



ANNUAL REPORT 2025/2026

Women Lawyers' Association
South Australia Inc



Women Lawyers' Association South Australia Inc



Annual Report 2025/2026 Index

OUR MISSION STATEMENT	3
ABOUT THE WOMEN LAWYERS' ASSOCIATION OF SA	3
THANKS TO OUR SUPPORT TEAM	3
OUR VALUES	4
STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	4
GOVERNANCE STATEMENT.....	5
PRESIDENT'S REPORT	9
TREASURER'S REPORT	11
AUSTRALIAN WOMEN LAWYERS' REPORT.....	14
POLICY & EDUCATION SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT	19
SOCIAL MEDIA & WEBSITE SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT	21
ANNUAL NOMINATED CHARITY REPORT	22
2024 DR ROBYN LAYTON AO KC AWARD	22
CORPORATE MEMBERS.....	24

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Fostering equality and justice in the legal profession and the general community while championing the recognition of women lawyers and supporting them to achieve their full potential

ABOUT THE WOMEN LAWYERS' ASSOCIATION OF SA

The Women Lawyers' Association of South Australia ('the WLASA') is a professional association that represents the interests of women legal practitioners across South Australia as well as aiming to achieve equity and justice for all women in society. The WLASA is a constituent body of the national organisation, Australian Women Lawyers ('AWL'). The WLASA makes representations on issues that impact the status of women in the law and society more generally. The WLASA also provides opportunities for networking amongst women members of the legal profession and hosts continuing professional development seminars.

Ordinary Membership of the WLASA is open to all individuals who hold a law degree, are studying law or are otherwise eligible to practice law in South Australia. Corporate Membership is open to all incorporated bodies and partnerships that have principals or employ individuals who would be eligible to be an Ordinary Member.

Membership of the WLASA demonstrates that the individual or organisation wishes to advance the interests of women under the law and women legal practitioners in South Australia.

WLASA is now regarded as one of South Australia's peak professional bodies representing women in the law. We have a large and diverse membership of women at varying stages of their legal careers and in various fields of law and legal roles. We also have strong corporate support from our corporate members, including those who have signed our Charter for the Advancement of Women in the Legal Profession.

THANKS TO OUR SUPPORT TEAM

We are incredibly fortunate to have the ongoing contracted administrative services of Robyn Dibben. Robyn has been with us for just over six years now and, notwithstanding her increasing workload, she has continued to provide the WLASA with seamless administrative support. We would be lost without her.

Our sincere thanks and gratitude to the Honourable Margaret Nyland AM who is a continual source of inspiration, support and guidance as our Patron.



Picture: Robyn Dibben



Picture: (from left): Antonella Rodriguez, Adeline Lim, the Honourable Margaret Nyland AM, Marissa Mackie

OUR VALUES

Respect

Respect is an essential and core value which drives all dealings undertaken by the WLASA. The WLASA prides itself on engendering respect and esteem from the legal profession, the judiciary and the business community. By pursuing excellence and having committed and professional people to deliver, work towards and achieve its goals, the WLASA aims to earn the respect of all parties with whom it deals and interacts. As a professional association, the WLASA respects its members, stakeholders, all members of the legal profession, the judiciary and members of the broader community.

People

People are integral to the success of the WLASA and are its most important asset. It is essential to the WLASA that its members feel proud of their involvement and participation in the WLASA and receive benefit from their membership.

Excellence

The WLASA is committed to strive for excellence at all times. This includes being innovative and delivering a wide range of services tailored to benefiting the needs of its members. The WLASA is committed to hosting events that exceed the expectation of its members, stakeholders, sponsors and associated organisations and charities. The WLASA is committed to improving the level of enjoyment by the WLASA members, their colleagues and the Friends of the WLASA.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The WLASA Strategic Plan for 2024 to 2027 reflects the next stage of WLASA's growth and evolution, from a small group of pioneering women to a professional body that is committed to addressing the needs of our membership, as well as supporting all women in the legal profession and in the community more broadly to achieve genuine equality.

The WLASA is committed to ongoing improvement of the organisation to ensure its sustainability and to strengthen its capacity to have a positive effect and act as a catalyst for change in both the legal and wider communities.

The WLASA's strategic direction is underpinned by the following four strategic priorities as set out in the updated Strategic Plan:

- To position the WLASA as a leading resource and advocate for women in the legal profession at all stages of their careers;
- To become a peak body representing the legal rights and interests of women across all areas of society by influencing the reform of policy, legislation and legal processes;
- To maintain the effective and appropriate operation of the WLASA to ensure sustainability and support the delivery of services to its members; and
- To provide members with opportunities to create professional and social networks and advance their careers as women in the South Australian legal profession.

In achieving its strategic vision, the WLASA recognises that it must continue to strive for excellence in all aspects of its operation. This includes hosting events, engaging in consultation with stakeholders, providing professional development for members and fostering strong and enduring relationships with sponsors and members.

GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

Introduction

The WLASA is incorporated under the *Associations Incorporations Act 1985* (SA). The WLASA is a not-for-profit member organisation, is a 'Charitable Institution' for the purposes of Commonwealth taxation laws and has been endorsed as a tax concession charity by the Australian Tax Office. The Secretary of the WLASA submits an Annual Information Statement to the Australian Charities and Not-For-Profits Commission each year.

The business and affairs of the WLASA are overseen and controlled by a committee. The 2025/26 committee comprises WLASA Ordinary Members elected to office bearer positions, namely President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary and eight other WLASA Ordinary Members elected as general or associate members of the committee. All committee members provide their time and expertise on a volunteer basis.

The WLASA is governed with integrity and in a responsible, transparent and accountable manner. The committee is dedicated to achieving the objectives of the WLASA by implementing key strategies to support those objectives.

The committee meets once a month for the purposes of overseeing and implementing all aspects of the WLASA's Strategic Plan, its objectives and values. The committee reviews its performance by measuring the outcomes of its yearly actions against its objectives and its legal obligations.

During the period 1 July 2025 – 30 June 2026, 12 formal meetings of the committee were held. A Strategic Planning Day was held on 18 October 2025.

WLASA Committee

The WLASA Committee for the 2025/26 year was as follows:

- **Antonella Rodriguez** (President and member of the Policy & Education Sub-Committee)
- **Margaret Cusenza** (Vice-President, Chair of the Policy & Education Sub-Committee and member of the Members & Events Sub-Committee)
- **Courtney Chow** (Treasurer and member of the Social Media & Website Committee)
- **Michelle Williams** (Secretary and member of the Social Media & Website Sub-Committee)
- **Jessie Murphy-Allen** (committee member, Chair of the Social Media & Website Sub-Committee and member of the Member & Events Sub-Committee)
- **Shelley O'Connell** (committee member and AWL Representative)
- **Larisa Forgac** (committee member and member of the Policy & Education Sub-Committee)
- **Adeline Lim** (committee member and Co-Chair (Events) of the Members & Events Sub-Committee)
- **India Hopkins** (committee member and member of the Policy & Education and Members & Events Sub-Committees)
- **Marissa Mackie** (committee member and Co-Chair (Members) of the Members & Events Sub-Committees)
- **Poppy Matters** (committee member and member of the Members & Events Sub-Committee)
- **Molly Shanahan** (committee member and member of Policy and Education Sub-Committee)

The composition of the committee reflects the broad range of experience, skills and knowledge required to oversee the running of the WLASA, its business and affairs. We thank all members of the Committee for their dedication and commitment to the WLASA.

The following committee members will not be re-nominating for the 2026/27 year:

- Marissa Mackie
- Adeline Lim
- Shelley O'Connell
- Courtney Chow
- Poppy Matters
- Molly Shanahan

We would like to thank all outgoing members for their outstanding contribution to WLASA.

In particular, the Association wishes to acknowledge Marissa Mackie's ongoing dedication to the Association, not only as a committee member, but Marissa also served as the Association's President and her ongoing mentorship and guidance over a number of years has left the Association in a strong position.

The Association also wishes to sincerely thank Shelley O'Connell for her longstanding dedication to the committee and as the Association's AWL representative over a number of years.

Adeline Lim also steps down at the end of this financial year as a long-standing committee member and the Association wishes to extend its sincere gratitude to her longstanding service as Co-Chair of the Events and Membership Sub-Committee (Event).

The Association also wishes to formally thank Courtney Chow for her outstanding work as Treasurer in the last few years, as well as her contribution to the committee over a number of years. In addition, the Association would like to thank Poppy Matters for her longstanding commitment to the Association, as well as Molly Shanahan for her contribution to the Committee over the past year.

While Marissa Mackie and Adeline Lim are stepping down as Committee Members, the Association is thrilled that they have agreed to continue their work with the Association as Associate Committee Members



Picture: The WLASA Committee at the 2025 Christmas Drinks with the Judiciary event

Sub-committees

To assist in the execution of its responsibilities, the committee has established a number of sub-committees. These sub-committees operate to focus on specific strategic objectives.

The current permanent sub-committees are the:

- Policy & Education Sub-committee
- Members & Events Sub-committee
- Social Media & Website Sub-committee

Members' role

The Constitution of the WLASA requires that a meeting of financial members known as the Annual General Meeting ('AGM') is to be held annually (see section 4.7 of the WLASA Constitution).

The purpose of the AGM is to:

- confirm the minutes of the preceding Annual General Meeting;
- receive the President's report for the previous financial year;
- receive the Treasurer's report and the financial statements for the previous financial year;
- elect or re-elect the office bearers and committee members; and
- conduct any other business placed on the agenda before the commencement of the meeting.

All financial members of the WLASA are advised in advance of the AGM in accordance with the requirements of the Constitution. This notice includes notice of nominations for the election or re-election of office bearers and general members of the committee. The notice for this year's AGM was first distributed to all members via e-mail on 27 July 2026.

The WLASA committee encourages all of its members to attend the AGM in person or by proxy.

Communication to members

The WLASA continues to enjoy a growing membership from all different corners of the profession and State. It is incredibly important to the committee that all members are regularly informed about, and are actively engaged in, the work of the WLASA.

Annual Report

The WLASA prepares an Annual Report that is made available to all members. The Annual Report provides information on the WLASA's mission and objectives and provides an overview of the WLASA's achievements in the past year. The Annual Report also details all information required to be disclosed by the WLASA under its operating rules and policies and/or as required by law.

A copy of the Annual Report can be downloaded from the WLASA website following its Annual General Meeting.

Find a Woman Lawyer Directory

This year marks the eighth anniversary of the WLASA's 'Find A Woman Lawyer' Directory. The Directory provides a vehicle for anyone looking for a woman lawyer in South Australia to search the directory through the WLASA website according to a practitioner's name, firm, location or practice area. The Directory also allows women lawyers to promote their areas of expertise in the competitive South Australian legal market.

In recent years, the name of the Directory was updated from the 'Find a Female Lawyer' Directory to the 'Find a Woman Lawyer' Directory in order to be more inclusive. The entries listed in the Directory were also updated to ensure their accuracy.

Social media and website

In 2026, WLASA has continued to build its presence on social media, as an important vehicle for communication with our members and the wider public. The WLASA Facebook page now has in excess of 2,000 followers, the WLASA LinkedIn page has more than 1,000 followers and the WLASA Instagram page has more than 200 followers.

Our new website was also launched to improve members' experience, provide more relevant information and enable our volunteers to update it with ease.

Member emails and newsletters

Regular emails are distributed to members who have submitted their email addresses to the WLASA on issues such as providing notice of WLASA and external events and other key information for members.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Welcome to the WLASA Annual Report for the 2025/26 Financial Year.

It's been another busy and rewarding year for the Association. The committee has continued its work supporting our members and advocating for women across the legal profession, and I am grateful for the chance to reflect on what we've achieved together.

Throughout the year, we continued our regular consultation with the Attorney-General, meeting regularly to discuss the issues affecting women in law and in the broader community. We're grateful for this ongoing engagement and for the willingness to listen to the concerns we raise on behalf of our members.

We also continued our participation in the Respectful Behaviour Committee, contributing to the ongoing work of addressing bullying, discrimination and harassment within the profession. This remains a key part of our advocacy, and one we don't take lightly.

We were pleased to deliver two CPD sessions for our members this year. The first, presented by Emily Hunt, considered the ethics and use of AI by legal practitioners – a topic of growing relevance to how we all practise. The second, presented by Holly Veale and our own committee member Larisa Forgac, examined the decision in *Crauford v Thomas* and its implications for practitioners. Both sessions were well attended and prompted genuine engagement from members and friends of the Association, and we're grateful to Holly, Larisa and Emily for so generously sharing their time and expertise.

We hope to continue building our CPD offerings, and we welcome ideas from members for topics they'd like to see covered in the year ahead.

A highlight of the year was the annual Honourable Margaret Nyland AM Long Lunch, which was, once again, a wonderful success and a sell-out occasion. We were delighted to welcome former Chief Justice, the Honourable Chris Kourakis AC SC as our keynote speaker. His reflections on his career and on the profession were generous and thought-provoking, and it was a privilege to have him share the occasion with us.

We were also proud to fund the attendance of an Afghan woman judge at the International Association of Women Judges conference, held here in Adelaide. Supporting her participation was a small but meaningful way of standing with women in the judiciary who continue their work in the most difficult of circumstances, and we're grateful to have played a part in making her attendance possible.

Members of our Committee also attended the conference gala dinner, which was an extraordinarily joyful evening. Judges from across the Pacific were in attendance, and many took to the floor to perform traditional dances over the course of the night. It was a wonderful reminder of the warmth and generosity of the international judicial community, and a night many of us won't forget.

None of this happens without the people behind it. I want to sincerely thank every member of the Committee for their hard work and dedication this year. Each of them gives their time freely, on top of busy careers and personal commitments, because they believe in what WLASA stands for. That generosity is the reason this Association continues to thrive, and it doesn't go unnoticed.

We're also grateful, as always, to our members and to the organisations we work alongside throughout the year, including the Women at the Bar Committee, the Equal Opportunity Commissioner, and the Women Lawyers Committee of the Law Society.

Together, we'll keep working toward a more equal and inclusive profession – for everyone.

Antonella Rodriguez, President



Picture: Antonella Rodriguez, WLASA President

TREASURER'S REPORT

1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026

Combined Bank Accounts

	Balance (\$)
Opening combined bank balance as at 1 July 2025	84,364.58
Deposits	29,622.07
Withdrawals	(31,589.72)
Closing combined bank balance as at 30 June 2026	\$82,396.93

Summary of Income and Expenditure

1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026

Income	(\$)
Membership	
Individual	7,770.00
Corporate	9,850.00
Unwaged/Community	420.00
Find a Woman Lawyer	3,900.00 ¹
CPD	0.00
Christmas Drinks with the Judiciary	5,900.00 ²
Christmas Raffle	2,030.00 ³
Interest	42.24
Donation	60.00 ⁴
	29,972.24
Expenses	
Administration	1,787.50
AGM costs	260.63
AWL Delegate	0.00
Capitation Fees	1,998.00
Christmas Drinks with the Judiciary	8,405.27 ⁵
Christmas Meeting	1,278.66 ⁶
CPD	691.30
Donations	4,652.47 ⁷
Gifts to Winners of Competitions	0.00
International Women's Day	629.30
Insurance	2,396.35
Legal Fees - Policy Review	2,963.95
Meeting Costs	10.30
Membership - JusticeNet	288.00
Membership - Other	195.10 ⁸
Merchandise	924.99
MNLL	272.89
Other Events	750.00 ⁹
Planning Day	45.02
Dr Robyn Layton AO KC Award	343.80
Gifts	333.24 ¹⁰

Stripe and Humanitix Fees	350.17
Web Hosting Fees	2,162.95
Committee Photos	1,200.00
	31,939.89
Net Profit	-1,967.65

Notes to Summary of Income and Expenditure

1. A refund to an individual member for a FAWL directory fee (\$30) remains outstanding and will be recognised in the financial year that it is processed.
2. This figure includes \$60 from the 2024 Christmas Drinks with the Judiciary that was recovered in the current financial year and \$80 worth of refunds for ticket overpayment (separately accounted for in Expenses, see Note 5).
3. The total figure raised by raffle and donation by attendees for the TABOO Foundation at the 2025 Christmas Drinks with the Judiciary was \$2,030. \$40 of the IOUs from the 2023 Christmas Drinks that remain outstanding in the 25/26 financial year will be treated as written off going forward. A reimbursement of \$150 remains owing to the former Treasurer from the 2023 Christmas Drinks, which will be recorded in the financial year that it is paid.
4. The Association notes its thanks to an individual member who asked the Association to retain an overpayment of individual membership as a donation rather than processing a refund.
5. The actual cost of the food and drink at the 2025 Christmas Drinks with Judiciary was \$7,377.02. Additional costs of \$948.25 relate to the event photographer and other supplies for the event but does not include the Dr Robyn Layton AO KC Award associated costs as they are reported separately. \$80 represents a refund for ticket overpayment.
6. This figure includes the cost of the Association's 2024 and 2025 Christmas meetings.
7. This figure includes the donation to the 25/26 Charity (TABOO Foundation, comprising the amount raised by raffle and donation by attendees (\$2,030)) with an additional \$1,000 from the Association, totalling \$3,030, and the costs of sponsoring a women judge to attend the International Association of Women Judges Asia/Pacific Conference in Adelaide.
8. This figure includes the costs associated with the Honourable Chris Kourakis AC SC's honorary life membership of the Association and a refund to a member for overpayment of individual membership (with the corresponding receipts recorded under membership income).
9. This represents a payment of \$750 for food and drinks for the Welcome to the New Year event.
10. This figure represents the costs for a gift for a retiring Committee members and condolences flowers.

Comparison to Prior Years' Financials

Income	22/23 FY	23/24 FY	24/25 FY	25/26 FY
Memberships ¹	22,080.00	20,190.00	12,460.00	18,040.00
FAWL	3,020.00	900.00	1,380.00	3,900.00
Donations Received	1,221.00	1,565.00	2,250.00	2,030.00
Functions & CPD	4,584.35	5,705.00	5,415.00	5,900.00
Interest	-	-	-	42.24
Other	-	-	-	60
	\$30,905.35	\$28,360.00	\$21,505.00	\$29,972.24
Expenses				
Australian Women Lawyers	0.00	0.00	7,302.00	1,998.00
Competition Prizes	0.00	200.00	450.00	0.00
Functions & CPDs ²	8,870.76	12,814.60	8,688.12	13,745.89
Donations Made	4,308.11	0.00	5,700.00	4,652.47

Administrative Support	2,277.50	2,531.95	2,562.50	1,787.50
AGM	640.10	0.00	103.00	260.63
Meeting Expenses ³	617.21	1,567.38	418.58	3,496.93
Online Payments (Stripe / Humanitix Fees)	269.76	215.71	507.15	350.17
Legal Advice	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,963.95
Insurance	801.45	835.62	2,614.10	2,396.35
Memberships	288.00	288.00	288.00	288.00
Website Upgrade	-	-	9,927.00	-
	\$18,072.89	\$18,453.26	\$38,560.45	\$31,939.89

Notes to Comparative Financial Statements

1. Membership income is recorded in the FY it was received.
2. All event costs, including gifts and trophies, and other miscellaneous expenses are recorded in this category.
3. Includes the expenses associated with the Planning Day, Christmas meeting (lunch or dinner), meetings generally and website hosting fees.

Report

The financial position of the WLASA remains a strong one despite recording a net loss this financial year.

Memberships were relatively steady across the year, but the figures reflect a noticeable decline in corporate membership over a four-year period. Registrations for the Find a Woman Lawyer directory remain strong.

The Association's Christmas Drinks with the Judiciary was again very successful. The Committee utilised Humanitix for ticket sales and raffle tickets. While part of the income from ticket sales is reduced by way of service charges, the process has become more efficient by reducing the administrative tasks needed to keep track of ticket sales and cash raffle sale.

Our expenditure was lower than the previous year due to fewer one-off expenses from the previous financial year. In this financial year and going forward, the insurance cost has increased because the Committee resolved to also obtain cyber insurance, considering the heightened threat of fraud and cyber-crime and web-hosting fees for the new website are greater than the old fees. Nonetheless, the Association remains in a healthy position.

We thank our membership for their support during 25/26. I would also like to thank our Committee who has regularly met in person or electronically over the last 12 months to keep the Association running smoothly.

Courtney Chow, Treasurer

AUSTRALIAN WOMEN LAWYERS' REPORT

Australian Women Lawyers Ltd (AWL) is the national peak body of women lawyers in Australia. The WLASA is one of our constituent bodies. I have been the SA delegate to AWL since the start of 2023 and the Treasurer since November 2024.

General

The AWL Annual General Meeting for the past year was held in 29 November 2025 in Sydney.

Special thanks were given to outgoing board members including Astrid Haban-Beer as Immediate Past President.

The 2026 AWL Board comprises:

- Renee Bianchi (NSW) – President
- Emma Luck (WA) - Vice-President
- Sophie Lefebvre (Vic) – Secretary
- Shelley O'Connell (SA) – Treasurer
- Jillian Barrett (Qld) (Previously Jessica McClymont KC)
- Alinta Robinson-Herbert (TAS)
- Kylie Weston-Scheuber (Vic WBA)
- Kailey Coble (NT) (Previously Josie Short)
- Amanda Garside (ACT)

One of the main roles of AWL as the peak body is to provide the national voice on key issues that women in the profession face, and more broadly law reform areas relating to women. AWL is a regular commentator in the legal and wider press about issues relevant to its objectives.

We regularly engage with state and federal governments, the Australian Gender Equality Council (AGEC), Workplace Gender Equality Agency Australia (WGEA), the Law Council of Australia Equal Opportunity Committee (LCA EOC), the Respect @ Work Council, and of course our constituent bodies in each state and territory.

Conference 2027

Our conferences are usually biennial, with the last national conference being held in Canberra in October 2024.

It has been resolved, to align with the 30th anniversary of the establishment of AWL in 2027, to hold the next conference in April 2027 in Melbourne to make it a joint celebration with the 30th anniversary festivities, with a Gala Dinner as a highlight.

It will be a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the women who have been involved from inception and through the years, to reflect on our progress and future aspirations, and bring together as many past, present and future AWL members as possible.

The Board is working hard at putting together the program and speakers, and are in the process of reaching out to sponsors, without whom events like these are not possible.

Previous generous sponsors include Clayton Utz, the Australian Government Solicitor, College of Law, and the Victorian Legal Services Board. The complete 2026 sponsorship prospectus will be available very soon and will offer participation from larger organisations as well as individuals and smaller organisations who also wish to make a modest but meaningful contrition toward the conference and associated events.

Strategic Plan

The AWL Board held its Strategic Planning Day meeting on 7 February 2026 in Melbourne.



R-L – Board members at the 2026 Strategic Planning Day – Renee Bianchi (NSW), Amanda Garside (ACT), Alinta Robinson-Herbert (TAS), Shelley O'Connell (SA), Sophie Lefebvre (VIC), Kylie Weston-Scheuber (WBA).

The current Strategic Plan 2025 – 2027 is now available on the AWL website.

Our four Key Goals for this period are to:

1. educate and inform the profession and the public about matters affecting women in the profession and legal system;
2. provide leadership on issues affecting women in the profession and the legal system by driving and advocating for change;
3. facilitating opportunities for women lawyers to network and engage with each other and with relevant organisations; and
4. effectively manage AWL to ensure its continued operation and sustainability, and continued accountability to its members.

Media

Stay tuned for updates on our website <https://australianwomenlawyers.com.au> and our social media LinkedIn and Facebook.

Shelley O'Connell, AWL Delegate for SA

MEMBERS & EVENTS SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT

The Members and Events Sub-committee aims to provide further development, exposure and opportunities for women in the legal profession and to organise events for our members that not only give members the opportunity to catch up and network with others in the profession but also organise events that are of benefit and interest to our membership.

Events

Christmas Drinks with the Judiciary

WLASA held its annual Christmas Drinks with the Judiciary on 13 November 2025 at Mrs Q. The event was strongly supported, with more than 170 RSVPs received.

The charity partner for 2025 was TABOO Foundation. Eloise Hall attended the event and spoke about the important work undertaken by the Foundation.

WLASA thanks the generous sponsors who donated prizes for the raffle: Antonella Rodriguez (Campbell Chambers), Nicholas Linke (Dentons), Hanson Chambers, I Have Time Coffee Shop, Law Society of South Australia, Lucia's, LK Law, Never Never Distilling Co, O'Connell Family Law, Poppy Matters (Lindbloms Lawyers), Tyneil Flaherty (Murray Chambers) and Zoos SA. The raffle raised \$1,950.00 on the night, and WLASA contributed a further \$1,000.00, resulting in a total donation of \$2,950.00.

Dr Robyn Layton AO KC attended to present the annual award named in her honour to the 2025 recipient, Annie Hoffman. The selection process was highly competitive, with several extremely worthy nominees. Annie was recognised for her work in a highly specialised and challenging area of law, assisting victims of asbestos and dust-related diseases to access justice and compensation for themselves and their families. Annie has made a meaningful difference to the lives of her clients and has also contributed to the profession through mentoring young female lawyers and supporting broader social justice initiatives.



Pictured: Dr Robyn Layton AO KC and 2025 recipient of the Dr Robyn Layton AO KC award, Annie Hoffman of Turner Freeman Lawyers.

New Year Welcome Drinks and Bring a Friend Membership Offer

WLASA hosted New Year Welcome Drinks at the Crown & Sceptre on 19 February 2026. Members were encouraged to bring a guest who was not yet a WLASA member, providing an opportunity to introduce prospective members to WLASA's work. Guests who joined on the night received a 50% discount on their membership fee. The event was well attended with almost 50 attendees and provided a valuable opportunity for networking and connection.

International Women's Day Breakfast

The WLASA Committee hosted a table at the 2026 Adelaide International Women's Day Breakfast, held at the Adelaide Convention Centre on Friday, 6 March 2026. The event was hosted by Senator the Hon Penny Wong, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Leader of the Government in the Senate, under the theme "Balance The Scales". The keynote speaker was Katherine Bennell-Pegg, the 2026 Australian of the Year.

More than 3,000 people attended in person, with more joining online and a record 46 schools represented. The event supports UN Women Australia and is recognised as the largest event celebrating International Women's Day in Australia.

Katherine Bennell-Pegg spoke about opportunity, visibility and the importance of equal access to education and careers in STEM. As the first astronaut to officially represent Australia, and the first Australian woman to receive professional astronaut wings, her address was a powerful reminder of the importance of representation for women and girls.

The breakfast also included a Welcome to Country by Aunty Elaine and was MC'd by Sonya Feldhoff, who broadcast parts of the morning live for ABC Radio Adelaide. The 2026 event raised more than \$200,000 for UN Women Australia, supporting work toward gender equality.

WLASA was pleased to offer a competition enabling two members to attend and experience the breakfast. Tendai Dzeka and Sophie Jones were the successful recipients this year.

Margaret Nyland AM Long Lunch

On Friday, 29 May 2026, WLASA and the Law Society of South Australia hosted the Honourable Margaret Nyland AM Long Lunch at the National Wine Centre. Since the inaugural event on 5 April 2013, the luncheon has become a sell-out occasion, bringing together members of the profession, judiciary, colleagues and distinguished guests for an afternoon of connection and reflection. The 2026 event was the biggest yet, with more than 330 attendees.

The afternoon was formally opened by Antonella Rodriguez, President of WLASA and a barrister at Campbell Chambers, who welcomed guests before inviting Cliffy Wilson from Kuma Kaaru to deliver the Welcome to Country. Diana Newcombe, Chief Executive of the Law Society of South Australia, also welcomed attendees, acknowledged VIP guests and thanked the event sponsors for their generous support.

This year's guest speaker was The Honourable Christopher Kourakis AC SC, who graduated from the University of Adelaide with a Bachelor of Laws in 1981, served as Solicitor-General for South Australia from 2003 to 2008, was appointed to the Supreme Court of South Australia in 2008 and became the ninth Chief Justice in 2012, serving until 19 February 2026. The interview was facilitated by Marissa Mackie, Immediate Past President of the Law Society and a barrister at Mitchell Chambers.

His Honour spoke freely and candidly about his 45-year career in the law, his upbringing in Port Lincoln as one of 10 children, and the influence of his mother, whose strong sense of social justice helped shape his own commitment to public service. He reflected on initially wanting to become a scientist, before being drawn to the law and to the role it can play in improving society.

The conversation traversed significant developments in the courts and the profession, including the implementation of the Electronic Court Management System, the challenges associated with court infrastructure, and the opportunities for technology to support more efficient court processes. His Honour also reflected on diversity within the judiciary, noting the progress made toward greater representation of women in the Supreme Court.

A strong theme of the discussion was the importance of an inclusive profession. His Honour spoke about initiatives such as Step Up to the Bar, changes to court sitting hours and the work of the Respectful Behaviours Working Group, all of which have contributed to shifting culture and creating more practical pathways for participation and advancement.

His Honour also offered thoughtful reflections on the need to break down exclusivity within the profession so that opportunity is genuinely based on merit. Speaking as a public school graduate, he encouraged those from diverse educational and social backgrounds not to be overawed, but to recognise the value of having seen and understood a broad cross-section of the community.

Following the interview, The Honourable Christopher Kourakis AC SC was awarded life membership of WLASA by Association President Antonella Rodriguez. Law Society President David Colovic also presented His Honour with Honorary Membership of the Law Society of South Australia.

The luncheon was an enjoyable and memorable occasion, bringing guests together for food, wine and conversation. WLASA and the Law Society are grateful for the generous support of the event sponsors: Major Event Sponsors LK Law and BankSA Westpac; Supporting Sponsors Legalsuper and LEAP Legal Software; and Wine Partner Wine Direct. LK Law has been a long-time supporter of the event, and both the Law Society and WLASA acknowledge its ongoing contribution to this popular annual luncheon.

Adeline Lim, Chair, Members & Events Sub-Committee

POLICY & EDUCATION SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT

Policy

In the 2025/26 year, the committee has continued its work on issues affecting women in the legal profession and advocating in areas that affect women.

Law Reform

In June 2026, the committee released a statement in response to the proposed amendments to the *Termination of Pregnancy Act 2021* (SA). This statement re-affirmed the committee's strong support for the *Termination of Pregnancy Act 2021* (SA) in its existing form and confirmed that the committee did not support the proposed amendments.

Respectful Behaviours Working Group

Our President, Antonella Rodriguez, attended meeting meetings of the Respectful Behaviours Working Group, convened by former Chief Justice Kourakis and current Chief Justice Stein.

Antonella participated in discussions with a primary focus on whether implementation of a bullying, discrimination and harassment training program for judicial officers was possible. The working group has now divided into smaller subgroups resulting in the development and release of Respectful Behaviour Guidelines.

Meeting with the Attorney-General

Antonella, Shelley and Margaret have met regularly with Attorney-General, the Honourable Kyam Maher MLC. The topics discussed included the 2024 Review of Harassment in the Legal Profession, the Royal Commission into Domestic Family and Sexual Violence, amendments to the *Judicial Conduct Commissioner Act* and the coercive control legislation.

Resources

The committee has continued to make various resources available on the website for members and community members (see <https://womenlawyerssa.org.au/resources>).

The WLASA website also contains resources on policy and law reform issues relevant to the committee's work, including decriminalisation of sex work, abortion law reform, equitable briefing and diversity and gender equality.

Other

The committee has also commenced a review of its policies, including its respectful conduct policy, privacy policy, social media policy and expenditure policy.

The committee sponsored an Afghan woman judge to attend the Regional Conference of the International Association of Women Judges – Asia Pacific in May 2026. The committee was pleased to support her attendance and be part of such an important international gathering.

Education

The committee has continued to deliver CPDs for our members that address issues related to women in the law and substantive law topics.

On 19 March 2026, the committee held a CPD session on "Harnessing AI Responsibly: Practical Ethics for Modern Lawyers". The session was presented by Emily Hunt of Gilchrist Connell, chaired by Jessie Murphy-Allen of Murray Chambers and held at Dentons. This session addressed the advantages and implications of using AI in legal practice, the differences between the guidelines in each of the jurisdictions and some cases where AI has been used inappropriately.

On 23 June 2026, the committee held a CPD session titled "Horseplay or Harassment? An analysis of the decision in *Crauford v Thomas* [2025] FCA 1278". This session was presented by Holly Veale of Jeffcott Chambers and Larisa Forgac of LK Law, and was hosted by LK Law. It focused on the status of the law on sexual harassment prior to and following the decision in *Crauford v Thomas* as well as the potential jurisdictional challenges facing applicants pursuing their claims through the Federal Court. This session was free for WLASA members, and provided one CPD point on Bullying, Discrimination and Harassment.

Members are encouraged to contact a committee member with any ideas or suggestions for CPD sessions in the coming year.

Margaret Cusenza, Chair, Policy & Education Sub-committee

SOCIAL MEDIA & WEBSITE SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT

During 2025/2026, WLASA continued to build on its digital presence through the ongoing development of its website and social media channels. Following the successful launch of the redesigned website in 2025, the Sub-Committee's focus has been on enhancing member engagement, increasing public awareness of WLASA's work, and ensuring the website remains a valuable and accessible resource for members and the broader community.

The website continues to serve as the Association's primary digital hub, providing members and visitors with access to information about WLASA's activities, events, advocacy initiatives, and resources. Key features of the website include the updated **"Find a Woman Lawyer" Directory**, a centralised events calendar, member resources, news and updates, and an online membership renewal.

The **"Find a Woman Lawyer" Directory** remains one of the website's most important features and continues to be a key area of focus for WLASA. The Directory enables members of the public, businesses, and organisations to search for women legal practitioners throughout South Australia by practitioner name, firm, location, or area of practice. In addition to improving accessibility for those seeking legal assistance, the Directory provides women lawyers with a valuable opportunity to promote their expertise and increase their professional visibility within the South Australian legal profession.

Throughout the year, WLASA has continued to promote the Directory through its communication channels and encourages all eligible members to ensure that their profiles remain current and comprehensive.

WLASA has also maintained an active presence across its social media platforms, which continue to play an important role in informing members about events, professional development opportunities, advocacy initiatives, committee activities, and achievements of women in the legal profession.

The WLASA Facebook page remains a significant communication tool, while LinkedIn continues to support professional engagement and networking within the legal community. Instagram has provided an additional avenue for showcasing events, celebrating members, and increasing awareness of the Association's activities. Collectively, these platforms have continued to expand WLASA's reach and engagement throughout the year.

As at 14 August 2026, WLASA's social media following includes:

- [Facebook](#): 2,099
- [LinkedIn](#): 1293
- [Instagram](#): 209

The Sub-Committee thanks all members who engage with and contribute to WLASA's digital platforms. We encourage members to continue following, sharing, and promoting WLASA's online presence and to make use of the website's resources and the "Find a Woman Lawyer" Directory.

Jessie Murphy-Allen, Chair, Social Media & Website Sub-Committee

ANNUAL NOMINATED CHARITY REPORT

Each financial year, the WLASA nominates a charity for which we raise money. The charities chosen are always charities that work to promote and support women. A list of the charities we have raised money for in the past is available on the WLASA website.

This year, our chosen charity was TABOO Foundation.

TABOO Foundation is the dedicated charitable arm of TABOO Period Products, a social enterprise founded in Adelaide in 2016 by Isobel Marshall and Eloise Hall with the aim of eradicating period poverty in Australia. We were thrilled to have Eloise Hall, Co-Founder and Managing Director of TABOO Period Products, attend the 2025 Christmas Drinks with the Judiciary to talk about the vital work of TABOO Period Products and TABOO Foundation.

This year our Christmas Drinks with the Judiciary event raised 2,950.00 for TABOO Foundation.

If you would like to find out more about the work of TABOO Foundation, we encourage you to visit their website at: [TABOO's Story – TABOO Period Products](#).



Pictured: Eloise Hall, Co-Founder and Managing Director

2024 DR ROBYN LAYTON AO KC AWARD

The WLASA is delighted to be able to acknowledge the outstanding work of women practitioners through the WLASA's Dr Robyn Layton AO KC Award. This is awarded each calendar year to a woman practitioner in South Australia, who, like Dr Layton AO KC has made an outstanding contribution to her field.

The winner of the 2025 Dr Robyn Layton AO KC Award was Annie Hoffman.

Annie specialises in the area of asbestos litigation, and has consistently been named as one of South Australia's leading or preeminent dust diseases compensation lawyer.

We congratulate Annie and thank her for her significant contribution in a very difficult area of practice over a significant period of time.

Annie was presented with her award by Dr Layton AO KC at the WLASA's 'Drinks with the Judiciary' event in November 2025.



Pictured: Annie Hoffman accepting her 2025 Dr Robyn Layton AO KC Award, Dr Robyn Layton AO KC and Antonella Rodriguez, President of WLASA

CORPORATE MEMBERS

WLASA sincerely thanks its Corporate Members for their continued support and we look forward to providing further benefits for all members in the year ahead. Corporate Memberships allow the WLASA to continue its work including but not limited to promoting women lawyers through our Find a Woman Lawyer Directory, and by hosting CPD and networking events for women in the profession.

		
		
		
 		
		
		
		



We encourage potential Corporate Members, and previous Corporate Members who would like to renew their membership, to visit our website or enquire with the WLASA committee for more information.

