The *Starts With Us* Organisational Assessment Template

TO WORKSHOP AND IDENTIFY WHERE TO FOCUS ACTION

The *Starts With Us* Framework

A guide to create gender equitable and safe legal and justice workplaces is by and for Victoria's legal and justice workforce.

It is part of the *Starts With Us* Project – a cross-sector initiative to prevent gendered violence in Victoria's legal and justice sector.

This Framework provides 'how to' guidance and supporting resources – informed by the latest research and best practice – on practical steps your organisation can take to prevent gendered violence in the workplace.

This resource supports **Step 3: Conduct an organisational assessment workshop.** The organisational assessment will help you identify where to focus your action planning so that you can achieve:

1. An organisational culture that reflects gender equitable behaviour, attitudes, and expectations, internally, and in work with the community, with clients and stakeholders.

2. Systems, structures and processes that support gender equality, fairness and safety.

3. Robust and effective reporting systems that ensure safety, compliance and consequences for perpetrators.

This template is informed by the Workplace Equality and Respect Standards[1] and the research of the *Starts With Us* Project. Under each outcome, the assessment template prompts you to reflect on the following areas for action:

› Leadership and advocacy - for example, role-modelling by the executive, allocating resources, and ensuring alignment with strategic plans and organisational risk registers, and how you might advocate for gender equality through core business activities with clients and stakeholders.

› Policies and practices - for example, updating or drafting key policies and procedures such as preventing sexual harassment and discrimination, parental leave, recruitment, flexible working, recognition and reward, and professional development.

› Build staff and organisational capacity - for example, professional development opportunities including training, coaching and mentoring, and developing communities of practice to share learning and skills.

› Engagement and communication - for example, internal and external communications on why your organisation is investing in this work and the benefits to the workforce, events marking days of significance, including 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence and International Women's Day, and staff engagement surveys and focus groups.

› Monitoring, evaluation and reporting - evaluating the impact of action plans and their contribution to overarching gender equality outcomes.

The organisational assessment template asks questions to prompt honest assessment and to identify:

› whether current actions are sufficient and reflect good practice. Could you identify areas for improvement?

› what other work is being done in your organisation that links to this area? Is there potential to connect with this work to support sustainability? Does it relate to other reporting mechanisms on gender equality. These considerations will help you to consolidate your efforts and avoid duplication.

› opportunities to strengthen action.

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[1] Our Watch, *Workplace Equality and Respect Standards: Promoting workplace gender equality and the prevention of sexual harassment and gender-based violence* (2022), https://workplace.ourwatch.org.au/resource/workplace-equality-and-respect-standards/.

NOTE FOR SMALL ORGANISATIONS

The assessment template questions are very comprehensive. Use them as a guide to help you consider what you already do and what, within resources, could be improved. Remember that starting small, with realistic expectations and building on what your organisation already does well increases your chances of sustaining this work overtime. Pick some easy wins and aim to have at least three suggestions for action or improvement against each outcome.

Once areas of focus or improvement have been identified, they can be expanded upon in the *Starts With Us Action Plan to Prevent Gendered Violence in the Workplace Template.*

MEMBER ORGANISATIONS

The questions in the organisational assessment are helpful for you and your members to consider when assessing the existing support you give your members to take action to prevent workplace gendered violence. These additional questions, to be answered with input from your members, will help you identify gaps or areas you could improve on:

› are the prevention of gendered violence resources that (name of your organisation) provides useful? If not, how could these resources be improved? What other resources would be helpful?

› do the resources (name of your organisation) help to understand and apply an intersectional lens? If no, what could improve this?

› if (name of your organisation) requires members to share their assessment findings and action plans as a condition of membership, is your organisation likely to comply?

› if (name of your organisation) established a prevention of gendered violence community of practice to share learnings, expertise, resources and experiences, what key themes should this community address?

› are there key policy and practice areas that you think (name of your organisation) should focus on in the next 18 months to help advance gender equality and prevention of gendered violence in the legal and justice sector?

Template

Outcome 1: An organisational culture that reflects gender equitable behaviour, attitudes, and expectations, internally and in work with the community, with clients and with stakeholders.				
	Current state	**What could be improved?**	**What other work is being done in the organisation linked to this area? Detail connections to reporting requirements such as to the Workplace Gender Equality Agency or Gender Equality Act?**	**Summary and potential follow up actions**
a. Leadership and advocacy › What commitment to undertaking the *Starts with Us* Framework has your leadership made, including any resource allocations? › What is driving/motivating your organisation to implement the *Starts with Us* Framework? › How do your organisational values and strategic plan frame or align with gender equality?				

› Is gender (and other forms of) equality considered in decision-making about external partnerships/ stakeholder relationships? How? › Do leaders demonstrate a commitment to ensuring an intersectional gender lens is applied to policies, programs, and practices? What do leaders need to be able to do this consistently in the future?				
b. Policies and practices › Do you have a resourced strategy or plan to promote gender equality? If not, is there a commitment to developing one using the guidance in the *Starts with Us* Framework? › If so, how can your organisation align this work with current diversity and inclusion practices and strategic planning?				

c. Building staff and organisational capacity
 	
› Have staff in the organisation participated in training/workshops on:
  – unconscious bias
  – bystander interventions
  – gender equality
  – workplace respect
  – diversity and inclusion
  – cultural competency
 	
If so, who has been trained? Who still needs to attend training?[2]
 	
› If not, are these considered as training priority areas, and what is the timeframe for all staff completing trainings?
› If so, what has been the impact on staff?
› What are the priority areas for future training?
› What kind of professional development opportunities are offered? For example, mentoring, coaching, etc. Are there diverse role models to deliver these programs, and are there any barriers to uptake due to gender?				

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[2] It is recommended that all staff receive violence prevention and gender equality training. If training all staff is not possible, staff should receive communications with information and access to learning resources.

d. Engagement and communication › Do internal and external communications use inclusive language and images that proactively challenge stereotypes and harmful gender norms? › What else could be done to improve the use of inclusive language (e.g., in team meetings or internal communications)? › How do your internal communications currently reflect your commitment to gender equality (e.g., challenging gender stereotypes or promoting respectful behaviours)? › How do stakeholder engagement activities, public statements and external communications reflect the organisation's commitment to promoting gender equality, rejecting sexism, and challenging attitudes that justify, minimise, trivialise or excuse gendered violence? › What efforts are made to embed intersectional understandings of gendered violence and its impacts? How is it informing the organisation's actions?				
e. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting › Do senior leaders' Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) recognise efforts to promote gender equality and prevent sexual harassment and other forms of gendered violence? › How does the organisation currently report on progress made towards workplace gender equality (for example, reporting to the Workplace Gender Equality Agency)? › Does the organisation regularly report publicly against gender equality indicators and efforts to prevent sexual harrassment and other forms of gender-based violence?				

Outcome 1: Summary of draft actions:

Outcome 2: Systems, structures and processes that support gender equality, fairness and safety.				
	Current state	**What could be improved?**	**What other work is being done in the organisation linked to this area? Detail connections to reporting requirements such as to the Workplace Gender Equality Agency or Gender Equality Act?**	**Summary and potential follow up actions**
a. Leadership and advocacy 〉 Do leaders of all genders model and encourage flexible work options, including part-time, job share and parental leave? If yes, how? 〉 Do leaders sponsor or advocate for women and non-binary people from diverse backgrounds to take up leadership positions? 〉 Are there diversity and inclusion requirements at leadership level (such as the board) or in the organisational leadership's terms of reference to ensure diversity at this level?				
b. Policies and practices 〉 Are gender equality targets/goals built into your organisation's strategies/plans/values? 〉 How do staff-focused processes and practices (including recruitment, promotion, and remuneration) seek to reduce unconscious gender bias and intersectional forms of bias? 〉 Can all staff access flexible work options (including part-time and job share arrangements)? 〉 How does the organisation seek to identify and reduce the gender pay gap? 〉 Do all staff have equitable access to parental leave (regardless of gender)? If so, are there any improvements to be made on the uptake? 〉 Do all staff have access to family violence leave? If so, are there any perceived barriers to accessing this support?[3]				

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[3] From February 2023, all employees are entitled to 10 days of paid family violence leave a year. This includes people who are part time and/or work on casual basis. Fair Work Ombudsman, Family and domestic leave, https://www.fairwork.gov.au/leave/family-and-domestic-violence-leave.

› How are expectations on respectful and equal relationships (and associated behaviours) articulated in codes of conduct, work plans, performance plans, and position descriptions?				
c. Build staff and organisational capacity › What support already exists for women's leadership, including strategies to recruit, train, mentor and retain women and non-binary people from diverse backgrounds? › What training on unconscious bias is offered to those responsible for recruitment and/or assessing promotions? Could this be improved or expanded to more staff? › Is there an underrepresentation by gender of those with recruitment and promotion decision-making responsibilities? › Do you offer unconscious bias training to mentors or coaches and provide them with training to build capability to support gender equality?				
d. Engagement and communication › Have you recently supported or engaged with any campaigns or initiatives related to equality and diversity (for example, International Women's Day, International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia, (IDAHOBIT), 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence)? › Do internal communications have regular reminders about workplace wellbeing programs, specialist support and any events or news related to equality, fairness and safety (including psychological safety)? If so, how could internal communications be improved?				
e. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting › What gender-disaggregated data and other diversity data is collected to regularly assess the progress of gender equality across the organisation?				

› What gender targets are already established?				
› How do you collect staff feedback about their experiences and perspectives of gender inequality, sexual harassment, other forms of discrimination and inequality?				
› What happens with this information? Do you analyse it for themes and trends or review workplace processes and practices?				
› Does your leadership receive an update on diversity and inclusion practices across the organisation? If so, how frequently is this reported? If not, can this be added?				
› Do teams have to submit equality impact assessments on internal proposals or submissions? If so, what have been the learnings? If not, can this be added?				

Outcome 2: Summary of draft actions:

Outcome 3: Robust and effective reporting systems that ensure safety, compliance and consequences for perpetrators.

	Current state	What could be improved?	What other work is being done in the organisation linked to this area? Detail connections to reporting requirements such as to the Workplace Gender Equality Agency or Gender Equality Act?	Summary and potential follow up actions
a. Leadership and advocacy				
› Are organisational leaders offered opportunities to reflect on their own role and behaviours in eliminating gendered stereotypes, including those that interact with ageism, racism, homophobia, and ableism? How could this be improved?				
› When leaders become aware of discrimination, harassment and gendered violence in the workplace, how do they address it?				

› Do people feel safe challenging sexist and discriminatory behaviours when they experience them from leaders and other staff? What are the avenues for reporting if this happens?				
› How comfortable and safe do staff feel raising issues of gender inequality to People and Culture and organisational leaders?				
b. Policies and practices › What policies and procedures exist to promptly and appropriately support staff who disclose their experience/ observations of, or use of, gendered violence. Is the safety and well-being of the person impacted by this violence a central consideration? Do policies and procedures include: – paid family violence leave – responding to disclosures policy – referrals to specialist organisations › What other workplace policies need to be reviewed or developed to ensure the safety of staff who disclose an experience of violence, harassment or bullying? › How are policies and procedures related to gendered violence and family violence reviewed based on staff feedback? › Is there a consistent organisational understanding of what constitutes gender inequality across the full spectrum of behaviours and attitudes? Is this communicated?				
c. Build staff and organisational capacity › How are staff who implement these policies and procedures supported to build their confidence and skills to apply them? Who has been trained, and who still needs to be trained?[4]				

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[4] At a minimum, it is recommended all line managers and People and Culture teams undertake training on gender equality, sexual harassment, and family violence, supports available and reporting systems.

› How are organisational leaders and people managers trained to respond promptly and appropriately to disclosures and requests for support from staff experiencing gendered violence such as sexual harassment and discrimination or family violence?				
d. Engagement and communications › Are staff able to always access relevant policies easily? Are they regularly communicated? › What efforts are made to highlight and improve understandings of intersectional barriers to reporting? › Does the organisation promote a range of specialist organisations that can support staff who experience gendered violence? › Has the organisation assessed access to support and the sense of trust in the organisation's processes, based on staff experiences? › Have barriers to access or trust been identified and addressed?				
e. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting › How are complaints regarding sexual harassment and workplace gendered violence and subsequent response times tracked? Is this information analysed for trends or patterns? To whom is this information provided?				

Outcome 3: Summary of draft actions: