



## Women in Adult and Vocational Education Newsletter

Issue Number: 4

Year: 2020



**WAVE** is a national network of women involved in VET, adult education and the broad field of work-related education and training. WAVE provides seminars & workshops, research, policy advocacy and advice, as well as networking on an international, national and state basis. We are supported within each state by local representation that in turn contributes collaboratively to national events and governance. Web: [wave.org.au](http://wave.org.au) E: [wave@wave.org.au](mailto:wave@wave.org.au)

### Welcome

Welcome to our December 2020 WAVE Newsletter. We approach the end of the year with more optimism and a sense of freedom as borders and restrictions fall away and Australia once again becomes one.

The WAVE AGM was held on Friday 16 October, and WAVE Executive positions affirmed, with new faces joining our team. Please find attached our *WAVE in 2019/2020* National Report.

In this edition we look back on 2020 at what COVID-19 has changed and forward to what is in store for 2021 in a gender equal COVID recovery.

We are also proud to announce the launch of our new look website, please take some time to look over our refreshed site and familiarise yourself with the work of WAVE: [wave.org.au](http://wave.org.au) and our Socials:



WAVE is a voluntary run organisation, relying on memberships, donations and the volunteer contributions of our members to achieve what we do.

If you are interested in becoming a member, or contributing to our work, locally or at a national level please contact us by email, or visit our website and send us a message [wave.org.au/contact](http://wave.org.au/contact)

To become a member of WAVE contact us via email [wave@wave.org.au](mailto:wave@wave.org.au) and we will send you an invoice. WAVE membership fees for 2020-2021 are - individual \$50, Organisation \$120.

Have you ever thought about giving a bit of your time to working with other women in adult and vocational education? All Executive Members must be financial members. Let us know if you are interested, contact:

Linda Simon (National Convenor) [wave@wave.org.au](mailto:wave@wave.org.au)



## 2020 gender impacts

This year we have seen a gender lens of disaster response, a gender lens on a pandemic response, budgets, workplace and community safety and now economic recovery. In all of this is the thread that weaves and engages with women in adult and vocational education and how these issues impact women's economic and personal security.

Bushfire and COVID-19 responses saw women impacted both in the home, their education and their employment.

In amongst everything this year the McKinsey Global Institutes noted that:

*All is not doom and gloom—there are significant bright spots to celebrate. Maternal mortality is decreasing in most places, and literacy and secondary education enrolments are increasing in many countries. At work, too, most countries are making slow and steady progress in equality.*

To read the full report visit [mckinsey.com](https://www.mckinsey.com) and *Ten things to know about gender equality*.

Women's Health in the North (WHIN) working with Monash University Disaster Resilience Initiative conducted research and developed resources to support environmental justice for all. To read more visit: [whin.org.au/current-work/environmental-justice](https://whin.org.au/current-work/environmental-justice)

The Workplace Gender Equality Agency has been looking at the data and statistics emerging regarding the gendered impact of COVID -19, including the impact on the education sector as teaching went remote and the triple burden on women working, studying, caring at home. To read more visit: [wgea.gov.au/topics/gendered-impact-of-covid-19](https://wgea.gov.au/topics/gendered-impact-of-covid-19)

The National Foundation for Australian Women cast their Gender Lens on the 2020-2021 Budget showing the imbalance in budget investment for women and education. WAVE participated in the analysis around adult education.

To read more visit: [nfaw.org/gender-lens-on-the-budget/gender-lens-on-the-budget-2020-2021](https://nfaw.org/gender-lens-on-the-budget/gender-lens-on-the-budget-2020-2021)

## Meet our 2020-2021 WAVE team

### National Committee

Linda Simon: WAVE National Convenor  
Robyn Woolley: WAVE Secretary  
Annette Bonnici: WAVE Treasurer  
Elaine Butler: WAVE Ambassador  
Debra Parker: WAVE Communications

### Northern Territory Convenor

Raelke Grimmer

### Queensland Convenor

Jane Newton

### Victoria Convenors

Kira Clarke  
Demmi Paris  
Sally Thompson

### Western Australia Convenors

Sue Thompson  
Sarah Leftwich

### New South Wales Convenors

Cecilia Blackwell  
Terri Quinlan  
L'Amour Gina-Whewell

### South Australia Convenors

Jan Edwards  
Jeannie Daniels  
Janette Riggs

### Tasmania Convenor

Rebecca Gray

For more information about your executive team visit: [wave.org.au/leadership](https://wave.org.au/leadership)



## We have been busy!

Jan Edwards (WAVE South Australian Convenor) has been elected to the Management Group of Economic Security for Women (eS4W) and attended the members meeting on 25th November 2020 via videoconference. Debra Parker (WAVE Communications) will also join Jan representing WAVE at eS4W, stepping up to take the place of Linda Simon (WAVE National Convenor). Both WAVE and eS4W joined together to thank Linda for her contribution to the work of eS4W.

To find out more about eS4W visit:  
[security4women.org.au](http://security4women.org.au)

Jan Edwards attended a virtual conference on 3rd December with guest speaker Geoff Adlidge, Director for Advocacy and Communications at Global Partnerships for Education (GPE). Geoff provided an overview of the GPE financing and Raise Your Hand campaign and the Case for Investment to help the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) Education Community of Practice to lobby the Australian Government for GPE replenishment.

For more information on this work visit:  
[acfid.asn.au/about/communities-practice](http://acfid.asn.au/about/communities-practice)

Earlier this year WAVE submitted a research proposal to the National Careers Institute (NCI). We continue to have discussions with NCI and await their decision on the proposed partnership grant submission 'Creating Space' as they work their way through over 600 applications.

To read more about the submission visit:  
[wave.org.au/research-proposal-for-a-grant-from-national-careers-institute](http://wave.org.au/research-proposal-for-a-grant-from-national-careers-institute)

## WA news

WAVE has established a project in WA, with the support of our co-convenors Sue Thompson and Sarah Leftwich, to set up a network for young women with disabilities. We are excited to share that Tayla Taseff has joined the project as our project officer, and below Tayla introduces herself and the project.

*I'm Tayla Taseff, I recently turned 21 years old and I live with Cerebral Palsy and to be honest... my life is great. I am so excited to introduce you to WAVE'S newest project 'Salthouse Sistas' where I was proudly chosen to be the project officer. Salthouse Sistas is a networking platform based online where women with disabilities can connect and network on common grounds. Our main focus is a finding employment for women with a disability. We hope to create future social events in Western Australia.*



If you are able to support the *Salthouse Sistas* project, in memory of Sue Salthouse a past member of WAVE (see below for Sue's story) please contact us by email to [wave@wave.org.au](mailto:wave@wave.org.au)



## OctoberVET 2020

OctoberVET sought to showcase VET research and promote discussion between VET stakeholders about research needs, in 2020 this event moved online, providing a wealth of learning opportunities for VET practitioners and researchers.



If you didn't make it to OctoberVET this year it's not too late you can view the WAVE webinar, click link to open:

[Women learning, women working: how disability and gender shape training and career opportunities](#)

Access Passcode: #OctoberVET2020

### Disability Research Grant

WAVE raised over \$550 for a grant in memory of our colleague Sue Salhouse.

Sue was co-chair of the ACT Disability Expert Panel advising on the National Disability Insurance Scheme, influenced the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and between 2009-2012 was president of Women with Disabilities Australia. As well as being awarded 2020 ACT Senior Citizen of the Year, Sue was the Canberra Citizen of the Year in 2015, and the ACT Senior Woman of the Year in 2014.

The grant will be awarded at the AVETRA conference 2021 to a practitioner/researcher to support research on 'gender and disability'. Our ambition is to establish a yearly disability stream and best paper award at the AVETRA conference to foster emerging and practitioner researchers to undertake VET research on themes of gender and disability.

## Other matters

### AVETRA Conference 2021

**SAVE THE DATE: 19-23 April 2021**

***Recover, rethink and rebuild: All eyes on VET***

In April 2021 VET practitioners and researchers will come together for a multi-day conference with speakers and sessions drawn from researchers, practitioners and policymakers across Australia and internationally. Stay tuned for more news on this virtual event early 2021.

### Fellowship opportunity

The Anne Kantor Fellowship is a unique graduate style program to provide on-the-job training to help equip and encourage new voices in Australia's future policy and democratic debates.

Expressions of interest are currently being sought from interested individuals and organisations who would like to participate in the Australia Institute's Anne Kantor Fellowship program as either an individual participant or program partner.

For more information visit: [annekantorfellowship.org.au](http://annekantorfellowship.org.au)

### Grant Opportunity

The Australian Government, Office for Women announced in late November substantial investment into women's job creation, economic security, workforce participation, leadership and safety for women through the Women's Leadership and Development Program Project Grants closing December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2020; for implementation in 2021.

WAVE looks forward to seeing the results of this investment into women's careers and education and a gender equal post COVID-19 recovery.

To find out more about these grants visit:

[pmc.gov.au/news-centre/office-women/guide-womens-leadership-development-program-project-grants-applicants](http://pmc.gov.au/news-centre/office-women/guide-womens-leadership-development-program-project-grants-applicants)



## WAVE in 2019/20

**As a WAVE member you're part of a national network that advocates on behalf of women and girls in adult and vocational education and training. Your membership lends strength to our advocacy.**

WAVE was involved in a number of national and international activities in 2019/20, partnering with a range of groups, and seeking to ensure that government policy in relation to adult and vocational education during COVID-19, addressed the needs of women and girls.

### Sue Salthouse

WAVE, along with the women's and disabilities networks, has been most saddened by the loss of our long time Executive member, Sue Salthouse. Sue was an amazing activist, with a warm sense of humour, who will be missed by many. We are planning two projects in memory of Sue, with a particular focus on women and disabilities.

The first is in WA, where a 'Young Women with Disability Employment Network WA' will be trialled through a project officer and support of our WA members.

The second is the OctoberVET webinar, as outlined below.

### Forum/Webinar.

WAVE had a forum planned for April this year at the time of the AVETRA conference. It was entitled: *More than just women in hardhats: understanding the wide role of VET for the careers of Australian women.*

We had a great range of speakers lined up: Lizzie Knight, Ann-Marie Bathmaker, Sue Webb, Jane Newton, Karen O'Reilly-Briggs, Deb Parker, Michelle Circelli and Kira Clarke. The forum was to be held at the VET Development Centre, and we also had sponsorship from the Australian Apprenticeships and Traineeships Information Service (AATIS). However like many other events this year, we had to postpone ours due to COVID-19.

We are now in the process of developing a webinar entitled: *Women learning, women working: how disability and gender shape training and careers opportunities.* It is an interactive OctoberVET event to be held on 29 October 1.30 – 3.30 pm (AEDT), with speakers including Lizzie Knight, Jen Cousins, Karen O'Reilly-Briggs, Michelle Circelli and Kira Clarke.

We are charging \$20 is to help raise funds for a grant in memory of our WAVE colleague, Sue Salthouse, who sadly passed away earlier this year. We are launching a grant in her memory that will be awarded at the AVETRA conference 2021 to a practitioner/researcher to support research on 'gender and disability'.

Thanks to Kira Clarke for her work on both of these events.

### WAVE event at NCVET conference

WAVE was planning an event at the proposed NCVET conference in Perth this year. It was also cancelled but we hope to partner with NCVET in future events.

### Research Proposal

WAVE Executive members Jan and Elaine worked on a research proposal for a partnership grant from the National Careers Institute. The objectives of the partnership grants are:

- Improve the quality of, and access to careers information and advice
- Build an evidence-base for best practice career development



- Demonstrate the value of career development
- Increase knowledge and create greater awareness of career paths and career information

Results of the grant are expected in November.

### Lobbying

WAVE members continue to lobby around issues relating to women and girls and adult education. The lobbying involves letter writing, submissions and visits to MPs. Our stated demands include:

- Access to a strong, national public vocational education and training system
- Career advice, counselling & targeted support to undertake accredited training for viable, well-paid and decent jobs
- Technical & trade training in all areas of skill shortages, emergent occupations and industries
- Training provision that is high quality, affordable, inclusive and relevant for the diversity of all Australian women

We also continue to make the point that Australia has signed up to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and therefore all governments in Australia are obliged to meet these commitments to gender, education and decent work.

### Gender Lens on the Budget 2020/21

WAVE was again involved in analysing the impact of the 2019/20 Federal Budget on women and girls in vocational education and training. The full 'Gender Lens on the Budget' report will be on the WAVE website. The report made the following comments on the budget:

*In the current economic circumstances resulting from the COVID 19 pandemic impacting disproportionately on women with the loss of jobs in hospitality, retail, arts and tourism, the government's vocational education and training measures fail to reflect a real understanding of the need for reforms to VET policy and programs and a more targeted approach to funding to increase women's participation in a greater diversity of vocational fields of study. Women's concentration in certain industries has made them exceptionally vulnerable to job losses at this time.*

### Submissions

WAVE contributed to a number of submissions through the year, including through the National Women's Alliances.

We also collaborated with Gender Equity Victoria and the Gender Equity Accredited Training Project from Women's Health Victoria on two submissions. One to the Skills for Victoria Review and another to the Productivity Commission's review of the National Training Agreement.

We made the following recommendations in relation to a new National Agreement on Skills and Workforce Development:

Develop a strategic framework for women in VET with a clear set of priorities and targets with performance accountability mechanisms. We recommend that these align with the Australian Government's gender equity and prevention of violence policies and support the reform required to transform the Australian workforce in a post-COVID-19 environment.

The targets need to be based on a framework of long-term reform of inequality through the Australian VET sector and include:

- Targets for both retention and recruitment of women in male dominated VET courses *and* targets for retention and recruitment of men in female dominated VET courses



- An improved method for assessing skill shortages in the Australian workforce that, takes into account the prevalence of gender stereotypes and norms in Australian workforces
- A national approach to identify the barriers and enablers to women’s participation in VET including in traineeships and apprenticeships, identifying what can be done to address the barriers and replicate enablers across the VET sector. (For instance, funding to support contextualisation of training package qualifications, or skills sets to enable better work opportunities.)
- An evaluation of the outcomes of VET policy from an equity perspective, including use of gender-disaggregated data. Collect, analyse and publish performance and outcome data on women’s participation in VET, that include trends over time that are disaggregated by gender, and what steps have been taken to address shortcomings.

Include a requirement for the Australian VET system to address gender inequality by:

- Reforming VET funding models and policy that impact women’s engagement and completion (retention rates),
- Improve VET funding to ensure funded training providers hold workforce expertise, facilities and services that are appropriate for the provision of gender equitable VET with structures and practices that support gender equality in VET and the VET Sector

Full submissions can be found here: <https://whv.org.au/our-focus/gender-equity>

### International Women’s Day

International Women’s Day (IWD), celebrated on 8 March, commemorates women’s achievements – socially, economically, culturally and politically. This year the theme for International Women’s Day was: *I am Generation Equality: Realizing Women’s Rights*. WAVE encourages involvement of our members.

COVID-19 has raised concerns with WAVE members and many other women’s groups that equal rights have been under attack with all governments having developed a tunnelled focus on economic growth at any cost.

### International matters

WAVE continues to work with ASPBAE and a range of other international groups, including the Women’s Major Group. We comment on position papers and provide information for submissions and meetings, either as part of the Australian Coalition for Education and Development (ACED) or as a separate organisation.

Members of the WAVE Executive provided feedback on the Position Paper to the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of The Fourth World Conference on Women and The Beijing Declaration and Platform For Action (1995). The Joint Position Paper was from Disabled People’s Organisations Australia (DPO Australia) and the National Women’s Alliances.

Members of the WAVE Executive provided technical inputs into the ACFID Education Community of Practice (CoP) to inform submission by NGOs to the Australian Governments Aid Review.

WAVE endorsed a statement from the Women Major Group, which highlighted the need to: Invest in the Care Economy for a Just, Green, Feminist Covid-19 Response and Recovery

We wrote up a position paper for the National Consultation on ASPBAE’s 8<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, and were asked about current concerns, and the effects of COVID-19 in our sector.

We said that contemporary issues included:

1. *The lack of value accorded to education per se & to educators as experts*
  - i. *Education is increasingly viewed primarily as an economic lever.*
2. *Learners are viewed mostly as an homogenous group, in national policy terms.*
  - i. *There are no national policies that focus on gender & social inclusion in VET, gender in compulsory education, & few if any other overarching*



*GEDSI policies in education broadly.*

- ii. This increases as learners age/move through or between education sectors.*
- iii. Negligible value or recognition is accorded to lifelong learning & ALE*
3. *The increasing defunding & privatisation of education & training in all sectors*
  - i. 'Pathways' is a prevalent discourse in education & training, but funding &/or support diminish after a first qualification, especially in VET. This is inexplicable given the rapidly changing needs of society and the economy.*
  - ii. Funding cuts to VET (& TAFE) & Higher education are ongoing, increasing the vulnerability of the public provision of accessible quality affordable education & training for all.*
4. *The increasing influence of (big) industry in the development of national education policy*
  - i. While industry has long been considered a key stakeholder of education policy, this influence is increasing.*
  - ii. National inquiries are increasingly narrow in their focus & TOR, with the expert committees overseeing them dominated by key industry bodies & persons.*
  - iii. Educators are rarely if ever included as key members of such special purpose/designated groups.*
  - iv. Even while Inquiries are underway, rapid 'thought bubble' policy changes that have major implications are made prior to completion of major Inquiries (e.g. Productivity Commission<sup>3</sup>), let alone their findings.*
5. *Education & training funding & governance are shared between the Federal Government & State/Territory Governments.*
  - i. This increases the complexity of policy work & funding regimes.*
6. *It is well recognised that the national VET system in Australia is not fit for purpose*

Apart from the above, we post and share international news, comments and posts related to education and training, work and of course gender issues on our Facebook page. Our Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/womeninadultandvocationaleducation/>) can also be accessed through our website (<http://wave.org.au/wave/>) where information is regularly updated. Thanks to Elaine and Jan for their work on international issues.

### **WAVE representation on economic security 4 women (eS4W)**

WAVE is represented on eS4W by Jan Edwards and Linda Simon, with Elaine Butler as an alternate.

### **WAVE representation on Equality Rights Alliance (ERA)**

WAVE is represented by a number of our members on ERA's various groups, including Elaine Butler, Jen Walsh, Sue Thompson and Linda Simon. Demmi Paris was a member of the ERA Steering committee for part of the year.

### **Partnerships**

WAVE is represented on and/or collaborates with a number of organisations both to ensure our points of view are heard and included at strategic points related to the *Education 2030* Agenda

- WAVE is a member of Asia South Pacific Association for Basic & Adult Education (ASPBAE)<sup>1</sup> – a regional association of more than 200 organisations & individuals that operates from grassroots to government and high-level global echelons, thus linking us into our wider region and globally. Information is shared regularly.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.aspbae.org>



- WAVE is a member of the Women's Major Group (WMG)<sup>2</sup> and of NGO CSW<sup>3</sup>. We share their communications, endorse relevant documents and submissions, and contribute information relating to our interests, thus sharing on a global level.
- As a CSO (civil Society Organisation) we are also a member of the Asia Pacific Regional CSO Engagement Mechanism (AP-RCEM)<sup>4</sup>

*APRCEM is a civil society platform aimed to enable stronger cross constituency coordination and ensure that voices of all sub-regions of Asia Pacific are heard in intergovernmental processes in regional and global level. The platform is initiated, owned and driven by the CSOs, and has been set up under the auspices of UN-ESCAP and seeks to engage with UN agencies and Member States on the Post-2015 as well as other development related issues/processes.*

### Newsletters

WAVE communicates with a large range of members through our Newsletters – three this year, as well as regular posts on social media. Contributions are always welcome.

### WAVE AGM and Executive meeting

The WAVE AGM this year will be held online on 16 October.

**Thanks to WAVE Executive members for their work over the year on behalf of all WAVE members.**

**Public Officer** – Elinor Buckley

**National Secretary** – Robyn Woolley

**National Treasurer** - Annette Bonnici

**WAVE Ambassador** – Elaine Butler

**WAVE Executive member** – Jan Edwards

**State and Territory Convenors**

**ACT** – Sue Salthouse and Marinda Burger

**Queensland** – Jane Newton

**Victoria** – Kira Clarke and Demmi Paris

**Western Australia** – Sue Thompson and Sarah Leftwich

**Northern Territory** – Raelke Grimmer

**NSW** – Cecilia Blackwell and Terri Quinlan

**Tasmania** – Rebecca Gray

### WAVE Resources

WAVE has developed:

- \* a flyer about WAVE, its organisation and its work
- \* a membership card to be handed out at events
- \* a postcard outlining our main aims for these two years.

We send Newsletters to our wider group of members 4-5 times a year. To join WAVE and receive our Newsletters, go to the website [www.wave.org.au/wave/](http://www.wave.org.au/wave/)

### Website

Our website continues to be a great resource and focus of interest. We plan to redevelop the website over the next couple of months. Thanks to Simon.

### Social Media

Thanks to Kira, Elaine and Jan for their work around social media.

**Linda Simon – National Convenor**

**10 October 2020**

<sup>2</sup> For information about the Women's Major Group see: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/majorgroups/women> and <http://www.womenmajorgroup.org>

<sup>3</sup> For information about NGO CSW see: <https://www.ngocsw.org>

<sup>4</sup> See: <http://www.asiapacificrcem.org>