

Media Release

The Hon Shaun Leane MLC
Minister for Local Government
Minister for Suburban Development
Minister for Veterans



Friday, 29 April 2022

SUPPORTING WOMEN TO LEAD THEIR LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Women aspiring to become a local councillor are being encouraged to apply for a new program as the Andrews Labor Government continues the push for gender equity in the local government sector.

Minister for Government Shaun Leane today announced applications will soon open for the Women Leading Locally program.

The program will help develop leadership skills, provide participants with ongoing mentoring and equip them with the knowledge and skills needed to run a successful local government campaign.

The program encourages applications from women from the 30 municipalities where women were most under-represented at the 2020 local government elections, including Colac Otway, Moira, Pyrenees, Baw Baw, Bass Coast, Glen Eira and Hume. Women who are Aboriginal, live with disability or identify as LGBTQI+ are encouraged to apply.

To kickstart the program, there will be a series of online and in-person seminars highlighting the valuable work of women leaders across Victoria.

Participants will also learn about the *Women Leading Locally Fellowship* – which is fully funded by the Government and will support 120 women over the next two years to develop the connections and tools they need to campaign as candidates in the next council elections in 2024.

The Labor Government has set a target of 50 per cent women councillors by 2025 and this program was guided by the Gender Equality Advisory Committee, established in 2021 to advise the Government on how to deliver on this target.

At the last council elections in 2020, Victorians set a national record in electing 272 women, representing 43.8 per cent of councillors.

Applications for the program open on 12 May. To find out more go to localgovernment.vic.gov.au.

Quote attributable to Minister for Local Government Shaun Leane

“Having more women in local government makes councils more representative and able to make better decisions for their communities.”

Quote attributable to Minister for Women Gabrielle Williams

“It is vital we increase the number of women in local government, particularly from underrepresented groups – so that our council representatives reflect the diversity of the community they serve.”

Quote attributable to Member for Northcote and GEAC co-chair Kat Theophanous

“Women from a diverse range of backgrounds and experiences are already contributing to their communities. This program will tap into this talent and make a real impact towards gender equality in the local government sector.”

Quotes attributable to Member for Wendouree and GEAC co-chair Juliana Addison

“Through this program, women will be breaking the bias and achieving goals for gender equality.”

“I am pleased that the program has a strong focus on regional women as well as encouraging women who are Aboriginal, LGBTQI+ and those with a disability to apply.”

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