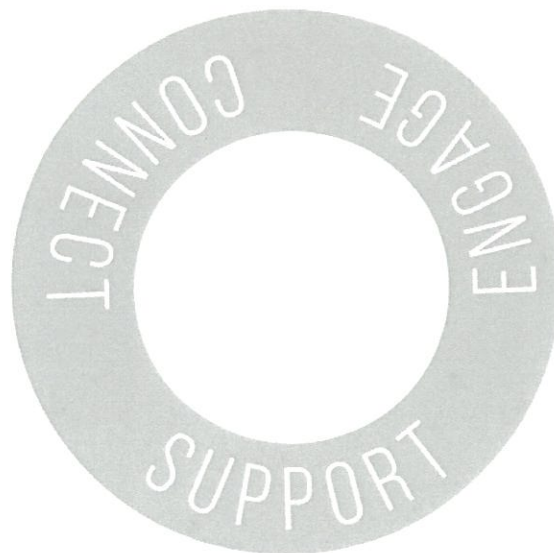
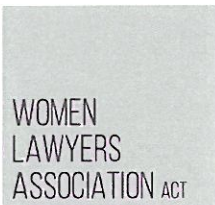


ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22





is proud to have built on the success of previous years in 2021/22, albeit with "COVID intervention". The first half of the financial year saw us consolidating our position and growing our strengths with a stable committee. We continue to see excellent initiatives from the subcommittees across the board.

We, along with our members, experienced many disappointments in 2021/22 as a result of the uncertainty we found ourselves living with. Once again, WLA ACT had grand plans to roll events out for the 2021/22 year, providing our members with opportunities to network and hear from leading women in the judiciary, government, private practice and academia, many of which have been cancelled or postponed. Nevertheless, our Events subcommittee introduced new events.

We continue to welcome new sponsors as partners on our events. When we recommenced planning our Gala Awards Night again, postponed from October 2020 and March 2022, we were heartened by the generous sponsors who approached us, offering their support. Sponsors help us deliver on our commitment to provide low cost events and benefits to members which far exceed the value of their yearly membership fee. Importantly, this has assisted us to forge closer relationships with law firms and boost our profile within the ACT legal community. We look forward to engaging with our members, however we can, in the coming year.

The Committee and Subcommittee members continue to give their time and energy to making the WLA ACT what it is. It reflects their ongoing commitment to this community and to their fellow women lawyers, which is inspiring. The WLA ACT Executive is truly grateful for their support and contributions.

WOMEN LAWYERS ASSOCIATION^{ACT}

We take great pride in working in a jurisdiction where the Chief Justice of the ACT Supreme Court, Chief Magistrate of the ACT Magistrates Court, President of the ACT Bar Association, President of the ACT Law Society (with nine of the sixteen councillors being female), Chief Executive Officer of the ACT Law Society and the Dean of the ANU College of Law are all women.

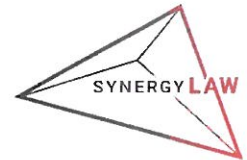
Thank you to all our supporters for making this year possible, and for continuing to lay foundations for the achievements which will follow.

Danielle Mildren

President

WOMEN LAWYERS ASSOCIATION ACT

Thank you to our 2021/2022 Sponsors



1. Our people – 2021/22 Committee Members

President:	Danielle Mildren
Vice President:	Louise Parry
Secretary:	Amanda Garside
Treasurer:	Chiara Cirillo
Policy Subcommittee Co-Chairs:	Thea Sofatzis Lara Douglas
Events Subcommittee Co-Chairs:	Deborah Mak Jiadi Liang
Communications Subcommittee Co-Chairs:	Stacey Bell Annie Arnott
Membership Officer:	Molly Covell
Representative on AWL board:	Harriet Boothman
Policy Subcommittee Members:	Danielle Mildren Belinda Miller Prue Binden Harriet Boothman Jolene Reece
Events Subcommittee Members:	Katie Haywood Monica Lee Bridie Norman Sarah Pain Ruth Parsons Hannah Ranger Jessica Steele Isla Tobin
Communications Subcommittee Members:	Tiffany Wilken Laura Knobel Renee Mastrolembo Joyce Zhang

2. Overview of our Year

President: Danielle Mildren

Committee and governance

- 2.1 In 2022, the Executive Committee welcomed Chiara Cirillo as Treasurer. We have had a busy and productive year, despite the uncertainty brought about, yet again, by the pandemic and periods of lockdown.
- 2.2 We were grateful for the assistance of our auditor, Hardwicks. WLA ACT received a fully compliant audit report and we are immensely grateful for the assistance of our auditor in working with us.

Mentoring and education

- 2.3 We have continued our association with the women law student mentor programs developed by law students at the University of Canberra (Women Lawyers Mentoring Program) and the ANU (Women in Law Organisation) through providing some financial assistance and assisting in recruiting mentors. Many of our members again volunteered their time on these programs as mentors to the women who will become lawyers in the near future. We congratulate the students at both universities who have worked tirelessly to run these programs. Not surprisingly, the pandemic impacted on mentoring opportunities and events.

Raising profiles

- 2.4 It was disappointing that the 2021 Gala Awards Dinner, postponed to March 2022, has been further postponed to October 2022.
- 2.5 We were delighted that the annual Law Week dinner went ahead with high attendance. Keynote speaker Michelle Law, a writer and actor based in Sydney, spoke about her experience growing up in Australia, particularly the discrimination and challenges she faced. WLA ACT would like to thank Michelle for sharing her experiences and insight.

Policy and advocacy

- 2.6 Our Policy subcommittee has continued to have a particular focus on issues of diversity and representation for women lawyers in the ACT in the last year. The subcommittee is currently seeking to distribute a Reconciliation Statement for initial consultation with a view to strengthening relationships with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-indigenous peoples, and better facilitating representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women within the legal profession.

Membership

- 2.7 Our member numbers for 2021/22 remained steady with approximately 362 memberships in total, despite the COVID-19 pandemic having impacted the events WLA ACT could run. WLA ACT continued to offer free student memberships and free memberships for people working at Community Legal Centres and Legal Aid, which were consistently taken up.

3. Our Events

Events Subcommittee Co-Chairs: Deborah Mak and Jiadi Liang

- 3.1 We were delighted to be able to increase our event offerings in 2022, with a range of networking, speaker and panel events. The key focus of the Events subcommittee for this year has been working towards the first ACT Women Lawyers Awards since 2018. It has been fantastic to provide the opportunity to our engaged member base to meet each other and to facilitate important discussions on issues affecting women lawyers in the ACT.
- 3.2 The Events subcommittee would like to thank our sponsors and our speakers for their generous contributions which made our events possible. In particular, we would like to thank the Honourable Helen Murrell, Michelle Law, Elizabeth Lee, Jasmin Barker-Mitchell, Jennifer Darmody and Prue Bindon for speaking at and facilitating our events for the 2021/22 year. We would also like to thank Tyrone Bell from Thunderstone for delivering the Welcome to Country at the 2022 Law Week Dinner.

DATE	EVENT	SPONSOR
December 2021	Christmas Drinks	
March 2022	International Women's Day Breakfast with Chief Justice Helen Murrell (as her Honour then was)	Burley Griffin Chambers
April 2022	Clay Night	Trinity Law
May 2022	Law Week Dinner with Michelle Law	Lawyerbank, Blumers Lawyers and Synergy Law, partnered with the ACT Law Society
July 2022	Panel: How to Survive and Thrive in the Law, with Elizabeth Lee MLA, Jasmin Barker-Mitchell and Jennifer Darmody, facilitated by Prue Bindon	Leo Cussen and ANU College of Law

4. Our Communications

Communications Subcommittee Co-Chairs: Stacey Bell and Annie Arnott

- 4.1 The Communications subcommittee has had a very busy financial year, working on numerous developments to enhance and retain our engagement with WLA ACT members. We have continued to update our membership using emails, the WLA ACT website, and our Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn accounts.
- 4.2 As events have begun to resume, the Communications subcommittee has been busy liaising with the Events subcommittee, ensuring events are well-attended with most events to date being sold out or close to capacity.
- 4.3 To support the Communications subcommittee to engage with WLA ACT members and to ensure consistency in our communications, we have maintained a handbook with key responsibilities and instructions and recorded videos online.
- 4.4 Social media platforms have been the primary drivers for sharing content and events. In the coming year, we will continue to use our social media presence to deliver exciting and interesting content that is accessible to all members and keeps members and the broader community informed of all things WLA ACT.

5. Our Policy work

Policy Subcommittee Co-Chairs: Thea Sofatzis and Lara Douglas

- 5.1 This year our Policy subcommittee has continued to focus on issues of diversity and inclusion affecting women in the ACT Legal Profession. The subcommittee is successfully working collaboratively with the broader Association to better ensure that WLA ACT events and priorities are representative of its diverse membership in order to reflect this policy goal.
- 5.2 Throughout the year, the Policy subcommittee has worked to prepare a Reconciliation Statement which it intends to soon distribute for initial consultation. The Statement seeks to strengthen relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous peoples, as well as better facilitate representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women within the legal profession.
- 5.3 Moving forward, the subcommittee is endeavouring to pursue projects collaborating with other like-minded organisations to facilitate the advancement of its priorities, especially regarding diversity and inclusion, with a view to fostering greater representation of minorities, particularly woman of multi-minority status, within the legal profession.

6. Our Membership

Membership Officer: Molly Covell

- 6.1 WLA ACT had 362 members for the 2021/22 financial year. This is a sizeable decrease from the 623 members we had in 2020/21. We expect that this is a reflection of the impact of COVID-19 on the consequential limited ability of WLA ACT to run events and provide networking opportunities for our membership during the 2021/22 financial year.
- 6.3 We anticipate that the membership numbers will increase once WLA ACT is able to run more events and the benefit of having a membership becomes apparent to individuals.
- 6.3 We have continued to offer free Associate Memberships for students who are enrolled in a course for a degree in law at a tertiary institution in Australia as well as for Community Legal Centre lawyers and Legal Aid lawyers.
- 6.4 Corporate Membership continues to be popular, as it offers a range of benefits and discounts for entities, and has encouraged a significant number of members over the last few years.

7. Our Finances Overview

Treasurer: Chiara Cirillo

- 7.1 During the 2021/22 Financial Year the WLA ACT made a profit of \$7,281.
- 7.2 This is a pleasing result following the losses in the 2019/20 and 2020/21 Financial Years due to the consequences of COVID-19, in particular the extension of memberships and cancellation of events.
- 7.3 The WLA ACT has been able to seek membership renewals and new sponsorships during the 2021/22 Financial Year, as well as conducting a number of events, that have boosted the financial position.
- 7.4 Further detail is contained in the Financial Statements that will be tabled at the AGM.

8. Acknowledgements

The President acknowledges the efforts and contributions of the following people for their commitment and support:

- The Executive – Louise Parry, Amanda Garside and Chiara Cirillo
- The rest of the Committee – Harriet Boothman, Jiadi Liang, Deborah Mak, Annie Arnott, Stacey Bell, Molly Covell, Thea Sofatzis and Lara Douglas
- Members of our subcommittees
- Particular thanks to Jiadi Liang and Deborah Mak who are retiring as Events Subcommittee Co-Chairs
- Our patron and life member Justice Hilary Penfold, and life member Chief Justice Helen Murrell, for their ongoing support and contributions
- Our event and project sponsors: Blumers Personal Injury Lawyers, Lawyer Bank, Synergy Law, Trinity Law, Burley Griffin Chambers, Leo Cussen Centre for Law and ANU College of Law
- The ACT Law Society President Elizabeth Carroll, CEO Simone Carton and Communications Officer Nicole Karman

27 September 2022



Danielle Mildren, President



Louise Parry, Vice President