

EQUITABLE FOUNDATIONS

A Framework for Gender-wise Philanthropy in Partnerships



**AUSTRALIANS
INVESTING IN
WOMEN**

Empowering giving for a fairer future



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

Acknowledgment of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the unceded lands on which we work, learn and live, and recognise the unique place held by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the original owners and custodians of the lands, skies and waterways of the Australian continent.

Acknowledgments:

We sincerely thank all of the participants who gave their time, expertise and wisdom to participate in research and the organisations in the partnership that made Viv's Place and My Home a reality.

We also thank members of the project's Expert Reference Group (refer to page 27 for names).

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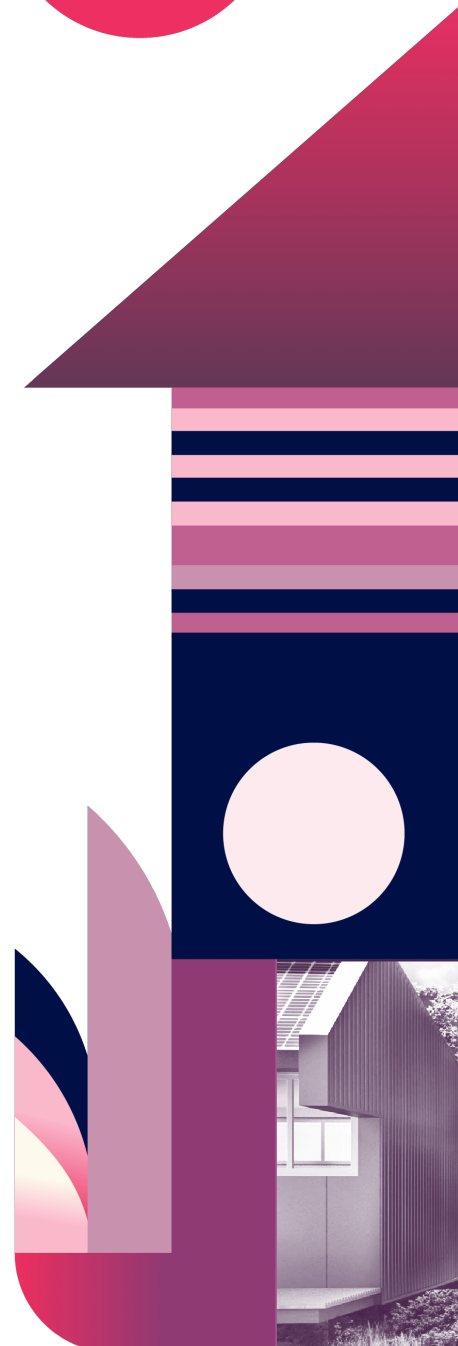
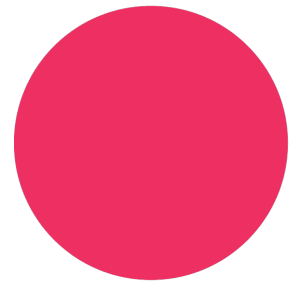
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The use of inclusive language in this document:

When this document refers to 'woman/women' or 'man/men' it refers to people who identify that way; this includes transgender people, cisgender people, and others who identify themselves as woman or man. This document also uses the term 'gender diverse people', who may identify as non-binary, trans, agender, genderqueer, genderfluid or with any other relevant term.

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Foreword



Philanthropy has the power to play a pivotal role in addressing complex challenges facing society. Increasingly, philanthropic funders recognise that this power can be amplified when they work in partnership and collaborate with other funders and key stakeholders to achieve an outcome that would not be possible alone.



Both Australians Investing In Women (AIW) and the University of Melbourne's Melbourne Social Equity Institute (MSEI) understand the power of a gender lens to super charge this impact further and to help ensure that philanthropic collaborations include and benefit all members of society equitably.

For this reason, our organisations teamed up to produce an evidence-informed gender-wise practical resource, *Equitable Foundations: A Framework for Gender-wise Philanthropy in Partnerships* and its underpinning report *Equitable Foundations: Case Studies of Gender-wise Philanthropy in Housing Partnerships*, enabled by funding from the Paul Ramsay Foundation.

The argument in favour of gender equality and its positive impacts on the wellbeing of societies, economies and our planet are well documented. Evidence both globally and locally indicates that among the many advantages, enhancing gender equality plays a crucial role in alleviating poverty and disadvantage. Despite this, significant and deeply rooted gender inequities and their associated impacts persist.

We present this Framework, and the underpinning report, in the context of an increased focus on equality for women from governments in Australia.

Federally we have seen a strengthened commitment to gender equality through the 2023 Women's Budget Statement, the establishment of the Women's Economic Equality Taskforce and through development of the National Gender Equality Strategy. This expectation of

gender consideration flows into public and private partnerships which have become increasingly important in delivering projects in healthcare, education and infrastructure in recent times.

Complementing AIW's existing suite of Gender-wise resources, this new resource recognises that philanthropic partnerships and collaborations often develop organically, and that the various parties that come together may be at different stages of understanding and commitment to considering gender equality as part of their social impact.

The Framework provides a clear and practical roadmap whether you are at the beginning of the gender-wise path or are more experienced in applying a gender lens to increase philanthropic impact and gender equity. Informed by case studies and broader sector expertise, the Framework draws on experiences of funders and partners in projects supporting women's housing to map out principles and pathways forward that can be applied to collaborations seeking to impact any social issue.

We thank those who have generously shared their experience and insights contributing to the development of the work presented and recommend this Framework to you and your partners in support of your efforts to achieve positive, sustainable, social impact.



Julie Reilly OAM
CEO, Australians Investing In Women



Professor Jo Barraket AM
Director, Melbourne Social Equity Institute,
The University of Melbourne

Introducing the Framework

Vision

The philanthropic sector and other funders improve the impact of their investment and collaboration by actively seeking to understand and respond to gender inequality and disadvantage in their area of focus.

Resources

Two companion resources have been produced to support philanthropic partnerships and collaborations to apply a gender lens. They are titled:

- *Equitable Foundations: A Framework for Gender-wise Philanthropy in Partnerships* (this document)
- *Equitable Foundations: Case Studies of Gender-wise Philanthropy in Housing Partnerships*

Purpose of the Framework

The Framework aims to enable philanthropic organisations to:

- apply a gender lens to partnerships and collaborations
- include gender analysis in the design, delivery and measurement of projects
- better understand the ways that gender inequality plays out in areas of philanthropic investment and grantmaking, such as poverty, disadvantage, health and housing, and recognise the benefits of applying a gender lens.

This Framework can support more rigorous analysis and decision making by funders, boards, executives, and people implementing change, and in their work more broadly, and encourage effort and investment towards gender equality.

This Framework does not cover applying a gender lens to internal systems, policies and processes such as recruitment, retention and promotion. There are other resources to support this work, such as those available from the Workplace Gender Equality Strategy (wgea.gov.au/take-action).

The Framework is focused on working in partnerships and collaborations. However, we recognise that there is always overlap between what happens at an organisational level, and what happens in the partnership.

Who is this Framework for?

This Framework is for all philanthropic organisations regardless of their area of focus, as gender inequality exists in every aspect of philanthropic endeavour.

How to use this Framework

This Framework includes:

- **steps to apply a gender lens** to your partnership or collaboration
- an **exploration of myths** around applying a gender lens
- a **set of leading practice principles** for applying a gender lens and gender analysis
- a list of **further resources**.

The Framework is based on evidence that demonstrates:

- Gender inequality persists in all aspects of Australian life across the lifecycle. This includes the impacts of gender stereotypes and discrimination in early childhood; experiences of gendered norms in education, the gender pay gap, sexual harassment and sexual assault from youth; discrimination in employment, unequal pay, limited access to paid parental leave and secure and affordable housing, family violence and unequal caring responsibilities in adulthood; and inequality in later years, including in retirement income and wealth.
- A gender lens improves outcomes for everyone, not just women.
- A gender lens can be used as a tool to hear from and empower people experiencing inequity.
- Gender equality is critical to economic and social security and safety.

The case for a gender lens



What is a gender lens?

A **gender lens** is an umbrella term to describe an approach and mindset that encourages you to think about gender in all aspects of decision making. A gender lens can be applied to many social issues and processes. This includes investment proposals, partnerships and collaborations, program design and delivery, and to an organisation's internal policies and practices.

“It’s not about only giving to women and girls, or giving more, it’s about being intentionally equitable in our giving to every cause. Unless we intentionally include women and girls, the system will unintentionally exclude them.”

ELIZABETH BRODERICK AO,
FOUNDER, CHAMPIONS OF CHANGE COALITION.

Why it matters

The ways we think about gender, including the expected roles of men and women and the consequent access to opportunities and resources, shape all aspects of social and economic life.

Recognising this, the philanthropic and impact investment sectors have started to adopt gender analysis and leverage opportunities for investment to maximise the impact of the initiatives they invest in while also advancing gender equality. Philanthropic organisations wield enormous power and have potential to significantly address gender inequality and make progress towards solving this challenge. Without it, there is an inherent bias to the gender unequal status quo.



A gender lens internationally and in Australia

Governments around the world have recognised the critical role that gender equality plays in economic and social security and the reduction of conflict. The United Nations (UN) Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in 1995 stated that “women’s empowerment and their full participation on the basis of equality in all spheres of society ... are fundamental for the achievement of equality, development and peace”.¹ One of the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are actions to achieve sustainable (economic, social and environmental) development, is Gender Equality. Critically, in the UN statement of SDGs, Gender Equality is linked to the success of all of the SDGs.

In Australia, many new policy proposals will be required to undertake a Gender Impact Assessment.² In Victoria, the Gender Equality Act 2020, requires all new policy, program and project proposals to include a Gender Impact Assessment and all public sector organisations to develop a Gender Equality Action Plan.

“Where gender inequality persists, efforts to reduce poverty are undermined...numerous studies and on-the-ground experiences have shown that promoting equality between men and women helps economies grow faster, accelerates poverty reduction and enhances the dignity and well-being of men, women and children.”

JAMES D. WOLFENSOHN, PRESIDENT, THE WORLD BANK

Why use a gender lens?

A gender lens applied to your philanthropic investment or project will:

- Increase the impact of the investment or project
- Challenge assumptions and norms that underpin the investment or project design
- Uncover blind spots in information and analysis
- Improve the rigour and quality of analysis and understanding of the issue
- Enable better informed decision making
- Improve the design and impact of your investment.

Why use a gender lens on philanthropic partnerships?

A gender lens applied effectively to your partnership can:

- Improve the rigour and quality of analysis and decision making
- Improve the design and impact of your partnership investment
- Increase equity, safety and respect in ways of working between partner organisations.

CASE STUDY

A gender lens on homelessness increases impact

The Big Issue magazine provides work opportunities for people experiencing homelessness, marginalisation and disadvantage. It was launched in 1996 based on a successful UK model.

🔗 Applying a gender lens ↴

However, **applying a gender lens to the initiative revealed that the majority of *The Big Issue* street vendors were men. Gender analysis highlighted that there were safety concerns for women selling magazines on the street** and that it was not a viable option for women leaving domestic and family violence, and those responsible for the primary care of children.

Recognising these gendered issues, *The Big Issue* established the Women's Workforce in 2010. The Women's Workforce employs women experiencing homelessness, marginalisation and disadvantage to pack and send subscriber copies of *The Big Issue* magazine. Employees are also provided with a range of opportunities to further develop their skills by completing social procurement work such as gift hamper creation, mailing list distribution, data entry and event support.

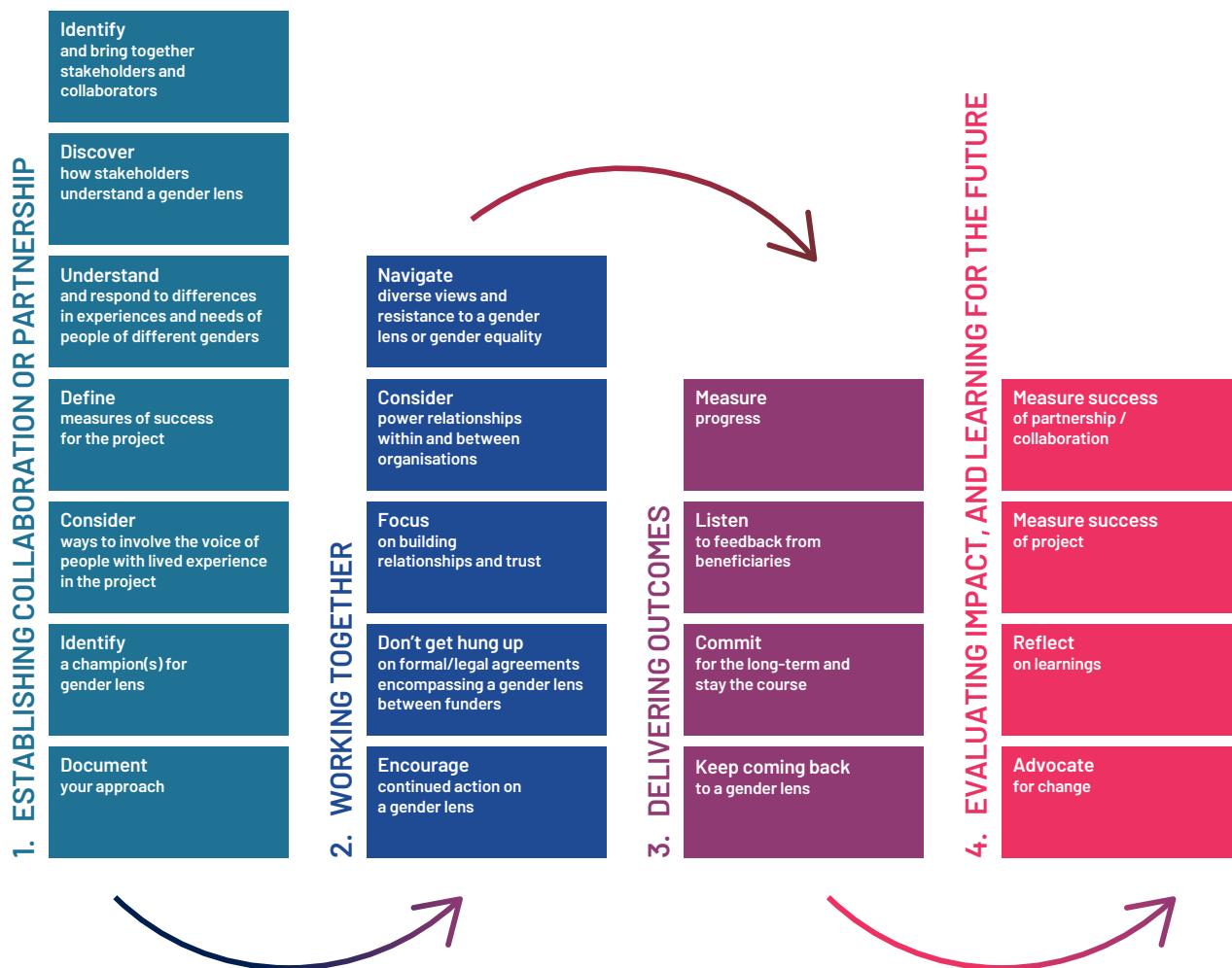
Source:
thebigissue.org.au/article/meet-the-big-issues-womens-workforce

Applying a gender lens helped *The Big Issue* understand how women's experiences of homelessness differ from men's. A gender lens increased *The Big Issue*'s impact on homelessness, marginalisation and disadvantage by instigating and shaping the design of a new initiative that takes into account women's experiences and needs.

Gender-wise initiatives like this have never been more important. Women made up 44 per cent of people experiencing homelessness in Australia in 2021, up 10 per cent from the previous 2016 Census.



Visualising the Framework



Principles

Below is a set of guiding principles that underpin the Framework and should be considered across all of its steps.

Principle	Practice
Intersectionality	Consider how different forms of social disadvantage and discrimination based on attributes such as race, income, class, disability and sexuality intersect with gender inequality. For example, how do women with disabilities, First Nations or LGBTIQ+ people experience this issue?
Sustainability	Think about how the impact on gender equality will be sustained over the long-term.
Voice of lived experience	Ask how people with lived experience are being listened to and empowered. What are the opportunities for women, girls, and gender diverse people to have a voice and participate in the design, delivery and evaluation of the project?
Evidence-informed	Consider how qualitative and quantitative data (in particular gender data), as well as lived experience and stakeholders' perspectives, can contribute to a better understanding of the issues and shape the project's design, delivery and evaluation.



Above: Interior of Viv's Place, providing long-term housing for single mothers and their children who have experienced family or domestic violence.

Viv's Place photography supplied by Launch Housing; photographer Tatjana Plitt ©

EXAMPLE

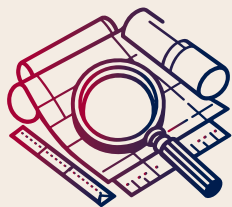
A gender lens on poverty

The philanthropic and social sector in Australia has historically focused on poverty and disadvantage without an explicit understanding of the role of gender in *driving* poverty and disadvantage. We know that the majority of people living in poverty (53 per cent) are women or girls. The vast majority of single parents are women (80 per cent), which is the family type that experiences the highest rate of poverty (34 per cent). Gender inequality is also one of the barriers to effectively *addressing* poverty and disadvantage in terms of women's inequality in accessing secure employment, the gender pay gap, barriers to accessing safe and affordable housing, women's experience of violence, discrimination during pregnancy and inequality in parenting and caring.

Source:
 Davidson, P; Bradbury, B; and Wong, M (2023),
 Poverty in Australia 2023: Who is affected
 Poverty and Inequality Partnership Report no. 20.
 Australian Council of Social Service and UNSW Sydney
https://povertyandinequality.acoss.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Poverty-in-Australia-2023_Who-is-affected.pdf



Applying a gender lens to your partnership and project



Applying a gender lens is **the practice of considering how an issue, decision or investment affects people of different genders**. Not considering gender can have the unintended consequence of underserving women and reinforcing or entrenching existing gender inequality.



Gender lens considerations in a partnership or collaboration

A gender lens can be applied in any context. This Framework applies a gender lens to *partnerships and collaborations*. This means asking how a partnership or collaboration contributes towards gender equality. It asks how gendered norms and gender equality play out in how:

- partnerships and collaboration come together
- partners and collaborators design, deliver and measure impact of a project
- partners and collaborators relate and engage with one another including asking how roles, structures and processes reflect gender equality within a partnership or collaboration.

Gender lens considerations for a project

To apply a gender lens and conduct gender analysis on the *design, delivery and measurement of a project* means asking³:

- Are there existing gender inequalities related to the issue the project is addressing?
- Are there gendered norms or attitudes that may impact patterns of behaviour in the issue?
- Does the proposed project:
 - Provide equitable access to resources, opportunities, services or infrastructure?
 - Perpetuate or prevent gender-based inequality?
 - Address or challenge gender stereotypes or roles?
- What gender disaggregated data, evidence and insights are available?
- Are there intersectional data, evidence or insights?
- Do stakeholders, including people with lived experience, identify or raise gender impacts?
- Can demographic data, evidence and insights (e.g. family composition, household types, income level) be used to identify gender-based differences in the impacts of a proposal?

The above questions are a simplified version of gender analysis and are by no means comprehensive. Gender analysis is the subject of significant research and there are a wealth of tools and guidance available in Australia and internationally. A list of **resources** is available at the end of this document.

Take action: Responding to gender analysis

The previous section *Applying a gender lens to your partnership or project* listed some of the questions to guide gender analysis. This is only the first step, which is to understand the different needs and experiences of people of different genders. The second and most critical step is to take action, to respond to different needs and experiences.



Some questions to consider when taking action on the gender analysis (adapted from *An APS Guide to Gender Analysis and Gender Impact Assessment*⁴) are:

- Does the project have a gendered impact and what is the nature of that impact?
 - Negative impact – Will it reinforce existing gender inequalities (e.g. inequalities in gender roles, norms, relations or access to resources or opportunities)?
 - Neutral impact – Will it have no impact on gender roles, norms, relations or access to resources or opportunities?
 - Positive impact – Will it improve gender roles, norms, relations or access to resources or opportunities?
 - Transformative impact – Will it transform unequal gender relations to promote shared power, control of resources, decision making, and support for women’s empowerment?
- If the proposal was found to have a positive impact on gender equality, are there changes that could be made to adapt and improve the impact?
- If the proposal was found to have or be at risk of having a negative impact on gender equality, or to entrench existing inequalities, is it possible to mitigate these impacts?

For example, gender analysis of a proposed social housing development might identify that construction is typically a male-dominated industry and that some companies have a poor track record of sexual harassment and safety for women. A mitigation to this potential gender negative impact that the partners/collaborators could consider is including in tender documents questions about construction company’s policies and practices around improving the gender diversity of their workforce and safety of women. This would mean the project’s impact has changed from negative (i.e., reinforcing existing inequalities in the construction workforce) to a positive impact on gender equality.

Similarly, gender analysis of a project in mental health may highlight that services historically have not considered the systemic role of gender and gender-based violence and mental health. Clients accessing mental health services may not have been screened for experiences of family violence or abuse in the past, and not connected to appropriate services to address the underlying cause of mental ill health. Mitigating this gender inequality could involve requiring tendered services to take a trauma-informed and intersectional approach to providing services for women and gender diverse people.

Mitigating negative impacts on gender equality does not necessarily require more investment, it just requires better, more intentionally inclusive and equitable investment leading to improved impact.

Stages of Framework implementation



1. ESTABLISHING COLLABORATION OR PARTNERSHIP

- Identify
- Discover
- Understand
- Define
- Consider
- Identify
- Document

STAGE 1: ESTABLISHING COLLABORATION OR PARTNERSHIP

Purpose of applying a gender lens at this stage

- To set a solid foundation for your partnership or collaboration, developing a shared commitment to a gender lens and identifying any gendered experiences and impacts

Value to partnership/collaboration

- Maximises the impact of collaboration by identifying and mitigating potential unintended consequences, from the outset, for people of different genders

Steps	Critical tasks and behaviours identified from case studies and evidence	Success factors identified from case studies and evidence
<p>1 Identify and bring together stakeholders and collaborators</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Start by building from previous collaborations and existing connections. ● Share expertise without direct expectation of outcomes. ● Take deliberate steps to include gender diversity in your project team and leadership composition. ● Discuss and advocate for a gender lens in partnerships at multiple levels within organisations (i.e. board, CEO, program managers). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Entry points to partnerships at multiple times, as required by partners and/or the project. ● Different strategic focus areas of partners, within the common interests of partnership. ● Diversity of funders in terms of sector, type and size.
<p>2 Discover how stakeholders understand a gender lens</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reflect on your individual understanding of gender equality and applying a gender lens. ● Initiate conversations with people in your organisation about applying a gender lens. ● Begin having conversations with external colleagues about what a gender lens might look like in your own organisation's giving or investment and those in the partnership. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Clarity up front about each partner organisation's understanding and position on gender equality and a gender lens. ● Recognising that government and other investors will have different interest and motivations to apply a gender lens.

STAGE 1:
ESTABLISHING COLLABORATION OR PARTNERSHIP

Steps	Critical tasks and behaviours identified from case studies and evidence	Success factors identified from case studies and evidence
<p>3 Understand and respond to differences in experiences and needs of people of different genders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Agree which of the partners/ collaborators will undertake gender analysis or if it should be outsourced. ● Conduct gender analysis on your proposed project. ● Understand the impact of your proposed project on gender equality. Will it reinforce existing gender inequalities? Will it improve gender norms, roles and access to resources? Or is the impact neutral? ● Refine the project design responding to the findings of the gender analysis to mitigate reinforcing existing gender inequalities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● High quality gender analysis that critically considers what information might be missing, rather than seeking to confirm existing direction. ● Taking effective action to respond to the findings of the analysis to improve, or at least, not reinforce existing inequalities.
<p>4 Define measures of success for the project</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Define measures for success including gender disaggregated indicators. ● Consider how gender equality outcomes will be measured. ● Define relevant gender disaggregated targets, implementation milestones or progress commitments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Collection of gender-disaggregated data including, where possible, the option to identify as gender diverse. ● A program logic or theory of change that outlines how inputs and outputs translate to outcomes and impact. ● Measures that are tailored to the capacity of the organisation, recognising the effort required to collect and analyse data.
<p>5 Consider ways to involve the voice of people with lived experience in the project</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consider the options to listen to lesser heard voices such as women, girls and gender diverse people in the project which could be through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Consultation ○ Co-design ○ Formal advisory groups ○ Feedback mechanisms. ● Identify and manage risks of retraumatisation that may occur for people with lived experience sharing their stories. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensuring diversity in voices of lived experience including cultural diversity, First Nations, LGBTIQ+ people, people living in regional and rural areas, disability and different faiths. ● Psychosocial risks for participants and staff from consultation processes are assessed to prevent harm and to ensure relevant support where needed.



STAGE 1:
ESTABLISHING COLLABORATION OR PARTNERSHIP

Steps	Critical tasks and behaviours identified from case studies and evidence	Success factors identified from case studies and evidence
<p>6 Identify a champion(s) for gender lens</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify organisational actors with formal (e.g. senior leaders) and symbolic power (e.g. a highly esteemed colleague) who understand the value of a gender lens and will help you champion it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A gender-lens funder who commits early and publicly to a partnership or to collaborative funding. ● Ensuring funders and decision makers with 'gravitas' (i.e. reputation, expertise, large contribution) are part of the group.
<p>7 Document your approach</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Start to record your values and commitments to gender equality. ● Consider how applying a gender lens may change partnership and project objectives and methods. ● Detail how a gender lens is applied in documents such as grant guidelines, project plans, tender documents, evaluation and monitoring requirements or ways of working. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Projects that are flexible and adapt to additional and emerging research and evidence on gendered systems, practices, and norms. ● Consistency and coherence of project documents in applying a gender lens.



Above: My Home in Fremantle, Western Australia, is a group of 18 tiny homes for women aged over 55. It is one of the case studies that informed this Framework.

My Home photography supplied by Minderoo Foundation; photographer Emma Dolzadelli ©



Navigate

Consider

Focus

Don't get hung up

Encourage

STAGE 2: WORKING TOGETHER

Purpose of applying a gender lens at this stage

- To support partners/collaborators to work effectively together for greater impact

Value to partnership/collaboration

- Maximises impact by continuing to measure and track gendered experiences and impacts
- Embeds a gender lens into partnership and project delivery

Steps	Critical tasks and behaviours identified from case studies and evidence	Success factors identified from case studies and evidence
<p>8 Navigate diverse views and resistance to a gender lens or gender equality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Be patient but persistent. Partnerships are constantly changing and evolving. ● Recognise points of tension. ● Focus on the shared values and commitment to a gender lens within the partnership as a regular touchpoint. ● Revisit each organisation's expectations of the partnership. ● Be clear on expectations and the capacity of organisations to deliver. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Partners need to be comfortable with small variations in ways of working with a gender lens. ● Different funders can put more energy and resources into different aspects of a project. ● Funding commitments reflect the funder's capacity. ● Embracing the mindset that investing time and thought in a gender lens is not wasted time.
<p>9 Consider power relationships within and between organisations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Be aware of differences in resources, status, class, wealth, gender, policy, age, employment status, reputation, and organisational structures. ● Acknowledge how differences impact the partnership and capacity to contribute and implement a gender lens. ● Engage with safety and respect, while recognising the differences in power between individuals and organisations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All partners bring experience and expertise in different fields. ● Respecting others' knowledge and in-kind contributions. ● Recognising that organisations will contribute relative to their resources and capacity.



STAGE 2:
WORKING TOGETHER

Steps	Critical tasks and behaviours identified from case studies and evidence	Success factors identified from case studies and evidence
<p>10 Focus on building relationships and trust</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Have multiple points of connection between organisations in the partnership, to avoid problems with turnover. ● Take opportunities to meet in person, as a group, where possible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Trust developed and demonstrated by relying on partners, based on experience both in current and previous partnerships.
<p>11 Don't get hung up on formal/legal agreements encompassing a gender lens between funders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Accept that conceptions of partnership influence the way others' actions are framed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Understandings of what a partnership is can differ, and are not contingent on written agreements. ● Connections need to exist both between funding partners, as well as between funders and other partner organisations.
<p>12 Encourage continued action on a gender lens</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Coordinate the take up of a gender lens. ● Provide consistency and momentum as a connector at the centre of the partnership. ● Implement and strengthen strategies or processes that support a gender lens. ● Provide evidence on the application and benefits of a gender lens, promoting transparency and accountability. ● Establish communities of practice between partner organisations or more broadly within the sector. ● Share knowledge, evidence, resources, training and tools on gender equality. ● Share the benefits of gender equality and gender analysis through evaluations, data analysis, case studies and stories. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meeting agendas include a gender lens item. ● Informally share gender lens learnings within partnership. ● Strong relationships between funders and/or champions within partner organisations.



- Measure progress
- Listen
- Commit
- Keep coming back

STAGE 3: DELIVERING OUTCOMES

Purpose of applying a gender lens at this stage

- To enable the project to achieve its intended impact by uncovering information on the experiences of people of different genders and using those insights to adapt approaches.

Value to partnership/collaboration

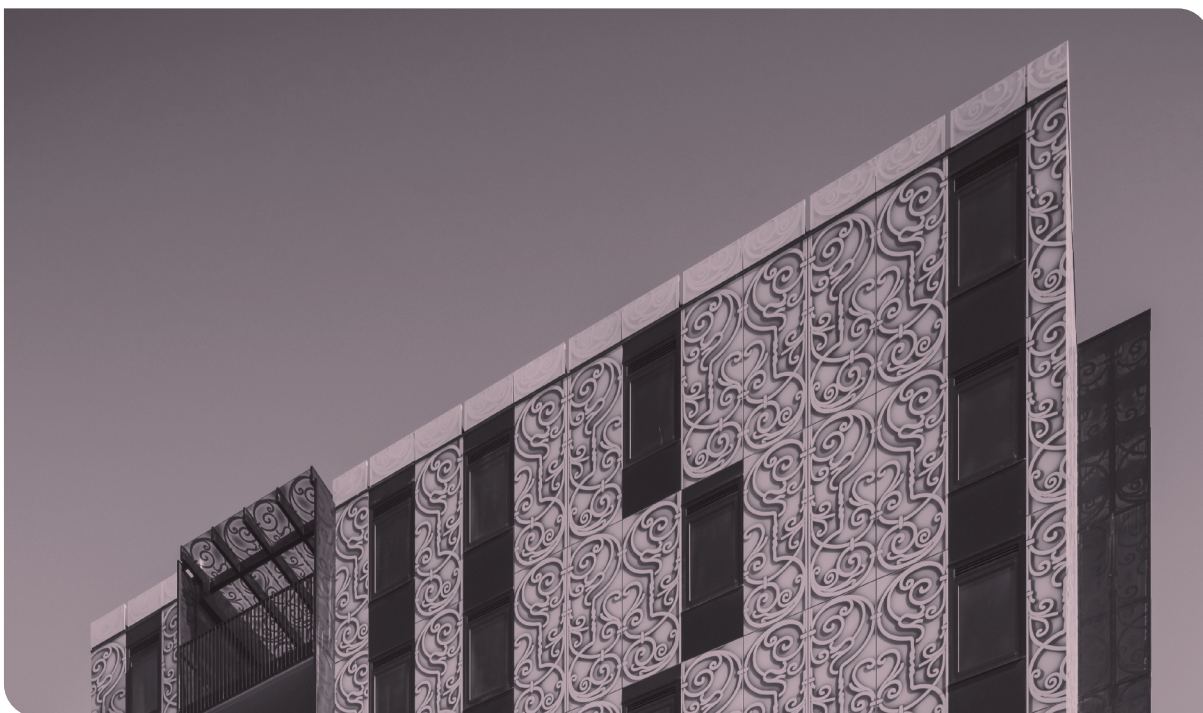
- Maximises impact and reduces risk by measuring gendered experiences, seeking timely feedback and developing better practices during implementation.

Steps	Critical tasks and behaviours identified from case studies and evidence	Success factors identified from case studies and evidence
13 Measure progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Set up systems to collect gender disaggregated data. ● Regularly analyse gender disaggregated data and track progress against project milestones and targets. ● Where appropriate, use methods such as development evaluations or action research, which are methods to provide timely feedback during the project to inform decision making and delivery. ● Adjust project delivery to achieve gender disaggregated success measures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All philanthropic partners are aligned on the approach to performance measurement and, where possible, under one reporting system, minimising duplication of effort for grantee.
14 Listen to feedback from beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure beneficiary voices are heard throughout each project funded by the partnership. ● Consider both immediate and long-term needs of beneficiaries, within the scope and duration of the project. ● Remember to respond later to beneficiaries you consulted to tell them how you responded and why. ● Adjust delivery of the project to respond to gendered needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Accepting feedback, learning and changing throughout a partnership and/or project. ● Stakeholders are informed on how feedback was taken up, or not, and why.



STAGE 3:
DELIVERING OUTCOMES

Steps	Critical tasks and behaviours identified from case studies and evidence	Success factors identified from case studies and evidence
15 Commit for the long-term and stay the course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Be accepting when things don't go to plan, responding flexibly and constructively. ● Communicate to others that you remain committed to the partnership/project, and share the wins and lessons learnt. ● Celebrate wins along the way. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Top-up funding may be needed to get a project 'over the line'. ● Symbolic support including public endorsement of a gender lens can be vital.
16 Keep coming back to a gender lens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Take repeated actions and decisions to include and discuss a gender lens. ● Follow up on the application of a gender lens across and within organisations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Stakeholders do not 'set and forget'. People and organisations who are deeply committed to a gender lens actively keep it front and centre in their work.



Above: *Viv's Place* in Dandenong, Victoria was conceived and planned as a housing solution for women. It is one of the case studies that informed this Framework.

Viv's Place photography supplied by Launch Housing; photographer Tatjana Plitt ©



Measure success of collaboration

Measure success of project

Reflect

Advocate

STAGE 4: EVALUATING IMPACT, AND LEARNING FOR THE FUTURE

Purpose of applying a gender lens at this stage

- To understand the partnership and project’s success and impact on people of different genders.

Value to partnership/collaboration

- Maximises success of future partnerships/collaboration by reflecting on what worked and did not work in applying a gender lens.

Steps	Critical tasks and behaviours identified from case studies and evidence	Success factors identified from case studies and evidence
<p>17 Measure success of partnership /collaboration (i.e., how the partnership /collaboration worked together)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evaluate the partnership/collaboration. ● Conduct a partnership retrospective with all organisations to debrief on how the collaboration worked and whether it stayed true to its stated purpose and objectives. ● Identify opportunities to improve partnership and collaboration for gender equality in future. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Recognition that an intended objective may change over the course of a partnership or project, particularly when other lenses intersect with a gender lens. ● Assessors are open to unexpected or surprising outcomes (positive and negative) of a gender lens to become apparent.
<p>18 Measure success of project</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evaluate outcomes for all beneficiaries, beyond the target group. For example, if the target group is people with a disability or people experiencing homelessness, then considering outcomes for men, women and gender non-binary people within this group will be valuable. ● Evaluate the project against success measures defined from the start, including gender-disaggregated measures. ● Evaluate the impact on gender equality. Did it reinforce existing inequalities in gender roles, norms and stereotypes? Did it have no impact on gender norms, roles and relations? Or did it improve or transform gender norms, roles and access to resources or opportunities? ● Listen to beneficiaries and understand differences in the experiences of men, women and gender diverse beneficiaries. What do they say about the project’s impact on gender norms, roles and access to resources or opportunities? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Understanding that, in many ways, a gender lens may affect a wider group than anticipated. ● Communities and places are considered indirect beneficiaries. ● Evaluation evidence and data (where possible) is shared with other funders and policymakers.



STAGE 4:
EVALUATING IMPACT, AND LEARNING FOR THE FUTURE

Steps	Critical tasks and behaviours identified from case studies and evidence	Success factors identified from case studies and evidence
<p>19 Reflect on learnings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reflect on learnings on applying a gender lens. ● Reflect on learnings as a funder, to inform future partnerships. ● Conduct an informal ‘project retrospective’ as an organisation, to inform better practices. ● Consider including the voice of beneficiaries in the project retrospective. ● Identify opportunities to improve the project and its impact on gender equality. ● Consider how the benefits of applying a gender lens in the partnership could also be applied internally. ● Ask about whether partner organisations have a gender equality strategy and relevant policies, whether they report on gender diversity and experience of safety and respect. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Funders learn from each other regarding how, what and when they evaluate using a gender lens.
<p>20 Advocate for change</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tell the stories. ● Advocate for a gender lens in partnerships where and whenever possible. ● Seek opportunities to promote a gender lens outside direct stakeholder groups. ● Share success stories making the case for explicit commitment to a gender equality in the sector. ● Share tools, resources and learnings from the partnership and the project, contributing to the evidence base for gender analysis and gender equality investment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Success stories are made public, including in general news media. ● The evidence base is built and advocacy is sustained over time.

Pathways forward

These are the things you can do to apply a gender lens in partnerships. Here we suggest a first step to take, then further steps along the pathway.

Be purposeful on intent/ action but flexible on process

- 1** While a common understanding of a gender lens and terminology can evolve and become more explicit during the course of the partnership, **a clear commitment to a gender lens upfront is valuable.**

 - First step: Look through any accessible information about potential partner organisations to gain an understanding of whether their grantmaking considers gender. What (if any) patterns are there? Review what information your organisation makes public about its own gender lens.
 - Further steps: Highlight similarities and differences in the gender lens approaches demonstrated through a project. Share the similarities, and work to understand the differences more clearly, including whether they change over time. Initiate a conversation about a shared commitment to gender equity.

- 2** The origins of partnerships vary widely, and often start from proximity and points of connection. Partnerships applying a gender lens can grow from projects, meaning that **partnerships don't always have to be in place before a project starts.**

 - First step: Promote a gender lens and evidence-based data on gender equity when connecting with other funders to co-fund a project or with nonprofit organisations seeking funding – whether you initially identify the work as a partnership or not.
 - Further steps: As a partnership comes together around a project, draw attention to the benefits a gender lens offers. Ask questions about whether/how you could learn from others' expertise and experience.

- 3** **Timelines for partnerships need to be elastic**, as at times they will be stretched, yet at other times they will be slack. Likewise, different funders will focus more attention on a gender lens at different times.

 - First step: Check in with collaborators specifically about the timing and duration of partnerships. Let them know about your own gender lens processes and timeframes.
 - Further steps: Hold space for a gender lens regardless of timeline pressures. Plan for known and foreseeable busy times, so that a gender lens doesn't get overlooked in the rush. Likewise, during lulls in a project, bring a gender lens back into prominence. Think strategically about when partners might be receptive to engaging with gender lens processes. Set calendar reminders and team catch-ups to revisit and reapply a gender lens, and make it a standing item on project meeting agendas.

Pathways forward

Relate to partners and work together

- 4** **For a gender lens to be successfully applied, it needs to be championed, encouraged and demonstrated.** In a partnership, applying a gender lens is about both relationships and processes. While it cannot be imposed, there are increasing requirements to demonstrate a gender lens in government-funded initiatives, and a growing recognition of a gender lens as central to best practice philanthropy.
- First step: Initiate conversations with trusted colleagues about the value and validity of applying a gender lens.
 - Further steps: Publicly report on your gender lens approach to funding. Share stories and evidence of the effectiveness of a gender lens. Speak and advocate in professional groups and forums about the benefits (and challenges) of applying a gender lens.

- 5** A clear commitment to a gender lens is required, then applying a gender lens and **continuously improving through iterative actions.**
- First step: Add a gender lens in day-to-day operations, extending or amending what you're already doing and taking opportunities as they arise.
 - Further steps: Revisit and rewrite established processes and procedures, adding questions about gender equality to application forms, grant agreements, reporting templates and evaluation designs.

- 6** Full application of a gender lens is most successful when there is **support at board level through a directed policy and/or strategic position for organisations.**
- First step: Advocate for a gender lens in multiple ways in your work. Seek evidence and ask questions about who benefits more and who may not.
 - Further steps: Brief your board about evidence setting out the increased impact of grantmaking with a gender lens. Add gender equity to the discussion agenda for strategic planning and monitoring sessions. Keep bringing the focus back to the evidence and data about increased impact generated when a gender lens is applied.

Develop a learning and evidence-base

- 7** **Evaluations need to evolve in partnerships applying a gender lens, and be focused on mutual learning.** Decide what kind and level of evaluation will be useful, then apply a gender lens to impact and process.
- First step: Include questions with a gender lens regarding the design or brief for evaluations. Integrate reporting and metrics so there is a common understanding and language.
 - Further steps: Analyse whether all genders have benefited equitably. This should go beyond a simple count of participants, to consider outcomes and impact. Implement improvements in other projects and areas of funding, without waiting for longer-term evaluations.

Conversation starters



Some **gentle questions** to begin a conversation about applying a gender lens in a partnership:

- With perfect hindsight, can you think of any projects you funded where increased gender awareness might have led to better outcomes?
- What are the resources or skills that would help you and make it easier for you to apply a gender lens to your work?
- Who do you know that uses a gender lens in their philanthropy? What appeals to you about the way they work?

And three **harder questions** to focus attention on applying a gender lens in a partnership:

- What or who makes it harder to apply a gender lens to your work?
- Are some groups of people excluded from benefitting from your philanthropy because of their gender?
- What evidence is needed to support a gender lens throughout your organisation, and where will that evidence come from?

Plus some **tough questions** to challenge yourself and colleagues:

- How can you ensure a gender lens is considered when appointing new directors to your board?
- What have been your worst failures with regard to gender, and why did they happen?
- Do you revert to stereotypes of women in your grantmaking?

Mythbusting



Myth	Actuality
<p>If we haven't applied a gender lens from the start of the partnership, it's too late.</p>	<p>While better practice is to apply a gender lens from the outset, it is never too late to think about a gender lens in a partnership or project, and this includes applying a gender lens to the evaluation of a project. You will gain experience and will be able to develop a more systematic application of a gender lens in future projects.</p>
<p>If I try to apply a gender lens and get it wrong, that's worse than not trying.</p>	<p>Applying a gender lens is a process of critical inquiry, which can be an iterative or cyclical process. Starting and learning is part of the process, and no one is expected to be highly skilled at the beginning. There are many organisations and resources that can support your capability to apply a gender lens.</p>
<p>We can't tell other organisations what they should do and how they should apply a gender lens.</p>	<p>Gender lens champions can ask questions and listen to what their stakeholders have to say, talk about examples and benefits, and demonstrate better practice in applying a gender lens. You can share your knowledge and experience, without telling people what to do.</p>
<p>We already know what people need and want.</p>	<p>Making assumptions about people's needs can reduce the impact of philanthropy. Talking to the potential beneficiaries of your initiatives, asking what they really want, and listening to their experiences of inequality and discrimination can help you develop more targeted and effective programs. Listen to their answers using a gender and intersectional lens. Then reflect on what you've heard and take action. Making assumptions about people based on their gender ignores their different experiences of inequality and discrimination.</p>
<p>Only women and girls benefit from applying a gender lens.</p>	<p>A gender lens refers to and considers the unique needs of different genders, including men and boys, women and girls, and those with diverse gender identities. Applying a gender lens can help you both understand the experiences of people who have been marginalised, and adapt your funding to best serve their needs.</p>
<p>If we're funding a project for women and girls, we're already applying a gender lens.</p>	<p>Applying a gender lens doesn't necessarily mean directing funding to benefit only one particular gender group, although this may be the outcome. More broadly it means querying assumptions that men, women and gender diverse people's needs and solutions are the same, and then funding projects that address people's different needs.</p>
<p>Our mission as funders is to focus on issues, and not single out different cohorts of people.</p>	<p>Gendered systems, practices and norms deeply influence issues within communities and society. Every issue has a gender dimension to be explored, understood and addressed. Focusing on an issue without understanding different people's experiences of it risks poorly designed programs, unintended consequences and ultimately, less impact.</p>

Mythbusting

Myth	Actuality
Applying a gender lens is not a mainstream endeavour .	Applying a gender lens is about questioning assumptions, uncovering blind spots, improving the understanding of a problem and consequently the quality of decision making to address it. More government funded initiatives are requiring the application of a gender lens, and there is a growing recognition that it is central to best practice philanthropy .
Requiring a gender lens will slow down the process of getting funding for a project.	Bringing a gender lens to a partnership or collaboration of funders makes a project more attractive by increasing inclusion, equity and impact , even to funders who don't apply a lens within their own organisations.
Applying a gender lens will divert money from the amount our organisation is giving to other areas.	A gender lens is an overlay or a perspective on your existing giving, not an additional area or program of giving . A gender lens will help you refine your approach to allocate funding where it is most needed and useful.
Applying a gender lens will cost money and increase our administrative burden.	Without evidence and knowledge of gendered needs and conditions of potential beneficiaries, your grantmaking can actually be more costly and might not deliver the impact you seek.
It's just one more thing to think about and do, and I'm already too busy .	It's not necessarily complex, hard or time-consuming . Start simple with the first steps outlined in this Framework. At minimum, ask the question "How will this (decision, initiative, project/program, model) impact women?"
If we start applying a gender lens, then we have to apply all the other lenses too, and it will never end .	The potential beneficiaries of your initiative already experience intersecting discrimination and inequality. Thinking of gender as a foundational lens to build on can be useful. The skills and practices of applying one lens to funding are very transferable, and they often intersect .
It's tokenistic and about being politically correct.	Applying a gender lens should allow you to identify systemic issues with social norms and structures you need to understand, and sometimes attempt to change, to support the beneficiaries of your initiatives. This means that a gender lens can help you go beyond tokenistic efforts and into meaningful impact .
Applying a gender lens means that we have to give up something .	A gender lens is a bonus, not a loss. Applying a gender lens helps you focus your efforts . It's about the perspective you take when making decisions.
A gender lens is only about grantmaking, it's not relevant to us otherwise.	You can apply a gender lens to your organisation's philanthropic strategy, investments, research, and communications . It's also helpful to reflect on your organisation's internal policies and practices to consider how they contribute to, or detract from, gender equality more broadly.

Definitions and concepts

Collaboration

“A process through which parties who see different aspects of a problem can constructively explore their differences and search for solutions that go beyond their own limited version of what is possible”.⁵

Evaluation

The systematic collection and analysis of information to make judgements, usually about the effectiveness, efficiency and/or appropriateness of an activity.

Gender

The concept of gender is not binary but encompasses a range of gender identities. It refers to our different socially constructed roles, our behaviours, our activities, the way we relate, share resources, make decisions, plan for the future and participate in our community. It is different from “sex”, which merely defines us in a biological and physiological way.

Gender analysis

The critical examination of how differences in gender roles, activities, needs, opportunities and rights/entitlements affect women, men, girls, boys and gender diverse people in a given policy area, situation or context.

Gender diversity

Some older definitions of gender equality and analysis did not explicitly consider gender beyond the binary of men and women, boys and girls. However, gender inequality affects all genders. Women experience inequality and disadvantage in almost all aspects of life including employment, gender pay gap, sexual harassment, unequal caring responsibilities and family violence. Men suffer the impact of harmful gender stereotypes that encourage aggression and discourage help-seeking behaviours. Gender diverse and transgender people experience higher rates of violence and discrimination than women or men.

Gender equality

Gender equality occurs when people of all genders enjoy the same rights, responsibilities and opportunities. Gender equality does not mean that people with different gender identities will become the same. It means that someone’s rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born, or identify as, female, male or another gender identity.⁶

Gender Impact Assessment

A Gender Impact Assessment is a specific tool for gender analysis often used to assess the gender impact of public policies, programs and investments.

Gender lens

The deliberate and critical consideration of the unique experiences and needs of people of different genders, and the drivers of those experiences. The application of a gender lens aims to develop strategies and practices to address and redress gendered norms, structures and power imbalances. A gender lens is an entry point for inquiry into the ways that discrimination and inequalities intersect and compound with different social identities.

Gender mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming is the process of integrating a gender lens into all aspects of an organisation’s strategies and initiatives, and into its culture, systems and operations.

Housing

Housing refers to the buildings in which people live that give shelter and safety, as well as provide a place to rest and to keep belongings. Housing is habitable year-round, and provides a residential address for the individuals or groups who dwell there.

Intersectionality

We know that a gender lens is one way to consider and understand disadvantage and discrimination. Intersectionality is a term that is used to describe how other forms of social disadvantage and discrimination intersect, and compound. It is “the interconnected nature of different characteristics and circumstances such as race, income, class, disability, sexuality and gender as they apply to a given individual or group. These characteristics and circumstances overlap and create an interdependent system of discrimination or disadvantage”.⁷

Partnerships

Joint working arrangements between two or more organisations (at least one of which is a philanthropic funder), that remain autonomous while engaging in ongoing, coordinated collective action to achieve outcomes that could not be achieved on their own.⁸

Philanthropy

Philanthropy is broadly defined as giving private resources for public or community benefit. Resources commonly refer to money, but may also include time and expertise.

Additional resources

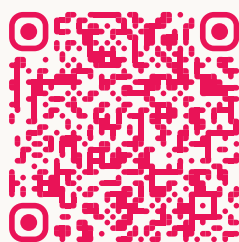
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- Funders seeking further tools and practical advice on gender-wise giving in partnerships can visit aiiw.org.au

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Explore the Equitable Foundations Case Studies

The Equitable Foundations **Case Studies** report includes **key insights** regarding the application of a gender lens in two case study partnerships.



To download the Equitable Foundations Case Studies, visit aiiw.org.au/research-resources/equitable-foundations

Who undertook this study?



Melbourne Social Equity Institute

The Melbourne Social Equity Institute at The University of Melbourne conducts and facilitates interdisciplinary research that addresses the causes and consequences of social inequities and advances knowledge about effective ways to respond. The work of the Melbourne Social Equity Institute is focused on communities and co-production, and can be explored at socialequity.unimelb.edu.au.

The project team from the Melbourne Social Equity Institute included:

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**AUSTRALIANS
INVESTING IN
WOMEN**

Empowering giving for a fairer future

Australians Investing In Women

Australians Investing In Women (AIIW) is a leading national advocate for Gender-wise philanthropy. Building on progress towards gender equity, AIIW takes an evidence-based approach and works in partnership with philanthropic, corporate and community leaders to strengthen society by catalysing investing in women and girls.

The project team from AIIW included:

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Who undertook this study?

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