

Victoria**Law**
Foundation



Annual Report 2024-25



The office of Victoria Law Foundation is on the traditional lands of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation. We acknowledge their history, culture and Elders past and present.

Victoria Law Foundation

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Children and Young People's Rights Program, Westjustice

Contents

02	About VLF
03	From the Chair
05	Our Board
06	From the Executive Director
08	Activity snapshot
10	Function highlights
14	Our people
17	Understand
24	Enable
34	Perform
41	Financial Report 2024-25



Victoria Law Foundation supports better justice through research, education and grants.

Vision

Fair, equitable and accessible
justice system for all Victorians.

Purpose

We work in research, education
and grants to contribute to the
development of an effective civil
justice system for the Victorian
community as guided by the
Victoria Law Foundation Act.

From the Chair



Victoria Law Foundation entered an exciting phase of renewal and external engagement this year. A great deal of work has been done to ensure VLF is positioned to deliver on our statutory commitment to 'improve knowledge and information about the Victorian justice system.'

With the major Public Understanding of Law Survey (PULS) reports now completed we will continue to use this seminal work to inform our research, grant making, and education programs for many years to come.

With the third PULS report released, our focus has shifted to ensuring data and insights are accessible and actionable for those who can use them to improve legal outcomes for Victorians. We are deepening our analysis to explore specific legal problem types and demographic groups, while also investigating what works to makes legal services effective.

Our investigation into legal service delivery for vulnerable people is nearing completion. The Measure for Measure project draws on consultations with 30 organisations on 66 initiatives, applying PULS insights at the service level - a critical step in real-world impact.

VLF has contributed extensively over the last twelve months to the new National Access to Justice Partnership Agreement between the States and the Commonwealth, with our data and analyses cited in the development and now informing national reform projects.

Globally, VLF's profile continues to grow, with three papers presented at the 2024 International Access to Justice Forum in Toronto, and three accepted for the 2025 Forum in New York. We are delighted to bring the Forum to Melbourne in 2026, underscoring Victoria's leadership in access to justice innovation.

The Victorian Law Week theme this year was *Where law meets life*, which encapsulates much of our work. The statewide program was informed directly by the PULS data, and delivered in partnership with libraries, Neighbourhood Houses, CLCs and local lawyers. Our Education team continues to connect people to the broader justice system and provides valuable civics and legal education including programs for schools and the public in Warrnambool and Horsham this year.

Legal Laneway Breakfasts continue to proliferate, with events marking the opening of this legal year in Melbourne, Ballarat and Morwell. We hosted the new Attorney General, the Honourable Sonya Kilkeny, in one of her first engagements in Hardware Lane, and look forward to seeing her again in 2026.

In its first year, our new Major Grants round offered up to \$100,000 to fund targeted research, data capability improvements and community legal education. The demand for these grants and our quick response Everyday Legal Grants continues to be very high, indicating their value to the sector.

Internally, we undertook an Organisational review and strengthened our capacity, with additions to the staff team and a focus on professional development to support our increasingly integrated approach. A new Strategy and Engagement function will provide a greater capacity to understand the needs of the sector, facilitate collaboration and drive external engagement.

As resources tighten across the sector, the need for evidence-based decision making becomes even more critical. We continue to use our networks and influence to ensure insights on legal need and legal capability inform effective policy and practice.

In the coming year we will develop a new project on young people's understanding of law, leveraging our research expertise and strong connections with schools to inform future education and service delivery.

The title of our 2025-27 Strategy – Building Capability – is borne out in all we do: in research, schools, profession and practice, and in our contributions to policy.

For a small agency, VLF punches above its weight – in Victoria, nationally and around the world. The Board is grateful for the continued support of our funder, the Victorian Legal Services Board and Commissioner, our partners and the work of our dedicated VLF team, as I am for their expertise and generous commitment. Lastly, I thank all our Board members for their vision and commitment.



The Hon Greg Garde AO RFD
Chair, Victorian Law Foundation

Our Board



An eight-person board governs Victoria Law Foundation.

Board members hold honorary positions and are appointed under the Victoria Law Foundation Act 2009 (Vic).

The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Victoria nominates the Chair of the Board. The Victorian Bar, the Law Institute of Victoria, the Courts Council, the Board of Victoria Legal Aid, and the Federation of Community Legal Centres (Victoria) Inc. each nominate a member, and the Attorney-General of Victoria appoints two members. Apart from the Chair, all members serve three-year terms.

**Victoria Law
Foundation Board**

Left to right

**The Honourable Justice
Garde AO RFD,
Chair**

Peter Caillard

Stephen Roche

Dr Melissa Castan

Dr Gerry Bean

Rowan McRae

Tania McKenna

**Her Honour Magistrate
Thérèse McCarthy
(till 8 December 2024,
awaiting reappointment)**

**Molly Hoffman
(Board Observer –
non-voting member)**

Research Subgroup

**Dr Melissa Castan,
Chair**

**The Honourable Justice
Garde AO RFD**

Rowan McRae

Tania McKenna

Lynne Haultain

**Human Resources
Subgroup**

**Dr Melissa Castan,
Chair**

**The Honourable Justice
Garde AO RFD**

Dr Gerry Bean

**Audit, Finance
and Risk Subgroup**

**Stephen Roche,
Chair**

Dr Gerry Bean

**The Honourable Justice
Garde AO RFD**

Peter Caillard

Lynne Haultain

**Molly Hoffman
(non-voting)**

Grants Subgroup

**Peter Caillard,
Chair**

Dr Gerry Bean

**Her Honour Magistrate
Thérèse McCarthy**

Lynne Haultain

**Molly Hoffman
(non-voting)**

From the Executive Director



As the VLF team knows well, I'm particularly fond of the word useful. Our research is useful to practitioners and policy makers. Law Week is useful to the community in explaining where law is and guiding people to assistance. The Schools program is useful in helping young people understand the law around them and how to participate. Our grant-making is useful in building skills, insights and resources to improve service delivery.

Being of use is a great privilege and carries with it a requirement to constantly reassess how we apply our time and energy to best effect. It means we need to listen carefully and respond to our sector and community.

What we see clearly is the real appetite for data and evidence on how to improve access to justice, which the Public Understanding of Law Survey (PULS) has done so much to reveal. The concept of legal capability explored in PULS has the potential to be a game changer in the way in which people in the justice system serve our community.

What we heard though was that the data was one thing, but that people working in the field need guidance on what building capability might look like on the ground. So we developed Measure for Measure, a project looking at successful service provision which will be completed early next financial year. We're also building a suite of resources which to outline what PULS outcomes might mean at the coalface of service provision.

We are keenly aware of the tight budget constraints in the sector. The usefulness of VLF Grants in funding targeted small-scale research, funding legal information resources and supporting the improvement of data systems is amply demonstrated in the 21 projects we funded this year. What we heard was the need for a higher quantum, so this year we introduced a consolidated Major Grants round, streamlining process and doubling the cap to \$100,000. We also saw that smaller grants with quick turnaround can be exceptionally valuable, from translating for newly arrived migrants to building an app to manage debt. This year we gave 15 Everyday Legal Grants – our highest ever.

We have long been involved in providing legal information tailored to young

people, and now civics education is high in the minds of many, from the Governor General down. Over the last three years we have substantially increased our commitment to civics in schools and for the public, expanding our engagement with TAFE students and delivering information in new ways, like short-form video.

What we hear is a growing concern about disengagement by young people, who have lower legal knowledge and lower capability to navigate the process and resolve their problems. Next year we will launch a significant project on Young Persons Understanding of the Law – or YPULS. Leveraging our research strength and established contact with young people, the outcomes could be a powerful empirical contribution to public debate on democracy, the rule of law and civic health.

VLF operates in three domains: research, education and grants. This report demonstrates the value of these functions, but we see the potential for greater integration and greater opportunity to learn where we can be of best use. Our new Strategy and Engagement function will connect more dots and give us an even more sophisticated understanding of how to deliver access to justice. Or as someone recently said to me, deliver justice.

My profound thanks to the VLF Board for their unwavering support and guidance, our partner and funder in the Victorian Legal Services Board, and the VLF team - who are highly competent, curious and deeply committed to ensuring our work is as useful as it can be.



Lynne Haultain
Executive Director
June 2025

Activity snapshot

Building legal capability across Victoria

6
School and
Community
Law talks

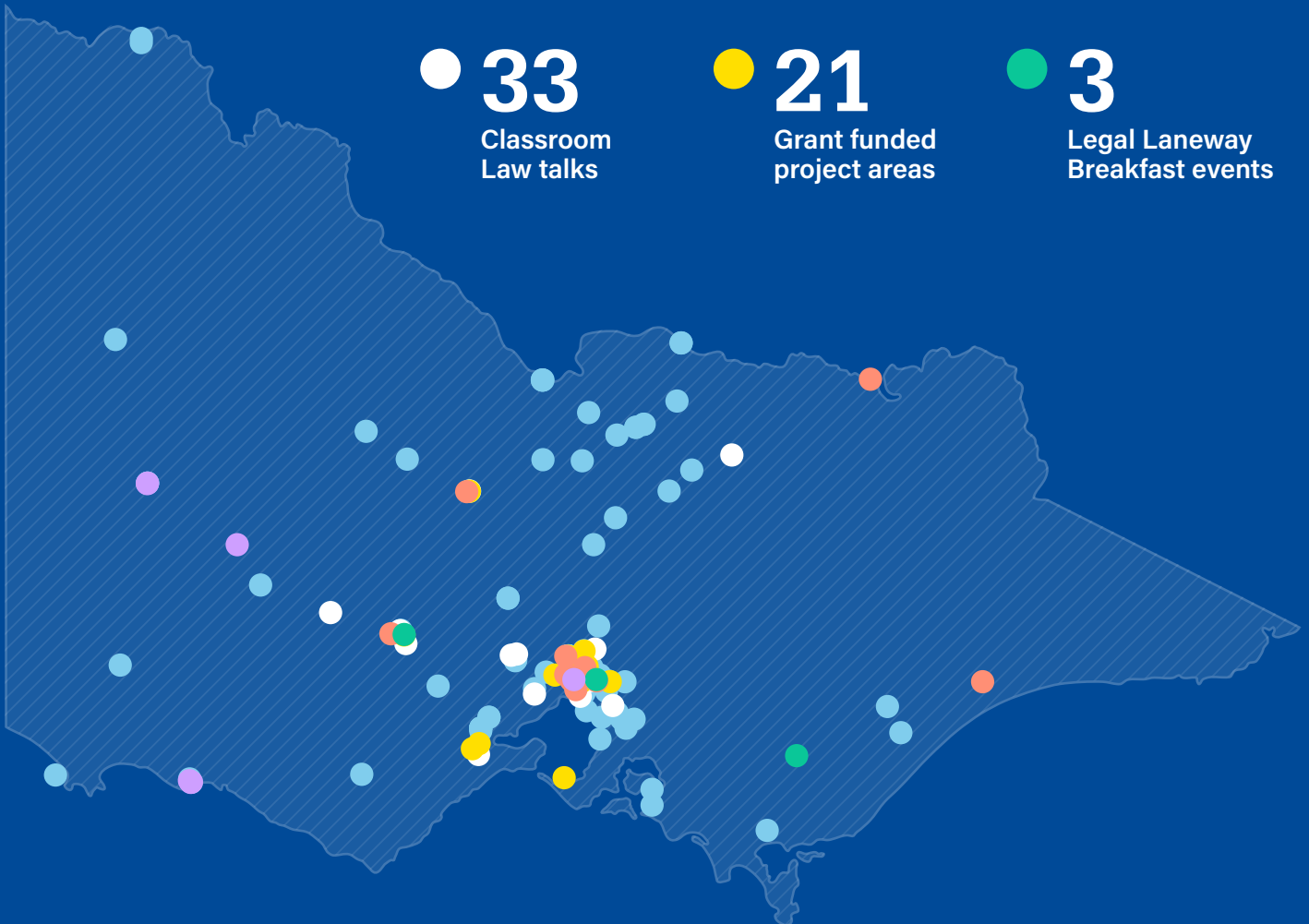
23
Research
interviews

108
Law Week
in-person
events

33
Classroom
Law talks

21
Grant funded
project areas

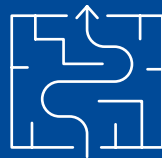
3
Legal Laneway
Breakfast events





6

Major Grants
awarded



15

Everyday Legal
Grants awarded



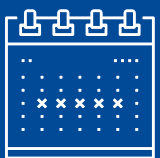
3,254

Research publication
downloads



4,121

Education resource
downloads



138

Law Week events
organised by 112
organisations



33

Classroom Law
talks across
Victoria reaching
1261 students



592

Legal Laneway
Breakfast CBD
registrations

Function highlights

Research

This year, we completed and released the final headline report and comprehensive dataset from our landmark Public Understanding of Law Survey (PULS). This research offers unparalleled insights and deep understanding on the importance of legal capability in achieving just outcomes. We encourage people from across the sector to engage with the findings, and we are ready to assist.

Our commitment to sharing this work led to extensive engagement. The third volume of PULS, *A New Perspective on Legal Need and Legal Capability*, was disseminated through over 30 local, national, and international events, including the 2024 International Access to Justice Forum.

The PULS demonstrates that Victorians' access to justice is deeply intertwined with their legal capability. Following discussions with people from across the sector about what helps most, we are working with VLF teams to support the transformation of evidence into action. Following the expansion of the Research team this year, our investment in capacity is a firm foundation to deliver on our research plan.

With the first tranche of the PULS reporting complete, our research shifts towards exploring the application of findings and understanding "what works" to address Victorians' legal needs and capabilities. Our *Measure for Measure* project is specifically designed to achieve this, laying a robust foundation for sustained access to justice research.

How individuals navigate legal processes and achieve positive outcomes hinges on their knowledge, skills, attitudes, and available resources. In the coming year, we will continue analysis of the PULS data, supporting translation of the research into policy and practice, as well as developing a new project on the legal understanding of young people.

Education

We know from the PULS that understanding our law and its systems is critical in accessing justice throughout life. Our Education team continue to rise to this challenge, helping Victorians understand their law and offer pathways to action – connecting legal services and communities through a combination of public programs, school initiatives and sector partnerships.

Victorian Law Week 2025 was a notable success, with a substantial increase in regional participation and a growing return to in-person events. With a new Victorian Law Week strategy due in 2026, the insights gathered from our recent focus on everyday legal issues, Event Organiser engagement and grass roots approaches, will shape how Victorians can enjoy and benefit from the program of events in the future.

The annual 'In Conversation' this year explored the balance between privacy and transparency through a compelling discussion with Victorian Information Commissioner Sean Morrison. This event again shone a spotlight on the people behind the law and demystified parts of the justice system.

Offering young people an essential understanding of the justice system drives our extensive schools program. New initiatives like the Young Workers Centre's pop-up stall in Warrnambool, providing employment advice to TAFE students, raised important awareness in young Victorians, cultivating early legal capability.

The team is dedicated to making law accessible, relevant, and engaging for all, leveraging PULS insights to inform future education and research efforts, especially for young people, civics, and democracy.

Grants

In 2024-25, we introduced a new Major Grants round, combining the objectives of the former Knowledge and Community Legal Grants with an emphasis on collecting and using data to respond to need.

A comprehensive Grants Strategy was developed, informed by a review of five years of Knowledge Grants, and feedback from the sector on the impact of grants, closely aligning our funding approach with VLF's broader strategic direction and objectives. The new Major Grants offered higher allocations and simplified application processes, to support broader accessibility and effectiveness.

These Grants are specifically directed towards supporting research into civil legal problems, improving data and research capability, and interventions that address identified legal needs. Complementing this, Everyday Legal Grants continue to provide small quantum quick turnaround support for community-led legal information and education projects. Altogether, 21 projects were funded in 2024-25.

We continue to actively support the dissemination of findings from funded work through our events and communication channels. Greater support for this area with a new Grants Officer joining the team and an increased funding pool means VLF has better capacity to deliver a well targeted and effective granting program into the future.

Communications

This has been a transformative year, with a transition to the new Strategy and Engagement function and an expansion of our capabilities. The function is now structured to better translate research into accessible formats and offer greater engagement with a wide range of interested audiences.

A key focus for Communications this year was reaching young people beyond traditional school settings, with short-form video emerging as a highly effective tool for legal education. We provided comprehensive communication support for VLF's major initiatives, including Victorian Law Week, PULS Volume 3, and the update of our education resources.

Time spent understanding how people engage with VLF led to improvements in our audience data and a refined content strategy. This yielded strong growth in website traffic from email and social media, with video and case studies driving deeper engagement.

We strengthened relationships with the community services sector, notably enhancing the reach and engagement of PULS material through a range of formats and channels.

The Strategy and Engagement function will be fully embedded within VLF in the year to come, maintaining our commitment to relevant, useful and accessible content. With a renewed focus we will proactively engage with even more stakeholders to better share knowledge and further improve access to justice across the state.

Business Services

Business Services continues to play a vital role in supporting our high-performing teams and Board, managing central business systems, human resources, finance and risk.

The major undertaking this year was an Organisational review, involving extensive staff and Board consultation and careful deliberation on the outcomes. Consequently, supporting change and recruitment was central, while ensuring the growth could be sustained financially. A small increase to our staffing in this area will enhance capacity to manage operations and provide much needed support across the organisation.

Another key project this year was the ongoing digitisation of our extensive archive of paper records, dating back to the 1960s and 1970s. This initiative preserves our institutional culture and contributes to the accessibility of important historic information on the establishment and growth of the legal assistance ecosystem in Victoria.

Looking ahead to 2025-26, we will examine the evolving role of artificial intelligence in our workplace and sector, developing clear guidelines and policies which align with VLF's aim to build capability, improve systems, and support our people to achieve high-quality and meaningful outcomes.



Practical, empowering and information

In partnership with Mortgage Stress Victoria, VLF supported Attwood House Community Centre (Broadmeadows) to deliver *Navigating Mortgage Stress*, a hybrid event addressing the growing impact of rising living costs.

The session offered practical financial, legal, and welfare advice, equipping attendees with tools to pursue financial stability. The event is now available on-demand and has generated strong interest in future sessions, particularly for migrant communities.



“

Having the opportunity to connect with community members is a such an important part of the work we do.”

— Nathan Dorman, Solicitor,
Mortgage Stress Victoria

Our people

As of 30 June 2025, Victoria Law Foundation employs 25 staff members in full-time, part-time, or casual capacities.

Executive

Lynne Haultain
Executive Director

Research

Dr Hugh M. McDonald
Research Director

Bridget McAloon
Principal Researcher

Dr Bethia Burgess
Senior Researcher (from April 2025)

Yolanda Mansfield
Senior Researcher (from April 2025)

Dr Zhigang Wei
Data Analyst

Evie Ogier
Research Programs Manager
(from June 2025)

Education and events

Kate Sedgwick
Education and Events Director

Fabiola Superina
Education Manager

Nikita Batch
Education and Events Coordinator

Nicolas Tavassoli
Education Officer

David Thomson OAM
Teacher-in-Residence

Grants

Melanie Rygl
Grants Director

Silvie Bernhard
Grants Officer (from March 2025)

Business Services

Business and Finance Director

Finance Coordinator

Office Manager and PA to the
Executive Director

Human Resources Advisor

Administrative Officer

Business Support Officer
(from May 2025)

Strategy and Engagement

Jen Tucker
Strategy and Engagement Director
(from June 2025)

Leon Meyer
Communications Manager

Vikki Doig
Engagement Manager

Jackie Matthews
Communications Coordinator

Ysabel Kershaw
Communications Officer

Organisation

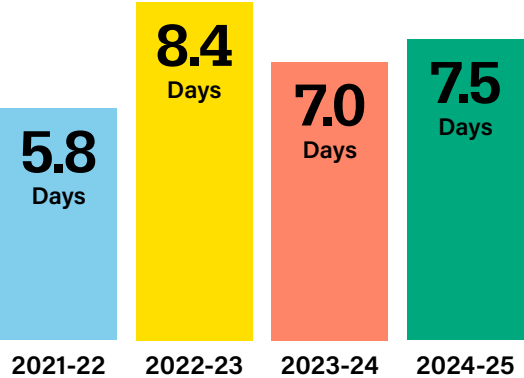
Staff work across five functions, equating to 19.6 full-time equivalents (excluding short term casual staff).

Function	FTE
Executive	1.0
Research	5.6
Education	3.2
Grants	1.4
Business Services	3.8
Strategy and Engagement	4.6

Leave and absenteeism

Absenteeism rates have increased slightly in this financial year, from 7.03 days personal leave per full-time employee in 2023-24 to 7.5 in 2024-25.

Days of personal leave per full-time employee



*The average absenteeism level in Australia is 14 days, according to the DHS 2023 Absence management and wellbeing survey report.



Fostering future leaders

VLF is proud to participate in the Observership Program, a national initiative connecting emerging leaders with not-for-profit boards. Designed for professionals aged 25 to 40, the program offers participants exposure to board governance, strategic decision-making, and the broader impact of community leadership.

Observers attend board and committee meetings, engage with governance processes, and contribute fresh perspectives to the organisations where they are placed.

We have been fortunate to host Molly Hoffman as our Observer for two consecutive years. Molly has brought enthusiasm and curiosity, enriching our board discussions and offering valuable insights.



Understand

We deepened our understanding of how people engage with civil law through rigorous research and meaningful collaboration.



Our work has enhanced awareness of legal needs and capabilities across the justice and community sectors, among decision-makers, and within the broader public.

We make a constant effort to share insights and invite feedback to further refine our practice in all areas, which in turn drives evidence-based improvements for Victorians.

Revealing the complexity of capability

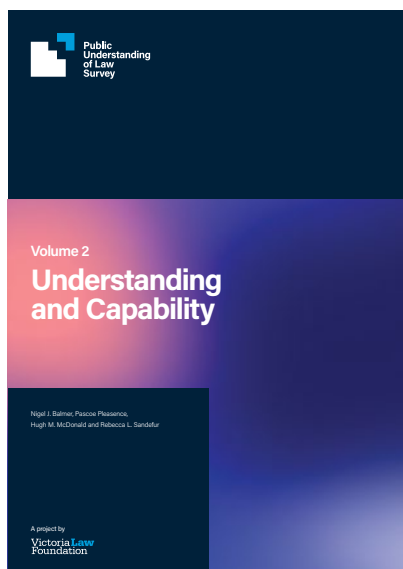
In August 2024, Victoria Law Foundation launched *A New Perspective on Legal Need and Legal Capability*, Volume 3 of the Public Understanding of Law Survey (PULS). The launch, held at the Law Institute of Victoria, capped years of research and marked a significant milestone in understanding how Victorians experience and resolve legal problems.

Volume 3 builds on the foundational insights of Volumes 1 and 2, integrating data on legal need and capability to reveal how knowledge, skills, and attitudes shape experience of everyday legal problems, handling and resolution, and ultimately, access to justice. The report highlights a critical finding: inequality in legal capability lies at the heart

of inequality in justice. Those with lower capability are less likely to access legal services, resolve problems effectively, and achieve satisfactory outcomes.

The launch featured reflections from Executive Director Lynne Haultain and Research Director Dr Hugh McDonald, who emphasised the importance of using this data to inform service design and institutional reform. Former Research Director Professor Nigel Balmer presented key findings, urging the wider legal and justice sectors to respond to diverse capabilities with tailored, person-centred approaches.

Accompanying videos and additional publications explored the report's themes and future directions. PULS Volumes 1, 2 and 3 are available online, along with the full dataset for others to explore. This is one of the important ways we deliver on our ongoing commitment to open science, transparent research and sector-wide innovation.



Evidence to inform effective policy and practice

Early in 2025, we released another short paper, presenting focused insights from the PULS. These concise publications offer new and targeted analysis of specific legal issues or population groups, to encourage evidence-informed policy and practice.

Are legal problems bad for your health? Are health issues bad for your law? explored the bi-directional relationship between legal problems and health status. Importantly, the paper highlights that people with long-term illness and disability, and/or elevated levels of mental distress face compounded challenges. The analysis revealed that they are more likely to encounter legal problems, have lower legal capability and demonstrate more negative attitudes toward the law, which further impairs access to justice.

The paper also demonstrated that people with compromised health status have significantly more legal problems, which are more severe, last longer, and are often unresolved. These people report higher levels of stress, loss of confidence, and other adverse consequences stemming from legal issues.

The PULS Short Papers series will continue to provide new, timely and accessible insights, helping legal and community services and justice institutions better understand and respond to the needs of diverse Victorian communities.



Enabling legal support to better match capabilities

Measure for Measure: Tailoring Everyday Justice is a major research initiative aimed at identifying and understanding what works to meet legal need across Victoria. Building on insights from the PULS and the earlier Data Mapping research, the project responds to a critical gap: while legal need is widespread, existing data does not adequately explain what services and processes are effective, for whom, and under what conditions.

The project began with a sector-wide survey, inviting justice organisations to share initiatives that are helping people prevent or resolve legal issues. This generated 66 responses, including services, policies, and practices tailored to specific communities or legal matters. The second phase involved 23 in-depth interviews to explore key themes such as service design, effectiveness, funding, and sustainability.

The research has already resulted in important insights on what makes for effective solutions. The interim findings confirm that complex legal issues benefit from integrated, flexible approaches that boost professional skills and build trust. This must involve people-centred justice approaches that respond to people's need, circumstance and capability.

The study will also pinpoint knowledge gaps for scaling effective services and sets out a research agenda to address them. The final report, due later this year, will provide independent, evidence-based insights into what is working in Victoria's justice system. It will highlight shared success factors, barriers to scaling, and opportunities to build and share important learning.

The findings will directly support policymakers, service providers and funders to design and deliver more effective legal help, enabling services to better match their offerings to the needs and capabilities of the community.

Informing policy and practice through evidence

VLF plays a vital role in shaping policy and practice by drawing on its research to inform decision-makers across the justice and community sectors. Our submissions and publications are grounded in a deep understanding of the legal experiences, needs, and capabilities of Victorians.

Our extensive engagement with the review of the National Legal Assistance Partnership (NLAP) highlights our commitment to improving policy at a national level. We continue to be involved with work on the long-term projects in its successor, the National Access to Justice Partnership (NAJP) on data, workforce and outcomes in the legal assistance sector.

Our research paper *Access to just this?* discusses the challenges and implications of legal assistance eligibility in Australia, and calls for increased funding, less stringent means tests, and redesigned entry points to improve access to justice. Sharing these findings with policymakers, legal services, and community organisations is part of how VLF helps to shape a more inclusive and effective justice system.

Through research, grants and targeted submissions, we continue to advocate for more consistent and meaningful data collection to support better-informed and effective service delivery.

Building new insights and ways of working

A key outcome of 2024-25 was the development of the VLF 2025-27 Research Plan. The new plan puts VLF at the forefront of legal needs and capability research, building on the rich insights of the PULS.

Central to the plan are actionable research insights—transforming evidence into practical tools and resources that inform policy and practice. Through collaboration with Strategy and Engagement, Research will focus on ensuring our work is relevant and useful to diverse stakeholders. This involves ongoing dialogue to tailor outputs to real-world needs.

As recognised in the *Independent Review of the National Legal Assistance Partnership* (Mundy review), there is a growing demand both within and outside the sector to develop data maturity. As such, we have committed to investing in evaluative research to rigorously measure what works. This commenced this year through *Measure for Measure* and will continue as a sustained and timely research stream as national policy shifts to include outcomes.



Showcasing access to justice

VLF's Research Network series continues to play a vital role in sharing research and practice knowledge from across the state and around the world.

In 2024-25, the series brought together researchers, legal professionals and community organisations to explore emerging issues, including the intersection of law and health, how integrated service models can improve outcomes, and the opportunities and risks in court ordered family violence protections in the digital age.

We also hosted a local discussion on the 2024 International Access to Justice Forum, where Victorian participants shared their presentations from the forum on a range of topics including climate-related legal need, youth justice, and legal capability. These reflections reinforced the importance of global dialogue in shaping local responses.

In exploring civil justice, this series shares cutting-edge insights, asks critical questions about where reform is needed and how legal services can better meet community needs. Each session contributed to the growing evidence base and helped strengthen sector capability.

Making changes to increase impact

In 2024-25, VLF pursued growth designed to maximise our impact across the justice sector. This is evident in our comprehensive organisational review, which led to the establishment of a new Strategy and Engagement function, taking in Communications and Engagement staff and reorienting the work for greater impact.

The process provided many valuable insights and a deeper understanding of our collective capabilities. The new structure matches our needs and aspirations for the next phase in our development as we build on the foundations of the PULS and help to build the bridge toward better access to justice.

A key aspect of focusing on impact is the enhancement of our grants program. Informed by a thorough review of our Knowledge Grants program and comprehensive feedback from stakeholders, we introduced a streamlined structure with Major Grants and Everyday Legal Grants. This redesign increased funding and simplified processes, ensuring resources are directed where they can achieve the greatest impact in building legal capability and addressing legal need.

The reimagining of grants is supported by a new Grants Strategy. Released this year, the strategy explicitly aligns grants funding with VLF's broader strategic direction of building legal capability. More clearly defining where our grants program will make a difference means we can prioritise initiatives that use evidence to deliver effective programs and services.



New approaches to education resources

VLF continuously improves its education resources to build legal capability across the community. Recent updates reflect a focus on accessibility, including plain language, inclusive design and the use of communication channels where people are most likely to engage. These choices are grounded in evidence about how people best understand and act on legal information.

Our refreshed resources make complex legal concepts approachable. For example, a case study on constitutional rights and federal power helps people understand how legal protections are shaped in Australia. Other resources encourage critical thinking about legal outcomes and provide practical insights into how law reform happens. These are built for a school age audience but have significant value in the broader community.

To reach younger audiences, we have expanded into short-form video content on topics like employment rights and police move-on orders. These videos use relatable scenarios and clear messaging to connect with young people in meaningful ways.

Collaboration with legal services and community organisations ensures our content is accurate and relevant. This partnership model strengthens our ability to deliver trusted legal education for Victorians.

Tailored analysis to improve application

To support a new Family Law Information Project, Victoria Legal Aid (VLA) approached VLF to discuss the family problem category used in the PULS.

VLF undertook fresh analysis of the PULS dataset using a narrower definition of family problems based on legal matter types handled by VLA's family practice area. The new analysis enabled VLA to better understand problem prevalence as it relates to their definition of family problem category to help accurately tailor future legal information.



“

PULS data is helping to shape our understanding of who needs family law information – and how we can better match it to their capability.”

— Andrea Staunton, Project Co-ordinator Family, Youth and Children's Law, Victoria Legal Aid

Enable

Through strong partnerships, we created opportunities for Victorians to be better informed about their rights and have improved access to legal services.



Our efforts have helped build sector capability to respond to legal need and engage more effectively with the community.

By supporting data and research development and informing policy and practice, we continue to enable a more responsive and inclusive justice system.

A week of where law meets life

Once again, the third week of May brought Victorian Law Week's community-based events to the people of Victoria, helping them to understand the law, their rights, and responsibilities, and to effectively navigate the legal system.

Informed significantly by insights from the PULS, the program continued our focus on everyday legal issues like employment, housing, and family matters. This year, intersections between the law and current pressing issues like health, finances, housing and employment were particularly apparent.

With over 130 events delivered by a diverse range of legal, community, and government organisations, Law Week 2025 delivered on our commitment to a strong presence in regional and suburban areas through community-based events.

This year our regional focus was centred on communities in the Wimmera. In partnership

with Neighbourhood Houses and local organisations, 14 events were held across the region, including free legal clinics in Horsham and Stawell. The Education team also delivered two days of Law Talks at Horsham Law Courts and Town Hall. Over 150 students and teachers from seven schools attended, some travelling significant distances, gaining real-world insights and connections with legal professionals and institutions.

A key outcome of Victorian Law Week is the strong relationships developed between justice and community sectors. This is demonstrated with many Neighbourhood Houses featuring Law Week events for the second or third time as part of their annual calendar of events.

This year VLF expanded our support and guidance to event organisers across the state, with an enhanced online toolkit, and greater support on topic selection, audiences, event design and delivery. As usual we also provide program-wide PR and promotion.

Law Week plays a vital role in building legal capability across the state and opening up the law to many. The connections developed as part of Law Week support ongoing work in the community, helping to move the program of events from a moment to a movement.





Bringing the law to people

Through initiatives like Community Law Talks, VLF connects people with legal professionals in familiar settings such as schools, neighbourhood centres, and workplaces. These familiar settings make legal help more approachable and relevant.

In Warrnambool, we partnered with the Victorian Ombudsman and Young Workers Centre to deliver tailored sessions. This included presenting to students at South West TAFE with advice on workplace rights, revealing gaps in youth legal awareness. At the West Warrnambool Neighbourhood House, locals learned how to navigate complaints about government services in a practical, conversational format.

During Law Week, our *Under One Roof* sessions in Horsham and Stawell provided free law clinics that brought multiple agencies to members of the community. Over tea and coffee, locals were able to get help identifying the legal aspects in their problems and connect with the right support. The events featured representatives from the Victorian Ombudsman, Energy and Water Ombudsman Victoria, Victorian

Aboriginal Legal Service, Tenants Victoria, Victoria Legal Aid, Young Workers Centre, Victoria Police, and Ballarat and Grampians Community Legal Service. This multi-agency approach aims to make legal help more accessible. Events such as these provide a valuable opportunity to develop relationships and approaches that point to options for future engagement with the community.

Beyond providing assistance, these programs help VLF understand how people recognise legal problems, what support they seek, and how best to deliver it. This informs future outreach and research, ensuring services are not only available but truly accessible. By meeting people where they are, VLF strengthens legal capability and builds trust in the justice system.

Balancing information and the right to privacy

Our *In Conversation* series offers a rare opportunity to gain insight into the workings of Victoria's justice system. This year, the online event featured Victorian Information Commissioner Sean Morrison in conversation with Executive Director Lynne Haultain, exploring the balance between transparency and privacy in a digital age.

The in-depth discussion set out to explain complex legal concepts such as freedom of information, data regulation, and privacy law – words that are often heard but not necessarily widely understood. Morrison's reflections on legislative reforms, including the *Health Legislation Amendment (Information Sharing) Act 2023*, provided real-world context to issues that affect everyday lives.

For students and those curious about the law, the event offered a window into how legal frameworks shape public accountability and individual rights. For legal professionals, it was a chance to reflect on emerging challenges and innovations in governance and justice.

By bridging expert knowledge with public understanding, *In Conversation* continues to foster transparency, trust, and civic engagement. Bringing people into dialogue with legal leaders about the issues that matter most exemplifies VLF's commitment to making the law more approachable, inclusive, and relevant.



Victorian Information Commissioner Sean Morrison

Support to build capability

In 2024–25, Victoria Law Foundation launched its Major Grants program to support initiatives that build capability across the justice and community sectors. With grants of up to \$100,000 and a funding pool of \$550,000 (in 2024-25), the program aims to strengthen understanding of legal need and improve responses to it. Funded projects are designed to generate new insights into the legal needs and capabilities of specific communities, enhance data and research capacity within the Victorian justice sector, and support the public in navigating the justice system through accessible legal information. A key objective is to ensure that project outcomes and learnings are shared widely, contributing to sector-wide knowledge and innovation.

Complementing this initiative, VLF's Everyday Legal Grants program provides up to \$10,000 for smaller-scale civil legal projects. These grants generally assist community organisations to develop or distribute legal information and education, or trial new approaches to service delivery. Everyday Legal Grants are assessed on a rolling basis, offering flexible support for grassroots efforts to improve legal understanding and access.

Together, these grant programs reflect VLF's commitment to fostering evidence-based innovation, strengthening legal capability, and improving access to justice for all Victorians.

Major Grants

Organisation	Project Title	Total Allocated
Advocacy and Right Centre Ltd (ARC Justice)	Where do we go now? Renters' experiences of housing precarity and climate disaster	\$100,000.00
Villamanta Disability Rights Legal Service Inc	Development of an outcomes framework for Villamanta	\$50,000.00
Westjustice	Diverse Voices, Varied Justice: Police Responses in family violence intervention orders	\$99,632.00
Justice Connect	Evaluating the impact of self-help resources for individuals	\$100,000.00
Young People's Legal Rights Centre Inc (Youthlaw)	"Heads Up" – Supporting the workers who support young people in the out of homecare sector	\$99,872.00
Barwon Community Legal Service Inc	Increasing organisational impact through integrated data systems	\$100,000.00
Total		\$549,504.00

Everyday Legal Grants

Organisation	Project Title	Total Allocated
Ballarat & Grampians Community Legal Service Inc	Ask for a Lawyer Phase 2 – Family violence legal information campaign	\$10,000.00
Consumer Action Law Centre	Creation of a series of videos featuring clients impacted by consumer issues	\$10,000.00
Deakin Law Clinic (Deakin University)	Increasing capability of self-represented litigants who have applied for or are responding to an application of a family violence intervention order	\$7,948.50
Fitzroy Legal Service Inc	Citizenship clinic resourcing - community legal education, resource development, translation and interpreter costs	\$10,000.00
Human Rights Law Centre	Development of video and advocacy guides designed to increase awareness and use of the Victorian Charter of Human Rights for people with disability	\$7,500.00
inTouch Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence	Freedom of movement: Resource guide on international travel information for parents and their children	\$10,000.00
inTouch Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence	Empowerment Through Awareness: Coercive control resource project	\$10,000.00
Law and Advocacy Centre for Women	Toolkit for representing pregnant women and mothers who are incarcerated or at risk of imprisonment using a human rights lens	\$9,354.00
Moonee Valley Legal Service	Legal Health Check Tool to identifying and triage legal inquiries	\$9,193.85
Peninsula Community Legal Centre	Creation of a digital educational suite to increase secondary school students' literacy on common legal issues	\$10,000.00
Young Workers Centre	Supporting young workers to access new casual conversion legislation	\$10,000.00
Banyule Community Health (West Heidelberg Community Legal Service)	Strengthening Women's Legal Literacy – Development of a sustainable legal literacy module	\$10,000.00
Thriving Communities Foundation	Scoping an online Bring Your Bills tool	\$10,000.00
Northern Community Legal Centre	The Citizenship Key - Legal education for migrant and refugee young people	\$10,000.00
Whittlesea Community Connections (Community Legal Service)	Roll the Dice - Development of a community legal education fines board game	\$10,000.00
Total		\$143,996.35



Building legal capability for young Victorians

The schools program continues to serve as a key initiative in building legal capability and supporting young people to meet their legal needs. Through more than 30 Classroom Law Talks around the state and our larger Regional and Metro Law Talks, students engage directly with legal professionals—judges, barristers, and advocates—gaining practical insights into how the justice system works and how it connects to their lives. These sessions are aligned with the VCE Legal Studies curriculum and broader civics education, ensuring relevance and strong school support.

At the County Court in Melbourne, over 80 students participated in Metro Law Talks, with interactive sessions on jury duty, civic participation, and legal problem-solving. These experiences help demystify the law and build confidence.

Our schools program prioritises disadvantaged and regional schools, where opportunities to develop legal literacy

may be fewer and barriers to legal support greater. In supporting early awareness, VLF empowers young people to navigate legal challenges such as their rights at work, consent and fines, and where to get help when a legal issue arises.

Insights from the Public Understanding of Law Survey (PULS) show that young people aged 18–24 experience high rates of legal problems, particularly in employment, housing, and mental health. Many don't identify these as having legal dimensions or know where to seek help. In response, VLF developed a dedicated webpage to support educators and youth organisations in designing strategies and services to address these gaps. Targeted communications and tailored content are part of our broader approach to supporting those who work with young people to access our research and understand what helps to build legal capability.

Fostering networks that build insight and capability

Enhancing Engagement is VLF's professional development webinar series, supporting the legal assistance sector to improve how it communicates legal information. In 2024–25, the series provided practical tools and real-world examples to help legal professionals better connect with the communities they serve.

One standout session, *Screenshot This!*, featured Westjustice's *Legal Street Smarts* – *Socially Networked project*, which demonstrated how social media can be used to deliver legal education to young people in engaging, accessible formats. The project showed how platforms like Instagram and TikTok can be powerful tools for reaching audiences who may not engage with traditional legal resources.

Another session, *The Room Where It Happens*, explored intersectional approaches to legal problem-solving, drawing on the *Fix It Fridays* program at Whittlesea Community House. The webinar highlighted how co-located services can help people navigate complex, overlapping legal and social issues, particularly where there are multiple forms of disadvantage.

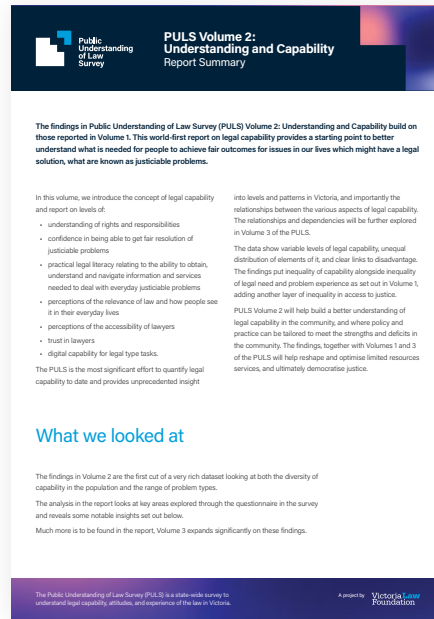
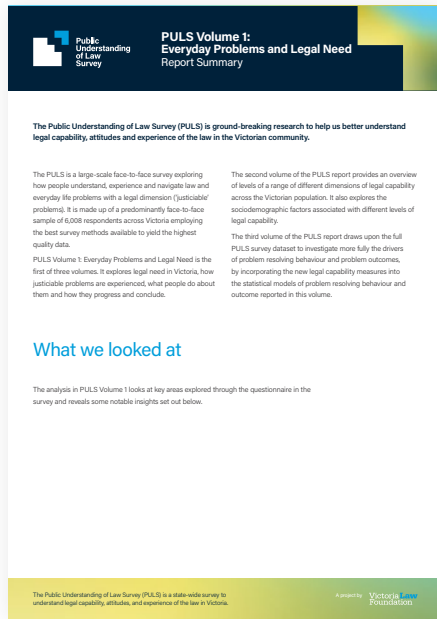
These webinars reflect VLF's commitment to building capability across the sector. By equipping legal professionals with the skills to communicate more clearly and inclusively, *Enhancing Engagement* helps ensure that legal information is not only available, but truly accessible to all Victorians.

Open data to amplify impact

In 2024–25, VLF demonstrated our commitment to open science and research transparency with the public release of the Public Understanding of Law Survey (PULS) dataset, underscoring the principle that access to information is essential for informed policy, practice, and public engagement.

The PULS dataset is the most comprehensive collection of data on legal need and capability of Victorians. It captures how people experience legal problems, their attitudes toward the law, and the barriers they face in handling and resolving legal matters. By making this dataset publicly available, we enable researchers, policymakers, and legal assistance organisations to explore and address systemic issues with evidence-based solutions.

Accompanied by a detailed *Guide to Using the PULS Dataset*, the release supports responsible and informed use of the data, encouraging collaboration across disciplines and sectors. It also aligns with broader movements in open data and public interest research, reinforcing the value of transparency in building trust and improving outcomes.



Making research accessible

In 2024–25, we released a series of summaries on the three major reports from the PULS, designed to make key findings from these volumes more accessible to policymakers, service providers, and the broader community. The summaries distil complex research into clear, readable formats that support evidence-informed decision-making and service design.

The summaries highlight critical insights from all three volumes. Volume 1 reveals that justiciable problems—legal issues arising from everyday life—are widespread, often interconnected, and disproportionately affect disadvantaged groups.

Volume 2 introduces the concept of legal capability, examining how knowledge, confidence, literacy, and attitudes toward law vary across the population and influence access to justice. It shows that capability is unevenly distributed and closely tied to disadvantage.

Volume 3 builds on these findings, demonstrating how legal capability affects problem-solving behaviour, satisfaction with outcomes, and whether legal needs are met. It highlights the importance of tailoring services to individual capability and calls for a more person-centred approach to justice.

New understanding through collection and use of data

Tenants Victoria used data-driven research to better understand the experiences and challenges faced by single-parent renters in Victoria. Funded by a Victoria Law Foundation Knowledge Grant, this was a major qualitative research project for the organisation and was designed to strengthen service responses and advocate for systemic reform.

By establishing ethical research protocols, integrating renter voice into service design, and utilising data analysis techniques, the organisation strengthened its ability to evaluate and adapt services.

The research has directly informed operational decisions and bolstered advocacy work, with findings used to support systemic reform efforts and amplify renter experiences in policy discussions.



“

This project helped us realise the value of embedding research into our practice. It's shifted how we think about service delivery and opened doors to more collaborative, evidence-based approaches.”

— Hannah Gray, Senior Research and Evaluation Officer,
Tenants Victoria

Perform

We continue to invest in our high-performing, collaborative team that is recognised for its expertise, integrity, and impact.



Our commitment to quality and inclusion ensures staff feel supported and safe, while maintaining a strong reputation across the justice, research, and community sectors.

By strengthening internal systems, expanding our influence, and securing long-term financial sustainability, we are well positioned to deliver lasting value to Victorians.

Insights and relationships from across the globe

VLF participated in the 2024 International Access to Justice Forum in Toronto, presenting insights from the PULS and contributing to global discourse on legal need and capability. VLF's research highlighted the critical role of legal capability in shaping access to justice outcomes, demonstrating that individuals with higher capability are more likely to engage with the legal system and achieve fair resolutions, and examined the tight nexus between poor health and legal need.

We also supported a number of local organisations to attend, with a Victorian representative presenting in the majority of sessions. This strong presence reflects the sector's collaborative approach to advancing responses access to justice.

The Forum underscored the universality of access to justice challenges and the convergence of innovative responses across jurisdictions. Notably, Victoria was recognised for its leadership in community legal education and integrated service models, particularly through community legal centres and First Nations legal services. Discussions also explored the intersection of civil and criminal legal needs, the growing relevance of justice epidemiology, and the implications of digital transformation and AI in legal services.



Bringing the profession together

Our Legal Laneway Breakfast events brought together around 400 legal professionals across Victoria to celebrate the new year in Melbourne, Morwell and Ballarat.

In the CBD, over 250 legal professionals attended, hearing from Victoria's new Attorney-General, the Honourable Sonya Kilkeny MP, who emphasised the legal sector's role in combating misinformation and advancing access to justice. Vincent Shin of Westjustice shared insights from his pioneering work as Victoria's first school lawyer, highlighting the importance of early legal education.

Morwell hosted its first Breakfast at Latrobe Regional Gallery, in partnership with the Gippsland Law Association. Former Attorney-General Rob Hulls and Charlie

Campbell of the Koori Court spoke on culturally responsive justice, and Fiona McLeay, CEO of the Victorian Legal Services Board, stressed the link between lawyer wellbeing and community service.

Ballarat's event at the George Hotel featured speakers including Claudia Fatone CEO at Women's Legal Service Victoria, who addressed the intersection of family violence and legal practice. Local leaders also reflected on the year ahead and the importance of collaboration.

Each region embraced the Breakfasts uniquely, showcasing the sector's commitment to reform, inclusion, and community connection and setting a collaborative tone for 2025.



Meeting the new cohort for a new grant round

At the beginning of 2025, VLF hosted its inaugural Major Grants networking event, bringing together grant recipients and VLF staff for a morning of connection and collaboration. The gathering provided a welcoming environment for recipients to engage with one another, share insights, and build relationships that will support the success of their projects.

Grants Director Melanie Rygl opened the session with an overview of VLF's grant program, highlighting the strategic intent behind the new Major Grants. Representatives from Research, Events, and Communications followed with presentations outlining the support available to recipients throughout the lifecycle of their projects—from development to dissemination.

Each grant recipient was invited to introduce their project, reflecting on previous work and outlining how their current initiatives aim to strengthen data use and innovation within Victoria's justice system. The event facilitated valuable knowledge exchange, with attendees identifying shared experiences, reconnecting with past collaborators, and forming new professional connections.

The session fostered a spirit of collaboration and mutual support, with participants sharing practical advice and project design insights. We look forward to seeing these important projects unfold in the year ahead.

Listening, learning, improving

As part of our commitment to continuous improvement, VLF undertook an Impact Study with key stakeholders in late 2024 to better understand how our work is perceived and used across the justice sector. The study focused on key projects from our Research, Grants, and Education teams and involved structured interviews with a diverse group of stakeholders.

The findings provided valuable insights into the awareness, relevance, and impact of our work. Stakeholders consistently reported positive engagement with VLF staff and expressed appreciation for our support across all program areas. They highlighted the value of our research, the accessibility of our education initiatives, and the practical support offered through our grants program.

Importantly, the study also identified areas for growth. Stakeholders encouraged us to further translate our research—particularly PULS findings—into formats that support policy, advocacy, and service delivery. Feedback also pointed to the need for broader grant reach and enhanced support for evaluation and communication.

These insights have directly informed our recent organisational review, shaped resource allocation, and led to refinements in how we design and deliver our programs. The Impact Study reinforces our commitment to listening, learning, and evolving to better serve the justice sector.

Strengthening data governance and responsible AI use

VLF is committed to maintaining the highest standards of data governance, privacy, and ethical technology use. In 2024–25, we continued to strengthen our data governance framework to ensure that data is managed as a strategic asset across its full lifecycle—from collection and storage to use and disposal.

Our data governance policy is underpinned by four key principles: responsible data management and use, clear ownership and security, data quality and integrity, and appropriate retention and disposal. These principles guide how we protect sensitive information, ensure compliance with privacy laws, and support transparency and accountability in our work.

Recognising the growing role of artificial intelligence in the workplace, we have established an internal AI Working Group. This group explores the opportunities and risks of AI tools, ensuring their use aligns with our values, obligations and commitment to evidence-based practice. It also supports staff in understanding how to use AI responsibly and ethically.

Throughout the year, guided by our Business Services team, we invested in staff awareness of risks and maintaining our knowledge in this ever-changing landscape. VLF is proactive in our approach to data and technology and through these initiatives ensure we remain a trusted, secure, and forward-thinking organisation.

Collaboration in action

Victoria Law Foundation's strength lies in the unique integration of our Research, Grants, and Education functions. This year, we expanded our collaborative capability with the establishment of the Strategy and Engagement function, reinforcing how we work together.

Our internal collaboration was particularly evident in the Major Grants program, with input from across the agency. Relevant applications continue to be reviewed by members of the Research team, providing valuable insights into project methodology, data collection, and the potential for long-term impact.

Successful grant recipients were also offered tailored support, including guidance on research design, data systems, outcome measurement, and communication strategies, ensuring projects are not only well-executed but also shared effectively with the broader sector. Our *Research Network* events often showcase funded projects, keeping stakeholders informed of emerging trends and evidence in access to justice.

This cross-functional collaboration ensures that every project we support is grounded in research, strengthened by education, and contributes to our strategic outcomes and builds legal capability.

Building a stronger foundation for First Nations engagement

In 2024–25, VLF worked to embed reconciliation across our operations, guided by the development of our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan. Our Reconciliation Working Group (RWG) led an organisation-wide effort to strengthen cultural capability, deepen relationships with First Nations communities, and ensure our work is more inclusive and impactful.

We invested in staff training, cultural learning, and participation in key events such as NAIDOC and National Reconciliation Week, fostering a shared understanding and commitment across VLF. Internally, we focused on enhancing cultural safety and inclusive language. Externally, we commenced an engagement plan to build meaningful partnerships with local First Nations stakeholders.

To support the release of the Yoorrook Justice Commission's final report, *Truth Be Told*, VLF staff participated in the *Walk for Truth*, culminating at Parliament House. The walk's first day in Portland coincided with Victorian Law Week, with staff participation highlighting our commitment to truth-telling, reconciliation, and ensuring our work addresses the needs of First Nations peoples.

Investing in staff development

VLF's commitment to evidence-based practice and sector leadership is reflected in our investment in staff development, notably through our annual Reading Week initiative. Reading Week offers staff an opportunity to step back from day-to-day responsibilities and engage deeply with professional development, research, and reflection. It is a dedicated time to explore articles, training programs, webinars and resources that inform our work and shape our understanding of access to justice.

Participation is flexible and self-directed, allowing staff to tailor their learning to individual goals and areas of interest. Activities and insights are shared to expand our collective understanding and embed a culture of continuous learning. This year curated resources focused on people-centred justice, legal needs research, and broader social and technological trends affecting the justice system.

This investment in our people ensures that VLF remains informed, proactive, and engaged in shaping our strategic and operational work.



Charlie Campbell, Court Services Victoria; Fiona McLeay, Victorian Legal Services Board & Commissioner; Katherine Woods, Gippsland Law Association; Lynne Haultain; Rob Hulls RMIT Centre for Innovative Justice

Collaborating to build on shared understanding

In 2024-25 Justice Connect received a VLF Major Grant to design and undertake an evaluation of their online self-help resources. Informed by findings from the PULS and previous VLF grant funded projects, the project will assess more than 100 resources to understand what's working, for whom, and for which matters.

As part of the project, the VLF Research team has provided support, helping to shape the research design, refining the survey, and develop interview guides.



Photo by Anna Carlisle, supplied by Justice Connect

“

Access to the PULS Reports and dataset helped us focus our research questions and ground our work in the bigger picture.”

— Grace Conway, Measurement, Evaluation and Learning Lead, Justice Connect

Financial Report 2024-25

Income Statement	42
Statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income	43
Statement of financial position	44
Statement of changes in equity	45
Statement of cash flows	46
Notes to financial statements	47
Foundation members' declaration	66
Independent auditor's report	67

Income Statement

For the year ended 30 June 2025

	Note	2025 \$	2025 \$
Revenue and other income			
Legal Services Board Public Purpose Fund	2	3,597,782	2,941,875
Managed funds distributions, dividends and other gains	2	149,947	109,906
Other income	2	177,624	180,256
		<u>3,925,353</u>	<u>3,232,037</u>
Less: expenses			
Administrative expenses		(210,354)	(142,910)
Depreciation and amortisation expense	3	(132,431)	(131,142)
Employee benefits expense		(2,181,129)	(1,953,787)
Finance costs	3	(45,524)	(50,114)
Program expenses		(874,006)	(501,381)
Research expenses		(71,828)	(105,325)
Other expenses		(62,354)	(75,906)
		<u>(3,577,626)</u>	<u>(2,960,565)</u>
Surplus from operating activities		<u>347,727</u>	<u>271,472</u>
Unrealised net (loss)/gain in <i>fair</i> value of financial assets classified at fair value through profit or loss		(7,253)	80,629
Surplus for the year		<u>340,474</u>	<u>352,101</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income

For the year ended 30 June 2025

	Note	2025 \$	2025 \$
Surplus for the year		340,474	352,101
Other comprehensive income			
<i>Items that will not be reclassified subsequently to profit and loss</i>			
Unrealised net gain in fair value of financial assets designated at fair value through other comprehensive income		178,464	113,820
Net gain on disposal of financial assets classified at fair value through other comprehensive income		24,370	35,745
		202,834	149,565
Other comprehensive income for the year		202,834	149,565
Total comprehensive income		543,308	501,666

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Statement of financial position

As at 30 June 2025

	Note	2025 \$	2025 \$
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	4	957,982	922,229
Trade and other receivables	5	64,653	63,433
Other current assets	6	1,200	470
Total Current Assets		1,023,835	986,132
Non-current assets			
Other financial assets	7	4,784,344	4,034,894
Lease assets	8	635,867	716,221
Plant and equipment	9	37,636	37,912
Total Non-current Assets		5,457,847	4,789,027
Total Assets		6,481,682	5,775,159
Current liabilities			
Trade and other payables	10	269,100	252,108
Lease liabilities	8	100,374	84,721
Provisions	11	666,127	466,880
Total Current Liabilities		1,035,601	803,709
Non-current liabilities			
Lease liabilities	8	599,471	668,183
Provisions	11	39,108	39,073
Total Non-current Liabilities		638,579	707,256
Total Liabilities		1,674,180	1,510,965
Net Assets		4,807,502	4,264,194
Equity			
Reserves	12	577,459	381,878
Accumulated funds	13	4,230,043	3,882,316
Total Equity		4,807,502	4,264,194

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Statement of changes in equity

For the year ended 30 June 2025

	Financial assets at fair value \$	Profits reserve \$	Accumulated surplus \$	Total equity \$
Balance as at 1 July 2023	100,953	50,731	3,610,844	3,762,528
Surplus for the year	-	-	352,101	352,101
Net change in fair value of financial assets designated at fair value through other comprehensive income	113,820	-	-	113,820
Transfer from financial assets at fair value through other comprehensive income reserve	-	35,745	-	35,745
Total comprehensive income for the year	113,820	35,745	352,101	501,666
Transfer to reserve	80,629	-	(80,629)	-
Balance as at 30 June 2024	295,402	86,476	3,882,316	4,264,194
Balance as at 1 July 2024	295,402	86,476	3,882,316	4,264,194
Surplus for the year	-	-	340,474	340,474
Net change in fair value of financial assets designated at fair value through other comprehensive income	178,464	-	-	178,464
Transfer from financial assets at fair value through other comprehensive income reserve relating to disposals	-	24,370	-	24,370
Total comprehensive income for the year	178,464	24,370	340,474	543,308
Transfer to reserve	(7,253)	-	7,253	-
Balance as at 30 June 2025	466,613	110,846	4,230,043	4,807,502

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 30 June 2025

Item	Note	2025 \$	2025 \$
Cash flow from operating activities			
Funding from Legal Services Board Public Purpose Fund		3,597,782	2,941,875
Payments to suppliers and employees		(2,696,196)	(2,499,740)
Payment of approved grants and projects		(488,680)	(336,825)
Interest received		92,128	92,198
Finance costs		(45,524)	(50,114)
Sponsorship, project and other income		68,876	66,356
Net cash provided by operating activities	14(b)	528,386	213,750
Cash flow from investing activities			
Payment for plant and equipment		(20,568)	(25,118)
Proceeds from sale of investments		212,693	692,108
Payment for shares and managed fund acquisitions		(766,470)	(491,447)
Dividends and distributions received		149,445	97,468
Recoupment of imputation credits received		17,582	20,740
Net cash provided / (used in) by investing activities		(407,318)	293,751
Cash flow from financing activities			
Principal portion of lease payments		(85,315)	(92,320)
Net cash used in financing activities		(85,315)	(92,320)
Cash at beginning of the financial year		922,229	507,048
Net increase in cash held		35,753	415,181
Cash at end of financial year	14(a)	957,982	922,229

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Notes to financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 1: Summary of material accounting policies

General information

The financial report is a general purpose financial report that has been prepared in accordance with the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* and Australian Accounting Standards, Interpretations and other applicable authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board.

The financial report covers Victoria Law Foundation as an individual entity. Victoria Law Foundation is a body corporate pursuant to the *Victoria Law Foundation Act 2009*. Victoria Law Foundation is a not-forprofit entity for the purpose of preparing the financial statements.

The financial report was approved by the directors on:

Historical Cost Convention

The financial report has been prepared under the historical cost convention, as modified by revaluations to fair value for certain classes of assets and liabilities as described in the accounting policies.

Fair value measurement

For financial reporting purposes, 'fair value' is the price that would be received to sell an asset, or paid to transfer a liability, in an orderly transaction between market participants (under current market conditions) at the measurement date, regardless of whether that price is directly observable or estimated using another valuation technique.

When estimating the fair value of an asset or liability, the entity uses valuation techniques that are appropriate in the circumstances and for which sufficient data are available to measure fair value, maximising the use of relevant observable inputs and minimising the use of unobservable inputs. Inputs to valuation techniques used to measure fair value are categorised into three levels according to the extent to which the inputs are observable:

- Level 1 inputs are quoted prices (unadjusted) in active markets for identical assets or liabilities that the entity can access at the measurement date.
- Level 2 inputs are inputs other than quoted prices included within Level 1 that are observable for the asset or liability, either directly or indirectly.
- Level 3 inputs are unobservable inputs for the asset or liability.

Going Concern

The financial report has been prepared on a going concern basis, which contemplates continuity of normal business activities and the realisation of assets and the settlement of liabilities in the ordinary course of business.

The Foundation is dependent on funding from the Legal Services Board in order to fund the majority of its operations. At the date of this report the members have no reason to believe that this funding will not continue to support the operations of the Foundation into the future.

Notes to financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 1: Summary of material accounting policies (continued)

New and revised accounting standards effective at 30 June 2025

The Foundation has applied all new and revised Australian Accounting Standards that apply for the first time at 30 June 2025. The application of these Australian Accounting Standards did not have a material impact on the Foundation's financial statements.

Material accounting policies

The following material accounting policies have been applied in the preparation and presentation of the financial report.

(a) Revenue and other income

Funding revenue received from the Legal Services Board Public Purpose Fund is brought to account upon receipt. Dividend and other distribution revenue is recognised when the right to receive a dividend or other distribution is established.

Interest revenue is measured in accordance with the effective interest method.

All revenue is measured net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST).

(b) Provisions

Provisions are recognised when the Foundation has a legal or constructive obligation, as a result of past events, for which it is probable that an outflow of economic benefits will result and that outflow can be reliably measured.

The amount recognised as a provision is the best estimate of the expenditure required to settle the present obligation at the end of the reporting period.

(c) Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand, demand deposits, short-term deposits with an original maturity of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities in the statement of financial position.

(d) Grants Provided

The Foundation brings into account as a provision all amounts approved under the Foundation's Grants Program. Recognition of the provision occurs when the formal approval of a grant is given by the Foundation and an acceptance of conditions of grant is signed by the grant recipient.

Notes to financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 1: Summary of material accounting policies (continued)

(e) Taxation

Income Tax

No provision for income tax has been raised as the Foundation is exempt from income tax under Division 50 of the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997*.

(f) Financial instruments

Initial recognition and measurement

Financial assets and financial liabilities are recognised when the Foundation becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the instrument. For financial assets, this is equivalent to the date that the Foundation commits itself to either the purchase or sale of the asset (i.e. trade date accounting is adopted).

Financial instruments are initially measured at fair value adjusted for transaction costs, except where the instrument is classified as fair value through profit or loss, in which case transaction costs are immediately recognised as expenses in profit or loss.

Classification of financial assets

Financial assets recognised by the Foundation are subsequently measured in their entirety at either amortised cost or fair value, subject to their classification and whether the Foundation irrevocably designates the financial asset on initial recognition at fair value through other comprehensive income (FVtOCI) in accordance with the relevant criteria in AASB 9.

Financial assets not irrevocably designated on initial recognition at FVtOCI are classified as subsequently measured at amortised cost, FVtOCI or fair value through profit or loss (FVtPL) on the basis of both:

- (a) the Foundation's business model for managing the financial assets; and
- (b) the contractual cash flow characteristics of the financial asset.

Trade and other receivables

Trade and other receivables arise from the Foundation's transactions with its customers and are normally settled within 30 days.

Consistent with both the Foundation's business model for managing the financial assets and the contractual cash flow characteristics of the assets, trade and other receivables are subsequently measured at amortised cost.

Corporate bonds

Corporate bonds are debt instruments issued by both listed and unlisted companies, and are classified (and measured) at fair value through other comprehensive income on the basis that:

- (a) they are held within a business model whose objective is achieved by the Foundation both collecting contractual cash flows and selling the financial assets; and
- (b) the contractual terms of the financial asset give rise on specified dates to cash flows that are solely payments of principal and interest on the principal amount outstanding.

Notes to financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 1: Summary of material accounting policies (continued)

(f) Financial instruments (Continued)

Equity instruments

Equity instruments comprise ordinary shares in listed entities that are not held for trading. On initial recognition, investments identified by the Foundation as equity instruments are irrevocably designated (and measured) at fair value through other comprehensive income. This election has been made as the members believe that to otherwise recognise changes in the fair value of these investments in profit or loss would be inconsistent with the objective of holding these investments.

Investments in Managed Funds

Investments in Managed Funds where the units held are redeemable directly to the Fund are classified and subsequently measured at fair value through profit or loss.

(g) Plant and equipment

Each class of plant and equipment is measured at cost or fair value less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation and any accumulated impairment losses.

Plant and equipment

Plant and equipment is measured on the cost basis.

Depreciation

The depreciable amount of all plant and equipment is depreciated over their estimated useful lives commencing from the time the asset is held available for use, consistent with the estimated consumption of the economic benefits embodied in the asset.

Leasehold improvements

Leasehold improvements are depreciated over the shorter of either the unexpired period of the lease or the estimated useful lives of the improvements.

Class of fixed asset	Depreciation rates	Depreciation basis
Leasehold improvements at cost	13%	Straight line
Furniture, fixtures and fittings at cost	11 - 33%	Straight line
Computer equipment at cost	10 - 33%	Straight line
Library at cost	5%	Straight line

Library

The cost of purchases which represent long term holdings of the library are capitalised and subsequently depreciated. Expenditure on library materials of a short term reference nature are expensed in the year of purchase.

Notes to financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 1: Summary of material accounting policies (continued)

(h) Impairment of non-financial assets

All non-financial assets, including property, plant and equipment, lease assets and other intangible assets, are tested for impairment whenever events or circumstances indicate that the asset may be impaired.

For impairment assessment purposes, assets are generally grouped at the lowest levels for which there are largely independent cash inflows ('cash generating units'). Accordingly, most assets are tested for impairment at the cash generating unit level. An impairment loss is recognised when the carrying amount of an asset or cash generating unit (to which the asset belongs) exceeds its recoverable amount.

(i) Leases

Lease assets are measured at cost less accumulated depreciation and any accumulated impairment losses.

Lease assets are depreciated over the shorter of the lease term and the estimated useful life of the underlying asset, on a basis that is consistent with the expected pattern of consumption of the economic benefits embodied in the underlying asset.

Lease liabilities are measured at the present value of the remaining lease payments. Interest expense on lease liabilities is recognised in profit or loss. Variable lease payments not included in the measurement of lease liabilities are recognised as an expense in the period in which they are incurred.

Lease payments made in relation to leases of 12-months or less and leases of low value assets (for which a lease asset and a lease liability has not been recognised) are recognised as an expense on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

(j) Employee benefits

Short-term employee benefits

Provisions for short-term employee benefits, including annual leave that are expected to be settled wholly within twelve months after the end of the reporting period, are measured at the (undiscounted) amount of the benefit expected to be paid.

Long-term employee benefits

Provisions for other long-term employee benefits, including long service leave and annual leave that are not expected to be settled wholly within twelve months after the end of the reporting period, are measured at the present value of the expected benefit to be paid in respect of the services provided by employees up to the reporting date.

(k) Borrowing costs

Borrowing costs, including interest and other finance costs, that are directly attributable to the acquisition, construction or production of a qualifying asset are included in the cost of that asset. All other borrowing costs are recognised in profit or loss.

Notes to financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 1: Summary of material accounting policies (continued)

(l) Goods and services tax (GST)

Revenues, expenses and purchased assets are recognised net of the amount of GST.

The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the taxation authority is included as part of receivables and payables in the Statement of Financial Position.

Cash flows are presented in the statement of cash flows on a gross basis, except for the GST component of investing and financing activities, which are disclosed as operating cash flows.

	2025 \$	2025 \$
Note 2: Revenue and Other Income		
Legal Services Board Public Purpose Fund	3,597,782	2,941,875
Managed funds distributions, dividends and other gains	149,947	109,906
Other income		
Imputation credits refund	17,582	20,740
Sponsorship and project income	60,500	62,500
Interest income	92,128	92,198
Sundry income	7,414	4,818
	177,624	180,256
	3,925,353	3,232,037

(a) Economic dependency

The Foundation is dependent on funding from the Legal Services Board in order to fund the majority of its operations. This funding has been committed for the financial year ending 30 June 2026. The members of the Foundation have no reason to believe that the funding will not continue beyond this period.

Notes to financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2025

	2025 \$	2025 \$
Note 3: Surplus From Operating Activities		
Surplus from operating activities has been determined after:		
Finance costs	45,524	50,114
Depreciation		
— leasehold improvements	636	558
— furniture and fittings	668	1,595
— computer equipment	18,517	17,370
	19,821	19,523
Amortisation of leased assets	112,610	111,619
Employee benefits		
— Short term benefits	1,957,435	1,724,905
— Superannuation guarantee contributions	217,777	188,792
— Other employee benefits	5,917	40,090
	2,181,129	1,953,787
Remuneration of auditors for <i>Pitcher Partners (Melbourne)</i>		
Audit and assurance services		
— Audit of the financial report	28,990	27,610
Note 4: Cash and cash equivalents		
Cash at bank	957,982	922,229
Note 5: Trade and other Receivables		
CURRENT		
Trade debtors	-	962
GST receivable	33,349	31,669
Other debtors	31,304	30,802
	64,653	63,433
Note 6: Other current assets		
CURRENT		
Prepayments	1,200	470

Notes to financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2025

	2025 \$	2025 \$
Note 7: Other financial assets		
NON-CURRENT		
<i>Financial assets at fair value through profit or loss</i>		
Managed funds	1,118,793	1,224,602
<i>Financial assets at fair value through other comprehensive income</i>		
Domestic and foreign equities	1,884,158	1,495,397
Fixed interest	1,781,393	1,314,895
	<u>4,784,344</u>	<u>4,034,894</u>

Basis of determining fair value

All assets listed above are measured and recognised as Level 1 assets under the fair value measurement hierarchy. All Foundation investment assets are measured based on available quoted prices traded on active financial markets.

Note 8: Lease Assets and Lease Liabilities

(a) Lease assets

Buildings under lease		
At cost	850,187	827,840
Accumulated amortisation	(223,238)	(111,619)
	<u>626,949</u>	<u>716,221</u>
Office equipment under lease		
At cost	9,909	-
Accumulated amortisation	(991)	-
	<u>8,918</u>	<u>-</u>
Total carrying amount of lease assets	<u>635,867</u>	<u>716,221</u>

Notes to financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2025

	2025 \$	2025 \$
Note 8: Lease Assets and Lease Liabilities (continued)		
Reconciliations		
Reconciliation of the carry amount of lease assets at the beginning and end of the financial year:		
<i>Buildings</i>		
Opening carrying amount	716,221	-
Additions	22,347	827,840
Amortisation	(111,619)	(111,619)
Closing carrying amount	626,949	716,221
<i>Office equipment</i>		
Opening carrying amount	-	-
Additions	9,909	-
Amortisation	(991)	-
Closing carrying amount	8,918	-
(b) Lease liabilities		
CURRENT		
Lease liability - buildings	98,518	84,721
Lease liability - office equipment	1,856	-
	100,374	84,721
NON-CURRENT		
Lease liability - buildings	592,012	668,183
Lease liability - office equipment	7,459	-
	599,471	668,183
Total carrying amount of lease liabilities	699,845	752,904
(c) Lease expenses and cashflows		
Amortisation expense on lease assets	112,610	111,619
Interest expense on lease liabilities	45,524	50,114
Cash outflow in relation to leases	130,839	142,434

Notes to financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2025

	2025 \$	2025 \$
Note 9: Plant and equipment		
Leasehold improvements at cost	4,890	4,890
Less accumulated depreciation	(1,194)	(558)
	3,696	4,332
Library at cost	-	4,211
Less accumulated depreciation	-	(3,460)
	-	751
Furniture, fixtures and fittings at cost	32,838	30,132
Less accumulated depreciation	(29,794)	(29,179)
	3,044	953
Computer equipment at cost	110,753	99,167
Less accumulated depreciation	(79,857)	(67,291)
	30,896	31,876
Total plant and equipment	37,636	37,912
(a) Reconciliations		
Reconciliation of the carrying amounts of plant and equipment at the beginning and end of the current financial year		
<i>Leasehold improvements</i>		
Opening carrying amount	4,332	-
Additions	-	4,890
Depreciation expense	(636)	(558)
Closing carrying amount	3,696	4,332
<i>Library</i>		
Opening carrying amount	751	804
Disposals	(698)	-
Depreciation expense	(53)	(53)
Closing carrying amount	-	751
<i>Furniture, fixtures and fittings</i>		
Opening carrying amount	953	2,495
Additions	2,706	-
Depreciation expense	(615)	(1,542)
Closing carrying amount	3,044	953

Notes to financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2025

	2025 \$	2025 \$
Note 9: Plant and equipment (Continued)		
(a) Reconciliations (Continued)		
<i>Computer equipment</i>		
Opening carrying amount	31,876	33,211
Additions	17,862	20,228
Disposals	(325)	(4,193)
Depreciation expense	(18,517)	(17,370)
Closing carrying amount	30,896	31,876
<i>Total plant and equipment</i>		
Carrying amount at 1 July	37,912	36,510
Additions	20,568	25,118
Disposals	(1,023)	(4,193)
Depreciation expense	(19,821)	(19,523)
Carrying amount at 30 June	37,636	37,912
Note 10: Trade & other payables		
CURRENT		
<i>Unsecured liabilities</i>		
Trade creditors	45,839	167,783
Sundry creditors and accruals	223,261	84,325
	269,100	252,108
Note 11: Provisions		
CURRENT		
Employee benefits (a)	321,874	316,676
Provision for approved grants	344,253	150,204
	666,127	466,880
NON-CURRENT		
Employee benefits (a)	28,336	39,073
Provision for approved grants	10,772	-
	39,108	39,073
(a) Aggregate employee benefits liability	350,210	355,749

Notes to financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 12: Reserves

	2025 \$	2025 \$
Financial assets revaluation reserve	466,613	295,402
Profits reserve	110,846	86,476
	577,459	381,878

Financial assets revaluation reserve is used to record the unrealised movements in fair values of financial assets.
The profits reserve is used to record realised gains / (losses) made on the disposal of financial assets.

Note 13: Accumulated funds

Accumulated funds at the beginning of the financial year	3,882,316	3,610,844
Surplus attributable to the members of the entity	340,474	352,101
Transfers (from) / to reserves	7,253	(80,629)
	4,230,043	3,882,316

Notes to financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2025

	2025 \$	2025 \$
Note 14: Cash Flow information		
(a) Reconciliation of cash		
Cash at the end of the financial year as shown in the Statement of Cash Flows is reconciled to the related items in the Statement of Financial Position as follows:		
Cash at bank	957,982	922,229
	<u>957,982</u>	<u>922,229</u>
(b) Reconciliation of cash flow from operations with surplus		
Surplus from ordinary activities	340,474	352,101
Adjustments and non-cash items		
Amortisation	112,610	111,618
Depreciation	19,821	19,523
Net loss on disposal of plant and equipment	1,023	4,193
Non-cash movement in investments	7,253	(80,629)
Reclassification of dividends and distributions received to investing activities	(149,947)	(109,906)
Reclassification of recoupment of imputation credits received to investing activities	(17,582)	(20,740)
Changes in operating assets and liabilities		
(Increase) / decrease in receivables	(718)	11,082
(Increase) / decrease in other assets	(730)	17,106
Increase / (decrease) in payables	16,992	(84,058)
Decrease in other liabilities	(92)	(8,165)
(Decrease) / increase in payables	(5,539)	13,450
Increase / (decrease) in grant provisions	204,821	(11,825)
	<u>187,912</u>	<u>(138,351)</u>
Cash flows from operating activities	<u>528,386</u>	<u>213,750</u>

Notes to financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 15: Financial risk management

The Foundation is exposed to the following financial risks in respect to the financial instruments that it held at the end of the reporting period:

- (a) interest rate risk
- (b) credit risk
- (c) liquidity risk
- (d) market price risk
- (e) fair values

The Foundation's board has overall responsibility for identifying and managing operational and financial risks.

The Foundation does not use derivative instruments to manage risks associated with its financial instruments.

(a) Interest rate risk

The Foundation is exposed to interest rate risk in relation to its financial instruments. Interest rate risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate as a result of changes in market interest rates.

All investments held by the Foundation are non-interest bearing except for cash and fixed interest financial assets at fair value through other comprehensive income.

The effective weighted average interest rate on cash is 2.69% (2024: 2.93%). Fixed interest investments have a fair value of \$1,781,393 (2024: \$1,314,895) which is subject to fluctuations as a result of interest rate risk.

The impact of reasonably possible movements in interest rates at year end are not considered to be material. No other financial assets or financial liabilities are expected to be exposed to interest rate risk.

(b) Credit risk

Credit risk is the risk that one party to a financial instrument will cause a financial loss for the other party by failing to discharge an obligation.

The maximum exposure to credit risk, excluding the value of any collateral or other security, at balance date of recognised financial assets is the carrying amount of those assets, net of any provisions for impairment of those assets, as disclosed in statement of financial position and notes to financial statements.

The Foundation does not have any material credit risk exposure to any single counterparty or group of counterparties under financial instruments entered into by the Foundation.

Notes to financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 15: Financial risk management (continued)

(i) Cash deposits

Credit risk for cash deposits is managed by holding all cash deposits with major Australian banks.

(ii) Receivables from contracts with customers

The Foundation does not have any material receivables from contracts with customers.

(iii) Other financial instruments

Credit risk for financial instruments is managed by holding a diversified portfolio of investments.

(c) Liquidity risk

Liquidity risk is the risk that an entity will encounter difficulty in meeting obligations associated with financial liabilities.

The Foundation manages liquidity risk by the monitoring of cash and working capital balances in conjunction with the Foundation's detailed budget. When necessary cash may be sourced from liquidation of other financial assets, but only with board approval.

The following table outlines the Foundation's remaining contractual maturities for non-derivative financial instruments. The amounts presented in the table are the undiscounted contractual cash flows of the financial liabilities, allocated to time bands based on the earliest date on which the Foundation can be required to pay.

	<12 months	1-5 years	Total contractual cash flows	Carrying amount
Year ended 30 June 2025				
Cash and cash equivalents	957,982	-	957,982	957,982
Receivables	64,653	-	64,653	64,653
Other financial assets	-	4,784,344	4,784,344	4,784,344
Payables	(269,100)	-	(269,100)	(269,100)
Lease liabilities	(100,374)	(599,471)	(699,845)	(699,845)
Net maturities	653,161	4,184,873	4,838,034	4,838,034
Year ended 30 June 2024				
Cash and cash equivalents	922,229	-	922,229	922,229
Receivables	33,866	-	33,866	63,433
Other financial assets	-	4,034,894	4,034,894	4,034,894
Payables	(252,108)	-	(252,108)	(252,108)
Lease liabilities	(84,721)	(668,183)	(752,904)	(752,904)
Net maturities	619,266	3,366,711	3,985,977	4,015,544

Notes to financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 15: Financial risk management (continued)

(d) Other market risk

Other market risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market prices (other than those arising from interest rate risk or currency risk).

The Foundation may have a material exposure to market price risk.

Sensitivity

Managed funds are measured at fair value through profit or loss. Equity instruments and corporate bonds are measured at fair value through other comprehensive income. If market prices were to increase / decrease by 5% from the prices observable at the reporting date, assuming all other variables remain constant, then the impact on profit for the year and equity is as follows:

	2025	2025
+ / - 5% price variation	\$	\$
Impact on profit	55,940	61,230
Impact on equity	183,278	140,515

(e) Fair values compared with carrying amounts

The fair value of financial assets and financial liabilities approximates their carrying amounts as disclosed in the statement of financial position and notes to financial statements.

Notes to financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 16: Fair value measurement

(a) Fair Value Hierarchy

The following table provides the fair value classification of those assets and liabilities held by the Foundation that are measured either on a recurring or non-recurring basis at fair value.

	Level 1 \$	Level 2 \$	Level 3 \$	Total \$
2025				
Recurring fair value measurements				
Financial assets				
<i>Financial assets at fair value</i>				
Domestic and foreign equities	1,884,158	-	-	1,884,158
Fixed interest	1,781,393	-	-	1,781,393
Managed funds	1,118,793	-	-	1,118,793
Total financial assets	4,784,344	-	-	4,784,344
2024				
Recurring fair value measurements				
Financial assets				
<i>Financial assets at fair value</i>				
Domestic and foreign equities	1,495,397	-	-	1,495,397
Fixed interest	1,314,895	-	-	1,314,895
Managed funds	1,224,602	-	-	1,224,602
Total financial assets	4,034,894	-	-	4,034,894

(b) Transfers between recurring level 1 and level 2 fair value measurements

There were no transfers between level 1 and level 2 during the year.

Notes to financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 17: Related party transactions

(a) Transactions with other related parties

Victoria Law Foundation board members are also connected with the following organisations which provided or received payments (exclusive of GST) as documented below:

Law Institute of Victoria provided sponsorship income of \$5,000 during the 2025 financial year (2024: \$5,000). Victoria Law Foundation paid rent & occupancy fees of \$129,688 to Law Institute of Victoria during the 2025 financial year (2024: \$125,080). Victoria Law Foundation paid membership and events fees of \$1,039 to Law Institute of Victoria during the 2025 financial year (2024: \$347). Victoria Law Foundation paid room hire and catering fees of \$5,994 to Law Institute of Victoria during the 2025 financial year (2024: \$3,847). Dr Gerry Bean is a Member of the Law Institute of Victoria.

Victoria Bar Association provided sponsorship income of \$5,500 during the 2025 financial year (2024: \$5,500). Peter Caillard is a Member of the Victoria Bar Association. Federation of Community Legal Centres provided sponsorship income of \$10,000 during the 2025 financial year (2024: \$2,500). Tania McKenna is the nominee to the Foundation Board of the Federation of Community Legal Centres.

Victoria Legal Aid provided sponsorship income of \$10,000 during the 2025 financial year (2024: \$10,000). Victoria Law Foundation provided support of \$5,000 to Victoria Legal Aid for a staff member to attend a conference during 2024 the prior financial year. Rowan McRae is a staff member of Victoria Legal Aid.

Victoria Law Foundation made grant contributions of \$49,754 to Monash University in 2024 the prior financial year. Melissa Castan is a Professor and the Associate Dean (Education) in the Law Faculty at Monash University.

The related parties disclosed above are not involved in the decisions with respect to the approval of grants to their related organisations.

	2025 \$	2024 \$
Note 18: Key management personnel compensation		
Compensation received by key management personnel of the Foundation	272,800	262,304
	<u>272,800</u>	<u>262,304</u>

Notes to financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 19: Events subsequent to reporting date

On 6 August 2025, the Foundation received confirmation from the Legal Services Board regarding funding allocation for the fiscal year 2026. The approved funding amount is \$4,577,119.

There has been no other matters or circumstances, which has arisen since 30 June 2025 that has significantly affected or may significantly affect:

- (a) the operations, in financial years subsequent to 30 June 2025, of the Foundation, or
- (b) the results of those operations, or
- (c) the state of affairs, in financial years subsequent to 30 June 2025, of the Foundation.

Note 20: Foundation details

The principal place of business of the Foundation is:

Victoria Law Foundation
Level 13
140 William Street
Melbourne VIC 3000

Foundation members' declaration

The members of the Foundation declare that:

1. In the members opinion, the financial statements and notes thereto, as set out on pages 1 - 24, satisfy the requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 and the Victoria Law Foundation Act 2009*, including:
 - (a) complying with Australian Accounting Standards and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulations 2022*; and
 - (b) giving a true and fair view of the financial position as at 30 June 2025 and performance for the year ended on that date of the Foundation.
2. In the members opinion there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Foundation will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable. Signed in accordance with subsection 60.15(2) of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulations 2022*.



Stephen Roche
Member



Peter Caillard
Member

Dated this 30th day of September 2025

VICTORIA LAW FOUNDATION
ABN: 64 131 425 884

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT
TO THE MEMBERS OF VICTORIA LAW FOUNDATION

Opinion

We have audited the financial report of Victoria Law Foundation ("the Foundation"), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2025, the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements including material accounting policy information, and the Foundation members' declaration.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report of Victoria Law Foundation, is in accordance with *Victoria Law Foundation Act 2009*, including:

- (a) giving a true and fair view of the Foundation's financial position as at 30 June 2025 and of its financial performance for the year then ended; and
- (b) complying with Australian Accounting Standards and Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulations 2022*.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of our report. We are independent of the Foundation in accordance with the auditor independence requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* ("ACNC Act") and the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including Independence Standards)* ("the Code") that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Other Information

The members are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Foundation's annual report for the year ended 30 June 2025, but does not include the financial report and our auditor's report thereon.

Our opinion on the financial report does not cover the other information and accordingly we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial report, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial report or

VICTORIA LAW FOUNDATION
ABN: 64 131 425 884

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT
TO THE MEMBERS OF VICTORIA LAW FOUNDATION

Other Information (Continued)

our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Report

Management is responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, *Victoria Law Foundation Act 2009* and the ACNC Act, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, management is responsible for assessing the Foundation's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Foundation or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Foundation's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.

VICTORIA LAW FOUNDATION
ABN: 64 131 425 884

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT
TO THE MEMBERS OF VICTORIA LAW FOUNDATION

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report (Continued)

- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Foundation's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the members.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the members' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Foundation's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Foundation to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with the members regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.



B POWERS

Partner



PITCHER PARTNERS

Melbourne

Date: 1 October 2025

Victoria**Law**
Foundation

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Victoria Law Foundation is a not-for-profit organisation supporting better justice for all Victorians through research, education and grants.