



Women Connect

Phillip Island Community & Learning Centre

STRATEGIC PLAN 2021-2024

About Women Connect

Women Connect exists to support women in our region who due to life events, limited support networks and feelings of social isolation are seeking to gain a sense of connection, empowerment and self reliance.

Our successful program provides practical resources, information and referrals to meet the employment, further education and social welfare needs of women in our community.

Supported since 2017 by the Phillip Island Community & Learning Centre (PICAL), Women Connect is a well recognised and award winning initiative with strong support from our local community and partner organisations.



How we help

A SPACE TO CONNECT

Women Connect provides a safe and welcoming space that is free to access for all local women. Our modern co-working space is equipped with technology and resources to support women to meet challenges, gain skills and build connections with other local women.

We provide:

- Free access to computers, printers and office resources
- Support from a volunteer to access technology and complete online tasks.
- Employment support services, resume writing and Work Wardrobe outfitting service
- Social Welfare information, referrals, and support to access service providers
- A resource "bank" of skilled volunteers assisting women with free 1:1 appointments to deliver practical and professional support in a range of areas including legal, financial, and small business.
- Material supports including hygiene items and emergency essentials.
- Regular social groups, and community activities that build networks and positive mental wellbeing.
- Education programs and workshops on topics relevant to local women

OUR IMPACT

"I thought I would find work on my own, but it proved harder than I thought. The kind and supportive words were what I noticed from the first interaction. They listened to my concerns and directed me in ways to improve my situation

KERRY N - NOVEMBER 2019



What we have achieved

SINCE 2017 WOMEN CONNECT HAS

- Provided 2000+ hours access to facilities & resources
- Established regional Victoria's only all-female co-working space
- Assisted over 100 local women to find employment
- Provided more than 50 free Work Wardrobe outfits
- Supported over 20 women to complete further education
- Distributed over 200 Share the Dignity Bags and Backpacks
- Assisted with over 100 referrals to social welfare organisations
- Supported over 25 women to complete TAFE and Tertiary Studies
- Established a free community laundry space for vulnerable women
- Assisted over 40 women to access and use technology through our Tech Club
- Worked closely with a network of 10 other local charity and NFP services
- Attracted a social media following of over 800 people
- Provided 450+ personal hygiene & care packs for vulnerable women in our community





2019 Volunteer Team Award – ACFE
VIC Learn Local Awards
Gender Equity Award Finalist "Career
Sessions" NHVic Awards
Runner up – Practitioner of the Year
Award – Michelle Harrison ACFE
Learn Local Awards 2020

Industry Awards

Strategic Plan

Thanks to the generous support of the Bass Coast Shire Council, our strategic planning process commenced in 2020.

Women Connect, in partnership with INZync have produced our 2021-2024 Strategic Plan.

This plan gives a clear vision of the future direction of our program and services and has allowed us to determine how we can have the biggest positive impact on women in our local community in the most cost-effective way.





OUR MISSION

To provide resources, programs & services that empower and support women on their journey to employment, personal fulfilment and belonging in our community



OUR VISION

To ensure that no matter what their circumstances, every woman in our region is aware of Women Connect and its services and how they are specifically designed to help them engage in their community, diminish feelings of isolation and enrich their sense of belonging

OUR VALUES

EMPATHY

RESPECT

RESILIANCE

INNOVATION

INCLUSIVITY

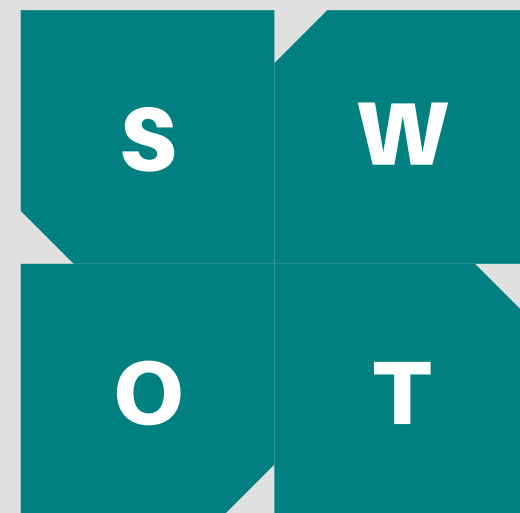
RELEVANCE

Analysis & Conclusions

Our strategic planning process included a detailed review of our current program including a SWOT Analysis. From this we identified a clear need for Women Connect to:

- Build greater structure and accountability into its operations and resources
- Seek greater board representation and access to fundraising expertise & support
- Expand its leadership and resources to ensure it can effectively plan, develop and deliver programs
- Commit to effectively measure and report on the impact of its activities
- Facilitate greater diversity of its financial resources and relationships with funders
- Build a more formal approach to its marketing and communications activities
- Drive greater coverage, impact and reach amongst the community

STRENGTHS
WEAKNESSES
OPPORTUNITIES
THREATS



Detailed information on our research including the SWOT analysis can be found in the Master Strategic Planning Document for Women Connect. This is available on our website:

www.womenconnectpi.org/what-s-new

Our future

PREPARE

- 1 Establish and onboard a new Women Connect structure and team
- 2 Streamline existing services in line with available resources and drive impact through a resource /referral model
- 3 Prepare to move and establish Women Connect into PICAL's new premises at Warley Avenue

EMBED

- 1 Ensure the team is operating cohesively and productively.
- 2 Activating strategic and operational activities that set the foundation for Women Connect's future
- 3 Embedding systems that support and inform the day to day operations, future programs and funding

BUILD

- 1 A range of highly valued and successful programs are in place
- 2 Women Connect is sought out as a "Partner of Choice" amongst funding providers and is a financially viable program
- 3 Women Connect has access to an enviable pool of operational staff and volunteers

Our strategic priorities



BUILD A GREAT CULTURE

Manage our capacity and foster a culture that supports, empowers and values its workforce and volunteer base

INCREASE THE EFFICIENCY AND SUSTAINABILITY OF THE ORGANISATION

Establish a solid foundation of infrastructure and systems to effectively transition and evolve Women Connect

DELIVER THE PROGRAMS THAT LOCAL WOMEN NEED

Ensure the effective delivery of a balanced "impact focused" mix of programs and activities

SECURE OUR FINANCES

Ensure our financial viability by diversifying income and funding streams

DEVELOP OUR EXISTING STRONG REPUTATION AND BRAND

Drive Women Connect's reputation and build awareness amongst the community and key stakeholders



Support, Empower, Connect.

During the COVID 19 pandemic, demand for our services from local women increased by over 50%.

Our success in meeting this demand in such a challenging year demonstrates how important Women Connect's services will be in helping women to successfully navigate their journey to financial and emotional security in the future.

Our strategic plan will guide our future direction and the evolution of our program to allow us to support, empower and connect the women in our local community.



**Contact us, find
out more, and get
involved!**

WOMEN CONNECT

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