

About Snow Foundation

Snow Foundation is a family philanthropic foundation deeply committed to place, country and community. Our purpose is to create lasting social change by building strong communities and forging fair systems.

We focus on five interconnecting themes – Gender, First Nations, Youth, LGBTIQ+, Community – underpinned by Ecosystem, investing in and working alongside leaders and initiatives that advance equity and strong leadership in Australia.

With trust and collaboration at the core, we take considered risks and embrace innovation — backing bold ideas, entrepreneurial solutions, and community-led approaches that create long-term, systemic change.

Established in 1991 by brothers [REDACTED] since 2006, we have grown from Canberra roots into a trusted philanthropic leader with national reach.

Our Gender Focus

Within our Gender theme we are committed to advancing gender equality in Australia, with a strategic focus on improving women's safety. Our work is grounded in the understanding that gender-based violence is driven by systemic inequality, harmful gender norms, and structural conditions that require long-term, coordinated responses. Across our portfolio, we support efforts that address these drivers and contribute to safer, more equitable systems for women and children.

Our gender strategy is centred on prevention. We prioritise investment in approaches that work upstream: shifting harmful attitudes and behaviours, strengthening early intervention (particularly with children and young people), and addressing the social and economic conditions that enable violence. This includes a strong and growing focus on engaging men and boys through positive masculinities, recognising that meaningful prevention requires transforming the norms and expectations that underpin violence.

We also recognise women's economic empowerment as foundational to safety and long-term wellbeing. Strengthening women's financial security, access to opportunity, and leadership is critical to reducing vulnerability, enabling choice, and supporting recovery from violence

Our approach combines national and place-based work. Nationally, we support prevention, advocacy, and narrative change initiatives that build evidence, influence policy, and shift public understanding of gender equality. In Canberra, Sydney and the NSW South Coast, we complement this with place-based investment that responds to community needs and strengthens local systems. Across both, we aim to play a catalytic role — backing innovation, supporting collaboration, and helping translate evidence into practice and systems reform.

Through these partnerships, we see firsthand the expertise held by organisations working directly with victim-survivors, families, communities and systems. The endorsements below draw on insights shared by partners contributing to this consultation and reflect areas where we believe the Second Action Plan can build on and strengthen existing efforts.

A note on this submission

We reached out to our partners working on domestic and family violence to hear what they wanted to see reflected in the Second Action Plan, in hopes of amplifying their work, ambitions, evidence and solutions. Not all of them will have the capacity to make their own submission, but that doesn't make their work any less valuable. Each addresses a specific part of the complex ecosystem of issues covered by the National Plan, and their expertise and insights are essential to its success.

The submission is in two parts. The first sets out the work, evidence and recommendations our partners shared with us, alongside a more extensive list of the organisations we support. The second sets out our own view, drawn from what we fund, what we see across the portfolio and what our partners tell us.

Several of our team attended the Women Deliver conference in Naarm/Melbourne this year, and much of what we heard there is reinforced the second part of this submission. There is not enough research on the causes of violence and on the people who use it. There is more to do with men and boys. And the way we talk about this issue needs to change if we want more people to see themselves in it.

Our partners

Our work is delivered with and through a wide range of 'gender' partners.

Women's Safety
4 Voices; Beryl; Canberra Rape Crisis; Cappyble; Consent Labs; Digital Safeguard Centre (formerly Nansen Digital Forensics); Doris; DV Safe Phone; Fair Agenda; Karinya House for Mothers and babies; Left Write Hook; ReLove; Toora Women; The Continuum Project; the University of Technology Sydney's national research on intimate partner relationships; Transforming Justice Australia; Violet Co.; and YWCA Canberra
Positive Masculinities
Dadfit; Everyman; No To Violence; Top Blokes
Economic Empowerment
Economic Justice Australia; The Warrior Woman; Humans of Purpose; and Good Shepherd (new)

Brokerage Funds

Alongside our gender portfolio funding, we provide brokerage funds directly to victim-survivors, through partner organisations, refuges, and directly to individual women. We think this is worth highlighting these funds as they go straight to the people who need them most, and the amounts involved are substantial, particularly when considered alongside other funders doing similar work.

Since FY22, we have provided \$225,000 in brokerage funding across four partner organisations: Beryl, YWCA Canberra, Doris and Toora.

In FY26, we provided \$266,000 in individual funds in the Canberra region. Of this, 13 women were supported for expenses relating to domestic and family violence, at around \$2,000 each.

These investments highlight an example of the contribution philanthropy is making alongside government to support victim-survivors. Capturing these contributions would provide a more complete understanding of the resources currently invested in crisis response and recovery.

What we're hearing from partners

Priority Area 1: Victim-survivors

Recovery and healing must be treated as core infrastructure

Through our partnership with Left Write Hook, we have been reminded that recovery and healing are not secondary to crisis response but are central to a person's long-term wellbeing. Left Write Hook's survivor-led model highlights a gap in the current system for adults living with the ongoing impacts of child sexual abuse and gender-based violence. Their work demonstrates the importance of trauma-informed, community-based recovery pathways that help survivors reconnect with agency, belonging, connection and hope. They also call for greater recognition of survivor-led organisations and lived experience leadership as essential components of Australia's response to violence. These perspectives reinforce the need for the Second Action Plan to consider recovery and healing as core infrastructure rather than an optional stage after crisis intervention.

Safe communication is increasingly essential to safety

DV Safe Phone has highlighted a growing challenge facing victim-survivors: the increasing use of technology as a tool of coercive control. Their submission argues that safe and independent communication should be recognised as essential safety infrastructure, noting that without a safe phone, victim-survivors can struggle to access police, specialist services, healthcare, housing, legal support, income assistance and education. Their work highlights the growing prevalence of technology-facilitated abuse and points to the need for stronger technology safety planning, workforce capability and practical supports that help people access services safely and earlier.

Survivor expertise and community leadership should inform reform

Across submissions, several partners highlighted the value of lived experience expertise and community-led responses. Humans of Purpose's lived experience approach to helping women escaping violence to re-enter the workforce, Left Write Hook's survivor-led recovery model, Fair Agenda's advocacy and engagement with survivors, and Women's Health Matters' Victim Survivor Voices work all point to the importance of ensuring people with lived experience help shape policy, system design and service responses. These organisations demonstrate that meaningful reform is strengthened when those most affected by violence are actively involved in designing solutions.

Recognise pregnancy and early parenting as a period of specific violence risk

Karinya House is a service in the Canberra region providing 24/7 supported accommodation and case management specifically for women who are pregnant or parenting. Their work sheds light on how pregnancy significantly increases a woman's risk of experiencing domestic and family violence, that severity escalates when violence is already present, and that this risk remains high through early parenting, which is also the leading cause of homelessness for single mothers. They point to the need for the Second Action Plan to name pregnancy and early parenting as a distinct period of risk, and to establish a clear, joined-up response that addresses domestic and family violence alongside the housing, psychosocial and economic support women and children need to stay safe.

Priority Area 2: Prevention and early intervention

Early intervention is an underinvested layer of prevention

Through its work connecting with women before crisis point, 4 Voices has identified a gap between Australia's crisis response system and the women who need support earlier. Their work reveals that many women experiencing escalating hardship, isolation or coercive control do not yet meet the threshold for formal services, and points to the need for trusted, relationship-based connection as its own layer of prevention infrastructure.

Workplaces are an underutilised prevention setting

Through its work with victim-survivors and employers, Cappyble has identified workplaces as one of Australia's most underutilised opportunities for prevention and early intervention. Their submission challenges the view that workplaces are only places of response, arguing that they should also be recognised as settings where violence can be prevented, identified and addressed earlier. Cappyble's work highlights the impact of stigma, fear of career consequences and lack of confidence in workplace systems, and points to the need for stronger workplace leadership, accountability and capability to support people experiencing violence.

Priority Area 4: People who use violence

People who use violence need earlier, more consistent support

Through our partnership with No to Violence, Australia's largest peak body working with men who use family violence, we have seen that most current investment remains weighted towards responding after violence has occurred, rather than intervening earlier. No to Violence's research highlights the need to move beyond fragmented responses towards an integrated ecosystem of evidence-informed interventions that engages men earlier, strengthens accountability, improves safety for victim-survivors and families, and recognises that behaviour change is often a long-term process. We support No to Violence's call for a significant expansion of these responses, alongside stronger national leadership to build a more consistent and connected system that centres the safety and wellbeing of women, children and families, while ensuring people using violence receive coordinated, evidence-informed support.

Priority Area 5: System integration and workforce

Sexual violence requires sustained and distinct attention

Through our support of Fair Agenda, we have seen the importance of maintaining a distinct focus on sexual violence within broader efforts to address violence against women and children. Fair Agenda's submission highlights the need for continued investment in specialist services, improved access to forensic medical services, independent legal representation for victim-survivors, and reforms that strengthen access to justice. They also raise concerns that sexual violence risks being overshadowed within broader domestic and family violence conversations despite requiring dedicated responses, expertise and investment.

Working closely with The Violet Co, we have seen the importance of improving both access to justice and justice system capability. The Violet Co supports victim-survivors who would otherwise be unable to afford legal representation to pursue justice, while also providing specialist training for

lawyers and judicial officers to strengthen trauma-informed responses to sexual violence. Investment in both specialist legal support and workforce capability is critical to ensuring victim-survivors can access safe, fair and effective pathways to justice.

With You We Can, a lived-experience led national advocacy organisation, works to demystify the legal system for victims of sexual violence. They argue that this area of violence is the least advanced in terms of progress. They suggest that establishing a sexual violence stream within the second action plan, with actions, funding and workforce measures is imperative to reducing the number of victims. In addition, they encourage the funding of a national legal literacy campaign in the education system as a prevention/early-intervention measure.

Responses to abuse need to keep pace with the technology that enables it

The Digital Safeguard Centre, formerly Nansen Digital Forensic Services, specialises in technology-facilitated abuse. They assess compromised devices and accounts, document findings for safety planning and legal processes, and advise on remediation for victim-survivors, alongside building trauma-informed tools for practitioners and a research partnership with the University of Canberra.

They recommend the Second Action Plan recognise technology-facilitated abuse as a distinct category. As they set out, this would not diminish other forms of abuse or create a separate service system. It would establish nationally consistent definitions, embed digital capability as a core expectation of the workforce, improve accountability, and keep Australia's framework moving alongside the technologies that increasingly shape how this violence is carried out.

System responses remain fragmented

A recurring theme across partner feedback is that victim-survivors continue to navigate fragmented systems. Whether through DV Safe Phone's focus on communication barriers, Fair Agenda's work on justice system access, Left Write Hook's observations of survivors moving between recovery, mental health, justice and community systems, or Economic Justice Australia's research on the barriers women outside major cities face in accessing social security, partners consistently highlight the need for more coordinated responses. Collectively, these insights point to the importance of designing systems around the needs of victim-survivors rather than requiring victim-survivors to navigate complex systems themselves.

Our Recommendations

1. **Invest in the evidence needed to understand what prevents violence and what works.** Australia needs better evidence not only about the drivers and prevalence of violence against women and children, but about how violence begins, escalates and ends, the protective factors that reduce risk, and which interventions produce sustained change over time. We support the proposed *Intimate Relationships in Australia (IRINA)* longitudinal study, led by Dr Anne Summers, which would follow people over time to build a much deeper understanding of pathways into and out of intimate partner violence and strengthen prevention and early intervention. Alongside this longer-term research, the next phase of the National Plan should continue investing in rigorous evaluation that is published, alongside delivery, so we learn what works, for whom and under what conditions as interventions are implemented—not only after they have concluded.

2. [Australia needs stronger implementation learning](#). Alongside evaluating outcomes, there is an opportunity to better understand how successful initiatives are implemented across different communities and settings. Creating mechanisms to synthesise and share practical implementation learning between governments, researchers, philanthropy and community organisations would accelerate adoption of effective approaches and reduce duplication across the sector.
3. [Language matters in bringing people into this work](#). As a partner of Plan International Australia's Gender Compass research, we have seen that while most Australians support a fairer society in principle, a smaller group feel unsure of their place in the conversation or resistant to it and respond better to respectful engagement than to messaging that assumes they are already on side. We have held roundtables exploring how to reach people at the margins of this conversation, including men who may not yet see its relevance to their own lives. Our experience is that people need to feel closer to this cause before they will act on it. This is part of why we support work on positive masculinities, which gives men and boys a way in grounded in their own experience rather than exclusion. We would encourage the Second Action Plan to treat communication and framing as central to long term public engagement with the issues at hand, not a secondary consideration to program delivery.
4. [Film has a particular role here](#), which is why we back it. *Silenced* takes on the post-#MeToo backlash against survivors. *Life Could Be A Dream* does the same for coercive control. *Unbreakable: The Jelena Dokic Story* shows how sustained abuse can continue in full view while the people and institutions around a child look away. *The Hunting Ground* examines sexual violence on university campuses and how institutions respond when reports are made. *Big Bad Love* follows young women who did not recognise their own relationships as abusive at the time and asks what friends and bystanders can do when they suspect something is wrong. Each reaches people who would not pick up a report or sit through a campaign, and each gives audiences a way into the subject through someone else's story before they can name it in their own.
5. [Engaging men and boys must become a central pillar of prevention](#). Preventing violence requires more than responding to harmful behaviours once they occur. It requires investing in positive models of masculinity, healthy relationships, emotional wellbeing and respectful behaviours throughout childhood and adulthood. This includes investing in fathers and fatherhood, recognising that pregnancy, early childhood and key family transitions provide important opportunities to engage men before harmful behaviours become entrenched. **This work should be firmly grounded in gender equality and women's safety, recognising that engaging men and boys is not an end, but a means of improving outcomes for women, children, families and communities.** It should complement accountability approaches and be recognised as an essential part of Australia's prevention infrastructure.
6. [Women's economic security should be recognised as a core violence prevention strategy](#). [Financial independence increases choice, reduces vulnerability and supports women to leave unsafe relationships safely](#). Economic Justice Australia's research on the barriers regional and remote women face accessing social security shows how the system itself can compound this insecurity. Re-Love, which furnishes homes for women and children leaving violence, and

Humans of Purpose, which reskills women recovering from violence into well-paid careers, all show what practical support for long-term financial independence can look like. Investment in women's economic participation, financial capability and long-term security should be considered core components of the National Plan rather than separate economic policy.

7. **Evidence-informed justice responses need continued investment.** We support partners exploring restorative justice approaches, led by victim-survivors and delivered safely alongside strong safeguards. Transforming Justice Australia provides community-based, trauma-informed restorative practices for people harmed by sexual violence, guided by survivors at every step. *Violet Co*, a survivor-led legal practice, combines direct representation for victim-survivors with advocacy for justice system reform. *The Continuum Project* (Olive Tree Project) has developed and is piloting a restorative justice model, in partnership with RMIT, to improve how schools respond to harmful sexual behaviour between students. Initial research by The Continuum Project found many schools remain stretched and poorly equipped to respond to sexually harmful behaviours, particularly since most existing policies focus on adults as perpetrators rather than peer-to-peer harm.
8. **Invest earlier in child-centred, whole-of-family support.** Through our partnership with No to Violence, we have seen the value of the emerging Pathways research, exploring earlier and more effective responses for families experiencing domestic and family violence (being launched 31 August 2026). This work is reinforcing a message we are also hearing consistently across our partner network: there is a need for earlier, coordinated support for families before violence escalates or becomes entrenched. Where it is safe and appropriate, whole-of-family approaches can create greater opportunities for safety, accountability and lasting change.

Central to this is ensuring that children are recognised as victim-survivors in their own right. Safe, therapeutic supports for children should be considered a core part of Australia's prevention and early intervention system, not simply an adjunct to services for adults. One strong example of this approach is Jannawi Family Centre, whose established practice demonstrates the value of child-centred, whole-of-family responses that engage parents, support children and strengthen families where it is safe to do so. This is further reinforced through the leadership of Biljana Milosevic, a member of the No to Violence *Pathways* Advisory Group, whose work continues to demonstrate the importance of keeping children's safety, wellbeing and voice at the centre of whole-of-family responses.

The Second Action Plan presents an opportunity to strengthen investment in these approaches, recognising that earlier support for children and families can help interrupt intergenerational cycles of violence while complementing specialist family violence services and accountability responses. Throughout, the safety of women and children must remain the primary consideration.

9. **Philanthropy has an important complementary role alongside government.** Philanthropy is well placed to test emerging ideas, support innovation, convene partners, strengthen evidence and back organisations before they are ready for large-scale government investment. Importantly, there is growing momentum across Australian philanthropy to collaborate more intentionally on women's safety and gender equality. Initiatives such as the Coalition of Funders for Women and

Families, alongside increasing collaboration between philanthropic organisations, demonstrate an opportunity to better align investment, share learning, coordinate evaluation and accelerate promising approaches. Some members of the coalition recently partnered to support Good Shepherd, which simplifies engagement whilst collectively maximising impact. We encourage the Second Action Plan to establish an ongoing mechanism for strategic dialogue between government, philanthropy, researchers and communities so that innovation, evidence and investment can be more effectively aligned.

In closing

The National Plan set a clear ambition to end violence against women and children in one generation, and has made important strides in this pursuit, but the urgency of this work continues to grow. The Second Action Plan is where much of that ambition will be tested, in the detail of what gets funded, measured, and who gets brought along.

What we hear from our partners is not that the direction is wrong. It is that some parts of the system remain thinner than others. Recovery and healing are still treated as what happens after crisis rather than as core infrastructure. Early intervention sits in the gap between prevention and crisis response, where fewer services and less funding reach. Sexual violence risks being absorbed into broader domestic and family violence responses when it needs its own stream. Children are still too often served as an adjunct to their mothers rather than being recognised as victim-survivors themselves. And work with men and boys, both to prevent harm and to hold people who use violence to account, remains smaller than the evidence suggests it should be.

Our experience points to three additional priorities. We need to know much more about what changes behaviour over time, which means investing in evaluation and longitudinal research alongside delivery rather than after it. We need to take communication seriously, because people will not act on this issue until they feel it involves them. And we need better ways to share what is being learned, between governments, researchers, philanthropy and the organisations doing the work.

Philanthropy cannot substitute for government funding and does not seek to. What we can do is test ideas earlier, back organisations before they are ready for scale, and stay with them long enough to learn something useful and help surface emerging needs, evidence and insights from across the sector. We would welcome a standing mechanism for that dialogue under the Second Action Plan, so that learning can flow both ways and philanthropic investment can complement and inform government investment rather than running alongside it.

Finally, we want to acknowledge the extraordinary work happening every day across this sector. Specialist services, community organisations, advocates, researchers and people with lived experience are working alongside women, children and families through incredibly difficult circumstances, while continuing to push for better responses and lasting change. We are continually struck by their expertise, courage and commitment, and much of what we have shared in this submission comes from listening to and learning from them.

We are deeply grateful to our partners for sharing their evidence, experience and recommendations with us. We encourage the Department to continue engaging with them and drawing directly on their expertise, and we are happy to make introductions to any of the organisations named in this submission or provide further detail on any of the areas above.