

Annual Report 2024/25

A YEAR OF RESILIENCE AND RENEWAL.

The Victorian Pride Centre respectfully acknowledges the Yalukut Weelam Clan of the Boon Wurrung peoples. We extend this acknowledgment to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional custodians of the lands where we live, learn and work. We uphold their continuing relationship to this land on which the Victorian Pride Centre exists today.

We pay our respects to their Elders, both past and present.





Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are advised that this report may include images, and names of deceased individuals.





Who We Are

The Victorian Pride Centre is the first purpose-built centre for Australia's LGBTIQA+ communities. We operate as a Not-For-Profit organisation, with no recurrent Government funding, and we stands as a beacon of inclusion, connection and progress, paving new directions for LGBTIQA+ communities while honouring and celebrating their brave, and at times difficult, past.

More than just a building, the Pride Centre is home to a diverse range of vital organisations that provide life-changing services- from mental health support and legal advocacy to youth outreach and peer connection. These resident organisations are at the heart of our mission to uplift and empower community.

Throughout the year, the Centre also hosts a vibrant calendar of events, including Pride Month celebrations, exhibitions, performances, workshops and forums that bring people together, spark conversation and celebrate the richness of LGBTIQA+ life.

Together, we are building a future where every person in our community feels seen, supported and celebrated.

Our Vision

A world where every LGBTIQA+ person has a place where we are welcomed, valued, respected and celebrated.

Our Purpose

To connect, support and amplify LGBTIQA+ voices, resources, services and groups so that our communities are cohesive, resilient and thrive.

Our Values

- Pride We value pride, courage and strength. Together we can create a positive future.
- Support We support each other, inclusive of each other and value our diversity.
- **Celebration** We celebrate our LGBTIQA+ communities, honouring our history and our cultures.
- **Belonging** We welcome all to a place of acceptance, belonging, reconciliation and kindness.





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Chair's Message





Craig Bell

He/Him

I am proud to reflect on a year of resilience, renewal, and deepened connection at the Victorian Pride Centre. The 2024–2025 financial year has unfolded in a global context where hard-won rights are being challenged, and many corporations are stepping back from their commitments to diversity, equity, and inclusion. In this climate, the Pride Centre has remained unwavering- a beacon of belonging, advocacy, and pride.

This year, we welcomed our new CEO, Paul Horwell, whose leadership marks an exciting new chapter for the Centre. His vision and energy are already helping us build on the strong foundations laid by our inaugural CEO, Justine Dalla Riva, whose legacy continues to shape our mission and values. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the profound impact Justine has had during her time as CEO and thank her for her invaluable contributions.

The Pride Centre has continued to thrive as a hub for community, creativity, and care. From expanded cultural programming throughout Midsumma Festival, Pride Month and Pride Gallery exhibitions, to capacity-building initiatives and inclusive events, our space has brought people together in powerful ways.

Our digital engagement has continued to grow, amplifying diverse voices and extending our reach. This visibility is a testament to the strength of our collective efforts and speaks to how loud and proud our community is.

In the ongoing absence of Government funding, the Pride Centre relies heavily on the generosity of its founders and donors, along with its corporate sponsors, to help fund the events and activities at the Centre. A sincere thank you for your continued support and commitment to the Pride Centre. However, this year we have experienced challenges with traditional sources of revenue significantly declining as cost of living pressures mount; a trend being experienced across the not-for-profit sector. With Financial Sustainability as one of the four strategic pillars, it is a focus area we are watching closely.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to our staff, volunteers, resident organisations, supporters, and partners. Your dedication sustains the vibrancy and impact of the Pride Centre.

Thank you for your unwavering support of the Victorian Pride Centre. Together, we will ensure it remains a place of pride, inclusion, and community now and into the future.

CEO's Message

As I begin my first year as CEO of the Victorian Pride Centre. I embrace this role with deep respect for the legacy of those who built this extraordinary space and with an understanding of the challenges ahead. Unfortunately, this year has been a financially challenging year for the Victorian Pride Centre. We have maintained security cover to deal with the rise in incidents at the Centre, and we have seen challenging results with new corporate sponsorships. Despite this, we have welcomed more people through the doors, both community members and allies, hosted community centered events, and maintained strong relationships with our vital resident organisations.

Among our proudest milestones this year were the inaugural Queer Deaf Festival, Queer Multicultural Carnival and the Nasty "ballroom" Ball, events that expanded our outreach and celebrated the intersectional identities within our LGBTIQA+ communities. These celebrations brought new faces into the Centre and reaffirmed our commitment to intersectional inclusion and representation.

We also celebrated the graduation of our TiPS program participants, marking a new chapter for emerging leaders in our community, and the launch of our Speakers Bureau. The growth and achievements of these initiatives reflect the power of both mentorship and storytelling, and the importance of investing in future changemakers.

I am excited by the momentum we've built and the opportunities ahead. Our planning efforts are focused on financial sustainability, strengthening our partnerships; and ensuring that every LGBTIQA+ person, especially young people, and our trans community, know they have a safe place here at the Victorian Pride Centre.

To our Board, volunteers, team members, donors, sponsors. resident organisations and to our colourful community, I thank you. Your support fuels our progress and inspires our vision. Together, we are shaping the next chapter of the Victorian Pride Centre with pride and with purpose.



He/Him. Paul Horwell

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW





Lachlan
He/Him
Pilley
Treasurer - Victorian

The 2024–2025 financial year has been marked by careful management of resources at the Victorian Pride Centre, allowing us to advance our mission and impact while ensuring financial sustainability. The Pride Centre does not receive recurrent operational funding from the State or Federal Governments.

The Pride Centre continues to be fully tenanted and primarily generates income from our resident organisations, venue hiring and associated events, corporate sponsorships, and donations. Due to the challenging economic and fundraising landscape, traditional sources of funding for the Pride Centre have reduced year on year. The unwavering support from our community has been vital to the continued success and impact of the Pride Centre's vision and objectives.

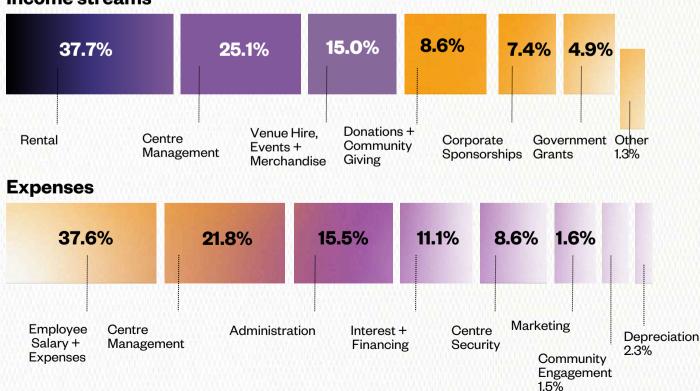
We invested in a larger team structure to fully activate the Pride Centre and support our resident organisations. Given the physical environment the Pride Centre operates in and the rise in incidents, the security costs have continued to increase year on year to ensure the safety of our community.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to closely managing our financial position and implementing strategies to achieve a debt-free future. This focus is essential for enabling us to financially thrive and expand the reach of the Pride Centre's vision and purpose.

Thank you to Paul, the broader staff team and the volunteers for their leadership and commitment to the Pride Centre.

Income streams

Pride Centre



IN FY24-25 VPC WAS HOME



The Little Social

(Forum) A social enterprise café empowering young people and providing hands-on skills development and mentoring.



Minus₁₈

(Level 1) Minus 18 is Australia's largest youthled organisation for same-sex attracted and gender diverse young people.



Switchboard

(Level 1) Switchboard Victoria provides a peer based, volunteer run support service for LGBTIQA+ people, their families, and allies.



Game Finance

(Level 3) Australian company offering mortgage broking, financial and property advice to LGBTQIA+ people and their family.



Star Observer

(Level 3) Star Observer has been setting the LGBTI agenda since 1979, with a long and proud history of independent journalism.



Monash Gender Clinic

(Level 3) The Monash Health Gender Clinic is the specialist public health service for the TGD and Non-Binary community in Victoria.



Hares and Hyenas

(Atrium) Hares & Hyenas is Australia's queer, gender and sexuality diverse bookshop, serving our communities since 1991.



JOY Media

(Level 1) JOY Media is the only Australian radio station committed to providing a voice for the diverse LGBTQIA+ communities.



MQFF

(Level 1) The Melbourne Queer Film Festival (MQFF) is the largest queer film festival in Australia, screening the best queer films.



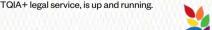
Transgender Victoria

(Level 3) TGV is the leading body for TGD advocacy, training, and resource development in Victoria.



Q+Law

(Level 3) Q+ Law, the Victoria-wide peer-run LGBTQIA+ legal service, is up and running.



thorneharbour health

Thorne Harbour Health

(Level 3) TTH is an organisation working to improve the health and wellbeing of our people living with HIV (PLHIV).



(Mezzanine) The Australian Queer Archives collection is the largest repository of historical materials about LGBTIQ experiences.



AGMC

(Level 1) AGMC advocates for the rights of multicultural and multifaith LGBTIQ individuals and communities.



Better Health Network

(Level 2) Better Health Network (BHN) is a leading health organisation for all people and communities



Equality Australia

(Permanent Desk) Equality Australia exists to improve the wellbeing and circumstances of LGBTIQA+ people in Australia.













Virtual Tenants

A YEAR IN NUMBERS

The Victorian Pride Centre is Australia's first purpose-built space for LGBTIQA+ communities- a vibrant hub for connection, creativity, and advocacy. We exist to uplift and empower through inclusive programs and dynamic events that celebrate pride in all its forms. From exhibitions and workshops to community forums and cultural festivals, the Centre brings community together to share stories, build networks, and shape a more inclusive future.



OPEN **357**days this year

Visitors to the Victorian Pride Centre:

55,000

15

virtual tenants

resident organisations who offer LGBTIQA+ focused services, alongside non-profits and businesses that support our communities.



Free Public Tours

Private Tours

38



11,000
hours donated by our dedicated volunteers

ACCESS, EQUITY AND ADVANCEMENT Through our expanding cultural expricing via our Access and celebrate LGBTIO a By providing and

pricing via our Access and Equity Model, we connect and

By providing space for our Pride Gallery, events, services, experiences, and amplify diverse voices.



Number of Festival

programmed events





total events across the vear.





Over

bookings via our LGBTIQA+ Speakers Bureau launched January 2025.



Bookings across VPC venue spaces, of that:

50% medium and large NFP 25% small NFP 25% commercial

Sunday Sizzle's across the year!



CONNECT

The Victorian Pride Centre plays a unique and vital role in connecting diverse and intersectional LGBTIQA+ communities across Victoria. As a physical and symbolic home for pride, the Centre is committed to fostering meaningful relationships that transcend identity, geography, and lived experience.

Throughout FY24-25, the Victorian Pride Centre demonstrated its commitment to strengthening relationships across LGBTIQA+ communities and allies through a series of impactful initiatives and events.

The inaugural Queer Deaf Festival created a dedicated space for Deaf LGBTIQA+ individuals to connect, celebrate, and be visible, marking a significant milestone in intersectional inclusion and accessibility. Similarly, the Pride Centre piloted its very first Queer Multicultural Carnival during Pride Month which brought together culturally diverse LGBTIQA+ communities in a vibrant celebration of identity, storytelling, and shared pride.

During Pride Month, the Centre also hosted a rich and varied program of events, including queer line dancing, drag cabaret, film screenings, and comedy nights. These events welcomed both emerging and established artists and encouraged broad community participation, reinforcing the Centre's role

as a cultural and social hub.





The graduation of our Telling it with Pride Speakers (TiPS) program participants further highlighted the Centre's investment in leadership development, equipping a new generation of changemakers with the tools to lead and advocate within their communities. Additionally, graduates were listed in our LGBTIQA+ Speakers Bureau, a network of speakers that amplifies lived experience storytelling and advocacy, strengthening visibility and building bridges with allies and institutions.

The Memory Lane Café, delivered in partnership with Dementia Australia, provided a supportive space for LGBTIQA+ individuals and their families affected by dementia, fostering intergenerational connection and care.

THRIVE

The Victorian Pride Centre is committed to building a strong foundation for long-term impact by investing in organisational sustainability and resilience.

In FY24-25, the Victorian Pride Centre responded proactively to a challenging economic climate by implementing a strategic organisational restructure. This new operating model, which had been in development since the previous financial year, was designed to strengthen our internal capacity, streamline operations, and better align our resources with the Centre's long-term strategic goals.

At the heart of this restructure was a commitment to enhancing the experience of all who engage with the Pride Centre from our resident organisations and community partners to the thousands of visitors who walk through our doors each year. By investing in a more agile and responsive team structure, we are better positioned to deliver high-impact programs, support our tenants, and activate our spaces in ways that reflect the vibrancy and diversity of our communities.

We have grown to a dedicated team of 9 permanent staff members, each bringing unique expertise and passion to their roles, to cover operating the Centre over peak programs, evenings and weekends. This team enables us to deliver more consistent support, deepen community engagement, and drive forward our mission with renewed energy and focus.





Katie Fennelly, Our Communications & Marketing Coordinator

CHAMPION

Throughout FY24-25, the Victorian Pride Centre has remained steadfast in its role as a champion for LGBTIQA+ inclusion, visibility, and equity. We have actively worked to amplify underrepresented voices, and create spaces where all members of our community feel seen, heard, and valued.

This year, our digital presence saw substantial growth, amplifying our community's voices. These results not only reflect our digital footprint but also enhance our ability to amplify the voices of LGBTIQA+ communities and strengthen our collective message.



11,601

followers



15,504

followers 22% increase



followers 11% increase



Rainbow Road Subscribers 13% decrease



web users 11% increase

In FY24-25, the Victorian Pride Centre communications function experienced significant digital growth, reflecting the community's increasing engagement with our online platforms. Our total reach across social media rose by an impressive 71%, driven by strong performance on Instagram (+22%) and LinkedIn (+11%), alongside steady numbers on Facebook. While Rainbow Road email subscribers saw a slight decline (-13%), our website traffic surged, with 113,000 users and increases of 11% across key metrics.

These figures highlight the growing impact of our digital presence and the importance of online connection in amplifying our mission and reach.

GROW

FY24–25 was a year of reflection and renewal for the Victorian Pride Centre. In the face of economic pressures and shifting community needs, we undertook a strategic internal restructure to strengthen our operational resilience and ensure long-term sustainability. These changes allowed us to streamline processes, clarify roles, and better align our resources with our mission.

In FY24–25, the Victorian Pride Centre deepened its commitment to connecting services for LGBTIQA+ communities by fostering inclusive partnerships, expanding access to health and wellbeing initiatives, and providing a stable home for vital service organisations.

We also proudly launched a new partnership with **Genea Fertility**, aimed at supporting LGBTIQA+ family-building journeys. This collaboration reflects our shared commitment to inclusivity in healthcare, ensuring that rainbow families can access fertility services without fear of discrimination or misunderstanding.





Our partnership with **Endeavour Group** has helped amplify visibility and support for LGBTIQA+ communities through shared values of diversity and inclusion, while also contributing to the sustainability of our programs and spaces. Together the aim is to deliver events such as a Wear It Purple Day panel which will strengthen and provide outreach for our community.

The Pride Centre continued to serve as a stable and collaborative home for 15 resident and community organisations, including **Thorne Harbour Health**, **Monash Health**, **Switchboard**, **Better Health Network**, **JOY Media**, and **Minus18**. This co-location model enables service providers to work side-by-side, share resources, and offer streamlined support to community members seeking health, legal, social, and advocacy.

Further enhancing service access, we celebrated the launch of **Justice of the Peace (JP)** Signing Services at the Centre in October 2025, offering free document witnessing and certification in a welcoming, judgment-free space. This initiative has become a trusted resource for community members needing essential legal services.



PRIDE GALLERY

pridecentre.org.au/pride-gallery

The Victorian Pride Centre provides opportunities for visual arts and archival exhibitions that focus on art by LGBTIQA+ artists and/or art that focuses on LGBTIQA+ issues.



Muru-ba **July 2024**

Muru-ba is a physical and online exhibition showcasing the faces and stories of First Nations LGBTQIA+ Elders involved with the LGBTQIA+ rights and First Nations community movements since the 1970s from across Australia.



July - September 2024

This exhibition by Artist Camila Pazz showcases humanity's richness, urging a more compassionate world where diversity and tolerance prevail—a poignant reminder that, above all, we share the vital title of being human.



TransTrans: Transnational Trans* Histories September - November 2024

Curated by Birgit Lang and Katie Sutton, TransTrans explores transnational networks of trans people who shaped early gender-diverse histories between the 1900s and the 1960s.



Our

November 2024 - 12 January 2025

David Arlo is a sculptor and video artist combining domestic crafts with a range of imagery that spans across the familial, the queer and the grotesque. His installations and films seek to entice viewers with a sense of comfort and nostalgia, an atmosphere that is simultaneously disrupted from within by emergent disturbing or jarring visceral cues.



You Looking At Me, Looking At You November 2024 - January 2025

Memories of intimate shared experiences taken in moments of life, love and loss. These unrefined portraits by artist and educator Emma Armstrong Porter are technically inconsistent because they were shot at a decisive moment, guided by emotion, not photographic convention.



Scars // Stars 12 March - 28 April, 2025

Ace Astrophel Hengel's Scars and Stars, a one-of-a-kind work that celebrates the beauty of identity, selfexpression, and visibility within the Trans community.



Don't Be Too Polite: Feminist Posters and their **Collectives**

12 March - 28 April, 2025

This exhibition highlights the vital contributions of Australian lesbian-feminist artists and print collectives over the past five decades, showcasing their roles in LGBTIQA+ activism and artistic expression.



Gender Fluids - VPC 'SUMMA 2025 15 January - 10 March, 2025

A celebration of the natural world's ingenuity and resilience, spotlighting the gender fluidity of marine creatures like the starfish, sea slug, and oyster. Through a dazzling mix of framed photographs, textile banners, costumes, and video, the exhibition captures the luminescent glory of these organisms in playful, sparkling tableaus.



Top 15 January - 10 March, 2025

This body of work depicts the experience of three friends as they navigate individual experiences with top surgery. The work explores the complexity of medically transitioning, and invites reflection on the complexities of body, self-expression and community.



Kin: A Celebration of Queer Resilience and Connection

1 May - 16 June, 2025

A poignant celebration of queer connection, chosen families, and the spaces that offer protection, joy, and belonging. Through a series of documentary-style photographs, J captures the quiet and vibrant acts of intimacy that sustain queer lives, crafting an archive of resilience that speaks to both the deeply personal and the profoundly communal.

Our People

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Board, Staff & Committees

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Craig Bell **Chair**

David Imber

Deputy Chair
(ceased May 2024)

Jane Crawley **Deputy Chair**(commenced May
2024)

Scott Hartley *Treasurer* (ceased June 2024)

Lachlan Pilley *Treasurer* (commenced April 2024)

Dr. Judy Tang

Board Director

Alan Wu **Board Director**

Melinda Rich **Board Director**

Tara Laursen

Board Director

Anastasia Le Board Director (commenced April 2024)

Mark Adams **Company Secretary**

Committees

Governance, People and Culture

Chair - Alan Wu

Audit, Finance and Risk Committee

Chair - Mangus Morton

Venue, Facilities and Activation

Chair - Melinda Rich

Communications and Engagement Chair - David Imber

Community Reference Group

Co-Chairs Tathra Street and Dr. Judy Tang

Visual Arts Selection
Panel

Chair - Jane Crawley

Thank you to all of our previous staff who contributed to the financial year and to our causal and event staff for delivering our programs.

Staff

Paul Horwell **CEO**

Samantha Chew

Fundraising, Marketing and Communications Manager

Anita Fiorenza

Events & Program Manager

Tyler Beck

Venue & Facilities
Coordinator

Valentin Micou

Customer Experience and Bookings Coordinator

Brett Hibberd

Fundraising, Philanthropy and Partnerships
Coordinator

Katie Fennelly

Communications & Marketing Coordinator

Adam Brackman

Volunteer Coordinator

Jack Hall

Administration Officer & Executive Assistant

Ivy Crago

TiPs Project Coordinator

Our Supporters



Thank You & Acknowledgments

Thank you to all our community and organisational supporters, and to our Organisational Patron and Ambassadors for their ongoing contributions to the Pride Centre's sustainability and future development as a home for LGBTIQA+ communities.

Organisational Patron & Ambassadors

Amao Leota Lu Benjamin Law Courtney Act G Flip **Greg Axtens**

Jay te manu Julie McCrossin AM Dr Rhonda Galbally AC Tony Ayres Tony Briffa JP

Acknowledgment:

The Victorian Pride Centre would like to formally thank the Hon. Michael Kirby AC CMG, former High Court Judge and academic, for his service as the Pride Centre's inaugural Organisational Patron, from June 2020 to March 2024.

Founders

Adam Trumble & Peter Herewila Alan Shepherd Andrew M Way Garry Oliver Greg Herman-Moore

Ian Gould Jamal Hakim

Dr Jayson McNaughton

Jude Munro AO Dr Judy Tang

Juliette Alush & Dana Nelson Linton Soderholm & Peter Reilly

OAM

Laurie Bebbington & Elizabeth

O'Keeffe

Louise Kummrow

Lawrence & Stephen Barrow-Yu Malcolm Alexander Campbell &

David

Justin Keenan Mandy Rashleigh Martin Robertson

Dr Matt Collins AM QC & Leonard

Vary

Michael Faneco

Michael Inman & Darren

Johannesen Sarah Trumble Stephen Game Sally Capp & The Sutherland

Family

Silvia Gonzalez & Laura

McCauley

Siobhán McHale

Stuart Kollmorgen & Rodrigo

Reis

Susie Montague Terrance Broadway & Michael Langtree, **Broadtree Foundation**

Tricia Power Will Randall

Patrons

Platinum Rachel Slade

Gold

Nathan Allwood & Julian Clarke

Daniel Dorall & David Mittler

Rowan Doig Roderick Sharpe

Bronze

Dennis Altman **Braith Bamkin** The Bruce Family Andrew P Chamberlain &

Lam X Nguyen Luke David Paul Gonzalez Peter van Gaalen Dr Rhonda Galbally AC Bronze (cntd.)

David Johnston-Bell

John Keats

Paul Keleher & Dave Seaward

Ruth McNair AM Emma Rose Moore

Lyn Morgain **Dale Newton**

Miranda Stewart Andrew D Stocker

Mimi Ton

Desmond Thompson Michael Trovato

Gail Veal James Vivian

L Damien Whelan

Benefactors

The Pride Fund Kevin Anderson The Bartlett Family King and McMillan Foundation

Resident **Organisations**

Thank you to all of the organisations that call the Pride Centre home. Our resident organisations are listed on Page 19.

Our Volunteers



THANK YOU

Thank you to all our incredible volunteers for your generous contributions of time, energy and heart. Your dedication helps make the Victorian Pride Centre a welcoming, vibrant and inclusive home for LGBTIQA+ communities. We are deeply grateful for the role you play in supporting our programs, events and everyday operations. Your impact is felt in every corner of the Centre.

Andres Acero Munoz

Chad Africa Gerard Alferez Stuart Anderson

Aleks Baldwin

Madalynn (Mads) Barnes

Robert Brierley
Kim Buenaflor
Lexi Camellia
Julia Campbell
Damien Chandler
Matthew Cooke
Brad Cresswell
Rachelle Dagher

Ken Dahm Tika Dankers Jeanette Epstein Sue Faulkner Peter Fitzgerald Anthony Fraser Aidan Gall Dean Gemmill

Philip Ghirardello Keira Gray

Jess Hume

Ali (Connor) Ignak

Alan Iveson Gautam Jatwani Waldemar Jenek Begum Koycic Louise Kummrow

Scott Li Chris Mier

(Amy) Ermawati Mohd Amin

Michaël Monty Emma Moore Tucika Moula Sue Nevin Ali Oblak

Luke Oehlmann Ashleigh Palmer Braeden Parnell Andrew Purvis Wahid Rahman Sandra Robinson Bronwen Rogers Shauna Sherker Steve Solmon Harry Stewart Sara Strell Jay Te Manu III Stephanie Teh

Hugh Tilley-Darvill
Jason Treanor
Mark Walker

Avishka (Alex) Weerasinghe

Kun (Alvin) Zhao

Our Partners



Partners & Corporate Sponsors

Critical to the success of the Victorian Pride Centre is the support of Funders, Corporate Partners and Sponsors - both financial, and pro-bono - and Philanthropic Trusts. The Victorian Pride Centre thanks the below organisations for their crucial support.

Foundation Funders





Founding Major Partners





Major Partners



Official Partners





Major Supporters





Program Partners

SCOTCHMANS HILL BELLARINE PENINSULA VICTORIA ESTABLISHED 1982



Valued Drink Partners

Pro-Bono Supporters









MinterEllison.



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