

Media Release

The Hon Natalie Hutchins MP
Minister for Jobs and Industry
Minister for Treaty and First Peoples
Minister for Women



Friday, 16 February 2024

WOMEN BEHIND THE WHEEL DRIVING GREATER GENDER EQUALITY

Women from migrant and refugee backgrounds are learning how to drive with lessons in their own language thanks to a program supported by the Allan Labor Government.

Minister for Women Natalie Hutchins today met participants of Carringbush Adult Education's Women Behind the Wheel program, which received funding through the *Investing in Women Grassroots Grant Program*.

Women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds face a unique set of barriers to getting a driver's licence, including the specific English vocabulary required to sit a driving test and a lack of support for mature-aged learners.

The popular six-week course runs at the Collingwood Neighbourhood Justice Centre where participants receive language, literacy and numeracy sessions supported by interpreters.

They are also provided with vouchers for five funded driving lessons with culturally appropriate instructors.

Participants also receive individual education sessions from Victoria Police, Victoria Legal Aid, and the Neighbourhood Justice Centre Financial Counselling Team which aim to build greater confidence and leadership. Women also can access a child-minding service.

The Labor Government announced \$400,000 last year to support community organisations that provide activities to advance gender equality, including this important program.

Forty-four community organisations around the state received grants as part of the *Investing in Women Grassroots Grant Program*. For the full list visit vic.gov.au/investing-women-grassroots-grant-program.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Women Natalie Hutchins

"This program supports women from diverse backgrounds to gain their driver's licence which will open doors and connect them to more jobs, study and social opportunities."

"We're making in-roads towards a better future for all women, and recognise grassroots programs have a vital role to play in leading communities towards a more equal Victoria."

Quotes attributable to Minister for Multicultural Affairs Ingrid Stitt

"Getting your licence is taken for granted by most of us, but for many women from diverse cultural backgrounds, a licence is gold - by making it easier for these women, it opens up so many opportunities for work, study and social connections."

"The Investing in Women Grassroots Grant program is driving gender equality across cultures, across the state."