

Workplaces for Older Women

Combating ageism and promoting gender equality
for older women in the workplace

Interviewee Information Sheet and Consent form

Background

Older women have the right to safe, respectful and equitable workplaces.¹ However, research shows HR professionals are reluctant to hire older people,² and 20% of older people experience age discrimination in the workplace,³ - with older women more likely to experience this form of ageism.⁴

The importance of addressing these issues is emphasised in data showing older women are the lowest income earning family group⁵ - 48% of women 60+ have no superannuation⁶ and women with super have 25% less than men.⁷ These experiences exist in the context of a lifetime of gender inequalities⁸ and the gendered experience of ageism.⁹

The *Workplaces for Older Women* project aims to help combat age-based discrimination for older women in the workplace. The project will be inclusive of marginalised groups of older women who experience other forms of discrimination (such as racism, ableism, transphobia etc) alongside age-based discrimination.

The specific aims of the project are to help combat the gendered ageism experienced by older women in the workplace by:

- Supporting older women to identify and consolidate their strengths
- Raising awareness of gender ageism and inequalities for older women
- Raising awareness of the strategies to promote equality for older women.

The project is led by Celebrate Ageing Ltd – and is supported by the Victorian Government Department of Families, Fairness and Housing as part of their Gender Equality Action Plan.

¹ <https://www.dffh.vic.gov.au/publications/gender-equality-action-plan-2022-2025>

² <https://www.ahri.com.au/wp-content/uploads/Older-Younger-Workers-Report-2025-FINAL.pdf>

³ <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/older-people/older-australians/contents/justice-and-safety>

⁴ <https://humanrights.gov.au/about-us/media-centre/speeches/speeches/safety-and-security-older-women>

⁵ https://melbourneinstitute.unimelb.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/2437426/HILDA-SR-med-res.pdf

⁶ <https://smcaustralia.com/report-older-womens-economic-security-in-retirement/>

⁷ as above

⁸ <https://www.emboldenfestival.com/uploads/1/5/3/9/15399992/lifestages.pdf>

⁹ <https://www.emboldenfestival.com/uploads/1/5/3/9/15399992/genderinselements.pdf>

Who can participate in interviews

We would like to interview eight women aged 60+ who are living in Victoria and are willing to share their experiences of age-related discrimination in the workplace. We would value the opportunity to hear from women who experience other forms of discrimination (e.g.: racism, ableism, transphobia) alongside age-based discrimination.

Project team

The project is being coordinated by Dr Catherine Barrett, CEO of Celebrate Ageing. Catherine is working with Rosemarie Draper OAM, a social worker with over 40 years' experience working with older people.

If you want more information about the project, please contact Catherine on director@celebrateageing.org or 0429 582 237

If you decide to participate

If you decide to participate, you will be asked to share your experiences of age related workplace discrimination. This will involve doing the following:

- Emailing Catherine to book a time for an interview
- Signing the consent form at the end of this document and return it to Catherine
- Participating in a confidential phone or zoom interview to describe your experiences of ageism and gender inequality in the workplace or recruitment, including the following:
 - the details of the age-related discrimination in your workplace
 - what you think motivated the discriminatory actions?
 - how did the ageism impact on you?
 - how did you respond?
 - what do you think needs to change?
- Reviewing interview notes that will be emailed to you – and make any changes, including to deidentify the story.

How your information will be used

The story you share will be used to inform education to help combat age related discrimination for older women in the workplace. The notes from your interview will be shared publicly (after you have deidentified them), including in a project report and an education module. The report will be disseminated through the networks and webpages of the project partners. They may also be shared with the media.

Confidentiality

The interviewer will ask you how your story can be edited to protect your identity. You will also be sent notes from the interview so that you can make any changes to protect your identity. Your signed consent form will be shared in a password protected folder hosted by Celebrate Ageing Ltd and will not be linked to your interview. Only the researchers who interview you will know your name.

Potential benefits

There may be no benefits from participating to you as an individual. However, by sharing your experiences you will help us to raise awareness of the age-related discrimination experienced by older women in the workplace. The information you share will be utilised to develop education and guidelines for organisations – to help combat this issue.

Potential adverse consequences

We don't anticipate any negative consequences from your participation. However, talking about experiences of discrimination can be difficult for some people. If you think sharing your experiences will be difficult, we invite you to only share what is not difficult, or to reconsider participation. In early 2026 we will share a confidential survey as an alternative to interviews.

If you do find the interview raises issues for you that are difficult, we invite you to reach out to for support. There are many free, confidential support services available by phone, text or online chat, including

- Lifeline: <https://www.lifeline.org.au/>
- BeyondBlue: <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/>

If you want to withdraw

Your participation is entirely voluntary and you have the right to withdraw from the project and to ask that your story is not used in the project. You will need to inform us within two weeks of the interview.

If you decide to withdraw, please notify Catherine Barrett by phone on 0429 582 237 or email on director@celebrateageing.org

What if I have any concerns or further questions?

If you have any questions about this project, you can contact Dr Catherine Barrett using the contact details below:

- Phone: 0429 582 237
- Email: director@celebrateageing.org

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Participant Consent Form

I (the participant) have read and understood the **participant information statement and consent form**, and I acknowledge the following:

I give Celebrate Ageing and the Victorian Government Department of Families, Fairness and Housing permission to use and publish my story in various locations, including a project report and on social media, webpages and media. I acknowledge my story will be used for educational purposes.

I authorise the reproduction, exhibit, broadcast, electronic storage and/or distribution of the story I submitted at the discretion of the project partners and waive any right to compensation I may have of any of the foregoing. I release the project partners for any loss or damage resulting from the publication or misuse of the portrait and description I provide.

Name of participant:

Signature:

Date:

Name of Project Facilitator:

Signature:

Date:

**Please sign this consent form and return it to Catherine Barrett
by email: director@celebrateageing.org**