



2021-25

STRATEGIC PLAN



SOUTH-EAST MONASH LEGAL SERVICE

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF

TRADITIONAL OWNER – SMLS acknowledges the Bunurong People and the Wurundjeri People, the traditional owners of the land where we work, and First Peoples language groups and communities across Victoria and Australia.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present. We celebrate the people, traditions, culture and strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and the fight for survival, justice and country that has taken place across Victoria and Australia. We thank the Traditional custodians for caring for Country for thousands of generations. SMLS recognises the ongoing impact of colonisation, dispossession and racism experienced by Aboriginal peoples. As a Community Legal Centre, we acknowledge the violence of Australian law and its ongoing role in processes of colonisation. We recognise that sovereignty was never ceded, and that this always was and always will be Aboriginal land.

P-PLAN

OUR STRATEGIC PLAN

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A fair and inclusive community where people can access the resources, networks and support they need to resolve legal issues and overcome barriers to social, cultural and economic inclusion and participation.

VISION



RESPECT

We build trust and feelings of safety and well-being in others by:

- Treating others the way we would like to be treated ourselves
- Acknowledging each person's human rights and dignity
- Having empathy for the lived experience of others and showing compassion
- Embracing diversity and different perspectives
- Encouraging each other's opinions and input
- Observing our organisation's policies and procedures
- Being accountable, honest, and taking responsibility for our decisions and actions.

COMMUNITY

We work together for the benefit of our clients, staff, volunteers and students by:

- Supporting each other
- Being committed to our work and our role within the sector
- Ensuring our service delivery is informed by local voices
- Working together with communities in our region to bringing about social justice.

EXCELLENCE

We seek to be our best and achieve the best possible outcomes by:

- Maintaining the highest professional standards
- Evaluating what we do and looking for ways to improve
- Keeping an eye on the future and thinking strategically
- Being curious and maintaining a problem-solving and innovative mind-set and
- Adapting and adjusting to meet client and community needs.

COURAGE

We act with integrity by:

- Living our values
- Being prepared to tackle complex and challenging problems and
- Taking a stand to support and defend human rights.

PURPOSE

*TO HELP RESOLVE PEOPLE'S LEGAL AND INTERCONNECTED ISSUES
AND ENSURE THAT LAWS AND LEGAL PROCESSES ARE FAIR.*

OB- JEC- TIVES

1. INTEGRATED, PERSON-CENTRED SERVICES

Integrated and networked services that are easy to find and use.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY - INTEGRATED SERVICES

- Develop (through co-design) and implement an integrated services model that includes:
 - A discrete suite of core services including multidisciplinary advice, case-work, representation, outreach, and community development
 - Client, community, staff, and volunteer feedback
 - Collaboration with partner organisations to better meet client needs
 - The ability to measure impact and
- Appropriate modes of delivery (virtual or face-to-face) via technology and a network of hubs/centres. Broaden the range of clinical placements (not just law, but other streams) to support the model
- Increase the pool of volunteers from across the south-east region in partnership with others to support the model.

2. EMPOWERED COMMUNITIES

Education and development programs that assist people to understand the law and legal processes and navigate the legal system.

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STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- Ensuring that we are meeting the needs of our expanding region
- Build the recognition and reputation of SMLS as a critical community education provider
- Ensuring that our strategies are contemporary, modern and community focused
- Building on our existing capabilities to be proactive in the provision of community development initiatives.

3. FAIRER LAWS AND BETTER LEGAL PROCESSES

Research and advocacy for fairer laws and processes.

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STRATEGIC PRIORITY - ADVOCACY AND RESEARCH

- Identify opportunities for SMLS to engage with national and state level reforms in areas such as mental health, family violence, sexual assault, employment law, and drug use.
- Identify and initiate priority advocacy campaigns
- Establish research and pro bono partnerships with relevant organisations to:
 - Improve data collection, analysis and use
 - Establish local unmet legal need/demand
 - Shape the nature of service delivery and how we use technology.
- Build staff awareness and understanding of the reasons for and contribute to systemic advocacy.

4. PRACTITIONERS OF THE FUTURE

Educating and developing the practitioners of the future, committed to social justice and integrated service delivery.

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STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- Delivering an educational experience of excellence
- Build our capacity to broaden the Clinical Placement Programs.

5. ORGANISATION OF CHOICE

An organisation of choice for employees, volunteers, students, funders, partners and clients.

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STRATEGIC PRIORITIES - PERFORMANCE AND IMPACT

- Uplift reporting and performance management capabilities
- #### SMLS Brand
- Invigorate our identity at a critical turning point
 - Engaged and cohesive team
 - Future proofed systems, processes, and technology
 - Provider and Partner of choice.



SOUTH-EAST MONASH LEGAL SERVICE INC.

STRONG FOUNDATIONS, NEW DIRECTION

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