

# Media Release

**The Hon Gabrielle Williams MP**  
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs  
Minister for Prevention of Family Violence  
Minister for Women



Saturday, 26 June 2021

## **BOOSTING PUBLIC ART OF INSPIRATIONAL WOMEN BY WOMEN**

Statues and other public art immortalising the significant contributions of great women today and throughout history will be boosted in Victoria, in a major step towards addressing a damaging long-standing underrepresentation.

The Victorian Government has created a landmark \$1 million fund to improve the public recognition of women leaders and ensure greater opportunities for female artists who are also significantly underrepresented when it comes to major public commissions.

In politics, activism, literature, civil life, science, medicine and on the sporting field – great women have played a critical role in the economic, social and cultural development of Victoria, as well as inspiring future generations of leaders. But of the 580 statues in Victoria, only nine - or 1.5 percent - are of real women.

The program will also assist in addressing gender inequality in the arts, recognising that women artists have low representation in art media, commercial galleries and state museums compared to men.

Women artists will be prioritised by the program when creating the statues to assist in addressing gender inequality in the visual arts.

Administered by the Office for Women within the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, the Victorian Women's Public Art program will open in the second half of 2021.

The Fund builds on the Government's investment of \$300,000 through the *Victorian Budget 2021/22* to design and erect a statue of an iconic netball player at John Cain Arena.

The Victorian Honour Roll of Women was established in 2001 to celebrate Victoria's centenary and recognise women demonstrating remarkable leadership and excellence in their field of expertise, interest, or endeavour, or through their commitment to the community.

Since 2001, 726 women have been inducted to the Honour Roll. They each represent the courage and determination of women across Victoria using their unique skills, experiences and insights to forge a brighter path for all women.

### **Quotes attributable to Minister for Women Gabrielle Williams**

*"You need to see it to be it and for far too long we've failed to publicly recognise our great women at the same rate that we recognise our great men – it's not good enough, it sends a damaging message and it has to change."*

*"Equal recognition for great women in public spaces is long overdue. This project will acknowledge remarkable women for their achievements in a range of fields, including arts, science and sport to inspire future generations."*

*"While celebrating the achievements of women we are also paving the way to recognise more women artists in Victoria."*

**Media contact:** Hannah Porter 0418 377 715 | [hannah.porter@minstaff.vic.gov.au](mailto:hannah.porter@minstaff.vic.gov.au)