

GEE LONG
ARTS CENTRE
GENDER EQUALITY
ACTION PLAN
2021-2025

JULY '23



geelong
arts
centre

WELCOME TO COUNTRY

The Geelong Arts Centre acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land we live and work on, the Wadawurrung People of the Kulin Nation. We pay our respects to their Elders past, to Elders present and to emerging leaders, recognizing their continuing connection to land, water, culture and community.

CONTENTS

Message from the CEO	2
Our Vision	3
Priority 1	9
Priority 2	13
Priority 3	17

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

It is with great pleasure that I present to you the Geelong Arts Centre’s Gender Equality Action Plan 2021–2025.

Gender equality in the workplace will be achieved when all our staff and community are able to access and enjoy equal rewards, resources, and opportunities, regardless of their gender and background. The Geelong Arts Centre has made considerable progress towards gender equity in the workplace, however we know there is much more we can do.

We have outlined three key priority areas for our organisation that we will work to embed by 2025.

- 1 The application of inclusive and bias-free practices when assessing our talent pool to achieve a gender-balanced workforce with pay equity, while also striving to have a workforce that is increasingly representative of the local community.
- 2 An organisational policy and workforce planning framework that aligns with the expectations of a contemporary inclusive workplace.
- 3 Zero tolerance for sexism, discrimination, bullying and sexual harassment, with all staff empowered to recognise, address and respond to it.

Our Gender Equality Action Plan outlines a range of objectives and targeted strategies that we will implement to achieve gender equality in the workplace.

The Geelong Arts Centre is committed to leading the way when it comes to gender equality and preventing violence against women and minority groups in our community.

This Gender Equality Action Plan aligns with our Strategic Plan 2022–2025, our People and Culture Plan 2022–2025 and our Workforce Plan 2022–2025. Collectively, these important strategic frameworks will enhance the attraction, development and retention of an inclusive, high performing and engaged workforce that will continue to deliver outstanding services to our community.

Joel McGuinness
Chief Executive Officer

OUR VISION



OUR VISION

The Geelong Arts Centre aspires to achieve equal representation, recognition, reward, and value of staff, irrespective of gender.

Purpose
The Gender Equity Action Plan offers an understanding of the barriers to diversity and inclusion and uses this understanding to introduce meaningful actions to address gender inequities for staff. The Plan seeks to address the additive effect of gender intersecting with other inequities and the impact this has on staff development, career progression and job satisfaction.

Geelong Arts Centre has considered the gender equality principles (principles) contained in the Gender Equality Act 2020 in the development of this Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP).

Geelong Arts Centre is committed to upholding these principles, which have been used to inform the strategies and measures contained within this GEAP.

During development of our GEAP, we considered women’s historical experiences of discrimination and disadvantages based on sex and gender, and prepared strategies to promote equal opportunity for women and gender-diverse staff.

Geelong Arts Centre has also considered intersectional gender inequality in the development of the GEAP. We are committed to taking action to address how gender inequality can interact with other inequities by:

- analysing our workplace gender audit data to identify systemic barriers to access, inclusion and equity for people who experience intersectional gender inequality
- identifying areas for improved intersectional data collection
- consulting with and incorporating feedback from staff who have experienced intersectional gender inequality in daily life, in the development of the GEAP
- developing strategies and measures to specifically address how gender inequality affects diverse staff who face more than one type of inequality.

Where intersectionality has not been measured out of respect for employee privacy, we have nevertheless worked to build capacity when it comes to addressing intersectional gender inequalities experienced by our employees.

OUR VISION

Context — The Case For Change
Data from our Workplace Gender Audit, 2021, demonstrates our commitment to gender equity with a balance of genders across all levels of the organisation from coordinator and manager level, through to directors and the Trust. This Gender Equality Action Plan 2021-2025 outlines the strategies and measures for promoting gender equality in the workplace of the Geelong Arts Centre, based on the results of the workplace gender audit. The Plan states the key actions we will take over the next five years to build on our commitments to sustaining an equitable and diverse workplace, in which our policies, buildings, workforce planning, and procedures reflect our goals for best practice.

Geelong Arts Centre sees gender inclusivity and diversity as a key contributor to success, celebrating and supporting women and gender diverse people, including those with intersectional characteristics. In practice this means that we are aware of gender diversity, and all other aspects of a person's identity and how it can expose them to overlapping forms of discrimination and marginalisation. Consideration of identity characteristics will be made during any planning, policy development and undertakings made by the organisation. Taking into account all aspects of identity when looking at gender, addresses instances where women and gender diverse people could otherwise be marginalised due to other factors, such as race, nationality, sexual orientation, and/or disability. Knowing that people with multiple intersectional characteristics are at the highest risk of discrimination, it is important to us that we acknowledge and address this in our Gender Equality Action Plan.

Intersectional Gender Inequality
A key consideration that underpinned the creation of the Geelong Arts Centre Gender Equality Action Plan was the intersectionality of gender equality. Geelong Arts Centre is committed to providing a safe and inclusive workplace for all. In particular, the Geelong Arts Centre maintains a diverse workforce with a mix of ages and people from different backgrounds. For this action plan to be most effective it has considered ethnicity and age-related factors that are present in our workforce to combat the increased discrimination experienced by these inter-sectional communities.

Principles of Gender Equality Act (2020)
This plan meets the requirements of public sector organisations, around the six gender equality principles of the Gender Equality Act (2020):

- Principle #1.1** Gender equality benefits all Victorians;
- Principle #1.2** Gender equality is a human right and precondition to social justice;
- Principle #1.3** Gender equality brings significant economic, social and health benefits to Victorians;
- Principle #1.4** Gender equality is a precondition to preventing violence against women and girls;
- Principle #2** Advancing gender equality is a shared responsibility across the Victorian community;
- Principle #3** All human beings, regardless of gender, should be free to live their lives without being limited by gender stereotypes, roles or prejudices;
- Principle #4** Gender inequality can be compounded by other forms of disadvantage or discrimination;
- Principle #5** Women have historically experienced discrimination and disadvantage on the basis of sex and gender
- Principle #6** Special measures may be necessary to achieve gender equality.

Each of these principles was incorporated into the consultation phase of the process as a preliminary statement to the group interviews and individual consultations that were undertaken. They were revisited in the planning stage, prior to creating this GEAP.

OUR VISION

Meaningful Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder engagement and consultation in the development of the Geelong Arts Centre Gender Equality Action Plan was conducted in a number of ways. The People Matter Survey was completed and available in June 2021, with 41 responses received. The People Matter Survey allowed all employees the opportunity to provide feedback around their experiences and perceptions of gender equality in the workplace. Feedback from this survey has been incorporated into the framing of our priority areas, as well as the Centre’s People and Culture Plan. Subsequently, all staff of the Centre were provided with the opportunity to give feedback on a draft of the Centre’s proposed Gender Equality Action Plan, as were the Geelong Performing Arts Centre Trust members and the Centre’s Staff Consultative Committee members. Consultation took place with People and Culture leading discussions with staff who were interested in giving feedback, allowing for brainstorming and comparison to best practice within the arts.

Consultation with our staff has led us to review policies and processes with a new lens, looking at work practices such as working flexibly and finding ways to promote inclusive practices to our staff. Flexible work arrangements are now more accessible than ever and we are working with our managers to ensure a consistent approach, which is particularly important for staff with caring responsibilities, many of whom are women.

Union representatives were involved in the Centre’s 2020 Enterprise Agreement bargaining process, which highlighted key gender-related activities such as, parental leave arrangements and support for victims of family violence. While this agreement sets the minimum standard that employees are entitled to, most staff are not aware of the support that has been arranged on their behalf. Thus, an important component of our GEAP is in communication and promoting the benefits that were agreed upon during consultation. Additionally, as per the 2020 Enterprise Agreement, we have a staff consultative committee that meets four times per year.

Leadership and Resourcing

The Geelong Arts Centre’s Gender Equality Action Plan 2021-2025 (GEAP) aims to promote gender equality within our workforce and improve outcomes for people of all genders.

Under the Gender Equality Act 2020 (Vic), Geelong Arts Centre is required to ensure adequate resources are invested to implement the GEAP. Properly resourcing the implementation of the GEAP is critical to delivering on our commitments to staff and meeting our obligation under the Act to make reasonable and material progress towards workplace gender equality.

Several actions identified in the GEAP include participation of employees from across the business in activities to raise awareness, knowledge, and skill development. We are currently forming a Diversity and Inclusion Working Group, which we have asked for expressions of interest for. The delivery of this plan will be overseen by the Centre’s Diversity and Inclusion Working Group and resourced through the People and Culture team.

The Geelong Arts Centre has allocated an annual budget and resources to support delivery of GEAP actions that have a cost as part of the training and development budget. A significant number of actions within the GEAP will be delivered by our Diversity and Inclusion Working Group, supported by our People and Culture team.

OUR VISION

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Geelong Arts Centre Gender Equality Action Plan outlines a range of goals and strategies which will be undertaken over the next four years. Actions will include work to be undertaken by the Centre or in partnership with stakeholders and will be reviewed and updated annually, with progress managed by the Gender Equality Diversity and Inclusion (GEDI) Working Group. The Gender Equality Action Plan and information showing progress against actions will be publicly available from the Centre’s website and on our internal staff intranet.

The Geelong Arts Centre will develop an evaluation framework designed to ensure we continuously reflect on and learn from the work undertaken for the Gender Equality Action Plan. Evaluation will be based on questions, such as the following examples:

- Has this project achieved the desired change?
- Is this project having the influence we expected?
- Have we done what we said we would do?
- What worked well and what needs improvement?
- How effective is our planning?

Success of this plan will also be measured through staff surveys that assess responses to the following questions on a Linkert scale:

- All people, regardless of gender, are accepted at Geelong Arts Centre
- First nations and culturally diverse women have an equal opportunity to obtain employment and succeed at Geelong Arts Centre
- My organisation has displayed an ongoing commitment to gender equality
- My organisation is working to minimize the impact of gender stereotypes, roles, or prejudices against women

Additionally, staff surveys will gain qualitative feedback that explores continuous improvement through responses to the following questions:

- In what ways could Geelong Arts Centre better address gender discrimination?
- Do you believe that Geelong Arts Centre is a good employer for all?

PRIORITY 1



PRIORITY 1

Geelong Arts Centre continues to apply inclusive and bias-free practices when assessing talent pools, recruiting, and assessing staff for promotion, to achieve a gender-balanced and diverse workforce, with pay and opportunity equity. Provide flexible working options to support inclusivity and diversity.

Indicator	Objective	Strategy	Leads	Timeline	Measure
Recruitment and promotion practices in the workplace	Make Geelong Arts Centre an attractive option for candidates of all genders and intersectionality	Include flexible working options in job listings, to promote attraction of all genders and intersectionality.	People and Culture Officer	Dec 2022	All current job listings updated
		All employment listing to include Geelong Arts Centre values statement relating to being a diversity employer, encouraging applications from all genders, cultures and LGBTIQ+ community.	Manager Marketing	Jun 2023	All current job listings updated
		Consider balance of gender, age and intersectional composition who meet selection criteria, when employing new staff. Consider gender-balance of interviewers and interviewees on recruitment panels. Awareness of challenging gender-biased views of merit of candidates, to allow fair evaluation of all genders	Manager People and Culture	Dec 2022	Balance of candidates and interviewees in selection processes
		Promotion of recruitment opportunities through community networks to attract a balance of candidates from different communities, including First Nations, LGBTIQ+, and disability groups.	People and Culture Officer	Dec 2023	Employment opportunities advertised through relevant networks
Gender pay equity	Remove gender pay gap	Create a remuneration review process with clear criteria for assessment and an objective process for review. Consider gender pay differences when hiring new staff.	Manager People and Culture	June 2023	Renumeration review process created.

PRIORITY 1

Indicator	Objective	Strategy	Leads	Timeline	Measure
Leave and flexible working	Promote and provide support for parental leave for all genders, family violence leave, transition leave, and carers leave	Ensure that there are opportunities for all staff to work flexibly and have access to meaningful work, with the same access to benefits, training and promotional opportunities.	CEO, ELT, Manager People and Culture	Dec 2023	Creation of flexible working toolkit and resources for staff and managers.
		Support carers in graduated return to work following parental leave and flexibility around caring responsibilities, to minimise disruption to career progress.			
		Reviewing and adapting positions to meet different personal requirements, throughout employee lifecycle.			
		Ensure professional development opportunities are afforded to all staff, including those working flexibly or part-time.			
		Provision and promotion of parental leave, family violence leave, and carers leave to all genders.	Manager People and Culture	Dec 2022	Information posted on staff intranet and promoted via email.
		Inclusion of transition leave in the Enterprise Agreement, to give staff access to paid leave and minimise career disruption whilst undergoing gender transition.	Manager People and Culture	Dec 2022	Transition leave included in Enterprise Agreement.

PRIORITY 2



PRIORITY 2

All policies, procedures, resources and workforce planning to be maintained in line with gender equity goals. Facilities updated to align with policy objectives, ensuring an inclusive workspace.

Indicator	Objective	Strategy	Leads	Timeline	Measure
Gender composition at all levels of governing bodies	Leadership commitment to gender and intersectionality equality	Trust, CEO, Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and Manager People and Culture (PnC) to act as champions for gender equality through role-modeling and communications to staff.	Trust, CEO, ELT	Jun 2022	Added as an agenda item on ELT Meetings on a quarterly basis. Added to Trust meeting agenda as required.
		Maintain policies, procedures, strategy, and workforce planning in line with gender equality indicators.	Policy owners	Dec 2025	All policies reviewed.
	Leadership commitment to cultural safety	Create a culturally safe and diverse workplace through actions informed by the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) and consultation with the First Nations Advisory Group, including informing inclusive recruitment and work practices.	First Nations Advisory Group	Dec 2024	RAP actions undertaken.
		Building connections across communities to improve networks within the community and nurture ongoing relationships to inform change, such as LGBTIQ+ communities, culturally diverse communities, and the disability sector.	ELT, Managers	Dec 2025	RAP actions undertaken.
		Zero tolerance bullying and harassment training.	Manager People and Culture	Dec 2023	Annual training plan includes harassment training.
		Continue to provide gender neutral choices in staff uniforms, supporting individual choices.	People and Culture Officer	Dec 2024	Gender neutral uniform choices available to staff.

PRIORITY 2

Indicator	Objective	Strategy	Leads	Timeline	Measure
Gender composition at all levels of governing bodies	Appropriate use of gender inclusive language and diverse images in all policies, procedures, and communications	Ensure language and imagery in Geelong Arts Centre policy documentation, front of house announcements, and promotional material is inclusive of all genders, intersectional groups and the LGBTIQ+ community.	Manager Marketing, Manager People and Culture	Dec 2024	Create a policy to ensure gender inclusive language and imagery.
		Education and promotion of appropriate use of pronouns and identity.	Manager People and Culture	Dec 2024	All staff training completed. Pronouns on email signatures for staff who choose to disclose this.
	Gender equality targets to inform workforce planning and support all genders to access career succession	Aim for gender balance and intersectional representation in new leadership, executive and management roles. Support women and gender diverse staff to access career succession planning.	CEO, Manager People and Culture	Jun 2024	Workforce plan includes career succession opportunities for all genders.
		Training and support for women and gender diverse staff to grow and access senior positions.	Manager People and Culture	Jun 2025	Annual training plan includes leadership training for all genders.
		Promote opportunities for women and gender diverse people to be spokespeople, with involvement in committees, boards and networks.	CEO, Manager People and Culture	Dec 2025	Staff of all genders part of committees, boards and/or networks.

PRIORITY 2

Indicator	Objective	Strategy	Leads	Timeline	Measure
Gendered segregation within the workplace	Improve facilities to make workspaces inclusive for all genders at different life stages and with different intersectionality.	Creation of non-gendered and accessible bathrooms, and breastfeeding and family rooms for staff and patrons.	Director Operations and Experience	Dec 2023	New facility operational.
		Review safety protocols to ensure all staff regardless of gender or identity, are safe at all times, including opening and closing the building after hours.	Director Operations and Experience, Manager People and Culture	Jun 2024	All staff trained in safety protocols.

PRIORITY 3



PRIORITY 3

Zero tolerance for discrimination, bullying and sexual harassment, with staff educated and trained in recognising, reporting and addressing incidents. Regular surveying and collection of data to assess and monitor against objectives.

Indicator	Objective	Strategy	Leads	Timeline	Measure
Gender Impact Assessment monitoring and reporting	Provide gender impact reporting	Gender and intersectionality data collected during onboarding and throughout the employee lifecycle on a voluntary basis to respect confidentiality and personal preferences.	Manager People and Culture, People and Culture Officer	Jun 2025	Data collection updated as part of new onboarding processes.
Workplace sexual harassment	Maintain a workplace free from sexual harassment, bullying and discrimination	Develop a one-page flowchart to explain to staff how to speak up about inappropriate behaviour and to encourage reporting. Review relevant policies as part of reviewing speak up process.	Manager People and Culture	Jun 2022	Speak up flowchart available to all staff on intranet
	Develop and launch wellbeing campaigns supporting women and intersectionality	Develop and implement an annual program of activities and events to build awareness of gender equality and intersectional factors, including International Women's Day and LGBTIQA+ festivals and events, and significant cultural events informed by RAP.	Manager People and Culture, First Nations Advisory Group	Jun 2023	Wellbeing calendar published on intranet

81 Ryrie Street
Geelong Victoria 3220
PO Box 991
Geelong Victoria 3220

P 1300 251 200

geelongartscentre.org.au

