

#5WCWS

Connect, Challenge, Change

5TH WORLD CONFERENCE OF WOMEN'S SHELTERS

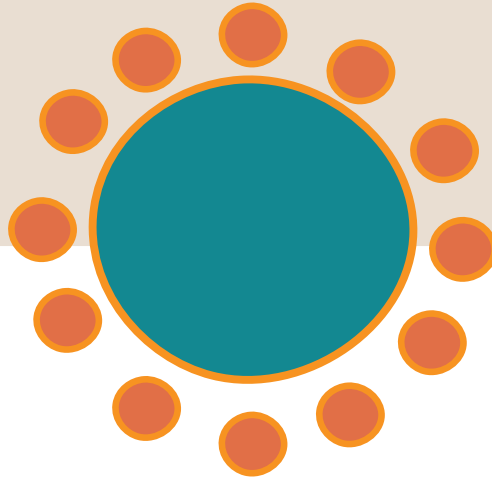
15-18 SEPTEMBER 2025
SYDNEY | AUSTRALIA

FINAL REPORT



HOSTED BY:





Acknowledgement

We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the first inhabitants of the nation and the traditional custodians of the lands where we live, learn and work. We pay our respects to elders past and present.



*Wesnet and GNWS
warmly thank WAGEC
as First Nations Sponsor.*

**WOMEN'S
AND GIRLS'
EMERGENCY
CENTRE**



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About the hosts



WESNET

Wesnet (the Women's Services Network) Inc. provides relief and support to women and children experiencing domestic and family violence, intimate partner violence and other forms of gender-based violence. A national network, our members are the specialist domestic and family violence services across Australia.

Wesnet is also the leading non-profit organisation in Australia working on the intersection of technology and violence against women. We work to ensure that women can remain connected through technology, that people who choose to misuse technology for abusive purposes are disrupted and held to account, and to educate and support individuals, organisations and broader society to end technology facilitated abuse.

wesnet.org.au



GLOBAL NETWORK OF WOMEN'S SHELTERS (GNWS)

The GNWS was born at the 1st World Conference of Women's Shelters in Edmonton, Canada, in 2008 and founded in 2009 by a globally diverse group of national networks and shelters from around the world.

The GNWS has networks in Africa, America, Asia, Europe, the Middle East and North Africa, and Oceania, working to: ensure global awareness of violence against women and their children; support and strengthen the women's shelter movement; promote effective policies and their implementation in order to prevent violence and to protect and empower women and their children; and promote social change that ends violence and oppression against women.

gnws.org

Host organisation of the 5th World Conference of Women's Shelters
Wesnet (Women's Services Network) Inc.
GPO Box 1579, CANBERRA ACT 2601
ABN: 16 068 548 631

Thank you



Dear Friends,

On behalf of the Global Network of Women's Shelters (GNWS) and the Women's Services Network (Wesnet Inc.), thank you to those who were part of the 5th World Conference of Women's Shelters (5WCWS)!

We were honoured that so many of you had travelled so far and taken the time to connect, learn and share with advocates from all over the world. Over the four days of the Conference, you had the opportunity to hear keynote sessions and plenaries, participate in concurrent sessions, workshops, and regional caucuses that addressed a range of topics relevant to ending gender-based violence.

Through all of these learning opportunities, you would have had the chance to meet and network with other advocates from around the globe. Our hope is that you learned new strategies for helping and supporting victims/survivors and holding perpetrators to account; share your knowledge and experiences with others; and left the Conference with new tools and resources to strengthen your work.

Moreover, we hope that you left with new friends and colleagues that you can reach out to for continued learning and support long after the Conference. Most of all, however, our hope is that you developed a renewed commitment to the critical goals that we all share—helping victims/survivors escape and heal from violence; working to increase support and resources for victims/survivors and those that support them; and, ultimately, preventing gender-based violence across the globe.

Once again, thank you for committing the time and resources necessary to participate in 5WCWS.

Sincerely:

Julie Oberin AM

Conference Chair

Founding Member of the Global Network
of Women's Shelters and Wesnet Board Member



Conference committees

CONFERENCE ORGANISING GROUP

Julie Oberin AM – Conference Chair, Wesnet Board Member, GNWS Board Member, CEO Annie North, Australia

Margaret Augerinos – Wesnet Board Member, GNWS Board Member, CEO Centre for Non-Violence, Australia

Leanne Barron – Wesnet Board Member, CEO Starick Services, Australia

Karen Bentley – CEO Wesnet, Australia, GNWS Board Member, GNWS Foundation Board Member.

Elise Philips – Wesnet Board Member, Deputy CEO DVNSW, Australia

Nicolette Hughes – Conference Director, Wesnet, Australia

PROGRAM ADVISORY GROUP

Julie Oberin AM – Program Advisory Group Co-chair, Wesnet Board member, GNWS Board Member, CEO Annie North, Australia

Karen Bentley – Program Advisory Group Co-chair, CEO Wesnet, Australia

Maha Abdo OAM – CEO Muslim Women Australia, Australia

Dr Pan Ay-Woan – Chairperson, Garden of Hope Foundation, Taiwan

Prof Donna Chung – John Curtin Distinguished Professor, Curtin School of Allied Health, Australia

Bonney Corbin – Director of Advocacy, MSI Asia Pacific, Australia

Lula Dembele – General Manager of Lived Experience and Co-production, Good Shepherd Institute, Australia

Dr Tina Dixon – Academic, Australian National University, Australia

Rebecca Glenn – CEO Centre for Women's Economic Safety, Australia

Margarita Guille – GNWS Board Member, Executive Coordinator Inter American Network of Women's Shelters, Mexico

Jenny Holmes – Project Lead, Women and Girls Emergency Centre, Australia

Dr Ang Jury ONZM – GNWS Board Member, CEO National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges, New Zealand

Chisato Kitanaka – GNWS Board Member, Co-chair All Japan Women's Shelter Network, Japan

Dixie Link-Gordon – Aunty in Residence, Full Stop Australia and Women's and Girls Emergency Centre, Australia

Kathleen Maltzahn – CEO Sexual Assault Services Victoria, Australia

Fatima Outaleb – Human rights and advocacy expert and activist, Morocco

Essa Reijmers – Senior policy advisor and coordinator of the National Network of Women's Shelters, Netherlands

Ashley Slye – GNWS Board Member, Director of Positively Safe, National Network to End Domestic Violence, USA

Cindy Southworth – Host of the 2nd World Conference of Women's Shelters, USA

Aleid van den Brink – GNWS Board Member, Chair of the GNWS Foundation in the Hague, Netherlands

Patricia Vargas – GNWS Board Member, Children, Family and Community Service Catholic Social Services, Canada

Nafula Wafula-Gitonga – Co-founder and programs lead, Ushindi Empowerment, Kenya

Ingrid Yeh – GNWS Board Member, Garden of Hope Foundation, Taiwan

FIRST NATIONS WORKING TEAM

Jenny Holmes, WAGEC

Dixie Link-Gordon, WAGEC

Kowana Welsh, WAGEC

Monique Wiseman, Biribee Housing

Professor Kyllie Cripps, Monash University

Jacqui Jarret, Nura Yoga

WESNET BOARD

Amie Carrington – National Chair of Wesnet. Domestic Violence Crisis Service

Leanne Barron – Deputy Chair of Wesnet. Starrick Services Inc.

Margaret Augerinos – Treasurer of Wesnet. Centre for Non-Violence

Angie Piubello – Secretary of Wesnet. Beryl Women Inc.

Jo Gamble, The Katherine Women's Crisis Service

Mary Leaker, Embolden

Julie Oberin AM, Annie North Inc.

Elise Phillips, DVNSW

GNWS BOARD

GNWS Executive Committee

Aleid van den Brink – Chair of the GNWS Foundation in the Hague, Netherlands

Karen Bentley, Wesnet, Australia

Julie Oberin AM, Wesnet, Australia

Ashley Slye, National Network to End Domestic Violence, USA

Patricia Vargas, Catholic Social Services of Alberta, Canada

Ingrid Yeh, The Garden of Hope Foundation, Taiwan

GNWS Secretariat

Margot Kuijpers, Global Network of Women's Shelters Secretariat, The Netherlands

Annie Chen, Garden of Hope, Taiwan

Yi-Chia Hwang, Garden of Hope, Taiwan

GNWS Board

Margaret Augerinos, Centre for Non-Violence, Australia

Mary Balikungeri, African Network of Women's Shelters, Rwanda

Zubeda Dangor, National Shelter Movement of South Africa

Léa Dudouet, WAVE (Women Against Violence Europe), Austria

Anuradha Dugal, Women's Shelters Canada, Canada

Maria Margarita Guille, RIRE, Mexico

Dr Ang Jury ONZM – National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges, New Zealand

Chisato Kitanaka, All Japan Women's Shelter Network, Japan

Joy Lange, National Shelter Movement, South Africa

Rosa Logar, Women Against Violence in Europe, Austria

Maria Munir Yusuf, Global Network of Women Shelters, Ethiopia

Nguyen Van Anh, Centre for Studies and Applied Sciences in Gender, Vietnam

Fatima Outleb, Human rights and advocacy expert and activist, Morocco

Marcella Pirrone, DiRe and WAVE (Women Against Violence Europe), Italy

Pille Tsopp-Pagan, Women Against Violence Europe, Estonia

Diana Vazquez Bravo, Fundacion María Amor, Ecuador

Nafula Wafula-Gitonga, Ushindi Empowerment, Kenya

5th World Conference of Women's Shelters

#5WCWS

Wesnet was honoured to co-host the 5th World Conference of Women's Shelters (5WCWS) in Sydney from 15–18 September, the world's largest Conference by and for those working at the grassroots to end gender-based violence.

With over 1,200 delegates from over 60 countries and featured 200+ inspiring speakers sharing global insights, research, and strategies to end gender-based violence, the event was a resounding success.

Held in the Southern Hemisphere for the first time,

the Conference showcased Australia's leadership in the sector and strengthened connections across our global movement. It was powerful to see our members present their work and to hear how communities around the world are driving change and supporting survivors.

What delegates thought about 5WCWS:

98% of delegates rated overall satisfaction 4–5 out of 5 (very good to excellent)

84% of delegates rated their satisfaction of quality and content of keynote presentations 4–5 out of 5 (very good to excellent)

88% of delegates said they would attend 6WCWS!

Top three motivators for attending the Conference:

- To increase knowledge and awareness of the issues faced around the world
- Professional development
- Networking opportunity

Scan or click on the QR Code to watch the Conference highlights video:



Who attended 5WCWS



1,208 delegates



Countries: 61 Australia 48%
52% overseas



Scholarships offered: 78 complimentary registrations
35 travel scholarships



84% of onsite attendees had never attended a World Conference of Women Shelter before

Gender breakdown:

Delegate by gender



77% Female



6% Male



17% Non-binary/other/prefer not to say

Sector breakdown:

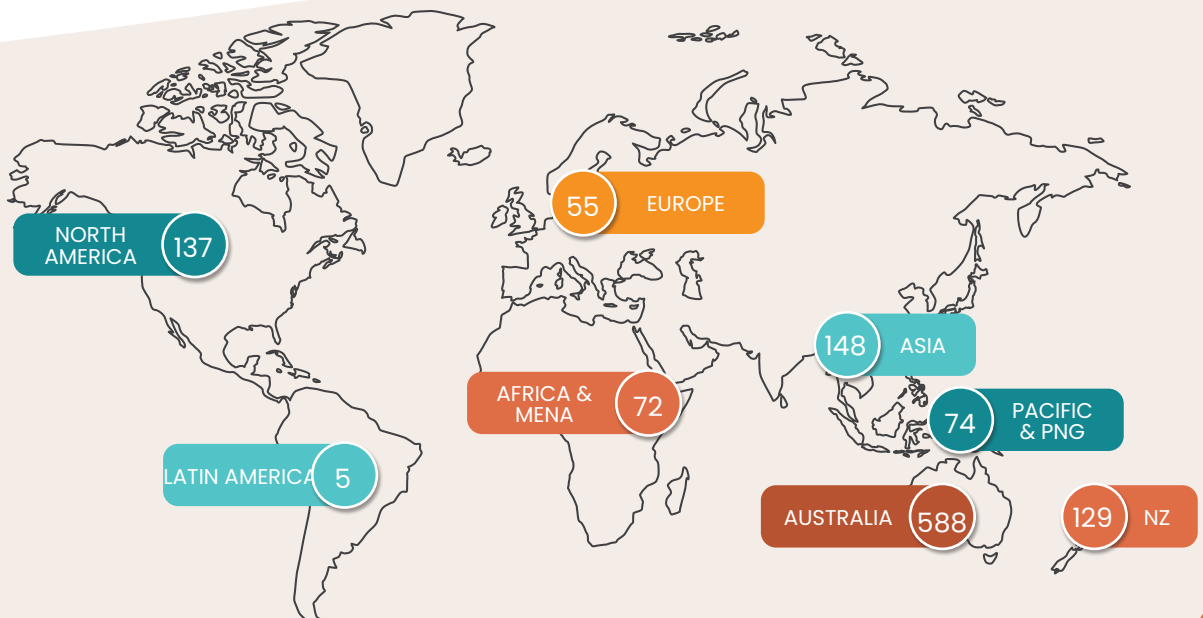
Top 3 sectors

38% NGO/Specialist

27% DFV/Sexual Assault

15% NGO/Other

Regional breakdown of registrations



What people said

Across social media and the conference survey, delegates described the 5WCWS as powerful, inspiring and profoundly connective. Many reflect on the emotional impact of hearing from global leaders, the honour of being part of a movement that spans more than sixty countries and the deep sense of solidarity and purpose the conference created. Participants spoke about the space to share stories, reconnect, build new relationships and return to their countries and communities with renewed determination to end gender based violence.

Attending the 5WCWS has been such a meaningful experience – hearing powerful voices, sharing knowledge, and standing in solidarity with changemakers from across the globe. It's truly inspired by the energy and commitment at the 5WCWS. Every session is a reminder of why we must continue this important work.

Amazing and Inspiring. It lit the fire again and made me connected more to the cause, to the why we work in this sector.

Hajeh Maha Krayem Abdo
23 September · 🌐

Last week I had the privilege of opening the 5th World conference of womens [Women's Services Network - WESNET](#) with a reminder that the true currency of our work is the currency of the heart, Compassion, Respect, Dignity, peace, and justice. As I looked out into a room full of incredible leaders, I felt deeply the weight of our shared responsibility, and also the hope that comes when hearts unite for a common purpose.

Over the days that followed, I listened, I learned, and I was uplifted by the wisdom, resilience and strength of women from across the globe who have dedicated their lives to ending violence and building safety. To sit and talk with some of these women was an honour, and also a moment of truth.

At the closing panel with amazingly courageous women, my dear wise friend and mentor [Julie Oberin](#) and [Natasha Scott Despoja](#), we shared our heart felt moments of truths, with our minds together focused on the now and the future.

In closing, I found myself asking what was sitting heavily on my heart. Where are the voices of those who are not in this room? Where are the women of Palestine and the surrounding regions whose lives are torn apart not only by family violence, but by the daily realities of state violence? We cannot speak of one without naming the other.

And as we move forward, we must not forget that the work of prevention cannot belong to women alone. If we do not bring men along with us on this journey, then we risk doing injustice to the feminist movement itself, because real change requires all of us.

I walked away from this conference feeling both humbled and challenged, while reminded that our task is not only to build shelters, but to build bridges, to hold space for every silenced voice, and to keep the heart at the centre of everything we do, just like the bird with two wings, hope and caution are our wings flying together with purpose and grace. [#5WCWS](#)

Katherine H. · 2nd
Team Leader at Domestic Violence Action Centre

So powerful! Thank you so much to the WESNET team! Such a brilliant conference

Like · 🌐 3 | Reply

Cecilia McKenzie · 2nd
Proud Wiradjuri Woman · First Nations Gender and Systems Reform ...

Thank you for including me
In such a significant and powerful event. I was struck by the passion and careful coordination and consideration. Thank you 🙏

Like · 🌐 3 | Reply

SDP
622 followers

What a privilege to have been there! Thank you again for organizing this wonderful event.

Like · 🌐 4 | Reply





Kyllie Cripps · 2nd
 Professor and Director Monash Indigenous Studies Centre, Monash Univ...
 1w · 🌐

Loving every moment at the 5th World Conference of Women's Shelters – what a privilege to reconnect with sisters and Aunties from across the country and around the global, and to create wonderful new connections along the way too.

Deep thanks to **WESNET (Women's Services Network) Inc.** for the invitation and opportunity to speak, and as always Auntie **Dixie Link-Gordon**, **Monique Wiseman**, **Jenny Anne Holmes**, **Yatungka Gordon** for sharing space, wisdom, and strength with me.

Feeling grateful to be part of this powerful collective of women and some wonderful men too leading change.

Fiona Vera Gray · 2nd
 Professor of Sexual Violence and Co-Director of the Child and Woman A...
 1w · 🌐

Me in Sydney... with all the chins?

But that aside, it's hard to sum up how wonderful the 5th World Conference on Women's Shelters hosted by **WESNET (Women's Services Network) Inc.** has been these past few days. I feel honoured to have spoken with so many women doing their thing, helping women, in countries all over the world. It helped reinvigorate me to feel part of something, not just local or national, but global – a movement.

Thank you to everyone who came and said hi, or shared their stories, or just smiled on the escalators. What a privilege this work is.

#5WCWS

Thank you to the 5WCWS organizers for hosting such a meaningful and well-coordinated conference. The sessions were insightful, and the opportunities for networking and knowledge sharing were invaluable. I deeply appreciate your hard work and dedication in making this event a success.

It has been an amazing conference, it's still very nearby in my thoughts and in my heart. The organisation and the atmosphere were excellent thanks to your work and the work of the whole Wesnet team. Thank you so much.

Katherine H. · 2nd
 Acting Executive Manager @ Domestic Violence Ac...
 2mo · 🌐

Feeling inspired by the solidarity, innovation and dedication of the presenters from day 2 of the #5WCWS hosted by **WESNET (Women's Services Network) Inc.**



Danielle Lavithis · 2nd
 Manager, Client Services – Family Violence, Accom...
 2mo · 🌐

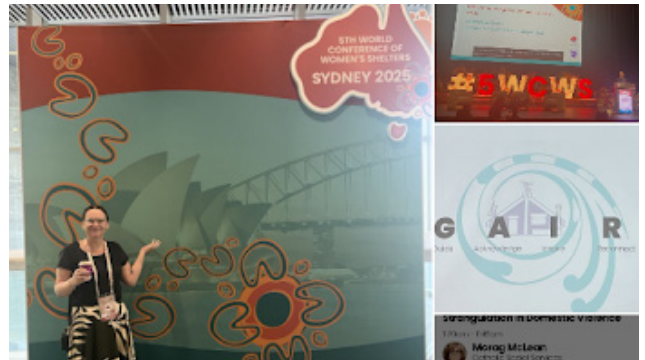
And day 2 is done and dusted #5WCWS

What a powerful day, from thought provoking panel discussions, to an amazing healing refuge framework from NZ. The session on non fatal strangulation provided us with important research findings and resources to help us understand how to ask about and respond to disclosures of strangulation.

The day ended with me participating in a choir performance (yes, random I know!) And a lovely dinner with new and old friends from across the globe.

I have left the conference with more determination than ever! We are agents of change, activists, feminists and we will not stop until all women and children are safe from violence.

Thanks **WESNET (Women's Services Network) Inc.** for hosting such an amazing conference.



This was a really fantastic conference with some keynote and session speakers that were absolutely inspiring. I really enjoyed myself and took a lot away from this powerful conference.

5th World Conference of Women's Shelters

#5WCWS

Media and reach

Traditional Media

A total of **115 articles** (online and print), in Australia and around the world, with an approximate audience reach of over **7.3 million**.

Violence against women put in spotlight amid conflicts

By Maeve Bannister
September 15, 2025, 5:24 PM



The largest gathering dedicated to ending gender-based violence will be held in Australia. (Stephanie Gardiner/AAP PHOTOS)

Hard-won rights for women must be fiercely protected as they are not guaranteed, particularly in times of conflict, advocates for ending gender-based violence say.

More than 1000 delegates from 100 nations are travelling to Sydney for the [fifth world conference of women's shelters](#).

It is the first time the event has been held in the southern hemisphere, and is the largest gathering dedicated to ending gender-based violence of all forms.

Among attendees will be Ukrainian women's and LGBTQI advocate Olena Shevchenko, named Time's Woman of the Year in 2023.



Olena Shevchenko fears rights for women could be rolled back during a crisis if not protected. (PR IMAGE PHOTO)

Ms Shevchenko established the Kyiv-based nonprofit Insight in 2017 to support women and LGBTQI communities.

But when Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022, the organisation's work shifted to urgent crisis response.

LGBTQI people and women are disproportionately vulnerable during war and the conflict in Ukraine had made Insight's work more visible internationally, Ms Shevchenko told AAP.



NEWS & VIEWS

Sydney hosts world's largest women's shelter conference



This week, Sydney was home to the world's largest conference led by and for frontline workers dedicated to ending gender-based violence. The 5th World Conference of Women's Shelters (5WCWS) brought together over 1000 delegates from more than 60 countries.

Frontline workers, lived-experience advocates, policymakers, researchers, and community leaders mobilised to shape the next era of prevention and justice. It's the first time the conference has been held in the southern hemisphere.

Over four days, the global gathering offered a rare chance to hear directly from international leaders and grassroots activists addressing gender-based violence in a wide range of contexts. The conference placed lived-experience, frontline expertise, and community-driven solutions at the centre with more than 100 presentations, 11 keynotes, and multiple plenaries. Topics included anti-oppression, exploration of new research, and working together across different settings with diverse resources and expertise.



by **Chloe Watts**
September 18, 2025

Want to raise good men? Start with their group chats

Anna Price
September 15, 2025 — 11:03am

You're in a group chat with your mates. And then one says something so off, you don't even know how to respond. So you let it go. Then you let it go again.

It's a common response, says Jackson Katz, author of the new book *Every Man*. He is in Sydney this week to deliver a keynote at the fifth World Conference of Women's Shelters, organised by WESNET, the Women's Services Network, a national network of specialist domestic and family violence services across Australia.

But that common response, that moment when you can't call out your mates, no matter how badly they behave, is partly why Katz and allies devised a new way of being a bystander. And it's not nearly as terrifying as having to confront your mates.



Teenage boys and young men may want to speak up, but it can be particularly difficult in group settings. (WESNET/STYLING: AARON)

There is, says Katz, a pressure to remain silent just to fit in. It starts at school and gets reinforced, particularly if you are part of what he describes as "cohesive organisational cultures". Work, sport, it happens everywhere – and it's strengthened because you are all mates, pals, good guys here.

In her new role (as of May this year), Tanya Pibersek is also at the conference. After the federal election, Pibersek



Scan or click on the QR Code to watch the Conference highlights video:



Social Media



55,847
IMPRESSIONS



1,348
REACTIONS



117
POSTS



7,884
VIDEO VIEWS



304
SHARES



WESNET (Women's Services Network) Inc.
2,620 followers
2mo · 🌐

We're deeply grateful to our incredible sponsors whose support is helping make the 5th World Conference of Women's Shelters (#5WCWS) possible.

Your support ensures we can bring together over 1,000 delegates from more than 60 countries to share knowledge, amplify survivor voices, and drive global change to end violence against women and children.

We couldn't do this without you. 💜

It's not too late to register your attendance!

📅 15-18 September 2025
📍 ICC Sydney
🌐 5wcws.org

#5WCWS #ThankYouSponsors #EndVAW #DFV #MeetInSydney
#ItsGotToBeSydney #WESNET #GNWS #SocialImpact #GlobalSolidarity

#5WCWS
5TH WORLD CONFERENCE
OF WOMEN'S SHELTERS

THANK YOU

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5th World Conference of Women's Shelters

#5WCWS

Program highlights

The comprehensive program included 12 keynotes and 204 concurrent speakers covering a wide range of topics including:

- Oppression – Anti-oppression and inclusion strategies
- Barriers – Breaking down the barriers and transformational change
- Justice – Justice and rights
- Knowledge – Knowledge and research
- All Forms – Recognising all forms of gender-based violence, challenges and strategies
- Sustainability – Resourcing and sustainability
- Safety/Wellbeing – Safety, wellbeing, recovery and healing
- Tech – Technology
- Continuum – The continuum of approaches
- Together – Working together

International Keynote Speakers



Olena Shevchenko – Ukraine



Prof. Fiona Vera Gray – United Kingdom



Bandana Rana – Nepal



Jackson Katz, Ph.D – USA

Study tours

There were many study tours held showcasing local services in NSW. Thank you to all our hosts and delegates who attended.

- Tribal Warrior Private Charter Cultural Tour
- Women’s and Girls’ Emergency Centre (WAGEC) Women’s Refuge
- eSafety and Tech-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence – Improving Prevention and Responses
- Muslim Women Australia (MWA) – Multicultural Study Tour: Setting Standard and Breaking Barriers – Over 40 Years of MWA Excellence
- Jesuit Refugee Service Australia – Accompanying Women on Temporary Visas along the Pathway to Safety
- ANROWS – Bridging the Gap Between Research, Policy and Practice in the Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Space in Australia
- 50 Years of Services and Advocacy to End Gender Based Violence: Welcome to Full Stop Australia

Pre and post Conference workshops were also held:

Holding our stories, strengthening our shelters: Indigenous women leading change in safety, healing, and knowledge sharing	Presented and Sponsored by WAGEC	Jenny Holmes (WAGEC), Prof Kyllie Cripps (Monash Uni)
Unpacking technology-facilitated abuse in the context of domestic and family violence	NNEDV, Wesnet	Erica Olsen, Laisa Schweigert (NNEDV)
Advanced topics in technology-facilitated abuse	Wesnet, NNEDV, Nansen	Annabelle Harrison, Sarah Biordi (Wesnet), Rose McDonald (Nansen)
Recovery, healing and advocacy for victim-survivors: Australia’s specialist sexual violence sector	NASASV	Prof. Fiona Vera Gray, Kate Wright (NASASV), Mette Hotker (CASACV), Kathleen Maltzahn (Sexual Assault Services Vic), Jess Murray (Centre for Women’s Safety & Wellbeing)

Program at a glance



Monday 15 September		
9:00am – 1:00pm	Half Day Workshop – Unpacking Technology-Facilitated Abuse in the context of Domestic and Family Violence – NNEDV, Wesnet <i>*Additional registration required at a fee</i>	Australia’s First Nations Knowledge Circle – WAGEC <i>*Open to all First Nations delegates from around the world. Additional registration required at a fee.</i>
12:00pm (midday)	REGISTRATION OPENS	
3:00 – 5:00pm	Opening Ceremony and Welcome to Country Rowena Welsh-Jarrett	
	Welcome Addresses Prime Minister of Australia, The Hon. Anthony Albanese MP, Julie Oberin AM, Conference Chair, Aleid van den Brink, Chair Global Network of Women’s Shelter Foundation	
	OPENING KEYNOTE Prof. Kyllie Cripps	
	Welcome Address Dr Hannah Tonkin, NSW Women’s Safety Commissioner	
	Performance Dr Shellie Morris AO	
	Welcome Reception, ICC Sydney Caroline Wall, CommBank Next Chapter	
5:00 – 7:00pm	Live Art by Saretta Design	

Tuesday 16 September	
Early	Wellbeing activities
8:00am	EXHIBITION OPENS
8:15 – 10:00am	Currency of the Heart Maha Abdo OAM, Muslim Women Australia
	KEYNOTE The Hon. Tanya Plibersek MP – Minister for Social Services
	KEYNOTE – The Forgotten 20%: Women and Children with Disabilities in Gender-Based Violence Prevention and Response Systems Heidi la Paglia Reid Australia
	KEYNOTE PANEL – Survivor voices Dr Ann O’Neill AO, Arman Abrahamzadeh OAM, Lula Dembele, Cecilia McKenzie Various Australia
10:00 – 10:30am	MORNING TEA
10:40 – 11:40am	Workshops and Concurrent Sessions
<i>Move to the next session</i>	
11:50am – 12:50pm	Workshops and Concurrent Sessions
12:50 – 1:50pm	LUNCH
2:00 – 3:00pm	Workshops and Concurrent Sessions
3:00 – 3:30pm	AFTERNOON TEA
3:40 – 4:50pm	KEYNOTE – Has Sexual Violence Lost its Politics? Prof. Fiona Vera Gray
3:40 – 4:50pm	KEYNOTE – Global Pushback on Women’s Rights & the Power of Solidarity Olena Shevchenko
5:00 – 6:30pm	Regional get togethers

Wednesday 17 September	
Early	<i>Wellbeing activities</i>
8:00am	EXHIBITION OPENS
8:30 – 9:30am	<i>KEYNOTE – Why Violence Against Women is a Men’s Issue Jackson Katz Ph.D</i>
	<i>KEYNOTE PANEL Jackson Katz Ph.D, Olena Shevchenko, Prof. Fiona Vera Gray</i>
9:30 – 10:00am	MORNING TEA
10:10 – 11:10am	<i>Workshops and Concurrent Sessions</i>
<i>Move to the next session</i>	
11:20am – 12:20pm	<i>Workshops and Concurrent Sessions</i>
12:20 – 1:20pm	LUNCH
1:30 – 2:30pm	<i>Plenary Session – Regional Report Backs Members of the GNWS Board from around the globe</i>
	<i>KEYNOTE – “Breaking Barriers: Dismantling Gender Stereotypes to End Violence Against Women” CEDAW’s Role in Addressing Structural Barriers to Equality and Protection Bandana Rana</i>
<i>Move to the next session</i>	
2:40 – 3:40pm	<i>Workshops and Concurrent Sessions</i>
3:40 – 4:10pm	AFTERNOON TEA
4:20 – 5:30pm	<i>Closing Ceremony</i>
6:30 – 7:00pm	<i>Transfers to Conference dinner (Wharf outside ICC Sydney)</i>
7:00 – 10:30pm	<i>Conference dinner Watersedge at Campbell’s Stores</i>

Thursday 18 September	
9:00am – 1:00pm	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <i>Half Day Workshop – Advanced Topics in Technology Facilitated Abuse – Wesnet, NNEDV, Nansen</i> <i>*Additional registration required at a fee</i> </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> <i>Half Day Workshop – Recovery, Healing and Advocacy for Victim-Survivors: Australia’s Specialist Sexual Violence Sector – NASASV</i> <i>*Additional registration required at a fee</i> </div> </div>
Various times <i>(Part or full day Study Tours)</i>	<i>A range of Study Tours were available for delegates.</i> <i>Visit fifthworldshelterconference.org/study-tours to see what was offered.</i>

5th World Conference of Women's Shelters

#5WCWS

A Conference is not a Conference without social and networking events!

Thank you to CommBank Next Chapter for sponsoring the Welcome Reception themed "Tastes of Australia" in the exhibition area.





Thank you to Telstra for sponsoring our Conference dinner at Watersedge on beautiful Sydney harbour on a stunning evening.



5th World Conference of Women's Shelters

#5WCWS

Thank you to our Sponsors, Exhibitors and Volunteers

A heartfelt thank you to all our member organisations who attended, presented, and supported the event. Your contributions made the conference a true reflection of global solidarity and collective action.

Also, a special thanks goes out to all our Conference sponsors, supporters and exhibitors whose support made this exceptional world Conference possible.

Thank you to our sponsors

MAJOR FINANCIAL SUPPORTER



Australian Government
Department of Social Services

PLATINUM



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DINNER



WELCOME RECEPTION

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CONFERENCE APP



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We thank our exhibitors

- Saretta Art and Design Pop Up Store
- Wesnet Inc.
- Global Network of Women's Shelters
- Department of Social Services
- CommBank Next Chapter
- The Office of the eSafety Commissioner
- Restorative Pathways (formerly Ruby's Place)
- Asian Network of Women's Shelters and The Garden of Hope Foundation
- SDP Inc.
- Lifeline/ DV Alert



Thank you to our volunteers

We extend a great appreciation to all the volunteers who worked at the 5th World Conference of Women's Shelters. Thank you for all your hard work to ensure the Conference ran as smoothly as possible.



Our plenary and keynote speakers



Dr Emma Fulu – Emcee

Founder of the Equality Institute, Feminist Activist, Diversity & Inclusion Expert (Australia)

Dr Emma Fulu is a feminist activist, researcher, and entrepreneur who has dedicated her life to advancing gender equality and ending violence against women and girls. She is the founder and Co-CEO of the Equality Institute, a global organisation dedicated to creating a more just and inclusive world that has worked in more than 30 countries. Emma has led some of the world's largest studies on violence against women, including at the United Nations, and co-founded VOICE, supporting women and girls in crisis settings. Emma has advised governments, UN agencies, and global brands, and her work has been featured on Q&A, The Project, the BBC, CNN, and beyond. A TEDx speaker and writer with a PhD from the University of Melbourne, she brings together data, storytelling, and lived experience to inspire change.



The Hon. Tanya Plibersek MP

Minister for Social Services, and the Federal Member for Sydney (Australia)

Tanya Plibersek is the Minister for Social Services, and the Federal Member for Sydney. Between 2013 and 2019, Tanya was Deputy Leader of the Opposition and Deputy Leader of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party. From 2013 to 2016, Tanya was also the Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Development. From 2017 to 2022 Tanya was the Shadow Minister for Education and the Shadow Minister for Women.

From 2022 to 2025, she was the Minister for the Environment and Water in the first Albanese Labor Government. Tanya served as a Cabinet minister in the Gillard and Rudd Governments. Tanya was Minister for Health, Minister for Medical Research, Minister for Housing, Minister for Human Services, Minister for Social Inclusion, and Minister for the Status of Women. Tanya grew up in the Sutherland Shire of Sydney and is the daughter of migrants from Slovenia. Like many newly arrived migrants, Tanya's parents helped build the country in which they made their new home. Her father worked on the Snowy River hydro electric scheme in the 1950s.

Tanya holds a BA Communications (Hons) from the University of Technology Sydney (UTS) and a Master of Politics and Public Policy from Macquarie University. Before entering Parliament, Tanya worked in the Domestic Violence Unit at the NSW Ministry for the Status and Advancement of Women. Elected to Federal Parliament as the Member for Sydney in 1998, she spoke of her conviction that ordinary people working together can achieve positive change. Tanya lives in Sydney with her husband Michael and her three children, Anna, Joseph and Louis.



Professor Kyllie Cripps

Director, Monash Indigenous Studies Centre; Chief Investigator, ARC Centre of Excellence for the Elimination of Violence Against Women (CEVAW) (Australia)

Professor Kyllie Cripps is a proud Palawa woman, Director of the Monash Indigenous Studies Centre, and Chief Investigator in the ARC Centre of Excellence for the Elimination of Violence Against Women (CEVAW). She is nationally recognised for her expertise in Indigenous family violence, child abuse, and sexual assault. With over two decades of experience, her research centres truth-telling, community-led solutions, and systemic reform. Kyllie works closely with communities, services, and governments to create culturally safe, accountable responses to violence. Her leadership is grounded in care, collaboration, and justice—driving change that upholds the dignity, rights, and wellbeing of First Nations peoples.



Dr Shellie Morris AO

Singer/Songwriter (Australia)

Yanyuwa and Wardaman woman Dr Shellie Morris AO is a multi-award-winning singer/songwriter creating and singing in around 20 Australian Aboriginal languages. While she has been in the spotlight over the years for involvement in various national and international projects, by and large, she works on the ground empowering and gently effecting change.

She is a Red Ochre recipient and has been appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia in the Kings Birthday Honours for “distinguished service to the performing arts, to the Indigenous community, and to not-for-profit organisations.

She is the 2014 NT Australian of the Year, the 2014 NAIDOC National Artist of the Year, a multi Deadly Award winner and a driving force of the acclaimed album Ngambala Wiji li-Wunungu and the internationally award-winning musical documentary Prison Songs.

In April 2021, she was awarded an Honorary Award of Doctor of Music from Sydney University for her unique and ongoing work with Indigenous communities to build resilience and self-esteem through song writing and musical collaborations.



Professor Fiona Vera Gray

Professor of Sexual Violence and Co-Director of the Child and Woman Abuse Studies Unit at London Metropolitan University (United Kingdom)

Fiona Vera Gray is Professor of Sexual Violence at London Metropolitan University and Co-Director of the Child and Woman Abuse Studies Unit, an internationally renowned research centre on violence against women and girls. A former frontline sexual violence practitioner, her research bridges theory and activism, focusing on sexual violence, harassment, and pornography. Vera Gray is widely recognised for her work on public sexual harassment and its impact on women's embodiment, and is the author of several books, including *The Right Amount of Panic* and most recently *Women on Porn*.



Olena Shevchenko

Chair, Insight NG (Ukraine)

Olena Shevchenko is a prominent Ukrainian women's and LGBTI rights activist, serving as the chairwoman of the NGO Insight and co-founder of the feminist movement – Women's March in Ukraine (Marsh Zhinok). She advocates for marginalized communities, including LGBTIQ individuals and women from vulnerable communities, while challenging discriminatory laws. In 2021, Shevchenko was awarded the Human Rights Tulip by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs for her pioneering human rights work. The following year, she and Insight received the Prix international de la ville de Paris for the Rights of LGBTIQ+ People. Named Women of the Year by The Times in 2023, Shevchenko highlighted the increased vulnerability of women and LGBTIQ people during the war in Ukraine, pointing to widespread discrimination, sexual violence, and gaps in humanitarian aid. She remains a powerful advocate for human rights in Ukraine.



Jackson Katz Ph.D

Founder & President, MVP Strategies (USA)

Jackson Katz, Ph.D., is an educator, author, and scholar-activist who has long been a major figure in the global movement of men working to promote gender equity and prevent gender-based violence. He co-founded the first large-scale prevention initiative in university and professional athletics in North America, and the first system-wide prevention program in the U.S. military. He is one of the original architects of the "bystander" approach to prevention. He is the creator of award-winning educational documentaries, including the classic *Tough Guise* series. He is the author of three books, including the recently published *Every Man: Why Violence Against Women Is a Men's Issue* (Penguin Random House UK). His TEDx talk on that topic has been translated into 27 languages and has over 5.5 million views.



Bandana Rana

Member (former Vice Chair) UN CEDAW (Convention of Elimination of Discrimination Against Women) (Nepal)

Bandana Rana is the first Nepali member of the UN CEDAW (Convention of Elimination of Discrimination Against Women) Committee since 2017. She served as Vice Chair of the Committee from 2018–2020. She is presently the Chair of the Task Force on Afghanistan within the Committee. She is also a member of the UNFPA High Level Commission on ICPD25 follow-up.



Natasha Stott Despoja AO

Expert Member, United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (UN CEDAW), (Australia)

Natasha Stott Despoja AO is an Australian politician, diplomat, gender equality advocate and author. Natasha is a former Senator, political party leader, Ambassador and Royal Commissioner. She is a Professor in the Practice of Politics at ANU. In 2020, Natasha was elected by the General Assembly of the United Nations as a member of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). In 2024, Natasha was appointed to lead the South Australian Royal Commission into Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence. Natasha was the founding Chair of Our Watch (2013–2021) and served as Australia’s Global Ambassador for Women and Girls (2013–2016), working to promote gender equality and women’s empowerment around the world. She currently serves as a non-executive Director of The Australian Ballet and Carrie’s Beanies for Brain Cancer. She is also a member of the Broad Agenda 50:50 by 2030 Advisory Group and the George Washington Global Women’s Leadership Council.



Heidi La Paglia Reid

Advocate (Australia)

Heidi La Paglia Reid is an Autistic and disabled, mum, feminist, rights advocate and policy consultant based in Lutruwita/Tasmania. She has worked nationally and internationally to advance the rights of women with disabilities through research, policy, and systems advocacy. Heidi brings personal and professional experience to her work and has extensive policy experience in a number of policy areas including disability rights, gender equity, and violence prevention. Heidi worked as the policy director at Women With Disabilities Australia for a number of years and in 2023, started her own consultancy business. In all of her work, Heidi advocates for deep community engagement and has a drive to transform systems in a way that breaks down intersectional discrimination.



Arman Abrahamzadeh OAM

Co-Founder, Zahra Foundation Australia (Australia)

Arman Abrahamzadeh is a DV prevention advocate and an experienced Board Director, having served on a number of advisory committees and NFP Boards in SA including Zahra Foundation Australia, of which he is also a Co-Founder. As an advocate for the prevention of family and domestic violence, Arman speaks on the topic of healthy relationships and early warning signs in abusive relationships at schools, workplaces, prisons and conferences. Arman was elected as a Councillor in the City of Adelaide in 2018 and served as the Deputy Lord Mayor in 2022. In addition to his work in community housing and the City of Adelaide, Arman is also a member of the Advisory Group to the SA Royal Commission into Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence.



Lula Dembele

General Manager, Lived Experience and Co-Production, Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand (Australia)

Lula is a strategic policy entrepreneur driving national change through thought leadership, research, and lived experience advocacy. Lula's work has influenced gender equality, national security and domestic violence policy, and systems reform, leading to major government and sector shifts. Lula is a trusted advisor and speaker, who has co-founded national survivor-led initiatives and secured over \$25 million for women's recovery programs. Her leadership has seen a growing national focus on understanding and reducing the perpetration of domestic, family, and sexual violence. In 2024, Lula joined Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand as their inaugural General Manager for Lived Experience and Co-Production.



Cecilia McKenzie

Wiradjuri Woman | Policy and Engagement Leader | Lived Experience Advocate | Singer (Australia)

Cecilia McKenzie is a proud Wiradjuri woman and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy and Engagement Manager at Domestic Violence NSW. A survivor and advocate, she brings lived experience and culture to her work, championing healing, self-determination, centering hope and a deep commitment to systemic change. Cecilia has worked across state borders to influence policy, improve service responses, and amplify the voices of Aboriginal women impacted by Domestic Violence in particular coercive control—particularly in regional and remote communities. She is known for her deep listening, courageous storytelling, and commitment to justice. A professional vocalist, singing is where Cecilia goes to heal and reset. Through music and story, she connects with culture, community, and self. She lives on a rural property in the Southern Tablelands with her husband and daughters, grounded in family, purpose, and hope.



Dr Ann O'Neill AO

PhD. Int Hlth., from Soul Stuff. Motivational Speaker, Counsellor, Lived Experience/Academic Educator, Mentor, Coach & Facilitator (Australia)

Dr. Ann O'Neill AO is an award-winning social worker, academic, and internationally respected advocate for those affected by violence and trauma. In 1994, Ann survived an unimaginable act of family violence that took the lives of her two young children and left her with life-altering injuries. Rather than being defined by this tragedy, Ann chose to dedicate her life to helping others navigate and recover from trauma. She went on to earn a PhD in Social Work and founded angelhands, a not-for-profit organisation supporting victims of serious violence and homicide. Through her research, teaching, and public speaking, Ann has become a powerful voice for healing, justice, and systemic change. In recognition of her extraordinary contributions to the Australian community, she was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia, has received the John Curtin Medal, and was inducted into the Western Australian Women's Hall of Fame.



Julie Oberin AM

Conference Chair, Program Advisory Group Co-chair, Wesnet Board member, GNWS Board Member, CEO Annie North (Australia)

Julie has worked in the anti-violence against women sector for 35 years. She is the Chief Executive Officer of Annie North Inc. a women's refuge and domestic violence service based in central Victoria, and current Board member of WESNET after many years as National Chair. She is a founding member of the Global Network of Women's Shelters.

In June 2021, Julie was awarded a Member (AM) of the Order of Australia "For significant services to women and children experiencing family violence". In 2024, she was inducted into the Victorian Honours Roll of Women for her work supporting women and children who have experienced family violence. Julie is recognised for over three decades of leadership in innovative and good practice responses to women and children experiencing violence and over this time has presented at numerous national and international conferences, including at the Commission for the Status of Women at United Nations Headquarters in New York. Within Australia she has advised many governments and inquiries on policy responses to gender-based violence. Julie is passionate about educating the community about the drivers of gender-based violence so that everyone can contribute to the social change needed to prevent it.



Aleid van den Brink

Chair of the GNWS Foundation in the Hague, the Netherlands and First Vice-president of GREVIO (expert group for the monitoring of the Istanbul Convention of the Council of Europe) and GNWS Board member (Netherlands)

Aleid has dedicated her professional life to governing various institutions committed to combating domestic violence against women, children – and also men. Her retirement as CEO of 'Blijf Groep' in 2018, has not ended her deeply rooted connection to the causes she has been supporting. As an independent expert new possibilities have arisen. For example a publication on current attitudes towards partner violence in the Netherlands. The honorable membership of GREVIO, an expert group at the Council of Europe, since September 2018 has allowed Aleid to employ many aspects of her expertise for the greater good. She has been involved in the Global Network of Women's Shelters since 2008, currently as the chair of the GNWS Foundation in the Hague, the Netherlands.

University skilled in social sciences, Aleid has always tried to continue staying in direct contact with the victims of domestic violence seeking shelter and support, predominantly women and children. Listening to what they had to tell has kept me alert, and open to the real problems. Whether or not explicitly presented. The women and children she met during the past decades are her true inspiration. Their problems must be solved, in the most effective way. To her creating the most effective way means creating high quality, innovative and sustainable organisational frameworks.



Maha Abdo OAM

CEO, Muslim Women Australia (Australia)

Maha Krayem Abdo OAM is a passionate advocate for social justice and serves as the CEO of Muslim Women Australia (MWA). Under Maha's leadership, MWA provides advocacy, policy advice, community development and domestic violence support for women and children for women from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds. Maha knows the migrant experience firsthand having moved from Lebanon to Australia with her family in the 1960s.

Maha's work has helped provide new arrivals and other women with safety and assurance. She also works at a local, national and international level to advise governments on policy, services and strategies for Muslim and non-Muslim women. A trained social worker, Maha's contributions to human rights, equality and community cohesion have been recognised through numerous awards.



REGIONAL REPORT BACKS: MEMBERS of the GNWS BOARD from AROUND the GLOBE

Connect. Challenge. Change.



MC: DR EMMA FULU

EUROPE: MARCELLA PIRRONE

RICH DISCUSSIONS → Technology → Limited ACCESS to shelters → **VULNERABILITIES**

NON DISCRIMINATORY FUNDING → **CUTS** → New Competition → "A POLITICAL ACT" → OUR ROOTS! → INTERSECTIONAL

WORK HOUSING → CHILD CARE → Storytelling

NORTH AMERICA: ANURADHA DUGAL

PREVENTION • ENABLERS • INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP → SHELTER MOVEMENT → OVERBURDENED → JUSTICE & SOLIDARITY → FEMINIST → Messaging: UNITY

OVER 50 FIRST NATIONS → x Climate → x Housing → GBV ↑

ASIA: DR PAN AY-WOAN

OBSTACLES: COVID19 PREVENTION = WEAK → Technology Facilitated → Shelter standards → HOPE

PROGRESS: JAPAN: AGE of CONSENT ↑ → Penal code updated → SRI LANKA: SUPPORT for gender equality

AFRICA: DR ZUBEDA DANGOR

NO MENA VOICES → "NO SURVIVOR of VIOLENCE is LEFT BEHIND" → WARS in AFRICA → TRAVEL BARRIERS → VISAS withheld → UNDERMINES INCLUSIVITY → STRENGTH in DIVERSITY → Safety, dignity & RIGHTS of WOMEN

OCEANIA: MARGARET AUGERINOS, EMILY PAPA & THERESA TOKAN

AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND: USE our VOICE → "professionalisation" → PASIFIKA countries: Need greater SPACE for US → FUNDING → SELF DETERMINATION → CHANGE MAKERS → Victim survivors at the CENTRE → Children → Building MOMENTUM

LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN: DIANA VAZQUEZ BRAVO

Celebrate our RESILIENCE → ORGANISED CRIME → We provide CARE... FUNDING or NO FUNDING → VOICE of THOUSANDS → "Ordinary people doing EXTRAORDINARY things"

LACK of recognition of OUR EXPERTISE → BUDGET should be with US → WE SAVE LIVES

5th World Conference of Women's Shelters
15-18 Sept 2025 • Sydney, Australia

HOSTED BY:

#5WCWS



GRAPHIC RECORDING by EMMA ROWLAND @ROWLAND_STUDIO

About our artist

SARETTA FIELDING

Saretta Fielding is an award-winning Aboriginal artist of the Wonnarua Nation located in the Hunter Valley NSW. Saretta's unique art style combining traditional symbolism and storytelling alongside contemporary artform, and colour palette is fast becoming recognised nationally and internationally. Her flair for interpreting natural elements and mediums demonstrate her passion for country, instantly grabbing one's attention, inviting the viewer to savour, connect and share in the rich and alive culture of Aboriginal Australia. Saretta loves the challenge of conveying to others, through art, how she is influenced by people, life experiences and nature's beauty.



www.saretta.com.au

Saretta showcased a live art installation during the 2-hour Welcome Reception held on Monday 15 September from 5:00-7:00pm. Through this work, she highlighted the elements that have been prominent through the entire Conference promotion and bring these together in one amazing piece of art.

Saretta also had a pop-up stall in the Exhibition from Monday 5:00pm through to Wednesday 4:10pm for those who would want to meet Saretta and purchase authentic Australian designed products.

CONFERENCE LOGO

This logo depicts the 5WCWS to be held in Sydney, Australia.

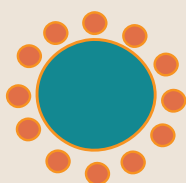
Women on country are reflected through traditional symbols, highlighting women through people imagery alongside the coolamon (a traditional wooden bowl used by women as gatherers). The women are connected, hand in hand, highlighting collaboration and protection. This is also depicted through a traditional gathering circle of women, placing a spotlight on Sydney. The traditional sun acknowledges the country and the many nations attending the Conference.

The colour palette depicts blue from Sydney beaches, sun and sand and outback colours for Australia.

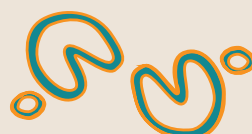


SYMBOL MEANINGS

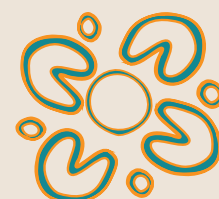
5WCWS Sun



Women Connection & Collaboration



Gathering Circle



Social impact

FIRST NATIONS LEGACY

For the first time ever at a world conference for women's shelters, 5WCWS brought together First Nations representatives from around the world, with the purpose of connecting them globally and understanding their experiences and needs. Wesnet felt this was really important as 3 in 5 First Nations Women in Australia have experienced physical or sexual violence and are 34 times more likely than other women to be hospitalised due to family violence. This is mirrored in many other First Nation populations around the globe. Solidarity across the world will ensure their voice is heard. Led by the First



Nations Working Team: our initiatives covered:

- Creating the First Nations Lounge as a safe space to meet and be with other First Nations women.
- A First Nations pre-Conference workshop entitled "Holding our stories, strengthening our shelters: Indigenous women leading change in safety, healing, and knowledge sharing".
- A traditional Welcome to Country was held at the Opening Ceremony by Aunty Lola Ryan.
- Professor Kyllie Cripps, a proud Palawa woman, Director of the Monash Indigenous Studies Centre, and Chief Investigator at the ARC Centre of Excellence for the Elimination of Violence Against Women (CEVAW), delivered the opening First Nations keynote.
- A concurrent session was held the final day of the Conference and a Call to Action was presented by Jenny Holmes (Women and Girls Emergency Centre) at the closing ceremony, which was special and authentic.
- Australian Indigenous food was showcased at the Welcome Reception where we had "Tastes of Australia" as the theme.



- Dr Shellie Morris AO, singer/songwriter and Yanyuwa and Wardaman woman, sang two songs at the Opening Ceremony, then conducted 2 workshops for First Nations delegates to collaborate and create a song, later performing the song as a Choir (with Shellie leading) at the Closing Ceremony.
- Our designer of the 5WCWS logo and theming was Saretta Fielding, an award-winning Aboriginal artist of the Wonnarua Nation located in the Hunter Valley NSW.
- Study tours were dedicated to the indigenous culture through Tribal Warrior.
- Scholarships were offered to Australian and other First Nations women to attend.
- Scholarships were offered to rural Australian First Nations women to attend.



OCEANIA LEGACY

Parts of the Oceania region has one of the highest rates of domestic and sexual violence in the world, and to date there has been little engagement of shelter networks from the Pacific and Papua New Guinea in the Global Network of Women's Shelters. With the 5WCWS being held in the southern hemisphere for the first time and also in Oceania this provided an opportunity to connect the shelter movement across the last remaining region. With the support of the Australian Government (DFAT), UN Women, and Deakin University, the largest number of delegates from the Pacific and PNG were able to attend the world shelter conference for the first time. The conference allowed for connections between nations in the region and across the world. Networks that will provide peer support, guidance on best practice, and a sense of community across the different countries was created.

At a post Conference webinar, the attendees expressed gratitude, shared their learnings from the Conference and shared information about their new networks across borders. Wesnet has encouraged any national shelter network in pacific region nations to consider joining the GNWS interim board, or at the very least, join GNWS announcement list so they can connect globally and keep up to date with what is being planned for other events. Other opportunities to connect in the region are being planned.

Sustainability

Recognising the role climate change occurrences have historically resulted in spikes in domestic violence and that globally, climate change disproportionately impacts women, 5WCWS took action to be a more mindful and environmentally conscious event.



We worked closely with both ICC Sydney and our Professional Conference Organiser (ICMSA) to ensure a broad environmental sustainability strategy.

Initiatives which were implemented:

- Digital promotions to reduce paper waste.
- Provided eco-friendly delegate satchels, gifts, onsite programs.
- Used green décor and sustainable materials sourced locally for any theming/staging.
- Implemented zero-waste practices with reusable or compostable utensils, plates and coffee cups. Also, ethical catering practices with ICC Sydney and offsite social event venues where possible.
- Communicated green travel methods with attendees, noting the various public transport connections available a short walk from ICC Sydney.
- ICC Sydney set up recycling stations throughout the venue with signage to minimise waste. All bins during the event were divided into streams, with separate sections utilised for organics, co-mingled recycling and general waste. Soft plastics and coffee cups were also recycled individually.
- Through ICC Sydney and offsite social events, we donated excess event food where possible.
- We created a First Nations' Lounge/Space which featured interactive green spaces with a touch of nature.
- We used biodegradable materials for signage and digital where possible.
- We provided accurate numbers for catering to reduce overproduction of food.



#5WCWS

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