A world transformed by women and gender-diverse people leading change.

FY27-FY29

PROSPECTUS

Together, building the leadership Australia needs for our climate and environment.

wela

WOMEN'S ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP AUSTRALIA

Acknowledgement of Country

Women's Environmental Leadership Australia (WELA) acknowledges First Nations peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the unceded lands and waters on which we live, learn and work. We honour their enduring connections to Country and pay our deep respects to Elders past and present.

We recognise and celebrate the leadership of First Nations women and gender-diverse people, whose custodianship, knowledge and advocacy have always guided the care of Country. We commit to continuing to listen, learn, and grow in how we walk as allies, supporting sovereignty, self-determination and the healing of Country.

We recognise and celebrate the leadership of First Nations women and gender-diverse people

STORIES
OF CHANGE:
A COLLECTIVE
TIMELINE
wela

A message from our CEO

Across Australia, women and gender-diverse people are leading extraordinary responses to climate and environmental crises—protecting Country, strengthening communities, and shaping better futures.

Yet too often, this leadership is under-resourced and excluded from the very spaces where decisions are made.

Australia is at a critical crossroads. Fossil fuel expansion continues, biodiversity loss is accelerating, and climate impacts are being felt most acutely by those who have contributed least to the problem. At the same time, political and social forces—both here and globally—are slowing progress and entrenching inequitable systems of power.

These outcomes are not inevitable. They are the result of choices about who holds power, whose knowledge is valued, and what kinds of leadership are prioritised.

WELA exists to change this. Over the past decade, we have built a national ecosystem of thousands of changemakers, strengthening and amplifying feminist leadership grounded in care, connection and collaboration.

The next phase of this work matters more than ever. As we learn first-hand the devastating realities of climate disaster and biodiversity loss, social divisions deepen, and the decisions we make now will determine the fate of future generations.

This Prospectus outlines our shared strategy for the next three years—how, together, we can strengthen leadership, deepen connection, and amplify influence across Australia.

I invite you to walk alongside WELA as part of this movement, to create a very different future. Together, we can inspire and support the leaders and the leadership our communities and Country need.

I look forward to working with you,
Victoria McKenzie-McHarg

Time and time again, it has been proven. The leadership that got us in this crisis is not going to get us out.

Outdated power structures fuel environmental and climate destruction, deepen inequality, and silence diverse voices.

Women and gender-diverse people are disproportionately impacted by climate change, facing increased violence, poverty, and exclusion from policymaking. Far-right and misogynistic forces are eroding democracy, stalling climate action, and entrenching inequality. Our actions now are essential.

What we choose to do next together matters.

WELA's mission is to build the leadership and influence of women and gender-diverse changemakers so that, together, we transform Australia's response to our climate and environmental crises.

These crises are not only scientific or technical challenges, they are leadership challenges. The choices that shape our future depend on who holds power, whose knowledge is valued, and how decisions are made.

We work from a simple premise: women and gender-diverse people are central to driving climate and environmental solutions. A feminist approach—where leadership is diverse, inclusive, and grounded in care for people and Country—makes change more just, durable, and transformative.

What we've built together

From its beginnings as an annual leadership initiative, WELA has grown into a national ecosystem of changemakers. Today, this community includes leaders working across climate action, environmental protection, policy, advocacy, research, community organising and cultural change.

Through leadership programs, national networks, storytelling and advocacy, we have collectively supported thousands of women and gender-diverse people to step into leadership, build influence, and sustain impact.

WELA alumni have influenced some of Australia's most important and strategic campaigns and projects for our environment. They've gone on to:

- Stop new coal mines
- End native forest logging in WA and VIC
- Win major legal challenges for nature and climate through the courts
- Be elected to state and local government
- Secure millions in funding for nature and climate action
- Be hired in formal leadership roles as CEOs, Directors, Chairs, senior executives, campaign leads, national advocates and spokespeople for nature and climate

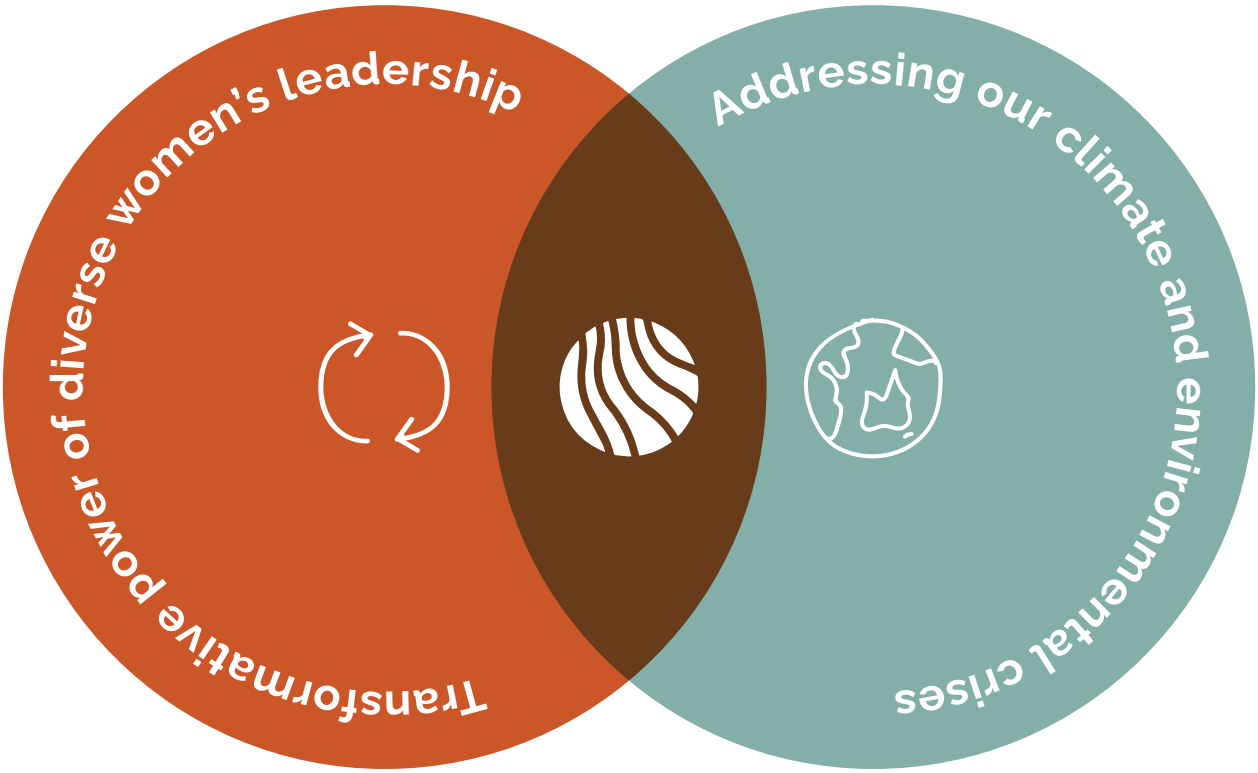
Our community tells us they are inspired, connected, supported and better equipped to face the biggest challenges when they see their stories told and connect with each other.

What WELA has built to date has been made possible through partnership—through people and organisations choosing to invest in leadership for the long term.

"As WELA's work illustrates — and international evidence backs up — more women in decision-making ensures better environmental outcomes. If we're to make the most of the opportunities for renewal presented by our current environmental crises, women must play a key role in leading and shaping a future in which people and the planet can thrive. WELA's work has never been more important."

Jill Reichstein OAM, Chair, Reichstein Foundation

WELA works at the intersection of diverse women's leadership and environmental action



Our Theory of Change

If we...	Then we...	So that...
Deliver transformative leadership programs for women and gender-diverse people	Increase representation in leadership roles	Diverse leadership is driving transformative action for our climate, environment and communities
Foster a powerful network of women and gender-diverse changemakers	Support diverse voices shaping our future	
Invest in women and gender-diverse led projects	Amplify innovative solutions to the environment and climate crises	
Advocate for gender aware solutions		

Building the leadership and influence of women and gender-diverse changemakers so that together we transform Australia's response to our environmental and climate crises.

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Where we're headed

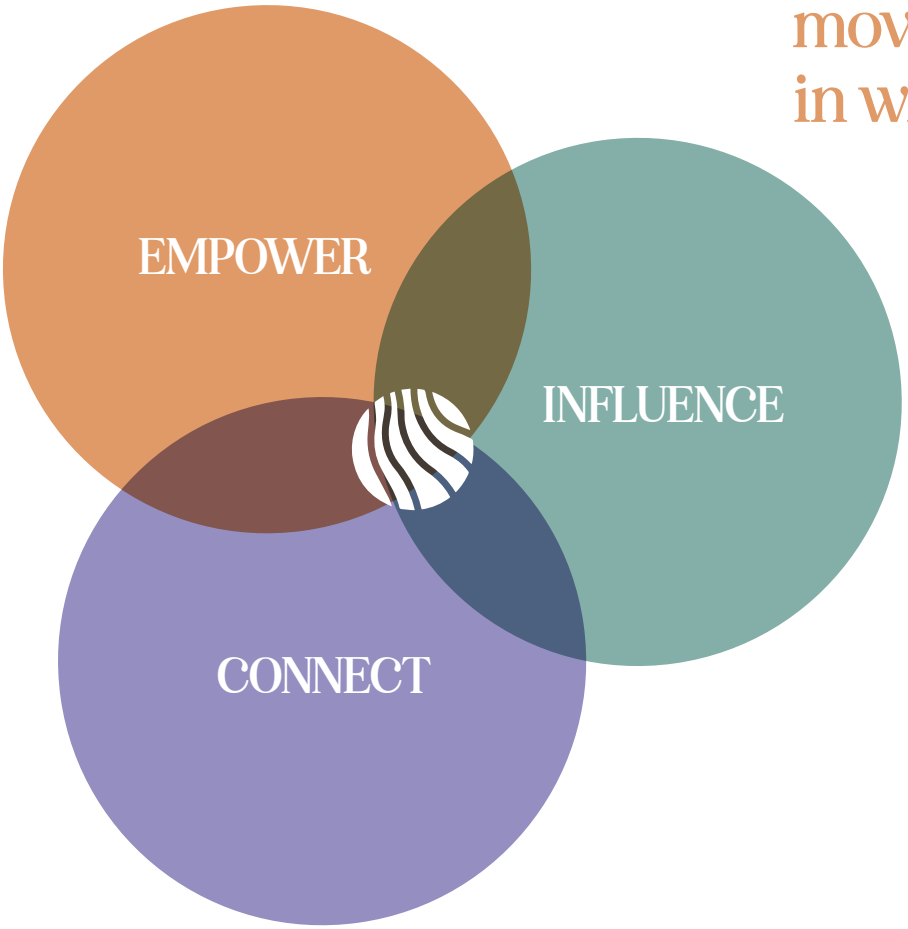
The next three years represent a pivotal chapter for climate and environmental leadership in Australia. Demand for WELA's work is growing, while the political, social and environmental context is shifting rapidly. This calls for leadership that is resilient, adaptive and deeply connected.

Our strategy builds on what we've learned and the strong foundation already in place. It focuses on deepening impact, strengthening connections, and growing our collective ability to influence the systems of power that shape people, communities and Country.

Together, we can equip women and gender-diverse leaders to meet this moment, shifting power toward those with the vision, courage, and capability to protect our natural environment and tackle the climate catastrophe.

A strategic partnership with WELA strengthens a diverse movement with thousands of leaders laying the foundation for lasting systems change.

This is where we are now.
And this is what's possible, together.



Strengthening our impact

WELA's work is built around three interconnected pillars. Leadership is **EMPOWERED** through capacity building, sustained through **CONNECTION** and amplified through **INFLUENCE.** Each element reinforces the others—turning individual leadership into collective power, and collective power into systems change.

WELA's impact comes from resourcing these elements together, allowing us to support leaders at every stage of their journey, while shaping the broader movements and systems in which they lead.

Our strategy for the next three years

1. EMPOWER. *CAPACITY BUILDING FOR A THRIVING AND DIVERSE COMMUNITY OF LEADERS, EXERCISING THE POWER THEY ALREADY HOLD.*

Leadership Development

We build the capacity of women and gender -diverse people who are working for our climate and environment to realise their potential and step further into leadership.

Diversity and Inclusion

Leadership must reflect the full breadth of our communities. We provide pathways and elevate diverse voices to shift who leads and how leadership is practiced.

2. CONNECT. *FOSTERING AND AMPLIFYING A POWERFUL NETWORK OF CHANGEMAKERS.*

Community

We nurture a thriving, supportive community of diverse leaders. We ensure no one stands alone in this work, but is held by a powerful ecosystem of alumni, allies and mentors for lifelong impact.

Storytelling

We amplify the voices and stories of diverse changemakers, ensuring their leadership is seen and heard. In doing so, we showcase leadership that is inclusive, collaborative and centred in care.

Giving Circle

Through the power of collective giving, the Giving Circle invests in grassroots climate action and the long-term leadership needed to transform systems.

3. INFLUENCE. *TRANSFORMING SYSTEMS FOR CLIMATE, ENVIRONMENT AND GENDER JUSTICE.*

Movement building

We foster connected and inspired networks of organisations and individuals in Australia that advocate for gender, climate and environmental justice.

A compelling case for change

We expand the evidence-base on gender and climate justice in Australia, elevating diverse voices and solutions to shape and contribute to systems change.

Engage with policy and decision-makers

Across Parliament, government and industry, we motivate decision-makers to drive positive change for those facing the greatest climate and environmental challenges.

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1. Empower

Leadership Development

Capacity building for a thriving and diverse community of leaders.

What we will do

- Expand our flagship National Leadership Program and Leadership Intensives
- Deliver online workshops through our Tools for Changemakers series
- Pilot new formats to increase accessibility and partnerships for tailored programs

What this enables

By 2029, hundreds more women and gender-diverse leaders each year are confidently stepping into their leadership for climate and environmental action—equipped with skills, confidence and networks to collaborate, influence systems and drive change.

Long-term impact

Over the next decade, these leaders will help reshape Australia's climate and environmental landscape—centering people, nature and future generations in decision-making.

By 2029, we'll support 200+ women and gender-diverse leaders annually through leadership programs

Diversity and Inclusion

What we will do

- Strengthen leadership pathways for First Nations and culturally diverse leaders through targeted scholarships, mentoring and culturally appropriate support
- Embed First Nations leadership and knowledges across WELA's programs and community
- Continue our Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) Learning Circles
- Design all programs with accessibility, flexibility, reciprocity and dignity at their core.

What this enables

A climate and environmental movement that is more representative, inclusive and grounded in lived experience.

Long-term impact

A sector shaped by Indigenous knowledge, diverse perspectives and justice-centred leadership—better equipped to deliver lasting change.

"The [National Leadership] Program really reshaped how I see myself as a leader. Before, I often questioned whether I had enough knowledge or experience to speak up in certain spaces. Through WELA, I realised that leadership isn't about being perfect or having every skill. It's about showing up authentically, speaking from your values, and being willing to learn alongside others."

Takesa Frank, 2024 National Leadership Program Alum and Dr Deb Foskey Scholarship Recipient.

2. Connect

Leadership does not happen in isolation. Connection sustains courage, deepens impact and builds active hope. Through connection and storytelling, your support magnifies and strengthens leadership across the country.

Community

What we will do

- Launch a national alumni program supporting lifelong leadership, peer connection and shared learning
- Strengthen engagement across WELA's growing community and networks
- Host inclusive in-person and online gatherings that build belonging and momentum

What this enables

By 2029, a connected national alumni network of over 1,000 leaders, supported by an engaged digital community of over 40,000.

Long-term impact

A resilient ecosystem of changemakers who draw strength from connection and shared purpose, amplifying collective impact across Australia.

A national alumni network of more than 1,000 leaders

Storytelling

What we will do

- Amplify the voices of women and gender-diverse leaders through events, media, podcasts, partnerships and digital storytelling
- Curate narratives that showcase collaborative, inclusive and care-centred leadership

What this enables

Greater visibility and influence for diverse leaders, and a broader public understanding of what effective leadership looks like.

Long-term impact

A shift in public narratives—where women and gender-diverse people are recognised, valued and sought out as leaders in climate and environmental action.

Giving Circle

What we will do

- Grow WELA's Giving Circle as a national community of people investing in women and gender-diverse led climate action
- Deliver direct significant funding to grassroots advocacy and long-term leadership

What this enables

An expanding movement of supporters united by shared values, hope and collaboration.

Long-term impact

More resources flowing to the leaders and organisations shaping Australia's climate future.

3. Influence

Ensure women and gender-diverse leaders shape the systems that shape our future, contributing to change that extends far beyond individual campaigns.

Transforming systems

What we will do

- Build and grow national networks, including Women Leading on Climate and the Gender, Climate and Environmental Advocacy Network
- Collaborate with coalitions in Australia and internationally to advance climate, environment and gender justice.

What this enables

Hundreds of organisations and individuals connected, resourced and mobilised for systemic change.

Long-term impact

Systems, policies and public narratives increasingly shaped by diverse leadership, lived experience and justice-centred solutions.

Hundreds of organisations and individuals connected through WELA-led advocacy networks.

A compelling case for change

What we will do

- Develop research and policy solutions grounded in lived experience
- Bring an intersectional gender and climate lens to decision-makers, industry and public discourse.

What this enables

Greater understanding of gendered climate impacts and solutions among policymakers and the public.

Long-term impact

Climate and environmental policies shaped by gender equality, evidence and lived experience.

Engaging decision-makers

What we will do

- Build strong relationships with government, parliamentarians and key sectors
- Advocate for meaningful change led by those most impacted

What this enables

Influential decision-makers drive change for those most impacted by climate and environmental challenges.

Long-term impact

Systems and frameworks at all levels reflect the leadership and solutions of women and gender-diverse people.

Why partnership matters

Your leadership now will make this vision and strategy a reality.

Right now, there is a pivotal window to develop climate and environmental leadership in Australia.

Our impact depends on resourcing for leadership development, connection and influence as interconnected parts of a single strategy. Supporting these elements as an ecosystem will enable us to:

- Support women and gender-diverse leaders at critical moments in their leadership journeys
- Strengthen national networks and movements that rely on continuity and trust
- Respond strategically to fast-moving political, environmental and social contexts
- Invest in organisational resilience, learning and growth—so impact compounds over time.

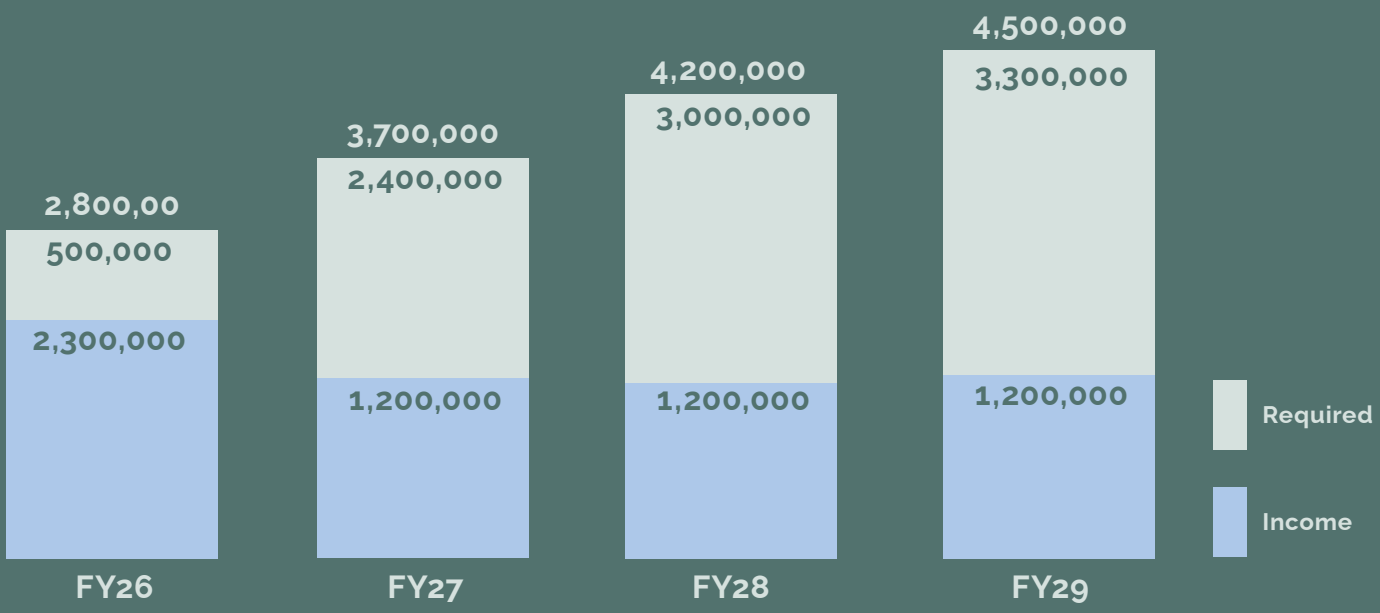
WELA brings a clear strategy, a growing national community and a proven approach.

An invitation to support: Empower, Connect and Influence.

Multi-year funding will back diverse leaders, strengthen the movements they are part of, and shift power toward those best placed to drive lasting change Below is an outline of the investment needed to deliver our three-year plan:

Overview	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29
Our 3 year plan: EMPOWER CONNECT, INFLUENCE	2,800,000	3,700,000	4,200,000	4,500,000
Income: program fees and partnerships Giving Circle, confirmed commitments	2,300,000	1,200,000	1,200,000	1,200,000
Strategic investment required	**500,000**	**2,500,000**	**3,000,000**	**3,300,000**

Strategic Investment



Strategic investment at this level enables WELA to operate as an integrated, national organisation—supporting long-term leadership, organisational capability and the flexibility needed to respond to emerging challenges and opportunities.

Thank you for considering this invitation to join with WELA and invest in this vital work.

Let's continue the conversation

Meaningful partnerships are built through dialogue, shared values and a shared commitment to impact.

As one of our valued supporters—or as someone interested in learning more about how you can be involved—we invite you to talk with us today and explore how partnering with WELA can help realise a more hopeful future for our communities, our environment and our climate.

For a further discussion about how you can support diverse leadership for our environment and climate, please contact:

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WELA is an independent not-for-profit organisation, registered with the ACNC. WELA is status DGR1 and all donations are tax-deductible.

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WOMEN'S ENVIRONMENTAL
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REGISTERED CHARITY
acnc.gov.au/charityregister

Proud member of
PHILANTHROPY
AUSTRALIA

FIA
ORGANISATIONAL
MEMBER
CODE COMPLIANT