connect with talented and enthusiastic philanthropists dedicated to positively impacting the lives of women and their families. I have had the opportunity to contribute to the grants assessment process to facilitate funding of transformative projects to address complex issues in our community. It is a truly rewarding experience to be part of such a dedicated collective seeking to make a real impact with their giving.”

**MWF Next Gen Member,  
Taylor-Jayne Manning**

# Delivering Meaningful Impact

Empowering non-profits through our collective giving is a key feature of our work. We engage members who generously volunteer to join and lead our committees to deliver that work. The results are beneficial to the non-profits and ultimately to the vulnerable women and families they assist. But they can also affect the personal and professional lives of our volunteers. Here we feature two special examples.

## Grant Recipient



**The Women and Mentoring Program (WAM) established in 2009 aims to support women and non-binary people involved with the criminal justice system in Victoria.**

WAM provides early intervention support for these individuals entering the justice system by matching them with trained mentors. Working alongside other services, WAM's mentors address the issues impacting women and non-binary people that led, or contributed to, their offending behaviour across a broad range of areas.

MWF's Signature Grant in 2015 (\$60,000) supported the expansion of this innovative early intervention mentorship program for women entering the justice system. At the time, WAM was operating in the City of Yarra only with \$74,000 annual revenue.

### **What impact did the MWF grant have on the WAM program?**

The grant allowed WAM to replicate the program in the Sunshine Magistrates Court precinct and helped raise WAM's profile and credibility to obtain an additional \$764,000 within a year.

WAM has since expanded their mentorship program into courts in Broadmeadows, Collingwood, Dandenong, Frankston, Heidelberg, Melbourne, Ringwood and Sunshine, increasing its beneficiaries and resulting in 80% not re-offending and 95% avoiding a custodial sentence. Most recently, the Victorian Government granted WAM \$3.6 million over four years to expand its services.

### **What advice do you have for other grassroots organisations seeking philanthropic support?**

Having a robust and comprehensive evaluation framework is paramount. Not only does it give you data and evidence to demonstrate how effective your program/project is, but it can also assist in drawing out people's stories. These stories speak to not just the overall impact, but also to the incremental changes to your participants.

For WAM, we have been able to demonstrate the low recidivism rate for women engaged in mentoring, and we can also speak to the way mentoring has made a difference in individual lives – returning to work, engaging positively with services, repairing relationships with family members. Our women are unique, as are their support needs, and also their own goals and outcomes.

### **What is WAM looking forward to in the coming year?**

This year will be interesting—having secured Government funding (still doesn't get tiresome saying that!) will allow us to grow into regional areas, boost our volunteer recruitment and focus on leadership development for our team.

Other activities we will be exploring are corporate partnerships and building our brand, and of course, spending some time on our evaluation framework, making sure we position ourselves well for other funding possibilities and program growth.

## Member

# Amanda Thornton



**Amanda Thornton has been a valued member since 2016. Amanda has worked tirelessly on the Grants Committee for six years and her dedication and leadership have seen the committee's processes and diligence produce outstanding grant recipients.**

**In 2021 Amanda received the Sue Beecher Memorial Award. The award recognises outstanding contribution and exemplary leadership given to Melbourne Women's Fund.**

### **Where did philanthropy start for you?**

I initially became interested in philanthropy from a grant-seeking perspective. In 2014, I worked in an operational role in the arts, raising funds for gallery events and exhibitions. I was motivated to learn how philanthropic organisations can enable small organisations with big ambitions. I enrolled in Swinburne University of Technology's Master of Social Investment and Philanthropy to study part-time. That was it—I was hooked from day one.

### **What led to your interest in Melbourne Women's Fund and where has it taken you so far?**

I met MWF founders, Pat and Gillian, at Swinburne. I was struck by their ambitious plans to create a giving circle. I thought how brave and exciting this was. When my study ended, I joined MWF and expressed my interest in volunteering with the Grants Committee. Almost immediately, Pat sent me a pile of induction paperwork and that was it!

The journey to date has included making new and beneficial relationships, including an introduction to WAM (recently being appointed to their Board); learning from philanthropists, grant-making experts, and amazing non-profit and social leaders. Enjoying the terrific company and enthusiasm of MWF members has been a highlight, as we returned to in-person events this year.

### **What would you say to someone starting their philanthropy journey?**

Congratulations on an excellent decision, for making a commitment to help where you can. It's important, it works, and it will become a valued part of your life.

# Marketing Committee



## Chairs

**Emma Nickson**  
**Kate Harvey**

## Committee

**Kate Brooks**  
**Sandra Castro**  
**Ellen Matusko**  
**Lynne Umbers**  
**Simone Clancy**  
**Kate Eddy**  
**Christine Darcas**

## Additional support

**Amanda Thornton**  
(Grants Committee Chair)

**The Marketing Committee met the roller coaster challenges of FY21/22, successfully adapting to our changing communication needs during the 2021 lockdowns and the 2022 opening. During such unsettling times, the team supported the Membership Engagement, Grants and Events committees to ensure our MWF community received messages through all relevant channels about our activities to support our strategic objectives.**

### Non-profit support

We're aware that many non-profits constantly confront the pressure of delivering crucial services with insufficient resources. Given this, we strive to raise community awareness of, and support for, our finalists through our grants process, social media, newsletters and website. We continued strengthening this approach through FY21/22, adding a Grants Committee representative—Simone Clancy in 2021 and Kate Eddy with Amanda Thornton in 2022—to reinforce communication about our grants process.

Our Non-Profit Liaison, Ellen Matusko, continued her reach-outs to our current and historical finalists to gather information about their needs and achievements, which we then shared as much as possible with our social media network.



### Marketing Collateral

Having developed our first strategic plan in 2020 and refreshed our brand strategy with our new logo, colour palette and more modern imagery that same year, in FY21/22 we created and/or updated our print and digital collateral to reinforce those initiatives.

**Sponsorships and Partnerships brochure:** We developed this digital brochure to strengthen our outreach to current and potential partners and sponsors. Sponsorships and Partnerships have great potential to help build community awareness about issues affecting vulnerable women and families, develop our membership and reduce our operational costs, particularly given significantly increased event costs.

**Flyer:** We updated our flyer, making it available via print form for our in-person events and digitally on our website. Conscious to minimise our climate footprint, we print as few as possible and always use recycled paper. The same is true for our annual review, managed in FY21/22 by Sandra Castro.

**Website:** This continued to be our 'go to' for everything related to MWF. All information about us, including grants-related information, is there and maintained by Kate Harvey and Emma Nickson with input across the committees. With the assistance of Rikki Andrews of Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation, which holds our endowment fund, we also added a Bequests page to our website in FY21/22.

**Newsletters and informational emails:** We adjusted the content and delivery of our newsletter, reducing the content to 'bite size' with the option to click through to greater detail. As in the past, we sent special emails alerting our community to upcoming events.

**Social media:** Kate Brooks and Christine Darcas continued to share content on social media for our members and followers. In addition to supporting past and current grant finalists, it included Covid's effects on vulnerable women and families and the non-profit sector, and best-practice grant approaches to address these effects; announced our events; and provided updates on our grant round.

### Appreciation and Acknowledgement

Our thanks to Kate Harvey, who stepped aside as Marketing Chair to become MWF's first Chief Technology Officer. Emma Nickson of Egg Creative generously stepped into this leadership position. Special thanks also to Simone Clancy, who has moved on to pursue other goals, and Lynne Umbers, who has moved overseas, for their invaluable support in delivering our digital events during Covid.



# Events Committee



Chair

**Louise Potter**

Committee

**Gillian Hund OAM**

**Pandora Kay**

**Christine Darcas**

Various Events Task Force  
Members throughout FY21-22

**Louise Potter**

**Kate Harvey**

**Pandora Kay**

**Gillian Hund**

**Amanda Thornton**

**Kate Eddy**

**Simone Clancy**

**Christine Darcas**

**Kate Brooks**

**Matt Porter**

Our events are essential to the glue that binds us together as a special giving circle community. They also provide important opportunities to learn about the challenges confronting vulnerable women and families in Melbourne and about non-profits addressing them.

With Covid restricting us from interacting in person in the first half of FY21/22, we were forced to conduct our 2021 Grants Information Night and Grant Awards Celebration online. We continued the task force approach we established in 2020 to deliver these and our live 2022 Grant Awards Celebration at Melbourne Town Hall.

Despite giving our all to deliver our events during Covid, online events couldn't quite replace the exciting buzz of anticipation and social interaction that energises our community. So when we were finally free to deliver in-person events in early 2022, we pursued them with gusto!

October 2021

## Grants Information Evening

A well-established annual event, our Grants Information Evening is when our Grants Committee members present each of our six Signature and Nurturing Grant Finalists and the initiatives for which they are seeking funding. This event is always an important opportunity for our members to become as informed as possible about our finalists when they vote for our major grant recipients. It also allows our members and guests to develop greater awareness about non-profits working to support vulnerable women and families in our community.



November 2021

## Finalist Site Visits

Our site visits allow our members to interact with our finalists directly and get a more personal sense about their mission and activities. Due to Covid restrictions, we conducted these site visits virtually. This new approach nearly doubled attendance versus prior years, further strengthening awareness of the great work each of these non-profits is doing. Our thanks to all involved, including the finalists for working with us to deliver their presentations virtually.



November 2021

## 7th Annual Grant Awards Celebration

This event is always the culmination of our annual efforts to support vulnerable women and families in Melbourne. For the second year in a row, we conducted this event virtually because of Covid restrictions. Thanks to our principal sponsor Bendigo Community Bank Elwood and extra sponsorship support from Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation, we produced a short video with highlights from our site visits to help make these organisations and their work as real as possible for our members and guests.

**Our FY20/21 Annual Review covered the results and highlights from our 2021 Grants Round. To read it for more detail about these events and our finalists, please visit our website.**



“The Melbourne Women’s Fund is an amazing organisation that supports philanthropic giving, and I am a proud member of this remarkable giving circle. Bendigo Community Bank Elwood have been supporting the MWF grants for a number of years and we applaud all the outstanding work the volunteers contribute. Such organisations are so important in our society and we are delighted to be supporters.”

**MWF Member and Chair, Bendigo Community Bank Elwood, Carole Mackie**

Community Bank  
Elwood



February 2022

## Welcome Back Celebration Dinner

Free at last, we held a Welcome Back Celebration Dinner in Melbourne’s beautiful Botanic Gardens. A perfect late summer evening saw members and guests gather at the Ornamental Lake for drinks and canapes—all enjoying the thrill of socialising once more. Director and Chief Executive of Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria, Professor Tim Entwisle, kindly welcomed us and reminded us just how exceptional our local botanic gardens are. Comedian Alex Ward also regaled us with some light-hearted entertainment.



June 2022

## 'What Women Want' Panel Event

Featuring Tania Farha (CEO, Safe and Equal), Jeanette Large (CEO, Women’s Property Initiatives), Dr Emily Porter (Senior Research Fellow, Brotherhood of St Lawrence) and moderated by Julie Reilly OAM (CEO, Australians Investing in Women), this sold-out panel discussion focused on the crucial issues of women’s homelessness, family violence and economic security.

This was an intensely engaging and educational event with much audience interaction. Special thanks to Perpetual Private, whose sponsorship made the event possible. Our thanks also to Just Gold Digital Agency, which filmed the event pro bono for their Invisible Woman Project in partnership with the City of Melbourne.

To appreciate the complex and interrelated nature of these issues and learn about the dynamics underpinning them, we encourage you to visit our YouTube Channel to view the discussion.



May 2022

## Indigenous Cultural Awareness Workshop

Our survey results show that our members are particularly passionate about supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

To give MWF members and guests the opportunity to become more aware of Aboriginal culture and better understand the issues faced by First Nations’ organisations and people, we held our first Indigenous Cultural Awareness Workshop, with valued sponsorship from Bendigo Community Bank Elwood.

Presenters Josh Wanganeen and Drucilla Morgan from VACSAL (Victorian Aboriginal Community Services Association Limited) created inspiring, insightful and thought-provoking content. The event’s venue—the Koorie Heritage Trust rooms overlooking the current and traditional meeting place of Birrarung (Yarra River) and Federation Square—further enriched the workshop experience. Bunji Catering, a corporate catering venture with certified Indigenous ownership and management, provided refreshments.

Community Bank  
Elwood



“It’s always a joy to attend events with old friends and meet like-minded people. I appreciate the effort and thought that goes into making each gathering both educational and social. It’s inspiring to learn more about how to help our communities. That’s such an uplifting part of being a member.”

MWF Member, Terri Lourey



### Acknowledgement and Appreciation

In January 2023, Louise Potter will have finished her three-year tenure as Events Chair during what has been a roller coaster period. No sooner had she accepted the role when Covid landed. Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Eventbrite, Humanitix, Survey Monkey—she learned them all, then helped us return to live events with graciousness and enthusiasm.

# Governance



Governance Lead

**Carmel Collins**

In collaboration with  
MWF Executive Committee

**Having existed for eight years, granted \$980,000 to 43 non-profit organisations, built a quarter-million endowment fund and developed a 140+ membership, Melbourne Women's Fund has come into its own as one of Australia's strongest giving circles.**

Effective governance is essential to continue our smooth functioning, compliance with Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation policy requirements and ultimate sustainability. To that end, we have continued our governance oversight—led by our Governance Lead, Carmel Collins—reworking or developing policies and position descriptions as appropriate to address our special needs as a volunteer-managed giving circle.

Our governance includes the rigorous assessment process we apply to our grants process. This due diligence is further reinforced by the board of Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation as trustee of the Lord Mayor's Charitable Fund, which review and provide final approval for our grant finalists and recipients.



# Information Technology



Chief Technology Officer

**Kate Harvey**

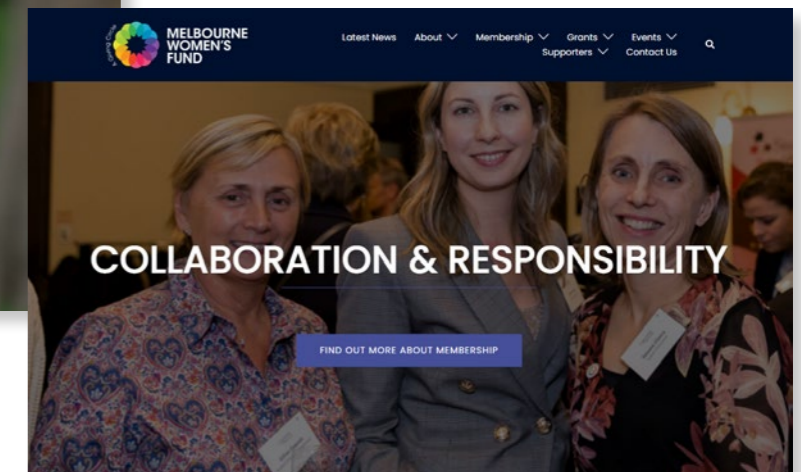
In collaboration with  
MWF Executive Committee

**As we have matured as an organisation that has also confronted Covid's demands to strengthen digital capacity, we have realised the importance of committing resources to help us develop, and adapt, our technological capabilities.**

To achieve that, we created the new position of Chief Technology Officer and included it within our Executive Committee. We are extremely fortunate that Kate Harvey—former Marketing Chair and founding digital management consultant of Digital By Design—undertook this position.

In FY21/22, Kate set up our new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, ensuring that all membership and non-member information is centralised and remained secure. She continued to maintain and update the MWF website, which she originally designed, in collaboration with the committees. This included adding a 'latest news' page. Last, but certainly not least, she implemented Office 365 and has centralised our document management capabilities.

Together, these achievements have improved MWF's overall capacity to meet its operational needs, pursue its strategic objectives and ensure its sustainability.





# Financial Report



Treasurer/Financial Manager

**Jo Crawshaw**



With the return to in-person events in FY21/22, we experienced considerable event expenses. This was not surprising given the low digital costs associated with the Covid restrictions of FY20/21. What was surprising were the significantly increased costs for catering and venue hire as the world emerged to reconnect, creating significant competition for locations amidst exacerbating circumstances like catering staff shortages and product prices increases. We are especially grateful to Bendigo Community Bank Elwood, Perpetual Private and Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation for generously sponsoring several of our major FY21/22 events so they were possible.

**We have three accounts, all within the Lord Mayor's Charitable Fund:**

### Collective Giving Account

This account holds our members' annual \$1,000 donations and public donations of any amount, all of which are tax-deductible. We distribute all these funds annually through our grants.

### Charitable Fund Account (Melbourne Women's Fund Endowment Fund)

Our endowment fund accrues our \$25,000 Life Membership donations and any public donations designated for this fund to assist vulnerable women and families in Melbourne in perpetuity.

### Administration Account

The Administration Account holds members' annual administration fee payments. We depend on these fees to: cover operational costs and the Foundation's administration fee for governance and administrative support; conduct our events; undertake new initiatives to further our mission; and protect us against the unexpected. We collaborate with the Foundation to ensure our budgeting processes and theirs align, giving us certainty about how well we can address our needs ongoing and determine available amounts to reinforce our granting pool.

We roll over any residual funds in the previous year's Administration Account to the following year's account.

At 30 June 2022, the final balances for these accounts were:

<b>Collective Giving Account</b>	<b>\$131,920</b>
<b>Melbourne Women's Fund Endowment Fund</b>	<b>\$264,294</b>
<b>Administration Account</b>	<b>\$14,330</b>

The Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation Board allocated \$10,790 from the Melbourne Women's Fund Endowment Fund in FY20/21 for distribution. We committed this entire amount to our 2022 grants pool. This, plus another \$290 from our FY22/23 admin fund, allowed us to grant \$143,000 for our 2022 grants round.

### MWF FY21/22 expenses:

Events	\$13,844
Marketing, design, printing	\$3,969
Platforms	\$2,014
Gifts	\$619
Membership Stewardship	\$150
Postage & Handling	\$402
Affiliation Expenses	\$753*
LMCF Collective Giving Account Fees	\$3,460
Miscellaneous	\$176
Transfer to 2021 Grants Pool	\$1,219
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$26,606</b>

\* This covered our Philanos membership—which is US\$300 annually—for both 2021 and 2022. Philanos is the leading US-based women's giving circle network. MWF is their only Australian affiliate. We turn to Philanos to stay informed about current approaches to best-practice giving circle management.

Special thanks to our Financial Manager, Jo Crawshaw, for her conscientious attention to managing our Administration Account. With the uncertainty and variability around our event costs, this was no small feat. We are also grateful to Lonia Catalano and Jaishma Krishna of Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation who, with oversight by Rikki Andrews, dedicated administrative support in banking and managing our funds across all three accounts and tracking our members and their payments.

**All donations and membership fees for Melbourne Women's Fund are received by the Lord Mayor's Charitable Fund, and compliance, charity law and financial requirements are ensured by the trustee, Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation.**

# Thank You

Melbourne Women's Fund is proud to be an international affiliate of:



## Behind the Scenes

A volunteer-led and run group like Melbourne Women's Fund couldn't be managed successfully without the different people who fulfill necessary 'back room' roles.

Michael and Gillian Hund founded and have kindly continued to finance and manage our website domain, working with Kate Harvey to maintain it. Our thanks to Michael Podlabeniouk and Hugh MacDonald of Intuitive Strategy for their IT support, particularly in supporting our individual volunteers. Very special thanks to GrantEd Directors and MWF members Kirsten Bartlett and Lyn Airey for financing Intuitive Strategy's valuable assistance.

We also give special recognition to Jay Donohue. Jay has been our patient and steadfast designer since our beginning, doing exceptional work—such as designing this annual review—with very generous discounts.

## Our Valued Sponsors and Partners

We gratefully and sincerely acknowledge the support we have received from corporate and philanthropic sponsors and partners this past year. Without their generosity, MWF would not have been able to: hold quality digital and live events at accessible prices; produce compelling marketing communications and streamlined digital platforms; and, overall, generate the magnitude of membership engagement and donations that allow us to strengthen the quality of life for vulnerable women and families in Melbourne.

## Please help us thank these valued FY21/22 partners:

- Australians Investing in Women
- Community Bank Elwood | Bendigo Bank
- Digital by Design
- Evans & Partners
- Intuitive Strategy
- Jay Donohue
- Just Gold Digital Agency
- Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation
- Matt Porter Post
- Officeworks
- Perpetual Private
- Philanthropy Australia
- The GrantEd Group
- Toyota
- Yellow Fin

## To our Executive and Committee Members

All volunteer-led and run groups like Melbourne Women's Fund rely heavily on the extensive time, talents and treasure of members who step up to serve in committee roles. We have recognised every one by name in each committee's report.

The Executive Committee comprises the MWF founders, our Executive Officer, the Chairs and Co-Chairs of each committee, the Financial Manager, Governance Lead and Chief Technology Officer. They generously provide their expertise pro bono to ensure we are effective and proactive in addressing the needs of our membership, the non-profits we support and the issues impacting the vulnerable women and families of Melbourne.

## MWF Executive Committee FY21/22 (at June 30, 2022)

- Co-Founders:** Gillian Hund OAM and Pat Burke OAM (Chair)
- Executive Officer/Membership Chair:** Christine Darcas
- Events Chair:** Louise Potter
- Grants Chair:** Amanda Thornton
- Marketing Chair:** Emma Nickson
- Chief Technology Officer:** Kate Harvey
- Next Gen Chair:** Emily Cooke (formerly Emily Jenkins)
- Financial Manager:** Jo Crawshaw
- Governance Lead:** Carmel Collins

## To Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation

Melbourne Women's Fund was established in 2014 as a Charitable Fund Account in Lord Mayor's Charitable Fund.

This relationship gives us access to the Foundation's range of expertise and support, for which we are very grateful. This includes managing our funds while giving us the flexibility to advise on distributions (subject to Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation Board approval); providing governance, organisational guidance and event assistance; and strengthening the due diligence of our grants process and overall operations. All of this is in addition to the credibility and social trust we receive and build together through our close association.

We rely on several key Foundation staff members to help us operate smoothly and efficiently. Donor Services Coordinator, Lonia Catalano, manages all donations and regularly reports on donor changes. General Manager of Fund Development, Rikki Andrews, liaises between us and the Foundation to provide valuable guidance and insights while ensuring our compliance with Foundation requirements. Special thanks also to Finance Officer Jaishma Krishna for her support. And, of course, we are grateful to Chief Executive Officer, Dr Catherine Brown OAM, and the Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation Board for their ongoing dedication to us.

## To our members and friends

We would not have reached our eighth year without our members' and non-member donors' commitment to supporting our work. A heartfelt 'thank you' to all who have continued their dedication to our special giving circle and to the new Standard, Next Gen and Life Members who joined us this past year.

Follow us online   

 [info@melbournewomensfund.org](mailto:info@melbournewomensfund.org)

 [melbournewomensfund.org](http://melbournewomensfund.org)



Interested in joining us?



# MELBOURNE WOMEN'S FUND

Melbourne Women's Fund is a charitable fund account within Lord Mayor's Charitable Fund ABN 63 635 798 473. Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation, as trustee of the Fund, ensures that all charity law, financial and compliance requirements are met.