

\$3.032 million funding awarded in the 2016 Grants Funding Round

We are pleased to announce that the Victorian Legal Services Board provided \$3.032 million in funding to sixteen projects

The projects funded through the 2016 Grants Funding Round are detailed below. More information can be found on the Grants page of the Board [website](#).

- **Friends of Castlemaine Library (\$45,000 over 2.5 years)**
Read-Along Dads and literacy programs
- **Loddon Campaspe Community Legal Centre (\$571,282 over 3 years)**
Tipping the Scales – Improving justice outcomes in Central Goldfields through collective impact
- **Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service Co-operative Limited (\$133,000 over 1 year)**
Your life, Your choice
- **Monash University (\$104,638 over 1.5 years)**
Improving educational outcomes for children with disability in Victoria
- **Deakin University (\$23,886 over 1.5 years)**
Evaluating the effectiveness of the new mechanisms in the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
- **Springvale Monash Legal Service Inc. (\$276,927 over 2 years)**
Sporting Change
- **Inclusion Melbourne (\$38,830 over 1 year)**
The Right to be Heard: Providing Equal Access To the Law for People with Cognitive and Communicative Impairment
- **Victorian Bar Incorporated (\$53,818 over 1 year)**
Duty Barrister' Scheme Online Portal
- **Federation University Australia (\$57,270 over 2 years)**
What are the support and communication requirements of people with complex communication needs when interacting with the criminal and civil justice system?
- **Banyule Community Health (\$366,890 over 3 years)**
Yarning Up Law
- **Swinburne University of Technology (\$47,893 over 1 year)**
Effective judicial supervision of offender rehabilitation project
- **Jesuit Social Services (\$387,800 over 3 years)**
Best Practice in Recidivism Reduction through improving access to education, training and employment – An Action Research Project

- **Justice Connect (\$412,657 over 3 years)**
Not-for-profit Law – supporting long-term sustainability of Victorian community organisations.
- **Social Security Rights (\$72,500 over 1 year)**
Profiling high risk social security recipients for specialist assistance
- **Yarra Ranges Community Legal Centre (\$399,306 over 2 year)**
Enhancing MABLES Project
- **Victoria University (\$40,000 over 1 year)**
Law and Courts in an Online World.

UPDATE FROM THE GRANTS PROGRAM

Health-Justice Partnership Projects

Health Justice Partnerships (or HJPs) integrate legal assistance as an integral element of the health care team. They require the development of a sophisticated partnership between the legal and health professions and their organisations to jointly address the health and social circumstances which often manifest in the form of legal needs.

Eight HJPs were funded as part of the Victorian Legal Services Board's 2014 Grants Program. Funding had previously been provided by the Board to four other HJPs and several have been funded since. There is significant diversity amongst the projects funded; the nature of the partnerships, the issues and the demographics targeted. Given the LAW Australia - wide survey¹ highlights that traditional models of lawyering have limited utility for people who are excluded, HJPs involves lawyers going to the places vulnerable people are likely to be and working with the non-legal professionals that they are likely to turn to, to assist in problem identification and resolution in a client centred way.

A report has been put together which focuses on the projects funded through the Board's 2014 Major Grants Round, which allocated \$2.6 million across 8 projects, and on an additional three projects that received funding outside this round which are also following this model. This report outlines the aims of the projects and provides a snapshot of outcomes and highlights in the first year of operation. Most projects have received multiyear funding.

In keeping with the Board's Grant program the project activities aim to create outcomes leading to improved laws and their administration, improved access and equity, improved legal services, and better informed and educated consumers of legal services.

Click image below for Health Justice Partnership Video.



Click image above for the full report.



¹ Coumarelos, C., MacCourt, D., People, J. McDonald, H.M., Wei, Z., Iriana, R. & Ramsey, S. (2012) *Access to Justice and Legal Needs: Legal Australia Wide Survey Legal Need in Australia*, (Sydney, Law and Justice Foundation of New South Wales). Available at: [http://www.lawfoundation.net.au/ljf/site/templates/LAW_AUS/\\$file/LAW_Survey_Australia.pdf](http://www.lawfoundation.net.au/ljf/site/templates/LAW_AUS/$file/LAW_Survey_Australia.pdf)

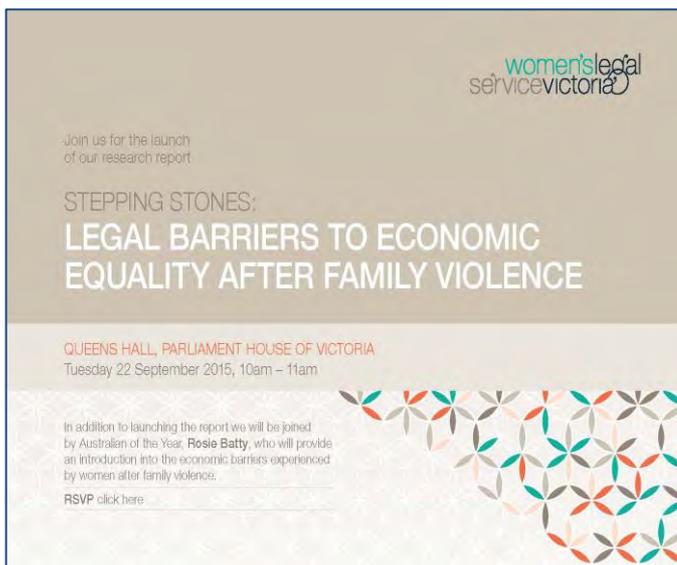
OUTCOMES OF PROJECTS FUNDED THROUGH THE GRANTS PROGRAM

Stepping Stone – Women’s Legal Service Victoria

In order to respond to the multiple and complex legal and financial issues that women fleeing family violence experience, the Stepping Stone Project was funded via the Grants program in 2013.

The project aimed to promote the economic well-being of women and their children when experiencing family violence and relationship breakdown. The project was in operation as of March 2014 to deliver legal and financial counselling services within a co-case management model and to publish a report which raises awareness of the issues women face and the systemic barriers that prevent recovery from economic well-being.

The Stepping Stones report was launched on Tuesday 22 September 2015. Australian of the Year, Rosie Batty, Chief Justice of the Family Court, the Hon. Diana Bryant AO the Hon. Martin Pakula MP and Michael McGarvie, CEO VLSB spoke at the launch and provided an introduction into the economic barriers experienced by women after family violence.



Click the image above for project and report details.

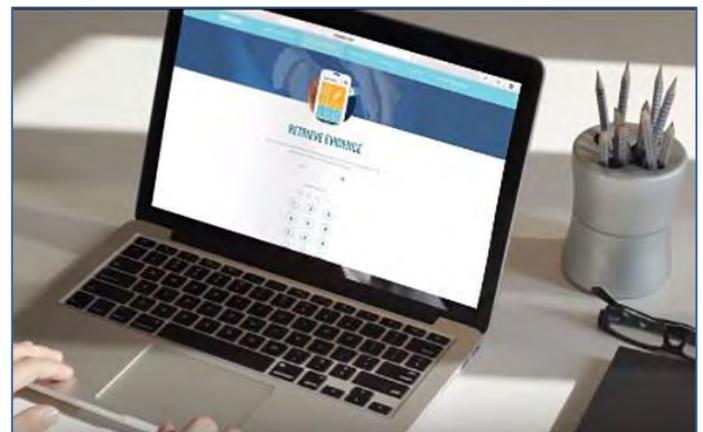
The Project raised awareness among some influential decision makers regarding changes sought to the **Family violence legal system**, in particular via the Project Research Coordinator (PRC) giving evidence at the Royal Commission into Family Violence. In its report released on 31st March 2016, the Commission adopted 11 of the 27 recommendations proposed in the Stepping Stones Report in some form.

Moreover, the project achieved the highest level of change in the **banking** sector where the PRC is now working with the Australian Banker’s Association, ANZ and the National Australia Bank (i.e. three of the five target organisations) to assist them develop family violence policies to better assist banking customers affected by family violence.

Family Violence App – Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria (DVRCV)

Congratulations! The SmartSafe+ App, by the DVRCV, has won the inaugural Victorian Premier’s iAward for Innovation at the Australian Information Industry Association Awards.

The project, **Improving legal intervention for technology-facilitated stalking: a mobile app**, was funded through 2013 Grants program. The SmartSafe+ App is designed to provide a practical resource to support women to safely collect quality evidence of family violence.



Click the image above for details of the App.

The App was developed collaboratively with the

Magistrates' Courts Victoria, Victoria Police, and legal, family violence and community services. *Premier Daniel Andrews said: "SmartSafe+ is a fantastic app helping to tackle family violence. It will save lives – and it's a fitting first winner of the Victorian Premier's iAward for Public Sector Innovation." [Pro Bono Australia](#)*

A purpose-built website <http://plus.smartsafe.org.au/> was also developed and runs alongside the App and 'pushes' updated information to the App. The App is accessed via this website to ensure users complete a safety assessment prior to downloading the App. Printed resources – a [pamphlet](#), [service provider manual](#) and [client cards](#) which are available for download via the [website](#).

Youth Community and Law Program (YCLP) – Youth Junction

This program has demonstrated a measureable impact on crime prevention for young adults in the Western Region. It is aiming to maximise the efforts by constructing a robust business case to up-scale the successful crime prevention approach for young adults facing matter in the Magistrates Court in Broadmeadows and the City of Melbourne.

The project, first funded via 2012 Major Grants round, secured an additional \$150,000 funding during the 2015 Grants Round to continue the work of the team at the Visy Cares Hub. Since the introduction of the program, it has enjoyed remarkable success with re-offending rate reduced to just 13%. The Courts have also recognised the success rate and its benefits, and are referring greater numbers of young people to the program.

Herald Sun published an article on the project: ["Youth Community and Law Program receives \\$150,000 grant from Victorian Legal Services Board"](#) (20 August 2015). It was also reported in Brimbank Leader, 18 August 2015, ["Program gets boost"](#).

The program was first featured on the ABC7.30 Report Victoria on 21 June 2013. *Click the image below to watch the video.*



Acting on the Warning Sign (AOWS) – Inner Melbourne Community Legal partner with Royal Women's Hospital

This project was first funded in 2011 and extended for a further two years in 2013. This partnership aims to empower and protect a significant number of Victorian women by providing legal assistance and training within the hospital setting. It was the first of its kind in a major, metropolitan hospital in Australia and now sees a lawyer on-site at the Women's five times per fortnight. This allows women to obtain free help from a lawyer while visiting the hospital. The project successfully combines health professional education, early intervention and outreach legal assistance into an integrated approach to patient care promoting the social model of health. The project has generated significant momentum and achieved whole-of-hospital support and improved legal access for vulnerable women.

The on-site legal service is complemented by the provision of training to health professionals to identify and respond to patients experiencing family violence. Over 370 staff have been trained at the Women's through this work.

An external evaluation of the Acting on the Warning Signs project conducted by the University of Melbourne showed that 98% of clinicians surveyed felt that the training was a positive learning experience.

Click on the image below to watch a video about the partnership with the Royal Women's Hospital



Establishing a Victorian model of health legal partnership in hospital – Michael Kirby Centre for Public Health

The project, funded through 2013 Major Grants Round, has been a successful collaboration between the Kirby Centre, Justice Connect, the Alfred Hospital and Maurice Blackburn.

A poster for the HeLP Patient Legal Clinic. The top half is white with the HeLP logo (H-eLP) in large black letters, with "PATIENT LEGAL CLINIC" in red below it, and "ALFRED HEALTH + MAURICE BLACKBURN" in black. The bottom half is red with white text. The main text reads "Need legal advice?". Below this, it says "Sometimes people admitted to hospital are also facing other serious concerns. This can include legal issues." and "Alfred Health and Maurice Blackburn Lawyers have partnered up to provide a free HeLP Patient Legal Clinic that will provide advice for patients with health-related legal issues." It also includes "To make an appointment speak to an Alfred Health staff member." and a quote: "We're dedicated to offering our patients extra help. Not just medical care, but legal help too." At the bottom left, it says "HeLP is a free service".

HeLP, a Patient Legal Clinic, is located in the Social Work Department of The Alfred Hospital and staffed by lawyers from the law firm Maurice Blackburn. Free legal assistance is available to any patient or next-of-kin for any legal matter related to a patient's health and reason for admission.

The HeLP was officially launched on 27 March 2014 by the Hon Michael Kirby. The project was also appeared in an article : "[Bedside legal aid for family violence victims at the Alfred](#)" (*Herald Sun* 20 May 2014)

Over 500 patients and / or their carers have been assisted by HeLP and with the 500th patient seen on 25 February 2016.

The evaluation paper, "[A hospital-based patient legal clinic](#)" by Liz Bishop, Hana Shahkhan and Bebe Loff, was also published in the *Journal of Law and Medicine*, March 2016.

Making the law work better for people affected by cancer – McCabe Centre for Law and Cancer

Supported by the Grants program in 2012, the McCabe Centre for Law and Cancer undertook consultation across regional and metropolitan Victoria on these areas: Financial support for transport and accommodation for cancer patients and carers in regional areas; Employment, including discrimination, access to workplace rights and returning to work; Discrimination in insurance; and Decision making at the end-of-life.

The first two reports titled *Making the law work better for people affected by cancer* were released in March 2014 and March 2015. The final report which built on the findings and recommendations from the previous two reports, focusing on six areas of law and policy that have key roles in experiences and outcome for people affected by cancer, their carers and health professionals.

Please click on the image below to download the 2015 Report. Previous reports could also be downloaded from here [2013 Report](#) and [2014 Report](#).



Making the law work better for
people affected by cancer

2015 Report



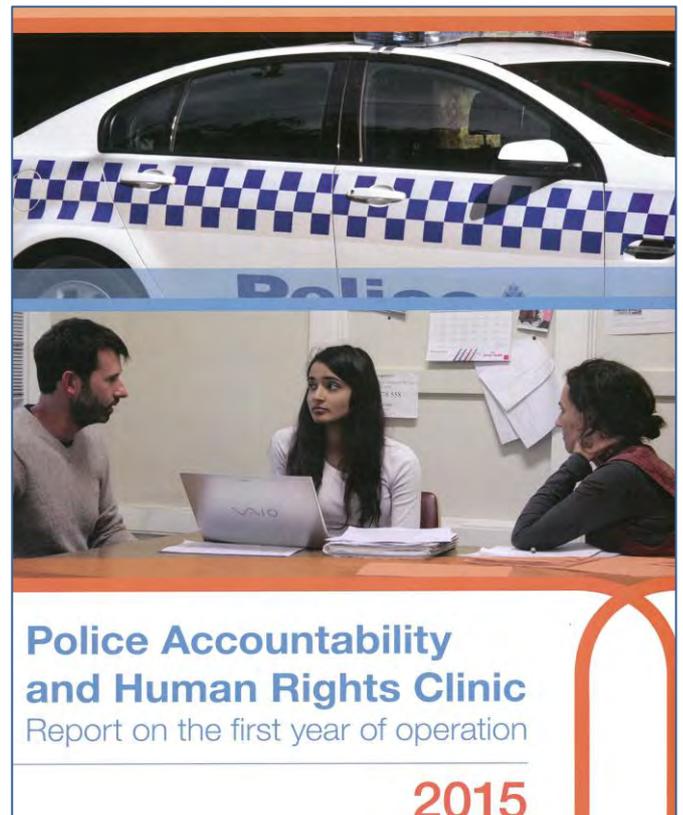
Police Accountability and Human Rights Clinic – Flemington Kensington and Human Rights Clinic (FKCLC)

Funded through 2015 Grants Round, the Flemington Kensington Community Legal Centre has formed a partnership with the Public Interest Law Initiative of Melbourne Law School to establish Victoria's first Police Accountability and Human Rights Clinic (the Clinic) to provide advice, referral, support and casework to victims of police misconduct.

The Clinic uses a premier model of clinical legal education to see victims of police misconduct from across Victoria and provides access to justice and seeks to enhance human rights and accountability outcomes.

Report on the first year of operation in 2015 is now available upon request. The report raises a number of concerns with the way complaints are currently investigated in Victoria in contrast to international obligations to effectively, transparently, promptly and independently investigate complaints regarding human rights abuses.

Please click image below to request full report and more details on the project and Clinic.



PROJECT LAUNCHES AND EVENTS

Supported decision-making and guardianship: building capacity within Victorian – Scope (Vic) Ltd

Funded via 2012 Grants Round, this project researched the decision-making needs of people with various cognitive disabilities who are likely to find themselves at VCAT for a Guardianship hearing.

It aimed to test and refine the new Supported Decision Making (SDM) model proposed in the revision of the *Guardianship Act*. It also developed and tested practical resources to support best practice SDM, and develop SDM protocols for the relevant parties.

The project has produced outstanding resource materials, both print and multimedia, for stakeholder groups upon its completion. The resource material is available online and through a short registration process, which will collect information about people so that they can be contacted about participating in the ongoing evaluation of the resources.

You are invited to



Dignity through decision-making support

You are cordially invited to the launch of **Decision Making Support: Building Capacity Within Victoria** – a series of evidence based educational resources about providing decision-making support to people with cognitive disability.

A partnership between Scope and Carers Victoria and funded by the Victorian Legal Services Board, through their major grants program, these resources are informed by a human rights perspective, promoting the dignity of decision-making to all.

Join us for the official launch and hear firsthand from carers about the development of the resources and what this means to them.

Date: Wednesday August 3rd 2016

Time: 2pm – 4pm

Location: Office of the Public Advocate
1/204 Lygon St
Carlton VIC 3053

RSVP by Wednesday July 27th 2016 to Robert Williams
at rwilliams@scopevic.org.au

Warm regards,

Dr Jennifer Fitzgerald, Scope Australia CEO
Caroline Mulcahy, Carers Victoria CEO



Please click image above to obtain copy of the resource material. A formal launch for the resource materials took place on Wednesday 3 August 2016. Key stakeholders, including people with disability and their families, were invited to attend the event.

The organisation has also submitted an abstract to present about the project and the resources that have been developed at the upcoming Adult Guardianship and Administration Council (AGAC; Sydney, October 2016). The abstract was submitted in collaboration with Carers Victoria and, if accepted, will be a joint presentation.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Grants recipients are encouraged to let us know about any news or upcoming events relating to their projects, so that we can include them in future issues of this bulletin. You can email your news to the Grants Team at grants@lsbc.vic.gov.au

To access the most up-to-date information about the Victorian Legal Services Board Grants Program, please visit our website at www.lsbc.vic.gov.au

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