



Women's Environmental Leadership Australia

The leadership program for women environmentalists

Information for 2018 Applicants

The Women's Environmental Leadership Australia (WELA) program is a leadership program designed by and for women environmentalists. The Green Institute, Plan to Win and a range of women environmentalists and philanthropists have partnered to offer this exciting program to support women taking even more environmental leadership in Australia. The 2016 and 2017 WELA program were highly successful so we are inspired to run the program again in 2018.

The 2018 program will run April to October 2018. **The deadline for application is Wednesday 21 February 2018.**

Who is it for?

Are you a woman and an active environmentalist living in Australia? Are you looking to take your next step in leadership? WELA 2018 is for you! We aim to bring together another cohort of around 20 women from diverse backgrounds who are working on a variety of environmental issues and campaigns around the country. Some will be employed in the movement; others working as volunteers or as individuals.

WELA aims to address the ways in which women's crucial leadership in the environment movement is undervalued and often not reflected in formal leadership positions. We recognise that this dynamic is not limited to gender and we encourage women from other marginalised constituencies (such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, women of colour, culturally and linguistically diverse women, working class and regional women) to apply.

What does the program involve?

The program includes:

- Three residential retreats (four days each) held at Commonground near Seymour, Victoria
- Mentoring sessions with experienced women environmental leaders
- Small group action learning projects on key issues facing women environmentalists
- Online connection of participants during and after the program
- A comprehensive collection of resources
- Access to an ongoing WELA network

The retreats are designed to encourage focus and active participation. There will be free time each day for participants to enjoy the environment, exercise, and check in with work if necessary.

What is it about?

The WELA program responds to the expressed needs and feedback from interviews with many women in the environment movement. Each year's program also grows out of the needs, interests and offerings of the participants. The program is collaborative and experiential with an emphasis on developing skills which can be directly applied to participants' real life challenges.

The WELA increases capacity for women to lead in the environment movement by:

- Understanding and planning to address barriers to women's leadership – including personal limiting beliefs, organisational and movement dynamics, and broader societal forces.
- Developing skills and capacity to undertake personal change, organisational and movement change, and societal change.
- Building a supportive community of women in the environment movement.

Topics covered include:

- Gender and leadership in the environment movement
- Different models of leadership and approaches to environmental activism
- Campaign strategy, community organising and behavioural change frameworks
- Building inclusive movements and practising solidarity
- Activist wellbeing and resilience, including peer coaching skills and building support networks
- Finding your voice, reclaiming physical power, stepping outside your comfort zone

Who presents at WELA?

The residential retreats will be facilitated by Holly Hammond, experienced activist educator and director of Plan to Win. Louise Duxbury (environmental educator) and Sue Lewis (expert on the intersection of gender and environmentalism) have also contributed significant leadership in developing the curriculum and experience of WELA.

Each retreat will include special guests contributing their insights and expertise in a range of areas. Presenters at past WELA retreats include Christine Milne (former Senator and leader of the Australian Greens), Kelly O'Shanassy (CEO of the Australian Conservation Foundation), Joan Staples (academic and civil society advocate), Cheryl Buchanan (traditional owner from Guwamu Nation and Nyurin Clan), Clare Land (author of *Decolonising Solidarity*), Amanda Sinclair (author of *Doing Leadership Differently and Women Leading*), Lidia Thorpe (treaty activist and now State MP for Northcote) and Eleanor Glenn (Common Cause). Each retreat also includes contributions from WELA reference group members who have a wealth of experience in environmental leadership, including Margaret Blakers, Karen Alexander and Judy Lambert. Details of 2018 presenters coming soon.

Participants are also invited to present sessions during the program to showcase the experience and expertise in the group and provide opportunities to practise public speaking and training skills.

When and where?

All three residential retreats will be located at Commonground accommodation and conference facilities near Seymour about 100 km from Melbourne. Flights to and from Melbourne will be organised for you and transport from there to Commonground will be via train, bus or car, also organised in advance for you. Travel is included in the course fees (see below) which are the same for all participants.

Please factor in travel time when assessing your availability for the following retreats:

- April/May: commencing evening of Monday 30th April, departing afternoon of Friday 4th May
- July/August: evening of Monday 30th July to Friday 3rd August
- October: evening of Monday 15th to Friday 19th October

Please note dates may be subject to change depending on timing of the federal election.

Participation in the WELA program requires a commitment to all three retreats plus availability for small group work and mentoring between retreats.

How much does it cost?

Registration fees cover all costs associated with participation in the program and its three residential workshops (over 12 days). The fee includes travel costs from wherever you are in Australia, all food and lodging for the three workshops, and all materials, course time and mentoring time. We prefer if you are able to pay on registration but are also open to instalment payment throughout the year.

The registration options are:

- pay the organisational registration fee \$4950 (includes GST)
- pay the small group or individual registration fee \$2950 (includes GST)
- apply for a scholarship
- pay the registration fee in instalments

We are actively fundraising to be able to offer part and full scholarships and we strongly encourage you to fundraise if necessary to contribute to your fees; that will help us be able to offer more scholarships. [Donations](#) to the Green Institute are tax deductible.

Who runs WELA?

Holly Hammond from Plan to Win coordinates the WELA curriculum and is the lead trainer and facilitator at the three retreats. India Prior from Plan to Win coordinates WELA logistics, including applications, travel and connecting participants with mentors.

The WELA reference group oversees the project and coordinates fundraising. WELA is auspiced by the Green Institute.

For more information about the organisations involved see <http://plantowin.net.au/> and www.greeninstitute.org.au.

What do past participants say about WELA?

WELA's power is in the strength of the collective. WELA brings together a group of women to learn from each other, to challenge and inspire, and provides a space to network and build relationships so we can return to our work stronger, more connected and better able to have the impact we need to create positive environmental change.

A wise feminist said that the best thing you can do for your health is to get a girl gang. WELA introduced me to women who are inspirational, wise, generous and experienced in a wide range of environment and social justice work.

WELA ... has encouraged me to look at reasons and causes of gender bias in society, no matter how subtle and why we need more women leaders.

WELA is an amazing gift. It is a rare chance to stop, listen deeply, learn from other passionate ecofeminists and reflect on your own practice.

WELA has been the best leadership program I have been involved with. The coming together of women from all ages and from across Australia passionate to make a difference has been totally inspiring.

How to apply

Complete the WELA 2018 Application Form and apply by 21st February 2018:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WELA2018>

The application has two pages and asks why you would like to participate as well as your experience and needs from the program. We ask that you upload a current CV and provide two referees to support your application. We also ask you to tell us your preferred payment option. You can apply as an individual or as part of an organisation: the priority is that participants are actively engaged in environmental action and change (whether or not you define it as leadership).

Please note: if you struggle with working online, or aren't able to upload a CV, don't let that be a barrier to applying! Word document or hard copy application forms can be provided if required. We can also phone you to gather information.

We welcome a diversity of participants and will aim to include differences in age and cultural backgrounds; a national focus with representation from all states; and women engaged on campaigns on a range of environmental issues.

Submit your application by Wednesday 21st February 2018. Applicants will be advised whether they are successful in early March.

More information

See www.welaprogram.org.au; email welaprogram@gmail.com if you have queries; or phone India Prior on 0403 198 959.