

LAUREL HOUSE BOARD APPLICATION INFORMATION PACK



Introduction

Thank you for your interest in joining the Laurel House Board.

This pack is designed to assist you with your application by providing relevant information about Laurel House, our strategic direction, governance and organisational structure, and other information relevant to the Laurel House Board.

If you would like any further information or a confidential discussion about the role, please contact Nicole Crook, Laurel House Board Chair on 0413 122 086 or [via email](#); or Kathryn Fordyce Laurel House CEO on 0427 739 397 or [via email](#).

About Laurel House

Established in 1988, the North and North West Tasmanian Sexual Assault Support Service Inc, known as Laurel House, is a not-for-profit, community-based specialist sexual assault support service.

Laurel House is an incorporated association registered with the Australian Charities and Not for Profit Commission (ACNC) and the Consumer, Building and Occupational Services (CBOS). Laurel House is endorsed as a Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR), and is a Public Benevolent Institution endorsed to access to Goods and Services Tax (GST) Concession, Fringe Benefit Tax (FBT) Exemption, and Income Tax Exemption.

For further information about Laurel House, please refer to our website: laurelhouse.org.au

Our Contact Details

Launceston: 66 York Street, Launceston, TAS, 7250

Burnie: 16 Mooreville Road, Burnie, TAS, 7320

Devonport: 1/57 Best Street, Devonport, TAS 7310

Postal Address: PO Box 1062, Launceston, TAS, 7250

North Phone: (03) 6334 2740

North West Phone: (03) 6431 9711

Email: info@laurelhouse.org.au

Website: laurelhouse.org.au

24/7 Support Hotline: 1800 MYSUPPORT (1800 697 877) – Available statewide.

Our Vision

Everyone acts to prevent and respond to sexual harm.

Purpose

Laurel House drives change through counselling, education and advocacy.

Looking Ahead

Laurel House is currently developing its next Strategic Plan, building on our Vision and Purpose to provide a clear roadmap for the organisation's future priorities and continued impact across Tasmania.

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Our Values



We are curious: We are inquisitive, reflective, consider different ideas, and are driven to learn and improve: we are a *learning culture*.

We are courageous: We are accountable, persistent and encouraging of others in the face of change, challenges and unknowns.

We are inclusive: We respect difference, value diversity and amplify the voices of people who are not often heard.

We are collaborative: We achieve more by building trusting relationships and working in partnership with others.

We are hopeful: We envision positive outcomes, are goal oriented and bring a mindset that allows us to plan for a better future.

Laurel House Membership

As an incorporated association, Laurel House's membership structure is outlined in the Laurel House Constitution. Membership at Laurel House is open to individuals and organizations committed to supporting victim-survivors of sexual violence and promoting safer communities. Members play a vital role in shaping the direction of the service and advocating for systemic change.

Further details and our current Laurel House Membership lists are available on the Laurel House website: [Become A Member](#)

Our Services

Laurel House is a trusted, community-based organisation that provides essential support services to victim-survivors of sexual violence in North and North West Tasmania. Our holistic approach combines therapeutic counselling, support, advocacy, training and prevention initiatives to help individuals heal and build safer communities. We provide an inclusive service that addresses sexual inequalities and abuses by advocating for individual and community change.

Therapeutic Support Services

Our Therapeutic Services team cover the North and North West of Tasmania. We provide specialist counselling, support and advocacy services to victim-survivors of sexual assault and their non-offending family members and support people.

We deliver specialist therapeutic adults, young people and children including the provision of therapeutic face-to-face counselling at our centres located at Launceston, Devonport and Burnie and through outreach locations across the North and North West Tasmania.

Laurel House partners with the Tasmanian Government in the delivery of the Northern and North West Arch Centres (multidisciplinary centres) for victim-survivors of sexual harm.

<https://arch.tas.gov.au/>

After Hours Support Service

The 1800 My Support Telephone Support Line provides 24/7 specialist sexual violence support. The phone is operated by Laurel House in the north and north west of Tasmania, and by SASS in the south.

The staff who deliver this service work on a roster covering overnight from 5:00pm to 8:30am weekdays, weekends and public holidays. They are responsible for providing phone-based counselling as well as acute care response, support and advocacy and provide coordination for victim-survivors of sexual assault who may be presenting to a hospital who may be undergoing forensic or medical examination.

Educational Programs

The Laurel House team develops and delivers a wide range of community education programs focused on the prevention of sexual harm and on supporting parents, carers and service providers to better respond to disclosures of sexual violence.

Laurel House can develop tailor-made programs to support businesses/organisations with educating teams around consent and respect, and respectful relationships to support employers to meet their responsibilities under work health and safety management of psycho-social hazards and sexual harassment.

Lived Experience Engagement Program

The Lived Experience Engagement Program (LEEP) is a Laurel House initiative that enables victim-survivors of sexual violence and child sexual abuse from diverse and intersectional backgrounds to contribute their lived expertise to advocacy, service improvement, and systemic change. The program ensures that lived experience informs policy, practice, community education, and service design, helping to strengthen responses to sexual violence across the community and sector. Through lived experience advocacy and peer support, participants are provided with training, mentoring, and ongoing support to engage safely and effectively in this work. LEEP also creates opportunities for external organisations to collaborate with lived experience workers, ensuring survivor voices remain central to shaping services, systems, and community understanding.

Policy and Advocacy

By engaging with victim-survivors and professionals working in the field, the Policy and Advocacy team at Laurel House ensures that policy and advocacy efforts are both evidence-based and survivor-centered. This approach strengthens their ability to influence meaningful reforms and improve service responses to sexual violence.

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Administration and Operations Support

Working behind the scenes, the Operations Team is made up of the Administration Lead, Administration and Finance Coordinator, People and Culture Office, Arch Administration Officers, Casual Administration Support Officers and the Operations Manager. This team handles all the administrative, human resources, property management, finance and governance duties associated with running the organisation.

Organisational Structure

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is responsible to the Laurel House Board for the management and operations of Laurel House. The CEO is supported by the Executive Leadership team that is comprised of the Therapeutic Services Manager, Community Education and Advocacy Manager, and the Operations Manager. The CEO and Executive Leadership Team are supported by the Board and Executive Assistant. The Laurel House Organisational Chart is also available upon request.

Our Key Documents

The following key documents guide Laurel House's operations and strategic direction.

Strategic Plan 2023–2025

The [Laurel House Strategic Plan](#) 2023–2025 set the organisation's strategic direction around equipping communities to prevent and respond to sexual violence. Its priorities included delivering inclusive and accessible support, amplifying the diverse voices of victim-survivors, strengthening partnerships, community education and advocacy, and building organisational capability.

As the 2023–2025 Strategic Plan has conclude, Laurel House is currently developing its next Strategic Plan. The new plan will build on our Vision and Purpose and provide a clear roadmap for the organisation's future priorities, continued impact and commitment to supporting victim-survivors and building safer communities across Tasmania.

Annual Reports

Laurel House's Annual Reports provide an overview of the organisation's activities, achievements, and financial performance each year. They demonstrate our commitment to transparency and accountability, highlight the impact of our services, and report on progress against organisational and strategic priorities. Laurel House [Annual Reports](#) are available on our website.

Laurel House Constitution

The Laurel House Constitution serves as the foundational legal document that outlines the organisation's purpose, governance structure, and operational framework. It establishes the roles and responsibilities of board members, guiding principles for decision-making, and the processes for ensuring accountability and transparency within the organisation. The Laurel House [Constitution](#) is available on our website.

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The Laurel House Board

The Laurel House Board ('the Board') is committed to the principles of good corporate governance and the adoption of ethical conduct in all areas of its responsibilities and authority.

The Board of Laurel House plays a crucial role in setting the overall strategic direction of the organisation, including establishing its vision, mission, and values, and approving the strategic plan.

The Board is responsible for appointing and supporting the CEO, monitoring organisational performance against strategic goals, and overseeing risk management to ensure that potential risks are identified and mitigated effectively. Additionally, the Board ensures compliance with legal and ethical standards, maintains a comprehensive policy framework, and engages in networking to foster beneficial relationships with stakeholders.

By promoting effective communication and making informed decisions, the Board guides Laurel House towards achieving its mission while ensuring accountability and transparency in all its operations.

Role of the Laurel House Board

The Laurel House Board leads the work of Laurel House and provides leadership and strategic governance, in partnership with the CEO who is responsible for day-to-day operations.

Board responsibilities include:

- Overseeing the development and implementation of the Laurel House Strategic Plan;
- Reviewing outcomes and metrics for evaluating outcomes and impact, and regularly measuring its performance and effectiveness using those metrics;
- Approving Laurel House's budget, audit reports, and material business decisions;
- Being informed of, and meeting all, legal and fiduciary responsibilities;
- Annual performance evaluation of the CEO;
- Serving on Board Sub-Committees;
- Representing Laurel House to stakeholders, as required; and
- Ensuring Laurel House's commitment to a diverse board and staff that reflects the communities Laurel House serves.

Board Composition and Term of Office

The Laurel House Board is made up of ten (10) board members. At least one member position on the board is reserved for a person who has significant clinical experience in the delivery or governance of a trauma-informed counselling, social work or psychology service, and at least one member position on the board is reserved for an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person.

Laurel House's Board Members serve two-year terms. Four board members will be elected at each annual general meeting. As well, two board members are to be appointed by the board annually taking into account the needs of the board.

Four board members are elected to office bearer positions of chair, deputy chair, treasurer and secretary. The officers of the Association must have been an ordinary board member for at least twelve months prior to becoming an officer of the Association, except in a circumstance of an identified skill gap and with the unanimous approval of the board. Each officer of the Association may hold an office for four consecutive years but may only serve a maximum of six years in total as an officer of any description

Please see the Laurel House website to view current [board membership](#).

Board Member Remuneration

Laurel House Board roles are voluntary. Laurel House will pay out of pocket expenses for Directors engaged in Laurel House business, in line with the organisation's Reimbursement Policy.

Board Meeting Frequency and Location

The Board meets at least every second month (bi-monthly), usually on a Thursday from 4.30pm to 6.30pm and holds two face-to-face meetings focused on strategic and/or governance review and board development per year (usually May and November). The meeting dates are set in advance for the year.

Board meetings are usually held online to support the attendance of regional and remote Board Members. In-person attendance can be supported at Laurel House's office if needed.

The Board may pass a resolution without a meeting being held if all the Board Directors entitled to vote on the resolution state in writing (usually via our board portal, Our Cat Herder) that they are in favour of passing the resolution.

Time Commitment

Board members are expected to dedicate time to both board and sub-committee responsibilities, as well as key organisational events. The estimated time commitment is as follows:

- Board Meetings: Held bi-monthly, each meeting runs for approximately 2 hours (around 16 hours annually), with 2-3 hours of preparation per meeting (around 20 hours annually).
- Out-of-session Meetings: These meetings occur when the needs of the organisation necessitate additional input from the board outside of scheduled meetings. It is difficult to predict the time commitment needed for out-of-session meetings.
- Sub-Committee Meetings: These occur bi-monthly and last 1.5 hours per meeting (around 12 hours annually), with around 1 hour of preparation per meeting (around 10 hours annually).
- Planning Days: The Board participates in two face-to-face annual planning days, lasting approximately 5 hours; focused on strategic and/or governance review and board development.

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- Annual General Meeting (AGM): Typically a 1-hour meeting, cooccurring with one of the above planning days.
- Optional Attendance at Events: Board members are encouraged to attend Laurel House events, which may require approximately 10 hours per annum.

This results in an overall commitment of around 70 to 85 hours annually (approximately 6 to 7 hours per month). Time commitments may vary depending on specific board role and the organisational needs.

Board Member Duties

In order to meet their legal duties and obligations, it is expected that Laurel House board members will:

- comply with the Code of Conduct and the Board Charter at all times
- attend all meetings of the Board, the Annual General Meeting, and all relevant subcommittee meetings
- participates in and contribute to discussions and decision making in all areas of Board responsibility
- exercise due diligence in decision making and acting in the best interests of Laurel House and for its charitable purpose at all times
- identify risks, opportunities, changing strategic environment that may influence the organisation or its strategic plan
- disclose conflicts of interest, and do not misuse their position or information gained as a board member
- ensure that the financial affairs of the charity are managed responsibly, including not allowing Laurel House to operate while it is insolvent

Board Directors may be requested to formally represent the organisation by sitting on external committees or attending events.

Board Sub-Committees

The Board carries out certain duties by delegation to Board Sub-Committees, which comprise of Board Directors with interest and expertise. Board Members are asked to participate in at least one committee. Each Board Sub-Committee has a Terms of Reference clearly defining their role, responsibilities and function, and the extent of their authority. Board Sub-Committees advise and make recommendations to the Board. Laurel House Board has established three formal sub committees, each responsible to the Board. The function of each committee is detailed below:

- **Quality, Safety and Practice Committee:** The role of the Quality, Safety and Practice Committee is to assist the Board in fulfilling its corporate governance responsibilities in relation to practice governance including compliance with the NASASV standards and other best-practice frameworks about client safety.
- **Finance, Audit and Risk Management Committee:** The role of the Finance, Audit and Risk Management Committee is to assist the Board to fulfill its fiduciary and corporate governance responsibilities relating to financial reporting, internal control structures, risk management and compliance systems, internal audit, and external audit.

- **Governance & Nominations Committee:** The role of the Governance and Nominations Committee is to assist the Board in fulfilling its corporate governance responsibilities in relation to Board and CEO recruitment, performance, and development.

Public Officer

The Public Officer is the holder of all Laurel House's records, including member records, and is the point of contact between the organisation and the relevant statutory authorities for that purpose. Specific duties and responsibilities are outlined in the Constitution and the Public Officer Position Description. The Public Officer for Laurel House is the CEO.

Application Process

The Laurel House board is seeking applications from suitable candidates to join the board. Following analysis of the current board composition and the needs of the organisation, it has been determined that Laurel House is looking for candidates with a background in:

- Governance
- Legal
- Marketing, communications and public relations
- Fundraising, capital raising and revenue diversification at a strategic or governance level

Laurel House values the expertise, lived experience and cultural knowledge that diverse perspectives bring to our Board. We strongly encourage applications from victim-survivors, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, LGBTIQA+, migrant and culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and people with disability.

We also strongly encourage applications from people living in regional and remote communities, particularly the North West, West Coast, East Coast or the Islands.

In addition, applicants must meet the following essential criteria

- Possess the ability to think strategically and to identify and critically assess strategic opportunities and threats.
- Be able to identify key risks to the organisation in a wide range of areas and to specifically contribute to addressing risks.
- Possess knowledge in best practice corporate and clinical governance structures, policies, and processes.
- Possess a passion for the work of Laurel House and a commitment to support victim-survivors of sexual assault.
- Have the interpersonal communication skills and character necessary to work in collaboration with other board members for the benefit of the organisation.
- Possess knowledge of the socio-cultural, legal and regulatory environment influencing sexual violence, child protection and domestic violence, or the ability to quickly acquire.
- Willingness to commit to own director professional education, and actively engage in activities focused on improving board performance.

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Further, it would be advantageous for applicants to meet the following desirable criteria:

- Experience in a not-for-profit community-based organisation.
- Experience working in a professional setting where clients are experiencing or have experienced traumatic events, and staff are at risk of vicarious trauma.
- Training/experience in working with diversity including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people; people with disabilities; members of culturally, linguistically and religiously diverse communities.
- Understanding of sexual assault through an intersectional approach that considers where gender and other inequalities/oppressions produce unique experiences of violence.

Applicants must also meet the following requirements:

- Be a member of Laurel House. If you not yet a member, [click here](#) or email (karen.vanlangenberg@laurelhouse.org.au).
- Be able to attend in person or via technology scheduled after-hours board meetings (between 6 and 9 per year of approximately 2 hours in duration), out of session meetings including strategic and/or governance review planning, and the Annual General Meeting.
- Be able to participate in one subcommittee of the Board and attend the meetings as per the committee charter.
- Come to meetings prepared, willing to actively contribute, and at times to challenge the status quo.
- Possess or be willing to apply for a National Police Check, Working with Vulnerable People Check and a National Personal Insolvency Index (NPII) check.
- Not appear on the banned and disqualified register held by ASIC and not have been declared bankrupt.

To apply:

Applications are invited from candidates who meet the essential skills and expertise, and personal attributes.

Please submit your application by completing the [Nomination Form](#), a cover letter addressing the selection criteria and your resume to the Public Officer, Kathryn Fordyce, via email (kathryn.fordyce@laurelhouse.org.au).

If you would like any further information or a confidential discussion about the role, please contact Nicole Crook, Laurel House Board Chair, on 0413 122 086 or [via email](#); or Kathryn Fordyce Laurel House CEO on 0427 739 397 or [via email](#).