



## The Biscuit Tin Project Facilitator's Kit

### About the #OldisBeautiful primary prevention project

Older women make valuable contributions to our community - as leaders, CEOs, academics, mothers, grandmothers, aunts, neighbours, colleagues and friends. In Australia, most volunteers are older women<sup>1</sup> and older women make up the largest group of unpaid carers.<sup>2</sup>

Despite their contributions, older women are often devalued and experience a particularly caustic form of ageism intertwined with sexism,<sup>3</sup> resulting in significant inequalities. This includes financial hardship, for example, older women are the lowest income earning family group,<sup>4</sup> 34% of single older women live in poverty,<sup>5</sup> 60% of older women leave paid work with no superannuation.<sup>6</sup>

Inequalities also include homelessness. Homelessness for older women increased 40% between 2011-2016,<sup>7</sup> with an estimated 240,000 women aged 55+ at risk of homelessness.<sup>8</sup>

These inequalities contribute to the violence and abuse experienced by older women. Global data show that 23% of women aged 60 years+ have experienced physical or intimate partner violence in their lifetime,<sup>9</sup> and an estimated 68 million older women (or 1 in 6), experience elder abuse.<sup>10</sup> Looking at Australian data, 28

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/wp-content/uploads/Volunteering-in-Australia-Research-Early-Insights-from-the-Volunteer-Perspective.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.carersaustralia.com.au/carers-need-more-mental-health-and-wellbeing-supports-this-national-carers-week-and-beyond/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://theconversation.com/from-cauldrons-to-cardigans-the-lurking-prejudices-behind-the-name-granny-238200>

<sup>4</sup> [https://melbourneinstitute.unimelb.edu.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0010/2437426/HILDA-SR-med-res.pdf](https://melbourneinstitute.unimelb.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/2437426/HILDA-SR-med-res.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> [https://melbourneinstitute.unimelb.edu.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0010/2437426/HILDA-SR-med-res.pdf](https://melbourneinstitute.unimelb.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/2437426/HILDA-SR-med-res.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> <https://officeforwomen.sa.gov.au/womens-policy/womens-employment-and-economic-status/superannuation>

<sup>7</sup> <https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/age-discrimination/publications/older-womens-risk-homelessness-background-paper-2019>

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.older tenants.org.au/sites/default/files/at\\_risk\\_final\\_report\\_web.pdf](https://www.older tenants.org.au/sites/default/files/at_risk_final_report_web.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> <https://iris.who.int/bitstream/handle/10665/376338/9789240090996-eng.pdf?sequence=1>

<sup>10</sup> <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29333977/>

women aged 55+ were identified as victims of family and domestic violence homicides and related offences in 2023, a doubling in a decade.<sup>11</sup>

There is a need to raise awareness of contributions and achievements of older women, to help build respect and combat the inequalities they experience. To address this need, Celebrate Ageing Ltd and The Older Women's Network NSW developed #TheBiscuitTin project<sup>12</sup> and Celebrate Ageing developed a Facilitator's Kit to enable licensing and replication by others.

The biscuit tin is an iconic symbol of nurturing across cultures and is not limited to women with children. The focus on biscuit tins celebrates the important role women play as carers and nurturers, as well as their other contributions. In consultation to develop the project, older women told us they wanted all their contributions to be recognised, including their role as nurturers and care givers.

### **Aims**

The aims of the project are to raise awareness of the inequalities experienced by older women and to promote equality and respect for older women.

### **Activities**

The Biscuit Tin Facilitator's Kit includes the resources needed to facilitate the following activities:

- Hosting a seminar for service providers: to understand inequalities for older women and a gender lens for primary prevention of ageism and elder abuse
- Documenting older women's stories: working with older women prior to the workshop to document their biscuit recipes as well as their contributions and achievements, and the ways they experience respect
- Facilitating a workshop for older women: exploring how older women are represented in popular culture, sharing and celebrating older women's contributions and strengths, identifying how respect is shown, identifying 'strong words' that help to empower older women by turning around ageist language, photographing older women with their biscuit tins
- Documenting a Recipes for Respect resource: a biscuit recipe book that includes portraits of older women and their stories about achievements, contributions and respect
- Hosting a community launch: engaging older women's families and the local community in celebrating older women's achievements – and learning about inequalities for older women and the importance of respect.

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<sup>11</sup> <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/crime-and-justice/recorded-crime-victims/latest-release#data-downloads>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.celebrateageing.com/TheBiscuitTin.html>

## Evaluation

The pilot workshops were led by Celebrate Ageing Ltd and supported by Elder Rights Australia and Whitehorse City Council. Evaluation findings include:

- Service provider seminar: 81% strongly agreed the seminar was relevant and had helped them to understand gender inequalities for older women; and 90% planned to change something in response to what they had learned
- Workshop for older women: average ratings of 6.7 for relevance and 5.8 for new knowledge and skills (on a scale of 1-7, with higher scores indicating greater relevance and learning). Additionally, 83% of participants said they would change something as a result of participating
- Community launch: 100% of evaluation participants reported learning something new.

## Kit Inclusions

The Facilitator's Kit includes all the resources needed to host #TheBiscuitTin project, including:

- Background: theory, project outline, examples from the pilot projects
- Artwork: logo for #TheBiscuitTin and artwork guidelines
- Recruitment: draft flyer, tips on recruitment
- Consent: information sheet and consent form
- Photographer agreement: briefing info and agreement
- Workshop guidelines: running sheet, tips, ppt or poster presentation
- Staff seminar: ppt or poster presentation
- Evaluation: why, how and what to evaluate - and evaluation forms
- Recipes for respect: how to document a resource for local community
- Launch: how to share your project with local community
- License: 12 month license (\$1400)

Resources are downloadable so they can be localised to your community. Please contact us for further information.

## License agreement

Celebrate Ageing develops kits for service providers and groups to help accelerate the pace of change. We charge a small licensing fee for use of the kits, to help fund the work we do. We don't have core funding to help us continue this important work, we ask that participating services/groups don't share the Kit.

## Duration

Two-hour workshop and photoshoot and documenting participants stories prior to the workshop

## Suitable for

Anyone who works with older women or wants to help build respect for older women

### Older women's Reviews

- *Appreciated meeting with such dynamic interesting women making a difference in the community*
- *The workshop was enlightening*
- *Great initiative, pleased to be involved*
- *Well constructed. Thoughtful (respectful!)*
- *As a 76 old single woman, I found the [workshop] a very safe and informative place to meet with other women and share our concerns*
- *This was a fantastic [workshop]. I hope we have more of them in the future*
- *I am so glad and happy that we have the opportunity to work, learn, debate, share, connect and discuss better ways of working together*
- *Most of my women friends 'don't like getting old' and don't really identify ageism when it occurs.....so it is nice to hear people's experiences of ageism and their understanding of this embedded cultural phenomenon*
- *I thought the [workshop] was fantastic and I learnt a lot from the session*
- *The [workshop] reinforced my own beliefs about gender inequalities in older women and the need for older women to unite and speak up.*

### Acknowledgements

Special thanks to Elder Rights Australia and Whitehorse City Council for supporting the project pilots.

### About Celebrate Ageing School

Celebrate Ageing Ltd is a charity established in 2013 to combat ageism and build respect for older people. The Celebrate Ageing School offers online activities, kits and courses that are evidence based, innovative, multimodal, practical, and coproduced with older people.

Education is available to support individual learners, groups and learning facilitators. A small fee to access the education enables us to continue our important work.

