

2023-2024 ANNUAL REPORT SNAPSHOT Impact & Outcomes If the

butterfly has fluttered by your cards today, you're being prepared for a magical transformation, a chance to make sense of what may have been a traumatic and potentially 'painful' period of necessary change.

> The butterfly offers new life and the chance to transform on all levels, to become a stronger, prouder person who's more willing to trust. As the Butterfly moves from Caterpillar to Butterfly it shows trust in its ability to grow and adapt.

The Caterpillar is slow and cumbersome, symbolic of how we may view ourselves and how we come to terms with what the new information demands of us. By the time the Caterpillar decides to emerge as the Butterfly we are ready to present our new found wings and enhance the lives of others.

The sight of the Butterfly breaking free of its Chrysalis is a re-enactment of rebirth. As such, the Butterfly is a powerful symbol of anyone contemplating change or who is in the midst of major transformation.



The **Women's Spirit Project** acknowledges the traditional owners of the land of the Southern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne and the Mornington Peninsula including the Boon Wurrung/Bunurong people and the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation. We pay our respects to elders past, present and emerging. We are committed to honouring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in our work.

We thank Kerry Strickland, our Cultural Advisor, for her continued guidance and the extended team at Nairm Marr Djambana, Frankston for their ongoing support.

A special thank you goes to Greer Watson (Innate Design) for always making us look good, to Norman Krueger for his beautiful photography and to Lynn Holt, Suzanne Murphy, Birte Moliere and Kathy Heffernan for their meticulous proofing. Thank you, also, to our valued long-term partner Pressroom Philanthropy for printing, and to team members and volunteers for their contributions to this report.



Words From Our Chair			02-03	
Our Why				
Our Impact			05-06	
Environmental Sustainability				
A YEAR IN F	REVIE	W	07	
Catch Up & Connect Walks			08-09	
Spirit Of Transformation Programs				
Aug-Nov 20	)23	Mornington Peninsula		
March-June	e 2023	City Of Kingston & Frankston City		
Women's Spirit Circle Seasonal Series			16-18	
Dec 2023	l Am	Enough		
Feb 2024	Choc	sing Hope		
June 2024	Wint	er Solstice		
International	Wome	en's Day	19	
Community Engagement - Sharing Our Stories			20-21	
Financial and In-Kind Contributions			22-25	
Staff and Volunteer Contributions			26-27	
Our Vision 2024- 2025			28-29	

Prepared By Lynn Holt, Birte Moliere, Melissa FloresEdited By Kathy HeffernanArtwork & Design Greer Watson – Innate Design

Bornen's Spirit Project

## Words from the Chair Kathy Heffernan



The **Women's Spirit Project** has had a significant and impactful year. We have continued to grow, strengthen, and support the transformation of many women in our community, despite at times very challenging circumstances.

It was with great sadness that we received the news of the passing of our Ambassador, Peta Murphy, Federal MP For Dunkley. Peta was a long-term supporter and friend of the **Women's Spirit Project** (WSP) and she is dearly missed by all of us.

We also said farewell to our wonderful founder and Managing Director Jodie Belyea, after being elected as the new Federal Member for Dunkley. We miss Jodie, but we are very fortunate that she continues to support us as our founder and supporter in her new role.

The impact of these events has tested our resilience and strength as we banded together to ensure that the legacy of **Women's Spirit Project** continues to support women in our community. We welcomed Jackie Galloway as our new Ambassador and our interim Executive Manager Jane Price, who has done a great job ensuring the team and programs continue to thrive.



### Our success in no small part can be attributed to hard working volunteers who share a commitment and passion to support women in our community.

Our success in securing funding to continue to deliver the '**Spirit of Transformation**' (SOT) program has been significant with both State, Federal and Local Government funding received to support programs over the next 2-3 years.

We are excited to be delivering our programs across the Mornington Peninsula, Frankston, Kingston and now the Casey area in 2025. Donations from our business and philanthropic partners are also essential to support our operations. A special shout out to The Phil Taylor Foundation and Pressroom Philanthropy and The Count Foundation who have supported us for many years.

Our 'Women's Spirit Circles' and 'Catch Up and Connect Walks' have provided a great setting to celebrate and connect with each other. These events would not happen if it was not for our team of volunteers that turn up, set up and support every event.

**Volunteering** is alive and well with over 3,600 hours provided in the 2023/24 period. I would like to thank our dedicated team of contractors, who facilitate, promote, coordinate, and deliver all our events and programs with such professionalism and grace. All provide additional volunteer

hours to support this work with such joy and enthusiasm that make these events so special.

What we all share is a commitment and passion to support women in our community. Our mentors contribute many hours to the **Spirit of Transformation** program to ensure that our participants receive the best experience possible. Whenever I meet our mentors or participants from the **Spirit of Transformation** program, the feedback is so encouraging – we really do make a difference and that is what keeps us all going.

Monash University conducted an evaluation of our Spirit of Transformation program which has captured the impact of the Spirit of Transformation for participants and mentors. This process supports the continuous improvement of our evidence-based program. I am looking forward to another productive year as we venture into new areas and develop new partnerships with like-minded organisations.

Kathy Heffernan CHAIR, DIRECTOR

## Our Why

## **Facts That Inform Our Why**

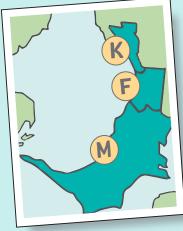
- A key barrier to women seeking help is not thinking their mental health issues are **'serious enough.'** In addition, **1 in 3 women cannot afford to seek help1**
- In 2024 approximately 1 in 2 (54%) Australian women experienced some form of mental health issue. Alarmingly, 1 in 4 (25%) of these women are dealing with severe mental health disorders <sup>2</sup>
- Women also experience specific mental health conditions linked to hormones and reproductive capacity throughout life. Mainstream mental health services are not routinely designed to recognise the specific needs and experiences of females. This omission greatly impacts the types of diagnoses women are likely to receive, their ability to access safe and appropriate treatment and support, the treatments they are offered, and the attitudes they encounter when they access mental health services <sup>3</sup>
- 4 Body image issues remain the third highest mental health challenge affecting women, including older women, where 1 in 4 (27%) women experiencing menopause also reported having body image issues 4

Out of the top 5 mental health issues, **body image** issues are the one issue women are least likely to

seek help for, with only a quarter (24%) of those affected taking active steps to seek help for their mental health struggles 2024<sup>4</sup>

- 5 Social isolation has been linked to mental illness, emotional distress, suicide, poor health behaviours, physical inactivity, poor sleep, and biological effects, in addition to decreases in feelings of wellbeing and life satisfaction. Young females experience loneliness at the highest proportion (1-4 females aged 15-24) of any other age group <sup>5</sup>
- 6 Attitudes and behaviours impacting women's mental health in Australia include social pressure, household responsibilities (including the mental load), work responsibilities (unfair treatment and overwork), financial responsibilities (less pay, gender inequality) and personal safety when leaving home
- 7 3 in 5 (60%) of Australian females are living with overweight or obesity <sup>6</sup>
- 8 34% of ill health and premature death among females could have been potentially prevented by avoiding or reducing exposure to certain risk factors which are tobacco, overweight (including obesity), dietary risk factors and high blood pressure **7**

### Women In Our Region Face Significant Disadvantage



For the Frankston | Kingston & Mornington Peninsula community, the Women's Health Atlas highlights <sup>8</sup>:

- Self-harm hospital admissions for women are two to three times higher than men
- A concerning number of family and intimate partner violence reports
  - Almost 40% of our women have experienced anxiety
  - Higher levels of psychological distress for women than the Victorian average
- Rates of female-headed households are more than double the Victorian average
- Significantly higher rates of social disadvantage for women than the Victorian average
- Disadvantaged women experience a range of barriers that prevent them from participating in a variety of physical activities and sports.

## How We Make An Impact



## **Our Vision**

Empowered, resilient, confident, connected women – able to bring to life their dreams and aspirations through access to wellbeing activities that create confidence, resilience, connection to self, people and support services that enable self-determination resulting in improved mental health, employment, and a reduction in poverty.

### What We Do

The **Women's Spirit Project** offers integrated holistic healing, recovery, and primary prevention programs, by women for women with lived experience. Our curriculum includes fitness, health and wellbeing activities that reflect our wellbeing framework. Our point of difference is in our holistic delivery – working with body, mind, and soul. We support women to rebuild, recover and repair in a safe community setting – enabling women to build confidence and courage to address intersectional risk factors impacting mental health, employment, economic situation, and participation in community life.

### Our Work Is Guided By All Dimensions Of Wellbeing



### Why We Make A Difference

We empower women to bring to life their hopes, dreams, and aspirations in a safe and supportive environment with other women.

We provide guidance and opportunities for women to recover from trauma by participating in strengths -based activities that build resilience, self-esteem and connections to other women and community services.

Our free and accessible programs complement case management and counselling support delivered by community organisations.

### **How We Work**

We are women with lived experience, on a mission to inspire, empower and support other women on a recovery journey to transform their lives.

We support women to overcome barriers by providing an opportunity to nurture a sense of belonging and build social connection.





Improved Mental Health, Self-Esteem & Resilience

mpact & Outcomes Report I

1. The Liptember Foundation - The Mental Health Gender Gap, July 2022; and Women's mental health in Australia: identifying gaps & trends for better mental health, 2023 | 2.4. The Liptember Foundation - Uncovering the Reality: Examining Multi-dimensional Aspects of Women's Mental Health in Australia 2024 | 3. Ibid | 5. AHIW - Social isolation and Ioneliness, 2023 | 6.7. AHIW - The health of Australia's females, 2023. |
 8. Victorian Women's Health Atlas 2024

# How We Make An Impact

#### **Theory Of Change**

#### We Support Women

who experience disadvantage and risk factors such as addiction; domestic/ family violence; homelessness; loneliness; poverty; and mental health barriers.

#### **To Overcome Barriers**

to seek help and access services to empower their recovery and wellbeing.

#### By Partnering with Community Stakeholders

to deliver place-based, trauma - informed, holistic fitness, health and wellbeing programs and activities for women.

Teaching strategies to ensure connectedness, wellbeing and referral to support services.

#### Empowering Healing and Recovery Including

- Reduction in risk factors & associated problems
- Commencement of further education or study
- Securing employment
- A sense of belonging & social connectedness

#### **Resulting In**

- Increased protective factors for thriving, including an increased support network
- Sustaining employment
- Achieving financial independence

# The values that inform our work:

Empowerment Connection Courage Integrity Respect Safety Wellness

### Environmental Sustainability

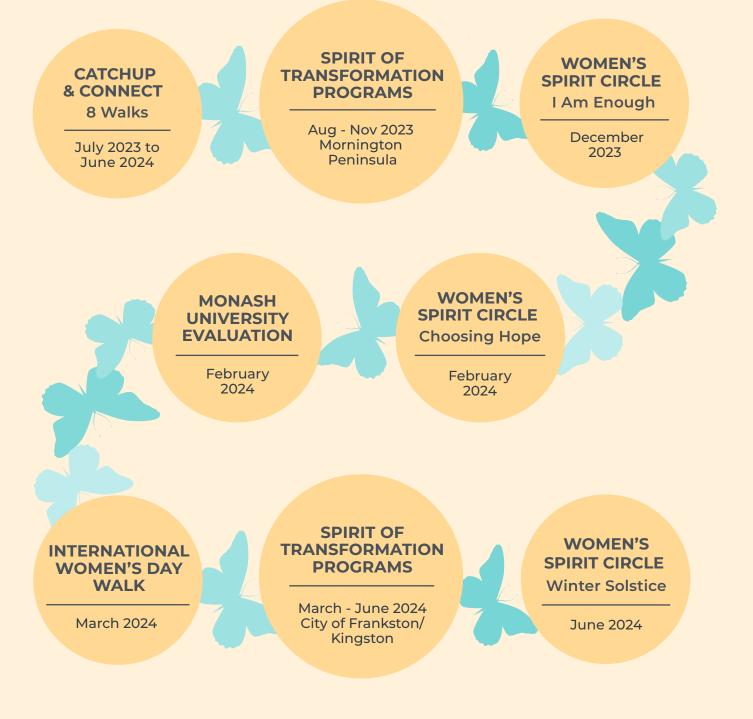
We operate in deep respect for Mother Nature and embrace a 'leave no trace' philosophy.

We continue to implement our waste wise and plastic free approach under the national Plastic Free Places program with Boomerang Alliance.

As part of our certification, we are committed to running all our activities and events without single use plastic takeaway packaging, instead opting for reusables wherever possible. We encourage our participants to extend this commitment into their own lives, reducing our impact on the planet as much as possible.

Thank you to Boomerang Alliance and funding partners Mornington Peninsula Shire Council for our work in this space. A Year In Review – Snapshot

## **Inspire, Empower, Transform** A YEAR OF CHANGE 2023-2024





## Free Walking Group

**Catchup & Connect Walks** are a 'free to join' gathering of local women who motivate each other to spend time outdoors, commit to regular exercise, develop strong community connections, and achieve new goals.

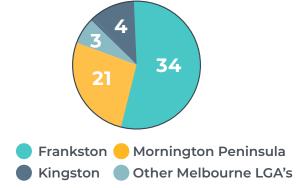
Eight walks catering for all needs were designed by volunteer walk lead Emma Rigby and delivered across Frankston, Kingston, and the Mornington Peninsula.

The walks provided women from the **Spirit Of Transformation** and the broader community with the opportunity to connect, walk and talk. Walks increased in distance and difficulty to support participants in building up their capacity to walk the **Frank to Schanck** 60km Trek in November 2024.

A highlight of the Catchup & Connect Series was for members to join the **Chasing Change Suicide Prevention** Walk in September 2023. The opportunity to be part of this important event and acknowledge those who have passed due to suicide is an important annual event for **The Women's Spirit Project** Team.



AREA DEMOGRAPHIC WHERE THE WOMEN ARE FROM





"Our walks are all about connection – I love hearing the group chatter and laughter ...seeing beaming smiles and knowing in that single moment the impact we have in their lives, simply by walking together. Women supporting women". EMMA RIGBY - WALK LEADER



"These walks are a fabulous opportunity to connect with a wonderful group of positive, welcoming and empowering women in the outdoors, to feel supported and to prepare for the Frank to Schanck walk".

MEL REYNOLDS - RAW TRAVEL



## SPIRIT OF TRANSFORMATION Programs

## Flagship Program

The **Spirit Of Transformation Program** is a FREE 10-13 week evidence based, movement, health and wellbeing program delivered to women experiencing risk factors such as addiction, disability, homelessness, domestic, family and sexual violence, mental health barriers, loneliness and isolation, poverty and unemployment. The program is aimed at supporting women to recover and heal from trauma.

Women who volunteer their time and expertise to mentor participants within the program are equally empowered with skills and strategies to live a healthier life. 'Giving back' to the community also fosters a sense of purpose antd satisfaction. Program activities included group fitness training; walking and yoga; goal setting; art, mindfulness activities including meditation and journaling; communication skills; boundary setting and the introduction and referral to community support and specialist services.

The combination of activities supported women to develop skills, motivation and strategies to recover and prevent challenges from reoccurring or escalating. Women also established connections and friendships that create a sense of belonging. This led, for example, to the establishment of their own walking group and online channel to stay connected beyond the completion of the program.

### 3 | MORNINGTON PENINSULA

AUG - NOV 2023 | 2704 Hours

#### 5 Activities – 20 sessions

- 1. Interviews
- 2. Mentor Training
- 3. 10-week program, 5 hrs per week
- 4. Working Group meetings
- 5. Reference checking

# 4 FRANKSTON KINGSTON

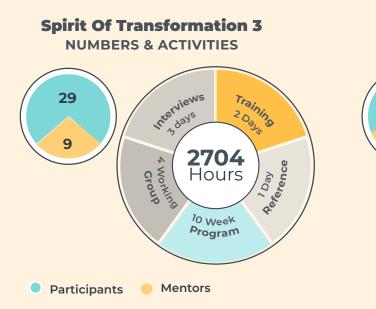
#### MAR - JUN 2024 | 2766 Hours

#### 5 Activities – 21 sessions

- 1. Interviews
- 2. Mentor Training
- 3. 11-week program, 5 hrs per week
- 4. Working Group meetings
- **5.** Reference checking

# **Spirit Of Transformation**

### **Snapshot Of Program Statistics**



**Spirit Of Transformation 4 NUMBERS & ACTIVITIES** Interviews Training 27 2 Days 3 days

4

\* Working Group

2766

Hours

11 Week

Program

### **Top 4 Risk Factors Affecting Participants**



87% Mental Health Barriers



79% Social Isolation/ Loneliness



11

84% Low Self-Esteem



Porerence

100% Health & Fitness

### **Employment / Carer / Study**



Employed Full Time



Employed

Part Time

UnEmployed



Retired



Carer



Study Part Time

## Spirit Of Transformation

### **Participant's Journey**

SOT 4, MARCH - JUNE 2024

Before the Spirit of Transformation program. I had been unemployed for many years and isolated, I had no hope for the future. I recently got casual employment at a café and had only just started university. I was hospitalised for many years due to a chronic mental health condition. I believed that long walks would help with my recovery and doing so gave me a sense of freedom. I felt hopeless and the pain just got worse. I was at severe risk of homelessness and extremely depressed. My health worker asked me if I had heard about the Women's Spirit Project. I was so scared

walking into my first interview. I could feel the anxiety building up.

Through the program I quickly learnt that the connection of being around other women going through hard times and going through my recovery journey with other people is not only possible but essential to living my best life despite life struggles. I also built my confidence and learnt new strengths and values I did not know I have, like resilience and courage.

Completing the spirit of transformation program has been a life-changing

experience for me. Before starting the program, I felt stuck in a very unhealthy place. I was welcomed into an inclusive, nonjudgmental environment where I have been able to change negative patterns, cultivate a positive mindset, and develop healthier habits.

The program has not only helped me overcome my past struggles but has also empowered me to create a more fulfilling future. I am sincerely grateful for this journey and thankful for everyone involved.

"Imagine if this program was rolled out across Australia – imagine what a better world it would be if we all had that sense of connection. If other people could feel what I have through the program, it would lift society up as a whole."

PARTICIPANT SOT 3 AUG - NOV 2023







# Spirit Of Transformation

### **Monash University Program Evaluation**

Monash University delivered their formal evaluation report to us in February 2024. The comprehensive evaluation of our **Spirit of Transformation (SOT)** programs equips us with a robust evidence base to substantially demonstrate the effectiveness of our programs.

The overall evaluation found wellbeing improvements for both participants and mentors in the programs, with the most notable improvements demonstrated in the participant group. The significant gains from the program included fitness, health, wellbeing, social connection, and altruism.

The report findings noted 'The impact for all participants is far reaching extending beyond participants to encompass family and friends as well as others supporting the overall Project, and over time beyond the Spirit Of Transformation iterations.' While the program primarily focusses on healing and recovery, it is also contributing to health promotion and prevention.

#### Participant

"The program has helped my mental and physical health. It has made me feel more confident that I can do many different forms of exercise and has shown me ways that I can implement these strategies easily into daily life."

#### Mentor

"I am feeling very good in my body and learning to love the body I am in, as I am in a group of very diverse looking women. I love and value them, so why would I not love and value myself? It's a work in progress, but I have come a LONG way from when I started."

#### **Participant**

"The program has given me the opportunity to grow, to recognise my emotions; helped me to understand these emotions; taught me problem-solving skills and given me confidence, in an encouraging, safe and secure environment."

#### Mentor

"WSP reminded me about setting boundaries which I took into my home life, clearly stating expectation about behaviours in the house with regards to the domestic work!"

#### Participant

"I have accessed a lot of government and community services during the years I have lived in Australia, but this program was the best. It is holistic in nature, looking at all aspects of health and well-being. Unlike other stand-alone services like counselling, neighbourhood houses, and family services, it provides you with sense of support and community. Often part of the solution is just to feel like you belong and are not alone with life's challenges."





### More Than A White Picket Fence

When I was young, I lived in a world Where children were to be seen and not heard The message for girls was to marry And proudly parade with a baby carriage.

To me this made absolutely no sense Life is about more than a white picket fence At age 13 my world turned upside down A biopsy of my left leg ensured my cancer was found.

Plunged into a world of illness and death Always wondering if I would be next Losing my leg, my hospital friends and my health And no one could tolerate me saying how I felt

I emerged to navigate a very different life For so many things I had to fight I made people provd and played the clown Stuffing my trauma and my feelings down.

Along the way I found support And processed the trauma and tamed my thoughts I built a career but always felt I had to hide away the story of myself.

Along came this thing called SOT It has given me such a lot Sharing my story is important to who I am today That story gives me strength in so many ways.

So today, I practice sharing some of my journey In addition to some professional learnings Thank you for giving me the strength & confidence to find The courage to no longer hide.

> Participant Spirit of Transformation 3, Dec 2023

Gernenis Spirit Circle,

SEASONAL SERIES

## Women's Spirit Circle

An inspiring series of **Women's Spirit Circles** were enjoyed by women over the past year, combining local food; sound healing; singing and mindfulness. Providing local access to women across three locations, each Circle celebrated our diversity within the context of the seasonal changes of summer, autumn, winter and spring.

Our **Women's Spirit Circle** events are open to all local women in the community to join and celebrate our uniqueness, meet new friends, connect and enjoy good company together.

### Women's Circle

DEC 2023

In December, this **Women's Circle** was attended by volunteers, members, and key supporters – an exceptional affirmation of the impact and value of the way we support women in our community to transform their lives. Our short film **'I am Enough'** was shown, followed by an inspiring celebration, reflecting on the vision and achievements of the **Women's Spirit Project** – supporting women from all walks of life to see what they are capable of and begin to realise their hopes, dreams, and aspirations.





Women's Spirit Circle

Spirit Circle,

SEASONAL SERIES

### Hope Circle

FEB 2024

Twenty-five women gathered to focus on our hopes and dreams for 2024 in Mordialloc. A highlight was the Wayapa movement session provided by Justine and the creation of a group mandala.



### Winter Solstice Circle

JUNE 2024

Our Winter Solstice Women's Circle was designed to deepen our sense of rest and recovery, tap into our inner wisdom, planting the seed of new beginnings. In the depths of winter, 45 women attended this circle facing the wild sea from the safety of our cozy space provided by the Frankston Yacht club on the foreshore.





### INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY MARCH 8 WALK • MEDITATE • SWIM

## March 2024

# Inaugural Walk

The Women's Spirit Project's inaugural, 'Walk for Women' was held to inspire and empower women and girls in celebration of International Women's Day.

Over 100 WSP supporters came together to celebrate steps taken toward gender equity and raise awareness about the work still to be done.

Participants joined for the Coastal Walk from Frankston to Seaford return, making the most of the beach setting on a beautiful sunny day. Followed by a powerful keynote address shared by **Women's Spirit Project** ambassador Jackie Galloway AOM, CEO Peninsula Legal Service and Jo Kowalczyk CEO Women in Super.





## Community Engagement & Advocacy

### **Sharing Our Stories**

Over the past 12 months, the Women's Spirit Project expanded our audience reach and engagement via traditional and digital media. Powerful storytelling content across the pillars **'Inspire, Empower, Transform'** focussed on inspiring content, engaging visuals and participating women sharing their journeys of transformation.

#### **Social Media**

Social Media – in particular Facebook continues to be the key platform for engaging participants in **Women's Spirit Project** programs.

All social media channels saw an increase in membership across both Public and Private Pages:

- The WSP Public Page grew by 32% to 2.2k followers.
- Membership of the Women's Spirit Project
   'Walk4Wellbeing' Private Facebook Group grew to 816 highly engaged women who are actively participating in walking and other fitness, health, and wellbeing activities.
- The Women's Spirit Project launched new Private Pages for the 40 members of each Spirit of Transformation Program, highly interactive pages with group members posting several times a day, focussed on staying connected and supporting each other
- The **Women's Spirit Project** also grew its Instagram channel reaching 357 followers
- The **Women's Spirit Project's** LinkedIn channel targets a professional audience and has more than doubled to 440 followers.

Our social media has been generously supported by Women's Health in the South East and our wonderful volunteer social media guru Alyssa Bruce.

#### **Print Media**

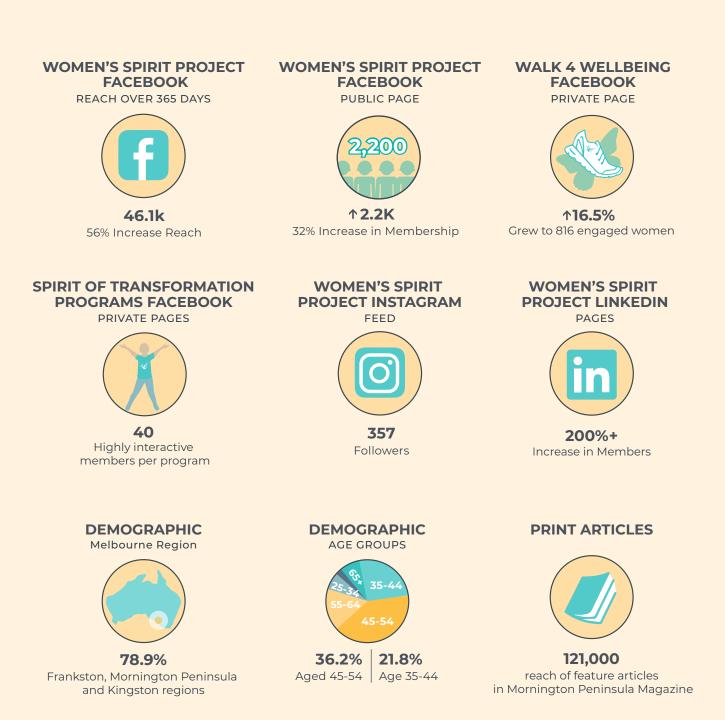
The **Women's Spirit Project** has continued to be regularly featured in print media. We are grateful for publishers and journalists shining a light on our work and raising awareness of our cause.

In addition, print posters and flyers formed an important aspect of program promotion with distribution focussed around the Frankston / Kingston and Mornington Peninsula regions. Pressroom Philanthropy has once again supported all our printing requirements and Ray White Frankston has shared our materials far and wide with local audiences.



## Community Engagement & Advocacy

### **Communication Engagement Outcomes**



# **Financial Contributions**

### **Financial Support - Profit & Loss**

Over the 2023-2024 financial year, the **Women's Spirit Project** was successful with a number of grant applications.

#### Our fundraising target for 2023-2024 was \$250,000 we exceeded our program goal reaching \$286,346

Income		\$286,346
Grants Donations Interest Sponsorship Raffle, Event Sales, Merch Sales	209,918 55,141 1,109 7,700 12,478	
Less Cost Of Sales		\$212,498
Grant Writing Expenses Event Expenses Trek Expenses Program Expenses	24,464 8,413 2,273 177,348	
Gross Profit		\$73,848
Less Operating Costs		\$66,522
Admin Support Business Overheads Insurance Marketing & Printing Software Volunteer Expenses - meals, meeting catering, gifts	50,798 10,386 293 4,689 222 134	
Not Drofit		¢7 776

Net Profit

\$7,326

# In Kind Contributions

### **In-Kind Support**

Over the past 12 months the following community members and leaders have supported our work through advocacy, financial advice, marketing advice, venues, as public speakers, presenters on webinars and provision of pro bono support. The in-kind support has been central to the work of evolving our vision. **Women's Spirit Project** thanks you.

#### **Community Members & In-Kind Support**

Carrum Patterson Lakes Sporting Club | Venue Hire

Carr Barnett Accounting | Financial Advice

Frankston Council | Venue Hire, Promotion & Advice

Kingston Council | Venue Hire, Promotion & Advice

Mornington Peninsula Shire | Venue Hire, Promotion & Advice

Innate Design | Design, Branding and Event Styling

Life Energy | Donations

Mornington Peninsula Magazine | Promotion & Marketing

Nairm Marr Djambana | Venue Hire

Peninsula Community Legal Services | Event Speaker & Ambassador

Paul Edbrooke STATE MP FOR FRANKSTON | Guest Speaker/Advocate

Raw Travel | Promotion & Walk Leader Training

Ray White Real Estate | Advertising & Promotion

Russell Kennedy Lawyers | Probono Legal Support

Women's Health in the South East | Governance & Communication

Women In Super | Event Speaker

## Partners, Sponsors & Supporters

### **Our Generous Community**

A range of generous local businesses have donated goods and services between \$25 to \$5000 in value to support our fundraising. Over the course of the year, several local organisations have raised funds for **Women's Spirit Project** as part of their events.

Our Partners who have provided financial and In-kind Support include:

#### **Partners, Sponsors & Supporters**

Anaconda	Nairm Marr Djambana	
Brotherhood of St Laurance	Raw Travel Ray White Frankston	
Carr Barnett Accountants CCI Giving	Ray White Frankston Rotary Russell Kennedy Lawyers	
City of Casey City of Kingston	Soroptimists International South Eastern Melbourne PHN	
Frankston City Council Frankston High Street Uniting Church	Smart Business Solutions Group Snow Angel Cleaning	
Frankston Social Enterprise Hub	Victorian State Government	
Lifeview Active Vibrant Living	WHISE – Womens Health in the South East	
Monash University Mornington Peninsula Magazine	Women in Business – Mornington Peninsula Women in Super	
Mornington Peninsula Shire	Supporters	
<b>PARC – Peninsula Aquatic Recreation Centre</b> Peninsula Bike Skillds Peninsula Community Legal Centre	e Body Art Boomerang Bags Frontline Wellness	
Peninsula Hot Springs Pressroom Philanthropy	Innate Design Life Energy	













#### Frankston Social Enterprise Hub

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to the team at Frankston Social Enterprise Hub.

The Women's Spirit Project have benefited from their generosity and on-going support. The hub has provided us with meeting spaces and their valuable mentorship, their contributions have been pivotal in our journey to empower and foster positive change for women in our community.

We especially recognise our incredible social enterprise mentor, Lisa Boothby. Lisa has provided us with strategic advice and insights that have helped grow our reach and impact.

"The Frankston Social Enterprise Hub mentoring support has enabled the Women's Spirit Project to identify services and programs they can offer for a fee to help offset their highly valued free programs for disadvantaged women... ensuring their unique approach to trauma recovery can continue into the future"

LISA BOOTHBY SOCIAL ENTERPRISE MENTOR

## Womens' Spirit Project Team

### Across 2023–2024, 55 volunteers contributed 3600 hours equalling 480 workdays valued at \$187,200

### **Our Team**

A small, dedicated team were contracted this year to fulfil strategic and operational program delivery and participant support requirements. It is important to note that all team members contributed significant volunteer hours on top of their paid hours to support the delivery of WSP activities and achieve the goals set for the year.

#### The investment from the Women's Spirit Project's

**'Team'** over the past year has been incredible. We have continued to dig deep, resulting in significant impact and outcomes for women in our community. The commitment of our pro bono Directors, Volunteers and Staff has ensured our viability to deliver quality programs for women across the Frankston, Kingston, and Mornington Peninsula region.

### **Our Board Of Directors**

Our fabulous Board of Directors provide their expertise and genuine passion to lead and inspire what we do. They all roll up their sleeves with a smile and provide the commitment, enthusiasm and guidance for us all.

#### **Our Team Members**

Jodie Belyea Managing Director

Jane Price Acting Exec Manager

Birte Moliere Brand & Impact Lead

Melissa Flores Project Coordinator

Juanita Sanger Health & Fitness Lead

**Louise Dunne** Mentor Lead & Women's Circle Faciliator

**Melanie Peterssen** Grant & Fundraising/ Volunteer Coordinator Lynn Holt Grant & Fundraising

Theresa Credlin Fitness Facilitator

**Christina Sawaya** Fitness Facilitator

Emma Rigby CUC Walk Lead

Kate Park Bookkeeper

Kerry Strickland Cultural Advisor

**Greer Watson** Branding & Design

**Jackie Galloway** WSP Ambassador

#### Directors

Kathy Heffernan Women's Spirit Project Director and Chair

Catherine Baird Director

Helen Beeby Director

Rachel Rice Director and Treasurer

#### **Team Update**

We are delighted to announced the appointment of our new Managing Director, **Suzanne Murphy** 





Spirit

Project







## Volunteers

### Our Incredible Volunteers

Our Volunteers are the backbone of the Women's Spirit Project. Across 2023-2024, 55 volunteers contributed 3600 hours equal to 480 workdays & valued at \$187,200.

The work of the **Women's Spirit Project** could not be achieved without the substantial contributions by dedicated, professional women and men from all walks of life with diverse skills across a range of professions including governance, accounting, administration, book-keeping, community services, graphic design, employment services, learning and development, logistics, nursing, project management, outdoor education, psychology, social work, and travel industry.

We are proud to report that the number of volunteers contributing to the **Women's Spirit Project** continues to increase. We would like to thank the women and men who have given so much to support the delivery of our programs and events over the past twelve months. An incredible effort.

We can continue to support women to transform their lives because of the work of our **Women's Spirit Project** Team and the community of support that gathers around us and cheers us on. To all of you who have backed us and supported us – a heartfelt thank you for all you do. It gives us the motivation and inspiration to keep on keeping on.

## Future Directions - Our Vision

### Women's Spirit Project – The Year Ahead

To manifest our vision to **Inspire, Empower and Support Women to Transform their lives**, in particular women recovering from trauma, the Women's Spirit Project has five pillars that guide our short, medium and long-term goals and workplan.

1	<b>Strengthen:</b> Organisational Excellence	<b>1.</b> Strengthen organisational capacity, capability & governance to continue to evolve <b>2.</b> Growth strategy for new programs/regions/ audiences include young women, mums and daughters, culturally and linguistically diverse and corporate sectors.	
2	<b>Collaborate:</b> Stakeholder Relations and Partnerships	<b>1.</b> Increase the variety of partners that support implementation of the strategy <b>2.</b> Implement a philanthropic engagement strategy linking with social impact and place-based program models and social enterprise development.	
3	<b>Understand:</b> Research and Insights	<b>1.</b> Build evidence to inform planning and advocacy of the value and need for WSP programs and activities. <b>2.</b> Share our research findings with key stakeholders to underpin advocacy work <b>3.</b> Program outcomes and participant, volunteer and member engagement and satisfaction measured as part of evaluation activities.	
4	<b>Promote and Advocate:</b> Profile Building	<ol> <li>Continue to strengthen WSP profile and brand awareness.</li> <li>Corporate impact profile: Produce annual impact and outcomes report and share with key stakeholders 3. Strategic speaking opportunities at key events, forums and seminars.</li> </ol>	
5	Activate: Program Delivery	<b>1.</b> Deliver free and fee for service activities/ programs that respond to community needs <b>2.</b> Deliver Professional and Personal Development training including: Mentor Training, Train the Trainer Training, Walk Leader Training, Bystander Training, Leadership Development Training, Trauma Informed and Lived Experience Facilitation Training, Cultural Diversity Training, First Aid Training	



### Strategic Focus 2024-2025

- Sustaining and scaling what we offer though fundraising and grants
- Generating income by diversifying our offerings to include fee for service healing and recovery activities and programs
- Focusing on developing strong partnerships with community, government at all levels, business, and philanthropy
- Promoting our activities through various channels including distribution of the 'I Am Enough' documentary to create awareness and engagement across the state
- Employing qualified and experienced staff and volunteers to support the delivery of our vision and mission into the future
- Strengthen our governance, risk management and expertise. Reinforce the quality of our programs and activities by investing in ongoing professional development and training
- Continuing to strengthen our data collection processes and systems, to provide the necessary evidence of the impact of what we deliver and ensure continuous improvement.

#### What Can You Do?

Support us to continue to inspire and empower women who have experienced disadvantage and grow our programs across the region.

**Partnership & Donation Enquiries** suzanne@womensspiritproject.org **General Enquiries** hello@womensspiritproject.org

Visit Our Website www.womensspiritproject.org



Together, we can **inspire**, **empower** and support women in our community to **transform** their lives.

Somer's Spirit Project

Inspire, Empower, Transform