

ANNUAL REPORT

Women with Disabilities ACT

1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020

Winner 2012 International Women's Day Award, Community Category

Winner 2015 ACT Chief Minister's Inclusion Awards, Excellence in Championing Human Rights

STRONG WOMEN STRONG VOICES

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WWDACT DIRECTORS' REPORT 2020

Your Directors present their Report and Financial Accounts on the Company for the 12 months ended 30 June 2020.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

WWDACT acknowledges the assistance of the ACT Government under the Office for Disability in making it possible to undertake our work.

Women With Disabilities ACT acknowledges and pays respect to the Ngunnawal peoples, the traditional custodians of the ACT Region, on whose land our office is located. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging. We acknowledge their spiritual, social, historical and ongoing connection to these lands and the contribution they make to the life of the Australian Capital Territory.

DIRECTORS

The names of the Directors in Office at any time during the reporting period are:

Louise Bannister
Kerry Marshall
Dianne McGowan
Sue Salthouse
Belinda O'Connor
Karen Hedley (to October 2019)
Maree Pavludis (to November 2019)
Vanamali Hermans (since November 2019)
Katie Shoemark (since November 2019)

OPERATING RESULTS

The attached financial reports are for the period 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020.

The Company finished the 2019-2020 Financial Year with a total equity of \$, and net profit of \$.

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN STATE OF AFFAIRS

There have been no significant changes in the State of Affairs of the Company during the reporting period.

COMPANY OBJECTIVES

The Vision, Mission, Object & Purposes of the Company are set out in Section 3 of the Constitution.

1. WWDACT is committed to the vision of an inclusive society in which women¹ with disabilities live meaningful lives as part of the community.
2. WWDACT is committed to a vision of human rights as a fundamental part of social justice and is guided by the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and other human rights instruments.
3. WWDACT is a Disabled People's Organisation, which means it is majority owned and managed by people with disabilities, in this case women with disabilities.
4. WWDACT's Mission is to represent women with disabilities in the ACT and region through feminist and human rights frameworks, including undertaking systemic advocacy on their behalf to address inequality and multiple disadvantage (intersectional discrimination).
5. WWDACT's Object is to seek to overcome the poverty, and the social and economic disadvantages resulting from disability, particularly the disadvantage caused by the intersection of gender and disability. It shall do this by:
 - (a) representing women with disabilities;
 - (b) providing systemic advocacy for women with disabilities;
 - (c) influencing policies of Governments and society to support the principles of inclusion of women with disabilities in the life of the community;
 - (d) providing information to women with disabilities; and
 - (e) providing information and advice to Government and the community on practices to address inequality and disadvantage, of women with disabilities through a human rights framework.

STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE OBJECTIVES

The Company's strategies to achieve its objectives are outlined in the Principal Activities section below. WWDACT systemic advocacy in areas of relevance to women with disabilities consists of intensive and extensive promotion of the interests of constituents to Government and civil society organisations. WWDACT's further brief is to provide information to

¹ Women denotes women, girls, non-binary persons and feminine identifying persons.

constituents about government policies and programs and to ensure that Government is kept informed of issues raised by ACT women with disabilities.

KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES

A successful outcome of the Company's systemic advocacy is measured in terms of:

1. consideration of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of women with disabilities as integral components of policies and programs developed by both government and community organisations.
2. Provision of information on policies and programs given to women with disabilities through consultations, forums and newsletters.
3. Provision of information to Government on the issues and concerns of ACT women with disabilities.

PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES

The Company acknowledges the assistance it receives from the ACT Government under the Office for Disability to undertake its activities.

ADVOCACY

WWDACT has undertaken systemic advocacy in areas of relevance to women with disability through the following activities.

Advisory Group Membership

It is important that issues for women with disabilities are considered in the development of gender-related policies and programs. WWDACT director Louise Bannister led the implementation of the ACT Women's Plan through her role as Chair of the Ministerial Advisory Council on Women (MACW). She also represented us on disability matters through her contribution to the ACT Disability Reference Group (DRG). Members are given regular feedback about proceedings from both these groups and have an opportunity to have input to surveys and other deliberations.

In addition, WWDACT Chair, Sue Salthouse maintained membership on the Disability Advisory Group for the Justice and Community Safety Directorate to improve employment of people with disabilities and the employment experience of existing staff with disabilities. Sue continued her membership on the Survey of Disability and Carers (SDAC) Advisory Group and had membership of the National Foundation of Australian Women Social Policy Advisory Group.

WWDACT CEO, C Moore coordinated the ACT Disability Advocacy Network (ACTDAN) which is activated on an 'as needs' basis. They were also a member of the HCCA Access and Design Reference Group and the First 1000 Days Early Childhood Strategy Reference Group.

WWDACT is a member of the Australian Federation of Disability Organisations (AFDO) and benefits from the CEO network of the eighteen member organisations.

Participation in Meetings/Forums

WWDACT Directors and staff have been active in their participation in meetings during the year. These have included 5 meetings on Health, 4 forums on Housing, 4 forums on identifying and addressing Domestic and Family Violence, a skype meeting with the incoming Disability Commissioner, 2 forums on gender equality in the ACT, 2 meetings to discuss emerging issues for people with disabilities due to COVID 19, a combined social media forum to target marginalised communities for consultation during COVID 19, 2 meetings to discuss data collection and statistics for women with disabilities, 4 general meetings on civil society matters and 3 meetings concerned with implementation of UN Human Rights conventions and associated schemes such as the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and the National Disability Agreement (NDA).

Policy Papers

WWDACT has had continuous input into local and federal government policy development through its submissions to inquiries and responses to discussion papers.

As is tradition, WWDACT contributed to the Canberra Times/People with Disabilities ACT I-Day Supplement to mark International Day of People with Disabilities.

WWDACT endorsed a number of reports including the NGO Shadow Report to the CRPD and DPO Australia's call for an NDIA Sexuality Policy. WWDACT co-signed ACTCOSS' letter on Human Rights and Medical Decisions during COVID 19 and letter to the NDIA on Continuity of Services during COVID 19, and ADACAS' letter to ACT Health regarding Group Homes during COVID 19. WWDACT endorsed the List of Issues related to COVID 19 published by AFDO and other National Peaks, and carried out a survey of women with disabilities in the ACT regarding COVID 19.

WWDACT made submissions to the Review of the NDIS Act and Participant Service Guarantee, the ACT Budget 2020-21 Consultation, the Religious Freedoms Bill, the Inquiry into Planning for the Surgical Procedures, Interventional Radiology and Emergency Centre (SPIRE) and the Canberra Hospital campus and immediate surrounds, and the Response to the Royal Commission Issues Paper on Group Homes.

Projects

I-Day 2019 WWDACT ran a panel discussion on the UN Sustainable Development Goals featuring WWDACT members with relevant experience as experts on the panel.

Social Drop-Ins WWDACT has continued to hold regular social events called Social Drop-Ins. In 2019 we trialed a virtual drop in format using video conferencing to include women who are unable to join us at physical events. This was a useful trial, as in 2020 we have had to move the Social Drop-Ins online due to COVID 19. These events provide women with networking and peer support opportunities with their community and allies.

NDIS ILC Project WWDACT was successful in receiving a grant from the 2018 NDIS DPFO Round which has allowed us to produce a series of 10 peer-led workshops exploring supported decision making and self-advocacy for women with disabilities. These workshops were moved online in 2020 due to COVID 19 restrictions, which enabled participants from other Australian states and territories to register. There was also an organisational capacity building component of the project, which enabled us to develop a range of policies and procedures for members, representatives and Board members.

Royal Commission Advocacy WWDACT received a grant from DANA to enable work on the Royal Commission. Part of this grant was used to commission research into the effects of COVID 19 on women with disabilities in the ACT.

Youth Leadership Project Due to COVID 19 the *Pitch Your Passion* event had to be postponed and moved into a virtual format. It became a live streamed show launched in July 2020 with six participants.

Direct Feedback to Governments & Community

WWDACT CEO and Chair have met with ministerial advisers and policy officers. In addition contributions were made to consultations on the ACT Budget 2020-21, the Inquiry into Planning for the Surgical Procedures, Interventional Radiology and Emergency Centre (SPIRE) and the Canberra Hospital campus and immediate surrounds, the National Management and Operational Guidelines for People with Disability, Canberra Health Services strategic plan and the ACT COVID 19 Pandemic Ethical Guidelines and Triage Process. WWDACT made contribution to meetings of a range of civil society Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) including presenting at the HACS hearing into Maternity Services in the ACT and participating in the ACT Disability Sector Forums. In addition WWDACT has participated in a working group on Menstrual Suppression with the Senior Practitioner.

WWDACT has maintained a media presence with interviews on radio and in print about accessibility of women's shelters and crisis services, the impacts of new opiate medication regulations on people with chronic pain, contraception and consent, NDIS and gender. As in previous years, WWDACT continues to give information and advice in response to individual inquiries from constituents, other NGO staff and staff in government departments.

Presentations

WWDACT has given a number of presentations over the year, including on leadership and diversity, accessible housing, disability awareness, access to the NBN and the significance of the Redefining Leadership exhibition. The CEO participated in a video with the Community

Services Directorate promoting the Know Your Neighbour cards and resources and was a panellist discussing the intersectionality of domestic violence and women's safety after dark in the ACT.

INFORMATION

Website

The WWDACT website has expanded in use and popularity, with almost 11,000 views over the year. This online presence enables members to join electronically and is the repository for all papers and reports over more than a decade of work. Significant speeches, media releases and calls to action are also shared on the site. The Fortnightly e-Bulletins are also posted online.

WWDACT Bulletin

WWDACT published 23 fortnightly e-Bulletins during the year. Each bulletin contains topical information about gender and/or disability issues and includes information on local, national and international news and events of relevance to women with disabilities. The e-Bulletin has 357 subscribers.

SOCIAL MEDIA

WWDACT Facebook

WWDACT has increased its Facebook likes to more than 1200, an increase which has been occurring consistently over each quarter since the launch of our website. WWDACT also has a private discussion group for our community members, and is the preferred form of information sharing according to our audience.

Twitter - @WWDACT

@WWDACT has 472 followers, increasing by over 10% per 6-month period, and is following 376 individuals/organisations. WWDACT tweets regularly on WWDACT news, invitations to WWDACT and other events, advocacy around the country and disability or gender items.

Instagram- @wwdact

WWDACT began using Instagram to connect with a wider audience. This account has 438 followers and regularly posts about events and announcements.

STAFF

C Moore

Chief Executive Officer

C (Cee) joined WWDACT as CEO in 2018, bringing their skills in community engagement, online media and systemic advocacy. They have a particular interest in access to health care,



equity in housing, and intersectionality in advocacy. They are a proudly genderqueer and disabled person. They are keen to work on the intersection of gender and disability. They were born and raised in Canberra and began advocating for their peers as a teenager on their school board.

C is particularly passionate about housing and health and has served on the board of Better Renting, and as a consumer representative with the Health Care Consumers Association of the ACT. They are a graduate of the Disability Leadership Institute Future Shapers program, and the winner of the 2018 Chief Minister's Inclusion Award for Emerging Young Leader.

Kathy Ehmann

Communications and Administration Officer

Kathy joined WWDACT in August 2018. Kathy comes to us with a diverse experience of customer service, administration and communications. Kathy reliably updates the WWDACT subscriber and membership lists and sends out our fortnightly newsletters. She has a passion for making our community kinder and fairer for all people.

Ajar Sana

Community Engagement Officer

Ajar has taken on the position of community engagement from her experience with advocacy of disability for students at the Australian National University. She conducts the WWDACT Representatives program and hosts all our engagement activities, such as social drop ins and consultations. She is especially interested in access to education, restorative practices, and recognition of intersectional power dynamics.

DIVIDENDS PAID OR RECOMMENDED

The memorandum of association of the Company prohibits the payment of dividends.

INFORMATION ON DIRECTORS

Information on directors for the 2019-2020 financial year is as follows:

Karen Hedley

WWDACT Director

Karen has been working with people with disabilities for 30 years. She has a focus on human rights and self-advocacy, and a growing interest in the specific issues facing women. She was awarded the ACT Chief Minister's Inclusion Award for Lifetime Achievement in Support Work in 2015. Karen aims to empower, influence and inform others and to this end she has established a number of successful blogs and Facebook groups and pages relating to disability, and continues her career in the community sector.

WWDACT accepted Karen's resignation in October 2019 so she could accept a job with the Disability Royal Commission.

Sue Salthouse

WWDACT Chair

Sue was an educator and disability rights advocate, and worked in both education and disability in Central Australia, Nepal, and Italy. She was a member of the University of Canberra Council from 2012 to 2018, and was the ACT Representative on the Independent Advisory Council of the National Disability Insurance Scheme. She was the immediate past Co-Chair of the Disability Reference Group advising the ACT Government on the implementation of the National Disability Strategy. She has been an inaugural board member, and Chair of the Australian Communications Consumer Action Network, and is a former president of Women With Disabilities Australia. She has advocated for improved access to services, education and employment for women with disabilities. She was 2020 ACT Senior of the Year, 2015 Canberra Citizen of the Year, 2014 ACT Senior Woman of the Year, and a nominee for the 2014 Senior Australian of the Year.

Dianne McGowan

WWDACT Treasurer

Di is a qualified bookkeeper and has worked extensively in both the disability sector and the private sector. She has been a member of WWDACT since it was first formed in 1995 and has supported the organisation with financial advice since its inception. She worked as the bookkeeper for Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA) for a number of years when the national office was located in Canberra.

Louise Bannister

WWDACT Director

Louise has been involved with WWDACT since 1998 and works to promote health and wellbeing for women with disabilities including improving access to women's health screening

services. She is passionate about the right for individual choice and control and about creating a fully inclusive community through mentoring, education, advocacy, and leadership. Louise represents WWDACT on the Ministerial Advisory Council on Women as its Chair; and on the ACT Disability Reference Group. She is the former Deputy Chair of the Disability Advisory Council, and continues to work with ACT Health and the government to improve women with disabilities' access to services and education. Louise has been recognised for her work in the community. She was awarded the Chief Minister's Award for Inclusion by an Individual (2012), and was a Finalist in the Women of Spirit Awards (2009), and a National Finalist for the Australian Centre for Leadership of Women Leadership Achievement Award (2006).

Maree Pavloudis
WWDACT Director

Maree is interested and involved with different things like Public Housing, Accessible Housing, Health, Aged Care, Disabilities and helping the community. She returned to Australia six years ago and for the past five she has been living in Public Housing. She became involved in advocacy with the relocation of tenants from Owen Flats on Northbourne Avenue as part of the Housing ACT Renewal program. This led her to become a member of the Tenants Consultative Group at HACT and then to creating a Facebook page exclusively for ACT Housing tenants to be able to voice their concerns about their tenancy and help each other with problems and solutions around everyday life. Maree is a recent Board member of the Belconnen Community Council.

Maree was a Board Director until November 2019.

Kerry Marshall
WWDACT Director

Born with Spina Bifida, Kerry is a Social Worker and qualified counsellor. She has a keen interest in mental health, mentoring, inclusion, human rights and social justice. Kerry has been a Canberra resident for more than 40 years and is passionate about improving the profile, status and lives of women with disabilities in the ACT and Region. She has been a member of WWDACT for several years and a Board Director since 2017.

Belinda O'Connor
WWDACT Director

Born with vision impairment, Belinda has forged a life of ongoing growth in personal self-advocacy as a person with disability and for people with disability. For the past 15 years Belinda has worked in various portfolios across the Australian Government, currently in public policy. She is passionate about improving disability workforce participation and inclusive practices, including through universal design and assistive technology. During this time, Belinda has been actively involved in disability networks and is currently working with other people with disability to establish with the Digital Transformation Agency a disability network

for innovation and technology inclusion. In 2017 Belinda founded Bioptic Drivers Australia and is working with a multi-disciplinary team to advocate to formalise bioptic driving in Australia.

Katie Shoemark
WWDACT Director

Katie is a twenty-something who begrudgingly has come to realise that she embodies the sentiments of cross-stitch cushions such as “be the change you want to see in the world.” Katie moved down to Canberra from Sydney in 2012 to study at ANU. Throughout university she was involved in a variety of advocacy positions and fought for a range of (often intersecting) social justice issues.

Katie is passionate about tackling issues at the systemic level, but wrestles with how to work as a systemic advocate while also trying to see positive changes at an individual and community level. Katie lives with Ehlers Danlos Syndrome, fibromyalgia and clinical anxiety, and was a WWDACT Board trainee before joining the Board as a Director in 2019.

Vanamali (Mali) Hermans
WWDACT Director

Vanamali (Mali) Hermans is a 21 year old Wiradjuri woman who was born and raised in the community of Murwillumbah, a small town in Bundjalung country on the Far North Coast of NSW, Australia.

Mali lives with hidradenitis suppurativa (HS) and fibromyalgia, and is a staunch disability rights activist. This work has largely been motivated by the death of her mother Julie Hermans, who was also a disabled woman. Julie died this year after medical negligence at the Canberra Hospital – her death is still being investigated by the coroner.

Mali’s community work is extensive, and she strongly believes in grassroots organising and that any analysis of disability in Australia should first and foremost take into account the ongoing impacts of colonisation.

Having graduated from the ANU with an undergraduate degree in sociology, Mali is studying a Master of Social Work through Charles Sturt University. She hopes to promote disability justice and work towards ensuring equitable healthcare through this path.

Christina Ryan
WWDACT Public Officer

Christina has been a member of the WWDACT Steering Committee since its formation in the 1990s and was a member of the inaugural Board in 2016, a position she continued to hold until February 2018. Christina is the Director of the Disability Leadership Institute. She continues as the Public Officer for WWDACT.

MEETINGS OF DIRECTORS

	DIRECTORS' MEETINGS	
	Number eligible to attend	Number attended
Louise Bannister	10	9
Karen Hedley	4	3
Sue Salthouse	10	9
Kerry Marshall	10	10
Dianne McGowan	10	8
Katie Shoemark	5	3
Vanamali (Mali) Hermans	5	3
Belinda O'Connor	10	6
Maree Pavloudis	5	4

The Company is limited by Guarantee. Under Section 6.3 of the WWDACT Constitution, each Member's liability on winding up is limited to a maximum of \$2.00.

MINUTES OF 2019 AGM

**Women with Disabilities ACT
Annual General Meeting
Friday, 29 November 2019
MINUTES**

Present: Sue Salthouse (Chair), C Moore (Minutes), Eleanor Armstrong, Louise Bannister, Natelee Thomas, Vanamali (Mali) Hermans, Kerry Marshall, Di McGowan, Maree Pavludis, Rona Lazo-Treloggen, Mignonne Cullen

Supporters: Jill Moran, Lauren O'Brien, Jonathan Peter, Beth Coster, Bob Bannister, Sumithri Venketasubramanian, Zahabia Adamaly

Apologies: Christina Ryan, Belinda O'Connor, Ruth O'Brien

Welcome and Introduction

The meeting commenced at 6:40pm. Chair, Sue Salthouse, welcomed members and supporters to the meeting, and gave an acknowledgement of the Ngunnawal people as custodians of the land on which the meeting was held.

1. General Business – Chair's Overview of the Year

The Chair gave an overview of the year, Thanking the Office for Disability for funding. She noted Lou Bannister's Representative work, WWDACT's publications such as the NFAW Budget Gender Lens, Contraception and Consent research project, the submissions to the Crimes (Consent) Bill, Libraries ACT, Inquiry and Maternity Services Inquiry. She also noted the projects undertaken and increase in WWDACT's social media and website engagement. She finished by thanking the staff and board for their work.

2. Minutes of the 2018 Annual General Meeting

The Chair noted that the 2018 minutes were distributed prior to the meeting and were tabled. She invited any comment on the minutes. No comments or questions were received

MOTION: That the minutes of the 2018 Annual General Meeting be accepted as tabled.

Moved: Lou Bannister
Seconded: Di McGowan
Passed

3. Annual Report

The Chair noted that the annual report was tabled ahead of the AGM and invited further questions on the report. No questions were received.

MOTION: That the Annual Report be accepted as tabled.



Moved: Maree Pavloudis,
Seconded: Natalee Thomas
Passed

4. Financial Statements

The Chair noted that the Financial Statements had been circulated. She then handed the floor of the meeting to the Treasurer, Dianne McGowan.

The Treasurer then asked for questions about the Financial Reports. No Questions were received.

MOTION: that the Financial Reports for 2018-19 be accepted as tabled.

Moved: Di McGowan
Seconded: Sue Salthouse
Passed

5. Appointment of Auditor for 2019-2020

The Treasurer then handed the floor back to the Chair. The Chair noted that Gaurav Bhatia of IBEX has previously verified WWDACT's accounts and provided sound financial advice. The Chair stated that Gaurav Bhatia has verified the financial statements for 2018-2019 and recommends his appointment for 2019-2020.

MOTION: That Gaurav Bhatia be appointed as WWDACT's auditor for 2019-2020.

Moved: Di McGowan
Seconded: Katie Shoemark
Passed

6. Announcement of Nominations and Elections

The Chair announced that only one nomination, that of Di McGowan, had been received for Treasurer. Di was therefore declared elected unopposed. The Chair outlined that five (5) nominations had been received for two (2) general board positions and introduced the nominees, noting that their bios had been distributed prior to the meeting. No proxies were received.

Bob Bannister was introduced as the Returning Officer. Voting papers and pens were distributed, and ballots cast in the sealed ballot box. The Returning Officer withdrew to the back of the room to count votes.

7. Returning Officer's Report

On return the Returning Officer announced that Katie Shoemark and Mali Hermans had been elected as general board members. The meeting accepted this with applause.

MOTION: That the returning officer's report and election results be accepted.

Moved: Sue Salthouse
Seconded: Mignonne Cullen
Passed

8. Other Business



- The Chair acknowledged Maree Pavloudis as WWDACT roving representative and thanked her for her contribution, Maree then thanked WWDACT for her time on the board and extended congratulations to new board members.
 - Katie Shoemark thanked Sue Salthouse for her work as chair of the board.
9. The meeting closed at 7:20pm