

# **Just transitions:**

CLCs leaving no one behind in a changing climate



**Community Legal Centres NSW Conference 2023**

Tuesday 5 and Wednesday 6 September 2023

# Program Information

**Acknowledgement of Country** We acknowledge the Lands upon which these meetings take place. Community Legal Centres NSW acknowledges the Gadigal people of the Eora nation as the sovereign owners of the land upon which our office operates, and where this conference is held. We pay our respects to Elders past and present. Sovereignty was never ceded. Always was, always will be, Aboriginal land.

**Theme** This year's theme is 'Just transitions — CLCs leaving no one behind in a changing climate'.

**Venue** The conference will be held at the Teachers Federation Conference Centre, located at 37 Reservoir Street, Surry Hills.

**Remote sessions + recording** Attendees will be able to join the plenary sessions remotely. If you register for remote attendance to these sessions, we will send you a link. All other sessions will be in-person only. Most sessions will be recorded, but we are unable to record select interactive sessions. All recordings will be uploaded onto Community Legal Centres NSW's private YouTube account. For access to our private channel, please email [OfficeManager@clcnsw.org.au](mailto:OfficeManager@clcnsw.org.au).

**CPD points** You may be eligible to claim CPD points for some of the sessions in the conference. Community Legal Centres NSW takes no responsibility if the content does not meet CPD requirements. Sessions are not accredited by the NSW Law Society. Community legal centre solicitors should make their own assessment of whether the session meets their CPD requirements and maintain their own records for meeting CPD requirements. Further information about CPD requirements is available on the Law Society NSW website.

**Thank you** Thank you to all the contributions of speakers, network convenors, volunteers, and community legal centre staff who have generously offered their time to make this conference happen. It would not be possible without you!

**COVID safety** Please do not attend the conference in person if you are unwell. Face masks and hand sanitiser will be available.

**Questions** If you have any questions on the day of the conference, please contact CLCNSW staff at [officemanager@clcnsw.org.au](mailto:officemanager@clcnsw.org.au).

# Day One: Tuesday, 5 September 2023

**9:30am – 11:00am**

Auditorium

Includes Welcome to Country

**Plenary session: Just Transitions from a global perspective, with Sharan Burrow**

Sharan Burrow was the former General Secretary of the International Trade Union Confederation 2010 to 2022 and President of the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) from 2000 to 2010. She is an international advocate on human rights and labour standards, sustainable business and corporate responsibility, urgent climate action with just transition, investment in infrastructure and the green economy, investment in the care economy, women, equality and diversity, global migration and employment. Amongst other roles, she is currently a board member of the European Climate Foundation, a co-chair of the IEA Labour Council, a member of the Commission for Universal Health Coverage, Deputy Chair of the B Team, a member of the Commission on Global Climate Governance, a member of the BCTI Global Commission to tackle inequality and a board member of Mission Possible Partnerships.

**11:00am – 11:30am**

Morning tea. Catering by House of Welcome

**11:30am – 1:00pm**

Stream 1: Auditorium

Stream 2: Heritage

Room

Stream 1: Building sustainable organisations (Auditorium)

## **1. Finding solutions to the complex challenges in our work through leadership**

Building a strategic leadership team is essential to the growth and sustainability of a centre. Join a panel discussion of centres at different stages of development of the leadership team for an insightful discussion and practical tips.

- John Hallam, CEO, Western Sydney Community Legal Centre
- Melanie Noden, CEO, Justice Support Centre
- Katherine Boyle, CEO, Welfare Rights Centre

Stream 2: Creating accessible services (Heritage Room)

## **2. Giving people the opportunity to create themselves: Mentoring, supervision and debriefing**

Has supervising in a legal practice just been reviewing advices, files and setting new bring up dates, or have we always had a larger responsibility in a trauma-informed practice? Everyone is welcome to join this workshop to contribute to the discussion about what we do well and what we could do better to support staff who work with clients or staff who work in operations.

- Pip Davis, Principal Solicitor, Women's Legal Service NSW
- Natalie Ross, Principal Solicitor, Welfare Rights Service
- Ken Beilby, Principal Solicitor and Manager Legal Service, Senior's Rights Service and collected colleagues

# Day One: Tuesday, 5 September 2023

**1:00pm – 2:00pm**

## **Lunch and Speed Networking**

Catering by House of Welcome

One of the best things about the CLC sector in NSW is collaboration. It's great to be able to contact a colleague in another centre to get some help, share ideas or debrief. If you are new (or not so new!) come and meet people from other centres for a low-stakes, fast-paced meet-and-greet at our Speed Networking break. Guaranteed not to have to have any awkward conversations and none will last more than two minutes!

**2:00pm – 3:15pm**

Stream 1:

Auditorium

Stream 2:

Heritage Room

Stream 1: Building sustainable organisations  
(Auditorium)

### **3. Creating culturally safe workplaces**

Community Legal Centres NSW's Aboriginal Advisory Group launched 'Our Voices, Our Employment' earlier this year, outlining the values, principles and actions needed to support First Nations employment in centres. Join an in-depth discussion about how centres can continue to focus on developing culturally safe workplaces.

- Bobbi Murray First Nations Cadetship Administrator/Aboriginal Engagement and Development Coordinator CLCNSW

Stream 2: Creating accessible services (Heritage Room)

### **4. Just transitions in community legal practice: climate change, housing and environmental defenders**

- Ellen Tilbury, Senior Solicitor, Public Interest Advocacy Centre
- Tenants' Union of NSW
- Environmental Defenders Office

**3:15pm – 3:30pm**

Afternoon tea

# Day One: Tuesday, 5 September 2023

**3:30pm – 4:45pm**

Stream 1: Auditorium

Stream 2: Heritage

Room

Stream 1: Building sustainable organisations  
(Auditorium)

## **5. Pro bono – Finding an ethical approach to justice response**

It has been 20 or so years of pro bono and a lot has changed with how firms support the frontline and fulfil their professional and commercial obligations.

This will be a frank conversation about the inherent tensions with pro bono responding to civil society. How can pro bono best respond to the realities that impact communities facing unfair structures? This discussion will start with a very brief look at how learning feminist theory, ethics in language, care ethics and decolonisation theories in social work have reinforced a silent practice for two practitioners. Come and challenge two pro bono practitioners who are working towards finding an ethical approach to pro bono!

- Jilly Field, Principal, Gilchrist Connell, Pro bono Partner of the year 2023
- Shakti Srikanth, Gilchrist Connell

Stream 2: Creating accessible services (Heritage Room)

## **6. Things I wish I'd known when working in CLCs (that I learned in government)**

This session will provide an overview of government structure and processes, with hot tips on effective engagement. Alex Davis from the Department of Communities and Justice will share the top ten things she wishes she'd known when she was a CLC lawyer that she's since learned from working in government.

- Alex Davis, Policy Manager, Courts, Access to Justice and Regulatory, Policy, Reform and Legislation Branch, Department of Communities and Justice

**4:45pm – 6:30pm**

## **Drinks and catch-up**

Farewell for Anna Cody

Catering by House of Welcome

# Day Two, Wednesday 6 September 2023

**9:30am – 11:00am**

Auditorium

**Plenary session: Implementation of OPCAT in Australia: How we are performing. Perspectives from the National Preventive Mechanism Coordinator**

Dr Rachelle Bonner is the Director of OPCAT and Detention Monitoring at the Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman, responsible for the Commonwealth National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) who visit places of detention under control of the Commonwealth in accordance with the OPCAT mandate, Coordination of all NPM bodies across Australia, and the Office's statutory reporting obligations under the Migration Act. Rachelle has been a health practitioner and public servant across a number of departments for 20 years and has a PhD in Medicine. Rachelle will talk about what OPCAT is, what an NPM is and does, the status of OPCAT implementation in Australia, future priorities, and how community legal centre lawyers can support this important human rights mechanism.

**11:00am – 11:30am**

Morning tea. Catering by House of Welcome

**11:30am – 1:00pm**

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Stream 1: Building sustainable organisations (Auditorium)

## **7. Are walk-ins your clients? Identifying and addressing legal need**

Remember the days when you were lost in Australian Bureau of Statistics maps and data trying to work out unmet legal need for a funding submission? Do you reach the people that need your help the most or are you relying on walk-ins? Join NCOSS and the Law and Justice Foundation of NSW who have developed tools to look at unmet legal need. Make your life easier in mapping unmet legal need by using interactive maps and data that is available at the touch of a button.

- Ben McAlpine, Director, Policy and Advocacy, NCOSS
- Delphine Bellerose, Principal Researcher, Law and Justice Foundation of NSW

Stream 2: Creating accessible services (Heritage Room)

## **8. The use of Artificial Intelligence in the practice of community law**

Opportunity or threat, AI is with us. Let's talk about the risks and the opportunities for community legal centres to automate systems and provide information to allow us to spend time clients.

- Zemya Kuliukas, Associate, Wotton + Kearney

# Day Two, Wednesday 6 September 2023

**1:00pm – 2:00pm**

## Lunch and ‘Stitch ‘n’ Bitch’

Catering by House of Welcome

For a change of pace, bring your work and your lunch and let’s create! For all knitters, crocheters and sewers, and those would like to be, this is multitasking at its finest. It’s gathering of minds to talk about progressive social and political change. Stitch and Bitch was the name of knitting groups that met regularly as far back as the 1940s. It continues the humble yet integral tradition of women gathering to create and socialise outside the watchful eye of the patriarchy. More recently, the Stitch ‘n’ Bitch movement has been considered a means of reclaiming domestic work in feminist circles and is an expression of grassroots community building and resistance to major political, social and technological change in Western societies.

**2:00pm – 3:15pm**

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## 9. Rethinking our purpose: The Legal Aid NSW Civil Blueprint

The Civil Law Division of Legal Aid NSW has released a blueprint to shape its future direction and priorities. Why have a blueprint? What is it? And how will it shift our focus?

- Meredith Osborne, Director, Civil Law, Legal Aid NSW
- Rebekah Doran, Senior Solicitor and Civil Blueprint Project Manager, Civil Law, Legal Aid NSW

Stream 2: Creating accessible services (Heritage Room)

## 10. Using Behavioural Insights to bust Sludge and support our clients

Sludge is the stuff that makes information hard to find or understand, lengthy forms and processes, and design that leads to feelings of anxiety and is not inclusive. Start your sludge journey here to make improvements in the way you communicate.

- Stephen Chan, Assistant Behavioural Advisor, Behavioural Insights Unit
- Katrina Wong, Project Manager, Behavioural Insights Unit

**3:15pm – 3:30pm**

Afternoon tea

# Day Two, Wednesday 6 September 2023

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## **11. Being a decent human in the workplace: Respect@Work**

Respect@Work creates safe, inclusive and respectful workplaces that prevent and address workplace sexual and sex-based harassment. They will provide an overview of the Respect@Work legislative changes including the positive duty on employers to take proactive and meaningful action, and what this can look like. This session will also cover what we can do as CLC workers to support bystanders and staff who face sexual or sex-based harassment in their work. Plus, there'll be a quiz!

- Fiona Duane, Senior Solicitor, Kingsford Legal Centre
- Laura Cottam, Solicitor, Kingsford Legal Centre
- Ruby Catsanos, Solicitor, Women's Legal Service NSW

Stream 2: Creating accessible services (Heritage Room)

## **12. Web-Ability: Developing inclusive design**

Financial Rights spent 12 months redeveloping its web resources and has now launched a new website which strives to reach best practice web accessibility standards. Join us to learn how we have tried to incorporate plain language content, machine-readable hyperlinks, and user-friendly accessibility tools, aiming to create a digital space that welcomes everyone. Come hear some tips about what to consider to make your organisation's website more inclusive.

- Julia Davis, Senior Policy and Communications Officer, Financial Rights Legal Service
- Annabel McConnachie, CLE Officer, Financial Rights Legal Service

**4:45pm**

Close