



YWCA  
CANBERRA

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Forum to generate new momentum on gender equity for the ACT (joint media release)**

**DATE: 30 October 2017**

The ACT Government and YWCA Canberra are today co-hosting The Case for Change, a gender equity forum at the ACT Legislative Assembly, Reception Room involving leaders from government, business, and non-government organisations.

The forum, whilst seeking to motivate ACT Government officials and our community leaders to champion a culture of gender equity within government, will also highlight best practice tools and policies to progress gender equity more broadly across the ACT community. Everyone has a role to play to drive real and lasting change.

The event will hear from experts including:

- Virginia Haussegger AM, Director of the 50/50 by 2030 Foundation;
- Carmel McGregor, Adjunct Professor and Academic Fellow at the Institute for Governance and Policy Analysis at the University of Canberra;
- Richard Denniss, Chief Economist at the Australia Institute; and
- Jerril Rechter, Chief Executive Officer of VicHealth.

Following on from the launch of the ACT Women's Plan 2016-2026, and the first Action Plan in March this year, I am looking forward to helping to build more momentum so that other leaders and key players in our community will want to become champions for gender equity too.

We can all make changes in our professional and personal lives to progress gender equity in a range of ways, all of which make a positive impact on both women and men, resulting in positive economic and social outcomes.

The ideas that will be shared and generated at today's forum will be key to driving important change for our whole community and progressing the next phase of our important work for gender equity.

This is the first in a series of bi-annual forums to be co-hosted by the community sector and ACT Government, with the next forum expected to be held in early 2018.

Government has already achieved a great deal but there is much more to do. Our recent achievements include:

- Funding for key election commitments to Increase the participation and representation of women in sports through female friendly sports infrastructure, funding agreements for more women on sporting organization board and the launch of the new ACTIVE HerCanberra online portal for women and girls to share information and support each other in a safe and friendly environment;
- Significant progress against actions under the ACT Women’s Plan 2016-2026, First Action Plan 2016-19, launched in March this year, the first years actions are due to be delivered by March 2018;
- Delivery of programs to support women on boards and in leadership positions and the requirement for compulsory consultation with the Office for Women on appointments to ACT Government boards and committees resulting in 48 percent representation of women, the highest of all States and Territories and on track to reach our 50 percent target.
- Continued direct support to thousands of women in the community who experience disadvantage or barriers to information, education and support services through the Women’s Information Line and the Return to Work Program.
- A number of other grant programs and awards have delivered support and acknowledgement to ACT women, and funded organisations to deliver initiatives that support the health, safety and participation of women.

**Quotes attributed to Frances Crimmins, Executive Director of YWCA Canberra**

“I’m honoured to emcee this event, and to share YWCA Canberra’s insights as an organisation that has worked with women and their families in the ACT since 1929.”

“The ACT is primed to be the leading Australian jurisdiction on gender equity. We have gender parity in the Legislative Assembly for the first time, and a vision for Canberra to be Australia's most inclusive city.

“This forum provides an opportunity for the leaders of this city to take stock of where we’re at, what works, and how we can make improvements on our work to date.”

- ENDS -

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**About YWCA Canberra:** YWCA Canberra is a feminist, secular, not-for-profit community organisation that has been providing community services and representing women’s issues in the Canberra community since its establishment in 1929. YWCA Canberra employs more than 300 staff across the ACT, and delivers 30 quality programs in children’s services, community development, housing, youth services, women’s leadership, advocacy, and training. Represented in 122 countries, the YWCA has a global reach of 25 million women and girls. As part of this international movement, YWCA Canberra works for a world where reconciliation, justice, peace, health, human dignity, freedom and care for the environment are promoted and sustained through women’s leadership. For more information visit:

[www.ywca-canberra.org.au](http://www.ywca-canberra.org.au)

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