



**Australian**  
Women Lawyers

# **STRATEGIC & BUSINESS PLAN**

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**January 2025 to December 2027**

**Australian Women Lawyers Ltd.**

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## **Contents**

<b>1. Our Vision</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Objects</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3. Key Five Year Goals</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>5. Goal 1: Education</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>6. Goal 2: Policy &amp; Advocacy</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7. Goal 3: Networking and Career Development</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>8. Goal 4: Corporate Governance and Sustainability</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>9. Authors</b>	<b>15</b>

## 1. Our Vision

Australian Women Lawyers Ltd. (**AWL**) is a justice and equity champion advancing women within the legal profession and beyond.

## 2. Objects

The objects of AWL are to:

1. achieve justice and equality for all women;
2. drive further understanding and support for the legal rights of all women;
3. identify, highlight and eradicate discrimination against women inherent in the legal system and in the community generally;
4. advance equality for women in the legal profession;
5. create and enhance awareness of the contribution of women to the practice and development of law; and
6. provide a professional and social network for women lawyers.

## 3. Key Five Year Goals

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. facilitate 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.

## 4. Goal 1: Education

Educate and inform the profession and the public about matters affecting women in the profession and legal system

### 4.1. Strategy

- 4.1.1. Deliver a national conference every two years.
- 4.1.2. Deliver updates to constituent bodies and women lawyers about relevant legal issues, AWL positions, and networking and career development opportunities.
- 4.1.3. Engage with constituent bodies and other relevant organisations.

### 4.2. Key Board Approvals

- 4.2.1. Approve conference strategies.
- 4.2.2. Approve prepared position statements and policies on key issues of significance to AWL, women lawyers, and women more generally.
- 4.2.3. Develop an education program in conjunction with constituent bodies and other relevant organisations.

### 4.3. Action Items

No.	Responsible Entity	Action
1.	Conference Subcommittee	Develop strategies for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ongoing and sustainable management of the conference;</li> <li>• sponsorship for the conference; and</li> <li>• media and communications for the conference.</li> </ul>

No.	Responsible Entity	Action
2.	Media & Communications Responsible Person	<p>Keep members and the general public informed of law reform issues relevant to AWL's vision by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• maintaining, monitoring, and updating all AWL media platforms with relevant content (including direct correspondence, website, LinkedIn and Facebook);</li> <li>• communicating regularly with constituent bodies about the work of AWL; and</li> <li>• acting as a repository of resources for members.</li> </ul>
3.	Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage state constituent bodies to attend the conference.</li> <li>• Arrange face-to-face meetings to coincide with constituent body events.</li> </ul>
4.	Board members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft policy position statements on key issues of significance to AWL, women lawyers, and women more generally for adoption by Board</li> <li>• Liaise with constituent bodies and other relevant organisations and develop an education program of topics of significance to AWL, women lawyers, and women more generally</li> </ul>

## 5. Goal 2: Policy & Advocacy

Provide leadership on issues affecting women in the profession and the legal system by driving and advocating for change

### 5.1. Strategy

- 5.1.1. Continue being an advocate for change.
- 5.1.2. Be a driving force on the Equal Opportunity Committee of the Law Council of Australia (EOC) and other organisations (including our constituent bodies) for progressive cultural change within the legal profession.

### 5.2. Key Board Actions

- 5.2.1. Proactively formulate and assist in the development of solutions to the problem of gender-based violence and gender-based discrimination in the legal profession, and community more broadly.
- 5.2.2. Proactively formulate and assist in the development of solutions to the problem of the gender pay gap in the legal profession.
- 5.2.3. Champion equitable briefing.
- 5.2.4. Advocate for reproductive justice.
- 5.2.5. Champion flexible work arrangements.
- 5.2.6. Contribute to policy development and law reform at a national level.

### 5.3. Action Items – Gender-based violence and discrimination

5.3.1. The Board will take the following actions:

No.	Action
1.	Participate in discussions on strategies to address gender-based violence and discrimination including in the workplace (with a particular focus on the legal profession) and advocate for those strategies.
2.	Amplify and consolidate learning about strategies to address sexual harassment and discrimination, and the positive duty to eliminate sexual harassment, including the impact of intersectionality on discrimination in the legal profession.
3.	Collaborate with constituent bodies and other relevant organisations on matters relating to gender-based violence and discrimination, including how those matters impact women lawyers personally and in their practice.
4.	Develop policy position statements on family violence and sexual harassment.

### 5.4. Action Items – Gender Pay Gap

5.4.1. The Australian Gender Equality Council (AGEC) Representative and President will take the following actions:

No.	Action
1.	Advocate to reduce the gender pay gap in the profession and beyond.
2.	Develop policy position statement on the gender pay gap.
3.	Monitor data.
4.	Collaborate with constituent bodies, and other relevant organisations including the Australian Gender Equality Council ( <b>AGEC</b> ) and the Workplace Gender Equality Agency ( <b>WGEA</b> ) on their work in this area.

## 5.5. Action Items – Equitable Briefing

5.5.1. The Law Council of Australia’s Equal Opportunity Committee (EOC) Representative and the Board will take the following actions:

No.	Action
1.	Continue to advocate for uptake of the Equitable Briefing Policy and for those who have adopted it, advocate for increased and regular reporting.
2.	Collaborate with constituent bodies and other relevant organisations to support and promote strategies to advance gender equitable briefing.
3.	Encourage and support the collection of data on equitable briefing, and monitor reports on progress and outcomes.
4.	Develop a policy position statement on gender equitable briefing.

## 5.6. Action Items – Reproductive Justice

5.6.1. The Board will take the following action:

No.	Action
1.	Advocate for reproductive justice in all its forms across jurisdictions. Reproductive justice includes justice linked to reproduction including abortion, contraception, fertility and menopause, and access to them.

## 5.7. Action Items – Flexible Work Arrangements

5.7.1. The Board will take the following actions:

No.	Action
1.	Support and raise awareness of flexible work practices including job-sharing practices.
2.	Provide guidance and materials explaining the benefits of flexible work practices to practitioners and employers.



## 5.8. Action Items – National Law Reform

5.8.1. The Board will take the following action:

No.	Action
1.	Contribute to policy development and law reform at a national level by making submissions on law reform proposals relevant to AWL's Vision/Objects.

## 5.9. Action Items – Diversity & Inclusion Initiatives

5.9.1. The EOC Representative and the Board will take the following actions:

No.	Action
1.	Support the identification and implementation of diversity and inclusion initiatives arising from the National Attrition and Re-Engagement Survey (NARS) Report and subsequent review and work undertaken by the Law Council of Australia.
2.	Represent women lawyers on the Law Council of Australia's EOC
3.	Engage with other relevant organisations on diversity and inclusion initiatives relevant to AWL's Vision and Objects.

## 6. Goal 3: Networking and Career Development

Facilitate opportunities for women lawyers to network and engage with each other and with other relevant organisations.

### 6.1. Strategy

- 6.1.1. Create and promote opportunities for networking and career advancement for women lawyers.
- 6.1.2. Promote equality, diversity, and transparency in judicial and other legal appointments.

### 6.2. Key Board Actions

- 6.2.1. Create and maintain a list of women who express an interest in judicial appointment.
- 6.2.2. Approve policy position statement in support of diversity and transparency in judicial appointment.
- 6.2.3. Engage with constituent bodies and other relevant organisations, regularly, and identify opportunities to collaborate.

## 7. Goal 4: Corporate Governance and Sustainability

Effectively manage AWL to ensure its continued operation and sustainability, and continued accountability to its members.

### 7.1. Strategy

- 7.1.1. Ensure the continued operation of AWL.
- 7.1.2. Ensure that AWL operates in a way that is sustainable.
- 7.1.3. Preserve and record the history of AWL.

### 7.2. Key Board Actions

- 7.2.1. Maintain AWL records management systems, corporate governance documentation, and operational protocols and practices.
- 7.2.2. Conduct a review of AWL policies and procedures and develop or update such policies and procedures where necessary.
- 7.2.3. Plan for the future of AWL, including succession planning.
- 7.2.4. Identify and consider ways to diversify income streams including categories of membership, sponsorship, and capitation fees.
- 7.2.5. Approve policies on issues of significance to AWL.
- 7.2.6. Ensure AWL actions align with its Vision, Objects, and goals.

### 7.3. Action Items

No.	Responsible Entity	Action
1.	President	Guide, coordinate, and manage AWL and the Board
2.	Vice President	Assist the President in managing AWL
3.	Secretary	Ensure AWL compliance with all legislative requirements and reporting obligations to ACNC and ASIC
4.	Treasurer	<p>Maintain robust and appropriate financial management practices and associated policies by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reporting monthly to the Board regarding AWL's financial status</li> <li>• preparing and ratifying a forecasted budget at the start of each financial year</li> <li>• ensuring that AWL meets its financial reporting obligations</li> <li>• maintaining, ratifying, and distributing capitation fee policy and procedures</li> <li>• recording data to enable AWL to record and report on the history of its membership numbers and fees</li> <li>• recording data to enable AWL to record and report on forecasted and actual expenses</li> <li>• considering, and where appropriate, propose appropriate bookkeeper and auditor</li> </ul>

No.	Responsible Entity	Action
5.	Board	<p>Review current policies and procedures</p> <p>Develop policies and procedures, where necessary, and policy position statements and keep in accordance with records management processes</p> <p>Review records management processes including reviewing documents in Dropbox, removing duplicate documents, and archiving relevant material</p> <p>Conduct regular review of progress against strategic plan</p> <p>Conduct review of Constitution/Articles of Association</p>
6.	Media and Communications Officer	<p>Increase AWL's exposure and influence by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• developing and implementing media and marketing strategies</li> <li>• developing website and social media policy</li> <li>• keeping AWL website up-to-date</li> <li>• compiling media distribution list</li> <li>• improving communication with members including by regular newsletter</li> <li>• communication with constituent bodies</li> <li>• developing communications strategy</li> </ul>

7.	Treasurer and other Board members	<p>Secure AWL's long-term financial future by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• diversifying income streams</li><li>• preparing overarching revenue/sponsorship strategy including identifying potential sponsors from a range of diverse sectors and alternative sources of revenue such as government grants</li><li>• investing cash reserves in interest-earning accounts, where possible</li></ul>
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## 8. Authors

- 8.1.** This Strategic and Business Plan was developed by the AWL Board on 1 February 2025 at the AWL Strategic Planning Day.
- 8.2.** AWL adopts this Strategic and Business Plan on the approval of the 2025 AWL Board members comprised of:

• President	- Renée Bianchi	(WLANSW)
• Vice President	- Emma Luck	(WLWA)
• Treasurer	- Shelley O’Connell	(WLASA)
• Secretary	- Alinta Robinson-Herbert	(TWL)
• Immediate Past President	- Astrid Haban-Beer	(WBA)
• Board Members	- Jessica McClymont KC	(WLAQ)
	- Sophie LeFebvre	(VWL)
	- Josie Hullick	(NTWLA)
	- (TBC)	(WLA ACT)
	- Kylie Weston-Scheuber	(WBA)