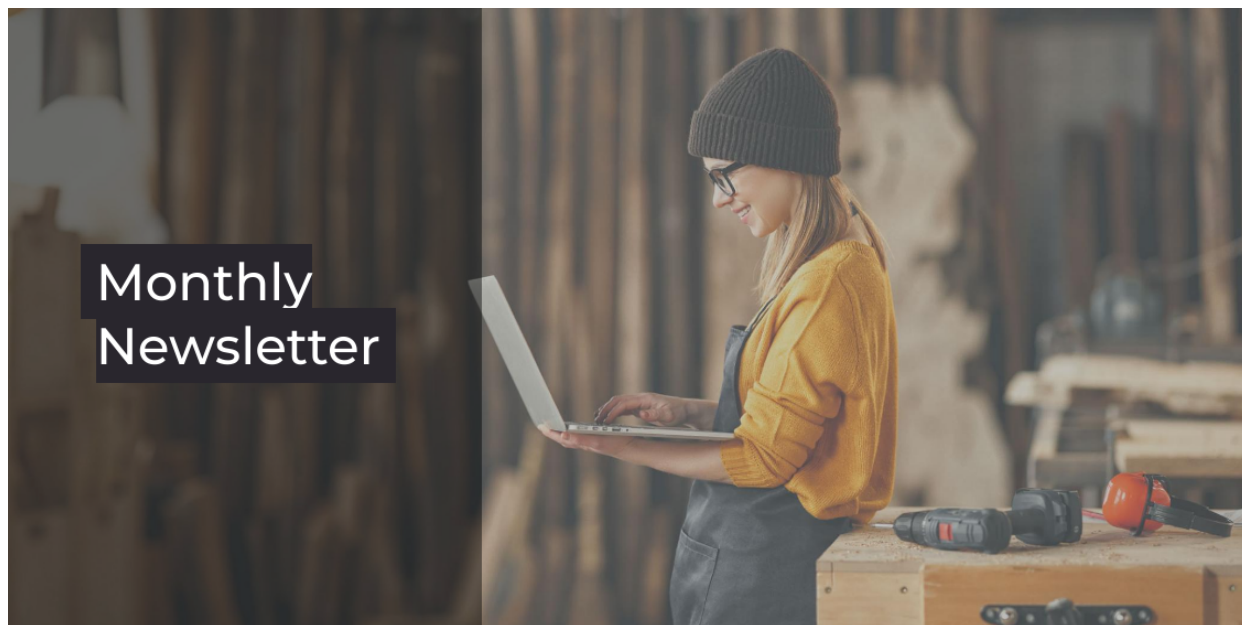


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WOMEN IN ADULT &
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION



Welcome to the first WAVE Newsletter for 2024. In this edition we are having a look back over our achievements in 2023 and looking forward to what the new year promises. With gender equality in education and workplaces continuing to be a hot topic we look forward to being part of some fruitful dialogue and collegiate conversations.

- The Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) will be publishing the gender pay gaps of employers with more than 100 team members in late February. Action will be needed by workplaces to remove pay disparities or face the public response.
- New legislation requirements around Respect@Work and WHS psycho-social hazards have come into effect requiring proactive steps to be taken by employers - respectful workplace culture will be a 'must have' moving forward not a 'nice to have'. Respectful culture plays a big part in career choices for women of all ages - no one wants to go to work and face gender discrimination and abuse.
- The AI revolution took a firm hold in 2023 and the focus is set to get stronger in 2024 - evidence supports that women are making their mark in this field.
- The review of vocational education and Australian Apprenticeships continues and Jobs and Skills Australia continues to shape its work plan.

We look forward to being part of these conversations and how that you will join us as a member contributing to this important work.



About WAVE

WAVE is a national network of women involved in Vocational Education and Training (VET) and adult education. WAVE provides research, policy advice and advocacy to Australian and State/ Territory Governments on gender equity in skills and adult education policy and provides input into VET and adult education internationally. Formed in 1985 WAVE is the first and only national independent, non-government organisation for Australian women and girls in the adult, community and vocational education and training sector/s.

Our mission is to advocate so that Australia's vocational education and training and adult education systems are equitable for all women and girls. Our vision is for a future where women and girls can participate fully in all aspects of work and democratic society, through equitable and transformative vocational and adult education.

[Find out more about WAVE on our website](#)

Reflections on 2023

2023 has been a busy year for the WAVE committee and members!

Over the last 12 months WAVE has remained steadfast in its commitment to enhancing the prominence of women in the workforce and education, focusing on rectifying inequities within the skills and labour market.

[Read the 2023 WAVE Annual Report now.](#)



WOMEN IN ADULT &
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ANNUAL REPORT 2023

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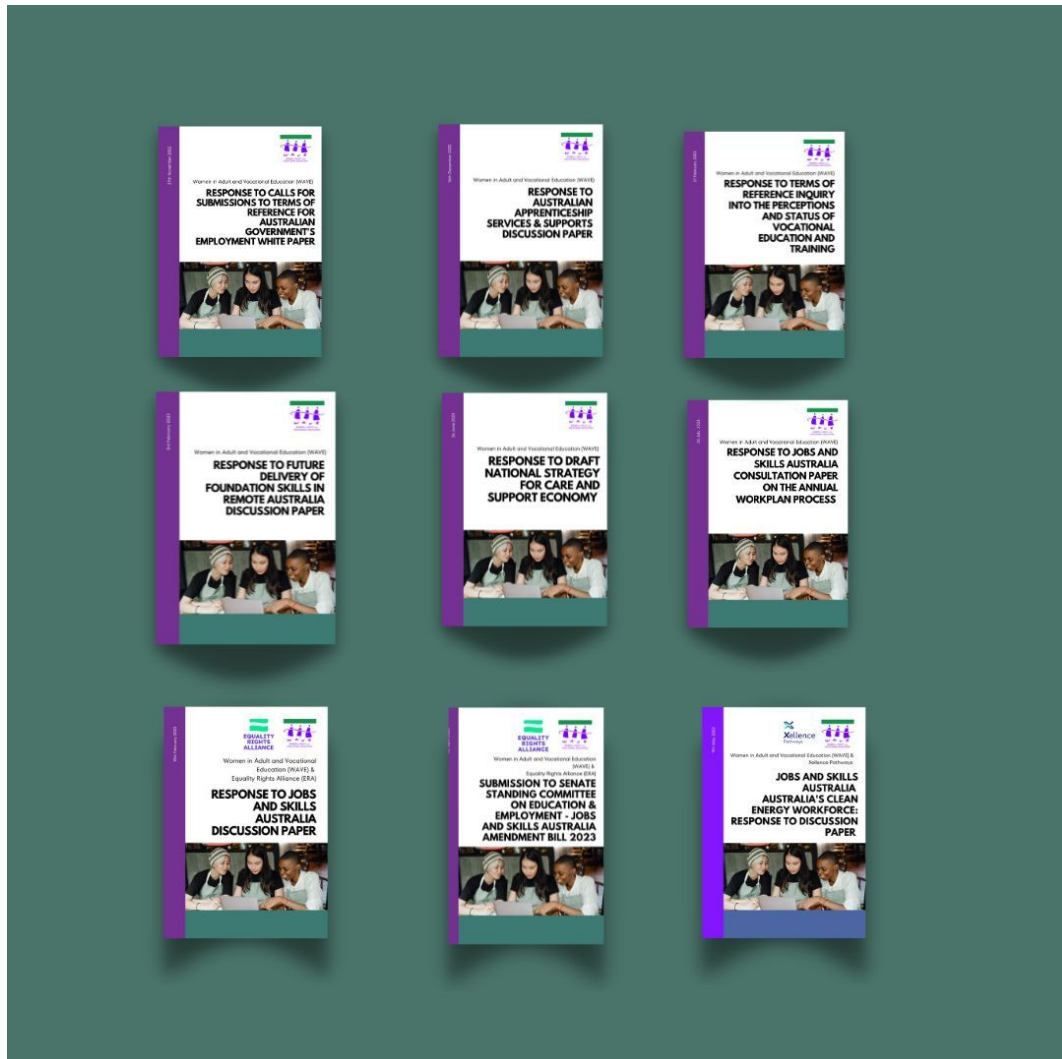
Policy Work in 2023

The volume of response generated by the WAVE team in this last year eclipses previous years due to the energy and busyness of the current government as they established their new priorities. Listed below are some of the interactions WAVE have instigated with our Australian government over the past 11 months.

1. Jobs and Skills Australia Clean Energy Capacity Building Study (with Xcellence Pathways)
2. Jobs and Skills Australia - Consultation on Annual Workplan
3. Department of Employment and Workplace Relations- Foundation Skills
4. Department of Employment and Workplace Relations- Apprenticeship Support & Services House
5. Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training - Inquiry into the Perceptions of VET
6. Department of Employment and Workplace Relations- RTO Standards Submission
7. Australian Government - Employment White Paper
8. Department of Home Affairs - A Migration System for Australia's Future
9. Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet - The National Strategy for the Care and Support Economy

11. Australian Government - Response to Gender Equality Strategy Call for Feedback

All of our policy papers, advocacy work and media releases are available on the [WAVE website](#)



Policy Work Leading into 2024

WAVE has contributed to some substantial policy work since the Annual Report was released.

WAVE Federal Government Pre-budget Submission

In a proactive move to combat the persistent inequity within Australia's

WAVE supports ACED submission to Australian Government White Paper

In previous statements to the Australian Government, ACED has called for

advocate for change. Recognizing the pivotal role vocational education plays in fostering women's economic equality, it is evident that the current national policy framework falls short in providing the necessary environment and enablers.

Our latest submission calls for a concerted effort to establish a fundamental framework that ensures equity within Australia's skills system, beginning with a focus on the Jobs and Skills Councils and enhancing the capacity and capability of these crucial organizations.

[Read More →](#)

WAVE calls on Federal Government for Systemic Change for equality in VET

WAVE urged the Federal Government to adopt a decisive and comprehensive approach to enhance gender equality in Vocational Education and Training (VET), emphasizing the importance of strategic and systemic measures while questioning the effectiveness of funding programs exclusively targeting women.

[Read More →](#)

Development Goal 4 and that the Australian Government is responsible for ensuring lifelong learning opportunities for all. WAVE contributed and supported this call for change.

[Read More →](#)

Response to discussion paper on supporting women to achieve VET Careers

In this submission, WAVE reinforces previous advice provided to the Australian Government across the last 12 months.

That is, to improve the outcome for women in Australia's vocational education and training sector so they can achieve careers that are based on VET skills development, Government Policy must take a strategic and systemic approach with attention to medium- and long-term gender sensitive outcomes not jeopardised by focus on short term initiatives to 'fix' the problem/s.

[Read More →](#)

“Fight for the things that you care about. But do it in a way that will lead others to join you.”

Ruth Bader Ginsburg

American lawyer and jurist, advocate for gender equality and women's rights.



WAVE Leadership Team Contributing to Change

Our WAVE leaders have been busy representing the work of WAVE in the public eye over the last few months.

Dr Jan Edwards

WAVE is thankful for the many women who contribute to the work we do. None more so than Dr Jan Edwards, WAVE Secretary. Jan works tirelessly to support the work of WAVE and this year [was recognised in the SA Government, Office for Women, Women's Honour Roll in December 2023.](#)

"Dr Janet 'Jan' Kay Edwards is a passionate advocate for gender equality, disability, social inclusion, and civil society engagement

Elaine Butler

In 2023 our incredible WAVE Ambassador Elaine Butler and colleague Fran Ferrier completed what is truly a "Landmark" piece for National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) - "A fair go for all" which looked at the issues core to WAVE work - equity and its need to be foundation and front and centre of our national training and education system.

[Butler and Ferriers' Landmark work can be found here.](#)

Kit McMahon

WAVE's National Co-Convenor Kit McMahon is CEO of Women's Health in the South East (WHISE), Chair of Tradeswomen Australia Foundation and Co-Chair of the Independent Collective of Survivors (ICOS). In 2023, Kit joined "The Big Skills Drive" Industry Panel facilitated by Claire Field. As a panelist, Kit brought her expertise in education and gender equality to the discussion of priority skill needs in Australia, some in many male dominated industries,

international levels."

which are in critical shortage.

Events in 2024

WAVE is excited to launch a number of webinars for members in 2024, more information to come on this in the first quarter, with a focus on policy and equity in education. Topics include:

1. Policy in action
2. Gender and intersectional practice in adult and vocational education
3. International trends in education policy
4. Sue Salthouse Award – 2023 Winner Presentation

Join us for our annual roundtable or conference, more to come on this soon.

Key Associations

WAVE is proud to continue its alliance with the following key associations, where our voices combined can make a difference for women in adult and vocational education.

Equity Rights Alliance (ERA)

WAVE is a member of the Equality Rights Alliance, one of the National Women's Alliances. Dr Jan Edwards represented WAVE at the Annual Members meeting in Melbourne in 2023 and our National Co-Convenors Therese Nolan and Kit McMahon along with our WAVE Ambassador Elaine Butler regularly attend membership forums and meetings.

Global Campaign for Education World Assembly

Dr Jan Edwards represented Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (ASPBE) at the meeting held in South Africa in November 2023.

Australian Coalition for Education and Development (ACED)

As a member of ACED, WAVE joins in partnership with other key organisations & people with a focus on adult education & training, adult learning and lifelong learning both in Australia as well as through regional and global networks and actors. In 2023, we participated in informal intergovernmental consultations held to gather input for UN's Summit of the Future that took place in February 2023

Research Association (AVETRA) conference in 2023. The conference was a fantastic coming together of leaders, policy thinkers and researchers in Vocational Education and Training. In 2023 WAVE was proud that our national committee member Kira Clarke was AVETRA President.

Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (ASPBAE)

WAVE is an active member organisation of the Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (ASPBAE), a regional network of 264 civil society organisations and individual members in 31 countries in the Asia Pacific region. Contributing to gender equality in education.

BECOME A WAVE MEMBER

As a WAVE member you become part of the national feminist network that advocates on behalf of women in adult and vocational education and training and employment related issues. Your membership lends strength to that advocacy, giving us a distinctive place in the women's movement.

As a member you can participate in and organise events, add your thoughts to our advocacy, and participate in research and other written work.

The Executive communicates with members through our website, including a quarterly e-newsletter, and through social media including Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter, ensuring an interactive and proactive organisation.

Now is the time to make a difference!

Has your membership lapsed? Have you been thinking about joining WAVE?

Join us today!

Join WAVE- Sign up here to become a member!



**“All great achievements
require time.”**

Maya Angelou

*American memoirist, poet, and civil rights
activist*



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