

EQUALITY AUSTRALIA IMPACT REPORT 2023-2024





Co-Chairs Address

Equality Australia is shaping a future for LGBTIQ+ people in our country which is safer, healthier and more equitable. This is our inaugural Impact Report, covering the financial year 2023–24, and it provides a snapshot of the many challenges we have faced and overcome in that time.

On behalf of the Board, we are incredibly proud of and grateful for the tireless work of the Equality Australia team, partner organisations and the community.

They continue to create positive legal and social change, bringing us ever closer to our vision of a fair and inclusive Australia for all LGBTIQ+ people and their families.

There remain big tasks ahead of us, including banning conversion practices across the nation, ensuring protections against discrimination in faith-based organisations and ending unnecessary medical procedures on people with innate variations of sex characteristics without their consent.

On all those fronts, this Impact Report gives us reason for hope. It speaks to our capacity and our resolve. Together, we can create a future in which no one is treated as less than simply for being who they are.

Fiona McLeay and Leonard Vary AM



CEO Address

Over the last year, Equality Australia has pursued its foundational aims with remarkable pace and vigor, and with landmark successes across the nation.

Our inaugural Impact Report highlights these achievements: from reversing a ban on same-sex parenting books in Cumberland to outlawing conversion practices in NSW and releasing a groundbreaking report on discrimination in religious schools.

Our small but mighty team could not have achieved all this, and more, without your support. Together we have built the power, voices and influence of our communities.

While this report outlines many wonderful achievements of which we can all be proud, there remain many active challenges which threaten our ability to live with dignity and respect.

At a federal level, we continue working for protections against discrimination by faith-based organisations; in NSW, we hope to secure the passage of the Equality Bill; and we must ensure conversion practices are banned across the nation.

These are but a few of the campaigns we will continue pursuing over the coming year and beyond.

I would like to thank our Board for their unwavering commitment and vision, including outgoing Chair Tom Snow, who has supported us to grow into the organisation we are today.

Thank you also to our Patrons, our program and partner organisations and to our wonderful supporters, without whose generous support we could not continue to drive change.

Lastly to my team at Equality Australia, who work tirelessly every day for our community, my sincere gratitude.

Anna Brown OAM

OUR STRATEGY

OUR VISION

A fair and inclusive Australia for all LGBTQ+ people, their families and communities.

OUR MISSION

To create and protect positive legal and social change to ensure LGBTQ+ people are treated equally and with dignity and respect.

OUTCOMES OF OUR WORK

Through our work we will contribute to LGBTQ+ people and their families being supported by:

- Laws and policies that enable us to live with **dignity and respect**,
- **Positive community attributes** that affirm who we are,
- A **strong LGBTQ+ movement** across Australia,
- **Allies working alongside us** to end discrimination against LGBTQ+ people, and
- Equality Australia as a **strong, respected, healthy and sustainable organisation**.



OUR WORK

Let's **ensure** LGBTQ+ people are **properly** counted in the 2026 Census.



#COUNTUSIN

Ensuring LGBTQ+ people are counted in the Census.

END CONVERSION PRACTICES ACROSS AUSTRALIA



ENDING CONVERSION PRACTICES

We are working to ensure all states legislate bans on these damaging practices.



The Sydney Morning Herald
Australia to advocate for LGBTQ rights in Asia-Pacific

FEB 26, 2023

FOREIGN POLICY

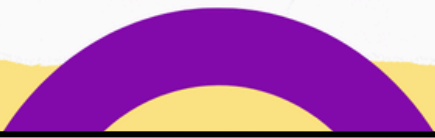
Championing LGBTQ+ rights in bilateral and multilateral diplomacy and working with groups in our region to help prevent legal and social stigma and discrimination.



FREEDOM FROM DISCRIMINATION

Protecting us from religious discrimination.

HELP END UNNECESSARY SURGERIES ON INTERSEX PEOPLE



INTERSEX HUMAN RIGHTS

Protecting future generations of people with innate variations of sex characteristics by ensuring laws end unnecessary medical procedures without their consent.

STAND UP AGAINST HATE



STAND UP AGAINST HATE

Advocating for national and state-level anti-vilification laws protecting the LGBTIQ+ community from hate speech.

#TRANS EQUALITY



TRANSEQUALITY

Promoting the well-being and rights of trans and gender diverse people across the country.

OUR IMPACT



CUMBERLAND COUNCIL REVERSED ITS BOOK BAN

42,480 PEOPLE SIGNED OUR PETITION!

When Cumberland Council in Western Sydney banned books featuring same-sex parents from its libraries, Equality Australia teamed up with a local resident and proud grandmother to a rainbow family, Caroline, to call on the Council to reverse the ban.

A groundswell of support for the LGBTIQ+ community, spearheaded by Caroline, was one of the biggest displays of mass public support in Equality Australia's history and, combined with intensive political engagement behind the scenes, it overturned the ban on books featuring rainbow families in the Western Sydney council's libraries.

“ *We don't ban people or families. Our diversity is part of what makes living in our area so special. We are better than this motion.* ”

- CAROLINE STAPLES



Anna Brown with conversion survivors inside NSW Parliament ahead of the introduction of the Conversion ban

NSW BAN ON CONVERSION PRACTICES

22 VOTES FOR, 4
AGAINST

NSW became the latest state to ban conversion practices, passing the *Conversion Practices Ban Act 2024* (NSW).

Equality Australia delivered countless briefings with MPs behind the scenes, worked with brave survivors who told their stories publicly and ensured survivor's voices were heard in developing the NSW Government's legislation.

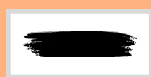
On the night the bill passed into law, the team at Equality Australia joined survivors at NSW parliament, camping out overnight as the debate continued. The bill passed with 22 votes to four in the upper house and saw NSW become the first state to legislate in this area with multi-partisan support.

“ *Conversion therapy only teaches us to hate ourselves. By banning it in NSW, we've saved so many people's lives.*

- JEREMY SMITH, CONVERSION PRACTICE SURVIVOR



April Long with their son



Let's **ensure** LGBTIQ+ people are **properly** counted in the 2026 Census.



ONE STEP CLOSER TO BEING COUNTED IN THE CENSUS

In 2021, the census failed to count us and our families. April Long was made to feel that their family was invisible in the last census and filed a human rights complaint with Equality Australia against the Australian Bureau of Statistics. The census kept asking for April's son's father - he has two mums.

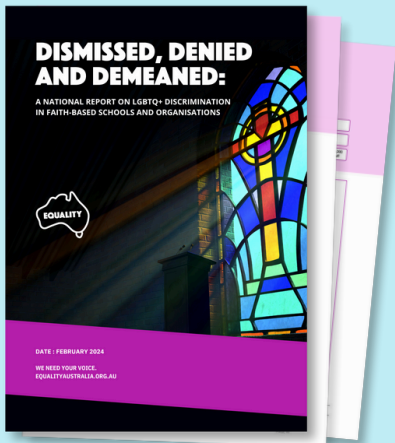
Following the conciliation and settlement of the complaint, not only did the ABS issue a statement of regret in August 2023, but April, Equality Australia and representatives across our communities were included in conversations advising the ABS on how to best include our communities.



The 2021 census left my family uncounted, my partner and I excluded as parents, and our son's family invisible. Every individual, parent, child and family deserves to be counted. I look forward to the 2026 census when we can finally tell our son how many kids like him have two mums.

- APRIL LONG

Update: In August 2024, after a shock announcement by the Federal Government that it had decided not to add any new topics to the Census, we worked furiously to reverse the decision, resulting in the Government deciding to add questions on sexual orientation and gender identity.



LAUNCHED OUR LANDMARK REPORT ON RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION AT PARLIAMENT HOUSE

1,000+ MEDIA MENTIONS IN ONE DAY

After years of meticulous research, Equality Australia released its ground-breaking report, *Dismissed, Denied and Demeaned*, documenting the extent of LGBTQ+ discrimination in religious schools and organisations across the country.

Equality Australia announced the report's release at a press conference at Parliament House in Canberra, alongside Karen, a teacher, and James, a former student, who both endured discrimination.

The story made national headlines with more than 1,000 media mentions in one day, bringing the issue of discrimination into the mainstream, and providing a roadmap for reform by federal and state governments.

“

Thanks for all you and your team do, Anna. I'm in the closet in professional spheres in Australia as I work in religious schools. Out of the closet in every single other part of my life and I look forward to the day when I can finally lock it behind me!! Thanks for all that's happening in this space and I'm happy to be part of it in a small way!!

- ANONYMOUS



Outside NSW Parliament before the introduction of the Equality Bill

NSW EQUALITY BILL INTRODUCED

**MORE THAN 500
LAWS AUDITED**

Equality Australia audited more than 500 laws for discrimination against LGBTIQ+ people. This helped form the basis of the Equality Bill, which was introduced in August 2023 and remains our best shot at long overdue reforms that affect our communities every day. We have called on our community to contact MPs with messages and put up targeted outdoor posters across Sydney, and continue to meet with parliamentarians and government to advocate for change.

The Equality Bill would better protect our communities from family and personal violence, improve recognition of children born through surrogacy and ensure trans and gender-diverse people can update their birth certificate without unnecessary surgery or medical treatment.

“

Misaligned birth certificates and documentation cause constant and deep frustration - I am misgendered constantly by every automated system that pulls from a birth certificate for ID in NSW, and often am forced to out and explain myself, with the whole process being demeaning and dehumanising every time. Every time I have to get my license redone, or the car registered, or even collecting medications I'm getting the "MISTER Stephanie".

- STEPHANIE (SHE/HER)



**#TRANS
EQUALITY**

The first cohort of TransLeading participants



WORKED FOR #TRANSEQUALITY WITH THE COMMUNITY AND IN PARLIAMENT

In August 2023, Equality Australia launched TransEquality, a dedicated initiative to bolster the capabilities, connection and rights of trans and gender diverse people.

We held our inaugural TransLeading workshop – where 15 up-and-coming trans leaders took part in our leadership and capacity building program. Participants walked away as friends and with tools to inspire change in ways that are authentic to them.

We helped defeat five motions across federal and state parliaments attempting to restrict access to gender affirming care and, in one instance, seeking to criminalise doctors who prescribe it.



Transleading was an awakening for me. Gave me what I needed to be able to navigate my blocks and start getting some of my ideas into the world.

- JAXSON

The November 2023 TransLeading program was supported through grant funding provided by NSW Ministry of Health.



TWO STATES MADE UPDATING BIRTH CERTIFICATES POSSIBLE!

Last year, the Queensland parliament passed a law allowing trans and gender diverse people to update their ID without surgery. In May this year, these life-changing reforms came into effect, introducing best-practice, respectful pathways to gender recognition.



For most of us, our birth certificate is the first piece of identification we have, and for many young people, it's their only proof of identity.

- YMANIA BROWN, CHAIR, TRANSEQUALITY

Until recently, Western Australia was the only state with a 'Gender Reassignment Board' - a board of strangers who decide if someone could legally change their gender. It was a process described as 'humiliating and dehumanising'. But in April this year, the WA Government introduced a bill that will abolish the Gender Reassignment Board and recognise non-binary people for the first time.



I have lived as a man for 11 years. I promised myself I'd never go before the Board and feel the shame of 'proving' myself. I'm glad I never had to break that promise.

- JACOB CORICA



Anna Brown speaking at our community event for The Voice



SUPPORTING THE VOICE

**22 LGBTQ+ GROUPS
JOINED THE STATEMENT**

We partnered with BlaQ Aboriginal Corporation to bring together the LGBTQ+ community and show our support for the 'Yes campaign', as the country prepared to vote on whether an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice should be enshrined in the Constitution. We mobilised our supporters, ran a community event and commissioned a beautiful artwork from Aboriginal artist Wayde Clarke (Alejandro Lauren) that was shared widely. It was an inclusion flag comprised of journey lines and meeting places to symbolise the importance of inclusion and recognition.



I wanted to bring Australia and everyone's journey into the artwork, into all the different colours, just to make it inclusive because a world that has inclusivity is a world that I want to live in.

- WAYDE CLARKE



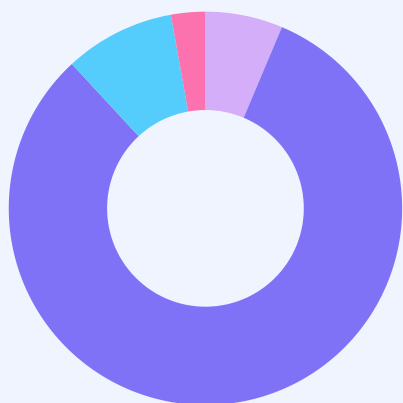
Anthony Albanese, Kate Wickett, Anna Brown, Penny Wong, Sophie Allouache



HOW WE DID IT: FY2024 FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

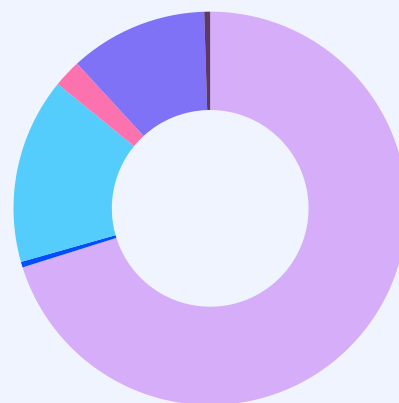
We continue to rely on the generous support of our donors, both individuals and institutions, for the vast majority of our income. Equality Australia received only six percent of our funding from government grants (NSW Ministry of Health) and a small amount from partnerships, other areas and interest, resulting in a modest surplus.

At Equality Australia, our people are our most valuable asset. Our impact relies on the knowledge, expertise and relationships of our small but committed team.



INCOME (\$)

- 1,929,596 Donations
- 214,122 Partnerships and other income
- 66,348 Interest
- 150,000 Government grants



EXPENSES (\$)

- 1,613,105 Employees
- 10,563 Fundraising
- 351,464 Projects
- 52,314 Transactional costs
- 260,879 Operations, facilities, admin
- 11,207 Amortisation and depreciation

THANK YOU



Equality Australia acknowledges the hundreds of supporters who joined us over the past 12 months to campaign for a world where everyone can live with dignity and respect, no matter who they are, or whom they love. To all our donors, volunteers, survivors, community leaders, and community partners, your generosity and commitment has made the impact highlighted in this report possible - thank you.

Special thanks to:

Cornerstone supporters

- Dr Adam Bayes and Mark Coulter
- Carol Haynes and Skipp Williamson
- The Centenary Foundation
- Paul O'Sullivan
- The Snow Foundation

Equality Heros

- Angus and Fiona McLeay
- Berg Family Foundation
- King & Wood Mallesons
- Leonard Vary AM and Matt Collins AM KC
- Mannifera
- Oranges & Sardines Foundation
- Pratt Foundation
- Sidney Myer Fund
- Vicki Vidor OAM

Our 35 Equality Champions

Program Partners

- Global Philanthropy Project
- NSW Ministry of Health
- Thorne Harbour Health

Pro Bono Partners

- Allens
- Alyse Mobruci
- Arnold Bloch Leibler
- Chris Tran
- Clayton Utz
- Corrs Chambers Westgarth
- Gilbert and Tobin
- Herbert Smith Freehills
- James Emmet SC
- Jennifer Batrouney AM KC
- Kathleen Foley SC
- King & Wood Mallesons
- Liz Bennett SC
- Norton Rose
- Ruth Higgins SC
- Spark Helmore Lawyers
- Tamara Phillips

OUR BOARD AND PATRONS

OUR BOARD



Fiona McLeay
(she/her)
Co-Chair



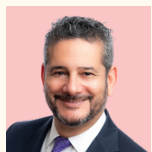
Leonard Vary AM
(he/him)
Co-Chair



Ryan Phillips PSM
(he/him)
Director



Hayley Conway
(she/her)
Director



David Lane
(he/him)
Director



Melissa Tandy GAICD
(she/her)
Director



Adrian Kennedy,
(he/him)
Company Secretary

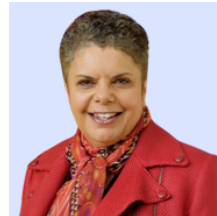


Sydney WorldPride and Equality Australia event at Australian Parliament House, Canberra, featuring First Nations drag queen Miss Ellaneous.

OUR PATRONS



**Shane Jenek AKA
Courtney Act**
(he/him) & (she/her)



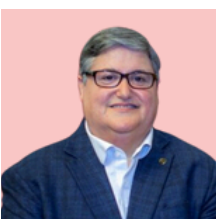
**Deborah Cheetham
AO**
(she/her)



**The Hon. Virginia
Bell AC**
(she/her)



**The Hon. Michael
Kirby AC CMG**
(he/him)



Tony Briffa
(she/her)



Kylie Kwong AM
(she/her)

OUR TEAM



Anna Brown OAM
(she/her)
CEO



Emily Gray
(she/her)
Legal Director



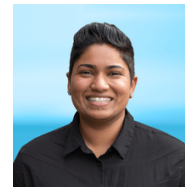
Emily Mulligan
(she/her)
Engagement
Director



Lachlan Snow
(he/him)
Development and
Partnerships Manager



Dale Dawson
(he/him)
Operations
Director



Naureen Shah
(she/her)
Executive Officer
to the CEO



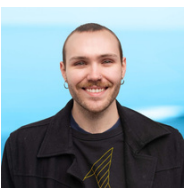
Tara Ravens
(she/her)
Media Advisor



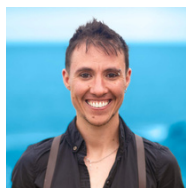
Oliver Ray
(he/him)
Senior Legal Policy
Advisor



Jasmine Rule
(she/her)
Digital Specialist



Mike Hitch
(he/him)
Digital Campaigner



Max Pick
(they/them)
#TransEquality
Project
Co-ordinator

Expert contractors: Lee Carnie, Tom Tanhchareun.

Former employees: Danielle Yung, Ghassan Kassisieh, Lisa Gluckman, Ymania Brown.

Legal secondees: Amy Silver, Catherine Macarounas, Hollie Jackson, Sophie Claplin.

TransCouncil members: Ymania Brown (Chair), Emery Wishart, Erin Spencer, Estelle Grace, Jackie Turner, Jeremy Wiggins, Joe Ball, Josephine Inkpin, Misty Farquhar OAM, Parker Forbes, Son Vivienne, Teddy Cook, Varo.

We would like to give special thanks to Allens, who partner with Equality Australia to provide opportunities to their Law Graduates and Lawyers to gain experience in legal policy on secondment rotations of up to four months at a time.



Conversion survivor and community advocates, Equality Australia team members and parliamentarians gather at NSW Parliament House



Media launch of our 'Dismissed, Denied, Demeaned' Report at Australian Parliament House



Media interview by Legal Director Ghassan Kassisieh

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which our offices stand and we pay our respects to elders past and present. We acknowledge the sorrow of the Stolen Generations and the impacts of colonisation on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We also recognise the resilience, strength and pride of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Anna Brown OAM, CEO
ceo@equalityaustralia.org.au

www.equalityaustralia.org.au

