



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



▲ 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**

Redictif Legal Senties Theory of Change

There are gaps and flaws in the design of services, policies and laws in the legal system that are failing people and communities

Issues

People experience inequality and injustices

Marginalised communities lack a voice in the system

People experiencing vulnerability

**Participants** 

People with disability

People experiencing or at risk of homelessness

People experiencing financial disadvantage

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

People experiencing family and domestic violence

People who are culturally and linguistically diverse

International students

Communities, volunteers, other stakeholders/participants

Provision of legal services to our clients including:

**Activities** 

Legal advice, information and referrals

Legal representation and casework

Holistic support, working closely with non-legal providers where required

Leading reform and advocacy in the system including:

Building partnerships and coalitions

Media and campaign work

Submissions

Strategic litigation and test cases

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

People experiencing disadvantage have increased access to justice

**Organisation-wide outcomes** 

People have increased capacity to understand and address their legal issues

Services work together so people experiencing disadvantage have their needs met holistically

Systemic injustices are addressed

Empowered and resilient communities

Equal access to justice

**Impact** 

A just and fair legal system

Improved wellbeing for individuals and communities

# **Credit, Debt and Consumer Law Practice**

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

# **Financial Abuse Service NSW**

# Financiai Abuse Service NSW

The provision of advice and services for our clients including:

- Legal advice
- Information
- Referrals

**Activities** 

- Representation
- Holistic support, working closely with non-legal providers where required

Engaging and building capacity in the community through:

- A central location for resources and information
- Community legal education (CLE)
- Seminars
- Referrals
- Media engagement

Leading reform by:

- Establishing and running an Economic Abuse Reference Group (EARG) in NSW to work on law and policy reform.
- Law reform and policy initiatives and test cases for RLC, focusing on issues residual to the work of the EARG

**Short-term outcomes** 

- People are less financially stressed
- People feel more able to leave and remain out of an abusive relationship
- People feel safer and more in control of their finances
- People feel more confident navigating the legal and financial system
- Increased community awareness about financial abuse
- Increased knowledge and understanding about financial abuse within the financial services industry, government and legal/ non-legal support organisations
- Stronger unified voice in NSW from community services working in financial abuse
- Increased sharing of knowledge and expertise to industry and government to improve responses to financial abuse

- Reduction in homelessness and
- People are more financially empowered

poverty

**Long-term outcomes** 

- People are more financially independent
- Families and children are safer and more financially secure
- Increased capacity in the sector to identify financial abuse and make appropriate referrals
- Stronger working relationships and recognition of financial abuse
- Decision makers address injustices stemming from financial abuse and improve policies to address it

Case outcomes

Measurement

- Client survey
- Stakeholder survey

Stakeholder survey

Media monitoring

Social media engagement

 Improved access to justice for people experiencing financial abuse

**Impact** 

 Greater capacity within the community services sector to prevent and respond to financial abuse

- Stakeholder survey
- Case studies

- Financial abuse is recognised and addressed by government and industry
- Improved outcomes for people affected by financial abuse
- Prevention
- Awareness

# **Health Justice Partnership**

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

**Activities** 

- Non-legal support
- Legal tasks
- Representation
- Coordinated care and support for people with complex needs

#### Short-term outcomes

- Greater access to legal and health services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and people with complex needs
- People better understand **Department of Communities** and Justice (DCJ) child protection processes
- People in the health system experiencing vulnerability are better informed about legal rights and options and are empowered to seek help
- Access to justice is achieved for people who would otherwise not seek legal help
- People feel supported to access safe and culturally appropriate legal and non-legal support

### **Long-term outcomes**

- Improved health and wellbeing · Better self-health management
- Families units are able to stay together
- Health harming legal issues are addressed: child protection, credit/ debt issues, reparations, housing and employment issues, domestic violence and family law disputes
- Increased access to justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the healthcare system

#### Measurement

- Case outcomes
- Client survey
- Stakeholder survey

# **Impact**

- Greater access to justice and improved management of health issues
- Reduced number of children, in particular Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, removed or separated from their families
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and people with complex needs experience improved health and wellbeing

### Engaging and building capacity in the community through:

- Community legal education (CLE)
- Partnerships and community outreach
- Improved capability to identify and address health harming legal needs
- Shared multidisciplinary knowledge between health and legal professionals
- Increased capacity and scope for collaboration between legal and health sectors
- More effective service response to intersectional/complex legal and health issues
- · Fewer preventable legal and health issues
- 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
- Governments recognise and embed innovative health/legal responses to address disadvantage
- Laws/policies and procedures are changed to reduce inequalities
- Cost savings to health and justice system
- HJP models increase

- Stakeholder survey
- Case studies

- · A just and fair child protection system
- Improved health outcomes and increased access to the legal system for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and health care consumers experiencing vulnerability

# **International Students Service NSW**

Test cases

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

 Reduced visa cancellations
 More inclusive practice by landlords and employers

# **Employment Law Practice**

Advocacy and law reform

• Employment network meetings

Test cases

attention of government

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

to workplace laws

# **Police Accountability Practice NSW**

The provision of advice and services to our clients including:

Legal advice

**Activities** 

- Information
- Casework
- Referrals
- Assistance with GIPA applications

Engaging and building capacity in the community through:

**Short-term outcomes** 

People feel less stressed and

People have their complaints

about police resolved

police powers

misconduct

People are more informed about

better equipped to address police

**Long-term outcomes** 

and their legal rights

People have reduced stress

and anxiety, and increased

understanding of police powers

Measurement

**Impact** 

- Case outcomes
  - Client survey
  - Stakeholder survey

- Equal access to justice
- Individuals, communities and the legal profession are empowered with tools to hold police to account

- Community legal education (CLE)
- Production of resources
- Media and campaign work
- Strategic litigation

Community workers and the general public are better educated about police powers and their legal rights

- Individuals, communities and the legal profession are better informed about the police complaints process and civil claims
- There is a greater awareness about systemic injustices in policing

- Increased community interest in transparent and fair policing
- Improved capability of legal and community sectors to respond to unjust and unlawful policing
- Stakeholder survey
- Media monitoring
- Social media engagement
- · More cohesive and safer communities
- More transparent and accountable policing
- More empowered and resilient communities

Leading reform through:

- Submissions
- Strategic litigation
- Roundtables
- Media and campaign work
- Advocacy and law reform
- Test cases

- Improved data collection and release by police about the use of police powers
- Government has increased understanding about systemic injustices in policing
- Law, policies and complaints mechanisms are changed to reduce injustices in policing
- · Policing practices are improved
- Improved relationships between communities and police
- Stakeholder survey
- Case studies

- A just and fair and policing system
- More transparent and accountable policing
- 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

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

#### **Activities**

### The provision of advice and services to our clients including:

- Legal advice
- Information
- · Legal tasks to assist in selfadvocacy or self-representation
- Client advocacy
- Representation
- Holistic support, working closely with non-legal providers where required

# Engaging and building capacity in

- Publications and other resources
- Partnerships and community outreach
- Community Legal Education (CLE)

- Direct advocacy, advising and
- Production of legal publications/ submissions
- housing providers
- Systemic advocacy

#### **Short-term outcomes**

#### People's housing issues are resolved

- People have increased capacity to understand and address legal issues
- People feel less stressed and anxious about housing issues

#### **Long-term outcomes**

- More people have access to secure housing and reasonable living conditions
- Renters have increased awareness of available supports and are empowered with tools to selfadvocate
- Increased access to justice for renters experiencing vulnerability
- Fewer housing issues escalate into complex and critical situations including homelessness

#### Measurement

- Case outcomes
- Client survey
- Stakeholder survey

### **Impact**

- Homelessness is reduced
- Supporting diverse and stable communities
- Access to justice
- Improved wellbeing for renters
- Reduced power imbalance between landlords and renters

# the community through:

- · Capacity building sessions
- Media and campaign work
- Community is better informed about renters' rights and housing issues
- Community support providers are better equipped to provide support on housing issues
- Building community support networks
- Services work together so renters experiencing disadvantage get the help they need
- Improved health for individuals and communities
- Strong, effective partnerships with communities, and support organisations

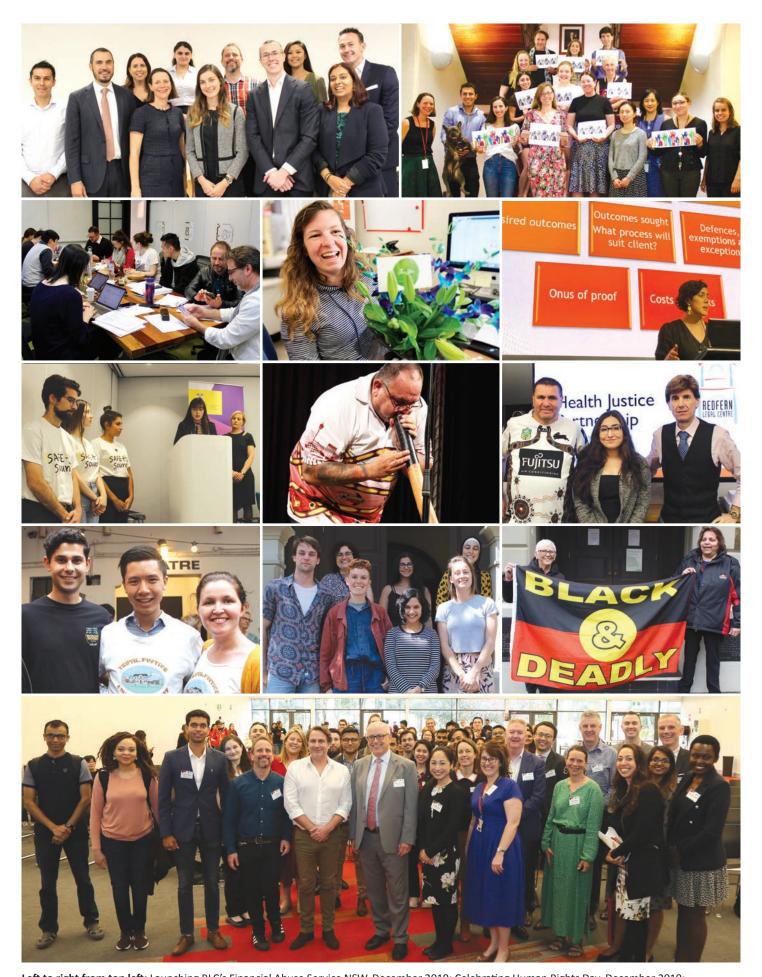
- Stakeholder survey
- Media monitoring
- Social media engagement
- The community has capacity to support renters, people experiencing homelessness, and people at risk of homelessness

#### Leading reform through:

- consulting on policy and law reform
- Media and campaign work
- · Direct engagement with social

- Government and industry take steps to improve outcomes for renters and people experiencing homelessness
- Laws, policies and procedures are improved to better support renters and people experiencing homelessness
- Government and industry prioritise safe, stable and affordable housing
- Government and industry address the imbalance between renters and landlords
- Stakeholder survey
- Court/Tribunal decisions that improve the law
- Case studies

- A just and fair legal system
- · All renters have strong and enforceable rights
- Renters have safe and stable homes
- Safe, accessible and affordable social housing
- Homelessness is reduced



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.



73 Pitt Street, Redfern NSW 2016
Legal enquiries: rlc.org.au/contact or phone: (02) 9698 7277
www.rlc.org.au