



## **AUSTRALIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION INC.**

**National Board founded Canberra 1951.**

ABN 58853 856 904 Inc. A0020253H

Friday 28th February 2022

To whom it may concern,

The purpose of this submission is to seek imperative funding for the Australian Local Government Women's Association ("ALGWA") to encourage and support women to stand for Local Government. Specifically in Tasmania and South Australia as their Local Government Elections are held this year. 2022 is also the 120<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Australian women being able to both vote and stand for public office. Whilst Australian women were the first in the world who could stand for public office, today Australia stands at 54<sup>th</sup> out of 155 countries for women's political empowerment. Five former Prime Ministers of Australia started their political career in Local Government and the benefit of ALGWA's work is not limited to the sphere of Local Government. The ripple effect of funding non-partisan organisations such as ALGWA is increasing representation of women pursuing politics at all three levels of government in Australia. ALGWA is a not-for-profit organisation completely run by volunteers and is the largest Local Government Women's Association in the world. If ALGWA was successful in this funding application, the result would see an increase in the number of women elected to Local Government in South Australia and Tasmania.

### **Australian Local Government Women's Association**

#### Background

The Australian Local Government Women's Association was created in Canberra on October 15, 1951 by 16 local government women drawn from all States of Australia. A provisional committee was elected with representation from most States of Australia. A permanent national organisation took shape at the First National Conference in Canberra, October 19, 1966, attended by 53 people.

#### The National Board

As aforementioned, ALGWA is the largest organisation of its kind. State Branches are federated through a common National Constitution with the National Board. The National Board represents the association at the National level. The National Board supports the State/Territory Branches. The Association currently has six states as members and a Network in the Northern Territory, the Northern Territory is in the process of becoming a Branch in its own right.

## Our Aims

The aim of the Australian Local Government Women's Association is to:-

- Assist in furthering women's knowledge and understanding of the functions of Local Government
- Encourage women to participate in Local Government
- Encourage women to make a career from Local Government
- Protect the interests and rights of women in Local Government
- Take action in relation to any subject or activity affecting Local Government and Local Government legislation
- Act in an advisory capacity to intending women candidates for Local Government elections

## Our Success

ALGWA measures its success by the number of women encouraged to run for Local Government. In 1951, when ALGWA was first organised, only 54 women had been elected. By December 1974 a total of 877 women had been elected in Australia, of whom 460 were then sitting members. While South Australia had the first woman in local government with Mrs Susan Grace Benny, JP, elected in 1919, NSW has been the most successful state. In 1974, 169 women were elected, the highest number elected up to that time in any one State, and the first woman Lord Mayor in Australia (Alderman Lilian M Fowler, MBE, MLA, JP, Newtown Municipal Council) was elected. At the 1995 elections 406 women were elected in NSW (22.5%). There were 27 women Mayors (15%) and 37 Deputy Mayors but there were still 12 Councils with no women at all.

In the recent NSW Local Government election held on the 4th December 2021, women's representation has risen from 28% to 39.5%.

Nonetheless, according to the Global Gender Gap Report 2021, Australia lags Iceland (1), New Zealand (4), Rwanda (6), Ireland (11), UK (23) and Canada (29). In 2006, Australia was 32<sup>nd</sup> in the same Gap Report. It is essential that ALGWA's work continues in collaboration with Government support to secure increased female representation in Australia.

## **Funding Request: Councillor Candidate Forums**

ALGWA seeks \$100,000 in funding allocation divided equally between Tasmania and South Australia. With this funding, ALGWA would be able to hold a multitude of intense one day programs across both jurisdictions to provide the best opportunities for interested women in the upcoming Local Government elections. The proposed intense one day program provides all the information that a candidate needs to make an informed decision to stand.

For context, ALGWA NSW conducted 29 forums before the 2021 Local Government elections, and with the requested funding ALGWA aims to run similar Councillor Candidate Forums in South Australia and Tasmania. The NSW Councillor Candidate Forum programs have been received with positive feedback from the high volume of attendees sourced through ALGWA's feedback surveys. The surveys ensure that forums encompass all areas of interest and importance to attendees and adapt to meet expectations.

The program's aim is to inform, empower and equip women in local communities who are interested in standing for election. The program's details include but are not limited to the following;

- Firstly, empowering women.
- Run information sessions inclusive of;
  - Electoral commission requirements
  - How to run a campaign
  - Advocacy skills
  - Traditional and digital media training
  - Budgeting
  - General campaigning information such as;
    - Campaign Module 1: "Getting Organised:
    - Campaign Module 2: "Image"
    - Campaign Module 3: "Campaign toolkit"
    - Campaign Module 4: "Prepoll and Election Day"
  - Informal volunteer mentoring
- Conducts Question and Answer Sessions
- Executive Members share their experience and wisdom

In conclusion, this funding is vital to assist in encouraging women to participate in Australian democracy at a local level. I await your favourable response.

Yours sincerely,



Marianne Saliba  
*President*  
*ALGWA National Board*

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