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Minister for Local Government



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Minister for Women
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Media Release

Empowering women to run for council

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With voters heading to the polls for local government elections in September, the NSW Government is providing support to encourage more women to consider running for their local council.

The Office of Local Government and Women NSW have jointly committed \$160,000 in funding for two women's organisations to host a series of candidate information workshops targeted at underrepresented groups of women.

The Australian Local Government Women's Association (ALGWA) NSW Branch and Women for Election will deliver workshops covering leadership skills, how to run a successful campaign as well as the roles and responsibilities of elected councillors.

Aimed at empowering women with the knowledge to run as candidates, these workshops will be delivered by women with lived experience as political candidates, as well as facilitators who have served or worked in local government.

They will be held at multiple locations in Sydney and in regional and rural areas to ensure women around NSW have access to these valuable training opportunities.

These will include dedicated workshops run by First Nations trainers to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women to run for local government.

Providing funding for these organisations is part of a wider campaign by the Office of Local Government to encourage greater diversity in candidate representation at the upcoming elections.

The most recent Candidate and Councillor Diversity Report shows the number of female councillors rose from 31.2 per cent to 39 per cent at the 2021 Local Government elections.

The report also shows 3.9 per cent of councillors were Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, 10.1 per cent of councillors were linguistically diverse and 4.2 per cent of councillors were aged 18-29.

The Office of Local Government's Candidate and Councillor Diversity Report can be viewed here: <https://www.olg.nsw.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Candidate-and-Councillor-Diversity-Report-2021-22-.pdf>

Quotes attributable to Minister for Local Government Ron Hoenig:

"One of the real strengths of our state is the diversity of our communities, and we need to see this diversity better reflected in the make-up of our councils.

"A lack of confidence or information about what it means to be a councillor can hold a lot of people back from putting their hand up, especially women.

“We hope with this support, these workshops can encourage more women and people from diverse backgrounds to take the plunge and represent their communities in the elections this September.”

Quotes attributable to Minister for Women Jodie Harrison:

“By increasing the number of women serving in local government, councils will better reflect the communities they represent.

“These workshops provide women with pathways to grow their careers in politics. We want to see more women elected to bring NSW closer to its goal of gender parity on councils and inspire the next generation of women in politics.

“Speaking from experience, being a councillor is an incredibly rewarding job, so I encourage women across NSW to get involved and consider running for election in September.”

Quotes attributable to CEO, Women for Election Licia Heath:

“Extensive work was done in 2021 to inspire and equip women of all backgrounds to run in the local government elections, which resulted in an unprecedented lift in the number of women elected to councils in NSW.

“Women for Election are excited to build on that work in 2024. Our events in Western Sydney, Coffs Harbour, Lismore and Tamworth will inspire women to see themselves as future political candidates as we run into the September council elections.

“Importantly, our partnership with the Turnstone Collective will see First Nations women getting access to dedicated training workshops to support their local government ambitions and campaigns.”

Quotes attributable to President, ALGWA NSW Branch, Cr Penny Pedersen:

“For too long women have been underrepresented in local government – as mayors, councillors and in senior management.

“Given more women than men live in NSW, we must encourage and support a greater number of women to take their place in local government.

“ALGWA’s forums introduce women, many of them already leaders in our community organisations, to elected women councillors, who can pass on the detail of their election journey and the importance of their role in local government.”

Information about the workshops can be found below:

Women for Election: <https://wfe.org.au/events/>

ALGWA: <https://algwa.org.au/events/forums.php>

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