

Board

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Noni Sproule - Board Chair

Noni (she/her) has been engaged in community, trade union, women's health and social equity activism for almost 20 years. More than ten of those years in Melbourne's West. In her professional life, she has worked to create impact across the government, not for profit and private sectors in the health, education and justice sectors. Noni stepped into the role of Board Chair in 2025 and has broad experience in community organising, partnerships, campaigns, engagement, communications, change, strategy and funding. Both Noni and her young son, Augie, train as part of social circus and feel incredibly lucky to be part of such a special community.



Eleanor (El) Boydell

El Boydell (she/her) is an experienced project manager with a history working in the arts, events and education sectors. She is currently working in the Victorian government's Major Events team, supporting projects, funding programs and strategy development. As a freelance creative producer, El has worked to bring creative visions to life with Wit Incorporated, Memetica, Women's Circus, Emerging Writers, Festival and more. El has been a training and performing member with Women's Circus since 2015.



Dr. Melinda Smith OAM

Dr. Melinda Smith OAM (she/her) has over 30 years experience in disability and education. In 2008, Melinda began promoting the health and wellbeing outcomes of dance for people with disabilities. In 2018, Melinda created her first solo work, Spasmotive. The next phase of her work sees her creating a series of audio-visual expressions of life in social isolation. Melinda lives with cerebral palsy and is an advocate of disability inclusion. In 2019 she was awarded an Honorary Doctorate by Deakin University. Melinda recently became a member of the Deakin University Disability and Inclusion team as a lecturer in Inclusive Arts.



Amy Lynes

Amy Lynes (she/her) is a Senior Workplace Relations Consultant with the National Retail Association, a not-for-profit organisation that represents the interests of retailers and quick service restaurants across Australia. Amy is passionate about authentic leadership, and empowering others to reach their potential and achieve their goals. As an experienced people leader, Amy has spent over decade leading Human Resources teams and managing complex business projects. Amy's broad range of expertise spans the entire people experience; from recruitment to learning and development, strategic planning to industrial relations, work health and safety to employee engagement, Amy is dedicated to helping organisations leverage their people to drive them to success



Maggie Tekell

Maggie (she/her) has a decade of experience working within the public arts sector. Since 2011, she has held positions at the Australia War Memorial, Sydney Opera House, Melbourne Recital Centre, Circus Oz and currently at ACMI, generating revenue from private sector support and developing fundraising strategies for the organisation. Throughout her employment history she has built strong relationships and maintains strong networks with donors, philanthropic trusts and foundations and government stakeholders. Maggie believes in the power of circus, the way it can generate community and empower, engage, and challenge people. She has always looked to Women's Circus and been inspired with the extensive training programs and the commitment to gender inclusion and equity.



Lisa Jumar

Lisa (she/her) has over 20 years of experience in the finance industry, working in banking, accounting, and in-house finance management roles. She thrives when helping small businesses manage their finances, providing practical financial, operational, technical, and strategic advice. She is a strong ally for the LGBTQIA+ community and is thrilled to bring her finance knowledge, practical strategy and previous Board experience to Women's Circus.



Karen Taranto

Karen (she/her) is interested in social justice and equity, working in a range of social policy roles across the community sector and government, and most recently at an industry ombudsman. Born in the Philippines, she migrated to Australia as a toddler, and was raised by a strong mother and grandmother, who taught her that joy and community can always be found in dance and music. Karen regularly performs music and theatre works in venues and festivals around the country, and is thrilled to bring a diverse mix of lived experiences to the Women's Circus board.



Peta Granger

Peta (she/her) is an experienced retail director and business leader specialising in retail and digital sales, brand innovation and strategic growth. Peta led the Lush ANZ business for the last 10 years harnessing the shared values of staff, customers and the public to prove that ethical values and behaviour drive sales and growth. She has cultivated a large body of international experience across more than 35 countries, bringing a wealth of strategic expertise and proven adaptability to organisational cultures, unique group dynamics, change management, opportunity and crisis. She understands the governance, structure and culture needed to take various sized organisations to the next level, and drives long-term growth and sustainability. Peta is a passionate audience member of circus, comedy and live music, and loves camping and festivals with her daughters.



Jack Nicholls - Board Secretary

Jack (they/them) is an Australian speculative fiction author and journalist. Their work has appeared in Tor.com, Business Insider, Beneath Ceaseless Skies, Aurealis and Grist, and they write essays at Medium. They studied history and climate change, giving them a good grasp of the past and the future, and they do their best to keep up with the present. They are a current training and performing Women's Circus Member.

Currently 37.5% of board members identify as gender diverse, LGBTQIA+, First Peoples, Deaf or Disabled. We are currently recruiting three additional board members which will be appointed in October 2025 and increase diversity within the board to 60%.

Core Staff

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Pippin Remi - Executive Director

Pippin (she/her) is an experienced arts manager, specialising in arts in education, programming, and project management. She's passionate about promoting access to the arts and using the arts to strengthen communities and connections. Growing up in regional Victoria, she was fortunate to experience the value of the arts as a young person and its ability to build lifelong skills and strengthen communities. With a background in circus, Pippin has experience as a performer, trainer, tour and community training space manager and in classes and education program development.



Siobhan Callanan - Operations Manager

Siobhan (she/her) started her career in Theatre in 2007 after completing a degree in Technical Production. She has spent most of her career as a lighting technician touring musicals around Australia. She has enjoyed expanding her tech skills into the world of arts administration - traversing the world of behind-the-scenes support from stage to office.



Hanne Grant - Marketing and Communications Manager

One of Australia's premier hula hoopers, Hanne (she/her) has a Bachelor of Circus Arts and over 15 years of circus industry knowledge and experience. Notable highlights in her long spanning circus career include touring both internationally and at home in Australia with award winning drag cabaret YUMMY. Still performing, Hanne now has a Master of Strategic Communication and works as a marketing and communications professional.



Sophia Laidlaw - Social Circus Program Manager

Sophia (she/they) has a Certificate IV in Circus Arts at NICA, specialising in static trapeze. Having grown up doing gymnastics, Sophia has been coaching since 2017 for a variety of clubs. In more recent years they have worked for NICA as a Circus Coach and Admin Assistant, and attained their rigging licence. Knowing first hand the transformative nature of circus, Sophia is passionate about social circus and how much of a positive impact it makes on both individuals and communities. In addition their role as Social Circus Program Manager, Sophia is also a Women's Circus trainer.



Vivian Lyngdoh - Community Partnerships Manager

Vivian Lyngdoh (they/them) is a queer leader and advocate dedicated to advancing intersectionality and inclusion across rainbow and ethnic communities. Originally from Northeast India, they belong to the Khasi tribe. Now based in Australia, Vivian is the Vice President of the Australian GLBTIQ+ Multicultural Council (AGMC), works at Transgender Victoria as the Fundraising and Partnerships Strategist, and volunteers with Refugee Code, supporting refugees and asylum seekers in gaining meaningful employment.



Franca Stadler - Resident Trainer and Head Rigger

Franca (she/her) has worked in Melbourne circus and theatre for over 20 years in a variety of roles – as a rigger, rigging designer, technician, prop maker, circus trainer and circus performer and director-devisor. In addition to her role as the Women's Circus Resident Trainer and in-house rigger, Franca works at Footscray Community Arts Centre as a circus trainer and facilitator. Franca has been involved in various capacities at the Women's Circus since 1995 and brings a wealth of knowledge, experience and passion to the organisation.



Sal Francis - Resident Trainer

Inspired by people and their journeys, Sal (they/them) sees circus as a vehicle for people to discover new possibilities for themselves. Sal has been a core trainer for the social circus programs across Circus Oz, Women's Circus, and Circus Nexus for the better part of the last two decades, bringing accessible circus to thousands of people across the country and around the world. Sal Frances has taught at Women's Circus since 2003, teaching the popular New Crew six-month intro to circus program, the ever fun Teen Allsorts classes for 12-17 year olds, and Circus Mixtape, our subsidised Trans & Gender Diverse only class. Sal also works with Women's Circus on community projects, helping those who face barriers to discover the joy of circus.

