

Annual Impact Report

2023 – 2024



Contents

Introduction	05
Leveraging technology where it makes sense	16
Helping not-for-profit organisations navigate the law	30
Keeping people safely and securely housed	42
Supporting disaster-affected communities	54
Guiding people through financial legal issues	66
Our thanks and acknowledgements	82



Introduction

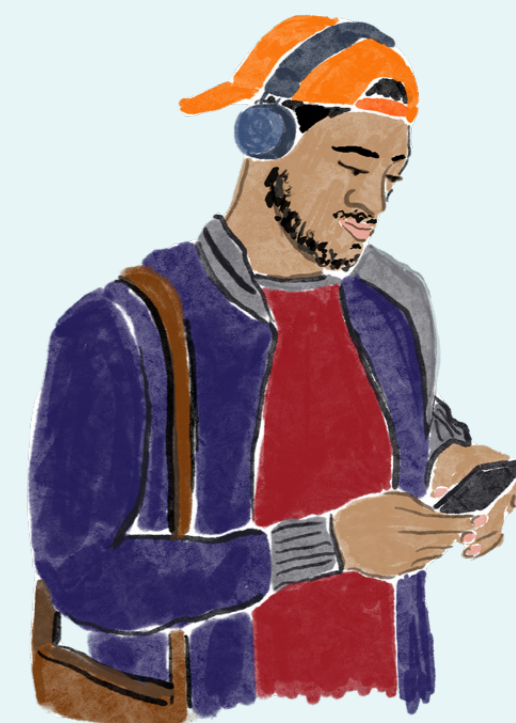
Acknowledgement of Country

Justice Connect acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the Lands on which we meet and work. We acknowledge that sovereignty was never ceded and pay our respects to Elders past and present.

About Justice Connect

In the face of rising unmet legal need, Justice Connect designs and delivers high-impact interventions to increase access to legal support and progress social justice.

We believe in a fair and just world, where people and communities are supported to engage with and fully participate in our legal and social systems, and avoid the negative impacts on their wellbeing or organisational health that flow from unresolved legal problems.



Letter from the CEO

Legal support matters.

Take Benson*, whose story reminds us of the real people behind legal issues and the immense impact legal support can have. Benson was caught up in a legal issue after a disaster, but everything changed when he received a terminal diagnosis. Suddenly, the stakes were much higher, and he worried how his partner would cope with the stress of a prolonged legal matter on her own.

At Justice Connect, we see this every day. People are often unsure where to turn in the face of complex legal problems. Research estimates 78% of legal needs go unmet¹, with a strong connection between social disadvantage and unmet need.

At the same time, a recent national review found our sector is chronically underfunded, with organisations like ours being forced to turn away 1,000 people every day.



Behind these numbers are individuals and communities reeling from crises like housing instability, rising living costs, and climate disasters. **Our 2023-2024 Annual Impact Report highlights the dedication of Justice Connect staff and partners to tackling these challenges head-on.**

Increasing access to justice means more than providing excellent, client-focussed legal services. **It means having a deep understanding of what drives legal need, and using all the tools at our disposal to address those drivers.**

Technology continues to enable us to reach more people and equip our partners to deliver more help. This work reflects the scale of the problems we face, and is deeply integrated across the many facets of our work: from how we collaborate with our pro bono network, our responses to homelessness and climate-fuelled disasters, and more.

This year we launched Home of Your Own, a digital tool that empowers people experiencing family violence to navigate their rights as renters. In its first two months, it has been accessed nearly 8,000 times, providing critical information to renters at risk of homelessness. **Home of Your Own was informed by our Women's Homelessness Prevention Project, which is celebrating its 10th anniversary this year.** By combining legal and social work support, we break cycles of family violence, homelessness, and financial insecurity. For women like Jean*, a grandmother facing eviction, this holistic approach meant she could secure stable housing and focus on her family's wellbeing.

Our Pro Bono Portal now spans 10 jurisdictions worldwide, helping organisations like the Vance Centre in New York provide pro bono support

to families separated by the US immigration system.

This industry-leading platform strengthens collaboration and ensures people receive the right help when they need it most.

In response to increasing disasters, we built Get ePrepared to help people safely store essential legal documents online, which has been viewed over 82,000 times.

Meanwhile, our self-help resources for community organisations have been visited over 283,000 times, empowering the community sector to make sense of the law.

These large-scale solutions are built on countless individual stories.

One such story is Linda's, a volunteer at a Neighbourhood House. After attending our training, Linda could formally induct committee members and lead her organisation through governance challenges with confidence. Her story illustrates the transformative power of accessible legal information, and how even a light touch can impact the resilience of an organisation.

I am proud to present this year's Annual Impact Report, and showcase how our resources, tools, services, and advocacy are helping people stay housed, keeping community organisations on their feet, and making it easier for our community to access justice.

Chris Povey

Chief Executive Officer
Justice Connect

* Names have been changed to protect their identity.

¹ Balmer, N.J., Pleasence, P., McDonald, H.M. & Sandefur, R.L. (2023). *The Public Understanding of Law Survey (PULS) Volume 1: Everyday Problems and Legal Need*. Melbourne: Victoria Law Foundation.

Letter from the Chair

This year, the vital role community legal centres play in providing life-changing support for people who need it has come into sharp focus.

As the housing crisis rages on, we work to keep renters safely housed. As disasters fuelled by climate change increase in frequency and intensity, we make sure affected communities can access pro bono lawyers. As technology develops at lightning speeds, we build digital tools to connect people to legal help faster and easier.

Where there is crisis, there are community legal centres.



Research released this year from the Victoria Law Foundation shows that unmet legal need is the rule, not the exception, for members of the community. There is still much to be done in the legal assistance sector to ensure our service models are as effective and accessible as they can be.

However, the Independent Review of the National Legal Assistance Partnership paints a picture of a sector in need of substantial support – not only to produce good legal outcomes for the community, but to ensure the resilience of the sector itself. It remains to be seen if our resilience will be provided for, to allow us to meet the sheer volume of need that face us.

Justice Connect finds itself at the intersection of mounting community need and tightening funding pressures. **Yet in the face of such turbulence, we remain determined to serve the communities that rely on us.**

Through legal service delivery, digital innovation, and advocacy, Justice Connect has served as a vital safety net for many in our community who would otherwise have nowhere left to turn.

This will be my last year as Chair of Justice Connect and I am proud to have been associated with such a wonderful organisation.

Working at the scale and breadth that we do takes the collaboration of many hands, minds, and hearts.

I extend my sincere thanks to our board members – Jidah Clark, Tristan Cutcliffe, Michael Horin, Vicki Jamieson, Prof. Sarah Maddison, Brooke Massender, and Laavanya Pari – for their steadfast counsel. I also thank Dr. Crystal McKinnon for her valuable contributions whilst serving as a board member until November 2023.

I congratulate our CEO, Chris Povey, for his stewardship through another year in which Justice Connect has had significant impact. His leadership has seen the organisation through significant challenges, and he has faced them with an unwavering vision that unites and galvanises us all. I also thank Sophie Gordon-Clark, our COO, for the excellent financial advice and guidance she has provided.

Our people remain our greatest strength. I am immensely grateful for the efforts of all staff members, volunteers, and partners, whose rigour and dedication has filled this year's Annual Impact Report with so many stories of change.

The Hon Marcia Neave AO

Chair of the Board
Justice Connect



How we understand impact at Justice Connect

This Annual Impact Report reflects our understanding of how we have:

- Implemented **our strategy**, which is designed to increase our reach, impact, and sustainability, guided by our three strategic directions:
 1. Extending the reach and impact of our services through digital strategies
 2. Amplifying and extending the impact of our work through strategic engagement to help drive systems-level change
 3. Achieving our purpose in the most effective and financially sustainable way.



View our strategy:

justiceconnect.org.au/our-2024-strategy

and

- Achieved the impacts described in **our theory of change**, which captures the ways in which we are focussed on the design, delivery, evaluation, and research required to deliver effective and high impact responses.



View our theory of change:

justiceconnect.org.au/theory-of-change

To deliver on our theory of change, we undertake the following key activities:



Develop and deliver education and self-help resources

Legal services design and delivery



Community outreach

Legal sector improvements



Complementary services

Strategic engagement



We expect these activities to achieve our four desired outcomes of:



Our work is guided by our organisational values:

Client-centered:

We centre our work and our goals around the needs of the people and communities that benefit from our work.

Inclusive:

The law disproportionately impacts certain groups. It creates and perpetuates cycles of hardship, and it provides tools and skills to redress unfair power dynamics. To realise our purpose we must embrace different perspectives, experience, and skills in our work, in our organisational culture and teams, and in our policies and strategic direction.

Collaborative:

We collaborate internally and externally because we know that together we are greater than the sum of our parts.

Responsive:

We look out for changes and we adapt and move easily and quickly in response.

Innovative:

We embrace innovation, curiosity and system-level thinking. We are not afraid to research, try, fail, and iterate.

Impactful:

We are evidence informed and rigorous in how we work, we look for opportunities to learn and improve, and can clearly demonstrate our impact.



How to read this report

For society, for the sector, for the system

We recognise that to increase access to legal support and progress social justice, we need to address the root causes of legal need, both at an individual and systemic level.

To holistically prevent and resolve unmet legal need, we work at three levels of intensity:



For society:

We address legal problems in the community with 1-to-1 legal and social work support. We also scale this support in a 1-to-many model through our digital tools, resources, training, and outreach.



For the sector:

We build capacity in the pro bono and community sectors so that the access to justice ecosystem is streamlined, and community organisations are supported to navigate their own legal issues.



For the system:

We work with institutions and decision makers to advocate for a fairer legal system, based on our evidence and trends we observe in our legal work.



Throughout this report, we have used iconography to highlight where our work sits across these levels of impact.



Our year at a glance

Outreach

50,998,162

People reached through digital consumer outreach

↑ 92% from 26,509,288

1,272,705

Unique website pageviews

↑ 10% from 1,156,521



Enquiries

5,452

Enquiries

↓ 2% from 5,567

3,990

Intakes

↑ 13% from 3,527

Self-help

434,288

Views to our self-help resources

↓ 17% from 522,629

155,889

Views to our self-help tools

↑ 63% from 95,841

11,894

Milestones reached in our self-help tools*

↑ 393% from 2,415



Advocacy

8

Law reform submissions

↑ 14% from 7

Service provision

7,974

One-to-one legal services

↑ 6% from 7,512

1,073

One-to-one social work services

↑ 24% from 868

356

Education sessions

↑ 46% from 244



One-to-one legal services

883

Secondary consults
↑ 16% from 759

100

Facilitated referrals
↑ 100% from 50

4,624

Information and simple referrals
↑ 9% from 4,234

614

Pro bono referrals
↑ 1% from 606

1,092

Advice services
↑ 16% from 941

661

Casework services
↓ 28% from 922

Pro bono work

54,388

Pro bono hours leveraged

↑ 12% from 48,428



\$23,526,858

Value of pro bono hours

↑ 20% from \$19,591,276

* A 'milestone' in our self-help tools describes when someone reaches a significant goal within the tool. This is defined individually for each tool, depending on its specific flows and outcomes. For example: in Dear Landlord, a Milestone is when someone successfully generates a letter using the tool.

Our FY24 numbers in this Annual Impact Report may differ slightly from numbers reported in our FY23 Annual Impact Report. While we try to ensure we're reporting up to date figures, file closure processes, client requests for file deletion, and improvements to our data systems can mean our numbers shift slightly.

Leveraging technology where it makes sense

To meet the sheer scale of unmet legal need, the legal assistance ecosystem must be set up to prevent, identify, and respond to legal issues as best as it can.

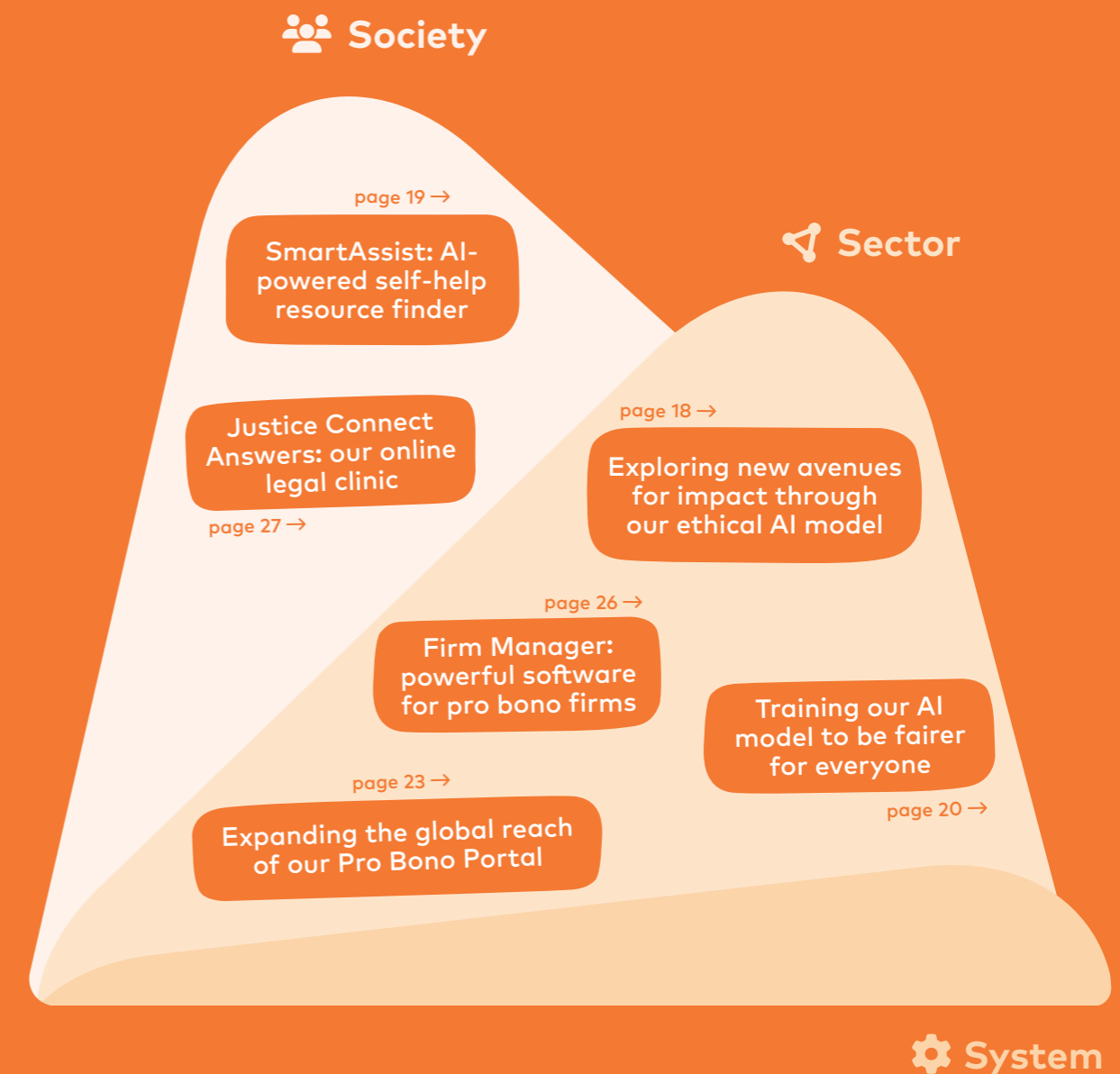
Technology provides an immense opportunity to enhance our access to justice work, both in improving the way we work, and connecting up the sector at large.

We harness technology where it makes sense to scale our reach, improve the experience of giving and getting legal help, and strengthen the entire access to justice ecosystem.

Our industry-leading innovation work has increased efficiencies in how people find and apply for our help, and how law firms around the world contribute to pro bono.

Work we are proud of

This chapter contains our stories of impact over the past year, and clients whose stories we changed for the better.



For society: We address legal problems in the community with legal and social work.

For the sector: Building capacity in, and supporting, the pro bono and community sectors.

For the system: We work with institutions and decision makers for a fairer legal system.



Exploring new avenues for impact through our ethical AI model

Since 2022, we have been using Artificial Intelligence (AI) to make it easier for our community to access legal help, and for our lawyers to deliver services.

Research has found that when people search for legal help, they often struggle to correctly articulate their legal problem. This can make it difficult for people to identify the type of legal help they need, or even recognise that their situation may have a legal solution.

In collaboration with the University of Melbourne, we developed a proprietary natural language processing AI model that can detect legal issues within a person's everyday language.

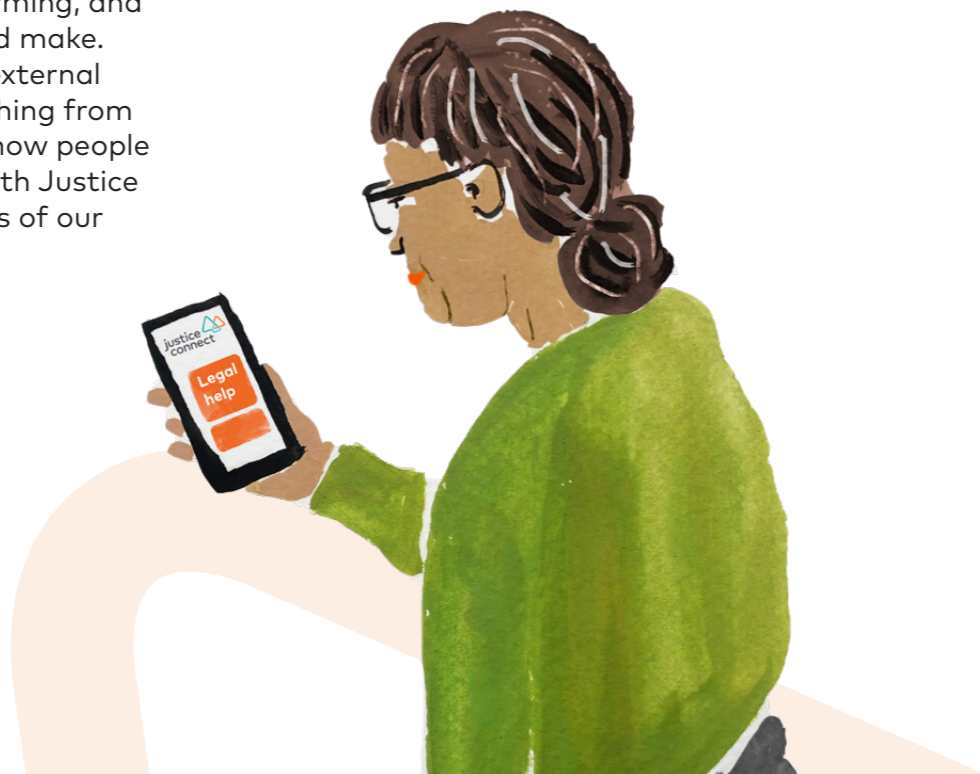
Trained on over 15,000 language samples of real – and diverse – people seeking legal help, it currently supports our online intake process. When someone types in their own description of their legal issue, our AI suggests the areas of law that may be relevant to their situation, which helps them better identify what kind of legal help they might need.

In FY24, we wanted to understand how our AI model was performing, and what improvements we could make. We undertook an extensive external evaluation, looking at everything from AI governance frameworks, how people seeking help are engaging with Justice Connect, and the experiences of our frontline legal staff.

The evaluation found that when people use our AI model, they are:

- **More likely to complete their application** for legal help
- **Less likely to abandon their application** for help when selecting the area of law relevant to their problem
- **More likely to receive a referral** to the right kind of assistance
- **More likely to be able to specifically identify the area of law** relevant to their problem; and
- Able to submit an application for assistance **in a shorter period of time.**

With these findings, we can now look to design and develop exciting new applications of our AI model, to make the experience of finding legal help even more seamless.



SmartAssist: Helping people find legal information using their own words, and build confidence with AI

Beyond intake and triage, we identified that our AI model can also assist people to navigate our website, and connect with the right self-help resources faster.

Our library of nearly 180 self-help resources covers a wide range of legal issues, such as employment, domestic building disputes, and representing yourself in court. But if you're not sure what legal issue you're facing, it can be difficult to identify which resource is right for you.

In building SmartAssist, each of our resources were reviewed and tagged by our in-house lawyers to align to the areas of law in our AI model, allowing it to accurately filter our library based on the areas of law identified within someone's situation.

That's why we created SmartAssist: an AI-powered tool that takes your own description of your legal problem, and matches you with the most appropriate Justice Connect resources. This works to streamline the process of finding the right support, and build people's confidence using safe and ethical AI.

Since launching in May 2024, SmartAssist has been used 1,245 times.



Use SmartAssist

justiceconnect.org.au/smart-assist

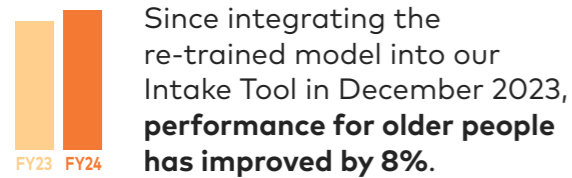




Training our AI model to be fairer for everyone

Technology does not always perform equally for all members of our community, and often carries the biases of the people that build, use, and maintain it.

Throughout the development of our AI model, we identified underperformance issues in accurately identifying legal issues when they are described by older people. To actively address this, we worked with community and government organisations to collect an additional 12,000 language samples to re-train the model, including 2,000 specifically from older people.



But we also observed that **when we worked to improve the performance for older people, we also improved the performance for everyone.**

As AI continues to transform how our sector responds to legal need, we're steadfast in our commitment to ensuring our own AI works as fairly as it can for all members of the community.



The work we do [in collaboration] with Justice Connect...represents the positive impact our research has in society. What drew us to the project is the social impact and the exciting research potential... Developing AI technologies that directly impact people in need, especially marginalised groups, is a privilege. Working with data that [enables] research into an emerging direction is likewise a rare opportunity. A perfect combination of these two things only comes once in a blue moon.

– Kemal Kurniawan,
University of Melbourne

IMPACT HIGHLIGHT



We were named **Not-for-Profit Technology Innovator of the Year** in the Infoxchange Australian Not-for-profit Technology Awards.



In FY24, the Pro Bono Portal helped our global partners match 1,420 people with free legal help.



Expanding the global reach of our Pro Bono Portal

Justice Connect's Pro Bono Portal is a technology-driven system to match unmet legal need with pro bono capacity.

In FY24, we brought our Pro Bono Portal to three new jurisdictions around the world:

- New York, United States of America:**
 The Vance Centre for International Justice is using the Portal to support their 'Keeping Families Together' project, which provides pro bono legal help to children and families who have been separated by the US immigration system.
- Texas, United States of America:**
 The Texas Opportunity & Justice Incubator adopted the Portal to support its clearinghouse functions.
- Buenos Aires, Argentina:**
 The Portal has been implemented by Comisión Pro Bono Argentina to support its clearinghouse functions.

We also continued to support our existing 7 jurisdictions, fostering a global network of access to justice organisations.

[Our partner firms] were impressed by the functionality of the platform. We received positive feedback in various occasions with remarks on how self-explanatory and clearly laid out the Portal is.

– UPJ, Germany



Learn more about the Pro Bono Portal
justiceconnect.org.au/global-portal

How is the Portal being used around the world?

 <p>2019 Australia</p> <p>In Australia, the Portal has been coordinating responses to various disasters since January 2020</p>	 <p>2020 The UK</p> <p>In the UK, the Portal supports domestic abuse survivors who are referred to law firms.</p>	 <p>2020 Ireland</p> <p>In Ireland, the Portal is supporting the scheme to regularise the status of long-term undocumented migrants.</p>	 <p>2021 New Zealand</p> <p>In New Zealand, the Portal supports their pro bono legal service, being key infrastructure from day one.</p>
 <p>2022 Hong Kong</p> <p>The Portal is closing the justice poverty gap and ensuring that disadvantaged people facing a legal problem get the help they need.</p>	 <p>2022 Germany</p> <p>In Germany, the Portal is helping people displaced from the conflict in Ukraine who are looking for legal help.</p>	 <p>2022 The Philippines</p> <p>In the Philippines, the Portal is the central pro bono platform for all attorneys, and is leveraging Justice Connect's experience to establish and promote a culture of pro bono.</p>	 <p>2023 USA</p>  <p>2024 South America</p>

CLIENT STORY:

How tech-driven collaboration between Te Ara Ture and Justice Connect built a bridge to justice across the Tasman

By connecting the private and community legal sectors, we unlock its full potential to provide essential legal support to the people who need it most.

Justice Connect's Pro Bono Portal was developed to streamline pro bono efforts, enabling private law firms to match their resources efficiently with unmet legal needs.

Since 2021, the Portal has been embraced by Te Ara Ture, a pro bono clearinghouse in Aotearoa, New Zealand.

Te Ara Ture, meaning "a bridge to law" in the Māori language, has connected lawyers with communities experiencing disadvantage across New Zealand for years, offering critical legal assistance to those who need it most. A small but mighty team of two accepts referrals from every Community Law Centre across Aotearoa. As the global cost-of-living crisis deepens, the demand for their support has only grown, as legal problems swell throughout the country.

The Portal has become a cornerstone in Te Ara Ture's processes, streamlining case management and enabling more people to access vital legal help.

"The Pro Bono Portal has been a game-changer for us," says Sabrina Muck, Director of Te Ara Ture. "My colleague Lee and I both work remotely, and the Portal gives us a clear, real-time overview of

new cases, qualified applications, and expressions of interest. It also allows us to search for lawyers by their areas of expertise, saving us time and ensuring that our community gets the right legal help faster."

Sabrina and Lee have found that the live insights generated by the Portal have significantly improved their workflows, allowing them to focus more on serving their community rather than being bogged down by administrative tasks.



My colleague Lee and I both work remotely, and the Portal gives us a clear, real-time overview of new cases, qualified applications, and expressions of interest.

- Sabrina Muck,
Director of Te Ara Ture



Justice Connect has remained by their side throughout their transformation journey, ensuring that Te Ara Ture makes full use of the Portal's capabilities.

"The support we've received from Justice Connect has been exceptional," Sabrina shares. "The roll-out was seamless, and they're always responsive to any questions or issues we have."

Beyond operational improvements, the Portal has enhanced Te Ara Ture's standing within the New Zealand legal community. According to Sabrina, "we've seen an increase in unprompted registrations from pro bono lawyers, and the feedback we get is overwhelmingly positive. The ease of use and accessibility of the Portal have helped bolster our reputation."

Bridging the justice gap is no small feat, but with technology like the Pro Bono Portal, organisations like Te Ara Ture are making meaningful strides in delivering more legal support to the communities who need it most. Through collaboration, innovation, and a shared commitment to justice, we are not just making legal help easier to access; we are transforming the way it is delivered on a global scale.



Helping law firms strengthen their pro bono practice with Firm Manager

Pro bono lawyers play an instrumental role in the access to justice ecosystem, ensuring that fairness reaches all corners of society.

However, a law firm's capacity to provide pro bono work relies heavily on the systems each firm has in place to manage and report on pro bono activity.

Recognising this, we saw an opportunity to build a platform that optimises the pro bono workflow for law firms, allowing them to unlock their full capacity to provide critical support.

After years of co-design and development, this year we launched Firm Manager – a powerful, intuitive, and secure system that streamlines the administration of law firm pro bono practices.



Firm Manager isn't just about efficient management of pro bono practices; it empowers law firms to deliver faster and higher-quality pro bono experiences. This means more individuals receive the help that they need and law firms can better measure their impact and dedicate valuable time to more meaningful work.

Since launching, our firm users are already seeing the benefits of Firm Manager:

Firm Manager has been a game changer for us. It has allowed us to gain deeper insights into our work and make more data-driven decisions. It has also significantly cut down the time we spend on reporting so we can spend more time on higher-value work. We are so proud to be supporting Justice Connect's important work leveraging technology to have a real impact in the legal assistance sector.

– Firm Manager user

We're excited to scale Firm Manager to even more firms, and develop new features to further streamline the pro bono process.



Learn more about Firm Manager

firmmanager.org



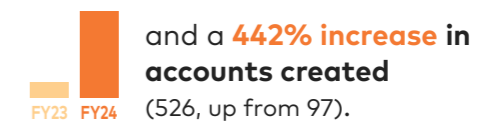
The next chapter for our online legal clinic: Justice Connect Answers

Providing access to justice can mean more than getting a lawyer to represent you. Sometimes, it can be as simple as asking a lawyer a quick question to figure out your rights and build confidence to take the next step.

By providing a range of legal assistance models, including online service-delivery, we work to meet people where they are at and adapt to their skills and knowledge.

Our online clinic, Justice Connect Answers, provides discrete, once-off legal advice completely free, and completely online. Eligible users can sign up, ask their question, and receive an answer from one of our pro bono lawyers.

In FY24, we saw a significant increase in demand for Justice Connect Answers, with:



Justice Connect Answers is removing systemic barriers for members of our community who can't afford to pay a lawyer, or those who may find it difficult to access legal help face-to-face due to living in regional or remote areas, having caring responsibilities, or living with a disability.



Use Justice Connect Answers

justiceconnect.org.au/jca



CLIENT STORY:

How our online legal clinic helped Esha get over \$18,000 worth of fines waived

When Esha* found herself owing over \$18,000 in fines for driving offences she didn't commit, she was at risk of losing her home. Already experiencing family violence and severe financial hardship, paying the fines would mean struggling to put food on the table, and potentially losing her home. When she couldn't find free legal help in person, she turned to our online legal clinic, Justice Connect Answers.

When life problems compound, they can make legal problems almost insurmountable.

Esha and her family were experiencing immense financial stress. Esha was unemployed, having been forced to leave her job due to sexual harassment. Her experience of depression and other health concerns made it even harder to find a new job. Her husband also recently liquidated his business due to his mental and physical health, leaving them with no income.

Suddenly, Esha received a final notice that she owed more than \$18,000 in unpaid driving fines. The fines had been left unpaid for so long that her property, including her home, was at risk of being seized to pay off the debt. Having recently moved house, the earlier notices had been sent to her previous address, so she had no idea about the fines until the last moment.

Amongst the physical, mental, and financial stress, Esha was also experiencing family violence perpetrated by her husband, who had driven her car and accrued the fines in Esha's name.



Desperate to keep her home, Esha was willing to pay in instalments, even though it would put a huge financial strain on her family.

After unsuccessfully trying to find free legal help, Esha found our online legal clinic Justice Connect Answers. Esha signed up and asked our lawyers what steps she could take to request an extension on the due date of the fines or arrange a payment plan.

Our lawyer provided her with written legal advice and a template letter that she could adapt for her situation to help negotiate the fines with Victoria Police.

Using our advice and template letter, Esha successfully had all of her fines waived.

Esha received the help she needed to act by asking one question on our platform, demonstrating the importance of enabling people to access help when and where they can, and providing practical assistance to support them on their legal journey.

Suddenly, Esha received a final notice that she owed more than \$18,000 in unpaid driving fines.

Reflecting on her experience, Esha felt she had received more help than she had anticipated. She commended Justice Connect's "knowledgeable and helpful lawyers" who provided "amazing support and (an amazing) experience".

With our guidance, Esha found greater financial freedom, and relief from the pursuit of debt collectors, which helped her feel safer and more secure as she moved forward in her life.



*Names in this story have been changed to protect their identity.

Helping not-for-profit organisations navigate the law

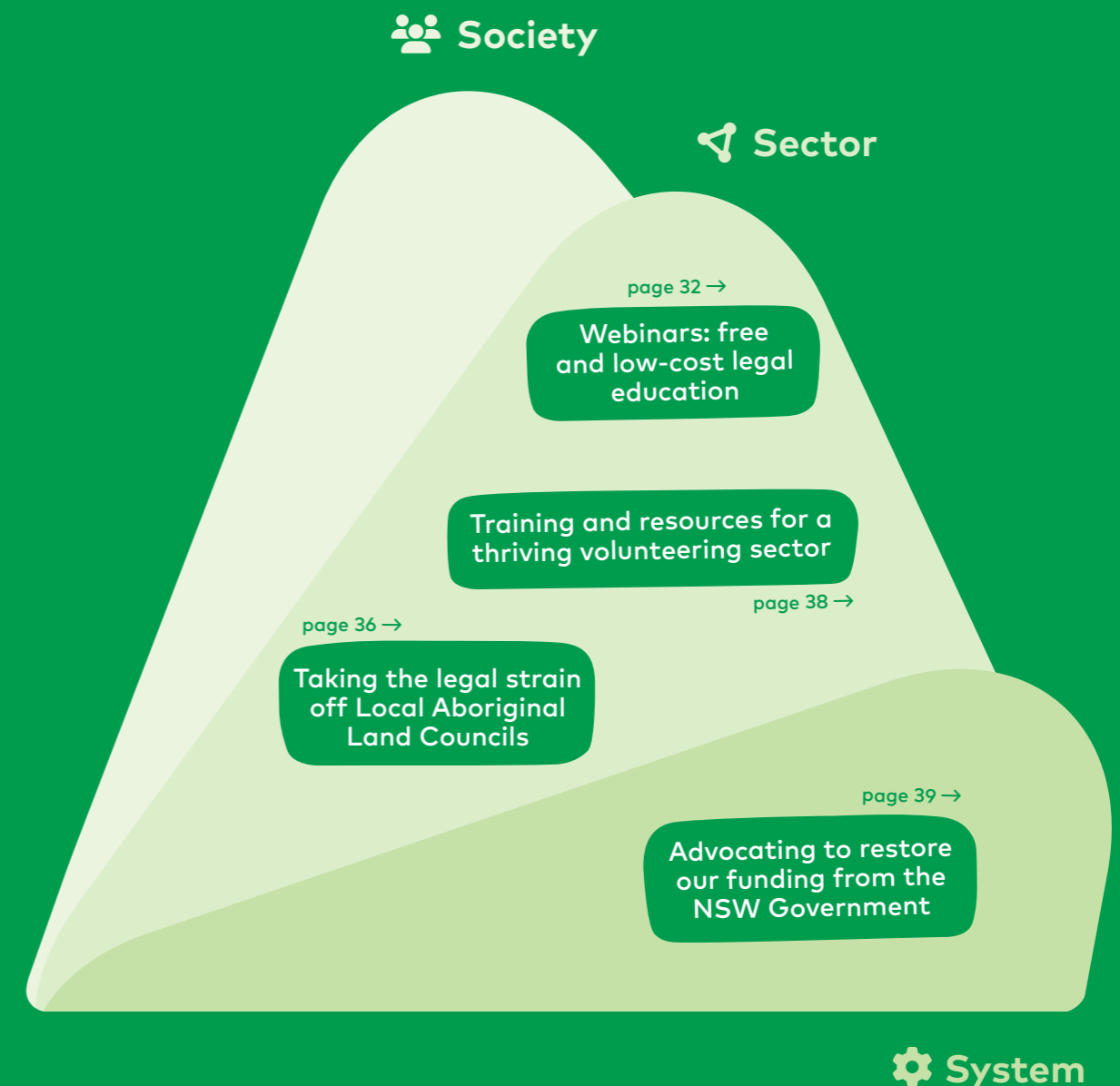
Not-for-profit organisations are the cornerstone of community resilience, providing essential services that uplift those most in need and strengthen communities in times of adversity.

However, these vital organisations exist in a complex legal landscape, especially if they operate in multiple states. With their limited time and resources, this can make keeping up with compliance extremely difficult, let alone affording costly legal fees when they experience a legal issue.

By providing expert advice, training, and resources, we work to relieve community organisations of this burden. As a charity ourselves, we share the same experience and priorities as the organisations we help. Our specialist legal support aims to give not-for-profit organisations the skills, confidence, and information they need to run their organisation well, while focussing on what matters most: their communities.

Work we are proud of

This chapter contains our stories of impact over the past year, and clients whose stories we changed for the better.



- 👥 **For society:** We address legal problems in the community with legal and social work.
- 🏢 **For the sector:** Building capacity in, and supporting, the pro bono and community sectors.
- ⚙️ **For the system:** We work with institutions and decision makers for a fairer legal system.



Bringing plain-language legal information to community organisations through webinars

When governing a community organisation, it's hard to know where to start when grappling with all the legal issues you may face.

Our interactive webinars provide a low-cost way to learn about common not-for-profit legal issues, and how to best navigate them. **Through webinars, we build the capacity of the social sector to prepare for, prevent, and respond to legal issues.**

Feedback on our webinars have shown the impact they have on community organisations' knowledge, confidence, and capacity.



89% (n=252) rated the training as very good or excellent



95% (n=252) said the training increased their knowledge about the topic

This year, we ran 24 webinars, which were attended by 2,100 people.



Browse our upcoming webinars

nfplaw.org.au/webinars

In the process of starting a community organisation. The information learnt in this webinar has greatly assisted in moving forward in establishing this business.

– Webinar attendee

Well done. This was my first webinar with Justice Connect but I will definitely be back.

– Webinar attendee

It was clearly presented, the slides were very well utilised and information that could be very dense was presented in an easy to understand way.

– Webinar attendee

As a migrant to Australia, it seems daunting to understand the structures in place and how everything works. The webinar was really helpful in painting a detailed and complete picture of what the not-for-profit sector landscape looks like.

– Webinar attendee

IMPACT HIGHLIGHT

Our self-help tools for community organisations were viewed **21,974 times**, and our self-help resources for community organisations were viewed **283,282 times**.



CLIENT STORY:

How governance training transformed Lancefield Neighbourhood House's confidence and leadership

This year, Lancefield Neighbourhood House will celebrate 35 years of operating by the community, for the community. The House provides essential services like first aid classes, food sharing networks, and farmer's markets, all tailored to the unique needs of its local members.

Located nearly 70 kilometres north of Melbourne, the Neighbourhood House runs with limited resources. Current funding only covers the salary of one coordinator for 15 hours a week. The rest of the operations rely entirely on volunteers, like Linda Wakeham, the secretary of Lancefield Neighbourhood House. Linda's role involves ensuring the organisation complies with its legal obligations and that its governance remains strong and aligned with its purpose.

"As secretary, I need to be across everything so that the rest of the committee stays informed. As a registered charity, it was crucial for me to understand what we could and couldn't do," Linda shared.

Navigating the legal requirements for a not-for-profit organisation can be daunting and overwhelming, especially for a volunteer. For Linda, this responsibility was affecting her confidence in fulfilling her role effectively.

"I suffer from depression and anxiety, and it's hard for me to speak in front of a group," she explained.

Determined to provide the necessary governance support and ensure legal compliance, Linda signed up for a training session with Justice Connect. Led by one of our expert lawyers, the session covered the legal duties of committee members in not-for-profit organisations.

Armed with the relevant legal information, Linda now has the confidence to formally induct committee members, and upskill them in their governance and regulatory requirements.



"Since doing this training, I can now stand up in meetings because I know I have the right information," she said. "I even put my hand up to join the board of Neighbourhood Houses Victoria, which is something I never would have done without the training!"

Seeing the positive impact of the training on Linda, she and other committee members are planning to attend more sessions next year.

"There's nothing I'd change about this training. I've attended more than once, and I've learned something new each time. The way everything is explained in plain language, without assuming any legal background, made it easy to follow and understand."

With the support of our training, Linda is helping ensure that Lancefield Neighbourhood House meets its legal obligations when serving the community, continuing its legacy for years to come.

Since doing this training, I can now stand up in meetings because I know I have the right information.

- Linda, Volunteer



Taking the legal strain off Local Aboriginal Land Councils

Local Aboriginal Land Councils (LALCs) work to improve, protect, and foster the best interests of Aboriginal communities across NSW.

To enable this purpose, it is essential that they are supported to navigate any legal issues that face their organisation.

That's why we provide targeted, practical, and culturally-appropriate legal services and training to all 120 LALCs across the state.

In FY24, we saw an increase in demand for our LALC legal supports, delivering 125 services (↑37% increase).

Alongside this overall increase, we also saw increases in the legal issues commonly facing LALCs:

- Property law matters **increased by 30%** (from 20 in FY23 to 26 in FY24)
- Employment and volunteer matters **increased by 116%** (from 24 in FY23 to 52 in FY24)



In the face of this increased demand, we continued to provide quality legal services.

83% (n=23) said they are happy with the help they got from Justice Connect

77% (n=23) said they now have a better understand of their legal problem.

Justice Connect gives great advice and are very helpful. When I needed help and additional understanding the team was available and the lawyers, I'm still working with them with one of our issues, they always follow up and make sure we are okay. Whatever is going on we're looked after.

– LALC worker

Took a lot of strain and burden off the Land Council, it really settled our feelings down.

– LALC worker

Without JC we would have been poorly informed, would have made uninformed decisions, could have been detrimental to our LALC.

– LALC worker



IMPACT HIGHLIGHT



We provided 247 pro bono referrals for community organisations.

"Justice Connect is doing fantastic work. They have always been prompt in getting back to me whenever I have contacted [them] for support. As a small team, they are doing much above their capacity to help the sector. They are widely respected for their support and that's why a range of charities reach out to them."

– Community organisation worker



Contributing to a thriving volunteering sector through training and resources

Last year, Volunteering Australia released the National Strategy for Volunteering 2023-2033. The strategy lays out a 10-year plan to support and enable Australia's volunteering ecosystem to thrive, and work towards a world where volunteering is the heart of Australian communities.

Many not-for-profit organisations rely on volunteers to keep their services running, and deliver impact in their community. To ensure that volunteer relationships are navigated responsibly, there are many legal obligations in place, both for an organisation and their volunteers. Recognising this, we have a suite of resources and training available on topics relating to engaging volunteers, such as recruitment, work health and safety, insurance, and child safety standards.

Due to the vital legal support our resources and training provide to the sector, **Justice Connect is responsible for leading an action as part of the 2024-2027 Action Plan, launched in August 2024.**

Under the plan, we will support volunteer-involving organisations to understand and meet their legal obligations to volunteers through our suite of training and resources.

We are looking forward to contributing to the resilience of the volunteering sector through the Action Plan, and working with the volunteering ecosystem to shape the future of volunteering in Australia.



Advocating to restore our funding from the NSW Government

Every year, thousands of not-for-profit organisations rely on our specialist legal advice, services, and resources. To ensure we meet this immense need, we rely on government and philanthropic funding to keep us running.

In October 2022, the NSW Government discontinued its funding for Justice Connect's Not-for-Profit Law, forcing us to cease our advice services in NSW and remove NSW-specific self-help resources we could no longer maintain from our website. **Because of the NSW Government's inaction to restore our funding, we provided 58% less advice services for community organisations in FY24.**

Seeing the devastating impact that discontinuing our services was having on NSW not-for-profit organisations, we launched a campaign to urge the NSW Government to take action. **As a result, 342 people wrote a letter to the Minister for Families and Communities,** demonstrating the crucial role we play in the NSW community sector's resilience and sustainability.

Frustratingly, this funding is yet to be reinstated. We will continue to keep pressure on the NSW Government to restore this vital legal support to community organisations in NSW.

Access to up to date online materials relevant to NSW have been a critical operational tool for the small NFP I work for, as has access to pro bono legal advice when the issue does beyond the need for legal information. [Justice Connect] has significantly lowered our risk that we will make a potentially costly legal compliance error and we want that service back!

– Feedback survey participant

Our campaign generated 342 emails to the Minister about our crucial role in the sector.



CLIENT STORY:

How pro bono legal advice helped BushED continue protecting children in rural communities

For many families in rural Australia, the daily struggle of accessing education and healthcare is growing harder.

As the cost-of-living rises, families are forced to make difficult decisions. Some children face hours-long journeys to school, while others stay home because tuition fees for boarding school have become unpayable.

For volunteer-run charities like BushED, complying with complex laws can be overwhelming and costly.

In the face of these mounting challenges, BushED, a volunteer-run charity based in rural Queensland, steps in.

The organisation provides volunteer tutors and teachers, educational materials, access to healthcare, and disaster assistance to ensure isolated children have the support they need to reach their potential. But as disadvantage continues to deepen and demand increased, **BushED knew they needed help of their own, especially when it came to safeguarding the children they work so hard to support.**

For volunteer-run charities like BushED, complying with complex laws can be overwhelming and costly. Luckily, BushED's CEO, Lyn French, recognised the need for expert legal advice and approached Justice Connect for assistance.

We referred BushED to a pro bono law firm, who carefully reviewed BushED's draft Safeguarding Policy to ensure it complied with child safety laws, and provided additional legal advice on reporting obligations.

Justice Connect provided us with access to legal expertise that we otherwise would not have had. This has been crucial in navigating complex legal issues, ensuring regulation compliance, and drafting legally sound documents.

– Lyn, BushED CEO

Thanks to this support, BushED now has a robust policy in place that helps the organisation meet its child safety requirements, ensuring children are protected and safe.

Reflecting on the assistance they received, Lyn said, "Justice Connect provided us with access to legal expertise that we otherwise would not have had. This has been crucial in navigating complex legal issues, ensuring regulation compliance, and drafting legally sound documents."

With timely and appropriate legal advice, BushED can now continue its life-changing work of changing lives for children in some of the country's most remote areas.



Keeping people safely and securely housed

Safe, secure housing is a human right that lays the foundation to wellbeing. But as legal, housing, health, social, and financial needs increase in the housing and cost-of-living crises, many more Victorians are facing homelessness, and accessing community supports for the first time.

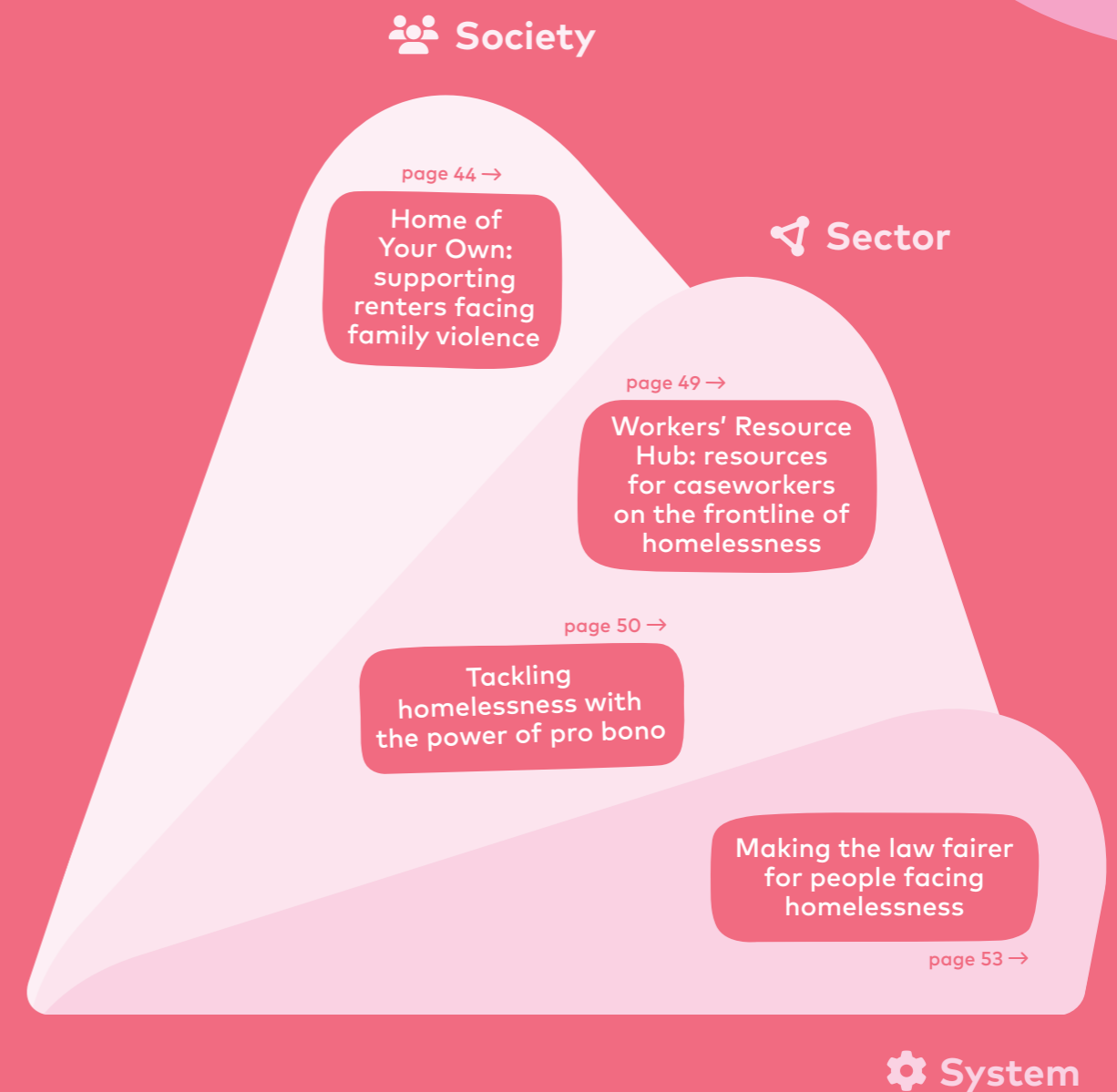
When people have complex or interconnected needs, our multi-disciplinary team of lawyers and social workers are there to offer a higher intensity of support, such as providing ongoing representation or casework.

We also amplify this impact by developing digital tools that increase our help to more people, so renters can understand their legal rights and take early, preventative action to stay safely housed.

To break the cycle of homelessness, we use the evidence from our casework data to advocate for better laws, policies, and practices for people facing homelessness and to stop homelessness before it starts.

Work we are proud of

This chapter contains our stories of impact over the past year, and clients whose stories we changed for the better.



For society: We address legal problems in the community with legal and social work.

For the sector: Building capacity in, and supporting, the pro bono and community sectors.

For the system: We work with institutions and decision makers for a fairer legal system.



Home of Your Own: Breaking the cycle between family violence and homelessness with digital tools

Family violence is a leading contributor to homelessness for women and children.

There are 30,000 people currently experiencing homelessness in Victoria, with women and children representing 75% of people accessing homelessness services.

The cycle between family violence and homelessness means many Victorians are faced with a choice between remaining in an unsafe home, or being pushed into homelessness.

Recent changes to renters' rights have created new legal protections for renters experiencing family violence, providing options to stay in their home or break a lease early without incurring debt.

However, we have found that there is low awareness that these laws exist, both within the community and frontline community workers. There are also multiple barriers to identifying and acting on the available protections.

Building on the impact of our award-winning online tool, Dear Landlord, and our best-practice, wraparound Women's Homelessness Prevention Project that breaks the links between homelessness, financial insecurity, and family violence, we developed Home of Your Own.

By answering a series of anonymous questions, Victorian renters can find information on their options to stay in their rental, leave their rental, or find a new place to live.

Since launching in May 2024, Home of Your Own has been accessed by renters facing family violence 7,888 times



Use Home of Your Own
justiceconnect.org.au/hoyo



IMPACT HIGHLIGHT

We directly prevented 261 clients and their families from being evicted into homelessness which, based on Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute findings, equates to government and community-wide cost savings of over \$7.6 million.

CLIENT STORY:

How integrated legal support and a listening ear helped Jean rebuild her life

With three generations under one roof, Jean* shared a home with her adult daughter and her three grandchildren. Jean was experiencing family violence, perpetrated by her daughter: the mother of her grandchildren. Because of these circumstances, Jean had custody of her three grandchildren.

Jean received news that the home they rented was being sold, leaving her family facing eviction. On the brink of homelessness, she was concerned about losing custody of her grandchildren.

Desperately searching for a new place to live, Jean found it nearly impossible to secure another rental due to the ongoing housing crisis in Victoria.

When Jean found us, she was directed to our specialised Women's Homelessness Prevention Project. One of our social workers worked with Jean alongside our expert tenancy lawyers to help provide her with the support she needed.

When our WHPP lawyers and social worker first contacted Jean via phone, "she was sitting outside the shops with \$10 in her account, not knowing how she was going to feed her family."

With less than a month to act, our team worked quickly to understand Jean's needs and build a strategy with her to stay safely housed and connect with support services. Our social worker noted that "the looming risk of homelessness had impacted Jean's mental health."

"I felt worried about Jean caring for her grandchildren. However, I felt hopeful that Jean had been in touch with Justice Connect."

Jean's lawyers began by negotiating with her rental provider and prepared to defend the eviction in VCAT. Jean confided to our social worker how the behaviour of the real estate agent had caused her additional stress.

Our lawyers took over direct communication with the agent to take this stress away from Jean, and advocated strongly for her and her grandchildren. Thanks to the lawyers' extensive preparation, negotiation, and strong advocacy for Jean and her grandchildren, the eviction proceedings were withdrawn, preventing Jean's family from being left without a roof over their heads.

While the legal team worked to stop the eviction, our social worker provided practical support. We arranged food vouchers for Jean and her family and supported Jean while she searched for a new place to live. When Jean eventually secured a more suitable property, we connected Jean with a housing service, who helped her pay for rent in advance and a removalist. This allowed Jean to focus on her wellbeing and her grandchildren's care.

"I noticed a significant positive change in Jean's demeanour. I felt positive for Jean and her family knowing they had housing stability when our work together ended," our social worker shared. "My approach in working with Jean was a listening ear, comforting words, realistic expectations, and support."

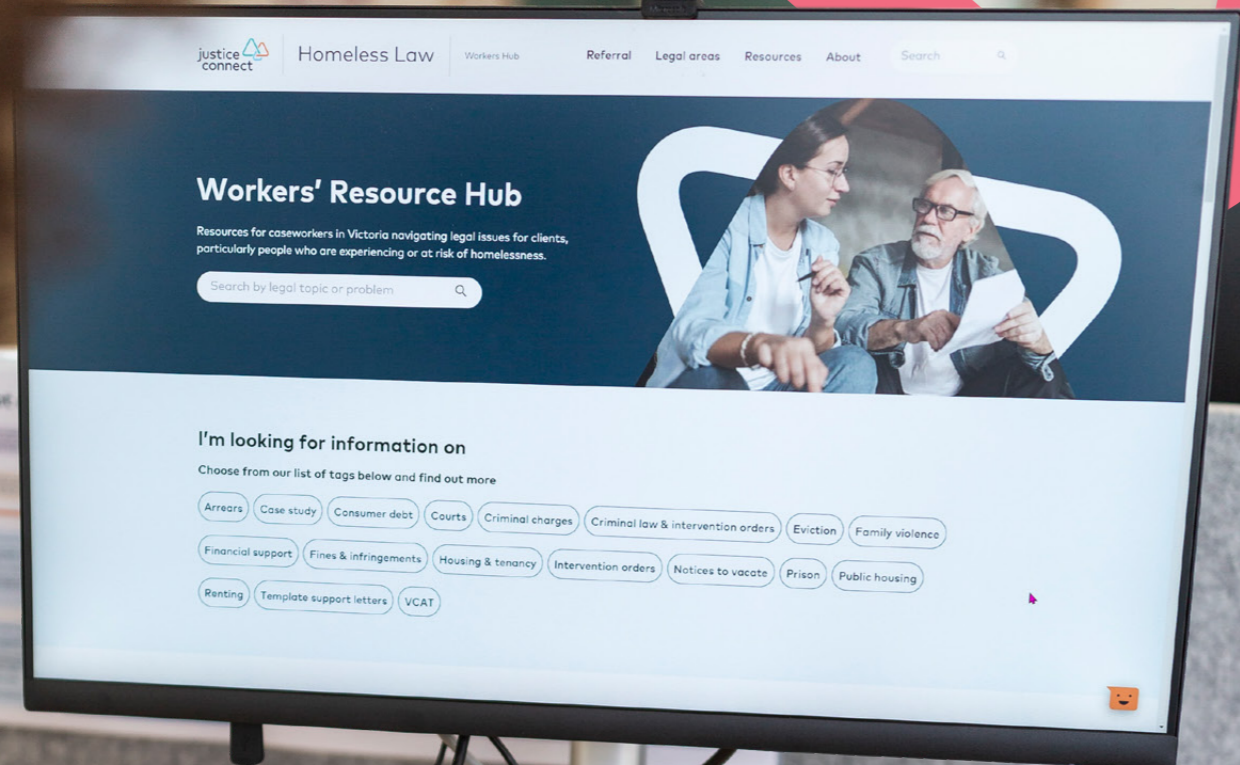
This year marks the 10th anniversary of Justice Connect's Women's Homelessness Prevention Project, which continues to provide holistic care for women and children at risk of homelessness. Through this work, we help break the cycle of homelessness, family violence, and financial insecurity.

"The social work complements the legal work, linking clients in with appropriate supports and working together to help someone with their legal and non-legal issues. This ensures our clients get the support they need to feel heard, empowered, and reassured that they have a team supporting them."

I felt positive for Jean and her family knowing they had housing stability when our work together ended.

- Justice Connect Social Worker





Launching our Workers' Resource Hub to equip frontline workers supporting clients experiencing homelessness

Each link in the community services system has a flow on effect on a person's legal outcomes.

Frontline community workers are vital in helping people facing homelessness identify and address their underlying legal needs. However, the nuance of legal need often makes it difficult for frontline workers and their clients to identify legal issues or know where to go if they need legal support.

We have received consistently positive feedback on the Hub, with one community worker stating:

I found it to be very user friendly, easy to access and extremely helpful with the information it provides. The tabs at the main page were great to easily look at what I need to support my participant... love the Hub.

– Frontline community worker

Through our integrated legal and social work services, we know that Victorians facing homelessness often have multiple, intersecting legal needs. When left unmet, legal needs often compound and make people's lives and circumstances even more complex.

Recognising this, the Workers' Resource Hub was co-designed with and for frontline workers to build their capacity to support people facing homelessness. Frontline workers in Victoria can access a library of plain-language legal resources, so they can better help their clients identify legal issues, and refer them onto appropriate legal supports before they escalate.

Since launching in August 2023, the Workers' Resource Hub has been accessed by frontline workers 16,033 times



Visit the Workers' Resource Hub
justiceconnect.org.au/workers-hub

IMPACT HIGHLIGHT

Our integrated social workers provided **1,073 specialised non-legal supports** (24% increase)

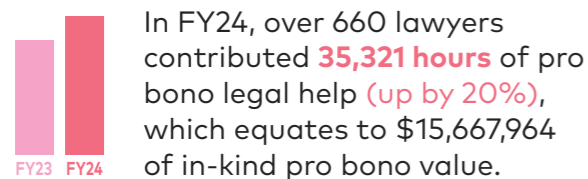


Tackling homelessness with the power of pro bono

Pro bono lawyers have an essential role to play in stopping homelessness before it starts for Victorians.

Without the support of our large pro bono network, it would not be possible for Justice Connect to respond to the rising demand for our services. By embedding pro bono in our practices, we help more Victorians experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

Justice Connect is grateful to our member law firms, and their pro bono lawyers, for their unwavering dedication to helping people exit and avoid homelessness.



To support our pro bono lawyers in delivering their vital assistance, we provide in-person and digital capacity building and training to help them respond to the legal issues our clients face.

In FY24, we delivered 13 training sessions, which were attended by lawyers 1,106 times.

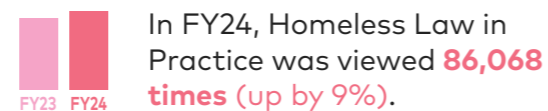
I did not previously realise how complex the fines process was and did not know about the extent of the options available to clients. I now have a better understanding of different fines and will know where to look for information related to an individual's circumstances. I also know who I could contact where I am not across that information.

– Pro bono lawyer and training participant

I think the most important part of this session is the contextual background and understanding of homelessness it has given us – hearing from actual clients...will help us to be more empathetic and understanding lawyers.

– Pro bono lawyer and training participant.

Homeless Law in Practice is an online resource that houses a range of detailed legal resources on common needs related to the experience of homelessness, such as housing and tenancy, fines and infringements, and consumer debt.



IMPACT HIGHLIGHT



Our free online self-help tool, **Dear Landlord**, was accessed by renters facing eviction **42,949 times**.





Making the law fairer for people facing homelessness

We work at the system-level to make the law fairer for people facing homelessness.

Through our decades of experience in providing holistic legal and social work services, we know the law doesn't always work fairly for everyone. That's why we use evidence from our casework and digital tools to inform systemic change.

Stopping homelessness before it starts:

To ensure that evictions into homelessness are a last resort and to make renting fairer and safer for all Victorians, we have advocated for fairer laws, practices, and procedural safeguards as well as stronger protections and equal rights for all public and community housing renters.

This year, we published a comprehensive briefing report called *Rising Housing & Financial Insecurity for Renters*, made a formal submission to the Victorian Parliament's Inquiry into the rental and housing affordability crisis in Victoria, and continued advocating for more social housing with the Victorian Housing Peaks Alliance.

We also worked with the Tenancy Coordination Group to advocate for better hearing practices at VCAT, and highlighted the need for safer renting options for family violence survivors and legislative reform to the *Residential Tenancies Act*. Our evidence was also featured in a United Nations Special Rapporteurs report on the right to adequate housing, extreme poverty, and human rights.

Preventing the criminalisation of homelessness:

Often forced to live their life in public places, people experiencing homelessness are more vulnerable to interactions with law enforcement. Current laws criminalising begging or conduct on public transport often work to criminalise the experience of homelessness, further entrenching disadvantage. We know this punitive approach does not work, so we bring evidence-based stories and solutions direct to decision makers.

This year, we continued our work with the Magistrates' Court of Victoria to run specialised court hearings for people experiencing homelessness, and also pushed for better bail laws. Through our role as co-convenor of the sector-wide Infringements Working Group, we also collaborated with the community legal and financial counselling sectors to make several submissions to government to call for a fairer fines system.



Read our briefing report

justiceconnect.org.au/housing-briefing



Supporting disaster-affected communities

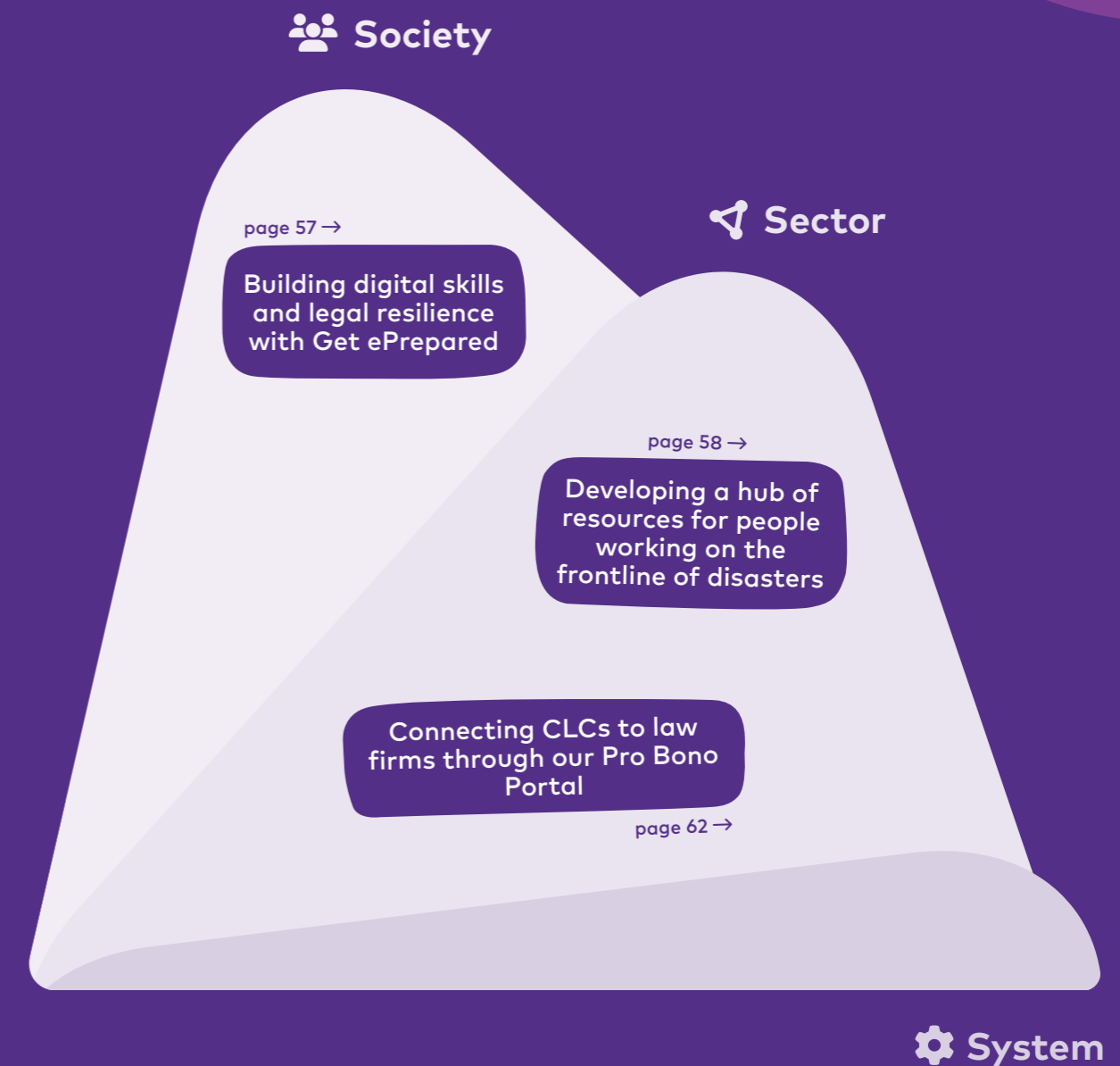
As we face hotter, dryer summers, and wetter, fiercer winters, the legal needs of disaster-affected communities is now a priority area in the access to justice space.

The recent Public Understanding of Law Survey uncovered that people affected by disaster were more likely to report multiple problems and problem clusters, which last longer and require greater use of services².

In disaster-affected communities, we work to build legal resilience by providing legal support and pro bono referrals, building self-help resources and tools to help with preparedness, and using technology such as our Pro Bono Portal to connect Community Legal Centres with the lawyers who can help their clients.

Work we are proud of

This chapter contains our stories of impact over the past year, and clients whose stories we changed for the better.



- 👥 **For society:** We address legal problems in the community with legal and social work.
- 🏢 **For the sector:** Building capacity in, and supporting, the pro bono and community sectors.
- ⚙️ **For the system:** We work with institutions and decision makers for a fairer legal system.

² Balmer, N.J., Pleasence, P., McDonald, H.M. & Sandefur, R.L. (2023). **The Public Understanding of Law Survey (PULS) Volume 1: Everyday Problems and Legal Need.** Melbourne: Victoria Law Foundation.



Building digital skills and legal resilience with Get ePrepared

When disaster strikes, legal problems often follow.

Having documents that prove a person's identity, place of residence, or assets is a key part of many legal responses or actions available. But if these important documents are lost, damaged, or can't be found quickly after a disaster, it can add even more difficulty at an already stressful time.

Storing electronic copies of these essential documents can help reduce this stress and kickstart legal preparedness for a disaster.

However, our community is witnessing the digital divide grow, with many people with lower levels of digital inclusion being left behind, such as older people, people in regional or rural areas, or people whose primary income is government payments.

That's why we built Get ePrepared: an online self-help tool that coaches people through how to store electronic copies of important documents, in case they are needed in an emergency. **By combining legal preparedness and digital inclusion, we aim to create a space that helps people prepare for disasters while also building their digital skills and comfort.**

Evaluating Get ePrepared

In FY25, we look forward to undertaking an evaluation of Get ePrepared, and creating our next iteration based on user insights and needs.

9,644 people have actively learned new digital skills using Get ePrepared to prepare for an emergency.



90% of users surveyed (n=83) said Get ePrepared increased their awareness of which documents may be needed in an emergency.



83% of users surveyed (n=12) said they now feel more legally prepared in case of an emergency.



78% of users surveyed (n=46) said they feel more confident to store documents electronically after using Get ePrepared.

Since launching in January 2024, Get ePrepared has been viewed 82,259 times.



Use Get ePrepared
justiceconnect.org.au/get-e-prepared



Developing a hub of resources for people working on the frontline of disasters

When facing a legal problem, many people turn to online searches to get more information. The same is true for community workers helping disaster-affected communities navigate legal problems.

Recognising the need for high-quality, accessible legal resources on common legal issues that arise after a disaster, we built our Disaster Legal Support Resource Hub.

The Hub, containing 77 resources, serves a variety of audiences:

- **Individuals and small businesses:** Plain language legal resources to help with understanding their rights and obligations after a disaster.
- **Community lawyers:** Practice manuals that provide an overview of common disaster legal matters, such as a private road dispute.
- **Community workers:** Resources that help them spot legal issues in the clients they are helping, and make effective referrals to appropriate legal services.

We get so many questions about this topic, and the handbook seems to cover them all. I'm sure it will be used by our lawyers for many disasters to come.

– Community Legal Centre lawyer.

By creating the Hub, we aim to improve understanding of disaster-related legal problems and available assistance pathways, helping to connect more individuals and businesses with the legal help they need, and fostering a more coordinated and responsive disaster legal assistance system.

Since launching in October 2023, the Hub has been viewed 17,750 times.



Explore the Hub
justiceconnect.org.au/disasters

IMPACT HIGHLIGHT



We attended 23 disaster response network meetings. We also made 48 disaster-related referrals to our network of firms through the Pro Bono Portal.



CLIENT STORY:

How a garage flood exposed a legal challenge that Benson couldn't face alone

When severe storms hit rural Victoria in the spring of 2022, Benson* and his wife Jude* were relieved that their home had avoided major damage. However, their garage wasn't so fortunate.

After the floodwaters receded, Benson discovered a large crack in the garage floor. Concerned that the flood might have caused the damage, he sought expert advice.

Two engineers conducted an investigation and found that the garage floor had been poorly constructed, which worsened the impact of the flooding. Knowing he couldn't afford private legal help because he lives on a disability pension, Benson turned to Justice Connect for assistance.

He applied for free legal help using our online Intake Tool, after which our lawyer Dylan spoke with him to fully understand his situation, and post his matter to our Pro Bono Portal.

When Dylan first spoke with Benson, he seemed "almost resigned to the fact that he would not receive any legal assistance for this issue."

While his case was waiting to be allocated to a law firm, Dylan stayed in touch with Benson to keep him updated every two weeks.

"This gave Benson the peace of mind that we were still trying our very best to place his matter, despite the amount of time that had lapsed," Dylan said.



During one of these meetings, Benson shared devastating news: he had been diagnosed with a terminal illness. His greatest fear was leaving his wife Jude to handle the legal issues on her own.

His greatest fear was leaving his wife Jude to handle the legal issues on her own.

Given Benson's new circumstances, Dylan knew immediate action was needed. "I felt that it was my duty to place his matter as soon as possible," Dylan reflects. "A surge of determination rushed through me to try and approach firms and update them

with his diagnosis and flag the urgency of the matter."

Dylan reached out to one of our member firms and directly referred

A surge of determination rushed through me to try and approach firms and update them with his diagnosis and flag the urgency of the matter.

- Dylan,
Justice Connect Lawyer

Benson's case, explaining the urgency of his situation. Within a few days, the firm agreed to take on his matter.

Dylan remembers telling Benson the good news: "The phone call I had with Benson is one that continues to resonate with me to this very day. After months of direct referrals and speaking to Benson regarding his health problems, providing him with a positive update was both fulfilling and heartwarming. These phone calls after placing a matter provide the 'why' aspect to what we do at Justice Connect."

By maintaining close communication with Benson and recognising the need for swift intervention, we ensured that he received the right legal assistance when he needed it most. Benson's case is now being handled by one of our pro bono member firms, and we wish him all the best with his legal matter and health.



*Names in this story have been changed to protect their identity.

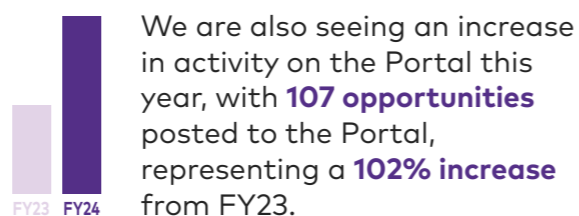
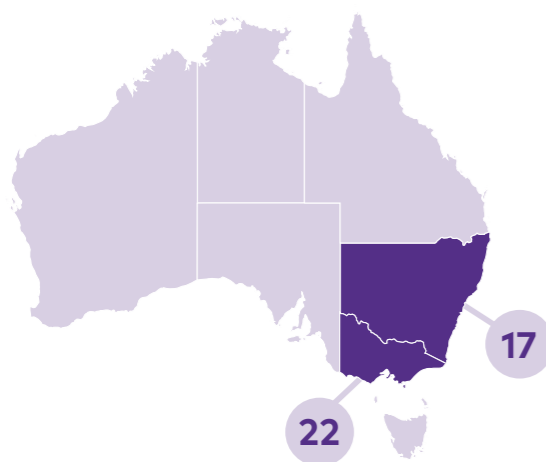
Connecting CLCs to law firms through our Pro Bono Portal

Technology provides the opportunity to connect Community Legal Centres (CLCs) to pro bono legal help.

Disaster resilience requires more than on-the-ground support when a disaster hits. Sustained work to connect up the legal assistance ecosystem ensures that when a community is affected by disaster, they are equipped to address the legal problems that arise, both in the short and long-term.

Our award-winning Pro Bono Portal is a technology-driven system that matches people who need legal help with one of the over 10,000 pro bono lawyers in our network. In a disaster resilience context, we provide free use of the Portal to CLCs so they can connect their own clients to pro bono legal help, and find the legal expertise their community needs.

Currently, 39 CLCs across New South Wales and Victoria are using the Pro Bono Portal.



We are also seeing an increase in activity on the Portal this year, with **107 opportunities** posted to the Portal, representing a **102% increase** from FY23.

We love the Portal and use it all the time!

- Community Legal Centre lawyer and Portal user



IMPACT HIGHLIGHT

We connected our clients with pro bono legal help **43% faster than last year.**



CLIENT STORY:

How Wesley and Tess found a pathway to justice after their dream home was destroyed in a fire

Wesley* and Tess* were devastated when they lost their new dream home to a fire. With no insurance, Wesley feared that his legal options were limited. Unsure of where to turn, he reached out to Justice Connect for help.

In October 2023, Wesley and Tess were preparing to move into their new home. They were both excited about the move, especially because the house was better suited to support Tess's disability, offering them more accessibility accommodations for a comfortable life.

However, around that time, extreme weather hit Victoria, with strong winds and high temperatures leading to a total fire ban. The ban was intended to prevent fires from breaking out during this dangerous period. Despite the warnings, Wesley's neighbour continued to weld on his property, a practice that is prohibited during fire bans due to the risk of sparks.

When Wesley returned to his new home, he was heartbroken to find that it had been reduced to ashes.

Already struggling with the cost-of-living crisis, especially given Tess's disability, Wesley and Tess had not been able to insure their home. With no insurance, they were left without a pathway to rebuild or seek compensation.

Wesley knew he needed legal advice but couldn't afford to pay for it. He applied for assistance through Justice Connect.

One of our lawyers, Dylan, was shocked to hear Wesley's situation. "I felt that this was a complete injustice for Wesley, and I was astounded that nothing had been done to firstly compensate Wesley for this loss, and secondly, hold the neighbours to account for their illegal actions."

Wesley knew he needed legal advice but couldn't afford to pay for it. He applied for assistance through Justice Connect.

Dylan placed Wesley's matter on our Pro Bono Portal to be picked up by one of our member law firms.

A firm expressed interest in taking on Wesley's case, but they discovered a critical piece of information – his neighbour's name – was missing before they could take it on.

Determined to find a solution, Wesley turned to his new community for help. After some effort, he managed to find the information he needed through a White Pages search, and the firm was able to review Wesley's case and take on his matter.

Legal problems that arise from disasters can be long-lasting and feel insurmountable, leaving people like Wesley and Tess feeling as though there is no hope for justice.

Thanks to Justice Connect, Wesley and Tess now have a chance to stand up for their rights and seek resolution for the loss of their home. We hope they achieve the best outcomes as their case moves forward.

I felt that this was a complete injustice for Wesley, and I was astounded that nothing had been done...

– Dylan,
Justice Connect Lawyer



Guiding people through financial legal issues

Financial stress has the potential to impact many areas of a person's life: their housing, health, and relationships. When financial stress comes with associated legal issues, it creates a myriad of barriers to justice. Everything from the cost of a lawyer, to access to supports, to the complexity of court processes influences the chances of someone receiving a fair outcome.

At Justice Connect, we see financial stress intersect with legal need every day. In light of the cost-of-living crisis, more people are being pushed into debt and bankruptcy. As our ageing population continues to grow, family members and carers are perpetrating financial elder abuse at alarming rates. Our systems of protecting those under financial stress need reforming.

Our work in this area seeks to understand, prevent, and resolve financial legal issues, with a particular focus on bankruptcy, employment, and financial elder abuse.

Work we are proud of

This chapter contains our stories of impact over the past year, and clients whose stories we changed for the better.



For society: We address legal problems in the community with legal and social work.

For the sector: Building capacity in, and supporting, the pro bono and community sectors.

For the system: We work with institutions and decision makers for a fairer legal system.



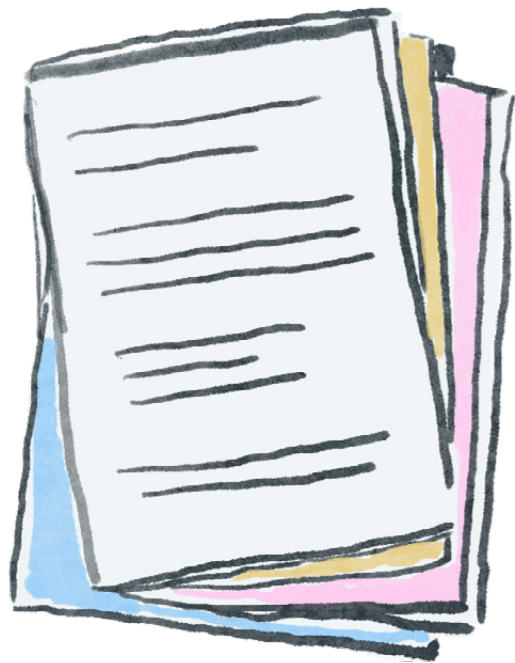
Contributing to the understanding of financial legal issues in Victoria

Through our work with self-represented litigants in the Victorian County and Supreme Court, and the Federal Court of Australia, we found that by the time people were finding us, their financial legal issues were often entrenched, complex, and significantly impacting the wellbeing of themselves and their families. We also saw that many of their legal problems could have been resolved much earlier.

Recognising this trend, we undertook an 18-month research project exploring financial legal issues in Victoria.

We worked with 32 people in Victoria with lived experience of financial legal problems, as well as service providers across the financial legal services ecosystem.

The final research report provides an understanding of how people with financial legal problems navigate the system, and provide recommendations for how we can provide support earlier.



Key research findings:

- **Debtors search for help right from the beginning** of their legal problem.
- **Debtors recognise a need for expertise** to help them resolve their legal problem, but they're not sure what different kinds of professionals can do.
- **Community is important to debtors**, who utilise peer-to-peer support when searching for help.
- **Debtors that experience 'life events' before and during their legal problem are overrepresented** in the cohorts facing creditor enforcement.
- **Debtors use many channels to find help**, but overwhelmingly rely on online search engines.

We hope our findings can inspire conversation, consideration, and reform among Victoria's financial legal services sector.



Read our research report
justiceconnect.org.au/research

IMPACT HIGHLIGHT



Justice Connect Answers responded to 57 questions related to financial legal issues (an increase of 307% in FY23).

CLIENT STORY:

How Basshir became a voice for his village in the fight for fair rent and service

Basshir* and his wife Aisha* thought they had found the perfect place to settle when they moved into a land lease village in Victoria. Basshir cares for his wife Aisha, who has Parkinson's disease, so they needed a home that was both comfortable and affordable.

However, after purchasing the property, they quickly realised that the amenities promised to them — like a men's shed, a cinema, and a storage facility — were nowhere to be found. These facilities had been advertised when they signed their lease, but they were not included in the site agreement, leaving the couple disappointed.

Despite the lack of amenities, Basshir and Aisha continued with their lease. However, tensions rose in the village when management suddenly imposed an excessive rent increase.

Along with other residents, Basshir argued that the rent hike was unjustified, especially since the amenities they were promised had never been delivered. Faced with the possibility of eviction if they didn't pay, the residents reluctantly agreed to the rent increase.

Determined to take action, Basshir and several fellow residents filed an application with the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT), seeking a refund of the increased rent and accountability for the unfulfilled

promises to the village residents. In response, the village management attempted to dismiss the residents' claims, but VCAT allowed the case to proceed.

During the proceedings, VCAT acknowledged that many of these types of agreements lack clarity on how rent increases are calculated and which services are included. This creates a power imbalance between residents and village management, leaving residents vulnerable to unfair treatment. VCAT ordered both sides to submit their legal arguments and set a deadline for filing the necessary materials.

As the deadline approached, Basshir found himself feeling increasingly overwhelmed as the stress continued to mount. The legal submissions were complex, and while the village management could pay lawyers to build their defence, Basshir didn't have the means to fight back on his own. Recognising that he needed expert legal advice but couldn't afford a lawyer, Basshir reached out to Justice Connect.

After listening to his story, Justice Connect connected Basshir with one of our pro bono law firms, who helped him prepare his legal submissions for VCAT, and gave him the support and relief he needed to keep fighting for his and his community's rights.

As the deadline approached, Basshir found himself feeling increasingly overwhelmed as the stress continued to mount.

Although the case is still ongoing, Basshir's perseverance and willingness to seek legal help has given his community a chance to stand up for what they were promised. We wish Basshir and his neighbours the best outcome as they continue their fight for fair rent and services, and commend Basshir for his self-determination.





IMPACT HIGHLIGHT



In FY24, we have seen Justice Connect Answers serve as a key avenue for workers to access justice, with **employment-related questions increasing by 350%**.



Explore our Conversation Guides

justiceconnect.org.au/conversation



Making future planning documents accessible to more older Australians

Everyone deserves to have their wishes and preferences honoured as they age.

One way to ensure this is by putting future planning documents in place, such as a Will, Power of Attorney, or Enduring Guardianship.

The Elder Abuse Prevalence Study found that having a Power of Attorney in place is associated with fewer reports of elder abuse. Despite the benefit of having Powers of Attorney in place, in our work supporting older people through our Health Justice Partnerships, we identified two key barriers people face in setting up future planning documents:

1. People don't have the help or support they need to go through the process.
2. People don't know how to have conversations about getting older, and making plans for older age.

To address this gap, we designed a series of Conversation Guides to help people consider key questions to help people plan for their future. Our team runs guided workshops in local communities to help them get started safeguarding their wishes.

In FY24, we ran **33 Conversation Guide workshops**, which were **attended by 628 people**.



93% (n=95) said they are more likely to plan for their future.



97% (n=95) said they now feel planning for the future is valuable to do.



96% (n=95) said they understand more about planning for their future.

It was clear and easy to follow – it was better than just presenting facts, it was relatable.

– Workshop participant

Made me think about the future. It was helpful to have a lawyer explaining legal terms and issues.

– Workshop participant

Excellent workshop. Thought provoking. Facilitator excellent... Good atmosphere for challenging conversation.

– Workshop participant

Building off these workshops, this year we co-designed and piloted a specialised pro bono referral clinic, to facilitate the process of putting future planning documents in place. Conversation Guide workshop attendees now have the option to sign up to attend a clinic, where a pro bono lawyer will help them fill in the forms to put legal documents like a Power of Attorney and/or an Enduring Medical Treatment Decision Maker in place.

In FY24, we successfully helped clients from a culturally and linguistically diverse background put enduring Powers of Attorney and Medical Treatment Decision Maker documents in place. We are galvanised to continue this work next year, to help more people avoid financial elder abuse.

CLIENT STORY:

How a healthcare referral helped Hanna take back control of her life as she grows older

After being diagnosed with a severe health condition, Hanna* was struggling to get the level of care she needed from her oldest daughter, who she had appointed to manage her affairs. When she opened up to a healthcare worker during one of her hospital visits, they were able to connect her with legal help through our Health Justice Partnership.

Hanna* travelled to Australia from Ukraine and made a home for herself and her family. Now in her late 60s, Hanna had been diagnosed with a severe health condition and needed additional support and care to stay in her home.

After discovering Hanna's diagnosis, her oldest daughter, Nadiia* took Hanna to her lawyer and put documents in place that allowed her to manage Hanna's affairs and make decisions on her behalf. Once in place, Nadiia would not give Hanna a copy of these documents for herself.

It soon became clear that Nadiia was not willing to provide Hanna the care and accommodation she needed. As Hanna's condition worsened, she asked to arrange for a home care provider to clean the house and provide her with groceries, but her older daughter refused.

Upset and afraid, Hanna disclosed her situation to a member of her healthcare team at a hospital visit. They then referred her to a Justice Connect lawyer who works within the hospital as a part of our Health Justice Partnership.

After connecting with Hanna, she mentioned that her younger daughter, Valentyna* was actually the one helping her organise her medical appointments, in regular contact, and was always caring about her best interests.

We advised Hanna that she had the right to revoke the current documents in place and give Valentyna the authority to manage her affairs. At first, Hanna was too scared to take action, fearing the repercussions of upsetting Nadiia.



It soon became clear that Nadiia was not willing to provide Hanna the care and accommodation she needed.

Our lawyers maintained regular contact with Hanna over several months, helping her build confidence. Eventually, Hanna made the decision to revoke Nadiia's power and appoint Valentyna in her place.

Once appointed, Valentyna immediately organised cleaning and meal services with Hanna's home care provider. She also went to the bank to inform them of the change in Hanna's arrangements, and had Hanna's passwords changed so that Nadiia could no longer access her accounts.

Hanna felt happy and relieved that her younger child was now able to fully support her, allowing Hanna to focus on addressing her health condition and aging safely.

Through our Health Justice Partnerships, we were able to work with Hanna in a healthcare environment she knew and trusted, and help her make the legal arrangements that best protects her as she gets older.





Calling for fairer laws for Australia's ageing population

To safeguard older people from elder abuse, our legal system must have laws in place that protect the financial interests of Australians as they age.

In June 2024, we made a submission to the Commonwealth Parliament's Inquiry into the Financial Services Regulatory Framework in relation to Financial Abuse. We shared client stories and casework insights, and made seven recommendations for better laws, policies, and practices to strengthen the banking sector's response to financial elder abuse.

Our evidence-based advocacy also included a submission to the Attorney-General's Department in November 2023 on the issue of inconsistent

Enduring Power of Attorney laws across Australia. Our submission highlighted the challenges of jurisdiction specific laws, particularly in the context of executing documents and accessing compensation avenues available to people experiencing abuse, and made seven future-focused recommendations.

Our work with older people makes us uniquely placed to leverage our casework experience, and we intend to build on this critical work in FY25 to continue tackling elder abuse for more older people.



IMPACT HIGHLIGHT



We ran over 100 specialist training sessions on elder abuse, including:

- **55 training sessions for community workers**, which were attended by 697 people.
- **54 training sessions for members of the community**, which was attended by 775 people.





Remaining responsive in the face of changing laws for workers experiencing wage theft

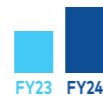
On 1 July 2023, the Fair Work small claims jurisdiction in the Federal Circuit Court and Family Court of Australia increased its monetary cap from \$20,000 to \$100,000.

This unlocks pathways to justice for more workers experiencing wage theft, who now have the option to take their employer to court through the small claims process.

Through our in-court clinics and pro bono network, we continued to deliver free legal help to workers with small claims, and we've witnessed an increase in workers coming to us with small claims now that the law has changed.



96% increase in enquiries related to small claims (49, up from 25 in FY23).



57% increase in services delivered related to small claims (44, up from 28 in FY23).



Using trends in our service delivery data to influence change for migrant workers

Through our experience working with self-represented litigants, we identified that migrant workers face particular challenges when they are trying to take their employer to court for wage theft.

To advocate for system-level change, we met with the Migrant Justice Institute to provide evidence and insights to inform their report: *All Work, No Pay: Why the court is failing migrant workers and what the government should – and must – do.*

The report, published in June 2024, contributed to the creation of the world's first Workplace Justice Visa in Australia, which provides exploited migrant workers a short-term visa to help them stay in Australia to take action against their employer.

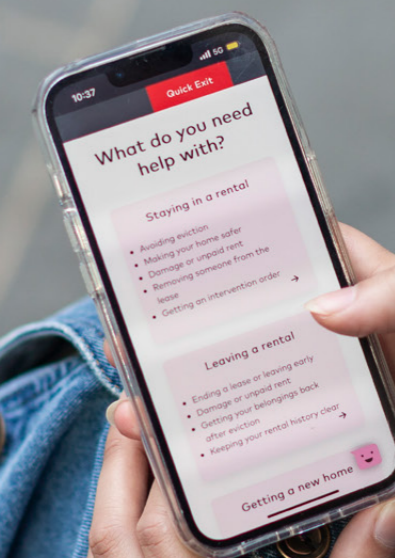
In addition, we also:

- Endorsed JobWatch's Non-Competition Clause submission, which explained the impact of non-competition clauses being used in a restrictive way, particularly for migrant workers.
- Endorsed the work of the Power2Prevent Coalition, calling for an equal access costs model in federal discrimination matters.

IMPACT HIGHLIGHT



We saw a **46% increase** in the number of self-represented litigants with employment legal issues we supported (86, up from 59 in FY23)



CLIENT STORY:

How we helped Tina and Greg win a \$500,000 settlement, after a decade of work without pay

For 10 years, Tina and Greg worked on their father's farm without pay, with the understanding that they would receive 50% of the land in exchange.

Relying on their father's word, they spent their life savings to help improve their father's home, and turned down other job opportunities.

When their father suddenly told them to leave and denied the agreement ever existed, Tina and Greg knew they needed to take legal action. Left without the money they had been promised, or any savings, they had no choice but to represent themselves.

However, without support from a lawyer, their documents were not accepted by the Court when they tried to start their case. They were then referred to Justice Connect.

Over 4 years, our lawyers and pro bono partners supported Tina and Greg through each step of their protracted legal battle, resulting in a pre-trial settlement of \$500,000.

Tina and Greg's 15 year journey:

2009

Tina and Greg's father separates, leaving him to maintain a large, rural farm on his own.



2010

Tina and Greg make an agreement with their father: they would work the land as caretakers without pay, in exchange for 50% of the land.



2020

After 10 years of working the farm, Tina and Greg's father told them to leave the farm, and refused to honour their agreement.



2020

Tina and Greg try to take their father to court, but their documents are not accepted because they are not drafted properly.

They are referred to Justice Connect.



Starting their case

We provide advice on how to prepare court documents to start their court case.



Drafting court documents

We find an expert property law barrister to help Tina and Greg finalise their Statement of Claim.



Default judgement

We provide advice on how to apply for default judgement, if their father would not provide a defence.



Directions hearing

Our pro bono lawyers provide advice on what goes on during a directions hearing.



Gathering evidence

Our pro bono lawyers provide advice on how to gather evidence for the case.



Witness statements

Our pro bono lawyers provide advice on how to prepare witness statements.



Settling their case

Our pro bono lawyers provide advice on how to settle their court case.

Mediation

We find an expert pro bono barrister to attend Tina and Greg's Mediation.



Trial

We find three barristers, including a King's Counsel, to represent Tina and Greg at their trial.



Pre-trial settlement

A pre-trial settlement of approximately \$500,000 is reached between Tina and Greg and their father.



Breach

Tina and Greg's father does not follow through with the pre-trial settlement.



Enforcement

We find a pro bono firm and two barristers to help Tina and Greg ensure their father follows through with the settlement.



2024

Tina and Greg can now move on with their lives with financial security.

You have no idea how this has helped our family. I can not thank you enough. We get to go buy a house and be somewhat financially secure... Honestly, thank you with all my heart.

- Greg

Our thanks & acknowledgements



Our people

There is an entire community of people that make our impact possible.

Employees

Our work is conducted by 80 employees across Australia. We are made stronger, more impactful, and more resilient as an organisation through the dedicated work of our employees.

Our multidisciplinary team includes lawyers, social workers, project managers, researchers, marketers, and developers. United in our commitment to increasing access to justice, each team member brings their unique expertise to inform how we design and deliver client-centred services, and change the legal system for the better.

We wholeheartedly thank our employees for their steadfast contributions, cumulating in the wins and stories we've been able to showcase in this report.

Patrons

We offer a special thanks to our patrons whose support and commitment to our organisation has been vital to engaging new supporters and scaling our services to reach more individuals and not-for-profit organisations who need legal help.

- Emeritus Professor Gillian Triggs
- Robert Fitzgerald AM
- Ruth McColl AO

Volunteers

Our volunteers include a diverse range of professionals, law students, and practical legal trainees. We extend our thanks to them for their remarkable commitment and service.

Our volunteers for FY24 were:

- Alexandra Donato
- Asher Wright
- Bonnie Milnes
- Bukhosi Masango
- Danielle Toka
- Deb Porter
- Debo Fagbenro
- Elaine Fell
- Emma Hagan
- Evelyn Agius
- Huong Le
- Imogen Mooney
- Imogen Simmons
- Janette Kong
- Jennie James
- Joey Graham-Freeman
- Maddy Evgeniadis
- Molly Wang
- Natasha Markavitage
- Nim Ekanayake
- Rebecca Johnstone

Our board

We are governed by an independent, skills-based volunteer board whose commitment to Justice Connect is crucial to our success.

Our directors for FY24 were:

- The Hon. Marcia Neave AO, Chair
- Prof. Sarah Maddison, Deputy Chair
- Brooke Massender
- Dr. Crystal McKinnon (retired August 2023)
- Jidah Clark
- Laavanya Pari
- Michael Horin
- Tristan Cutcliffe
- Vicki Jamieson



Our members

Our valued network of over 10,000 pro bono lawyers offers their time, expertise, and dedication to prevent the negative consequences of legal problems experienced by individuals and not-for-profit organisations.

With their help, we can deliver impactful responses to unmet legal need, and improve the community's wellbeing.

- Addisons
- Allens
- ARC Justice
- Arnold Bloch Leibler
- Ashurst
- Baker McKenzie
- Banki Haddock Fiora
- Barry Nilsson
- Bartier Perry Lawyers
- Beaumont&Beaumont
- Carroll & O'Dea Lawyers
- CIE Legal
- Clayton Utz
- Clifford Chance
- Clyde & Co
- Colin Biggers & Paisley Lawyers
- Corrs Chambers Westgarth
- Deloitte Legal Pty Ltd
- DLA Piper Australia
- FAL Lawyers
- Federation of Community Legal Centres
- Fragomen (Australia) Pty Ltd
- Hall & Wilcox
- Hardwood Andrews
- Herbert Smith Freehills
- Hive Legal
- Hogan Lovells
- Holding Redlich
- HopgoodGanim Lawyers
- Inner Melbourne Community Legal
- JobWatch Inc
- Johnson Winter & Slattery
- Justin Moses
- K&L Gates
- King & Wood Mallesons
- Kingston Reid
- Lander & Rogers
- Law Institute of Victoria
- Lawyerbank
- Maddocks
- Makinson d'Apice
- Maurice Blackburn Lawyers
- McCabes
- McCullough Robertson Lawyers
- MinterEllison
- Nicholes Family Lawyers
- Norton Rose Fulbright Australia
- Ross Mackay, Sole Practitioner
- Russell Kennedy Lawyers
- Sparke Helmore Lawyers
- The Justice and Equity Centre
- The Victorian Bar
- Thomson Geer Group
- TP Legal
- Transport Accident Commission
- Webb Henderson
- Weir Legal and Consulting
- White & Case
- Wisewould Mahony
- Women's Legal Service VIC
- Woolf Associates Solicitors
- Wotton + Kearney



Our secondees

Our member firms offer invaluable support to our initiatives by providing secondees for three- to six-month periods.

These partnerships are critical to our capacity to provide timely and effective legal support to the community, and we thank each of our secondees for their valuable contributions.

- Anna Lyons, MinterEllison
- Daniel Komesaroff, MinterEllison
- Dylan Perumal, Sparke Helmore Lawyers
- Emma Ladbury, Thomson Geer Group
- Isabella Harding, Sparke Helmore Lawyers
- Jenny Pang, Herbert Smith Freehills
- Laura Elliott, DLA Piper
- Mariah Pavlou, Herbert Smith Freehills
- Monambi Wiya, Sparke Helmore Lawyers
- Omar Shahin, Thomson Geer Group
- Rezwan Attai, Sparke Helmore Lawyers
- Stephen Somerville, Barry Nilsson
- Tadayu Mujdrlica, Barry Nilsson
- Zach Moon, MinterEllison



Our partners

Our last year's achievements would not have been possible without the collaboration and fellowship of our partners across the sector.

We also receive help in many ways from people and organisations, whether through reduced-fee services, access to facilities, or research.

- Accounting for Good
- Allens
- Ashurst
- Asta
- Australian Centre for Philanthropy and Nonprofit Studies
- Australian Men's Shed Association
- Baker McKenzie
- Caulfield Hospital, Alfred Health
- Clayton Utz
- cohealth
- Comisión Pro Bono Argentina
- Committo
- Community Legal Centres NSW
- Consumer Action Law Centre
- Corrs Chambers Westgarth
- Council on the Ageing Victoria
- Council to Homeless Persons
- Culture Amp
- Disaster Legal Help Victoria
- Disaster Response Legal Service (Legal Aid NSW)
- Diversity Council of Australia
- DLA Piper
- Domestic Building Dispute Resolution Victoria
- Equal Justice HK
- Equality Australia
- Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria
- FAL Lawyers
- Federation of Community Legal Centres
- Financial Counselling Victoria
- Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand
- Grant Thornton Australia
- Hall & Willcox
- Health Justice Australia
- Herbert Smith Freehills
- Hive Legal
- HLB Mann Judd
- Holding Redlich
- Human Rights Law Centre
- IBP Philippines
- intelliHR
- JobWatch
- Justice Adda India
- The Justice and Equity Centre
- K&L Gates
- knowMore
- Lander & Rogers
- Lanrex
- Launch Housing
- Law Institute of Victoria
- LawWorks UK
- LinkedIn Learning
- LiveHire
- Maddocks
- Melbourne City Library
- Merri Health
- MinterEllison
- MortgageStress Victoria
- Neighbourhood Houses Victoria
- New South Wales Council of Social Service
- Norton Rose Fulbright Australia
- Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations
- Performance Culture Consulting
- PILA Ireland
- PILnet HK
- Piper Alderman
- Reed Consultants International
- Sacred Heart Mission
- Safetrac
- Seniors Rights Victoria
- Social Traders
- St Vincent's Health Network, Sydney
- St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne
- Strategic Shift Consulting
- Tasmanian Council of Social Service
- Te Ara Ture
- Texas Opportunity & Justice Incubator
- The Dream Collective
- Thomson Geer Group
- Uniting War Memorial Hospital, Sydney
- University of Melbourne
- UPJ Germany
- Vacro
- Vance Centre
- Vertex Cyber Security
- Vic Bar Pro Bono Committee
- Victorian Bar
- Victorian Council of Social Service
- Victorian Men's Shed Association
- Volunteering Australia



Our supporters

We recognise our valued supporters whose contributions help to achieve our purpose. Our high-impact interventions for individuals and community organisations are made possible by the generosity of our government, philanthropic, corporate, and community supporters, and committed individual donors.

We give special thanks to those acknowledged below for their significant support in FY24.



Government & statutory entities

- Australian Government Attorney-General's Department
- Australian Government Department of Social Services
- City of Melbourne
- Consumer Affairs Victoria
- Court Services Victoria
- National Emergency Management Agency
- Victoria Legal Aid
- Victorian Government Department of Families, Fairness, and Housing
- Victorian Government Department of Justice and Community Safety
- Victoria Law Foundation
- Victorian Legal Services Board + Commissioner

Philanthropic & community organisations

- AuDA Foundation
- Equity Trustees
 - » Halfway Creek Legacy
 - » The Truby and Florence Williams Charitable Trust
- ERDI Foundation
- Fidelity International Foundation
- The Helen and David Hains Foundation
- Ian Potter Foundation
- Launch Housing Limited
- Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation
- New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council
- Perpetual
 - » H & L Hecht Trust
 - » Ian Rollo Currie Foundation
- Pratt Foundation
- Rachel Emma Ferguson Foundation
- The Shine On Foundation
- StreetSmart Australia

Individuals

- Anonymous donors
- Andrew & Kerry Stephenson
- Chris Paton
- Fiona McLeay
- Jonathan Casson
- Mitzi Gilligan
- Sarah Matheson AM
- Stephen & Elizabeth Howard
- William Pitt

Corporate organisations

- Anonymous donors
- Herbert Smith Freehills
- HP
- Telstra



Become a supporter

For more information about supporting Justice Connect please contact:

Clea Lumley

Fundraising Lead

giving@justiceconnect.org.au



Make a donation

justiceconnect.org.au/donate



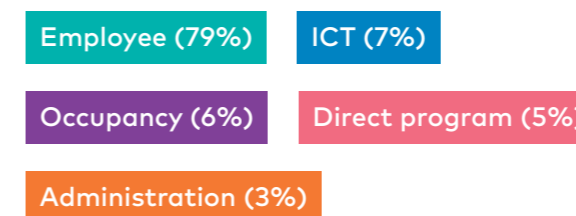
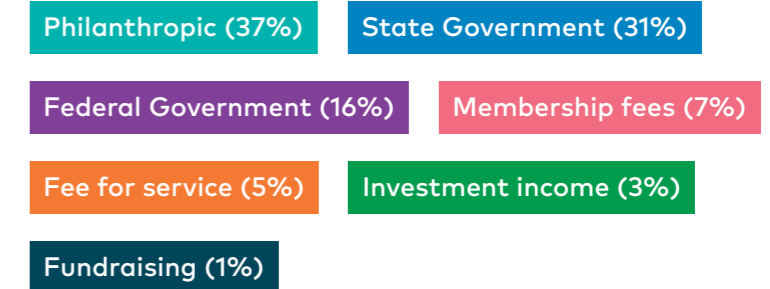
Our finances

The audited financial result for the 2023-24 financial year is a surplus of \$54,060. At 30 June 2024 we maintain healthy net assets and retained earnings of \$2,459,074.

Our work is made possible largely thanks to the financial support of our members and our partners in government and philanthropy.

Achieving our purpose in the most effective and financially sustainable way is one of our three strategic directions, enabling us to focus our limited resources on initiatives that achieve our strategy and build our organisational financial strength.

In 2023-24, our annual income totalled \$10,704,674, receiving funding from the diversified sources shown in the charts. We also received a range of very generous in-kind support from our members which assisted in making our work possible through staff secondments, volunteer engagement, and donation of resources and facilities.




Connect with us


To stay up to date on Justice Connect's latest news and impacts, you can visit our website or follow us on social media.

 justiceconnect.org.au

 facebook.com/JusticeConnect

 instagram.com/justiceconnect

 youtube.com/c/JusticeConnectVideo

 linkedin.com/company/justiceconnect

Melbourne office Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Boon Wurrung Country

PO Box 16013, Melbourne VIC 8007
DX 128 Melbourne
Tel: +61 3 8636 4400

Sydney office Gadigal Country

PO Box 436, Darlinghurst NSW 1300
Tel: +61 2 8599 2100





ABN: 54 206 789 276

justiceconnect.org.au

Illustrations by Tessa Chong.
Photos by Anna Carlisle.