



The Family Violence Philanthropy Collaboration Project

Phase Two in Review

December 2020

2020 Project Partners



We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we work together and pay our respects to elders past and present.

About Domestic Violence Victoria (DV Vic) and the Domestic Violence Resource Centre (DVRCV)

Domestic Violence Victoria (DV Vic) is the peak body for specialist family violence response services in Victoria. As such, DV Vic is recognised as the state-wide voice of Specialist Family Violence Services (SFVSs) responding to victims-survivors. DV Vic is an independent, non-government organisation that leads, organises, advocates for, and acts on behalf of its members utilising an intersectional feminist approach. DV Vic's work is focused on advocating for, supporting, and building the capacity of specialist family violence practice and service delivery for victims-survivors; system reform; and research, policy development and law reform.

The Domestic Violence Resource Centre (DVRCV) is a state-wide organisation working across prevention and response and is a SFV registered training organisation. DVRCV provides workforce development and capability building across family violence response and prevention workforces.

Our organisations are preparing to merge and will become a new entity in early 2021. Bringing together the expertise, influence and reach of both organisations, the new entity will hold a central position in the Victorian family violence system and its strategic governance, providing family violence subject matter expertise to the SFVSs sector, government, and other partners and stakeholders. The merge also presents opportunities to develop and resource new functions for the peak body that will support its position and leadership into the future.

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Domestic Violence Victoria Foreword

This year has indeed been a moment of reckoning for so many across the globe, not only with the human and economic impacts of this public health crisis exposing pre-existing vulnerabilities in our societies globally, but also the unfurling legacies of systemic racism, gender inequality and climate change. While it has been a confronting, overwhelming and at times frightening year, it is a privilege to be in a position to drive change through partnerships such as this one.

Of the many hard lessons and silver linings 2020 has revealed, the value of trusted, collaborative relationships in the face of disruption and crisis has been demonstrated. While we have all contended with challenges unique to our individual contexts, we have witnessed philanthropy mobilise in response to this crisis even as the pandemic posed challenges and uncertainty for many foundations. Because of this generosity and leadership, we have been able to continue to make progress on the long-term systems change required to improve outcomes for victim survivors and advocate for long-term change while also responding to the immediate needs presented by this current crisis.

In particular I would like to acknowledge the support provided by Gandel Philanthropy, the Ross Trust and the William Buckland Foundation who established this project in 2018 and thank the Ross Trust and the William Buckland Foundation for renewing support for the Project to continue in 2019 - 2020.

There is so much work ahead of us as we recover from this unprecedented year and establish what our new normal means. The goodwill and appetite for collaboration demonstrated by this Project provides us with hope for the future, as we respond to this moment and continue our common fight for a society where all of us can live free from fear and violence.

Tania Farha
CEO, DV Vic / DVRCV

Audience, Focus and Approach

This report's primary audience are the philanthropic funders, government agencies and community sector organisations that engage in systems change. It seeks to progress conversation and action in developing shared understanding of collaboration and partnership for change and impact. This case study aims to both assess the efficacy of this project and present the resultant learnings for the benefit of future cross-sector collaborations. The insights offered may also be of relevance to philanthropic funders considering new approaches to collaborative funding and to government and social sector stakeholders who shape the broader funding ecosystem.

Executive Summary

Working together through crisis, disruption and change

The Family Violence Philanthropy Collaboration Project (The Project) established in 2018, led by Domestic Violence Victoria (DV Vic) and funded by Gandel Philanthropy, the Ross Trust and the William Buckland Foundation, brings together philanthropic and corporate funding partners, the not-for-profit community sector and key government partners in an innovative multi-year project that marks a new phase of cross-sector commitment to collaboration. This project has led to more and better philanthropy in a complex, world leading reform environment, with co-designed and collaboratively funded innovative projects that support systemic change and the improvement of family violence outcomes for all Victorians.

The Project has enabled and enriched shared learning, increased understanding of the complexities of the sector and provided opportunities to establish and deepen cross-sector relationships. Key outcomes include:

- The **\$220K core funding invested in the Project has informed over \$1,700,000 investment from philanthropic partners in family violence projects** to date and a corporate partnership with Aesop in May 2020, distributing personal care products to victim survivors and FV practitioners across Victoria and NSW, with a **retail value of \$1.4 million**.
- Growth in the FV Funders Network – now **30 organisations engaged in the project** (26 engaged in phase one), with **6 new organisations** joining the network in 2020, and **a further 6 organisations re-engaging** with the network since the onset of the pandemic. Feedback from the FVPCP Funders Group indicates that participants **see they are achieving more together**, toward improving family violence outcomes in Victoria, than could be achieved by working separately.
- **Delivery of the FV Sector Capacity Building Program**, collaborative funding project supported by the FVPCP Funders Group in 2019 – the Experts by Experience Framework; the FV Regional Integration Research, Monitoring and Evaluation Framework; and The Strengthening Inclusion and Access for Specialist Family Violence Services Project
- Through the FV Funders Network the Project secured **\$438,000 in funding for DV Vic / DVRCV led projects to support FV systems reforms and FV sector Covid Response** – the New Pathways Project and Survivor Advocacy program of work.
- The **“Responding to the Shadow Pandemic” webinar series** delivered in partnership with the Monash Gendered and FV Prevention Centre, with a final webinar scheduled before the end of 2020. The **5 webinars presented to date have been viewed by 1853 people** across Australia, and internationally. A further program of monthly webinars are in planning for 2021.

“The FVPCP has provided a valuable platform for engagement and shared learning and intentional funding opportunities.”

Since the onset of the pandemic in Australia in mid-March the project partners have pivoted focus and efforts in order to respond to the emerging challenges and shifting priorities caused by the pandemic. This has included coordinating the promotion of Covid-19 responsive family violence projects within DV Vic’s membership to funders, and regular communications with the FV Funders Network as the impacts of the pandemic on family violence demand and service continuity unfolds.

The FVPCP: Phase Two in Review (November 2019 – December 2020)

Project Background

The 2016 Family Violence Royal Commission made it clear that improving family violence outcomes requires a coordinated response across government and the community. While government investment in family violence systems reform in Victoria has been of an unprecedented scale, philanthropy is uniquely placed to respond and invest in areas otherwise out of scope. When philanthropic investment is leveraged through a well informed and well-connected network of funders, common sense tells us that bigger and better outcomes can be achieved.

The Family Violence Philanthropy Collaboration Project (The Project) established in 2018, led by Domestic Violence Victoria (DV Vic) and funded by Gandel Philanthropy, the Ross Trust and the William Buckland Foundation, tests this thesis and marks a new phase of cross-sector commitment to collaboration. The Project brings together philanthropic and corporate funders, government stakeholders and family violence sector representatives to ‘grow the philanthropic pie’ within a complex, world leading reform environment, with co-designed and collaboratively funded innovative projects that support systemic change and improved family violence outcomes for all Victorians.

The Challenge

Ending family violence in our community is a ‘wicked problem’ that requires a coordinated approach to develop solutions and resource them. A coordinated community response is challenging due to the scale and complexity of change required; resource limitations; divergent priorities and processes; and fragmented cross-sector relationships. This complexity has been further amplified by the disruptions caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

“The FVPCP has highlighted the power of funder collaborations and has influenced us to think about how we work with other funders across the board.”

The Approach – Innovations in the Funders Network Model

The Project established the FV Funders Network, open to any corporate or philanthropic funder with an interest in family violence prevention and response. Through the network, the Project promotes opportunities to co-design and co-fund a number of collaborative funding projects, as well as promoting “stand alone” funding opportunities for family violence projects emerging from the community violence sector. While funder networks are not new, the location of this project’s backbone coordination within a not-for-profit peak body (DV Vic) and key input from partners in government departments represents an evolution in the funders network model. The grant makers have contributed financial resources and their time and efforts over three years in order to create an environment for collaboration and partnership. The collaborative approach adopted by the grant makers in the funding and implementation of this project has enabled adaptations in the project aims and activities to a rapidly changing context – both within the reform environment, and with the disruptions caused by the pandemic.

Outcomes & Activities

- The **\$220K core funding invested in the Project has informed over \$1,700,000 investment from philanthropic partners in family violence projects** to date and a corporate partnership with Aesop in May 2020, distributing personal care products to victim survivors and FV practitioners across Victoria and NSW, with a **retail value of \$1.4 million**.
- **Collaborators in the network have recognised that this different way of working is achieving more together than they could by working separately.** Participants identified that involvement in the Project has: influenced decision making on specific grant applications; influenced grant making process; led to increased opportunities to collaborate with other funding partners; and increased participant's knowledge and awareness of FV issues, the FV sector and key FV reforms.
- **Delivery of the FV Sector Capacity Building Program**, collaborative funding project supported by the FVPCP Funders Group in 2019 – the Experts by Experience Framework; the FV Regional Integration Research, Monitoring and Evaluation Framework; and The Strengthening Inclusion and Access for Specialist Family Violence Services Project.
- Secured **\$438,000 in funding for DV Vic / DVRCV led projects to support FV systems reforms and FV sector Covid Response** – the New Pathways Project and Survivor Advocacy program of work.
- Growth in the FV Funders Network – now **30 organisation engaged in the project** (from 17 organisations in phase one), with **6 new organisations** joining the network in 2020, and a further **6 organisations re-engaging** with the network since the onset of the pandemic.
- Delivery of the **FVPCP Phase Two in Review progress report** in July, included a review of impacts of Covid-19 on FV demand, service continuity and government funding decisions.
- **5 workshops with the FVPCP Funders group**, with an average of 9 attendees per session. One **FV Funders Forum, with an attendance of 30**.
- Delivery of 5 **"Responding to the Shadow Pandemic"** webinars in partnership with the Monash Gendered and FV Prevention Centre, with a further two webinars scheduled before the end of 2020. Webinars in the series **have been viewed by 1853 people** across Australia, and internationally.
- The establishment of the **FVPCP webpage on the DV Vic website** in July, and delivery of **10 Ebulletins** to the FV Funders Network since March 2020.
- Publishing **two articles promoting the Project** – Pro Bono/PA 13.03.20 and September issue of Parity Magazine (published by Council for Homeless Persons).
- **4 service providers workshops were facilitated in Geelong (Adolescent Family Violence Project) and two service providers workshops were facilitated in Frankston (Elder Abuse Project).** These projects were on the verge of fundraising and commencement when pandemic spread to Australia. As a result, the stakeholders involved in the proposal development have decided not to proceed with those collaborative projects, though several stakeholders have expressed intentions to develop adapted proposals for consideration in 2021/22.

"I appreciated the group was able to "pivot" in the face of the pandemic; that information about the issue continued to flow, and that this increased knowledge and understanding led to new responses and the engagement of additional funders."

What we have learned

- **The Project has led to “more and better” philanthropic investment in family violence prevention and response.** The activities and outputs of the project have informed over \$1,700,000 investment from philanthropic partners in family violence projects to date, and a corporate partnership with Aesop, with a retail value of \$1.4 million.
- **Funding “the glue” for coordination and facilitation is key, as is locating that role within the community sector.** Multiyear funding commitments from the principal funding partners to resource the backbone coordination and project lead role at DV Vic has been a critical success factor, giving the community sector a unique lead role in supporting a coordinated response with philanthropy, and key input from partners in government departments.
- **It takes time and patience to navigate the iterative and at times intangible nature of partnership work, particularly in spaces of great complexity.** Creating a space for connections and trust to grow has enabled a common understanding of the issues and ability to identify and resource solutions, in a complex and rapidly changing reform environment and will support innovation and systemic change into the future.
- **These partnerships leverage different kinds of investment.** The project partners have been intentional in creating a space for collaboration to unfold over time, offering a range of participation levels to suit the needs and priorities of a broad range of funders – from “inform” (through being on the mailing list, attending forums and receiving reports) and “coordinate” (sharing grant making opportunities and priorities, participating in consultations), to “collaborate” and “partner” (through co-design and co-funding of collaborative projects). In addition to significant financial resourcing, the project partners have contributed significant amounts of time and expertise, as well as access to their networks and professional contacts.
- **This project has enabled the family violence sector to establish collaborative relationships with key philanthropic and corporate funders that extend beyond the conventional grant seeker/funder relationship.** This has enabled the successful co-design of intentional collaborative funding projects that respond to emerging needs and focus on systemic change. This is evidenced by the delivery of the Family Violence Sector Capacity Building Program, designed to provide hand-on capability building support for specialist family violence practitioners and organisations across the state. The Family Violence Sector Capacity Building Program was generously funded by Gandel Philanthropy, The William Buckland Foundation, Give Where You Live Foundation, State Trustees Australia Foundation, The Victorian Women’s Benevolent Trust and the Johnstone Gumption Fund and the Jump Start Fund, sub-funds of Australian Communities Foundation.



- **The investment in partnership and collaboration has paid off during this unanticipated period of disruption and crisis.** Since the onset of the pandemic in Australia in mid-March the project partners have pivoted focus and efforts in order to respond to the emerging challenges and shifting priorities caused by the pandemic. There are a number of projects and partnerships emerging from these efforts that will shape the next phase of the Project in 2021.
- **Change happens through relationships. We need to engage more deeply, and at multiple levels, to sustain engagement and build momentum.** For this reason, the project partners are focusing attention on engagement with Trustees and others with decision-making delegation and influence.

Where to from here

In 2021 the Project will focus on continuing to build the FV Funders network, supporting Covid-Recovery for victim survivors and the FV sector, and leveraging funding across the family violence prevention to response continuum. Activities will include:

- DV Vic's partnership the Monash Gendered and Family Violence Prevention Centre to deliver the *Responding to the Shadow Pandemic* webinar series will continue in 2021, with a scheduled confirmed for the first half of the year that will focus on Covid-19 recovery and the FV reforms five years after the Royal Commission.
- Ongoing promotion of pandemic responsive family violence projects via the Australian Communities Foundation Covid-19 National Funding Platform.
- Scoping investment opportunities in FV data and outcomes measurement
- Quarterly FV Funders Network Forums – March, May, August and November
- Trustees engagement
- Ongoing delivery of monthly FV Funders E-Bulletins

As DV Vic and DVRCV prepare to merge, the organisations are progressing a philanthropically funded program of work focused on strategic projects that will harness the unique strengths and position of the new entity, and support opportunities to diversify our funding streams through philanthropic and corporate partnerships, and business development. This includes the establishment of a formal partnership between DV Vic/DVRCV and COTA/Seniors Rights Victoria, Djirra, InTouch, Switchboard and Women with Disabilities Victoria. This partnership will provide steering committee oversight for the strategic projects program of work, ensuring inclusion, access and equity is embedded in the design and delivery of this work from the beginning. This program of work includes:

The **New Pathways to Support Project** delivered by DV Vic and DVRCV to increase inclusion and access to family violence information and support during the pandemic, through the production of targeted resources and the establishment of new industry partnerships. This work is generously supported by The Barlow Foundation, The Edward Wilson Estate, Equity Trustees, The Erdi Foundation, The Lord Mayor's Charitable Fund, and The William Buckland Foundation.



A program of work for DV Vic and DVRCV to deliver as a newly established entity, including **leading sector efforts to embed the voices of victim survivors in the family violence system**, increasing evidence informed innovations in specialist practice and building community responses to family violence. This program of work is generously supported by The Barlow Foundation, The Melbourne Women's Fund and The Sidney Myer Fund.



Visit the [project page](#) to learn more about the Family Violence Philanthropy Collaboration Project and how you can get involved.