

ENGAGE

LISTEN

ACT

Pro Bono and  
Community Investment  
Report

December 2022

MinterEllison.



# Contents

Cover image:  
Kay and Jeanie – APY Art Centre Collective Artists

## Acknowledgement of Country:

MinterEllison respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Custodians on whose lands we live, work and learn. We offer our respects to Elders past and present and recognise the contribution of First Nations people both within our Firm and those who are part of our broader community.

## Message from the CEO >



**Virginia Briggs**

Managing Partner and CEO –  
Member, MinterEllison RAP Steering Committee

With pride and thanks I share this year's Pro Bono and Community Investment Report with all members of MinterEllison and our broader network of community and client partners.

Every year we have continued to grow and importantly lift the impact of our pro bono and community work that we do in collaboration with our network of partners. Our work is guided by our new Stretch RAP and our long term commitment to breaking cycles of disadvantage.

Our Pro Bono and Community Investment Program continues to focus on areas of complex social challenge: supporting people experiencing or at risk of homelessness; addressing the complexities

of domestic and family violence including important law reform work; supporting refugees from across the globe and closer to home; and building opportunities for young Australians through education and employment pathways.

This has been a landmark year in terms of the growth of the social enterprise movement. I was delighted with reports of the success of the Social Enterprise World Forum and the incredible impact of our firm's partnership with White Box Enterprises and the Westpac Foundation to deliver this event on a global scale. The Forum attracted innovators and leading social finance experts into conversations with the community sector and governments that have the potential

to redefine the way we all do business in Australia creating more sustainable futures for us all.

I hope you enjoy reading our report and learning more about the work that has engaged all members of our firm this year. Our shared values and client partnering has amplified the impact of all that we do each day.

We look forward to the year ahead, particularly as we work with our RAP Steering Committee's First Nations advisors at this time of historic opportunity for all Australians to embrace the generosity of the Uluru Statement from the Heart.

Virginia Briggs

# Pro Bono and Community Investment Program overview

As a purpose-driven organisation, our people are determined to use their skills, expertise and our networks of influence to address complex social challenges. We work in conscious collaboration with our community partners and others who share our values including partnering with our clients.

Our work is shaped by listening, engaging and responding to address cycles of disadvantage and the needs of the most vulnerable in our communities. We recognise the opportunity we have to make a positive impact whether by providing pro bono legal advice, mentoring school students, or through professional volunteering and providing in-kind assistance. Through our charitable giving program our MatchME funding amplifies campaigns led by people throughout the Firm.

Our focus on strengthening the social enterprise sector – through capacity

building, including shared values partnering with clients such as our support of the Westpac Foundation's work, makes a significant contribution to driving systemic social change.

Our Pro Bono and Community Investment Program is driven by a deep commitment to human rights directed across our interconnected strategic pillars and our Reconciliation Action Plan.

In the past year, the firm has invested over 60,000 hours in pro bono legal support to individuals, not-for-profits and social enterprises, seeking to create sustainable futures across our communities.



**Kate Cato**  
Chief Community Officer,  
Sydney



As Australia's largest law firm, a vibrant Pro Bono and Community Investment Program is core to our social licence and important to our clients, our people and the community.

**Our work with social enterprises reflects our commitment to driving systemic change that benefits vulnerable communities and all Australians.**

Our Pro Bono and Community Investment Program is part of our wiring and delivers tangible benefits to our community partners and the development of our people."



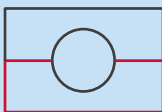
**Human rights and  
access to justice**



**Homelessness  
(including domestic and  
family violence)**



**Empowering  
youth**



**First Nations empowerment**

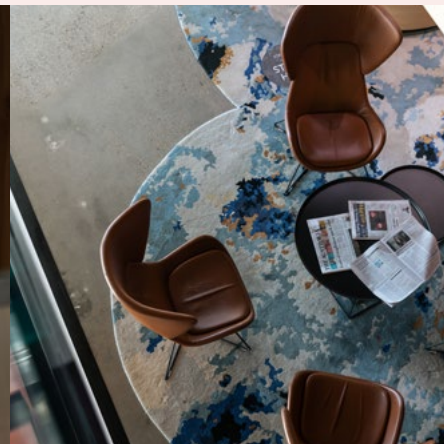


**Keith Rovers**  
National Pro Bono Partner,  
Sydney

# Our approach

Our Pro Bono and Community Investment Program is embedded within, and fundamental to, the firm's strategy and strengthened by our broader sustainability initiatives – Reconciliation, Diversity and Inclusion, Health and Wellbeing and creating sustainable careers and lifelong learning opportunities that engage our people across the firm.

This whole of firm approach and commitment to addressing unmet legal need and breaking cycles of disadvantage is at the core of our social impact strategy. We know that our ability to create positive social impact is enhanced when we bring the whole firm together to support our community partners.



# Impact by the numbers: our achievements

## Time



60,000 hrs

of pro bono  
services provided

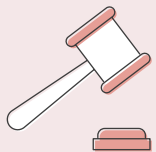
50 hrs

of pro bono work per  
lawyer (on average)



10,000+

hours of community  
investment



122 lawyers

provided 100+ hours  
of pro bono services

51%

of lawyers (graduates to  
special counsel) provided  
pro bono support

52%

of partners involved in  
pro bono

## Clients



595

new matters opened



212

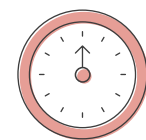
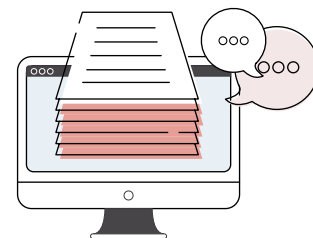
individuals  
assisted  
\*does not include  
all clinic clients



383

organisations  
assisted

## Technology consulting



156

pro bono hours

\$45,890

## RAP pro bono



145

matters



119

timekeepers



\$1.8M

value



119

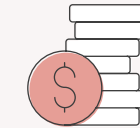
clients



4,569

hours

## Financial impact



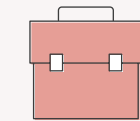
\$22M

of pro bono legal  
services



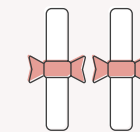
\$360K

donated for community  
relief initiatives



\$200K

in goods and services  
procured from social  
enterprises



13

Scholarships



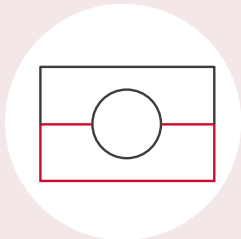
# FY22 priorities



MinterEllison recognised in key industries as working collaboratively with our clients to deliver community impact.



Strategically providing opportunities across the firm to all our people in Pro Bono and Community Investment.



MinterEllison delivering a meaningful contribution to Reconciliation through supporting our people to implement the objectives of our Stretch RAP.



# Partnering with clients to amplify our impact

//

MinterEllison acts as Legal and Tax adviser to the Perth Children's Hospital Foundation (PCHF) in relation to its collaboration with the State of Western Australia and the WA Department of Child and Adolescent Services to design and build Western Australia's first Hospice for children with life limiting illnesses. The impact of this work is a great reminder of the opportunities we have at MinterEllison to make a difference for people's lives now and in the years to come."

**Adam Handley,**

Partner – National Markets and Countries Desk, Project Solutions Perth

//

We are proud to have assisted Women's Environmental Leadership Australia (WELA) since 2021. WELA is an incredible organisation uniting a community of women and gender diverse people to transform Australia's response to our environmental and climate crises. Various practice groups within MinterEllison (including the Community Investment, Tax, Transaction Solutions and Workplace teams) have come together to facilitate the separation of WELA from The Green Institute (which had generously hosted WELA since its inception in 2016). In doing so, MinterEllison worked with WELA to ensure that it can grow and thrive as an independent organisation, including by assisting it in obtaining endorsement as a registered charity by the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission. MinterEllison will continue to support WELA in its future endeavours and wishes it all the very best."

**Pooja Tandon,**

Associate – Tax – Corporate

**Janet Yeung,**

Senior Associate – Transactions Solutions, Sydney

//

Over the last 12 to 18 months the Melbourne ICP Volume group has become increasingly involved in providing pro bono assistance. As the partner leading that work I have found it immensely rewarding to be giving back to the community and truly 'creating lasting impacts'. The work which we have been involved in has varied between advice work to Indigenous communities, the purchase of small businesses and general lease work for charities' head offices. It has been rewarding for the team to undertake pro bono work and grow through those experiences. The gratitude and genuine appreciation we have received from the clients has generated such a positive team culture and goodwill for the both the giver and receiver!"

**Max Cameron,**

Partner – ICP Volume, Melbourne



# Partnering with clients to amplify our impact

## Industry community impact ambitions

Aligned with our broader Pro Bono and Community Investment Program, we're working with our clients and industry groups to deliver community impact across:

### Financial Services



Partnering with clients to facilitate social justice and economic opportunity

### Health



Enabling the delivery of sustainable care and improved public health outcomes

### Real Estate



Creating equal housing opportunities for our communities

### Education



Creating future pathways for First Nations students

### Government



Identifying opportunities to progress Reconciliation with partner agencies

### Infrastructure



Partnering with our clients and industry bodies to leverage our RAP, inclusion and sustainability work

### Energy and Resources



Collaborating with industry to promote diversity and First Nations inclusion



In my capacity as Education Industry Leader our Reconciliation Action Plan sets the context for our community ambitions to improve employment and education outcomes for First Nations people. The impact of our scholarships at tertiary institutions and increasingly support for secondary students as well as a highlight of this year's launch of our second RAP which featured the contribution we have made through our long-standing relationship with Bond University."

**Tom Fletcher,**

Partner – Dispute Resolution, Brisbane, Education Industry leader

# Access to justice for all in our community

An important part of our pro bono program is working in partnership with community legal centres and social justice organisations. We work collaboratively with our partner organisations to deliver legal services to people who experience marginalisation and complex social disadvantage. Our casework also informs the strategic policy work and advocacy of our community partners which supports ongoing law reform and improves outcomes across our communities.

Volunteer lawyers from our Adelaide, Brisbane and Sydney offices were able to recommence face to face appointments at the homeless law clinics which have seen an increase in bookings.

We have assisted many clients to deal with debt problems, make victims assistance applications, access safe and secure tenancies through to providing guidance and support to assist people being referred into other social supports to assist them in breaking cycles of disadvantage.

We also assisted on a number of litigation cases including representing a disabled pensioner in Supreme Court proceedings seeking to preserve his rights and entitlements under a will and preserving his accommodation status whilst a decision is pending.

In response to the growing numbers of Australian women experiencing homelessness, including in NSW, and domestic and family violence being the leading cause of homelessness amongst women, this year has seen our lawyers become involved in the newly launched Women's Homelessness Prevention Service run by the Public Interest Advocacy Centre.

This service provides specialist, holistic support to women, particularly those who are victim-survivors of domestic and family violence and who are at risk of being evicted, homeless, and/or facing other barriers to accessing and maintaining safe and stable housing.

We successfully assisted and represented a vulnerable client who was experiencing ongoing difficulties with mould at the property which was managed by a Community Housing Provider (CHP). The mould was damaging her and her son's health who has epilepsy.

The client complained to the CHP at the beginning of this year but her complaints were ignored or dismissed. A builder's report revealed that the property was uninhabitable and that there was systemic mould, damp, stagnant water and asbestos issues in the building. The CHP had stopped responding to the client's calls and emails.

Due to health concerns, the client's son moved in with his grandmother, and the client became homeless. When we met the client, she had been sleeping in her car and on her friends' sofas. The client suffers from a number of mental health conditions including anxiety, ADHD and complex PTSD which were exacerbated by her situation. She was not eligible for any temporary accommodation because she had a public housing allocation. Further, despite not living at the property for many months due to it being uninhabitable, the client had been paying rent at her usual rate and had also been paying additional rent to catch up on her rental arrears.

We requested an urgent hearing at NCAT to request repairs, rent reduction and compensation. At the final hearing, the client was successful in having the following orders made:

- Repairs to be completed;
- 100% rent reduction for several months, and 50% thereafter (approx. \$3200);
- Compensation awarded for economic loss at about \$3340;
- Compensation awarded for non economic loss at about \$4000.



Wow what a fantastic turn around we received. I just want to thank Anneliese, Amelia and Ella and PIAC for helping me get through this tough and stressful case. You are all such glorious human beings. Your organisation deserves much praise and recognition for all the hard work and efforts helping people like myself and many others. Representing the homeless and less fortunate allowing the opportunity to be treated fairly with the assistance of very dedicated and knowledgeable staff. Thank you for your kind hearts."

**HPLS client**



## Access to justice for all in our community

We believe that access to legal advice and legal services is a fundamental human right, and this underpins our approach to our pro bono work. Through our pro bono practice, we work with organisations that support people who cannot afford to engage a private lawyer and who do not qualify for legal aid.

The majority of this work is done in partnership with community legal centres and advocacy organisations which are experts in the legal and non-legal needs of their communities. In 2022, we received referrals from 18 community legal centres and participated in pro bono clinics with legal services across Australia.

	Secondments	Clinics
ACT	Canberra Community Law StreetLaw (Disability Law)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Canberra Community Law StreetLaw</li> <li>– ACT Law Society Pro Bono Clearing House</li> <li>– Global Sisters</li> </ul>
NSW	Public Interest Advocacy Centre Adara	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Public Interest Advocacy Centre, Homeless Persons' Legal Service and Women's Homelessness Prevention Service</li> <li>– Marrickville Legal Centre</li> </ul>
NT	North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency	
QLD	LawRight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– LawRight Community Health Justice Partnerships</li> <li>– RAILS Afghan Visa Clinic</li> <li>– Women's Legal Service Divorce Clinic</li> <li>– Fair Work Advice Service</li> <li>– LawRight Self Representation Service (State and Federal Court + QCAT)</li> <li>– Caxton Legal Centre (Consumer Debt Clinic + Employment Clinic)</li> </ul>
SA		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Pro Bono Connect</li> <li>– Homeless Legal</li> <li>– JusticeNet Federal Court Self Representation Service</li> </ul>
VIC	Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service JusticeConnect Homeless Law JusticeConnect Not-for-profit Law Human Rights Law Centre Anika Legal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service VOCAT clinic</li> <li>– JusticeConnect Homeless Law</li> <li>– JusticeConnect Self Representation Service</li> </ul>
WA	Street Law Centre Law Access Circle Green Community Legal Centre	



## Access to justice for all in our community

//

I was very fortunate to work with the Disability Discrimination Law team at Canberra Community Law to provide legal advice and assistance to clients. I learned a lot about the importance of giving clients a safe place to tell their stories and the value that we as people with legal training can bring to empower those experiencing disadvantage."

**Lily Butterfield,**

Graduate – Workplace, Canberra

//

I have been very lucky and grateful to be involved in establishing an ongoing secondment arrangement with the North Australian Justice Agency (NAAJA) in Alice Springs. It has been such an inspiring opportunity to contribute to NAAJA's efforts in providing high quality, culturally appropriate legal aid and justice services to Aboriginal people throughout the Northern Territory. I truly believe that this is an exciting opportunity which contributes to the fulfillment of MinterEllison's Reconciliation Action Plan and purpose."

**Liam Dennis,**

Senior Associate – Insurance and Corporate Risk, Sydney



### Our work with Justice Connect

MinterEllison is proud of its longstanding partnership in Victoria with Justice Connect, a legal service that facilitates access to legal support and works to achieve social justice.

In FY22, MinterEllison acted in 44 legal matters referred by Justice Connect and assisted 15 self-represented litigants through Justice Connect's programs. In Melbourne, we were pleased to support Justice Connect's work through the pro bono secondments of **Cameron Inglis, Bec Cunningham and Arabella Close**.



Being involved in Justice Connect's Courting Justice Program, which provides integrated criminal legal representation to Victorians experiencing or at risk of homelessness has been one of my most rewarding experiences. I've been challenged, thrown out of my comfort zone and into the world that is the Magistrates Court of Victoria and, most importantly, I have been able to see the direct impact of my advocacy. Most people accused of crimes aren't actually afforded a lawyer, that is only reserved for those facing jail time, meaning that there is a large cohort of vulnerable people who become entangled in our criminal system by reason of homelessness and/or mental health who don't understand their rights, and are unable to navigate through the legal system. The opportunity to learn, successfully advocate for better outcomes (and on two occasions a withdrawal) and guide someone through an otherwise very stressful experience has truly been a privilege. I have realised more than ever the importance of education."

**Bec Cunningham,**  
Associate – Melbourne  
Secondee to Justice Connect Homeless Law



### Koori VOCAT List assistance

A team of 14 MinterEllison lawyers have been trained by the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service (VALS) to work on applications to the Koori List of the Victims of Crime Assistance Tribunal.

VALS provides invaluable support by preparing referrals and connecting us with their clients who we assist with the preparation of their applications and with appearances in the Tribunal. We are currently working with 25 First Nations clients and so far, more than \$100,000 has been awarded in the orders with many more applications pending. The people we are working with are aged between three and 61 years old.



We advised an individual through the Street Law Centre on his legal options in relation to a complicated family property dispute. We conducted extensive research and provided detailed advice to the client on his legal position and interest in the property."

**John Prevost,**

Partner – Real Estate, Perth

**Alex Hackett,**

Lawyer – Project Solutions, Perth



Working with VALS on this service has enabled us to jointly address a clear unmet area of need in civil law. One of the strengths of our model is VALS' deep client and community relationships whereby the team at VALS introduces us to our clients and is available throughout the running of our matters. It is a true partnership and one which has enabled MinterEllison to directly support people to achieve recognition and financial support following crimes that are often profoundly life-altering events."

**Anna Lyons,**

Pro Bono and Community Investment Manager



VALS and our clients are very grateful for the assistance of MinterEllison in running the VOCAT clinic. Without their hard work 22 of our clients would have likely been unable to file VOCAT applications. These applications can represent a recognition of the harm that these people faced due to being victims of crimes. The awards provide much needed counselling and support services to vulnerable people who have often been let down by the system many times in the past. Access to legal assistance for our regional community can also be a huge struggle and it is really pleasing to see 41% of clients were from regional Victoria. We are looking forward to continuing our work with MinterEllison in the future."

**Siobhan Doyle,**

Senior Lawyer – Civil Law and Human Rights Practice, Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service



## Access to justice for all in our community

### Partnership with Anika Legal

In 2022, MinterEllison worked with Anika Legal, a legal service that uses technology and an innovative service model to provide free legal assistance to Victorian renters. Anika Legal connect renters, who would otherwise be unable to access other free legal assistance, to legal help with rental repairs, eviction matters and bond disputes. We identified a number of ways that we could utilise our digital, legal and professional skills to support Anika's work:

- MinterEllison participated in Anika's first Giving Day, raising over \$23,000;
- In 2022, Charley Orr, our Head of Legal Operations – Consulting Solutions was the first pro bono secondee to Anika. Charley worked on more than 71 repairs matters and used her legal operations skills on a project to map and improve processes; and
- We also helped Anika to develop a suite of self-help resources which will be made available to renters in multiple languages.

We are proud of our growing partnership with Anika Legal and are pleased to support an organisation that similarly embraces technology to drive positive change.



Charley Orr (Head of Legal Operations – Consulting Solutions), Noel Lim (Co-founder and CEO, Anika Legal) and Anna Lyons (Pro Bono and Community Investment Manager) at a 'lunch and learn' session in October 2022



Anika Legal's crucial work helps to keep Victorian tenants in safe homes and provides access to justice to many vulnerable members of our community. I feel very fortunate to have been able to provide legal and operations support to Anika this year as part of a 6 month secondment. The Anika team made the secondment process so easy! They have an innovative technologically focussed growth strategy with inspiring leadership and a very clear purpose. What a great partner for MinterEllison to have! I am very proud to work for a firm that provides space for people to do this important work."

**Charley Orr,**

Head of Legal and Consulting Operations – Consulting Solutions, Melbourne



MinterEllison has been a magnificent partner to Anika Legal. Their people are easy to work with, exceptionally creative - always thinking outside of the box to solve problems - and genuinely committed to access to justice. This year, they have led a range of initiatives to support Anika to provide free legal support for safe housing.

Their Digital and Pro Bono teams collaborated to second their Head of Legal Operations - Consulting Solutions to Anika. Over her part-time, six-month secondment, Charley supervised law student interns to run over 70 legal cases for vulnerable renters facing barriers to safe housing. She also applied her unique legal operations expertise to lead a major project to improve Anika's processes and ensure renters receive vital legal support faster. Charley's infectious enthusiasm and professionalism have made her a pleasure to work with, and in her short time at Anika she has had a mammoth impact on our organisation and the people we help.

Their Pro Bono team have also assisted us to design accessible community legal education resources for renters, and their Digital Purpose team spearheaded a titanic fundraising effort and raised a transformative sum which helped Anika launch a new legal service and cope with doubling demand. We are incredibly grateful for MinterEllison's support and look forward to partnering with them into the future."

**Lucy Majstorovic,**

Head of Partnerships and Philanthropy – Anika Legal

# Homelessness

## Australia's homelessness crisis requires systemic change

2022 has been a challenging year for many. Ongoing challenges from the COVID-19 pandemic, climate emergencies evidenced by severe weather events, and spiralling cost of living pressures, means access to safe and secure housing has never been more critical. According to the 2016 Australian Bureau of Statistics Census, there were more than 116,000 people experiencing homelessness in Australia.

At MinterEllison, we are committed to learning from our community partners who work to address Australia's growing homelessness crisis. We also see in our work that people without secure housing often experience a range of other legal issues, many of which compound their existing financial pressures.

Our approach is three-fold:

1. We represent people who are experiencing, or are at risk of, homelessness. We do this through our relationships with community legal services, including Justice Connect Homeless Law, Canberra Community Law's Street Law service, PIAC's Homeless Persons' Legal Service, Street Law Centre in Western Australia and LawRight. In addition to eviction prevention work, we assist with civil legal matters that disproportionately impact people who are experiencing homelessness, including credit and debt matters, victims of crime assistance, fines and historical housing debt.
2. We provide pro bono legal help, financial and in-kind support to organisations that work to address homelessness through casework, policy and advocacy. These include Whitelion, Brisbane Youth Service, Hutt St Centre, 3rd Space, Housing All Australians, KARI, yourtown, WAGEC, My Foundations Youth Housing, Stepping Stone House (Sydney Stepping Stone Inc), Tenants Queensland and StreetSmart.
3. We leverage our networks and relationships to drive systemic change by collaborating with community organisations, businesses, industry groups, government and people with lived experience of homelessness. This includes the firm helping to fund Give Me Shelter, a ground-breaking report commissioned by Housing All Australians that outlines the significant costs of not addressing the chronic shortage of affordable public and social housing in Australia.



### Support for women's shelter renovation project in Western Australia

On 1 June 2022, Fremantle Council approved plans to extend and refurbish the vacant heritage-listed Wyn Carr House to provide short and medium-term accommodation for women aged from 55 years who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The project is delivering Perth's first Social Housing tripartite project between Government, the private sector and a Community Housing Provider.

Housing All Australians (HAA), led by WA HAA Chair and MinterEllison partner Lee Rossetto, has partnered with Uniting WA, who owns the property and will be the service provider, to draw on Perth's extensive network of private sector professional services to contribute their significant expertise to deliver this important project.

It is the first of what is expected to be many projects by not-for-profit organisation Housing All Australians.

Mr Rossetto said the group was in discussion with other property owners in Perth and other cities to create more emergency accommodation, with help from its partners.

MinterEllison has been involved with this project since October 2020 and continues to provide a wide range of assistance with:

- the preparation of contracts, agreements, and memoranda;
- the negotiation of funding agreements;
- procurement of pro bono professional services and trades; and
- general project management.

**Lee Rossetto** (Partner) led the project alongside **Alex Lowe** (Partner), **Kirstin Beedie** (Legal Consultant), and **Alex Hackett** (Lawyer).

Further, the WA building industry has donated up to \$1 million towards the renovation of Wyn Carr House. More than 20 individuals and private companies are donating professional services, construction materials and furnishings.

Residents will have their own bedrooms and bathrooms, and access to counselling, as well as educational, financial and career advice. WA's largest Aboriginal-owned construction business, Marawar, will build the complex.

"Women aged 55 and over who are homeless or at risk of homelessness are the fastest growing cohort of women at risk," Mr Rossetto said. "Many of these women are desperate or afraid for their lives, so it is important to not only provide a safe environment but also a homely and comfortable space that restores their dignity and hope, and an opportunity to draw on the support services needed to help them get back on their feet," he said.

Uniting WA co-chief executive Michael Chester said Wyn Carr had a long history of housing women. It operated as a refuge from 1978 until 2019, when it was no longer fit for purpose.

Research by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare shows women comprised more than two-thirds of all people seeking homelessness support last year. Many were unable to get help.



//

There are so many empty properties in many cities and towns across Australia that can be converted, either on a permanent or temporary basis, into fit-for-purpose accommodation for people either currently experiencing homelessness or facing homelessness," "Projects such as these provide very real and tangible opportunity for businesses to give back to their community by giving a hand up to people experiencing vulnerability and housing insecurity."

**Lee Rossetto,**  
Partner – Real Estate, Perth



### Our partnership with Justice Connect Homeless Law

Through our work with Justice Connect Homeless Law's service, our lawyers provide pro bono legal advice and human rights-based advocacy on behalf of clients facing homelessness. Supporting Justice Connect's integrated legal and social work team, this year we worked on 77 new files and more than 100 tenancy and infringements files in total.

In our eviction prevention work this year, our lawyers directly helped clients to avoid eviction into homelessness in 84% of cases. This work has a significant impact on the clients and their families, while generating cost savings for the government and community in avoided health, justice and social service costs.

//

MinterEllison has provided expert legal assistance through Justice Connect's Homeless Law program to challenge and change the legal outcomes for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. Combining their legal skills, kindness, and dedication, MinterEllison's lawyers have worked tirelessly to prevent evictions into homelessness, support women experiencing family violence to resolve housing issues, and to reduce significant fines and consumer debts. We thank MinterEllison for their genuinely life-changing support for Justice Connect's clients."

**Hannah Lewis,**

Principal Lawyer – Justice Connect Homeless Law



//

My involvement in the firm's pro bono program has evolved over the years – starting with our Justice Connect Homeless Law program as a junior lawyer to supporting a number of not-for-profit organisations with their commercial contracting and governance issues as a partner of the firm. Participating in our pro bono program has given me and the lawyers I have supervised the opportunity to make a difference and has provided me with unique learnings that complement the work I do on larger transactions and matters. Our successes in our program help build a strong pro bono culture in the firm."

**Andrea Frank,**

Partner – Transactions Solutions, Melbourne

## Homelessness

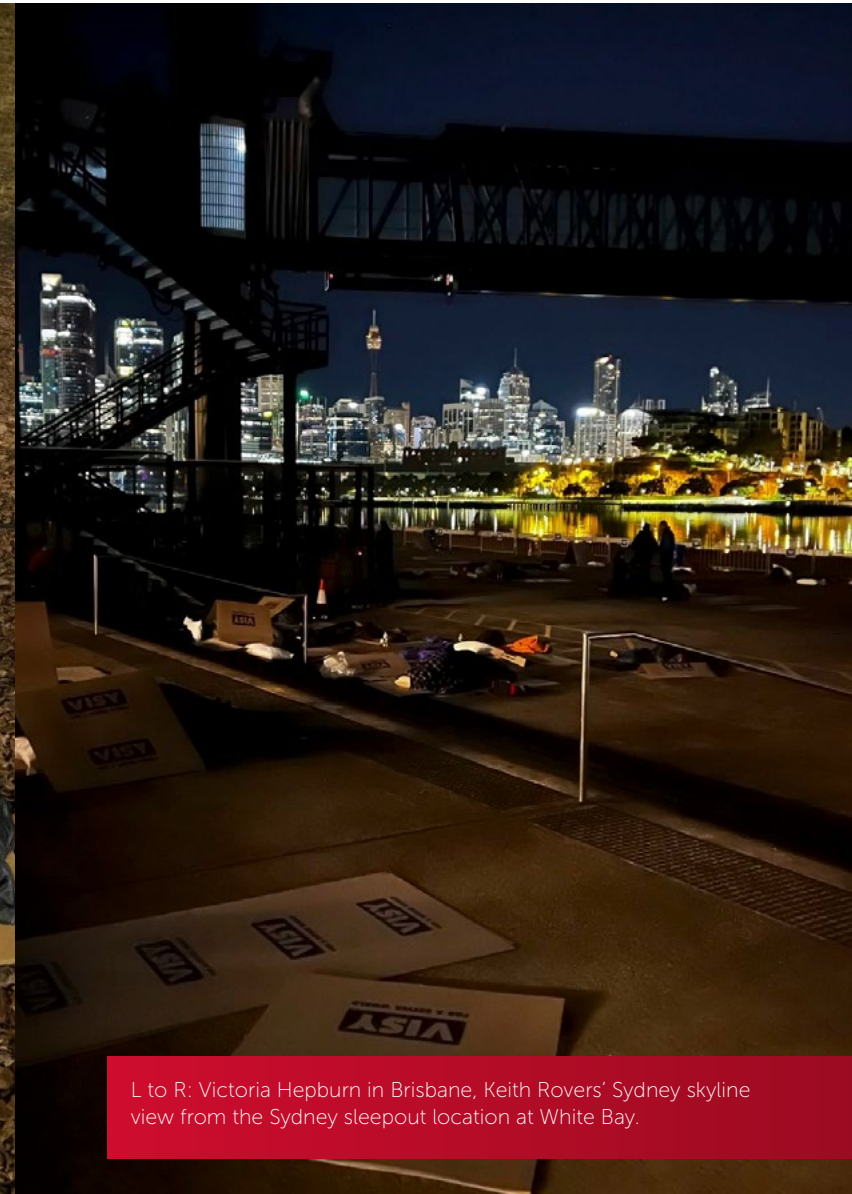
### A long night with the CEO Sleepout raises funds to alleviate homelessness

MinterEllison has long supported Vinnies' CEO Sleepout which raises funds for, and awareness of, homelessness by inviting leaders in business, community and government to sleep without shelter on one of the longest nights of the year.

Supported by people across the firm with donations from our people in all our offices, our team comprising of CEO and Managing Partner, **Virginia Briggs**, and Partners, **Michael Brennan**, **Victoria Hepburn**, **Geoff Shaw** and **Keith Rovers** raised \$54,000 for Vinnies.

In addition to raising much-needed funds, our team took the opportunity to lead discussions about how businesses can, and must, take a leading role in driving systemic change to alleviate homelessness.

The Vinnies CEO Sleepout raised \$9.6 million in 2022.



L to R: Victoria Hepburn in Brisbane, Keith Rovers' Sydney skyline view from the Sydney sleepout location at White Bay.



# Domestic and family violence

## Domestic and family violence is the leading cause of homelessness

Domestic and family violence is the major reason why women and children leave their homes. Of all people seeking homelessness services, 39.4% cite domestic and family violence as a reason for seeking assistance. It is also a major health, welfare and social issue that can have lifelong impacts for people who have experienced or used violence.

MinterEllison has been focussed on addressing the issue of domestic and family violence through our Pro Bono and Community Investment Program for decades. As a firm, we recognise domestic and family violence is an issue affecting all workplaces and we are committed to creating a work environment that supports our people who are experiencing its effects.

//

If we are going to end domestic and family violence, then we all need to work together, sharing our particular skills and resources, informing and supporting each other, taking steps and strides together to reach our ultimate goal. It is a privilege for us to be able to work with such a broad range of people and organisations from community, government and corporate sectors with such a passion to make a positive change. And it is heart-warming to see the way our people get involved in the opportunities coming out of those partnerships because they want to be part of that change."

**Robert Reed OAM,**  
Special Counsel and CIP Senior Manager, Brisbane

## yourtown

Informed by the knowledge and lived experiences of young people across Australia, yourtown understands the importance of empowering victims of domestic and family violence to regain control of their lives. During this year we were proud to support the acquisition of a new property in Western Sydney to be used as a refuge to support families rebuilding their lives after experiencing domestic and family violence with significant funding contribution from Lendlease.

In providing safe accommodation and valuable counselling and support services, yourtown is playing an important role in safeguarding the wellbeing of children and young people, and breaking cycles of housing instability, poverty, and trauma.

//

The pro-bono professional support we receive means that we can do more for those who need our services. We are very fortunate to be able to access the team at Minters, whose wealth of experience is matched by their drive to make a very real contribution to the lives of young people"

**Tracy Adams,**  
CEO – yourtown

With MinterEllison's support for yourtown commencing in 2003, it is one of our longstanding community partners and has been an important part of MinterEllison's Pro Bono and Community Investment Program.

We know that legal and strategic advice are critical inputs in the sustainability of charities and social enterprises and, we have provided support to Kids Helpline (powered by yourtown) as well as organisational support across its other programs, including partnership programs. More recently, we have provided support including the property acquisition in Western Sydney, intellectual property advice on its podcasting series 'No laughing matter' and advice on program partnerships.



## Domestic and family violence

### Darkness to Daylight 2022

MinterEllison supported the 9th Darkness to Daylight (D2D) event in Brisbane, to raise awareness of domestic and family violence and raise funds for our community partner, Challenge DV. Challenge DV seeks to create change through workplace education and prevention programs, advocacy and engagement, and a partnership program that connects front-line services such as shelters with corporates wishing to make a difference in this area.

The event, founded by Robert Reed, Special Counsel, CIP Senior Manager is about running for a reason with the cause embodied in every aspect of the run itself. It gives people the opportunity to experience something unique and do something physical and meaningful about domestic and family violence prevention.

Thousands of runners and walkers participate in D2D. A large team from MinterEllison raised more than \$22,000 (including MatchME funding).

Overall, the event raised close to \$400,000 which will help Challenge DV continue to build their partnerships program which has positive impacts for frontline services including women's refuges, men's behavioural change programs and domestic and family violence frontline services.





## Students participate in Darkness to Daylight 2022

St Teresa's Catholic College in Noosaville, Queensland, has, for several years, run a ground-breaking program for a select group of Year 10 students who learn how to identify and respond to domestic and family violence (DFV), undertake random acts of kindness, talk about respect in relationships and take part in meaningful physical training sessions. The program was created by St Teresa's Business Manager, Mark Robertson. The students also participate in the Darkness to Daylight event, each running or walking the length of a marathon. Each student is given a real-life story of a DFV survivor, and they run/walk for 'their person'.

Darkness to Daylight founder, Robert Reed, visited St Teresa's to film for the UN's 16 Days of Activism in November/December and next year's 10th anniversary of D2D and to hear insights from Mark and the students who have participated in D2D.

MinterEllison is proud to be associated with the great work being done by organisations like Challenge DV and schools like St Teresa's.

L to R: Mark Robertson (Business Manager, St Teresa's), Katrina Swanston (Chief Communications and Partnerships Officer, Challenge DV), Robert Reed and David McInnes (Principal, St Teresa's) plus St Teresa's staff and students





### CALD women face complex barriers to accessing domestic and family violence services

Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) women face unique and complex barriers when dealing with domestic and family violence and are often excluded from mainstream conversations around this topic.

MinterEllison's Brisbane office hosted an event aimed at connecting domestic and family violence service providers with leaders of the multicultural community. The event was hosted with our longstanding community partner, Challenge DV, in partnership with Caring is Culture and Multicultural Association of Caboolture and Surrounds.

The event was also used to launch the Combined Women's Refuge Group

(CWRG) brochure for women who may be considering escaping domestic and family violence, providing information in 15 different languages about refuges and how to seek assistance. The brochure was developed using fundraising from last year's Darkness to Daylight event.

Speakers included representatives from the Immigrant Women's Support Services (IWSS), Refugee and Immigration Legal Service (RAILS), Brisbane Domestic Violence

Service (BDVS), Services Australia, and Queensland Police Service, and the event was MCed by Dr Faiza El-Higzi OAM, a member of the Queensland Government's Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Council.

We continue to host events for Challenge DV focused on sectors of our community where the issue of DFV plays out in a specific way, including further events with the CALD community.



### Language and space can be barriers to seeking help

We heard many stories at the CALD event of the barriers women face in accessing domestic and family violence services.

One story in particular, highlighted the need for translated information; one woman had long avoided escaping her domestic violence situation because she thought that women's refuges were like refugee camps, because the words refuge and refugee sound similar.

Several attendees noted that they were used to CALD activities occurring in back rooms on 'dodgy chairs' and that by attending the event in a mainstream, corporate space they felt 'seen'.



# Empowering young people

Supporting the creativity, courage and agency of young people is key to empowering them to succeed. Through our Pro Bono and Community Investment Program, we have a particular focus on supporting young people who experience barriers to education, employment and other opportunities.

We know that the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has compounded the challenges for many young people. MinterEllison is committed to assisting our community partners who support young people to address issues such as barriers to employment, education and training, and access to mental health support.

We have provided pro bono support to organisations including Whitelion, the Alannah and Madeline Foundation and Brisbane Youth Service. We also support social enterprises that provide employment and training opportunities to young people who otherwise face barriers to employment and our Brisbane office supports students from Glenala State High School through work experience programs and scholarships.



The Alannah and Madeline Foundation is extremely grateful to be a pro bono client of MinterEllison – a relationship we value highly and use frequently! As a large, national charity with a range of services, we have diverse and complex legal needs, covering our legal requirements as a business as well as the specialist nature of our services. This year alone, MinterEllison has supported us with expert legal advice from issues such as gun safety and firearms importation, to funding and supplier contract negotiations, to specialist Award classification and employee agreements, to complex family law matters. They are, at all times, delightful to work with, helpful, expert, professional and we are truly grateful to have their support.”

**Sarah Davies,**  
CEO– the Alannah and Madeline Foundation

## Australian Business and Community Network (ABCN) mentoring

Throughout MinterEllison’s 16-year partnership with ABCN, our people have participated as mentors to students from schools in less advantaged areas and this year, our mentors worked with more than 600 high school students across Australia.

This year our partnership with ABCN took many forms. Our Perth office hosted an ABCN event and facilitated a donation of 15 laptops to Cecil Andrews College. We are also particularly proud of our participation in a pilot program with First Nations students from Armidale Secondary College in regional NSW, as well as our involvement in ABCN’s Laptops4Learning program, through which we donated 100 repurposed laptops to students in Queensland and Western Australia.

In the face of widening inequities in access to secondary and tertiary education across Australia, we have expanded our sponsored scholarships program in FY22, including two ABCN Accelerate scholarships, First Nations scholarships at Bond University and the University of South Australia and eight Glenala State High School scholarships.

8

ABCN mentoring programs:

- Aspirations (WA only)
- Empower
- Focus
- Future Thinkers
- GOALS
- Innovate (QLD only)
- Interview to Impress
- My Career Rules (VIC only)



24

programs run



7

face to face programs



17

digital programs



189

mentors



374

students/teachers reached

//

The ABCN programs are a wonderful opportunity to meet and engage with some really inspiring young people, whose creativity, energy and enthusiasm is completely infectious! It is incredibly rewarding to work through scenarios and share common experience together, and to see how much the students grow and develop their confidence in that time. I am so grateful to be part of a program that creates a space in which these young people feel comfortable to share their ideas and their voice, whilst also equipping them with a range of skills to identify and appreciate that they each have their own personal strengths, and are never alone in experiencing insecurity or uncertainty in their daily lives."

**Ellie Freemantle**

Associate – Melbourne

//

I have been a long-time participant in ABCN's programs with MinterEllison, first as a mentor starting in 2016 and taking on the role of Sydney office 'Champion' (Coordinator) since 2019. In 2022, MinterEllison in Sydney has participated in seven separate mentoring programs with regional schools such as Wadalba Community School and Molong Central School, and Sydney schools including Canterbury Boys High School and Bonnyrigg High School. MinterEllison mentors have also participated in an ABCN Mentoring Masterclass to learn about how they can better support transgender and non-binary students. I am proud to say that in each and every one of the mentorship programs, the feedback from students has been that our mentors have provided them with significant support and guidance and that they feel more confident to problem-solve, think critically and pursue higher education and potential career opportunities. The consensus from our mentors is that it is rewarding to feel that they are making a difference in the lives of the students and that it is enriching to have an opportunity to engage with and learn from a younger generation."

**Emma Grimley**

Associate – Melbourne



Year 11 Glenala State High School Scholarship students on work experience in the Brisbane office working with Legal Operations team



# First Nations empowerment

MinterEllison's pro bono and social impact practice is at the forefront of delivering culturally appropriate and innovative legal advice to help Indigenous businesses grow and scale.

In FY22 we launched our 'Stretch' Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP2) to further strengthen our commitment to working with Indigenous communities and organisations.

We provided advice to more than 100 Indigenous businesses and over 50 individuals during the year.

In recognising the importance of training and employment pathways, we have assisted several Indigenous businesses establish and implement social enterprise business models, providing training and job opportunities to First Nations Australians, including SevGen, Feraliser, Muru Mittigar and enablers such as Indigenous Emerging Business Forum Aboriginal Corporation and First Australian Capital.

We also have assisted a number of Indigenous businesses to build capacity within their organisations and navigate risk profiles. Additionally, we work to certify these businesses with Supply Nation and Social Traders so as to be able to access Commonwealth Government and State Government Indigenous procurement policies (IPP) and social procurements policies vital for driving economic wealth into these businesses to support self determination. As part of this, we advised on numerous joint venture arrangements in line with the IPP, including Nallawili Bunjil for digitised land and assement management, Mandura (a joint venture with Winc) providing office supplies and have been involved in developing Indigenous led finance solutions.

How an Indigenous business is integrated into government and corporate supply chains is a critical element of the success of the programs and one which our firm is proud to assist both our corporate clients and community partners with.



RAP2 cover artwork: 'Holding Space' by Bethany Allen



As an Indigenous woman, it's important to me that my workplace is not just culturally safe, but also recognises and celebrates Indigenous cultures. My involvement in RAP2 is an example of MinterEllison elevating Indigenous voices, and represented a meaningful opportunity to carve out Indigenous spaces within MinterEllison, and grow the cultural competence of the firm as a whole."

**Bethany Allen,**  
Lawyer – Brisbane





APY Art Centre Collective Artists



## First Nations empowerment

### APY Art Centre Collective

The APY Art Centre Collective (APYACC) is a group of 10 Indigenous-owned enterprises located on APY Lands in remote Central Australia, collaborating on artistic projects. The APYACC is a group of the most celebrated and ambitious Indigenous art studios in Australia, and aims to increase capacity for APY art centres and support their important work in communities, where art centres are the only source of non-government income.

During the five years MinterEllison has provided pro bono legal services, our partnership has been characterised by two-way learning.

We have provided a range of legal services to support the Centre and artists, often in partnership with the Westpac Foundation, and the APYACC and its artists have shared extraordinary art with us but even more importantly, their knowledge.

Over the last year, with support from LendLease we have acted for APYACC in acquiring new gallery space in Naarm (Melbourne) and in the acquisition of a new property on Kurna Land (Adelaide). This acquisition is a significant milestone

for APYACC as the new premises creates a permanent home for the organisation where artists visiting from the APY Lands or living permanently in Adelaide (usually for health needs) can work. The space also includes an indoor/outdoor area APYACC intends to use for Ceremony and growing traditional bush foods, a feature which was lacking in APYACC's current space.



APYACC artists exploring the new gallery space



Lawyers from our Adelaide office acted for Tjala Arts (an APY Lands Indigenous community arts association) in important matters for them seeking to protect the image rights of their artists and also in a property sale dispute

## First Nations empowerment

//

To Keith Rovers and our friends at MinterEllison, we are enormously grateful for your support. Keith you and the ME team in particular Rachel Johnston, Paul Ng, Kate Cato, Charlotte Wylie, Belinda Aldcock – you have made an extraordinary contribution this past year, you have worked very hard for our organisation and played such an important role in our property acquisitions, we can't wait to show you our new home in Adelaide. Thank you for your commitment to Anangu elders vision and for such sound and considered advice across a such diversity of areas."

**Skye O'Meara,**

General Manager – APY Art Centre Collective

The acquisition has been the culmination of over six months work from the MinterEllison team and from our community partner and social enterprise incubator, White Box Enterprises. The transaction has involved acting for APYACC in all aspects of the purchase, including due diligence, conveyancing and contract preparation, negotiation and exchange and Westpac Bank financing and Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation (ILSC) grant funding which contributed to financing the purchase and refurbishment costs.

MinterEllison also supported APYACC's submission to the Productivity Commission into Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Visual Arts and Crafts. The support included proposing new regulatory solutions such as certification and mandatory code frameworks as well as non-regulatory solutions such as artist contracts.

We have seen great change within Australian communities over the last decade as more people connect with First Nations culture – using art as a bridge to understand the 66,000+ years of history and knowledge which is so graciously shared by many First Nations communities.

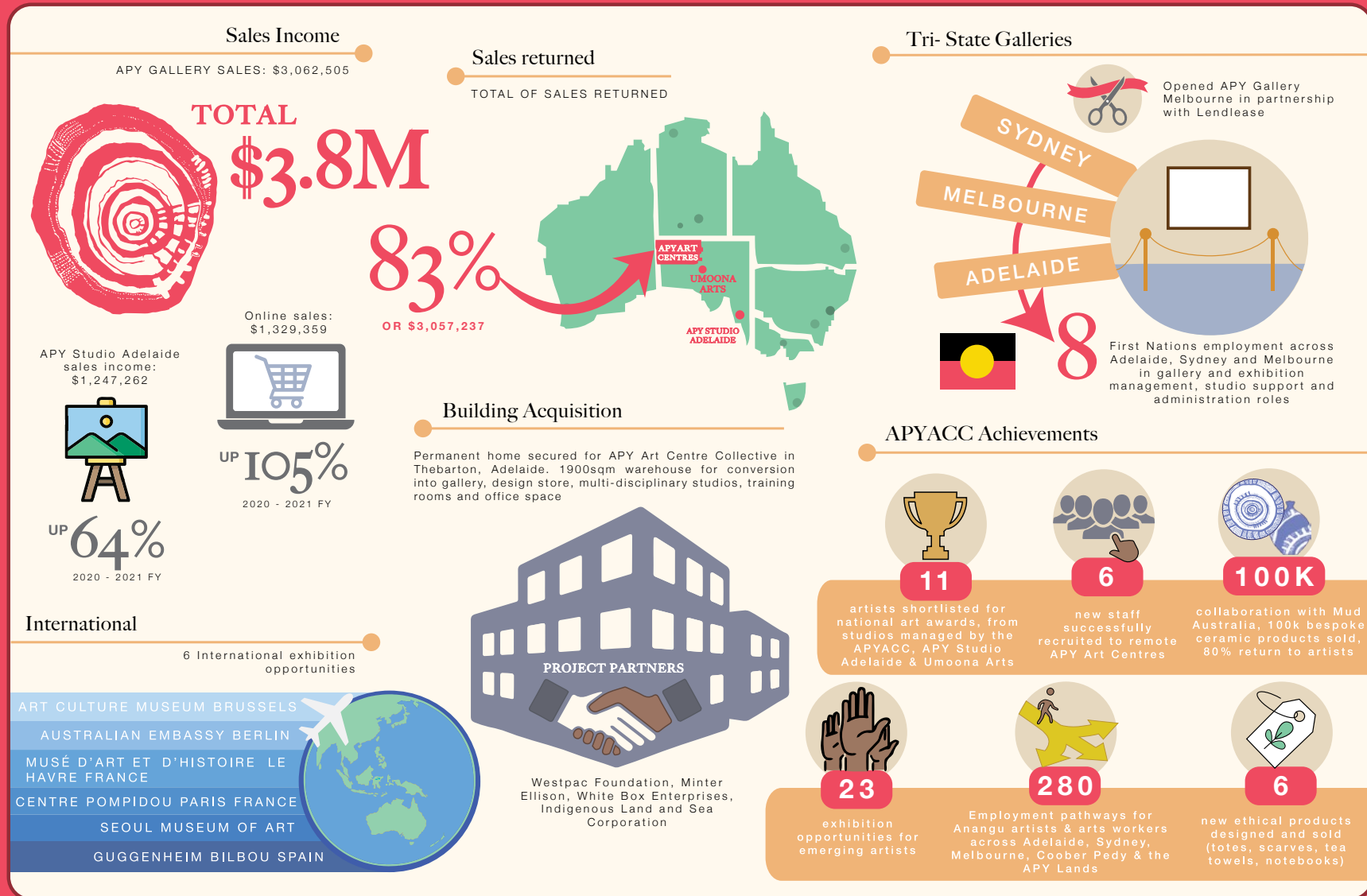
MinterEllison supported this learning and connection through licensing a number of APY artworks to use as virtual backgrounds which foster conversations between colleagues and clients. In addition, purchased a APYACC artwork to auction at a Sydney client event raising \$15,000 for Adam Goodes' Go Foundation.



Keith Rovers, Nyunmiti Burton, Skye O'Meara, Rachel Johnston



# APY Art Centre Collective FY2021 – 2022



Source: Skye O'Meara - APY Art Centre Collective

## Perth highlights



Ongoing work with other Perth firms to establish a WA Joint Law Firms Indigenous Scholarship for study at any of the 5 WA universities



Held Perth Cultural Centre walk for NAIDOC week



Hosted Navigators Lunch – Shelley Cable CEO Generation One



Sponsored UWA Blackstone Society cultural event – Indigenous art exhibition at Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery



Western Australia launch of Woort Koorliny (Generation One) Indigenous Employment Index



## First Nations empowerment

### SevGen Indigenous Corporation

MinterEllison, led by Finance and Pro bono partner Keith Rovers, recently assisted Indigenous business and social enterprise, SevGen on the financing and acquisition of a self-seeding, regenerative agroforestry property in Noosa Hinterland, Queensland. SevGen will operate the property which contains a 25-year-old orchard and hosts 2,000 native trees, as an agro-ecology bushtucker orchard under its Deadly Bushtucker Time brand.

The enterprise will generate revenue from raw orchard harvest and a number of value add products such as dry native botanic spices and oils, education workshops,

project accommodation, leases for food tech research and carbon sequestration.

MinterEllison assisted SevGen to secure impact finance from a syndicate of 21 impact lenders including First Australian Capital.

SevGen has been operating on Kabi Kabi Country since 2012, and has created three other social enterprise ventures (Deadly Espresso Time, Deadly Salt & Pepper Time, and Deadly Espresso Delivered Time) under the D-Time Enterprises brand.

The acquisition of the property will enable SevGen to fulfil its mission of fostering Indigenous enterprise, education and entrepreneurship.



SevGen is short for Seven Generations which is an Indigenous way of thinking that says our actions of today, will affect seven generations into the future

### The Storey Players – Arnhem Land Language Preservation Program

The Storey Players is a charitable organisation whose principal mission is empowering kids through drama workshops and storytelling activities to strengthen their self-confidence and increase their literacy skills. Much of their work is undertaken in remote Indigenous communities.

MinterEllison supported The Storey Players with a donation to their Arnhem Land language preservation program. Our support will contribute The Storey Players working with the Nawarddekan Academy, the Elders and young people of those communities to create a record of their Moon and Sun dreaming story in their language on film.

MinterEllison has partnered with FAC since its inception in 2018 and has continuously worked to help scale up more than 50 businesses and in doing so, has created employment and wealth generation opportunities for hundreds of First Nations people and their communities.

In FY22 FAC'S business advisory team provided more than 8,000 hours of support to Indigenous-led businesses, amounting to \$1.2 million in advisory services directed to Indigenous-led business. For the 2021 businesses FAC supported in FY22, 63 of these progressed to the investment pipeline.

Our work with FAC throughout the year included supporting their investment in SevGen Indigenous Corporation.

### First Australians Capital

First Australians Capital (FAC) was established four years ago and works to build sustainable Indigenous business enterprises resulting in a thriving Indigenous economy, intergenerational wealth creation and economic self-determination.



We harness the cultural, creative and economic strengths of Indigenous enterprises and MinterEllison have been on the journey with us."

**Leah Armstrong,**  
Co-chairperson/Managing Director  
– First Australians Capital

# Refugee support

MinterEllison has provided assistance to refugee advocacy organisations and other community partners to make a difference to the lives and experiences of refugees building new lives Australia. Our assistance has come in the form of pro bono legal services and secondments, and also specific and direct support relating to urgent need such as provision of technology, language coaching and assistance with visa applications.

We work closely with our community partners in many ways, including raising \$3,000 to support school transport services for recently arrived Afghan orphans with NGO, Mahboba's Promise, support for RAILS' Family Violence Spouse Visa Program and Afghan Family Reunion Clinic, and support for HOST International Australia, a community partner which offers mentoring and employment support for refugees. This program includes a new legal profession employment pathways program for Afghan Lawyers and Judges that we are shaping with the NSW Law Society.

## Refugee and Immigration Legal Service (RAILS)

A key focus of our decade-long partnership with RAILS, a leading non-profit organisation that strives for access to justice for migrants, refugees, asylum seekers and their families this year has been to assist them to respond to the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan. Our work has included:

- providing seed funding towards the establishment of their Afghan Family Reunion Visa Clinic;
- providing expertise and attending emergency clinics (including on weekends) in the early stages of the crisis. Brisbane office volunteers attended the second stage general clinics late last year to help Afghan-Australians in Queensland apply for family reunion visas for family members in or escaping Afghanistan;
- helping RAILS create the current (third stage) clinic model and taking on the first referrals before rolling out to other firms;
- volunteers from Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney offices signing on for the third stage clinic work (with referrals coming in fast before the November cut-off);

- our Digital team arranging for the donation of monitors for the RAILS Afghan Response Team to use (in addition to laptops already donated to RAILS generally);
- helping 6 Afghan female judges obtain visas in Australia (spoken about in more detail below); and
- providing a secondment to help with processing and referring clinic files in order to reunite as many Afghan Queenslanders with their families as possible before the end of this year.

This is additional to the other important work we are doing with and for RAILS including assisting them with their domestic violence visa clinic, having our immigration team assist them with complex matters and providing pro bono legal advice to RAILS as an organisation and other responses to the Afghan crisis.



Minter's support has been critical to our work with the Afghan community.... In November 2022 through to January 2023, as we move out of the crisis response to the Taliban takeover, the support of Minters will have made all the difference to the many members of the Afghan community we will have been able to advise and assist. You have made a genuine contribution to our ability to meet the key immigration legal needs that have arisen from this crisis and to be able to say to the Afghan community and its leaders, genuinely and with confidence, that we have stood by them, that we have done what we can and that we have worked through the key immigration legal needs that arose from the crisis."

**Kylie McGrath,**  
Executive Director – RAILS



Being able to contribute to RAILS' Afghan clinic has been a highlight for me this year. Between helping RAILS develop their clinic model through my work at MinterEllison and helping them prepare matters for referral during my secondment days at RAILS, I was able to coordinate getting over 70 lawyers across Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne on board to assist 35 Afghan-Australians submit visa applications for their families in Afghanistan. This has been a real showcase of how MinterEllison can channel its resources to unmet legal need in our community."

**Famin Ahmed, Lawyer,**  
Pro Bono and Community Investment Program, Brisbane



### A whole of firm approach to supporting Afghan refugees – collaborating with shared values partners

Earlier this year MinterEllison called for volunteers to deliver English as a Second Language (ESL) coaching for an Afghan refugee, Gulchaman Nazari. Gulchaman and her sister Parwin were introduced to us by Talent Beyond Boundaries, which matches skilled refugees with employers, and The Bread & Butter Project, a social enterprise committed to building employment pathways for refugees.

Fearing for their lives, Gulchaman and Parwin had fled Kabul to Islamabad and were helped to cross the border by a man who held an Australian visa and gave them his laptop so they could study English.

MinterEllison's enterprise-wide approach to this urgent and compelling need has changed the course of two lives and helped develop pathways for others. When the man who helped the sisters reached Australia, **Dolly Sequeira**, our IT Operations and Procurement lead, arranged a laptop for him via the ME laptop deployment program, to help him rebuild his life in Australia.

The Pro Bono and Community Investment team, led by **Kate Cato**, partnered with the firm's in-house Migration Services team, led by **Taya Hunt** Special Counsel - Migration Services, to sponsor Gulchaman's employment and help her and her sister to secure visas. Gulchaman holds a law degree from the University of Kateb and completed a post graduate Diploma in Law. She has worked in various government roles, the most recent one as a Communication and Coordination Manager for the Ministry for Parliamentary affairs in Afghanistan.

MinterEllison's Diversity and Inclusion Manager **Libby Connell**, coordinated a group of volunteers with ESL experience to coach Gulchaman to help her reach the required IELTS standard to qualify for a visa. Collectively they provided 16 hours of conversational and writing coaching.

An English exam was the last hurdle for Gulchaman and Parwin to secure Australian visas, and both sisters passed.

MinterEllison's ESL coaching team, came from all parts of the firm and included:

- Libby Connell, Diversity and Inclusion Manager, Melbourne;
- Mathilda Spence, Senior Change and Communication Manager, Sydney;
- Sarah Jacobson, Director – Knowledge Management, Melbourne;
- Michelle Power, Managing Partner – Markets, Melbourne;
- Jennifer Blom, Special Counsel – ICP Volume, Melbourne;
- Dolly Sequeira, IT Procurement Manager, Sydney;

- Pooja Tandon, Associate – Tax – Corporate, Sydney; and
- Alison Smith, Senior Associate – Workplace, Brisbane.

**Taya Hunt** has coordinated the permanent residency visa application that will now enable the sisters to travel to Australia this year. Gulchaman will take up a role at MinterEllison in the Talent team, based in Sydney. Parwin is being sponsored by Clayton Utz. In addition, Taya and the Migration team have advised a number of other organisations including clients and other major firms regarding the X-files skilled migration program.



At the UNHCR lunch MinterEllison CEO and Managing Partner Virginia Briggs met the first Afghan refugees to reach Australia as a consequence of our firm's support for the X-Files Project in partnership with The Bread & Butter Project.

# Social enterprise

**Our social impact practice has deep expertise assisting social enterprises that deliver economic, social, cultural and environmental benefits to the community to 'start up, sustain and thrive'.**

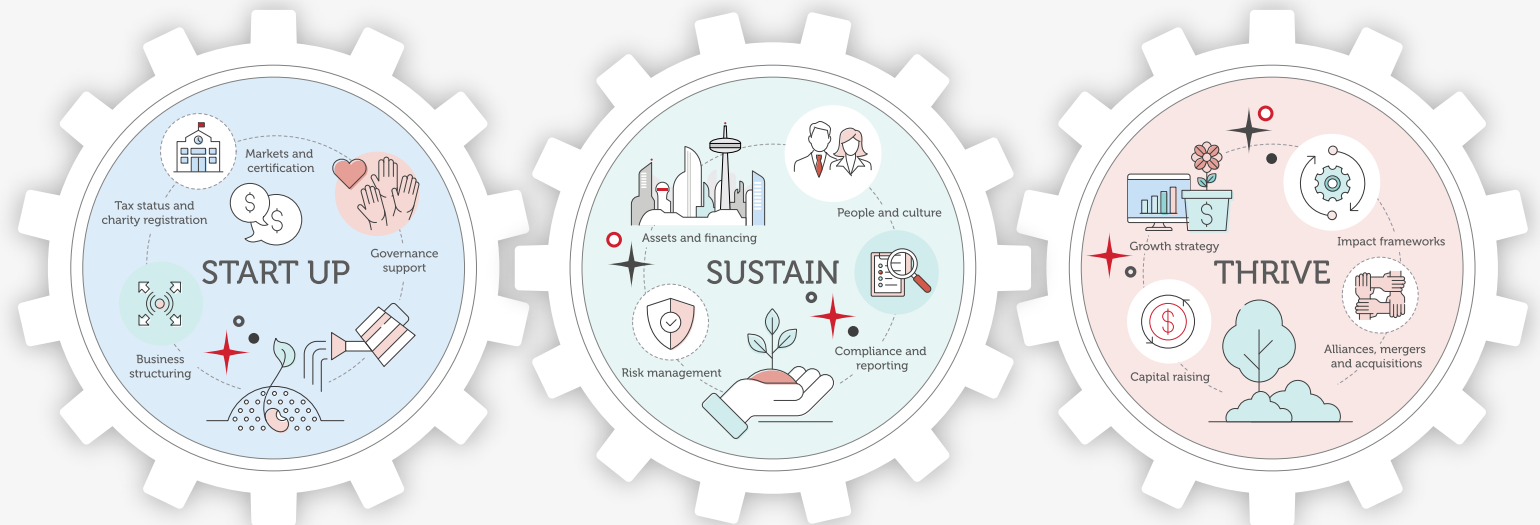
The recent sector report notes not only the social impact, but also the important contribution social enterprises make to the Australian economy contributing over \$21 billion per year, accounting for over 1% of GDP and employing over 200,000 people (that's 1.6% of the workforce, about the same number of people as Arts and Recreation Services or the Mining Industry).

Our decades of work in the social enterprise sector, has led to the firm being uniquely embedded in the sector, providing broader support for the social enterprise peak National body (Social Enterprise Australia) and State bodies (QSEC, SECNA, SENVIC, SENTAS), certifying bodies (like Social Traders, B Lab, Supply Nation), funds (SEFA, First Australians Capital) and intermediaries (like SVA and White Box Enterprises).

Our experience extends to assisting social enterprises to navigate Commonwealth and State government social procurement policies. We also leverage our corporate networks and experience to advise and assist social enterprises in their dealings with corporate procurement managers to ensure that social enterprises are integrated effectively into supply chains.

As part of this, we have assisted a number of social enterprises and Indigenous businesses to achieve certification with Social Traders, Supply Nation and B Lab in order to access the markets and contracts tied to procurement policies.

We work alongside many of our major government and corporate clients amplifying social impact through shared values partnering. Clients such as AMP, Westpac, Optus, Social Ventures Australia, White Box Enterprises, Australian Red Cross, Centre for Social Impact, Mission Australia, Lendlease, PwC and many others partner with MinterEllison to tackle complex social issues including homelessness, mental health and diversity and inclusion. This work includes building training and employment opportunities for vulnerable Australians to assist in breaking cycles of disadvantage.





### Feraliser

We assisted in the establishment of Feraliser, an innovative new social enterprise established to meet the challenge of feral pig management in Northern Australia using Indigenous land management skills, while creating employment, training and career pathways for Indigenous Australians. We have also assisted Feraliser in documenting its partnerships with other Indigenous organisations in the Cape York region. Natalie Bentley is on the board, providing further governance support.

### Meals with Impact

During the last year we have worked with Melbourne-based social enterprise Meals with Impact. Meals with Impact is a work-integrated social enterprise that operates a food preparation kitchen, preparing nutritious and culturally appropriate meals, with the dual mission of:

- creating employment and training opportunities for women from migrant, refugee and culturally diverse backgrounds experiencing long term unemployment and marginalisation; and
- partnering with food delivery services to provide meals to individuals who are facing food insecurity and do not have access to nutritious, affordable and culturally appropriate meals.

Since November 2020, Meals with Impact has facilitated the production and distribution of over 30,000 culturally appropriate meals across a number of local governments in Melbourne, while creating employment opportunities for marginalised women.

We worked with Meals with Impact chef, founder and Managing Director Harris Ryan to establish the charitable arm of the group, the Meals with Impact Foundation Limited including applying for charity registration with the ACNC and deductible gift recipient endorsement with the ATO. We have also provided the Meals with Impact group with a range of other assistance throughout the year including supporting Meals with Impact Pty Ltd to comply with the requirements to become certified by Social Traders as a social enterprise, provide general governance and policy development support and contracting assistance including drafting an agreement between Meals with Impact and supporting partner, the Collingwood Football Club Foundation.

### Humanitix

Humanitix is an event ticketing platform that directs 100% of profits from booking fees to deliver education projects for disadvantaged children and to date have donated over \$1.5M. We have continued our support for Humanitix across a range of legal areas including banking and finance, property, charitable tax advice among others to assist it in growing its impact.

### Social Enterprise Australia

MinterEllison worked with the steering group to establish the national social enterprise peak body to provide a voice for the 'business for good' sector and develop and deliver a national strategy – it has recently undertaken a survey of the sector.

The impact of SEA's research shows the scale of the sector's contribution to the Australian economy and makes the case for broader government and corporate engagement.

## Social enterprise

### White Box Enterprises

Furthering our support for White Box Enterprises, over the last year we acted for White Box Enterprises on a landmark Payment By Outcomes contract with the Department of Social Services, looking at the effectiveness of Work Integration Social Enterprises (WISES) in delivering long term employment outcomes for people living with a disability. Almost 2.1 million people living with disability are of working age in Australia. However, 93 per cent of unemployed people aged 15-64 with a disability, experience difficulties in finding employment. The unemployment rate for people living with disability is more than double that of working age Australians.

The partnership between White Box Enterprises and the Department of Social Services will deliver a three-year trial that will see social enterprises support up to 170 people living with a disability into award wage employment. The social enterprises will be paid directly by the Australian Government for their verified employment outcomes through an innovative payment by outcomes model.

Luke Terry, CEO of White Box Enterprises, who has long-advocated for the role of social enterprise in inclusive, dignified work said, "This trial is a milestone moment for jobs-focused social enterprises, and for the communities we support. We know through our years of experience, people who face barriers to employment, including those living with a disability, need tailored and consistent on-the-job support to succeed at work, this trial recognises the importance of that support."

In addition to this, our property and finance teams have assisted White Box Enterprises with purchasing property to develop into social enterprise precincts including in Braybrook in Melbourne which involved investment from four investors and the Victorian Government. Acting as intermediary to support the wider social enterprise sector, White Box Enterprises repurposed an old warehouse to house social enterprises, Green Collect and YMCA Rebuild. With the benefit of the security of tenure, these social enterprises have plans to create 300 jobs over the next 3 years for people who struggle to find mainstream employment.

Our teams also supported White Box Enterprises with the acquisition of an industrial site at Bangalow, NSW and the establishment of a new charitable social enterprise 'Beacon Laundry' which will operate a commercial laundry from that site. This will create 120 jobs for disadvantaged individuals in the Byron Bay area, with a commitment to sustainable energy sources and water recycling.



MinterEllison are in it with us, every step of the way. They genuinely care about the outcomes we're trying to achieve."

**Luke Terry,**  
CEO – White Box Enterprises



Launch of Braybrook



## Social enterprise

### Social Enterprise World Forum

For two days in September, thousands of social enterprise leaders, policymakers, philanthropists and purpose-led people from across the globe gathered in Brisbane (and on-line) as part of the world's largest social enterprise event the Social Enterprise World Forum (SEWF).

MinterEllison was proud to support the Forum which was co-hosted by White Box Enterprise, one of our key community partners.

Centred around the theme "Co-creating the Future", members of the Firm's Social Enterprise, Pro Bono and Community Investment, Innovation and Climate Risk Governance teams represented the firm. As the only law firm profiled at the Forum, we had many conversations with future and current business leaders around how their social enterprises could start up, sustain and thrive. Keith Rovers and his team were given a shout-out by a panellist during one of the sessions.

We sponsored four bursaries to enable leaders from innovative social enterprises across Australia to attend the Forum, including the founder of Chocolate On Purpose, the Co-Founder of Confit Pathways, Head of Marketing at ForPurposeCo/ OzHarvest and the Co-Founder of Kayu&Co.

The applicants were evaluated on three main areas: potential impact, passion and drive and means of ensuring funding not only supports those who need it, but also those that will create the greatest impact in their community. The feedback from the bursaries was overwhelmingly positive with bursary recipients rating the experience 9 out of 10 on average. Additionally, all bursary recipients made meaningful connections with external organisations with 40% of those completing their time at the Forum with scheduled follow-up meetings.

MinterEllison also sponsored a fringe event, an exclusive breakfast where Seb Elsworth MBE, the CEO of Access – The UK based Foundation for Social Investment shared how Access has disrupted the UK's social investment market by making social investment more accessible for charities and social enterprises and widened its reach into places and communities that were previously excluded. Launched in 2015, Access has raised more than £100m to offer the type of finance – blending grants and loans – that small to mid-scale social enterprises need to thrive. Seb was joined in conversation by White Box CEO Luke Terry and Libby Ward-Christie to discuss how the Access model might work in Australia to increase the size and resiliency of the social enterprise sector.



I'm excited about the Social Enterprise World Forum. It's an opportunity for me to connect with a huge audience of Australian and international changemakers who share my view that we need to keep challenging current perceptions and the way society supports people with disability and other marginalised communities. It's up to all of us to create a society where everyone feels included – where they don't just survive, they thrive."

**Dylan Alcott AO,**

Australian of the Year and former Australian wheelchair tennis player, radio host and motivational speaker.

# Community impact highlights




## Charitable giving 2022 = \$360K

We engaged the whole firm to support communities in need at times of global crisis and provided support closer to home including amplifying donations made by way of our firm donation matching program MatchME.

**Major campaigns** supported by our people with charitable giving amplified by MatchME provided much needed support to the Red Cross Afghan Appeal; UNHCR Ukraine Emergency response and QLD and NSW Flood Relief.

Individuals and teams in all offices developed local campaigns which attracted **MatchME** funding to support causes as diverse as Darkness to Daylight (Domestic and Family Violence), Anika Legal and CEO Sleepout (Homelessness), 86K for a Cure, Ovarian Cancer, Dry July, Mullets4Mental Health, STEPtember (Health and Wellbeing), Minus18 and Pinnacle Foundation (LGBTQ+).

We also recognise that many of our community partners' extraordinary programs would be accelerated with financial support as well as our in-kind contribution and were pleased to be able to deepen our relationships by way of **direct donations** to organisations such as Australian Business and Community Network (Accelerate Scholarship), Just Reinvest, Yalari, Wellsprings for Women and StreetSmart to name just a few.

-  CEO led major campaigns
-  MatchME
-  Direct donations to community partners



Reflecting on the stories from the past year, and the energy of people from right across the firm whose involvement has delivered meaningful impact in our communities inspires me everyday. I'm looking forward to what we can achieve in 2023 and beyond."

**Michelle Bold,**

National Pro Bono and Community Investment Program Coordinator.



### Westpac Board Observer Program 2022:

The Westpac Board Observer Program is a practical and immersive governance program that offers senior leaders the opportunity to attend a community organisation's board meetings as an Observer for 12 months.

The program was developed in partnership by MinterEllison and the Westpac Foundation five years ago and continues to grow each year.

The program harnesses the strong desire from senior professionals to utilise their skills, develop social leadership and to build networks whilst sharing our vision of helping create a more inclusive world. The program offers both Observers and Boards an opportunity to explore a potential directorship role. In 2022, 28 of our people currently participate in the Observer Program, with many being asked to remain on the Boards.

Westpac Board Observers 2022			
Tristan Aguirre	Senior Associate	Finance Solutions	Sydney
Adnane Benhammouche	Senior Manager	Technology Consulting	Canberra
Amelia Boyd Jones	Senior Manager	Technology Consulting	Sydney
Julia Brosnan	Senior Associate	Tax - Indirect	Sydney
Amrita Burman	Senior Manager	Technology Consulting	Canberra
Christian Camilleri	Senior Associate	Projects, Infrastructure and Construction	Melbourne
Sarah Cole	Client Engagement and Innovation Lead	CMG - Client Engagement and Innovation	Sydney
Leyla Dixon	Special Counsel	Workplace	Brisbane
Matthew Franks	AI and Emerging Technologies Lead	Legal Service Operations	Brisbane
Claire Harford	Associate	Dispute Resolution	Sydney
Emma Jakeman	Senior Associate	Projects, Infrastructure and Construction	Melbourne
Amanda Khoo	Associate	Capital Solutions	Brisbane
Jennifer Lambley	Senior Associate	Dispute Resolution	Sydney
Vanessa Lamborn	Senior Associate	Dispute Resolution	Melbourne
Naomi McGregor	Senior Associate	Tax - Controversy	Sydney
Tegun Middleton	Senior Associate	Environment and Planning	Brisbane
Domenic Mollica	Senior Associate	Projects, Infrastructure and Construction	Melbourne
James Mullins	Lawyer	Transaction Solutions	Melbourne
Lior Nickig	Head of Legal Operations - Industry	Legal Operations	Sydney
Petra Parker	Government Sector Lead	CMG - Government	Canberra
Kathryn Rigney	Consultant	Insurance and Corporate Risk	Sydney
Benjamin Roe	Senior Associate	Insurance and Corporate Risk	Sydney
Cindy Shammall	Deputy General Counsel - Commercial	Office of the General Counsel	Melbourne
Daniel Shaw	Senior Associate	Workplace	Sydney
Kristy Turner	Senior Associate	Transaction Solutions	Melbourne
Geraldine Williams	Special Counsel	Transaction Solutions	Melbourne
Jaimie Wolbers	Senior Associate	Dispute Resolution	Sydney
Janet Yeung	Senior Associate	Transaction Solutions	Sydney

## Community impact highlights

### Supporting WAM's Strategy Day

MinterEllison is a proud supporter of Women and Mentoring (WAM), a unique, early intervention program that supports women and non-binary people in contact with the legal system by matching them with a supportive mentor. WAM trains volunteer mentors to support the program participants, enabling the mentors to share their skills and contribute to the wider community.

True to our enterprise approach, we combined the skills of Mollie Tregillis from our Legal Optimising Consulting practice, Amber O'Meara from our Innovation team and our Pro Bono and Community Investment Manager, Anna Lyons, to work on this important project with WAM's leadership and board.

We look forward to seeing WAM's continued growth, success and impact for women and non-binary people.



Anna Lyons, Mollie Tregillis and Amber O'Meara with WAM's leadership team

### Moriarty Foundation Indigenous Football

To celebrate 2022 Indigenous Football Week, 10 of MinterEllison's 'peak athletes' took to the field at Allianz stadium for a corporate football tournament and fundraiser, hosted by one of our longstanding community partners, the Moriarty Foundation. Through its John Moriarty Football initiative delivers football programs to more than 2000 Indigenous children in 20 remote and regional communities in NSW, QLD and NT and currently employs 40 local

Indigenous staff members. Last year we raised significant funds for the foundation's Indi Kindi preschool program and this year supported the foundation through participation in this incredible tournament. John Moriarty, the first Aboriginal player selected to play football for Australia, and his son James Moriarty, co-founded John Moriarty Football Australia's longest running and most successful Indigenous football initiative for 2-18 year olds using football for talent and positive change - with a track record of improving school attendance and achieving resilient, healthier outcomes for some of Australia's most remote Indigenous communities.



ME team with John and Ros Moriarty



Share the Dignity

Our 'Dignity Drive' for Share the Dignity, a charity that distributes period products to people experiencing homelessness, fleeing domestic violence or just doing it tough, went national this year with coordination led by our Brisbane receptionist, Courtney Tatchell and a team of client services champions from every office. We collected more than 480 sanitary items to contribute to ending period poverty around Australia.

Coordinating the Share the Dignity campaign over the past few years in Brisbane has been both a privilege and an honour. To see the positive impact that it has had not only on our people, but the broader community has been so rewarding. Taking MinterEllison's involvement nationally this year led by champions across Corporate Services in each office has been amazing and I am so proud of what we've been able to achieve. I can't wait to see the impact we can make in 2023!"

Courtney Tatchell,  
Receptionist, Brisbane



BYS Christmas Hampers

Our Brisbane office supported the Brisbane Youth Service (BYS) Christmas Hamper Drive again in 2021. BYS supports vulnerable young people and their children to secure and maintain housing, address physical and mental health issues, establish successful relationships and support networks, and access pathways to education and employment. For the Christmas Hampers, BYS provide a list of (treat) grocery items to help make Christmas a little brighter for vulnerable young Queenslanders.

With overall coordination by Courtney Tatchell and Michelle Bold, we collated and delivered to Brisbane Youth Service a total of

82 hampers. The hampers will be distributed to BYS clients as they attend their last appointment of the year, plus extras for those who reach out to the organisation in the lead up to Christmas time.



Barbara Longland, previous BYS CEO and Michelle Bold

I have been involved in the firm's Christmas Goods Drive and ABCN mentoring programs for a few years. The delight in watching the students come out of themselves in the ABCN mentoring program is reward in itself and the Christmas Goods Drive has always been a very popular activity in our group. It's not unusual for us to collect a room full of gifts, hampers and return to school items – there is a lot of chatter in the group about who/what you are buying for. Knowing that a family would wake on Christmas Day to gifts and a food hamper has always made me feel that I had been able to do something for someone else at Christmas. Both these activities are not just for lawyers and I would encourage anyone to get involved".

Barbara Longland,  
Executive Assistant, Brisbane

### Perth and Brisbane offices 'walk for justice'

Walk for Justice is a national fundraiser held on National Pro Bono Day (17 May) and part of national Law Week each year. MinterEllison's Perth and Brisbane teams walked and raised funds for LawAccess in Perth where we were main sponsors of the event, and LawRight in Brisbane.

Both teams also raised funds for their respective law clearing houses which improve access to justice for vulnerable members of the community through strategic partnerships with pro bono lawyers.



Sarah Summers, Lydia Mountford, Eve Bramley, Alice Barber, Alexandra Murphy, Erin Duce, Lauren Michael and Conor McCavana.



Nadia Braad, Sarah O'Shea, Famin Ahmed, Julian Vidal, Robert Reed, Katie Clark, Emma Bastian, Chelsea Simmons, Olivia Fielding, Kate Thorogood, Maria Cantrill, Kate Dowse, Daylon Johnston, Scott Thompson and 'Biscuit'



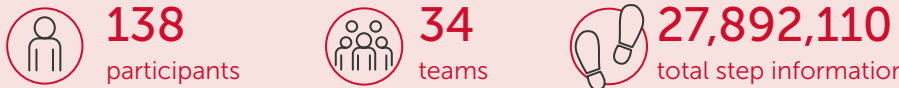
Fundraising for LGBTQ Domestic Violence Awareness

This year the Brisbane office annual trivia night raised funds for our Community Partner LGBTQ Domestic Violence Awareness Foundation which supports LGBTQ victims and survivors of domestic violence and abuse through awareness, education and breaking down barriers to accessing help. Through registration, raffle tickets, auctions and games on the night we raised more than \$15,000.



September

In 2022, 34 MinterEllison teams, and 134 of our staff, participated in STEPtember, a national fundraising challenge, raising funds that support life-changing research, treatment, services and technologies to help people with cerebral palsy to live their best life. Our teams stepped over 27 million steps and raised over \$20,000 including MatchME funding by the firm.



Fabulous submissions for our "Show us your step style" competition  
Declan Reidy, Daniel Antoyma and Dylan Rodier (winner).



### Sydney Street Choir

The Sydney Street Choir is a musical community that supports people dealing with homelessness, mental illness, addiction and/or social disadvantage and has been changing lives through the power of song since 2001. The Sydney Street Choir Corporate Challenge, an initiative of the PAYCE Foundation, was first held in 2017. The challenge has attracted some of Sydney's finest corporate choirs.

The funds that have been raised as part of the Challenge have gone towards running the three community-building Choir programs each week, as well as access to a social welfare officer, who helps the Choir members with challenges they encounter from time to time. Above all, the Sydney Street Choir gives its members a welcoming community where they can feel safe to express themselves and to have fun, as well as the opportunity to perform and be seen and heard by the wider public.

In October 2022 the MinterEllison Choir had the privilege of participating in the Sydney Street Choir Corporate Challenge at lunchtime in Martin Place. Other corporate choirs to take up the challenge were from George Weston Foods, Coca-Cola, Macquarie, PwC, and APA Group.

The MinterEllison Choir raised funds to contribute towards the continued operation of the Sydney Street Choir.

The members of the MinterEllison Choir are Dianne Boyd, Amelia Boyd Jones, Hayley Carr, Joel Dueck, Maria Grasso, Emma Grimley, Carmen Juarez, Tara Kennedy, Susan Macandrew, Suzana Macolino, Laura MacRae, Dolly Sequeira, James Stanton, Annie Watts and Philippa Wherrett.





# Meet our Pro Bono and Community Investment team



**Kate Cato**

Chief Community Officer

**Sydney**

[kate.cato@minterellison.com](mailto:kate.cato@minterellison.com)



**Keith Rovers**

Pro Bono Partner

**Sydney**

[keith.rovers@minterellison.com](mailto:keith.rovers@minterellison.com)



**Robert Reed OAM**

Special Counsel, Senior Manager

**Brisbane**

[robert.reed@minterellison.com](mailto:robert.reed@minterellison.com)

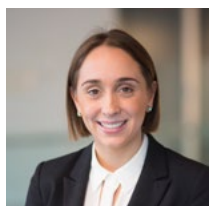


**Anna Lyons**

Senior Associate, Manager

**Melbourne**

[anna.lyons@minterellison.com](mailto:anna.lyons@minterellison.com)



**Natalie Bentley**

Senior Associate

**Sydney**

[natalie.bentley@minterellison.com](mailto:natalie.bentley@minterellison.com)

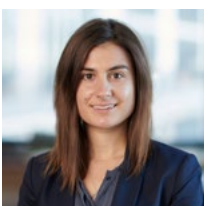


**Jane Salvesson**

Senior Legal Counsel

**Melbourne**

[jane.salvesson@minterellison.com](mailto:jane.salvesson@minterellison.com)

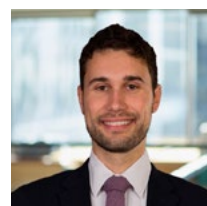


**Rachel Johnston**

Associate

**Sydney**

[rachel.johnston@minterellison.com](mailto:rachel.johnston@minterellison.com)

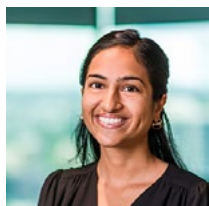


**Daniel Komesaroff**

Lawyer

**Melbourne**

[daniel.komesaroff@minterellison.com](mailto:daniel.komesaroff@minterellison.com)

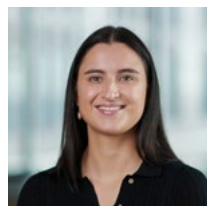


**Famin Ahmed**

Lawyer

**Brisbane**

[famin.ahmed@minterellison.com](mailto:famin.ahmed@minterellison.com)

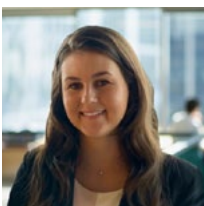


**Lizzy Enright**

Lawyer

**Sydney**

[lizzy.enright@minterellison.com](mailto:lizzy.enright@minterellison.com)

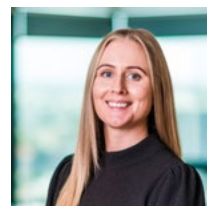


**Charlotte Wylie**

Lawyer

**Sydney**

[charlotte.wylie@minterellison.com](mailto:charlotte.wylie@minterellison.com)



**Michelle Bold**

National Coordinator

**Brisbane**

[michelle.bold@minterellison.com](mailto:michelle.bold@minterellison.com)

## Local Pro Bono Champions

**Adelaide**

**James Kearney**

Partner

[james.kearney@minterellison.com](mailto:james.kearney@minterellison.com)

**Brisbane**

**Stephen Knight**

Partner

[stephen.knight@minterellison.com](mailto:stephen.knight@minterellison.com)

**Canberra**

**Edward Campbell**

Partner

[edward.campbell@minterellison.com](mailto:edward.campbell@minterellison.com)

**Darwin**

**Lachlan Drew**

Partner

[lachlan.drew@minterellison.com](mailto:lachlan.drew@minterellison.com)

**Melbourne**

**Scott Chesterman**

Partner

[scott.chesterman@minterellison.com](mailto:scott.chesterman@minterellison.com)

**Rob Cooper**

Partner

[robert.cooper@minterellison.com](mailto:robert.cooper@minterellison.com)

**Perth**

**Lee Rossetto**

Partner

[lee.rossetto@minterellison.com](mailto:lee.rossetto@minterellison.com)

MinterEllison.