



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ECONOMY AND GENDER AND ECONOMIC EQUALITY
Ms Leanne Castley MLA (Chair), Ms Suzanne Orr MLA (Deputy Chair),
Mr Johnathan Davis MLA

Submission Cover sheet

Inquiry into memorialisation through
public commemoration

Submission number: 004

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25/11/21

Via: LACommitteeEGEE@parliament.act.gov.au

Dear Ms Nicole Lawder MLA (Chair), Ms Suzanne Orr MLA (Deputy Chair) and Mr Johnathan Davis MLA

RE: Submission: Inquiry into memorialisation through public commemoration Places, monuments, streets, and suburbs

Social and advocacy group Women in Gippsland wants to see local, state and federal leadership on public place representation and recognition of women and non-binary people.

Advocacy project **Put Her Name On It** started in Gippsland by Women in Gippsland and it has garnered interest and change across Victoria at a State and local government level. We believe this is an excellent example of systemic change that the ACT utilise to create change.

We support the submission by **Jasiri** on the 2/6/21 requesting the Assembly call on the ACT Government to:

- **Look to promote equality and diversity in the people we recognize through public commemoration;**
- **Increase the prominence of women in place naming conventions across the territory; and**
- **Identify opportunities to increase the representation of women, especially of diverse backgrounds and First Nations leaders in our public statues.**

What is the issue?

Place naming, statues and other public place commemorations can elevate stories and history of local champions, changemakers and everyday heroes. But there is a gap. Public place recognition has historically favoured men and women's names are disproportionately unrepresented in public places around the world. This is a global problem with a local solution. Whilst no comprehensive audit has been undertaken at a global, country or even state level, here is a snapshot of what we do know:

- **Federal Electorate Names**
 - Of the 151 House seats, 91 or 60% are named after a man and 17 or 11% are named after a woman. Only seven bear the name of a First Nations person.

- Of the 30 House seats in Queensland, 19 or 63% are named after a man, five or 16% are named after a women with two named after a First Nations Person.
- [Classification of electoral division names - Australian Electoral Commission \(aec.gov.au\)](http://aec.gov.au)
- **Statues**
 - There are few statues of women globally estimated at ~ 3% of all statues.
 - Melbourne – 1.5% of all statues are of real women or nine out 580.
 - Brisbane – three statues honouring women
 - [CITIES – Statues For Equality](#)
 - Earlier this year Shannon Fentiman MP wrote to all Mayors in QLD asking them to commit to improving gender representation and diversity in public places and announced that the Gambling Community Benefit fund would now accept applications to support more statues and monuments up to \$100k as a direct result of advocacy from nine-year-old Malia Knox of #FemaleFaces4PublicPlaces campaign.
 - Victorian Government have created a new \$1M funding program Women’s Public Art Program to advance representation of women in public places by women artists - [Regional Arts Victoria \(rav.net.au\)](http://rav.net.au)
- **Gippsland, Victoria**
 - LGA names – 100% of those named after people are men
 - Seven parks and reserves named after women – less than 1%
 - Korumburra and District streets and roads – 142 total – 41% men and 2% after women.
 - Bass Coast Council are the only LGA that have undertaken a formal process to audit all place names. They found that:
 - Localities – 60 total - 0 named after women and 26% after men
 - Street/roads – 1521 total – 12% after men and 6% after women
 - Features – 111 total – 37% after men and 7% after women.
 - [Case study: Undertaking a gender impact assessment on place naming | Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector \(genderequalitycommission.vic.gov.au\)](http://genderequalitycommission.vic.gov.au)
- **Other**
 - In 2013, ABC Gold Coast Breakfast program presented 37 stories behind the names of parks, carparks, streets, suburbs, crossings, lookouts, stands, etc. 26 or 70% were named after men and 5 or 13.5% were named after women
[What's in a name? - ABC \(none\) - Australian Broadcasting Corporation](#)

Put Her Name on It Campaign successes to date:

- Geographic Names Victoria have updated the Naming for Places rules in Victoria with gender equality now embedded in the rules as well as throughout the review documents and consultation process through the advertising images, key messages, workshops, etc. The rules establish a foundation for change and make it possible for

place naming equality in Vic. GNV have also created an avenue to collect gendered disaggregated data as a future baseline.

- Gender Victoria the peak body for women's health services and gender equality have partnered with Women in Gippsland to elevate the *Put Her Name on It* campaign because they see the merit and importance of women taking up equal space in our public realm. They built this initiative into their 2021-24 state government budget bid to resource the campaign adequately to achieve statewide outcomes. As a result:
 - The above mentioned \$1M Women's Public Art Fund was created.
 - Geographic Names Victoria have allocated financial resources to assist in the promotion of place name equality and projects to map and bring to life existing women's commemorations with tourism and economic development outcomes proposed.
 - Victorian Government Gender Equality Action Plan has recognised the underrepresentation of women in public place commemoration as a key issue.

Women in Gippsland and the Put Her Name on It Campaign call on the ACT Government to:

- 👉 Audit place names/recognition for gender and diversity
- 👉 Acknowledge the gender gap
- 👉 Amend place name policy/guidelines
- 👉 Accumulate a list of notable local women and non binary people
- 👉 Act to create gender balance and diversity in public place names/recognition (address the historic gap)

With a planned, resourced and monitored process, public place equality can have a positive, meaningful, practical and measurable contribution on gender equality by raising the profile of women, their roles and achievements from days gone by.

The alarming underrepresentation of public place recognition is a clear example of gender inequality and sends the dangerous message that women and their contributions are not as important as men.

We seek to increase the representation and recognition of women in public places as a way to address systemic gender inequality. The Assembly and the ACT Government can help 'make the invisible, visible' and improve gender equality.

Please feel free to contact me at your convenience to discuss the above.

Yours Sincerely,

Kerry Wilson | Member, Women in Gippsland

