

# INVESTING FOR WOMEN



The Palaszczuk Government is building a stronger, more resilient Queensland by creating jobs and driving industry growth while keeping Queenslanders safe and healthy.

When women and girls are supported and encouraged to fully participate in all aspects of society, the economy and state are strengthened. Now more than ever, Queensland women are looking to the government to invest in programs and services which address inequality, promote respect, and support women and girls to contribute and achieve across a range of fields and industries.

The 2021-22 Budget continues to invest in addressing barriers impacting on economic security, safety and success for women and girls, including through:

## Enabling workforce participation

# \$320 million

over 4 years, with \$80 million each year ongoing, for the Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative to assist disadvantaged Queenslanders to gain skills and qualifications to enter and stay in the workforce.

## Up to \$140 million

over 4 years for a revitalised Back to Work program.

## Providing safe and secure homes

# \$160.9 million

to provide housing and support services to vulnerable people, including those experiencing domestic and family violence.

## Ensuring safety

# \$30 million

over 4 years to boost support services for victims of domestic, family and sexual violence across the state.



## ECONOMIC SECURITY AND EQUAL WORKFORCE PARTICIPATION

The Palaszczuk Government's vision for an equal society is built on enabling women to be financially independent and economically secure. While systemic and structural issues impacting gender equality will take time to address, the 2021-22 Budget builds on the government's previous investments and aims to improve the lives of women and girls by delivering and supporting a range of initiatives to enable women to fully and equally participate in society, including in safe and successful work.

### Investing in training and skills

Investment in job readiness and unlocking new careers for Queenslanders continues in 2021-22 through funding for training and skills initiatives including through TAFE, which has seen a substantial increase in female enrolments.

The 2021-22 Budget includes:

- **\$320 million** over 4 years, and **\$80 million** each year ongoing, for the Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative to assist up to 15,000 disadvantaged Queenslanders each year to gain skills, qualifications and experience to enter and stay in the workforce. As at 31 May 2021, more than 31,000 women have benefited from the program.
- Up to **\$140 million** over 4 years for a revitalised Back to Work program to provide eligible businesses the confidence to employ Queenslanders who have experienced a period of unemployment and help workers facing disadvantage in the labour market. Since 2016 more than 10,600 women have been supported into employment through the Back to Work program.

In partnership with the Australian Government, the Palaszczuk Government has allocated **\$100.5 million** to the initial JobTrainer Fund to deliver additional no or low fee training places in accredited short courses and qualifications in priority areas. The JobTrainer Fund provides training places to jobseekers, school leavers and young people to support them into jobs as Australia emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic. More than half the current enrolments are women.

Training and TAFE facilities are essential to support skills acquisition for women's economic participation and **\$88.4 million** will be spent in 2021-22 on various capital projects. Importantly, **\$47.8 million** of the **\$100 million** Equipping TAFE for our Future commitment will be spent to build and modernise TAFE facilities in 2021-22 and the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training will actively support increasing women's participation in construction on these projects.

### Investing in women's innovation and success

Supporting women to create their own self-employment and maintain successful businesses is a priority for the Palaszczuk Government. Women have continued to increase as a share of those operating their own business, comprising 41 per cent of Queensland's self-employed, the highest proportion of all states, highlighting that Queensland is home to many great women innovators and entrepreneurs.

Grant funding of **\$15 million** (of a total **\$25 million** over 2 years) is being provided in 2021-22 to continue to support Queensland businesses to grow and thrive via the Business Basics, Business Boost and Business Growth Fund programs. These programs are part of the **\$140 million** Big Plans for Small Business commitment.

Social enterprises are being supported to scale-up activities and create training and employment opportunities particularly for vulnerable and disadvantaged Queenslanders, with **\$8 million** committed over 2 years for the Social Enterprise Jobs Fund.

**\$540,000** per annum is being provided under the Investing in Queensland Women Grant Program which provides small grants for projects to advance gender equality and respect for women and girls. Thirty-two projects received funding in the inaugural grant round.



# The Women's Centre Townsville

The Queensland Government provided **\$4.15 million** to construct a new fit for purpose women's centre. Since its opening in October 2020, the centre's staff have delivered a range of vital services to women in Townsville and surrounding areas, including sexual assault support services, counselling, domestic and family violence services and homelessness services.

Key among those services is the Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) – a multi-agency approach involving police, health, forensic services and sexual assault counsellors. Following a successful trial, the Queensland Government is providing **\$1.8 million** over five years to continue the SART.

The SART provides a client-centred, holistic wrap-around response to victims of sexual assault from when an offence is reported, through to the court hearing. In the year to 31 March 2021, more than 160 new clients benefited from this service and ongoing support and counselling was provided to existing clients. The evaluation of the trial showed that the direct and early involvement of sexual assault counsellors resulted in increased reporting to police, fewer complaints withdrawn by victims and more offenders being brought to account.

## KEEPING WOMEN AND CHILDREN SAFE - PREVENTING VIOLENCE

The Palaszczuk Government's commitment to ending violence against women and children is unwavering. Since 2015, the Palaszczuk Government has committed more than **\$600 million** in programs, services and strategies to address domestic, family and sexual violence. The independent Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce has been established to recommend how best to legislate against coercive control in Queensland, review the need for a specific offence of commit domestic violence, and to examine more broadly women's experiences in the criminal justice system.

### Investing in ending domestic and family violence and sexual violence

Over 4 years from 2021–22, the government has committed:

- **\$30 million**, in addition to the **\$7.5 million** provided in 2019–20, to boost services supporting victims of domestic, family and sexual violence across the state in response to increased demand including due to COVID-19 related impacts
- **\$4.4 million** to rollout further critical frontline domestic, family and sexual violence support services and perpetrator interventions in specialist court locations

In 2021–22, the Budget delivers:

- More than **\$138 million** to respond to domestic, family and sexual violence including counselling and crisis responses, perpetrator interventions, court support, shelters and mobile support, awareness and prevention, and sexual assault support
- **\$8.1 million** to continue specialist domestic and family violence courts
- **\$3.5 million** to enhance the capability of Community Justice Groups in 18 discrete Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander communities to address domestic and family violence through the development and implementation of culturally appropriate local responses
- **\$670,000** to continue the provision of legal advice and representation to sexual assault victims and counsellors, who seek

to prevent disclosure of counselling communications in court

- Funding to continue sexual assault service reform in Queensland Health to improve state-wide coverage of compassionate, person-centred care services for adult victims of sexual assault through enhanced leadership, training and procedures

### Supporting safe and secure futures for vulnerable women

Almost **\$800,000** over 3 years will be provided to Working Women Queensland to continue to provide free advice, advocacy and referral services on work-related issues, including to women who face family and domestic violence, are entering or re-entering the workforce or work in precarious employment.

**\$5.1 million** will be invested in programs for women in custody or in contact with the courts to reduce their risk of entering or returning to prison.

More than **\$18.6 million** will be provided in 2021–22 for a range of initiatives to assist young people to successfully complete bail, reduce future offending behaviour, and re-connect with community and education including continued investment in the Gendered Response to Bail Support Service and Transition to Success program.

## PROVIDING SAFE AND SECURE HOMES

A safe and secure home provides an important foundation from which challenges can be faced.

**\$160.9 million** is being invested in 2021–22 to provide housing, support and specialist homelessness services to vulnerable people, including older women and those experiencing domestic and family violence. Over the next 4 years, the Government is providing **\$20 million** to expand domestic and family violence housing support services, and **\$20 million** for homelessness initiatives including through head leases and crisis housing and supports.

Under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Action Plan 2019–2023, **\$5.5 million** is being invested to establish an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peak housing body to deliver improved housing outcomes for First Nations peoples in urban, regional and remote communities across Queensland.

Over **\$317 million** has been allocated in 2021–22 to improve housing outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across Queensland.

## IMPROVING HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

### High-quality women's health services

The Queensland Government will invest over **\$60 million** in breast cancer screening services in 2021–22. Women from across the state will have access to more individualised, timely and quality services to better meet their needs.

Funding for a further 2 years will help to maintain and update the Endometriosis Association QLD Inc (QENDO) endometriosis mobile app to assist women in tracking their symptoms, creating a care plan and assisting clinicians in treating women with endometriosis.

Investment in services provided by True Relationships and Reproductive Health will continue, providing Queensland women with access to reproductive, gynaecological and sexual health services.

### Maternal health services

In 2021–22, **\$7.7 million** will be invested in perinatal and infant health services across Queensland. This is part of a 5-year **\$31.2 million** investment under the Connecting Care to Recovery plan to respond to the mental health needs of women, their partners and infants during the perinatal period.

Provision of **\$8 million** in 2021–22 will support the continuation of culturally appropriate maternal, parenting and child health services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women. This builds on the Queensland Government's investment of **\$26 million** over 3 years state-wide from 2018–19.

Ongoing investment of **\$300,000** in 2021–22 for the Birthing in our Community hub to include the Early Learning Program will deliver early education and support programs for children aged 6 weeks to 2 years and their carers through family wellbeing and social support programs.



# STEM Girl Power Initiative

STEM Girl Power is encouraging girls into STEM pathways and broadening their understanding of the many careers that use science, technology, engineering and mathematics skills and knowledge.

The initiative has grown from a pilot camp of 24 Year 10 students in 2016 to a year-long program for up to 60 students and 10 teachers which includes an annual camp in Brisbane, regional activities and STEM ambassador projects generated by students.

Since 2016, 318 Year 10 girls and 55 teachers from state schools across Queensland have become a part of the STEM Girl Power network who have encouraged others in their school and community to consider STEM pathways and opportunities.



## INVESTING FOR WOMEN

### Active, engaged and connected women and girls

Investment continues in 2021–22 across a range of initiatives. This includes:

- **\$6.4 million** in 2021–22 to support Active Community Infrastructure projects
- **\$650,000** under the Female Founders Program to further develop women leaders
- More than **\$750,000** to continue the Queensland Country Women's Association Country Kitchens Program

Delivering on a 2020 election commitment, the Palaszczuk Government has established a parliamentary inquiry to consider the drivers and impacts of, and effective responses to, social isolation and loneliness in Queensland communities.

### VALUING AND INVESTING IN EDUCATION

Through an investment of **\$8 million** over 4 years, free after school homework centres will begin operating at state schools in 2021–22 to support students to build good study habits and assist parents who may need more flexible working arrangements.

In recognition that cultural change requires an investment in young people's understanding of gender equality and relationships, a review of Queensland's Respectful Relationships education program is being undertaken to strengthen content on gender-based violence, consent education including sexual assault, and help seeking strategies.

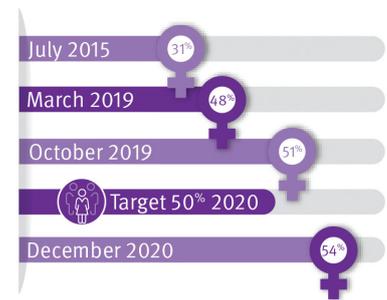
**\$450,000** is allocated in 2021–22 out of a total commitment up to **\$2.5 million** to ensure students at 120 Queensland schools have access to free sanitary products, via Share the Dignity's Dignity Vending Machines. Additionally, all schools in Queensland will have free access to the menstrual education program Period Talk.

**\$2 million** is being provided in 2021–22 for engagement programs which continue to support young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander female students to have an economically independent future.

### ENCOURAGING LEADERSHIP AND VALUING DIVERSITY

The Queensland Government is committed to ensuring women are equally represented in positions of leadership to maximise opportunities for competent and qualified women to contribute to community, civic and business life. Since the gender diversity targets were established in

July 2015, representation of women on Queensland Government bodies has increased significantly (up from 31 per cent in July 2015, to 54 per cent).



The Palaszczuk Government's commitment to act as a model employer and achieve equal opportunity in the Queensland Public Service has been boosted by the establishment of a new Special Commissioner – Equity and Diversity. Additional funding of **\$1.3 million** over 5 years will support the Special Commissioner to review current public sector employment arrangements and conditions to drive strategies and initiatives that promote gender pay equity and ensure fairness and inclusion across the state's largest workforce.

**\$2.5 million** is allocated in 2021–22 to continue to support people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to achieve economic and social participation outcomes through the Community Action for a Multicultural Society Program.

Leadership opportunities for young women from diverse backgrounds will continue to be supported through the Queensland Youth Engagement Panel (QYEP) and the Queensland Indigenous Youth Leadership Program (QIYLP). To date, half of the members of the QYEP have been women and 350 First Nations women have participated in the QIYLP.

Sponsorship of the Townsville Fire Community Youth Program from 2020 to 2022 supports engagement of young people in the Townsville region, including vulnerable female youths, to improve school attendance, establish healthy relationships and prepare for adulthood.

The Queensland Government also supports an array of programs which foster and celebrate women's success and innovation, including the: Women in Music Awards, Women in Media Conference, Women of the World Festival, Women in STEM Competition, Women in Local Government, AgriFutures Rural Women's Award, Queensland Indigenous Women Rangers Network Project, Empowered Leadership Summit and Women in Film and Television Queensland online events.