

women*scircus

ANNUAL REPORT

2025



Acknowledgement of Country

At Women's Circus we are privileged to meet, train and create on the lands of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and Bunurong peoples of the Kulin Nation and recognise their continuing connection to land, waters, communities and culture. We pay our respect to Elders past and present and through them to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Sovereignty was never ceded. Always was, always will be Aboriginal land.

Marginalised Gender Statement

Women's Circus welcomes anyone to our organisation who belongs to a marginalised gender.

This means we welcome members and staff to our organisation who are:

- cisgender or transgender women,
- transgender men,
- non-binary people,
- gender diverse people,
- intersex people,
- and anyone who is questioning their gender.

Women's Circus understands there is no such thing as 'proof' of gender.

We will not tolerate questioning of someone else's gender.

Women's Circus values each member's development, both creatively and personally, and recognises that self-identity may change over time.

As such, once members have taken out membership, they will continue to be able to access the services and support of Women's Circus, irrespective of their gender.

Women's Circus is truly special in the way it combines circus arts with community care. It's not just about training skills, it's about building a space where people of marginalised communities can feel safe, celebrated, and connected.

That balance of physical challenge, creativity, and genuine community support is something I've never experienced anywhere else.

- Mishkah, Member



Who We Are

Women's Circus is a not-for-profit intersectional feminist arts organisation based at the Drill Hall in Footscray. We specialise in the inclusive artform of social circus and use this as a tool to build connection and creative collaboration. We deliver a vibrant, year-round program of social circus classes, creative development projects and bold, thought-provoking performances that centre lived experience and amplify the diverse voices of our community.

Our work creates an impact that is both immediate and long lasting — from a powerful moment of recognition in the audience to a lifelong sense of belonging through membership.

Through skills development, artistic expression and collective creation, we foster a culture of care, confidence and compassion within our community.

Rich in history, Women's Circus was established in 1991 as a project of the Footscray Community Arts Centre, creating a safe space for women survivors of domestic violence. Over more than three decades, we have evolved into a national leader in social circus practice. Today, we welcome people of all marginalised genders and remain a vital force in the circus and physical theatre sector, with a growing membership of 260 and a strong reputation for artistic excellence, inclusion and social impact.

Purpose

Women's Circus works to empower people of marginalised genders to shape community and culture through circus.

Values

We **CARE** for community and for ourselves.

We take **PRIDE** in who we are, the work we do and the impact we have.

We actively pursue **JUSTICE & EQUITY**, and this is embedded in everything we do.

Our organisation is underpinned by intersectional feminist principles including personal agency, active listening, and compassion.

2023 -2025 Strategic Goals



Empower Marginalised Communities

Champion genuine and meaningful engagement, participation and representation of marginalised individuals and communities in circus.



Healthy Organisation and People

Participate in the creation of a robust, sustainable and healthy organisation and working culture.



Lasting Impact

Create programs and partnerships that create positive, lasting and reverberating impact for individuals, communities and the organisation.



Executive Director & Board Chair Welcome



Welcome to the Women's Circus 2025 Annual Report. This year reflects significant connection, growth and transition for our community.

In March, I stepped into the role of Executive Director, following the departure of Steph Cox, whose contribution to Women's Circus left a strong foundation for the future. I felt deeply welcomed by our community of members, staff, artists, and supporters. The spirit of connection, care, and creativity that is the essence of Women's Circus has guided us toward the goals set out in our 2023–2026 Strategic Plan.

This year, we celebrated the diverse voices of marginalised genders through bold and thought-provoking creative works. We opened the year with a successful season of Small Acts of Resistance at Midsumma Festival, featuring 13 Women's Circus members aged 50–75 in a compelling work that challenged stereotypes and sparked meaningful conversation.

Our Scratch Nights – relaxed, community-driven performance events – became further embedded in our annual program, strengthening artistic experimentation and deepening connection across our membership. We closed the year with a smash-hit end-of-year cabaret that captured the joy, courage and creativity that define our community.

We strengthened sector relationships through shared performance opportunities, weekly skill-sharing and continued partnership with Na Djinang Circus, Gasworks Arts Park and Midsumma Festival. We expanded our focus on fundraising and development, deepening philanthropic relationships, and delivering our most successful fundraising campaign to date. The impact of our generous donors was felt more than ever. Two-year organisational funding from Creative Australia enabled us to grow our staffing capacity, expand our social circus program and strengthen earned income streams.

Looking ahead, we developed a new Strategic Plan to launch in 2026, building on our strengths, honouring our legacy and setting a clear vision for the future.

I thank our Board for their leadership and support throughout this period of transition. In particular, I acknowledge Noni Sproule and Deputy Chair El Boydell for their guidance during my first year in the role.

I invite you to share our work, our impact, and the vibrant community that makes Women's Circus so special. Your support makes this work possible, and I look forward to our bright future ahead.

Pippin Remi, Executive Director



2025 was a year of renewal and growth for Women's Circus. We farewelled long-standing contributors Steph Cox, Hanne Grant and Peta Granger, and celebrated Pippin Remi stepping into the Executive Director role.

Under Pippin's leadership, we developed a new Strategic Plan that honours our creative legacy and strengthens our role in Melbourne's West. This plan sets the strategic direction that will allow us to grow and deliver for our communities in years to come. My heartfelt thanks go to Pippin and the entire team for their hard work, resilience and generosity throughout the year.

I was delighted to join the Board as Chair this year, after more than a decade of community engagement and activism in Melbourne's West and several years of membership of Women's Circus. The Board also grew, welcoming Zara Jones, Sam Jacob and Angela Pamic, along with our new Secretary, Jack Nicholls. I'm deeply grateful to every Board member for the care and expertise they bring to this organisation.

The Board would like to thank El Boydell, who was Acting Chair for much of 2024 and moved to Deputy Chair in March 2025. El will conclude her tenure on the Board in 2026 after almost a decade of service, first as Secretary and then as Member and Deputy Chair.

More supporters than ever became donors in 2025, helping us nurture a safe and empowering community for women, children and people of marginalised genders. We were especially honoured to receive our first bequest from founding member Annie Fayzdaughter, whose extraordinary gift will provide ongoing creative funding for years to come.

Our partnerships with the Victorian Government, Creative Australia and Maribyrnong Council continued to strengthen, with renewed Creative Victoria funding through to 2028, multiple Council grants, and Creative Australia's Circus and Physical Theatre organisation funding (2025–26). We're grateful to local MPs Katie Hall and Daniel Mulino for championing our work and assisting us in advocating for this funding.

This year also saw our membership grow, our community programs expand, particularly with multicultural communities and schools, and creative opportunities for members to flourish.

Thank you for being part of our story. I'm excited to celebrate our 35th anniversary with you in 2026.

Noni Sproule, Board Chair

Impact & Reach

Our Members



Empower Marginalised Communities



Healthy Organisation and People



Lasting Impact

Our 2025 membership survey results demonstrated our commitment to inclusive practice and creating a safe environment for our members of marginalised genders to feel comfortable being their full selves. Themes of community, support, values and safety rang strong in members' responses, along with appreciation for the skill and approach of our dedicated trainers.

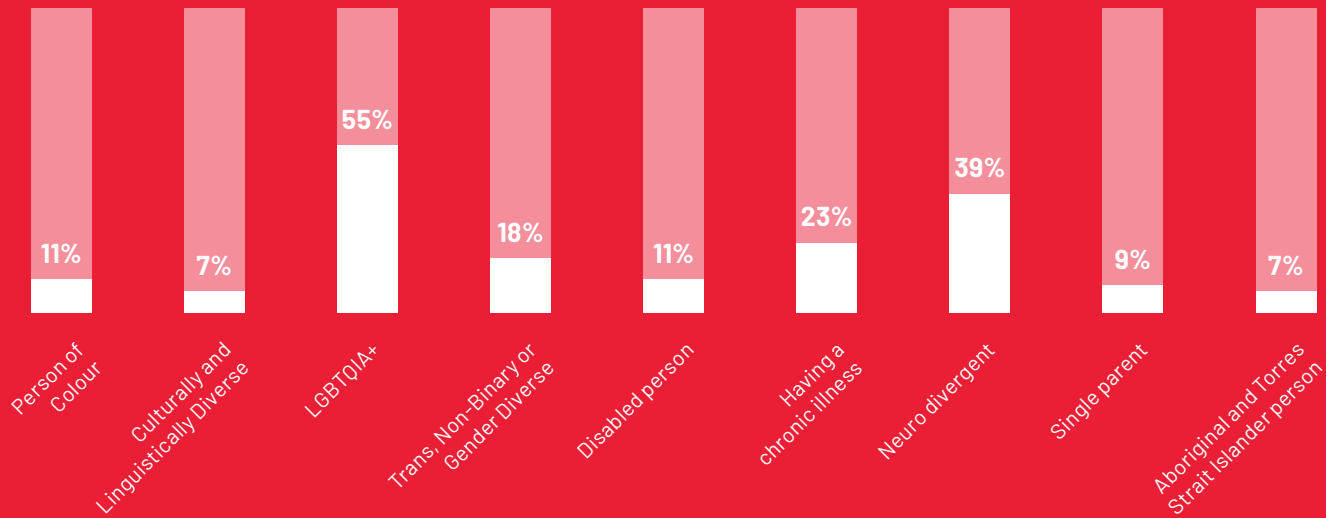
I can't wait to grow older in this community - Chatting with people who've been a part of Women's Circus for 20+ years and how it's shaped them and how they've shaped it is always an amazing conversation. Women's Circus is made of the movers and shakers building sustained community and while I've been fortunate to have had access to social circus throughout my life - I've seen new peers in the space have their perceptions entirely re-organised to what moving our bodies can be: Joyful!

I really love that I feel completely listened to and welcome by all trainers. Sometimes I feel socially awkward but when I am in my circus classes I find myself feeling more confident and loud, and I feel that the trainers make space for that.

Women's Circus is truly special in the way it combines circus arts with community care. It's not just about training skills, it's about building a space where people of marginalised communities can feel safe, celebrated, and connected. That balance of physical challenge, creativity, and genuine community support is something I've never experienced anywhere else.

Magic happens at Women's Circus. This is a space where marginalized people, the weirdos, and the misfits can all come together to feel a sense of belonging. This is where the whole is greater than the sum of its parts, and our community is made better by every single person who walks through our doors. WC is a place for creativity, play, and personal growth. It is so, so special and important.

Our members identify as:



2025

IN NUMBERS



OLDEST PARTICIPANT

78 yrs young



YOUNGEST PARTICIPANT

2 yrs old



MEMBERS

260



NEW MEMBERS

123



LONGEST MEMBER

34 yrs



WEBSITE USER SESSIONS

28,648



FACEBOOK FOLLOWERS

4,932



INSTAGRAM FOLLOWERS

4,259



EMAIL SUBSCRIBERS

2,962



FIRST TIMERS

309



AUDIENCE MEMBERS

1,355



OPEN TRAINING HOURS

300



WORKSHOP AND TERM PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

1,380



CIRCUS TRAINERS EMPLOYED

41



SOCIAL CIRCUS PROGRAM SUBSIDY COVERED BY WOMEN'S CIRCUS

\$23,224

**"Loved the show.
Circus with meaning!"**
– Judy Wolff



Creative Programming

"Great show ~☆☆☆☆~ Congratulations."
– Ursula Dutkiewicz

“A great show... reminding us that womyn are capable of amazing feats of strength and agility in a way that is significant and heart-warming. Congratulations to everyone involved.”

– Jean Taylor



Watch the *Small Acts Of Resistance* Trailer Video

Photographer: Suzanne Phoenix, Show: Small Acts of Resistance

‘Small Acts Of Resistance’

Co-Produced by Gasworks Arts Park

We commenced 2025 with a vibrant one-week season of Small Acts of Resistance, presented at Gasworks Arts Park as part of Midsumma Festival from 5–8 February.

Developed in 2024 in collaboration with acclaimed director Kate Fryer, the work featured 13 Women’s Circus members aged 50–75. Blending evocative storytelling, dynamic physicality and an original sound score, Small Acts of Resistance centred the lived experiences and creative voices of its performers. The production exemplified our strategic commitment to amplifying marginalised voices and creating platforms for self-representation through bold, contemporary circus practice.

The season was a significant success on multiple levels. A total of 660 audience members attended across the four performances, with feedback overwhelmingly positive. Audiences described feeling deeply moved—many to tears—and affirmed both the artistic quality and the cultural importance of the work. The production also received a four-star review from ArtsHub, further recognising its artistic excellence.

Participation in the Midsumma program provided a powerful platform for our collective voice, enabling us to reach new and diverse audiences while advancing our strategic objective to create programs that spark conversation, challenge perceptions and centre participant identities

and stories. We were particularly encouraged by increased engagement with the Deaf community, reflecting our ongoing commitment to accessibility and inclusive pathways into our work and community.

This project was dedicated to long-time member Annie Fayzdaughter, who contributed to the creative development of the work and sadly passed away prior to the season. Annie’s spirit and legacy remain woven through the fabric of this production.

Director Kate Fryer

Rigger Franca Stadler

Stage Manager Kara Floyd

Lighting Designer Gina Gascoigne

Sound Designer Sharyn Brand

Music Director Betty France

Costume Designer Jac Antcliff

Production Management Steph Cox

Cast Sheryl Bryce, Rebecca Bonser, Kate Cooke, Madeline Ford, Vig Geddes, Harry Grrl, Vivienne Halat, Nic Herd, Jen Hunt, Larissa MacFarlane, Catherine McMutrie, Liz Murray, Jenny Pitts and Bridget Roberts.



Empower Marginalised Communities



Lasting Impact



Members Cabaret

‘No Regrets’

Supported by Bendigo Bank Seddon

A cornerstone of the Women’s Circus calendar, our 2025 Members Cabaret, No Regrets, marked the culmination of a year dedicated to fostering a safe, inclusive community and championing creative self-expression.

Presented from 11-14 December, the one-week season transformed our home at The Drill Hall in Footscray into a vibrant and intimate performance venue, alive with celebration, courage and connection.

This was our second year collaborating with acclaimed circus artist Malia Walsh as Director, alongside beloved Women’s Circus community member and performance maker Katy Burrows as Assistant Director, providing opportunity to strengthen their connection to the Women’s Circus community. Their leadership not only elevated the artistic ambition of the cabaret but also created meaningful opportunities for members to deepen their creative practice.

No Regrets featured an intergenerational cast of 26 members—some stepping onto the stage for the very first time, others returning after many years away. Over a three-month creative development and rehearsal process, members worked closely with the Directors to devise solo, duo and ensemble acts. The process was as significant as the outcome: participants shared creative risk-taking, mutual support, meals and laughter, building thought

provoking performances filled with joy, silliness, vulnerability and power.

The season exceeded expectations, selling out all five performances and reaching 550 audience members. We reached new audiences and forged new connections with local organisations and residents, with each performance Auslan Interpreted. The overwhelming audience response affirmed the power of community-led performance and the appetite for bold, authentic storytelling.

A highlight this year was our commitment to strengthening pathways into the creative industries. We supported members to develop new production skills, expanding their experience into technical and behind-the-scenes roles. We were proud to invite creatives who had previously contributed as volunteers into paid production roles, reflecting our investment in upskilling our community, valuing expertise, and creating meaningful, pathways into creative work.

No Regrets strongly aligned with our strategic objective to design programs and partnerships that create lasting, positive impact for individuals, communities and the organisation—demonstrating the transformative potential of inclusive circus practice when artists are supported to share their voices on their own terms.



5
Paid Artists
& Creatives



38
Community
Members Involved



Sold Out!

550
Audience
Members



23%
of performers
hadn't performed
in a cabaret before

Members Cabaret

‘No Regrets’

Supported by Bendigo Bank Seddon

Director:

Malia Walsh

Assistant Director:

Katy Burrows

Rigger:

Franca Stadler

Stage & Production Manager:

Kara Floyd

Lighting Design & Technical Management:

Kyra Ryan

Lighting Operator:

Rachel Dann-South

Sound Operator:

Chase MacIntosh

FoH team:

Erin Adams, Kamina Vincent, Pippin Remi, Sophia Laidlaw, Vivian Lyngdoh.

Volunteers:

Amy Lynes, Angela Field, Angela Pamic, Aurore Dupuy, El Boydell, Emily Ross, Jack Nicholls, Karen Taranto, Louisa Dretzke, Noni Sproule, Rhiannon Eckhardt, Simone Sheriden and Tanija Parker

Videography:

Alex Walton - The Phil Taylor Foundation

Photography:

Grace Auld

Auslan Interpretation:

Sasha Barton, Auslan Stage Left

Cast:

Anna Boddenberg, Anna Cee, Alyssa Baker, Bee Blackburn, Bridget McClumpha, Charlie Flook, Fabienne Schmid, Isabella Pace, Jenny Pitts, Jo Sasse, Kate Cooke, Kelsea Blackburn, Ki Martin, Kristen Bell, Lara MacFarlane, Lauren Bartlett, Leon Murphy, Linda Wilson, Lindsey Gillard, Lynne Regan, Mishkah Rali, Nic Herd, Niamh Dann-South, Riana Popczyk, Xan Jempson, Yvonne Meng

Guest performers:

Ish Ryden, Katy Burrows, Malia Walsh, Nikii McCoppin and Tarn Scully



Empower Marginalised Communities



Healthy Organisation and People



Lasting Impact

“I really enjoyed being part of the 2025 cabaret, which is my third. It’s a big undertaking, and this time, I had heaps more confidence that I could negotiate the long hours required knowing that the Women’s Circus respects disability culture. We are all on a learning journey to make society less ableist and more inclusive, but the first step is being willing to listen and negotiate.”

- Cabaret performer

“Such a good bunch of friends and a supportive community”

- Cabaret audience member

“Amazing, awesome, strong!”

- Cabaret audience member



Social Circus Program

Supported by the Victorian Government through Creative Victoria, Maribyrnong City Council, the Wood Foundation, Pressroom Philanthropy, Be Blue Rock Foundation, the Victorian Women's Benevolent Trust and all our generous donors in 2025.

Our flagship offering, our Social Circus Program, continued to thrive in 2025 supporting 1445 people to experience the joy of social circus through our weekly classes at the Drill Hall in Footscray.

Our range of Social Circus Program offering catered for ages 2-75. In 2025, our number of participants grew by 40% and the number of classes offered by 24% from the previous year.

We have the privilege of witnessing people's journeys as they step into the circus space and gradually build confidence and trust in themselves and others. It's a unique experience to see participants cultivate resilience as they learn new skills and embrace challenges. Along the way, they discover a sense of accomplishment in reaching personal goals, and find joy in the process itself, celebrating progress and sharing breakthroughs.

We continued to offer subsidised rates to those facing financial difficulties.

Highlights included

- Our weekly free Circus Fit class continued to gain momentum and connect members, making general fitness fun!
- We expanded the number of Tiny Tots classes available due to popular demand, and introduced short courses in Unicycle and Stage Combat.
- Our longstanding Performing Older Women's class for ages 40+ continued to grow in popularity, allowing us to bring in an additional trainer to accommodate more participants.
- Introducing 6 new trainers to our team.

ADULT CONCESSIONS
162 enrolments

ADULT FULLY SUBSIDISED
3 enrolments

YOUTH FULLY SUBSIDISED
20 enrolments
with support from the Victorian Women's Benevolent Trust

PERFORMING OLDER WOMEN
(OVER 40'S CLASS)
95 enrolments

MIXTAPE (TRANS AND
GENDER DIVERSE CLASS)
44 enrolments

FIRST NATIONS FULLY SUBSIDISED
PLACES: 10 ADULTS, 17 YOUTH =
27 enrolments

TOTAL SUBSIDY
\$23,224

 **Empower Marginalised Communities**

 **Lasting Impact**



1,445
Total number
of enrolments



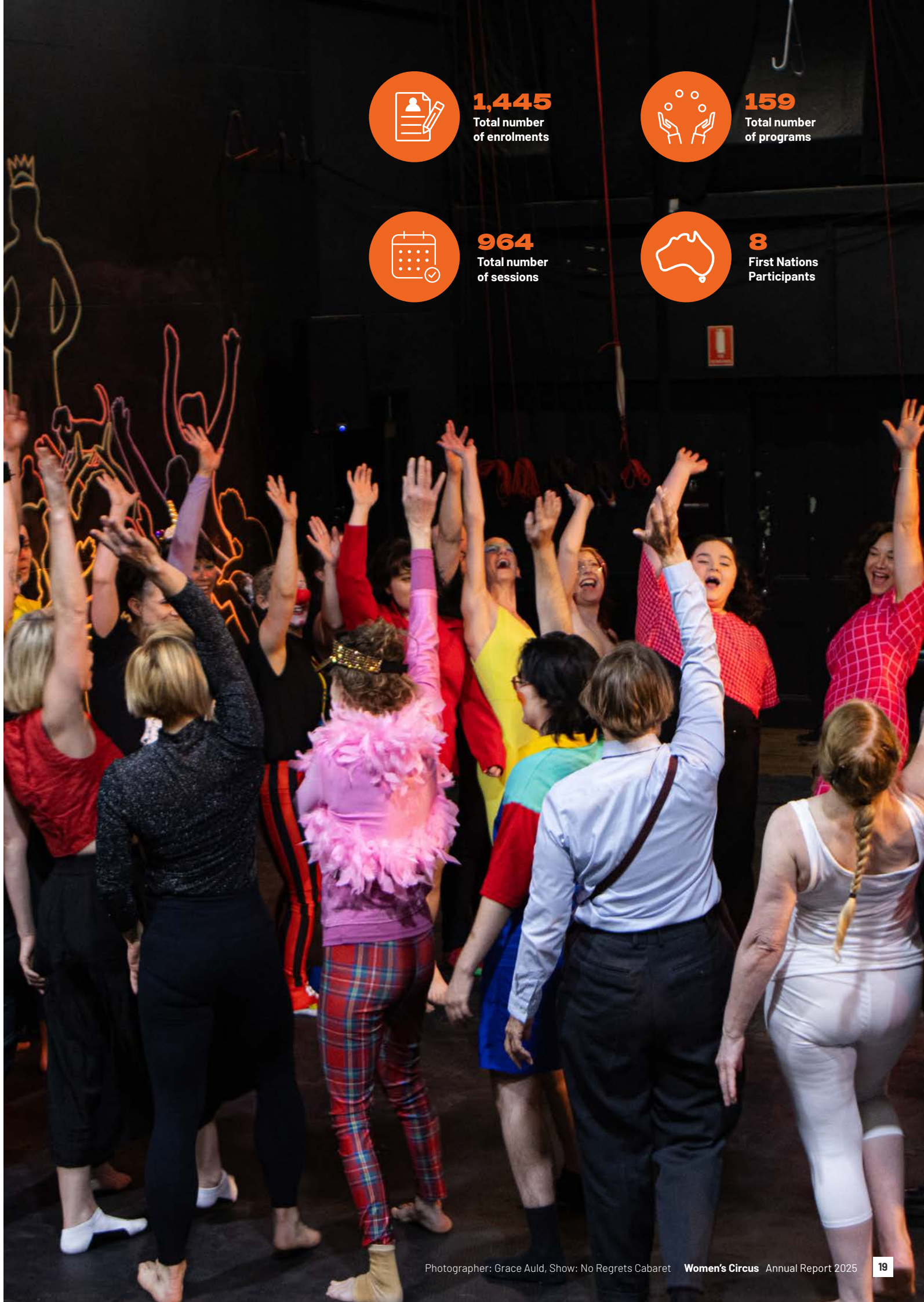
159
Total number
of programs



964
Total number
of sessions



8
First Nations
Participants





"I continue to be amazed by the way my trainers are able to trouble shoot, suggest alternative ways of achieving something, and include everyone on the class irrespective of their ability, flexibility, experience or confidence and in doing so, create a tight, cohesive group. It is a joy to come to class."

- Training Member.

"Attendance at these classes have been very significant to my young trans child. To participate in classes where there is full and neutralised inclusion of gender diversity is incredibly important. Life-changing, I would say. In her other educational and recreational settings, it is more commonplace for gender to be discussed in the binary and assumptions to be made about identity, rather than being given the invitation to self-identify, as it is at Women's Circus. VISIBILITY matters! To be in classes where other gender diverse individuals freely speak of their identity, and hand in hand this is not a big deal to anyone, is very very important."

- Training Member.

"My daughter loves the circus classes - she definitely builds physical confidence, and she has a lot of fun. She has really enjoyed the friendships she has made with other kids. The other thing I notice is that at school she is quite quiet and concerned about not doing anything weird or silly, but her silliness comes out bit more in circus class - which I actually think is really good for her. We really appreciated the scholarship actually - as it did help us to afford the term and take some financial pressure off, so thanks again."

Training Member.



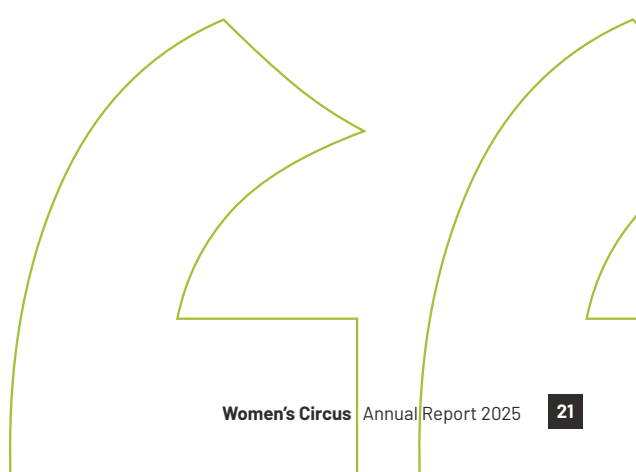
In July we ran workshops on ensemble practice and rhythm and voice. These were designed to kick start the co-design process of member led creative development exploring themes for creative programming in 2026. We received overwhelmingly positive feedback on these, igniting the momentum and building excitement for future creative work.

"I did the creative development short course this weekend and it was spectacularly great! I am bursting with ideas for my personal creative practice, for my acro class and for the circus as a whole. The world is in such a dark place right now and I feel like Women's Circus has such potential to embody how we are all feeling and show our passion and resilience in a way that is deeply human and depolarising. Bec and Sarah and Christy are all incredible artists and theatre makers with great skill at weaving space for structure and possibility. So that each person in class could express their joy and talents within the context of group performance. It was stunning and we all want MORE. The Women's Circus is unique in the Australian arts landscape for the number of people we can pull together in our ensemble and our capacity to put 'ordinary people' on stage. We can imbue real meaning and poignancy into the tricks and skills we learn. We have an incredible community of passionate, caring and mutually supportive people and those vibes show up on stage. The world needs that right now."

- Kiri, workshop participant

"Truly, it was one of the most enriching and heartwarming things I've done in a long time. It was great to be part of an inclusive, diverse group who were welcoming and non-judgemental (well at least to my face!). I loved all the sessions and never would have guessed how much I'd enjoy group music. Not sure what the plan was with that session but please know if you were testing the waters for creative development classes, I'd be the first to sign up!"

- Rosie, Workshop participant.



Community and Sector Engagement

WOMEN'S
CIRCUS
SCRATCH
NIGHT!





Photographer: Rachael Dere, Show: Scratch Night

Scratch Nights

In 2025 we presented two Scratch Nights—intimate, low-key performance opportunities for Women’s Circus members and sector colleagues of marginalised genders, shared with audiences of marginalised genders. For each event, the Drill Hall was transformed into a speakeasy-style venue, creating a warm, immersive atmosphere that invited our community into something experimental and special.

With each iteration, momentum continues to grow. Scratch Nights are fast becoming a valued fixture in the Women’s Circus calendar—an anticipated space for creative risk-taking and connection.

These evenings provided members with the opportunity to test new material in a deliberately low-pressure environment, fostering artistic experimentation and confidence. Performers were able to trial works-in-progress, explore new ideas and receive direct audience

feedback, while also building relationships with industry peers in a supportive setting.

Beyond artistic development, the events strengthened community connection. The May Scratch Night welcomed 50 audience members, with attendance increasing to 75 in September—demonstrating growing interest and engagement. The events also contributed to organisational sustainability, raising funds in support of our end-of-year Members Cabaret.

Scratch Nights reflect our commitment to creating accessible, empowering platforms for emerging and established artists of marginalised genders to share their voices, develop their craft and deepen community ties.



Lasting Impact



Photographer: Suzanne Phoenix, Show: Scratch Night



Company In Residence: Na Djinang Circus

First Nations led Circus Na Djinang Circus, continued to be our company in residence for the third-year running. We hosted Na Djinang for 100.5 hours of development and rehearsal space, supporting the development of new work and rehearsals of Arterial and Of the Land on Which We Meet in preparation for regional touring. We look to continue to build on our partnership with Na Djinang into the future.



**Empower Marginalised
Communities**



Lasting Impact





Photographer: Suzanne Phoenix,
Show: Scratch Night

‘Free open training at Women’s Circus in 2025 helped connect me to the circus community in the inner West, as well as provided me with consistent access to free training space. Through this program I was able to train and connect with other professional artists. Having this offered for free made training in a studio space more accessible for me as a sole trader with fluctuating income.’

- Ellie, Open Training Participant



Photographer:
Jessica Connell

‘Sunday morning Circus Fit was a highlight of my week last year. A safe, fun and friendly class which provided motivation and encouragement to build my strength, stamina and fitness. The training was offered in stages to suit different fitness levels meaning that everyone from beginners to regulars felt capable and comfortable being challenged physically while building community and lasting friendships.’

- Belinda, Circus Fit Participant.

Open Training & Circus Fit

Supported by City of Maribyrnong Community Grant

Through the support of City of Maribyrnong, in 2025 we ran “Open Training”, a regular opportunity for circus-based skill sharing and development supervised by Women’s Circus trainers and open to our wider industry peers of a marginalised gender, and “Circus Fit”, a weekly circus-based exercise class designed to improve general fitness, strength, and coordination, suitable for all levels of fitness.

Both streams included a focus on fostering community connection and belonging among members, attracting and retaining new participants and building a following for a new program offering.

Open Training and Circus Fit were free for members and created opportunities for social connection, to expand networks and form new friendships through shared experience. Participants benefited from the physical nature of circus-based activities, supporting positive physical and emotional health and wellbeing.

The success of Circus Fit has led to its introduction as a paid program in 2026 covering it’s own expenses, while Open Training supported members to develop their artistic practice in a safe environment and broaden networks with professionals in the industry.



709
attendances



109
sessions delivered
across the year



288
hours of employment



**Healthy Organisation
and People**



Lasting Impact



Photographer: Yvonne Meng, Show: No Regrets Cabaret

‘Thank you so much for your involvement and contribution to the West Gate Tunnel Discovery Day. We have had so much wonderful feedback about the entertainment on the day and more specifically, Women's Circus!’

- Transurban



Workshops Delivered

In 2025, we delivered a diverse program of community workshops for schools, universities, councils, corporates and grassroots organisations—creating welcoming entry points into social circus for people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds. Each workshop was grounded in our commitment to inclusion, safety and participant-led exploration.

Through these programs, participants experienced the joy of creative collaboration and safe risk-taking. Beyond skill development, workshops fostered confidence, teamwork, trust and resilience. For many, it was their first experience of circus or embodied performance practice—offering a powerful opportunity to build physical literacy while strengthening social connection and self-belief.

By partnering with educational institutions, community organisations and workplaces, we expanded access to the arts for communities who may not otherwise engage with them. These collaborations enabled us to reach culturally diverse groups, young people, LGBTIQ+ communities and local neighbourhood networks, reinforcing circus as a tool for wellbeing, empowerment and belonging.

“It was a pleasure to collaborate with an organisation that has an excellent understanding of community development but it was also a highlight to watch how they interacted with the children and their families. The facilitators were both supportive and energetic. They managed to make the sessions fun whilst also being understanding that the children had different levels of confidence and skill. It was lovely seeing many children who struggled with confidence be able to build up to doing activities they thought they were unable to and the smiles on their faces was gold! All the feedback from the children and their parents was incredibly positive and everyone asked if we could offer the sessions again in the future.”

- Yarraville Community Centre

Our 2025 partners included:

- University of Melbourne Student Union
- Djerriwarrh Community College
- Swinburne Senior Secondary College
- Steps Mental Health
- Australian LGBTIQ+ Multicultural Multifaith Council
- Yarraville Community Centre
- Footscray High School
- Sacred Heart Primary School
- Seddon Fun & Games Day
- Transurban

Our community engagement demonstrates the transformative potential of social circus—not only as an artform, but as a vehicle for connection, inclusion and lasting positive impact across our communities.



664
participants



92
hours of Trainers
employment



42
hours of
workshops



Lasting Impact



Photographer: Jason South,
Show: Vic Pride Street Party

Performance Opportunities

Throughout 2025, we were proud to showcase the strength, skill and creativity of our members onstage at a range of public events across Naarm, Melbourne. As part of the Midsumma Festival, we performed at the Victoria's Pride Street Party, bringing bold, high-impact circus to a large and diverse public audience. Our Performing Older Women's group also presented a dynamic acro-balance act for Seniors Week for the City of Darebin, celebrating strength, vitality and visibility at every age.

These opportunities delivered significant impact for both participants and the organisation. For members, performing in professional public settings builds confidence, deepens artistic practice, opportunity for social connection and strengthens pathways into broader industry engagement. It affirms that their stories, bodies and creative voices belong in prominent civic and cultural spaces.

For Women's Circus, these appearances increase visibility, expand audience reach and reinforce our reputation as a leader in inclusive, community-led circus practice. By occupying public platforms, we not only celebrate our members' achievements but also challenge dominant narratives around gender and age, advancing our mission in visible and meaningful ways.



Empower Marginalised Communities



Lasting Impact

Setting Up For The Future

Under new leadership, throughout 2025 Women's Circus developed a refreshed 2026–2029 Strategic Plan, guided by our current priorities and grounded in the core values that have shaped our organisation since its founding. This new strategy builds on the long-term goals of our current 2023–2025 plan while embracing our strengths, celebrating our legacy, and highlighting our unique offering of social circus and inclusive spaces for people of marginalised genders.

In 2025–26, Women's Circus was thrilled to receive Creative Australia Victorian Circus and Physical Theatre Operational funding. This support has empowered us to extend our reach, deepen our impact, and strengthen our team, while investing in internal capacity and pathways to diversify income. These strategic investments

not only enhance our resilience but also lay the groundwork for sustained growth, ensuring Women's Circus can continue to provide inclusive, transformative circus experiences for our community well into the future.



Empower Marginalised Communities



Healthy Organisation and People



Lasting Impact



Photographer: Grace Auld,
Show: No Regrets Cabaret

FINANCIALS

Statement of Financial Position

Women’s Circus Ltd as at 31 December 2025

Account	31 Dec 2025	31 Dec 2024
Assets		
Current Assests		
Cash & Cash Equivalents	\$698,615	\$572,086
Other Assets: Prepayments	\$17,467	\$15,055
Total Current Assets	\$716,082	\$587,141
Non-Current Assets		
Plant and Equipment	\$25,258	\$31,653
Total Non-Current Assets	\$25,258	\$31,653
Total Assets	\$741,340	\$618,794
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities		
Accounts payable and other liabilities	\$52,793	\$35,066
Income received in advance	\$440,004	\$365,603
Provisions	\$29,139	\$39,036
Total Current Liabilities	\$521,936	\$439,705
Total Liabilities	\$521,936	\$439,705
Net Assets		
	\$219,404	\$179,089
Equity		
Accumulated funds	\$219,404	\$179,089
Total Equity	\$219,404	\$179,089

Profit & Loss

Women’s Circus Ltd as at 31 December 2025

Account	2025	2024
Income		
Self-Generated Income	\$303,572	\$240,772
Government Funding & Grant Income	\$336,374	\$400,065
Sponsorship, Donations, Fundraising & Philanthropy	\$98,500	\$107,667
Other Income	\$10,424.99	\$13,998
Total Income	\$748,871	\$762,702
Operating Expenses		
Administration Costs	\$49,057.83	\$43,572.36
Development Expenditure	\$103.58	\$373.55
Marketing and Promotion	\$24,930.01	\$41,922.36
Program Expenses	\$8,515.30	\$38,461.08
Facilities and Maintenance	\$13,618.13	\$12,890.96
Total Salaries including on-costs	\$601,756.16	\$587,848.91
Total Other expenditure	\$2,885.22	\$10,210.21
Total Operating Expenses	\$700,866.23	\$735,279.43
Non-operating Expenses		
Depreciation	\$7,690.00	\$5,968.06
Loss on Disposal		
Total Non-operating Expenses	\$7,960.00	\$5968.06
Total Expenses	\$708,556.23	\$741,247.49
Net Profit	\$40,315	\$21,454.51



Our Supporters

THANK YOU

A heartfelt thank you to each of our generous donors and funding partners; we could not do this important work without you.

Your support is key in helping us achieve our goals and we are so grateful. Thank you for being part of our community of change makers and contributing to a successful year for Women's Circus.

LEAD PARTNERS



PHILANTHROPY



SPONSORSHIP



2025 DONORS

Bequest

Annie Fayzdaughter was a long-time member and a deeply cherished presence within the Women's Circus community. Their passing in 2024 was felt profoundly by the community. In an extraordinary act of generosity, Annie left a significant bequest to Women's Circus, ensuring their commitment to our community continues beyond their lifetime.

We are immensely grateful for Annie's support. Their gift will help sustain and inspire future creative projects and performances, strengthening the organisation they cared so deeply about. Annie's memory lives on in the spirit of our community, and their legacy will continue to shape Women's Circus for years to come. Thank you, Annie.

Top Donors

Dawna Wright, Madeline Ford, Michele Sproule, Vivienne Halat, Deb Lewis, Alison Edwards, Isabella Pace, Sheryl Bryce, Stephanie Watt, Robert Stumberger

Donors

Abby Duruz, Airdre Grant, Alyshia Boddenberg, Amy Lynes, Anne & Lilly Sheehan, Belinda Blackburn, Brad Granger, Caitlyn Grant, Candace M, Catherine Gault, Cathie Wills, Christine Sheehan, Claire Watson, David Ralph, Deidre Aitken, Donna Sparx, Eleanor Boydell, Ella Bucovaz, Ena Burstin, Frances Ford, Georgia Sheehan, Glorija Kuzman, Hanne Grant, Helen Zizys, Helen Nosworthy, Janine Sheridan, Jessica Welch, Jill Maglio, Jo Whatley, Jodie Granger, Karen Hofer, Karen Taranto, Kate O'Leary, Kathryn Grant, Kristen Bell, Larissa MacFarlane, Lindsey Gillard, Lisa Jumar, Lisa Morrison, Liz Murray, Lottie Stein, Maggie Tekell, Margaret Young, Margaret Sheehan, Margaret Summers, Maureen Sheehan, Meghan Bourke, Melanie Parton, Michael Williams, Nicole Salter, Noni Sproule, Paul de Boe, Peta Granger, Pippin Remi, Rachel Morgan, Rachel Dann, Sally Sharman, Sharyn Broomhead, Siobhan Callanan, Sophia Laidlaw, Sophie Gaballa, Stormy Storm, Toni Jones, Vig Geddes

Our Team

STAFF

Pippin Remi (She/Her)
Executive Director

Steph Cox (She/Her)
Executive Director
(Jan-March 2025)

Hanne Grant (She/Her)
Marketing and Communications
Manager (Jan-October)

Erin Adams (She/Her)
Marketing and Communications
Manager (October onwards)

Siobhan Callanan (She/Her)
Operations Manager (Jan-May)

Kamina Vincent (She/Her)
Operations Manager Parental
leave contract (May-December)

Aleisha Manion (She/Her)
Program Coordinator Social
Circus and Sector (Jan-April)

Sophia Laidlaw (She/They)
Social Circus Program Manager
(March onwards)

Vivian Lyngdoh (They/Them)
Community Partnerships Manager

Franca Stadler (She/Her)
Resident Trainer and Rigger

Sal Francis (They/Them)
Resident Trainer

OUR TEAM OF TRAINERS

Amanda Conti, Amy Nightingale-Olsen, Aurore Dupuy, Aleisha Manion, Anita Alexander, Bec Matthews, Christy Flaws, Claire Liebler, Dorota Scally, Emily Loe, Emily Ross, Franca Stadler, Holly Jobson, Ish Ryden, Isabelle Champagne-Chittick, Jessica Connell, Katy Burrows, Kelsea Blackburn, Krystal Meakins, Luca Trimboli, Laura Trenerry, Meiwah Williams, Maggie Church-Kopp, Maya Green, Miranda Shapcott, Nicci Wilks, Nina Robertson, Niamh Dann-South, Nikii McCoppin, Riana Popczyk, Rockie Stone, Rindi Harradine, Sal Francis, Simone Sheridan, Sarah Ward, Sophia Laidlaw, Tarn Scully, Tess Spry, Violetta Van Geyzel

A big thank you to all our
supporters, creative
collaborators, communities,
staff, board volunteers,
and members for
their support.

BOARD

Directors

El Boydell (She/Her)
Deputy Chair / Acting Chair (Jan-May)

Noni Sproule (She/Her)
Chair (Appointed May 2025)

Peta Granger (She/Her)
(September 2021-September 2025)

Dr Melinda Smith OAM (She/Her)

Maggie Tekell (She/Her)
Chair of Fundraising Subcommittee

Lisa Jumar (She/Her)

Amy Lynes (She/Her)
Chair of Audit and Risk
Subcommittee

Karen Taranto (She/Her)

Angela Pamic (She/Her)
Appointed October 2025

Sam Jacobs (They/Them)
Appointed October 2025

Zara Jones (They/Them)
Appointed October 2025

Secretaries

Stephanie Capley (She/Her)
(until March 2025)

Jack Nicholls (They/Them)
(From September onwards)

Join our troupe of change-makers

SIGN UP for our e-news to stay up to date
with all the latest Women's Circus News.

BECOME A MEMBER to access member-only
circus activities, free and discounted tickets,
as well as exclusive member only events,
social gatherings and more!

SUPPORT US by donating and you'll be
ensuring everyone has equitable access to
our social circus programs to enhance their
well-being, foster meaningful connections,
and ignite their creativity

JOIN US for a class and experience the
impact of social circus for yourself.

PARTNER WITH US. Join our team of philanthropic
and corporate partners to make an impact
through sponsoring our annual cabaret or
providing expertise to our staff and board.

LIKE US to stay up to date with our latest news,
photos and videos.

 /theWomensCircus

 @womenscircus

**FOR MORE WAYS TO GET INVOLVED EMAIL
US AT [INFO@WOMENSCIRCUS.ORG.AU](mailto:info@womenscircus.org.au)
OR CALL US ON (03) 9687 3665.**

DONATE TODAY



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