

Media Release

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



Wednesday, 1 October 2025

INAUGURAL WOMEN IN LOCAL GOV AWARD NOMINATIONS OPEN

The Allan Labor Government is supporting women in local government, with nominations opening today for a new award that will recognise their vital contributions to the local government sector in Victoria.

Minister for Local Government Nick Staikos said the inaugural Mary Rogers Award would celebrate women in leadership and support efforts to advance gender equality in the local government sector.

The award is part of \$20,000 in government funding for the Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA) and its work to acknowledge women councillors, raise the profile of women in the sector and highlight the importance of gender equality in local decision making.

The achievement award, announced in August, is named after Victoria's first woman councillor, Mary Rogers, who was elected to Richmond council in 1920.

Nominations are open for three award categories:

- Mary Rogers Award – Awarded to a current woman councillor for outstanding contributions as a civic leader in Victoria.
- Emerging Woman Leader Award – Awarded to a woman councillor who is demonstrating outstanding leadership in their first term.
- Gender Equality Council Champion Award – Awarded to a council in recognition of their work in supporting women's participation in local government.

The VLGA will manage the awards process from nominations through to the award ceremony, which will be held at Queen's Hall at Parliament House later this year.

In addition, the association will also conduct a series of roundtables on gender equality in the sector to help to lift women's representation and support diversity. The Labor Government has also provided \$20,000 to ALGWA for a mentorship program to continue their support for female councillors

Nominations for the Mary Rogers Awards close at 5pm, Friday 24 October and can be made at <https://www.vlga.org.au/governance-leadership/local-government/mary-rogers-awards>

Quotes attributable to Minister for Local Government Nick Staikos

"Mary Rogers was a trailblazer for women councillors in Victoria, and this award named in her honour is fitting recognition for outstanding women councillors today."

"We are very close to our goal of gender parity in Victorian councils, and the Mary Rogers Awards will help to inspire even more women to stand for local government in the next round of council elections."

Quote attributable to Victorian Local Governance Association CEO Kathryn Arndt

"Our vision is to see 50 per cent of women elected as councillors and mayors by the next local government election in 2028. We know that diversity in the council chamber inevitably leads to strengthened and more informed decision making and good governance and contributes to the prevention of fraud and corruption in local government."

Media contact: Marcus Tainsh 0427 713 891 | marcus.tainsh@minstaff.vic.gov.au