

Media Release

The Hon Nick Staikos MP
Minister for Consumer Affairs
Minister for Local Government



Friday, 29 August 2025

NEW FUNDING TO SUPPORT WOMEN IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Allan Labor Government is supporting more women in local government through important mentoring programs and a new award recognising vital contributions made by women councillors.

Minister for Local Government Nick Staikos today announced new funding for the *Australian Local Government Women's Association Victoria* to deliver programs that will help women councillors grow the professional skills and networks they need to thrive in the local government sector.

The funding is part of the Labor Government's commitment to achieving gender parity across Victorian councillor and mayoral positions.

A \$20,000 contribution will make possible a mentoring program connecting 20 women councillors with experienced mentors offering career guidance and support. Applicants who sit as the only woman on council in several municipalities across Victoria will be prioritised for inclusion in the program.

The Minister also announced the establishment of the *Mary Rogers Achievement Award*, to celebrate women councillors working to advance gender equality in the local government sector. The award is named after Victoria's first woman councillor, Mary Rogers, who was elected to Richmond council in 1920.

Past initiatives to increase the proportion of women candidates in the 2020 and 2024 council elections, such as the *Women Leading Locally* program, have driven real progress on female participation in local government.

Following the October 2024 elections, women comprised 43 per cent of councillors and 45 per cent of Victoria's mayors.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Local Government Nick Staikos

"We know the obstacles that stand in the way of women in the local government sector are very real – this funding will support and encourage more women to stand for council."

"We are very close to our goal of gender parity in Victoria's councils – our goal is to reach 50 per cent of councillor and mayoral positions held by women by 2028, and these important initiatives will go a long way towards achieving that goal."

"It is fantastic to be partnering with the Australian Local Government Women's Association Victoria to help empower women and make clearer their pathways to leadership."