

**WAM ANNUAL REPORT  
2020–2021**

Women and Mentoring  
Annual Report for the year  
ended 30 June 2021

**EMPOWERING  
POSITIVE  
CHANGE  
IN WOMEN**



## OUR PURPOSE

WAM exists to assist women in their early interaction with the justice system through the provision of a formal mentoring relationship. This will provide them with a pathway to develop and use positive life skills to build a life away from the justice system.



## OUR VISION

A national, volunteer-based mentoring program for women to reduce female incarceration and recidivism and promote social inclusion.



## OUR VALUES

Our guiding values underpin the way we work with women:

### INTEGRITY

We are reliable and trustworthy. Every woman who comes to us should feel safe, emotionally and physically, with our mentors. We optimise our resources to build early intervention strategies and offer them support.

### RESPECT

We operate without judgement or bias. We approach each individual with open minds and hearts full of compassion, no matter who they are or their circumstances.

### BELONGING

We work closely with the community for support and referrals, in pursuit of social justice and a better, stronger community for all.

### EMPOWERMENT

We don't tell women under mentorship what to do, but empower them to make the best decisions for themselves.

### SOCIAL JUSTICE

Ensuring that women in our community have a fair and just opportunity to thrive and live their lives as equally as others.

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# CHAIR'S REPORT

**As the new financial year was commencing in July 2020 we were all adjusting to living and working in the new environment of COVID-19. The Women and Mentoring team of staff, volunteer mentors, skilled volunteers and the board had to pivot and adapt to continue to provide our service to vulnerable women in the justice system.**

In the last 12 months Victoria has endured periods of heavy daily restrictions in order to minimise infections in the community and WAM found innovative ways to keep our mentors and participants engaged and connected in an increasingly isolating world. This has not been an easy task however the team continued their commitment to our vital work with optimism.

There has been two new board appointments this year. Emily Porter and Tracy Baylis are welcome additions, and their individual professional skills are valued.

In April 2021 an Evaluation Report on Women and Mentoring by Lirata Consulting was completed. This report is a 3-year study on the impact of WAM's services mentoring women who have encountered the criminal justice system in Victoria.

This evaluation aimed at providing WAM with feedback on the service over the 3-year period and identifying recommendations for improvement. Findings will add to knowledge about the characteristics and lived experience of women who find themselves involved in the criminal justice system. Fortunately, WAM was able to launch the report at an event in April this year. The event was hosted by Minter Ellison and attended by The Hon. Natalie Hutchins Minister of Corrections, Mr David Southwick Shadow Minister Corrections, Dr Tim Read, Greens MP and Ms Fiona Patten, MP Leader of the Reason Party along with many WAM supporters. Our patron Carmel Benjamin AM addressed the event and spoke of WAM as "possibly the most promising answer to the powerlessness of women caught up in the criminal justice system". The audience also heard a moving exchange between one of our mentors and her mentee which demonstrated how strong and meaningful the impact of participating in our service can be.

Findings from the report stated, "The WAM program successfully engaged a broad range of women over its three years of operation, most of whom presented with complex and intersecting issues that impact on their offending behaviour or contribute to it". The report also established that for women in the WAM program theirs is a life marred by a higher incidence of current or past family violence, the majority reported mental health issues that impacted their daily life, and a significant proportion were either homeless or in unsafe or inadequate housing.

The report also noted that "mentors appear to have played a strong support role for women in encouraging them to attend appointments, seek professional assistance if they were not engaged with it, and remaining in contact with women when they were hospitalised or in rehabilitation."

The Lirata report concluded "The evaluation of the first three years of the WAM program found that the program has been successfully implemented and has had an impact in supporting criminalised women to address issues that underly their offending behaviour, in supporting women to navigate the criminal justice system and reducing recidivism in the short term. The program continues to build the knowledge on women's lived experience of the criminal justice system including the complex inter-relationship between offending, family violence, homelessness, mental health and alcohol and drug use".

The report demonstrates that WAM is an effective and cost effective crime prevention initiative that addresses the root causes of reoffending rather than the symptoms alone.

To once again quote our patron, " Women at risk belong to our community. They are our mothers, sisters, aunts, cousins, neighbours and friends. They belong to us and need our support".

Women and Mentoring has strived to offer this support and encouragement in the last 11 years and with ongoing sustained funding will continue for many years to come.

Sam Payne, Board Chair



# EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

**In another year of uncertainty, I am privileged to be working with a dynamic and compassionate team who have been able to respond to the challenging conditions of the pandemic. The ability and speed at which the team leapt into adapting the program delivery and operations allowed our mentoring relationships to continue and thrive. For the most part, it was another year of business-as-usual despite the lockdowns and physical distancing requirements.**

Without faltering, volunteer mentors implemented remote mentoring. Coordinators conducted assessments, match meetings and peer supervision via zoom, day-to-day operations continued and of course everyone moved everything to work from home. With little understanding back in early 2020 of the duration and impact of the pandemic, I can look back now and be amazed at the resilience and work ethic of the team and our mentors to keep their connections with vulnerable women consistent and continuous.

Over this 12-month period the number of referrals was similar to previous years, despite seeing a decrease in the number of offences being committed and women being charged. Lockdown and the curfew have most likely played a part in this, as well as police being redirected to Covid-related matters. However, we note the number of new sources of referrals as we continue to build awareness and strengthen relationships across community agencies and the health justice sector.

The pandemic exacerbated the challenges and complexities in women's lives, and we observed an increase in poor mental health, increased substance use and family violence. Connecting with women and providing some case management has ensured women have been able to access the services they need and checking in regularly to help improve motivation.

Still, we know the mentoring relationships made a positive difference. A highlight for this year was the launch of our Evaluation Report that found WAM has had an impact in supporting criminalized women to address issues that underlie their offending behaviour, in supporting women to navigate the criminal justice system and reducing recidivism.

Another key event was our Law Week panel webinar with members of our lived experience Peer Advisory group sharing their stories of overcoming the structural and systemic barriers that persist, after leaving prison or a non-custodial sentence.

Our Women's Peer Advisory group is an initiative that brings together women at various stages of contact with the justice system to find support from their shared experience and to shape future programs and responses. Their insight assists us to develop strategies to better support program participants, identify other service gaps and help advocate on behalf of women in contact with the justice system. We are excited to see what this group will do as they invite new members to join in the new year.

We are in a position now – particularly as another extension of funding from the VLSB has been confirmed – to really reflect on where we are heading and put some robust plans into action. Covid presented some new opportunities, particularly to expand the program into regional areas using our remote mentoring model. This expansion will be our focus next year, along with securing sustainable funding to ensure more women across Victoria have access to the support they need to build their life away from the justice system.

We are grateful for the pro bono support we have received this year from Deloitte to help produce and rollout our risk management framework which is a critical piece of work as we embark on this trajectory of growth. As is investing in better resourcing and equipment fit-for-purpose, such as a integrating a CRM and improving staff infrastructure.

I would like to acknowledge the amazing commitment of the WAM volunteer mentors who always give so generously of their time and of themselves to walk the journey with our women in the mentoring program. They have attended online and in-person workshops, supervision and professional development all year, and we are grateful for their contribution. Thank you also to our skilled volunteers and special thanks to our Board Members who provide a wealth of expertise and knowledge. And of course, my thanks to the amazing WAM team who work tirelessly and provide such support to the mentors, our women and to me that it is a joy to work alongside them every day.

As we look to the year ahead, we will continue to deliver on our purpose to support criminalised women, to build on the data around pathways to offending, and empower women to build their life away from the justice system.

Tricia Ciampa, Executive Officer



# OUR PEOPLE

## OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Once again, the team has been grateful for the ongoing support of our volunteer Board of Directors, particularly through the continuing challenges of the pandemic.

As part of the regular rotation of Board members, we farewelled Virginia Murdoch in November 2020 and Keren Murray in March 2021. Virginia spent three and a half years on the Board, bringing valuable expertise in professional development, IT, data and distribution platforms. Her input was especially valuable in 2020 as we grappled with the pandemic and the challenges of working remotely. Keren was one of our longest-serving Board members for over seven years. She made such a huge contribution to WAM in that time with her expertise in law, the criminal justice system, good governance and the workings of state government. We sincerely thank both Keren and Virginia for all that they've done for us, and we wish them well.

Replacing Virginia and Keren, we were pleased to welcome Tracy Baylis and Emily Porter in February 2021.

## Our current Board Members are:



### Sam Payne, Chair

Sam retired from a long career in business administration in 2005. She joined the WAM pilot program as a volunteer mentor in 2010, one of our first volunteers. Sam has mentored three women participants up to 2017. Sam joined the Board in 2014 and was elected to Chair in 2017. She is a member of the Fundraising & Marketing Committee and the Nominations Committee.



### Anne Rudd

Anne is a serving member of Victoria Police and over the past 18 years she has performed duties within the Bayside area, Prosecutions Division, Family Violence Command and more recently, the North West Metro Region in Melbourne and Yarra. Anne is a lawyer and an experienced prosecutor within the Magistrates' Court and Children's Court where she specialised in prosecuting sexual offences and family violence matters. Anne was previously a member of the Therapeutic Treatment Board and the Court Network Board. Anne joined the Board in 2018 and she Chairs both the Governance Committee and Nominations Committee.



### Amanda Thornton

Amanda leads the National Partnerships team at Stroke Foundation and Co-chairs the Melbourne Women's Fund Grants Committee. She is experienced in fundraising, philanthropy and non-profit administration in the charitable and arts sectors, and holds a Master of Social Investment and Philanthropy. Amanda joined the Board in 2019 and she chairs the Fundraising & Marketing Committee and is a member of the Nominations Committee.



### Trevor Irwin

Trevor is an experienced accountant with a background in media, not-for-profit, the university sector, Victorian Government agencies, recycling/waste management, telecommunications, and oil and gas sectors in senior finance roles. Trevor is currently Chief Financial Officer with Surf Coast News Australia based in Torquay, Victoria. He is a CPA and holds a Bachelor of Business (Accounting) and has an MBA from RMIT University. Trevor joined the Board in 2019 and he chairs the Finance, Audit & Risk Committee and is a member of the Governance Committee.



### Tamsin Mildenhall

Tamsin is an experienced criminal defence lawyer, having worked in both the private and Government sectors. Currently, she is the Manager of the Summary Crime team at Victoria Legal Aid, working with sector partners to ensure the delivery of high-quality legal services as well as a fair and efficient justice system. She is a Law Institute of Victoria (LIV) Accredited Criminal Law and Children's Law Specialist and a member of the LIV Children's Law Specialisation Advisory Committee. She also is currently undertaking a Masters of Business Administration (Executive) at RMIT. Tamsin joined the Board in 2020 and is a member of the Finance, Audit & Risk Committee and the Governance Committee.



#### Su Robertson

Su is a social justice lawyer, academic and community radio broadcaster. She has previously worked as a community legal centre lawyer and university law lecturer, and is currently completing her PhD at the Australian National University. She has researched, published and presented on a variety of issues associated with poverty law, clinical legal education, feminism and the legal system, and her work has been tabled in Parliament. Su joined the Board in 2020 and is a member of the Finance, Audit & Risk Committee and the Fundraising & Marketing Committee.



#### Tracy Baylis

Tracy brings strong knowledge and many years of governance and strategic planning experience. A values-driven leader, Tracy is currently the Strategic Planning and Implementation Manager at the Australian Urban Research Infrastructure Network, an organisation aiming to increase liveability and resilience in our cities and communities and thereby improve the lives of every Australian. Tracy supported WAM as a volunteer for several years before joining the Board in 2021. She is a member of the Finance, Audit & Risk Committee and the Governance Committee.



#### Emily Porter

Emily is an experienced barrister practising in the areas of administrative, planning and environmental law. She has prior experience as a member of the Victorian Bar Council and the Eastern Community Legal Centre Committee of Management. She is passionate about maximising opportunities for women to participate fully in society, including through mentoring. She joined the Board in 2021 and is a member of the Fundraising & Marketing Committee and the Nominations Committee.

## OTHER GOVERNANCE MATTERS

The Board has again been supported by its various sub-committees meeting regularly throughout the year:

- Finance, Audit & Risk Committee
- Fundraising & Marketing Committee
- Governance Committee
- Nominations Committee

We finalised a major project this year, with generous pro-bono support from Deloitte Risk Advisory, to introduce a comprehensive risk management framework. The Deloitte team spent many hours with us, helping to formalise our existing risk management and to formally document our risk-based approach to the mentoring program. We are now working to embed this fully into our daily operations. We thank Deloitte for this valuable pro-bono support.

## OUR TEAM



#### Tricia Ciampa, Executive Officer

With over twenty-four years in the not-for-profit sector, Tricia has expertise in program design, social impact evaluation and forging collaborative partnerships to deliver positive and life-changing outcomes for vulnerable people in our community. Tricia holds a Bachelor of Arts and a Masters of Business Administration. Tricia has significant experience in managing and developing mentoring programs, and has also spent time volunteering with the Youth Referral and Independent Persons Program (YRIPP) providing support to young people during police interviews.



#### Mary Latham, Operations Manager

Mary has been with WAM since 2014. She is a chartered accountant who has experience in both corporate and not-for-profit roles, including professional accounting firms, financial services, disability and youth mental health. Mary has strong experience in finance, governance, project management, reporting and budget control.



#### Sarah Nyssen, Frankston Coordinator

Sarah has more than twenty years' experience in the health and community sector including international work in youth homelessness and mental health in the UK. She draws on this experience to support women in the justice space to achieve better outcomes. Sarah has a strong background of working in the early intervention and prevention space, with extensive experience including working in the women's health sector and coordinating a youth mentoring program in the south east. Sarah is responsible for the successful expansion of WAM into the Frankston and Mornington Peninsula since 2018, working with various partner agencies and stakeholders there.



#### Joyce Sedunary, Mentor Coordinator

The majority of Joyce's employment has been with not-for-profit and community organisations, with previous roles working in youth mentoring, and volunteer recruitment and training. Joyce is a qualified counsellor and has a strong administrative background. She is passionate about supporting and empowering women through connection, building trusting relationships, and community engagement.



#### Phaedra Thain, Intake Coordinator

Phaedra has experience in the youth justice space and has qualifications in family violence and a Master of Justice and Criminology. This has informed her understanding of advocacy, empowerment and preventing violence against women. Phaedra is passionate about building inclusive and sustainable programs that promote equality. She is also a WAM mentor.



# 2021 EVALUATION REPORT

Over the past 10 years we have been fortunate to have the support of many philanthropic trusts and foundations to enable us to build our organisational capacity, expand the reach of our service, and empower women to have a more positive future. To date we have matched and supported over 180 women in mentoring relationships, made numerous referrals, offered social support, created positive change and helped criminalised women address issues that have led to their offending.

Unfortunately, in this same 10-year period, the number of women in contact with the justice system and in Victoria's prisons increased dramatically. This was largely due to the rising number of women being remanded for short periods of time, many of whom are then subsequently released on bail or to a non-custodial sentence.

In 2017, in response to the rising rates of women's incarceration, the Victorian Legal Services Board prioritized their grants program to focus on promoting initiatives to keep women out of the justice system. It was with this funding, that WAM was given the opportunity to develop a more comprehensive theory of change and evaluation framework, to consider not just the rate of re-offending, or non-offending, within the participants but also the protective factors that supported women to build their lives away from the justice system. At this time, we engaged Lirata Consulting to provide an independent evaluation to measure and report on WAM's outcomes and impact.

Over a three-year period, we collected information on the women referred to the program, the presenting issues for women engaged in mentoring relationships, progress made towards achieving their goals and any disclosed re-offending.

The evaluation report considered data from 65 women who were successfully engaged in a mentoring relationship, with five matched twice in this period. Ideally, we could have engaged more women in mentoring, however with a small team we were constantly at capacity, and disengagement is common.

The findings in the report reinforce what we know about the complexity and vulnerabilities that are common characteristics of criminalised women.

- 88% per cent of women had experienced current or historical family violence,
- 95% were diagnosed with one or more mental health issues
- Half were either homeless or in unsafe/inadequate housing
- 42% reported problematic drug or alcohol use.
- 93% identified they were financially stressed, with 50% reporting low incomes and 29% reporting difficulty paying fines.

Women in the justice system are disproportionately victims of family violence, sexual abuse, trauma, financial disadvantage, low education attainment and insecure housing; yet have dependent children with fewer opportunities to find work and meaningful connection in their community. Other issues such as mental health and substance misuse are also common characteristics of women in the justice system. And it is often these same challenges that create barriers to engaging productively with the service system.

Once engaged in the mentoring program, relationships can last anywhere from six months to two years, with an average commitment of about 10 months. At time of assessment, and throughout the mentoring journey, the participants identified goals in key areas linked to Criminogenic Risk factors, or inversely, identifying Protective factors they wished to strengthen to assist in building their life away from the justice system.

50% of women identified social connection as one of their three priority goals. In fact, 69% of women reported feeling socially isolated, with many women indicating they had little family support, no positive friendship groups and no support network to turn to.

Other priority goals identified by women were addressing their legal issues, finding employment and improving relationships with children and family. Many also identified securing suitable housing. Over the course of each mentoring relationship reviews were conducted at regular intervals. The progression towards achieving individual goals was discussed and recorded, and if women felt they had achieved their goals, then mentoring relationships were 'graduated' and closed, and some continued on. Lirata's evaluation report identifies that through the connection of the mentoring relationship women reported positive outcomes such as:

- feeling more confident and resourced to respond to their legal issues
- becoming involved in community activities and no longer feeling socially isolated,
- developing strategies to improve relationships with estranged family members,
- some women had children returned to their care and proactively sought parenting support;
- women felt encouraged and supported to engage with alcohol and drug practitioners and remained sober for significant lengths of time,
- women worked with their mentor to embed practical approaches to manage their mental health



- some women engaged in further study, obtained casual work, attended meetings with job providers
- others reported completing financial literacy course or seeking alternate ways to reduce fine debt, particularly through the Work & Development Permit Scheme.

Regular catch ups with a mentor contributed to building self-esteem, and increasing a woman's confidence for self-advocacy. These supports can be the first step to strengthening social inclusion, being able to respond positively and helping overcome the turnstile of reoffending.

The report also confirms that not only do women progressively work towards building a pro-social identity away from the justice system ... the majority (87%) of women engaged with a mentor do not re-offend. This is compared to a State Average rate of re-offending of 43%.

Women follow distinctive pathways to criminality, and tend to represent a lower-risk, higher-needs offender group than men, therefore the responses must also be different. The social and economic implications of women's imprisonment are far-reaching. We know criminalised women experience significant exclusion from engaging with their community, finding meaningful employment, navigating service systems effectively and are often disconnected from their families, and children. Crime prevention strategies and supports for women to remain in their community are therefore a logical response.

WAM offers a gender-responsive lens to addressing the criminalisation of vulnerability and disadvantage. Mentoring operates as both a proactive strategy to reduce women's offending and minimise the negative impact of contact with the criminal justice system, but importantly also works with women to address issues that underly their offending behaviour and may act as a diversion program to keep women out of the criminal justice system.

You can find a copy of the Evaluation Report on our website: <http://womenandmentoring.org.au/resources-2/>



Funded by the Victorian Legal Services Board and with the support of philanthropic funding Women and Mentoring (WAM) provides an early intervention program for women with a criminal offence, or who are at risk of offending by matching them with a supportive, trained female mentor with the aim of:

- Reducing women's encounters with the justice system.
- Reducing the factors driving growth in the women's prison population.
- Reducing women's incarceration and recidivism rates.
- Providing models for reform

### Our impact:

 **Social Connections**  
**69%** of women we work with reported feeling socially isolated

**50%** had a mentoring goal of improving social connection

### Our mentors also helped with:

**Children & Family Relationships**



**Drug and Alcohol Use**

**Health & Wellbeing**



**Offending & Legal Issues**

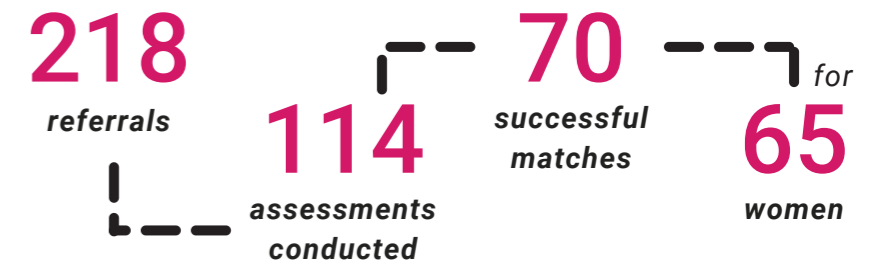
**Debt & Finances**

**Housing & Accommodation**

**Employment & Training**



## THE PAST THREE YEARS



## ABOUT THE MENTEES

- 88%** experienced previous or current family violence
- 95%** had one or more mental health diagnoses
- 50%** lived in unstable or insecure housing
- 42%** reported problematic drug or alcohol use

### Mentees looked for mentors who:

- Knew the courts or local service system
- Shared similar interests & a sense of humour
- Were easy going and unstressed
- Had good advocacy skills
- Were patient and good listeners

## ABOUT THE MENTORS

"She didn't give up on me. She has helped me through so many things and with so much of my life."

"Nothing they could do better. In 10 years I've never had so much help before."

**13%** of mentored women reported reoffending during their involvement with WAM compared to the state average of **43.3%**<sup>1</sup>

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Increase organisational capacity to support more women
- Improve data collection; continue to build on quantitative data
- Find opportunities to conduct longitudinal reviews (e.g. 6 and 12 months after closure)
- Expand program to regional and rural areas with a mix of face-to-face and remote operations

Victorian Legal Services BOARD + COMMISSIONER



<sup>1</sup> <https://www.sentencingcouncil.vic.gov.au/statistics/sentencing-trends/released-prisoners-returning-to-prison>





# CASE STUDY: JANE & VANESSA – ADDITIONAL SUPPORT TO MANAGE A TRICKY TIME

Jane is a mother of three in her 40s who was referred to WAM by her Law Clinic Lawyer. Jane was open to a 6–12-month match but through her positive mentoring experience she stayed in the match 16 months. Jane and her mentor, Vanessa, developed a strong and trusting rapport and will continue to stay connected outside the program.

Jane was facing charges for breaching a Personal Safety Intervention Order (PSIO) twice and was at risk of going to prison if she breached the order again. Jane had no prior interaction with the criminal justice system but was at a point in her life where she was making poor decisions, had increased mental health-issues, and was coming to terms with being a single parent.

Jane recently separated from her husband however when he found out that Jane was having an affair, he became angry and violent. Jane had to call the police and an Intervention Order was issued against him. He had never been violent before.

Jane's new relationship was short lived as her new boyfriend ended the relationship abruptly without any discussion with Jane. In wanting to resolve this, Jane sent many texts and drove past his house so she could talk with him. Jane felt distressed as she used to talk with her boyfriend every day. Instead, he placed a safety notice against her and as she tried to get in touch with him, Jane continued to breach this – unbeknownst to her that she was putting herself at risk of going to prison!

Jane and Vanessa were matched during covid lockdowns in 2020. Their match meeting was via zoom with the plan to eventually meet face to face when practicable. The pair hit it off straight away and had no problem chatting and connecting. For this match, going remote was not a barrier and they both managed to keep up regular contact via zoom, phone, and text.

Jane presented with mental health issues (anxiety and depression) that centred around the breakdown of her relationships with both partners. She really needed someone to talk to who could help her unravel her constant thoughts. Jane opened-up to Vanessa about her anxiety, medication and, inability to sleep and, Vanessa listened and suggested strategies like deep breathing exercises, routine, and less screen time before bed.

Jane identified that she wanted to look after health and wellbeing and continue talking to Vanessa whenever she felt anxious, had negative thoughts, or was ruminating about her ex-partners. Jane also wanted to gain employment or volunteer work or, to investigate training options. This goal was a challenge throughout Covid, but Jane and Vanessa did research paths to follow when lockdown lifted.

Jane's anxiety increased when she noticed that her ex-boyfriend had started driving past her home and parking out the front of her house. She felt he was trying to get her to breach her order again and, if Jane had done this, she could have potentially risked jeopardising her court hearing outcome.

During these stressful times Jane would call Vanessa. Vanessa calmly talked about strategies and they both discussed what was in Jane's control. For example,

Vanessa suggested that Jane could write down the times he drove past/parked and, Jane could make others aware of what was happening, so they too could witness him driving/parking outside her home. Vanessa also suggested to Jane that she should let her solicitor know. All of Vanessa's strategies and suggestions gave Jane back a sense of control and eased her anxiety.

Although Jane's confidence was building through Vanessa's support and calm approach, she was still anxious and stressed due to her court hearing being deferred a number of times. She talked through her frustration of having the court hearing hanging over her head with Vanessa which really helped. Vanessa also wrote a letter of support to the Magistrate, explaining Jane's involvement with WAM and her commitment to the program.

After a year of having her court hearing postponed, Jane went to court. She was nervous but felt confident in herself. The result was a Good Behaviour Bond for 12 months and a \$300 donation to the court. Jane was confident enough to speak up during the case and explained her side of the story. The Magistrate thanked her for her clarification.

Jane and Vanessa continued their contact after the court hearing. Jane's husband moved back into the family home as they were both keen to reconcile the relationship. Jane was happy to keep the match open during the initial reconnection for additional emotional support. It took time, but Jane expressed that their relationship was working and that they were talking more, solving issues together and, were working together in supporting their three children.

In closing the match, Jane said she no longer feels anxious, she is taking better care of herself and walking 45 minutes every day. The coordinator noticed how bright and sunny she looked, like a weight had lifted. She said that if she had not met Vanessa, she would have continued to breach the PSIO and things in her life would have escalated out of control. She said Vanessa was always so easy to talk to, "she is easier to talk to than professionals and not as emotionally involved as family."

Throughout their match Jane and Vanessa only met face-to-face a couple of times. They found the ease of a remote match worked for them and they built a trusting and strong relationship. After closing the match Jane emailed her coordinator and summed up what being in the WAM program meant to her.

*"I'm so glad I entered into the WAM program as it has helped me with my journey in so many ways. You matched me with such a wonderful person. I will be forever grateful to Vanessa for helping me along the way. I thank you both so much and wish you both the very best and I will definitely keep in touch. Regards Jane"*



# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

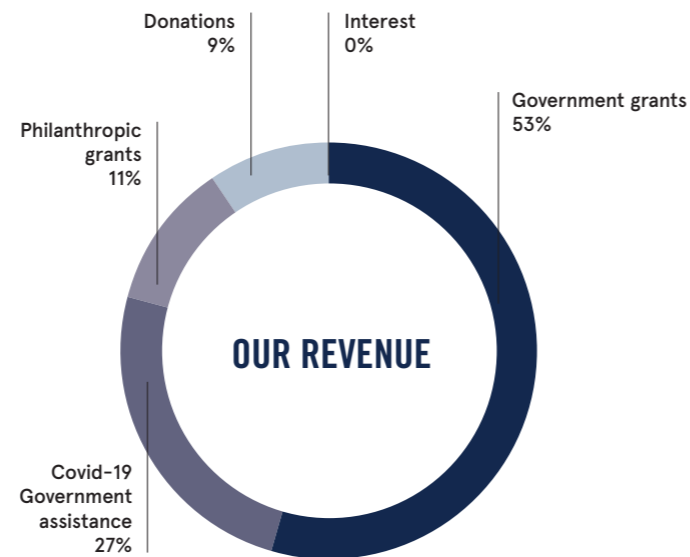
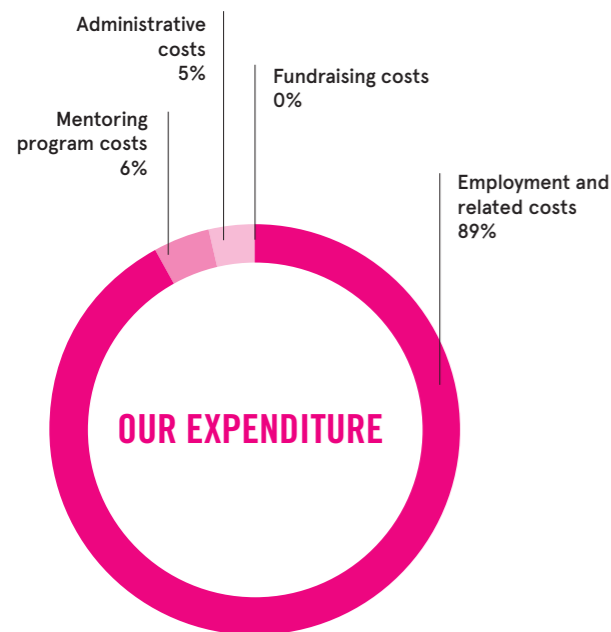
**OUR FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR 2020/21 CONTINUED TO BE IMPACTED BY THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND THE LOCKDOWN CONDITIONS IN MELBOURNE. WE CONTINUED WORKING FROM HOME FOR THE ENTIRE FINANCIAL YEAR, WITH ONLY OCCASIONAL FACE TO FACE MEETINGS WHEN CONDITIONS ALLOWED. WE CONTINUED TO INNOVATE IN THE WAY THAT WE PROVIDE OUR MENTORING PROGRAM, MOVING FROM ONLINE TO FACE-TO-FACE AND BACK TO ONLINE AS NEEDED.**

Our total revenue from philanthropic sources dropped, but we were again pleased to receive grants from several new philanthropic donors. Our Government grant revenue increased and we experienced our most successful year ever for donation revenue. Once again, we weren't able to hold fundraising events due to the social distancing and lockdown restrictions. But we were fortunate to receive further COVID-19 assistance from both the Federal and State Governments.

The result for the year was a deficit of \$16k, as we spent grant funds carried forward unspent from the previous year. Our expenditure continued to vary from month to month as the lockdowns in Melbourne stopped and started and we did more online and less in person. And we continued to spend more on supporting our program participants and mentors as they responded to the challenging pandemic conditions.

Throughout all of the revenue and expenditure challenges we've faced while working through a pandemic, we've remained focussed on using our funding as effectively as we can to support the women in the program.

We supported 58 women throughout the year at a cost of only \$6k per woman supported.



# SUPPORTERS, FUNDERS & DONORS

We are fortunate to have the support of not just our wonderful mentors but also several skilled volunteers who provide professional services such as HR, bookkeeping, social media and IT. Thank you to Mandy, Michelle, Jane, Bianca, Tracy and Adam. Our thanks also to our Patron, Carmel Benjamin AM for her ongoing support and advocacy.

## WE GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGE THE FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION FROM OUR PROGRAM FUNDERS:



## WAM WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE FOLLOWING ORGANISATIONS FOR THEIR GENEROUS SUPPORT OF PRO BONO PROFESSIONAL SERVICES:



## AND OUR GENEROUS INDIVIDUAL DONORS



[www.womenandmentoring.org.au](http://www.womenandmentoring.org.au)  
PO Box 8081, North Road 3187