



Theory of Change and Strategic Plan 2020–2025

### **Our Vision**

At Redfern Legal Centre (RLC), we strive for:

- Fair and equal access to justice
- A just and fair legal system
- Empowered individuals and strong communities.

### **Our Purpose**

Redfern Legal Centre promotes social justice by:

- Providing legal advice, legal services and education to people experiencing vulnerability in New South Wales, and to the groups who advocate for them, and
- Participating in activities that reduce inequalities and defects in laws, the legal system, and administrative and social practices that impact on people experiencing vulnerability.

### **Our Values**

- Equity and social justice
- Empowerment of individuals and communities to enjoy their rights
- Respect for clients, the communities we work within, and each other.

## **Our 2020–2025 Guiding Principles**

In all our work, we will be guided by the following principles:

- We will respect our clients, communities we work with, and each other
- We will positively impact people experiencing vulnerability through strategic service delivery
- We will ensure innovation and sustainability in our service delivery.

At Redfern Legal Centre, we measure and track our performance against outcomes to hold ourselves accountable for the impact we have on people and communities. Our 2020–2025 Strategic Plan is grounded on the belief that by achieving our goals, we will positively impact the people and communities we work with.

### **Cover artwork**



#### Justice For All, Sharon Smith, 2020, acrylic on canvas, 90cm x 61cm.

**Artist statement:** This painting for the Redfern Legal Centre (RLC) is about welcoming Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people into the community and giving them a safe place to access the RLC. The bigger circle in the middle of the painting represents a meeting place at the RLC and the feet are our people travelling into the community to use the free services that the RLC offers. The two outer circles are women's resting places, the circles with the branches are the roots of our community and people. I have used RLC a few times and I have found it to be a warm and friendly place so I hope when you look at the painting you will feel a warm and friendly place.

- Sharon Smith, Wiradjuri Artist

**About the artist:** Sharon Smith is a descendant of the Wiradjuri tribe of western New South Wales. Sharon's paintings thematically express her heritage and culture, and work as an affirmation of her identity. Born in Erskinville, Sharon currently resides in Waterloo and is a member of Boomalli Aboriginal Artists Cooperative. *Justice For All* was commissioned for RLC with funding support from City of Sydney.

### Our 2020-2025 Strategic Goals

In all our work, in 2020–2025, we will focus on:



#### Service operations

Strengthen our current service delivery and focus on addressing unmet legal need



#### Measurement and evaluation Measure and evaluate our services



### **Collaboration and partnerships** Pursue effective partnerships to better serve our clients and communities



#### Growth and sustainability

Continue to diversify income sources and prioritise the wellbeing of staff and volunteers



A Redfern Legal Centre staff and volunteers, October 2019.

# **Our Theory of Change**

#### At Redfern Legal Centre, we believe that:



#### Because ...

- There are gaps and flaws in the design of services, policies, and laws in the legal system that are failing people and communities
- People experience inequality and injustices, and
- Marginalised communities lack a voice.



#### We respond by ...

- Providing free legal services including legal advice and representation and referrals to provide holistic solutions
- Engaging in policy and law reform work to change the system, and
- Empowering and building capacity in the community and within the legal profession through legal education and providing an effective volunteer program.



#### Which results in ...

- Increased access to justice for people experiencing disadvantage
- Increased capacity in our community to understand and address legal issues
- Integrated and effective responses to the needs of people experiencing disadvantage
- Empowered and resilient individuals and communities
- Systemic injustices being addressed.

#### Ultimately this will lead to ...

- Equal access to justice
- A just and fair legal system
- Improved wellbeing for Individuals and communities.



Strategic planning with RLC staff and board

Volunteer Legal Assistants on RLC's Front Desk

# **Redfern Legal Centre's Theory of Change**

ssues	Participants	Activities	Organisation-wide outcomes	Impact
There are gaps and flaws in the design of services, policies and laws in the legal system that are failing people and communities	People experiencing vulnerability	Provision of legal services to our clients including:	People experiencing disadvantage	Equal access to justice
	People with disability	Legal advice, information and referrals	have increased access to justice	A just and fair legal system
People experience inequality and injustices	People experiencing or at risk of homelessness	Legal representation and casework	People have increased capacity to understand and address their legal issues	Improved wellbeing for individual and communities
Marginalised communities lack a voice in the system	People experiencing financial disadvantage	Holistic support, working closely with non-legal providers where required	Services work together so people experiencing disadvantage have their needs met holistically	
	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people	Leading reform and advocacy in the system including:		
	People experiencing family and	Building partnerships and coalitions	Systemic injustices are addressed	
	domestic violence	Media and campaign work	Empowered and resilient	1
	People who are culturally and linguistically diverse	Submissions	communities	
	International students	Strategic litigation and test cases		
	Communities, volunteers, other stakeholders/participants	Advising and consulting on law and policy reform		
		Engaging and building capacity in the community through:		
		Volunteer and professional training program		
		Community legal education		
		Partnerships and community outreach		
		Legal publications and information		

Media engagement

## Credit, Debt and Consumer Law Practice

Activities	Short-term outcomes	Long-term outcomes	Measurement	Impact
<ul> <li>The provision of advice and services to our clients including:</li> <li>Legal advice</li> <li>Information</li> <li>Referrals</li> <li>Representation</li> <li>Holistic support, working closely with non-legal providers where required</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>People are less financially stressed</li> <li>People feel more in control of their finances</li> <li>People feel more confident navigating the legal and financial system</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Reduction in homelessness and poverty</li> <li>Families and children are more financially secure</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Case outcomes</li> <li>Stakeholder survey</li> <li>Client survey</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Improved access to justice</li> <li>Improved economic security</li> </ul>
Engaging and building capacity in the community through: • Community legal education (CLE) • Referrals • Media engagement	<ul> <li>Increased capacity in the sector to identify credit, debt and consumer law problems and make appropriate referrals</li> <li>Increased public awareness of consumer rights issues</li> </ul>	Stronger working relationships in the community sector	<ul> <li>Stakeholder survey</li> <li>Media monitoring</li> <li>Social media engagement</li> </ul>	Greater capacity within the community services sector to respond to credit, debt and consumer law problems
Leading reform through: <ul> <li>Work on law and policy reform</li> <li>Strategic litigation and test cases</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Increased sharing of knowledge and expertise to industry and government about unfair laws and practices</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Decision-makers improve laws, policies and practices</li> </ul>	Case studies	• Fairer and more accountable financial services sector and stronger consumer rights, in particular for people experiencing vulnerability

### **Financial Abuse Service NSW**

Activities	Short-term outcomes	Long-term outcomes	Measurement	Impact
<ul> <li>The provision of advice and services for our clients including:</li> <li>Legal advice</li> <li>Information</li> <li>Referrals</li> <li>Representation</li> <li>Holistic support, working closely with non-legal providers where required</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>People are less financially stressed</li> <li>People feel more able to leave and remain out of an abusive relationship</li> <li>People feel safer and more in control of their finances</li> <li>People feel more confident navigating the legal and financial system</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Reduction in homelessness and poverty</li> <li>People are more financially empowered</li> <li>People are more financially independent</li> <li>Families and children are safer and more financially secure</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Case outcomes</li> <li>Client survey</li> <li>Stakeholder survey</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Improved access to justice for people experiencing financial abuse</li> </ul>
<ul> <li>Engaging and building capacity in the community through:</li> <li>A central location for resources and information</li> <li>Community legal education (CLE)</li> <li>Seminars</li> <li>Referrals</li> <li>Media engagement</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Increased community awareness about financial abuse</li> <li>Increased knowledge and understanding about financial abuse within the financial services industry, government and legal/ non-legal support organisations</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Increased capacity in the sector to identify financial abuse and make appropriate referrals</li> <li>Stronger working relationships and recognition of financial abuse</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Stakeholder survey</li> <li>Media monitoring</li> <li>Social media engagement</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Greater capacity within the community services sector to prevent and respond to financial abuse</li> </ul>
<ul> <li>Leading reform by:</li> <li>Establishing and running an Economic Abuse Reference Group (EARG) in NSW to work on law and policy reform.</li> <li>Law reform and policy initiatives and test cases for RLC, focusing on issues residual to the work of the EARG</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Stronger unified voice in NSW from community services working in financial abuse</li> <li>Increased sharing of knowledge and expertise to industry and government to improve responses to financial abuse</li> </ul>	• Decision makers address injustices stemming from financial abuse and improve policies to address it	<ul> <li>Stakeholder survey</li> <li>Case studies</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Financial abuse is recognised and addressed by government and industry</li> <li>Improved outcomes for people affected by financial abuse</li> <li>Prevention</li> <li>Awareness</li> </ul>

# Health Justice Partnership

Activities	Short-term outcomes	Long-term outcomes	Measurement	Impact
The provision of legal and non-legal services to health care consumers experiencing vulnerability, with a priority focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Services include: • Legal advice • Information • Referrals • Non-legal support • Legal tasks • Representation • Coordinated care and support for people with complex needs	<ul> <li>Greater access to legal and health services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and people with complex needs</li> <li>People better understand Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) child protection processes</li> <li>People in the health system experiencing vulnerability are better informed about legal rights and options and are empowered to seek help</li> <li>Access to justice is achieved for people who would otherwise not seek legal help</li> <li>People feel supported to access safe and culturally appropriate legal and non-legal support</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Improved health and wellbeing</li> <li>Better self-health management</li> <li>Families units are able to stay together</li> <li>Health harming legal issues are addressed: child protection, credit/ debt issues, reparations, housing and employment issues, domestic violence and family law disputes</li> <li>Increased access to justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the healthcare system</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Case outcomes</li> <li>Client survey</li> <li>Stakeholder survey</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Greater access to justice and improved management of health issues</li> <li>Reduced number of children, in particular Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, removed or separated from their families</li> <li>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and people with complex needs experience improved health and wellbeing</li> </ul>
<ul><li>Engaging and building capacity in the community through:</li><li>Community legal education (CLE)</li><li>Partnerships and community outreach</li></ul>	<ul> <li>Improved capability to identify and address health harming legal needs</li> <li>Shared multidisciplinary knowledge between health and legal professionals</li> <li>Increased capacity and scope for collaboration between legal and health sectors</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>More effective service response to intersectional/complex legal and health issues</li> <li>Fewer preventable legal and health issues</li> </ul>	Stakeholder survey	• Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and other health consumers with complex needs experience improved health and wellbeing
Leading reform through: • Advocacy • Submissions • Steering committees • Roundtables	• Benefits of HJP model and systemic injustices are brought to the attention of decision-makers	<ul> <li>Governments recognise and embed innovative health/legal responses to address disadvantage</li> <li>Laws/policies and procedures are changed to reduce inequalities</li> <li>Cost savings to health and justice system</li> <li>HJP models increase</li> </ul>	<ul><li>Stakeholder survey</li><li>Case studies</li></ul>	<ul> <li>A just and fair child protection system</li> <li>Improved health outcomes and increased access to the legal system for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and health care consumers experiencing vulnerability</li> </ul>

### International Students Service NSW

Activities	Short-term outcomes	Long-term outcomes	Measurement	Impact
<ul> <li>The provision of advice and services to our clients including:</li> <li>Legal advice</li> <li>Information</li> <li>Referrals</li> <li>Holistic support, working closely with non-legal providers where required</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>International students have a greater understanding of their legal rights, options and processes</li> <li>International students have reduced anxiety and stress</li> <li>Legal issues are resolved (housing, employment and other urgent legal matters)</li> <li>International students are empowered to exercise their rights and seek help</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>International students' rights are protected</li> <li>Exploitation of international students decreases</li> <li>International students can access secure accommodation and better living conditions</li> <li>International students' financial situation improves</li> <li>International students have stable employment and fair wages</li> <li>Students' safety, wellbeing and mental health is enhanced</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Student survey/follow-up survey</li> <li>Case outcomes</li> <li>Stakeholder survey</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>International students experience Australia as a safe and desirable place to study</li> <li>Secure, diverse and cohesive communities</li> <li>Equal access to justice</li> <li>Improved wellbeing</li> </ul>
<ul> <li>Engaging and building capacity in the community through:</li> <li>Community legal education (CLE)</li> <li>Partnerships and community outreach</li> <li>Production of resources</li> <li>Media engagement</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>International students and support workers are better educated about supports and legal remedies</li> <li>Increased collaboration between services</li> <li>Greater awareness of systemic injustices experienced by international students</li> <li>Professionals, volunteers and organisations are better equipped to deliver services to international students</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Education providers improve support strategies for students</li> <li>Services work together so international students have their needs met holistically</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Stakeholder survey</li> <li>Media monitoring</li> <li>Social media engagement</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Secure, diverse and cohesive communities</li> <li>Students stay in Australia to complete their studies</li> </ul>
Leading reform through: • Submissions • Strategic litigation • Roundtables • Media and campaign work • Advocacy and law reform • Test cases	• Decision-makers have increased information and understanding about systemic injustices experienced by international students	<ul> <li>Laws, policies and procedures are changed to reduce inequalities and injustices experienced by international students</li> <li>Reduction in racial vilification and violence</li> <li>Reduced visa cancellations</li> <li>More inclusive practice by landlords and employers</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Stakeholder survey</li> <li>Case studies</li> </ul>	• A just and fair legal system for international students

# **Employment Law Practice**

Activities	Short-term outcomes	Long-term outcomes	Measurement	Impact
<ul> <li>The provision of advice and services to our clients including:</li> <li>Legal advice</li> <li>Information</li> <li>Referrals</li> <li>Representation</li> <li>Holistic support, working closely with non-legal providers where required</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Workers know their rights</li> <li>Workers are empowered to pursue unpaid wages and entitlements and enforce their workplace rights</li> <li>Matters involving workplace harassment, discrimination, unfair dismissal or underpayment are resolved</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Workers have reduced stress and anxiety and improved wellbeing</li> <li>A more productive and harmonious workforce</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Case outcomes</li> <li>Client survey</li> <li>Stakeholder survey</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>A safe and productive workplace, and a secure workforce</li> <li>Equal participation in the workplace, and equal access to justice for all workers</li> </ul>
Engaging and building capacity in the community through: • Community Legal Education (CLE) • Media engagement • Production of resources • Test cases	<ul> <li>Increased community awareness and capacity to act in relation to workplace rights</li> <li>Professionals, volunteers and organisations are better equipped to deliver employment advice and support to the community</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Employees demand better protections</li> <li>Communities are more economically independent and stable</li> <li>Services work together so employees have their needs met holistically</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Stakeholder survey</li> <li>Media monitoring</li> <li>Social media engagement</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Empowered and resilient communities</li> <li>More inclusive workplaces and society</li> </ul>
Leading reform through: • Submissions • Strategic litigation • Roundtables • Media and campaign work • Advocacy and law reform • Test cases • Employment network meetings	<ul> <li>Employers and corporations are better educated in relation to workplace laws</li> <li>Unfair laws, processes and practices are brought to the attention of government</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Improved legal processes and better workplace policy and practices</li> <li>Employers and corporations are more accountable for compliance to workplace laws</li> </ul>	<ul><li>Stakeholder survey</li><li>Case studies</li></ul>	Just and fair employment laws and practices

# Police Accountability Practice NSW

Activities	Short-term outcomes	Long-term outcomes	Measurement	Impact
<ul> <li>The provision of advice and services to our clients including:</li> <li>Legal advice</li> <li>Information</li> <li>Casework</li> <li>Referrals</li> <li>Assistance with GIPA applications</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>People are more informed about police powers</li> <li>People feel less stressed and better equipped to address police misconduct</li> <li>People have their complaints about police resolved</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>People have reduced stress and anxiety, and increased understanding of police powers and their legal rights</li> </ul>	<ul><li>Case outcomes</li><li>Client survey</li><li>Stakeholder survey</li></ul>	<ul> <li>Equal access to justice</li> <li>Individuals, communities and the legal profession are empowered with tools to hold police to account</li> </ul>
Engaging and building capacity in the community through: • Community legal education (CLE) • Production of resources • Media and campaign work • Strategic litigation	<ul> <li>Community workers and the general public are better educated about police powers and their legal rights</li> <li>Individuals, communities and the legal profession are better informed about the police complaints process and civil claims</li> <li>There is a greater awareness about systemic injustices in policing</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Increased community interest in transparent and fair policing</li> <li>Improved capability of legal and community sectors to respond to unjust and unlawful policing</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Stakeholder survey</li> <li>Media monitoring</li> <li>Social media engagement</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>More cohesive and safer communities</li> <li>More transparent and accountable policing</li> <li>More empowered and resilient communities</li> </ul>
Leading reform through: • Submissions • Strategic litigation • Roundtables • Media and campaign work • Advocacy and law reform • Test cases	<ul> <li>Improved data collection and release by police about the use of police powers</li> <li>Government has increased understanding about systemic injustices in policing</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Law, policies and complaints mechanisms are changed to reduce injustices in policing</li> <li>Policing practices are improved</li> <li>Improved relationships between communities and police</li> </ul>	<ul><li>Stakeholder survey</li><li>Case studies</li></ul>	<ul> <li>A just and fair and policing system</li> <li>More transparent and accountable policing</li> <li>Reduction in the disproportionate use of police powers against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and other culturally and linguistically diverse communities, children and young people</li> </ul>

# Inner Sydney Tenants' Advice and Advocacy Service (ISTAAS)

Activities	Short-term outcomes	Long-term outcomes	Measurement	Impact
<ul> <li>The provision of advice and services to our clients including:</li> <li>Legal advice</li> <li>Information</li> <li>Legal tasks to assist in selfadvocacy or self-representation</li> <li>Client advocacy</li> <li>Representation</li> <li>Holistic support, working closely with non-legal providers where required</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>People's housing issues are resolved</li> <li>People have increased capacity to understand and address legal issues</li> <li>People feel less stressed and anxious about housing issues</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>More people have access to secure housing and reasonable living conditions</li> <li>Renters have increased awareness of available supports and are empowered with tools to self-advocate</li> <li>Increased access to justice for renters experiencing vulnerability</li> <li>Fewer housing issues escalate into complex and critical situations including homelessness</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Case outcomes</li> <li>Client survey</li> <li>Stakeholder survey</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Homelessness is reduced</li> <li>Supporting diverse and stable communities</li> <li>Access to justice</li> <li>Improved wellbeing for renters</li> <li>Reduced power imbalance between landlords and renters</li> </ul>
<ul> <li>Engaging and building capacity in the community through:</li> <li>Capacity building sessions</li> <li>Publications and other resources</li> <li>Partnerships and community outreach</li> <li>Media and campaign work</li> <li>Community Legal Education (CLE)</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Community is better informed about renters' rights and housing issues</li> <li>Community support providers are better equipped to provide support on housing issues</li> <li>Building community support networks</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Services work together so renters experiencing disadvantage get the help they need</li> <li>Improved health for individuals and communities</li> <li>Strong, effective partnerships with communities, and support organisations</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Stakeholder survey</li> <li>Media monitoring</li> <li>Social media engagement</li> </ul>	• The community has capacity to support renters, people experiencing homelessness, and people at risk of homelessness
<ul> <li>Leading reform through:</li> <li>Direct advocacy, advising and consulting on policy and law reform</li> <li>Production of legal publications/ submissions</li> <li>Media and campaign work</li> <li>Direct engagement with social housing providers</li> <li>Systemic advocacy</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Government and industry take steps to improve outcomes for renters and people experiencing homelessness</li> <li>Laws, policies and procedures are improved to better support renters and people experiencing homelessness</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Government and industry prioritise safe, stable and affordable housing</li> <li>Government and industry address the imbalance between renters and landlords</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Stakeholder survey</li> <li>Court/Tribunal decisions that improve the law</li> <li>Case studies</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>A just and fair legal system</li> <li>All renters have strong and enforceable rights</li> <li>Renters have safe and stable homes</li> <li>Safe, accessible and affordable social housing</li> <li>Homelessness is reduced</li> </ul>



Left to right from top left: Launching RLC's Financial Abuse Service NSW, December 2019; Celebrating Human Rights Day, December 2019; International students testing out *My Legal Mate*, October 2019; Accolades for a tenants' advocate; RLC's employment solicitor presents at the National CLCs Conference, August 2019; *Rethinking Strip Searches in NSW* report launch, August 2019; Uncle Brendan welcomes guests at an RLC fundraiser, March 2020; RLC's HJP Pod Project provided intensive legal support and identified law reform and advocacy opportunities to support First Nations young people, July 2019; members of RLC's Young Professionals Committee; Staff and students of RLC's UNSW Police Powers Clinic, September 2019; RLC's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Access Worker with Wiradjuri artist, Sharon Smith, September 2020; and Launching *My Legal Mate* on campus at Macquarie University, October 2019. Image courtesy Macquarie University.



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