

# Media Release

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



Thursday, 27 November 2025

## INAUGURAL MARY ROGERS AWARDS RECIPIENTS RECOGNISED

The Allan Labor Government is celebrating the remarkable achievements of women in local government today at the inaugural *Mary Rogers Awards* ceremony, shining a spotlight on their contributions to the sector in Victoria.

Minister for Local Government Nick Staikos today joined award nominees in Queens Hall at Parliament House to celebrate women in leadership, advance gender equality in local government and congratulate recipients of the *Mary Rogers Awards*, are named after Victoria's first woman councillor, Mary Rogers.

Kylie Spears from Maroondah City Council received the Mary Rogers Award for outstanding contributions as a civic leader, having demonstrated a commitment to equality and building upon the legacy of Mary Rogers by strengthening community wellbeing and sustainability, as well as mentoring emerging women leaders.

Brimbank City Council's first term councillor Katharine Nikolic received the Emerging Women Leader Award for demonstrating exceptional leadership, for her work empowering young people to shape local government decision making through youth led projects.

Monash City Council received the Gender Equality Council Champion Award in recognition of its support for women's participation in local government and longstanding commitment to achieving gender equality through initiatives such as its Gender Equity Advisory Committee.

The *Mary Rogers Awards* were launched earlier this year and form part of a \$20,000 Labor Government funding package for the Victorian Local Governance Association, to support their work acknowledging and raising the profile of women in the sector and highlighting the importance of gender equality in local decision making.

The funding package will also support the Victorian Local Governance Association to conduct a series of roundtables on gender equality in the sector to help to lift women's representation and support diversity and achieve the goal of women making up half of all elected councillors and mayors by 2028.

The Labor Government invested \$1.8 million over four years in 2021 in the Women Leading Locally Program, to inspire women to become local community representatives. In August, the government provided \$20,000 for the Australian Local Government Women's Association Victoria's mentoring program for new women councillors.

For more information on the Mary Rogers Awards, visit [vlga.org.au/governance-leadership/local-government/mary-rogers-awards](https://vlga.org.au/governance-leadership/local-government/mary-rogers-awards)

### Quote attributable to Minister for Local Government Nick Staikos

*"The Mary Rogers Awards gives us an opportunity to celebrate the remarkable women in local government and their contributions to strengthening communities and inspiring future generations – I congratulate the recipients and nominees for their commitment to leading with purpose and driving gender equality in the sector."*

### Quote attributable to Minister for Women Natalie Hutchins

*"More than a century ago, Mary Rogers blazed a trail for Victorian women in local government, and this award named in her honour is fitting recognition for outstanding women councillors today."*

**Media contact:** Marcus Tainsh | 0427 713 891 | [marcus.tainsh@minstaff.vic.gov.au](mailto:marcus.tainsh@minstaff.vic.gov.au)

**Quote attributable to Victorian Local Governance Association CEO Kathryn Arndt**

*“The Mary Rogers Awards put a spotlight on the very important contribution women make to the local government sector and the importance of gender parity.”*