



A SAFE PLACE FOR WOMEN



2023

# ANNUAL REPORT

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Lou's Place acknowledges the Gadigal People of the Eora nation as the traditional custodians of the land in which we work and deliver services on. We recognise their continuing connection to the land, waters and culture and thank them for protecting it since time immemorial.

We pay our respect to Elders past and present, and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women who are part of the Lou's Place community.

**AUSTRALIA ALWAYS WAS AND  
ALWAYS WILL BE ABORIGINAL LAND.**



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# A NOTE FROM THE CHAIR



2023 has been an incredible year of growth in every way at Lou's. Our client numbers have virtually doubled since our days in Potts Point and to manage this growth, the service's offerings and staff levels have increased. Lou's is now a solid middle-sized service with a reputation for consistently providing a safe place for women, a community in which to heal, and the therapeutic programs and referral resources to change women's lives. Volunteers continue to be at the heart of Lou's with more meals being prepared than we ever imagined, and our beloved activities often oversubscribed. No matter how much we grow, we are committed to maintaining the inclusive, independent, and warm welcoming spirit that defines us.

From a fundraising and economic perspective Lou's is blessed with a group of loyal philanthropic and community donors who enable us to stay open and respond to the growing number of women seeking support. Knowing our costs are increasing, we reached out this year and had some success in receiving grants from several larger foundations for specific areas of expenses, such as our growing food budget. We also worked to broaden our network of government contacts and have begun a conversation about some ongoing support for our work with homeless women. We will continue to reach out to broaden our engagement with new donors, and welcome introductions from existing friends and supporters.



Alexa Haslingden

# GENERAL MANAGERS REPORT

As I contemplate the last year a profound sense of pride and gratitude fills me. This past year has been a transformative journey for Lou's Place, marked by significant milestones and the unwavering support of our incredible community.

The decision to move to a more spacious location was made prior to my tenure, however I cannot go without mentioning the impact this decision has had. This relocation has proven pivotal, enabling us to extend our reach and offer unparalleled support to an increasing number of women who are seeking support and a safe place come together and connect with others whilst seeking support and having their basic needs met at Lou's Place.

Heartfelt thanks go to our exceptional team of staff and volunteers whose tireless dedication ensures Lou's Place's continues to be a success. Their commitment has been instrumental in maintaining a Lou's Place that is a haven for those in need despite the difficulties encountered due to the rapid growth, their passion continues to propel our service forward.

I extend my deepest gratitude to all who have contributed to Lou's Place's success, whether through time, resources, or sharing our story. Your involvement has played a crucial role in shaping Lou's Place into the wonderful space it is today.

Amanda Greaney



*"Lou's Place is more than a service or a drop-in space. It's a community!"*

# TREASURERS REPORT

It is my pleasure to present the Treasurer's Report for Lou's Place for the financial year 2022-23. Our financial statements have been prepared in accordance with accounting standards, ensuring transparency and accuracy in our reporting. We are immensely grateful to Price Waterhouse Cooper for their invaluable contribution in independently auditing our financials, providing this service pro bono.

Lou's Place is deeply reliant on the generosity of our donors, who are primarily individual community members, supporting businesses, and philanthropic foundations. Their contributions have been instrumental in sustaining our operations and facilitating our mission of providing a safe place for women.

In addition to donations, our fundraising endeavours have played a pivotal role in supporting our operations. Our annual fundraising event, Lou's Closet, was a tremendous success, raising in excess of \$112,000. Furthermore, the Empty Shoes Vigil, which increased education while also raising over \$100,000 for Lou's Place operations, demonstrated the dedication and hard work of our volunteers, staff, and supporters.

These achievements underscore the unwavering commitment of our community towards our cause. We extend our heartfelt thanks to all those who contributed, volunteered, and supported Lou's Place throughout the year. Your generosity and dedication have made a tangible difference in the lives of the women we serve.

As we move forward, we remain committed to our mission and to the responsible stewardship of the resources entrusted to us. We look forward to continuing our work in providing an a Safe Place for women.



*Karen Martin*

**INCOME** \$1,603,911

**EXPENDITURE** \$996,462

**SURPLUS** \$607,449

"Lou's had a great year financially in 2022 - 2023, thanks predominantly to the generosity of our donors.

Through their unwavering support, we have finished the year with a surplus that has allowed us to review and restructure our staffing to meet the increase in clients we have seen over the past year.

This includes an additional case worker, additional administration support and the ability to address career progression opportunities for our current staff."

# A YEAR AT LOU'S DROP-IN CENTRE

ON AVERAGE

**39**  
**WOMEN**

VISIT LOU'S DROP-IN  
EVERY DAY!



## IN THE LAST YEAR WE HAVE SUPPORTED WOMEN IN OUR COMMUNITY WITH...

**1727** Breakfasts

**7086** Lunches

**2056** Toiletries

**1321** Loads of Washing

**458** Hot Showers

At the heart of Lou's Place, the drop-in centre has seen considerable growth since January 2023. Despite this expansion, our core mission remains unwavering: to offer women a secure haven to simply exist and fulfill their basic needs.

This vital space continues to be a sanctuary for vulnerable women grappling with life's challenges. Here, they find respite for the day, with access to essential amenities such as laundry, showers, meals, and emergency clothing. Lou's Place drop-in center is not just a place; it's a lifeline that fosters connection and combats isolation, empowering women on their journey to stability and well-being.



# BUILDING COMMUNITY

At Lou's Place, we have maintained a commitment to providing a safe space where women can come together, forge new connections, find a welcoming space, and alleviate the weight of social isolation. Our diverse range of activities led by committed volunteers caters to various interests and preferences, ensuring that there's something for everyone who is seeking solace and companionship within our walls.

Over time, we've witnessed a remarkable surge in attendance at our scheduled weekly activities, with the numbers of women accessing these activities climbing considerably. This increase stands as a testament to the growing recognition of Lou's Place as a sought-after destination for community engagement and support. From the soothing flow of yoga sessions to the exuberant energy of karaoke, our activities are well-attended, resonating deeply with our attendees. Creative writing workshops provide a platform for self-expression, while the delicate art of jewellery making and the therapeutic rhythm of sewing remain perennial favourites among the women.

At Lou's Place, we recognise the profound impact of these volunteer-led initiatives in enriching the lives of those we serve. As we continue to prioritise inclusivity and support, Lou's Place remains steadfast in its mission to provide a haven where all can find belonging, connection, and a sense of community.



**EACH WEEK, OUR SPACE BUZZES WITH THE LAUGHTER, CAMARADERIE, AND SHARED EXPERIENCES OF WOMEN COMING TOGETHER TO PARTICIPATE IN THESE CHERISHED ACTIVITIES.**



**OUR ACTIVITIES NOT ONLY NURTURE CREATIVITY BUT ALSO FOSTER A SENSE OF BELONGING, EMPOWERING WOMEN TO EXPLORE THEIR PASSIONS AND FORM MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS.**

# BUILDING COMMUNITY

This year we ran over **464 individual activity sessions** with at least **2162 recorded attendances**. Some of the highlights from this year include...

## ART

We ran **50 sessions** with **321 attendances**



## SEWING

We ran **51 sessions** with **404 attendances**



## JEWELLERY MAKING

We ran **50 sessions** with **321 attendances**



## CREATIVE WRITING

We ran **41 sessions** with **126 attendances**



## MEDITATION & BREATHWORK

We ran **32 sessions** with **75 attendances**



## YOGA

We ran **53 sessions** with **199 attendances**



The Always Mum program has continued to grow throughout the past year, with some incredible outcomes and milestones reached through our core program, workshops, and case management.

Our 10-week program is psycho-educational in nature which allows for therapeutic “moments of change”, it is highly experiential and uses metaphors and imagery to speak about things that are often too painful or difficult to put into words. It has been such a privilege to witness the incredible amount of insight, strength, and dedication that the mums have displayed to build safe, nurturing relationships with their kids.

## FEEDBACK

In the final session of Always Mum, we conduct an anonymous evaluation, emphasizing the importance of candid feedback for ongoing service enhancement.

### WHAT HAVE I LEARNT IN THE LAST 10 WEEKS OF ALWAYS MUM?

*“Never give up.”*

*“How to acknowledge my children’s feelings and thinking from a child’s perspective”*

*“To forgive myself.”*

### WHAT WOULD MY KIDS SAY IF THEY KNEW I HAD DONE ALWAYS MUM?

*“My mum finished mummy school.”*

*“They would be proud of their mum and the hard work she has done to bring them home where they belong.”*

### WHAT ADVICE WOULD I GIVE TO OTHER MUMS WITH KIDS IN OOHC?

*“Do Always Mum – you will feel like you have an army behind you.”*

*“Stay connected, reach out and build your village.”*

## THIS YEAR, THE ALWAYS MUM PROGRAM HAS SUPPORTED:

**39**  
MUMS

**88**  
KIDS

**56%** Identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander

**15%** From Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds

## SEEDS OF WISDOM



At the end of each session, mums are given a seed to record their “ah hah” moment or something that they understand or see differently as a result of the group session.





## CASE MANAGEMENT

Always Mum case management is a unique service tailored to provide holistic support for mothers who are navigating the Child Protection System. This could look like; support to improve contacts with their kids, understanding court processes and documents, communicating with services, or support to work towards the restoration of their kids where safe and appropriate.

**Four mums who we have supported through case management have had their children restored to their care.**

We have had the privilege of working alongside them intensively over the past couple of years, supporting them through the highs and lows of the process, but ultimately, these mums have displayed tremendous amount of strength, resilience, and dedication to their kids to achieve their goal of reunification.

**"I LOVE THE TEAM AT LOU'S AND THINK THAT ALWAYS MUM IS SO UNIQUE I WILL BE FOREVER GRATEFUL FOR ALWAYS MUM AND THE SUPPORT I RECEIVE FROM LOU'S".**

-Group Participant



## VISITS WITH MUM

Our new space provides a conducive environment for mothers and their children to meet when supervised visits are required by DCJ. Previously challenges related to weather, accessibility, and child needs meant very few options were available. Mothers had to spend precious and limited time visiting with kids at local DCJ offices, which was often related to traumatic events. Mothers said that this hindered them having meaningful and positive visits.

Lou's is now able to offer mothers a space to visit that is comfortable, familiar and equipped with toys, books, and activities. Staff members are available to offer emotional support and parenting advice before and after visits.

**The initiative aims to create a more supportive and nurturing atmosphere for families to foster improved parent-child relationships.**



**DECORATING BOXES TO STORE PRECIOUS MEMORIES FOR THEIR KIDS**

# Connecting THROUGH Change



**34**  
**WOMEN**

Completed our  
**core program** this year.

**31%**

Identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres  
Straight Islander

**21%**

From Culturally and Linguistically  
Diverse Backgrounds



## WEEKLY AFFIRMATIONS & NURTURING GROWTH

## EXTENDING OUR REACH



In May 2023, we forged a valuable partnership with WHOS to conduct a tailored 5-week outreach group for women undergoing residential drug and alcohol rehabilitation.

Derived from our core 7-week program, the content was meticulously adjusted to address the unique needs of this specific group. Having successfully delivered two outreach groups at WHOS, we've supported 32 women through our program. The feedback from staff and participants has been remarkably positive. and we are honoured to contribute to the healing journeys of these women.

**32**  
**WOMEN**

Completed our  
**outreach program**  
this year.

"IT'S BECAUSE OF THIS COURSE THAT  
I DID NOT GO BACK TO MY EX.  
THIS COURSE HAS HELPED KEEP  
ME SAFE."

-Group Participant

## IMPACT & OUTCOMES:

We conduct an anonymous evaluation at the beginning and end of the group which allows us to measure change, impact & outcomes achieved:

**"I feel like I can identify red flags and  
warning signs early in a relationship."**

**51% IMPROVEMENT**

**"I feel comfortable in setting boundaries with  
intimate partners."**

**39% IMPROVEMENT**

**"I am aware of my rights."**

**38% IMPROVEMENT**

**"I feel connected to other women who have  
been through a similar experience as me."**

**44% IMPROVEMENT**



"MY BIGGEST TAKEAWAY WAS THAT I AM NOT ALONE, AND I DID NOT DO ANYTHING TO DESERVE WHAT HAPPENED TO ME."

-Group Participant

## PROGRAM REDEVELOPMENT

Connecting Through Change underwent a **comprehensive program redevelopment** in the past year. This initiative has been rooted in the valuable first-hand feedback and suggestions we received from the women who have engaged in our program.

The program has been restructured into a 7-week face-to-face group that adopts a **trauma-informed, strengths-based approach** through psychoeducational and therapeutic group work activities and discussions.

The holistic nature of the program underscores its commitment to promoting healthy relationships, fostering well-being, and empowering victim-survivors to prioritise their recovery and seek support. Through activities, group discussions, reflective exercises, and meditative tools, the program not only educates but also cultivates resilience and post-traumatic growth, offering a supportive journey toward healing and empowerment.

We feel truly privileged to play a role in the significant life journeys of these women and to observe the profound connections they forge through the power of group work. The incredible insight, resilience, and comradery.

## SOME OF THE TOPICS WE EXPLORE:

A deeper understanding of domestic and family violence, including warning signs and power and control dynamics.

Nurturing self-care and well-being practices.

Building healthy relationships and setting boundaries.

Insights to recognize, address, and advocate for healthy relationships free from violence.

Cultivating resilience and post-traumatic growth.

Enhancing communication and assertiveness skills.

Exploring trauma responses and coping mechanisms.

# DROP-IN CASEWORK SUPPORT

## RESPONDING TO THE NEEDS OF OUR COMMUNITY:

The Drop-In Case Work Program at Lou's Place has recognized a surge in demand for support among women who visit the our drop-in centre daily seeking assistance. In response to this increased need, the program has expanded its staffing in the latter part of this year. This proactive approach underscores the program's commitment to addressing the evolving needs of marginalised women in our community.



**748**

TOTAL INCIDENTS  
OF SUPPORT

**38%** OF WOMEN IDENTIFY AS ABORIGINAL  
AND/OR TORRES STRAIGHT ISLANDER

**29%** OF WOMEN ARE FROM CULTURALLY AND  
LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS

## ABOUT THE PROGRAM:

The primary objective of the Drop-In Case Work Program is to offer one-time or short-term case management support to women accessing our drop-in centre. Importantly, there are no restrictions on the number of times a woman can access support from the program. Instead, the focus lies on stabilizing crises, addressing immediate needs, and eliminating barriers commonly encountered when seeking assistance. By doing so, the program aims to simplify and streamline the process of accessing support services within a safe and welcoming environment.

In essence, the program aims to provide tailored assistance to vulnerable women, ensuring they receive the necessary support to overcome challenges and access the resources essential for their well-being. Through its responsive and client-centered approach, the Drop-In Case Work Program plays a vital role in empowering women and fostering resilience within the community.

# DROP-IN CASEWORK SUPPORT

This program aims to meet women at their point of need and therefore offers flexible support that is tailored to the individual. Our case workers support women in areas including but definitely not limited to; support to obtain safe, secure housing, maintaining current tenancies, support to access to material aid, assistance with completing forms and applications., targeted referrals to appropriate services, outreach, & advocacy support.

**HOMELESSNESS** or support to *prevent homelessness* is overwhelmingly the ultimate reason that women seek support. **EVEN IF IT APPEARS SECONDARY.**

**246  
WOMEN**



## **PROVIDED WITH FINANCIAL SUPPORT.**

Support to access income, referral to financial counselling, assistance with budgeting and financial support for essential services that are at risk of disconnection, access to phone and opal top up to assist women to remain in contact with support systems. Support with access to food through food vouchers and referrals to alternative options to support longer term solutions.

**88  
WOMEN**



## **PROVIDED WITH LEGAL SUPPORT.**

Referrals to legal clinics, assistance with completing Legal Aid applications and compiling evidence, support to attend legal appointments and court hearings.

**298  
WOMEN**



## **SUPPORTED WITH HOUSING & HOMELESSNESS.**

Support to access crisis accommodation, housing applications and tenancy transfers. Support to maintain current tenancy & establish homes, advocacy and brokered crisis accommodation.

**150  
WOMEN**



## **SUPPORTED WITH HEALTH & WELLBEING.**

Physical health & wellbeing support responses include brokerage to access medication & urgent medical costs, referral to medical services that support low-cost or bulk-billed GP's. Counselling referrals and mental health support including specialist DFV support

# EVENTS AT LOU'S



## INTERNATIONAL WOMENS DAY

Lou's Place celebrated International Women's Day with the theme "Embracing Equity." Purple decorations and empowering quotes adorned our walls, setting the tone for a morning tea event attended by 46 women. A special poster titled "What it Means to be a Woman" sparked meaningful conversations, amplifying the voices of the women and reinforcing our commitment to equity for women.

## NAIDOC

During NAIDOC Week at Lou's Place, we were pleased to have multiple activities throughout the week. Commencing on Monday with Community Elders unveiling the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags, permanently placing them in Lou's Place. A successful basket weaving workshop led by Deidre Martin delighted the women on Tuesday. Wednesday began with a Welcome to Country by Aunty Rhonda, followed by a delightful community BBQ. With around 35 women attending each day, the week's events enabled us to celebrate the history, cultural and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



## BASKET WEAVING



## LOU'S CHRISTMAS PARTY

The Lou's Place Christmas Celebration brought together staff, board members, and volunteers to create a memorable day for women and children. Activities included card making, bauble decorating, carolling, gingerbread decoration, and Santa photos, alongside a spread of delicious food and festive music. Women and children all received a small gift, spreading joy throughout the day. With 78 women and 11 children in attendance, the event was a heart warming success. Everyone left with a smile on their face and filled with the spirit of the season and had created cherished memories made in the warmth of Lou's Place community.

# VOLUNTEERS

**WELCOME TO THE HEART OF LOU'S PLACE,  
WHERE OUR VOLUNTEERS STAND AS PILLARS  
OF SUPPORT.**

With their dedication, passion, and diverse talents, our 110 volunteers infuse life into the service, ensuring that lunch is served every weekday and our women have the opportunity to explore new passions, from piano to karaoke. Beyond their invaluable assistance in the kitchen cooking lunch and then leading workshops and classes like art or sewing, they also lend their expertise in areas like newsletter development, and social media management, all of which are vital to our mission. As we celebrate their invaluable contributions in this annual report, we recognise that without them, Lou's Place wouldn't be the vibrant service it is today.



**"I LOVE BEING PART OF A  
STRONG, COLLABORATIVE  
COMMUNITY OF WOMEN  
WHO HELP WOMEN."**

*- Amanda, Volunteering for 17 years*

## 2023 VOLUNTEERS OF THE YEAR AWARD



The volunteer cooks at Lou's Place have been recognised for their outstanding contributions by being nominated for the 2023 Volunteers of the Year Award. Their dedication and skill have been instrumental in ensuring that the women who visit Lou's Place have access to nutritious meals. Throughout the year, these volunteers have served a total of 260 meals, demonstrating their commitment to addressing the basic needs of the women in the community.

Their efforts go beyond just providing sustenance; they do so with care and dedication, ensuring that each meal is prepared with skill and attention to nutritional value. By doing so, they play a crucial role in ensuring that the women who rely on Lou's Place do not go hungry, fostering a sense of support and community within the space.

# WORDS FROM SOME OF OUR VOLUNTEERS

"THERE IS NOTHING QUITE LIKE BEING TOLD HOW MUCH OUR WOMEN LOVE OUR FOOD AND APPRECIATE HOW MUCH LOVE WE PUT INTO EVERY MEAL WE PREPARE. TO HAVE OUR REGULAR LADIES SAY THAT THEY COME SPECIALLY ON OUR MONDAY BECAUSE THEY LOVE OUR COOKING AND FEEL THAT WE REALLY GENUINELY CARE. NOTHING MORE REWARDING."

- Jane, Volunteering for over 24 years

"Volunteering at Lou's place for almost 10 years has been one of the most rewarding things I have done. From working in the boutiques supplying clothing to the women to cooking for them and seeing their beautiful smiles makes all the hard work worthwhile.

All this done in a very supportive, loving, kind environment surrounded by people who share the common objective of helping the most vulnerable women in our society."

- EUGENIE, VOLUNTEERING FOR 10 YEARS

“

As a veteran cook with Lou's Place, it brings me great satisfaction to be able to hop in the kitchen, find out what goodies Oz Harvest have delivered that day and cook up a storm to feed 40-50 clients.

**THESE WOMEN ARE SO GENUINELY APPRECIATIVE, THEIR JOY AT HAVING SOMEONE GO TO THE TROUBLE OF PREPARING MEALS WITH LOVE AND CARE, BRINGING A SMILE TO THEIR FACES IS PRICELESS.**

Whatever else is going on in our lives, as a volunteer cook, even making a small difference to the lives of these women reinforces the value of community, to give back, to use any skills we have to help others.

”

- ANTONIA, VOLUNTEERING FOR OVER 10 YEARS

"What I love about volunteering at Lou's is the way it enables me to connect with women from such a broad range of backgrounds and learn about their cultures and experiences, broadening my own worldview as a result."

- DEB, VOLUNTEERING FOR 1.5 YEARS

# FUNDRAISING

## LOU'S CLOSET



**IN 2023, LOU'S CLOSET PROVED TO BE MORE THAN JUST A FUNDRAISING EVENT—IT WAS A CELEBRATION OF COMMUNITY, SUSTAINABILITY, AND EMPOWERMENT.**

Held for the 13th consecutive year at the picturesque Manly Golf Club in May, the event showcased a stunning array of second-hand and designer women's wear, captivating both seasoned fashion enthusiasts and newcomers alike. As Lou's Place's flagship fundraiser, Lou's Closet embodies our commitment to supporting women in need while championing sustainability and social responsibility.

**This year's sale marked a remarkable milestone, with over \$112K raised to further our mission at Lou's Place.**

The success of Lou's Closet Sale is a testament to the unwavering generosity of our donors, whose contributions of both pre-loved and brand-new garments transformed the event into a vibrant "Designer Emporium." Noteworthy donations from esteemed designers such as Carla Zampatti, Bianca Spender, Camilla, and Moss & Spy elevated the sale to new heights, attracting eager shoppers. Behind the scenes, the seamless execution of the event would not have been possible without the dedication of our remarkable team of over 50 volunteers. Their tireless efforts in sorting, hanging, pricing, and selling clothing underscore the collaborative spirit that defines Lou's Place and drives our collective impact.

The Marmalade Foundation committee remains steadfast in their efforts to support Lou's Place by, devising innovative ways to raise funds. This year, the committee organised a Gingerbread House workshop evening, where attendees purchased tickets to participate. This event proved to be both enjoyable for all in attendance and a financial success, showcasing the community's dedication to the cause. This is the second year of holding this event and tickets were again sold out. The success of the evening underscores the Foundation's ongoing commitment to making a meaningful difference in the lives of those in need.

## GINGERBREAD HOUSE MAKING



# FUNDRAISING

## EMPTY SHOES

In November, Lou's Place hosted an impactful event, Empty Shoes, as part of our ongoing efforts to raise awareness and funds for our vital service. This vigil, which showcased 52 pairs of empty shoes, symbolised the heartbreaking reality that on average, one woman or girl is killed each week due to domestic violence.

Empty Shoes not only served as a memorial but also as a platform for education and advocacy. Our esteemed guest speaker, award-winning journalist and author, Jess Hill, brought her insightful perspective to the event, shedding light on the complexities of domestic violence and the urgent need for societal change. Jess's presence lent credibility and depth to our mission, inspiring attendees to engage in meaningful conversations about this pressing issue.

Adding a soul-stirring touch to the event, the wonderfully talented songwriter and performer, Amber Lawrence, graced us with her presence. Accompanied by the Sydney Philharmonic Choirs, their rendition of "This is Me" from The Greatest Showman resonated deeply with the audience, emphasising the strength of women who stand, speak out against violence and survive.

The turnout for Empty Shoes was nothing short of remarkable, with members of the community coming together to show their support. Their presence not only helped us raise essential funds for Lou's Place but also reaffirmed our collective commitment to ending domestic violence. By creating a space for dialogue and reflection, we ensure that this critical issue continues to be discussed and confronted head-on.

As we reflect on the success of Empty Shoes, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who contributed to making this event a triumph. Your support enables Lou's Place to continue providing essential services to women in need, offering them refuge, support, and hope for a brighter future. Together, we stand united in our mission to create a world free from violence, where every woman and girl can thrive without fear.

**THANK YOU FOR STANDING WITH US IN SOLIDARITY AS WE WORK TOWARDS THIS SHARED VISION.**



# SERVICE PARTNERSHIPS

## IMMIGRATION RIGHTS & ADVICE CENTRE (IARC)



Lou's Place has been partnering with IARC since March 2023. IARC, a specialised not-for-profit community legal centre with over 35 years of expertise in migration law and policy, supports vulnerable migrants in NSW by offering free legal guidance, consultations, and casework services. As part of our partnership, IARC hosts an outreach program at Lou's Place every second Wednesday, delivering essential information, referrals, counsel, and representation on various immigration matters. These encompass family visas, visa cancellations, Australian citizenship, Refugee and Humanitarian visas, Protection visas, as well as other temporary visas such as Bridging and Visitor visas. Additionally, IARC prioritises addressing the intersection of domestic and family violence with immigration law, striving to provide independent, confidential immigration assistance to survivors. This empowers them with knowledge of their rights and enables informed decision-making.



## SYDNEY LOCAL HEALTH DISTRICT (SLHD)

SLHD and Lou's Place have been working together since July 2023, in particular with their Priority Populations Programs. Their focus is providing prevention and health promotion programs, and supporting access to health care that is culturally safe and tailored to diverse community needs. They specifically work with trans and gender diverse, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) communities, people who are at risk or living with HIV, STIs, hepatitis B and C, people who inject drugs, people who engage in sex work, people who experience social disadvantage and homelessness, and Aboriginal and culturally and linguistically diverse communities. In 2023, SLHD organised a successful Hepatitis C Education Session and Testing Clinic, resulting in 15 women undergoing Hepatitis C testing. Additionally, they provided women with cervical self-screening tests, allowing them to screen for cervical cancer at their convenience and comfort.

## INNER CITY LEGAL CENTRE (IARC)



Lou's Place has maintained a longstanding partnership with Inner City Legal Centre. Located in Kings Cross, ICLC is a not-for-profit community-based legal institution that has offered free legal assistance to residents in the inner city, surrounding areas and LGBTIQ communities since 1980. As part of our partnership, ICLC conducts outreach sessions at Lou's Place every second Thursday, delivering invaluable legal guidance to up to 6 women per session. They are able to provide these women with free legal advice, information and referrals, as well as specialised services such as Specialist Trans and Gender-Diverse Legal Service, Specialist Sex Workers Legal Service, and specialist gay, lesbian and bisexual legal advice. Moreover, they also engage in law reform efforts and advocacy campaigns.



## THREAD TOGETHER

Since 2017, Lou's Place has fostered a partnership with Thread Together. Thread Together saves new clothing from going into landfill and distributes this clothing to those in need, firmly believing that circumstances or disadvantage should not hinder people from accessing clothing to realise their full potential. This ethos strongly resonates with Lou's Place. Through this partnership, we facilitate clothing orders on behalf of clients, allowing them access to brand-new clothing at no cost. Additionally, Thread Together has supplied Lou's Place with a stocked wardrobe, enabling us to offer emergency clothing assistance to women in dire situations, such as homelessness or fleeing unsafe living conditions, who lack access to clean garments. This service is invaluable, allowing us to provide crucial support to vulnerable women.

# OUR DONORS & PARTNERS

## WOTTON & KEARNEY



For 14 years, Lou's Place has cherished its partnership with Wotton & Kearney, renowned for their agility and flexibility, well known for their breakfasts they also support Lou's Place with a wealth of invaluable support and resources.

THROUGHOUT 2023, WOTTON & KEARNEY ORGANISED 10 BREAKFAST EVENTS, WHICH WERE ATTENDED BY A TOTAL OF 127 WOMEN.



Wotton + Kearney's connection to Lou's Place dates back 14 years ago to the inception of our responsible business program, Community Footprint. At the heart of Community Footprint is a deep commitment to making a meaningful impact and contributing to a fairer and more inclusive society. Lou's Place provides a vital service to our community, empowering women from diverse backgrounds and all walks of life. We volunteer at Lou's Place every month by cooking a hot breakfast. Through conversations over scrambled eggs with Lou's Place clients and staff, we gain a better understanding of the issues faced by women in crisis. We also support Lou's Place through our ongoing commitment to fundraising, volunteering, in-kind donations, and other forms of support.

HEIDI ANDERSON, HEAD OF PRO BONO AND RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS, WOTTON + KEARNEY



## DONOR NIGHT

On 31st May 2023 we had an evening to celebrate **"Life at Lou's."** We opened our doors to welcome donors, allied services and friends to see our new larger and more accessible premises in Redfern. They heard about the latest developments at Lou's Place, met staff members who run our programs and admired displays of the women's work. There were paintings and powerful examples of creative writing, as well as pieces from the much-loved sewing and jewellery making groups. But by far the most moving part of the night was a short speech by Ting Ting, a woman who wished to share her story of recovery as a way of thanking everyone who supported the service.



# OUR DONORS & PARTNERS

As we wrap up this year's annual report, we want to take a moment to extend a heartfelt thanks to every single one of our donors and partners. Your support is crucial to Lou's Place; without it, we simply couldn't do what we do.

We know we can't list all of your names here, but please know this: whether you've given a dollar or much more, or helped us in other ways your donation truly makes a difference. Your generosity means everything to us and to those we help.

From all of us here, thank you for being part of our journey. Your belief in our mission and your commitment to making a positive impact is what keeps us going.

**LOU'S PLACE 2023  
TEAM  
THANK YOU FOR  
YOUR SUPPORT!**



