



Collaboration, Innovation and Resilience: Championing a Digital Generation

Brisbane, Australia 6-10 April

Gender equality in public place naming – Australian Capital Territory and Victorian case studies

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Gender equality – HIStory



ACT
Government



VICTORIA
State
Government

Department
of Transport
and Planning

Spence *Named to recognise two eminent Australians*

William Guthrie Spence (1846–1926)
Miner, union organiser, labour leader and politician



Portrait of William Spence
Image credit: National Library of Australia PIC64585-42 LOC 621

Born in Scotland, Spence came to Victoria as a child during the 1850s gold rush. Working as a miner, he joined the local miner's union and became known as the 'Father' of the Australian Workers' Union. A prominent labour movement leader, he was elected to the first Commonwealth Parliament in 1901. He was Commonwealth Postmaster-General during 1914–1915 and vice-president of the Executive Council in 1916–1917.

Catherine Helen Spence (1825–1910)
Social and political reformer, journalist, feminist, educationist, novelist and writer



Portrait of Catherine Helen Spence
Image credit: National Library of Australia PIC 7234 #PIC7234

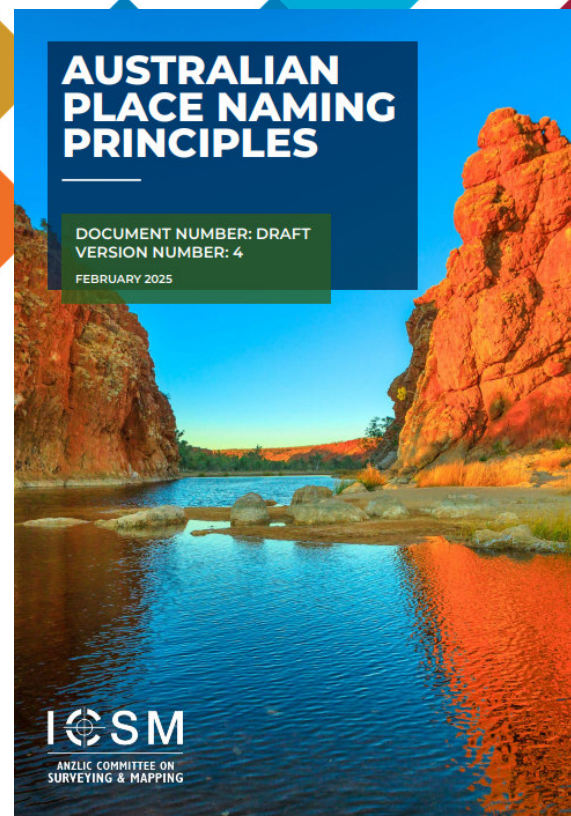
Catherine Helen Spence was Australia's first female political candidate, a lifelong campaigner for electoral reform and an acclaimed early novelist. Her influence as a crusading journalist on cultural, political and economic issues, including suffrage, contributed to South Australia being the first Australian colony to grant the vote to women. Spence actively campaigned for proportional representation and toured internationally to widespread acclaim.




The suburb of Spence was named in 1972 to recognise William Guthrie Spence and was amended in 2023 to commemorate the legacy of Catherine Helen Spence.

AUSTRALIAN PLACE NAMING PRINCIPLES


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VERSION NUMBER: 4
FEBRUARY 2025



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ANZLIC COMMITTEE ON
SURVEYING & MAPPING

 **YOUR SAY**
CONVERSATIONS

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Naming our places

We asked for your help to name our suburbs, streets and other places to celebrate Australia's remarkable people, heritage and history

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Recent engagements

The ACT Place Names Advisory Committee invited community feedback and submissions on place names in Dickson, Kingston and Monash. Find out more about each project below.



Dickson - new place names [Closed]

We asked you to have your say to name two roads and one public area in Dickson and rename part of Dickson Place.

[Find out more about Dickson place names >](#)



Kingston boardwalk [Closed]

We asked you to provide feedback on a proposal to name the boardwalk that runs around the Kingston harbour.

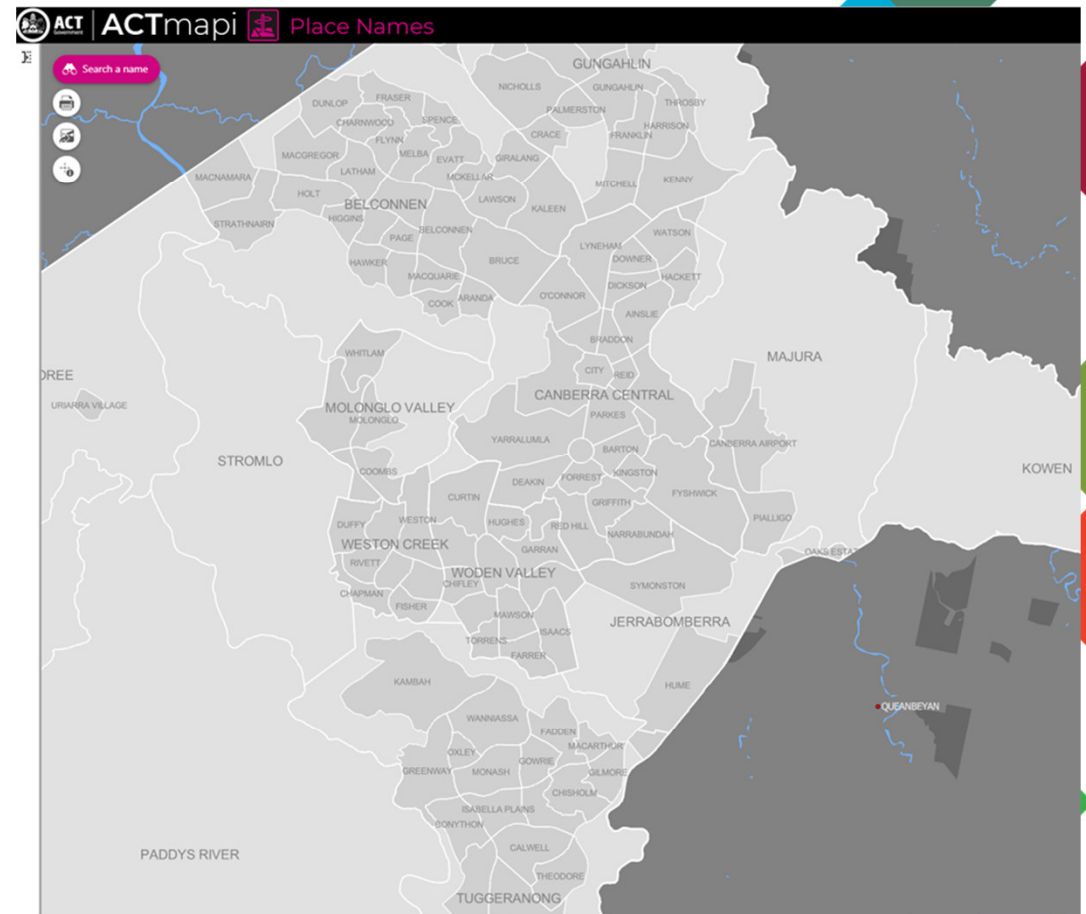
News Feed



7 June 2023 / NAMING OUR PLACES
Have your say on placenames in Dickson, Kingston & Monash



1 June 2023 / NAMING OUR PLACES
Place name instruments approved and notified





Australian Capital Territory

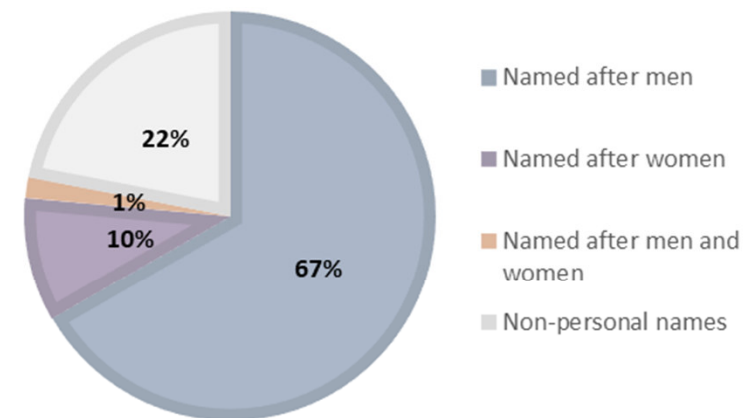
Public Place Names Act 1989

Act to provide for the naming of divisions and public places

Extract:

- (2) If the Minister is making a determination about the naming of a division, or the naming of a public place after a person mentioned in section 4 (2) (a) or (b), the Minister must consider—
- (a) the number of women and men after whom divisions or public places have been named in the last 10 years; and
 - (b) whether the names of women are well-represented.

ACT DIVISIONS (SUBURBS) COMMEMORATED PERSONAL NAMES BY GENDER AND NON-PERSONAL NAMES



ACT Divisions (Suburbs)	No.
Named after men	82
Named after women	12
Named after men and women	2
Non-personal names	27
Total	123



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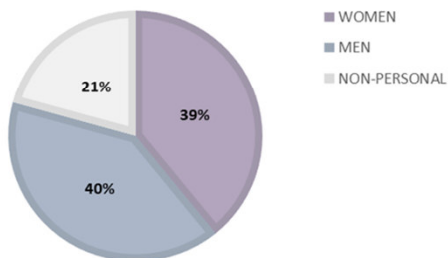
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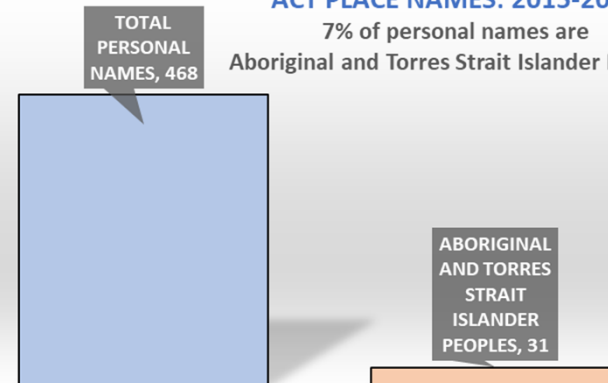
ACT PLACE NAMES: 2015-2024
PERCENTAGE OF PERSONAL AND
NON-PERSONAL NAMES COMMEMORATED



YEAR	NO. OF PLACE NAMES	WOMEN	MEN	NON- PERSONAL
PAST TEN YEARS TOTALS				
2015	80	31	29	26
2016	61	12	19	31
2017	53	21	22	11
2018	125	54	74	5
2019	56	26	17	16
2020	76	32	37	11
2021	7	2	0	5
2022	31	16	11	6
2023	51	26	19	8
2024	21	11	9	3
TOTAL	561	231	237	122
%		39.15%	40.17%	20.68%

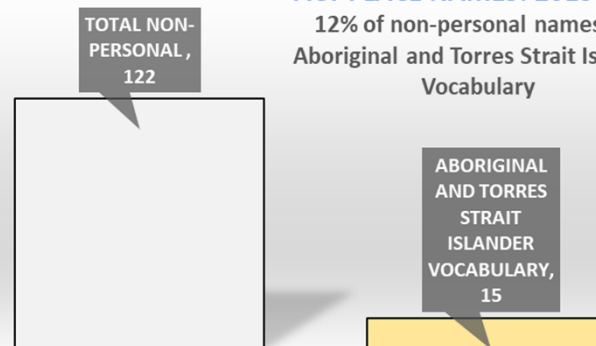
ACT PLACE NAMES: 2015-2024

7% of personal names are
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples



ACT PLACE NAMES: 2015-2024

12% of non-personal names are
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Vocabulary



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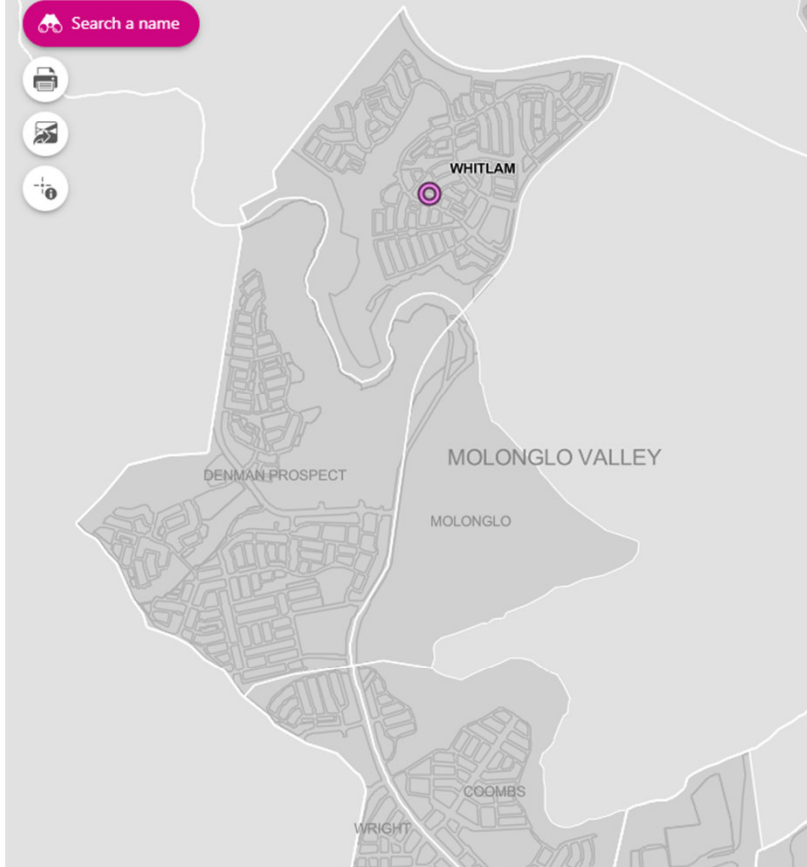


ACTmapi

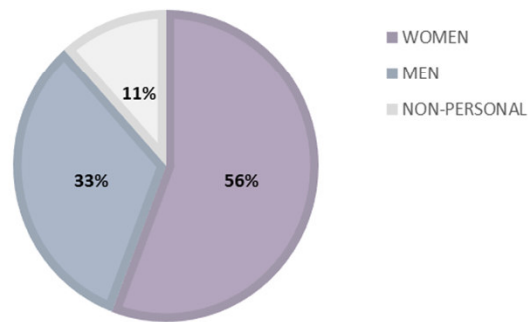


Place Names

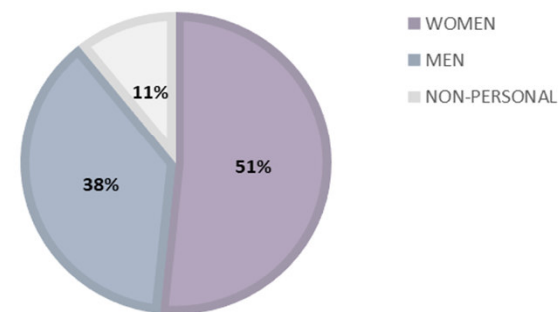
Search a name



ACT SUBURB OF DENMAN PROSPECT
PERCENTAGE OF PERSONAL AND
NON-PERSONAL NAMES COMMEMORATED



ACT SUBURB OF WHITLAM
PERCENTAGE OF PERSONAL AND
NON-PERSONAL NAMES COMMEMORATED



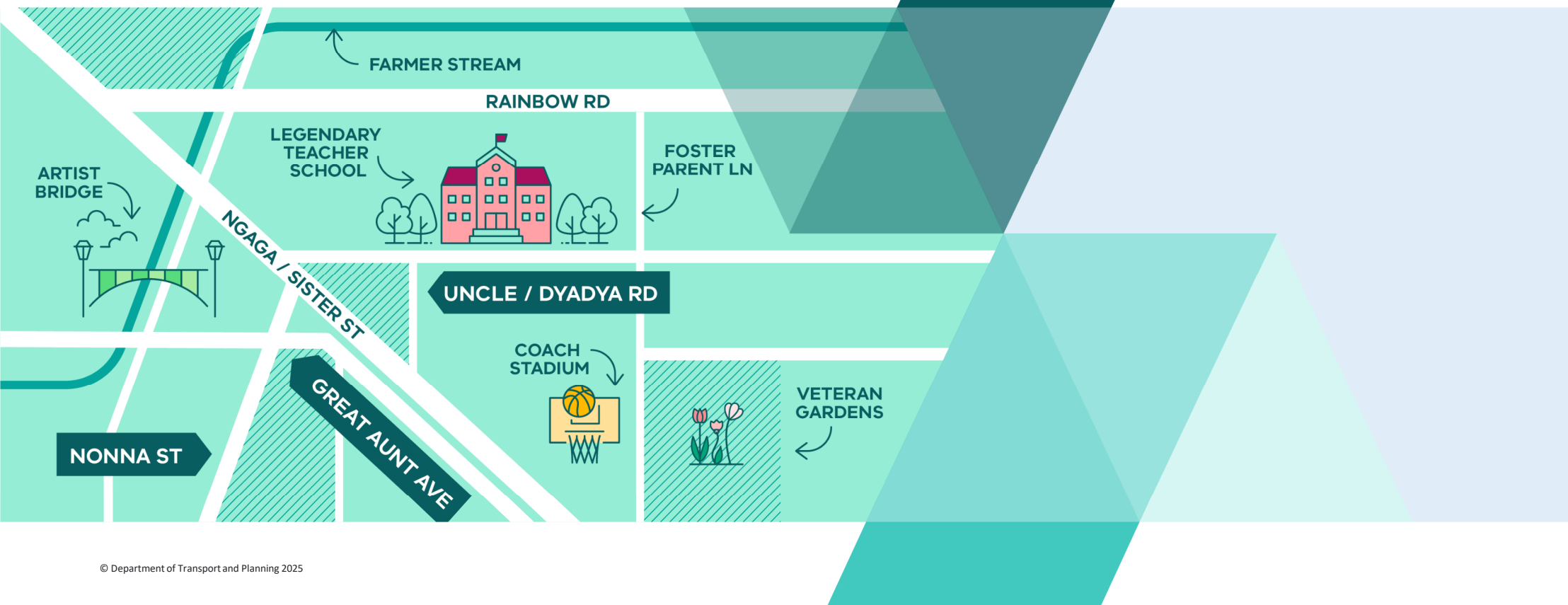
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Our equal places





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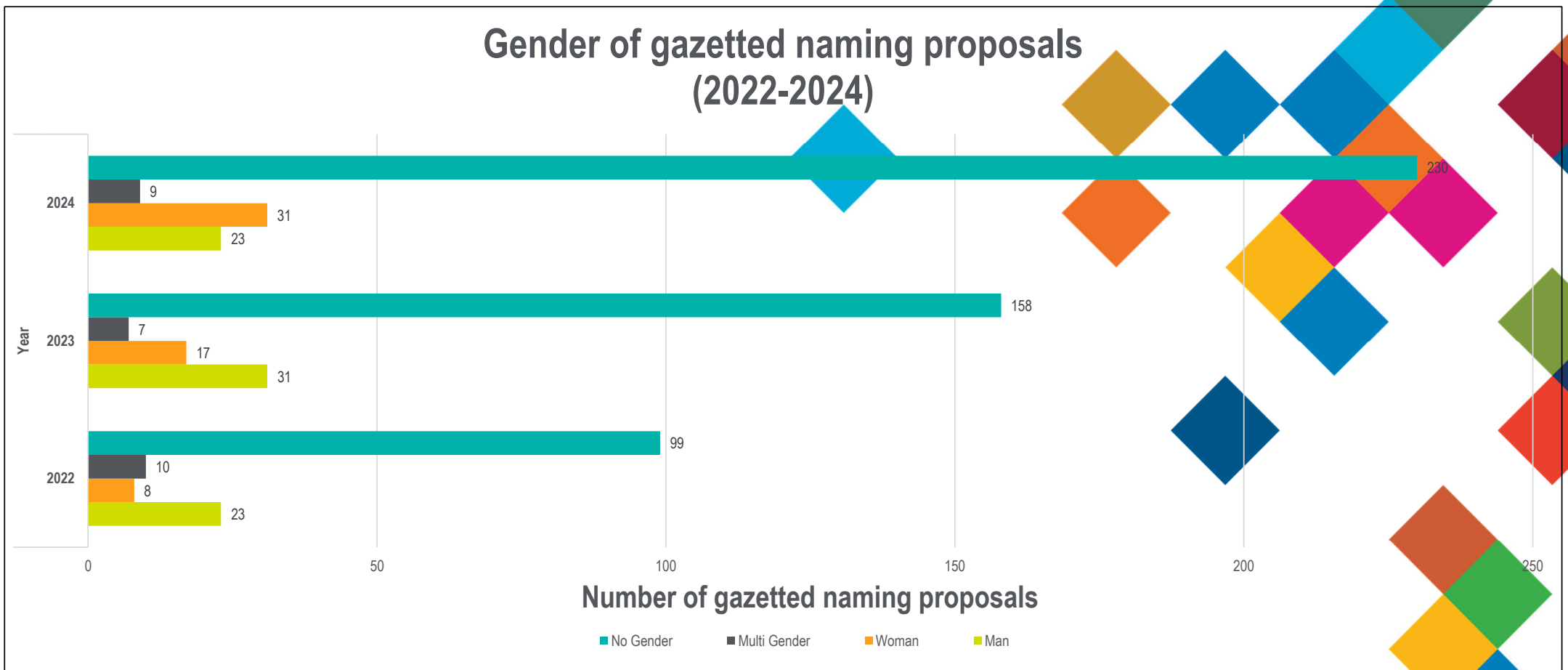
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Gender of gazetted naming proposals (2022-2024)



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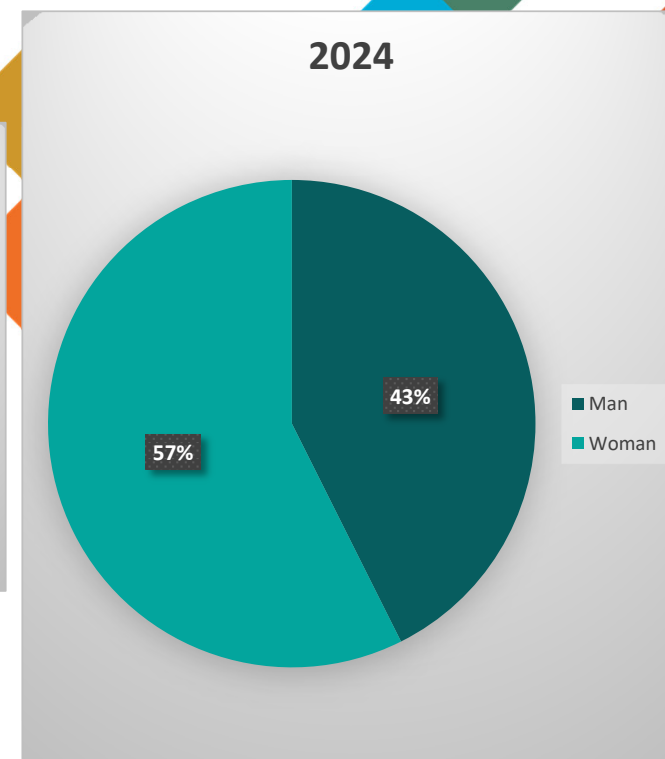
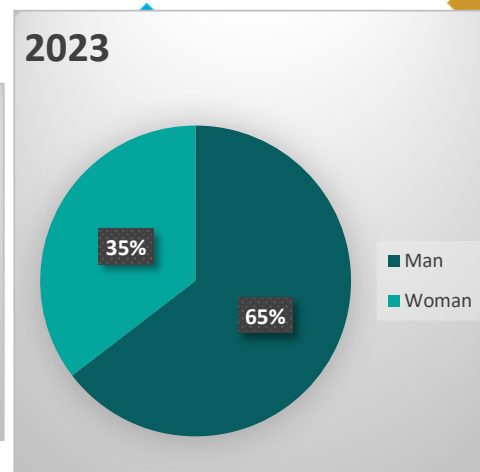
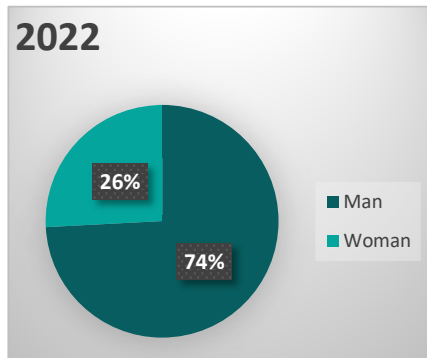
Gazetted Commemorative Place Names: 2024

Commemorative names
recognising women

57%

This is an increase from:

- 26% in 2022
- 34% in 2023



About this data:

- Percentages are calculated based on male and female gazetted commemorative names only. It does not include commemorative names that include multiple persons of different genders i.e. family commemorations.



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Naming rules for places in Victoria

Statutory requirements for naming roads, features and localities - 2022

Principle G Gender equality

Gender equality is to be considered in naming proposals

Principle I Commemorative names

First or last names can now be used

VICNAMES

The official register of place names has been updated to record gender against commemorative names

Progress



Finding Her Map

- A digital interactive map spotlighting existing commemorations of women in Victoria and sharing their stories with the public.
- In situ QR Codes linking physical commemorations to digital stories.



Round 1: 65% nominations for women

"Australia's first coordinated effort for gender equality in place naming and public art."



70%
of all new commemorative place names to be named after women

Source: Our Equal State: Victoria's Gender Equality Strategy and Action Plan 2022-2027



FORUM 2

Equity in the landscape: Are new subdivisions the golden ticket to achieving equality in place naming and public art?

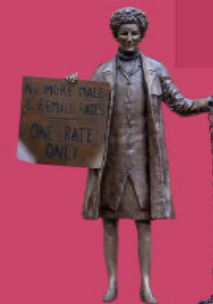
4 March 10AM - 1:30PM
Queen Victoria Women's Centre
Level 4, 210 Lansdowne Street Melbourne



**G+V
GENVIC**



9 in 10 commemorative places are named after men



Victorian Womens Public Art Program
2021-2025 \$2.2M and 12 public art works

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Gazetted commemorative place names



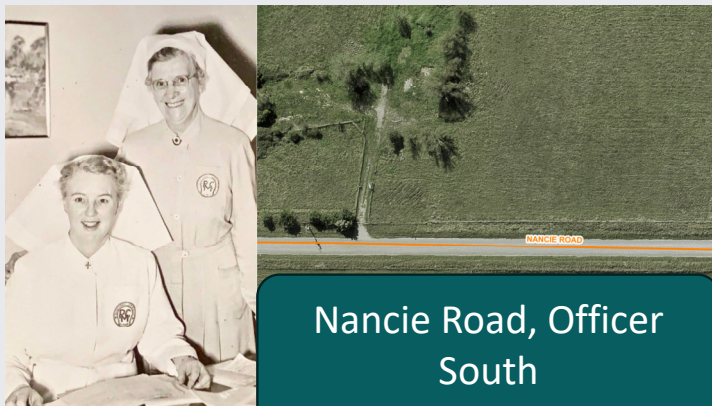
Michelle Guglielmo
Park, Brunswick



Eliza Lane, Mildura



Caitlyns Lane, Wy
Yung



Nancie Road, Officer
South



Kelly Koochew Park,
Warragul

- In 2024, 57% of gazetted commemorative places were named after women.
- This is an increase from 26% in 2022.

Victorian case study – City of Port Phillip



City of Port Phillip –
Gender equality in
place-naming and
commemoration

<https://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/herstory>

HerStory – how it all started

Background:

- Gender Equality Act 2020
- Put Her Name On It campaign (local government audit)
- Changes to Naming Rules for Places in Victoria (2022)
- Internal discussions began about gender equality in place-naming and commemoration

HerStory and International Women's Day 2024:

- The 'HerStory' map was launched on IWD 2024 (printed and online)
- 'HerStory' celebrates the inspiring, diverse women who are commemorated in Port Phillip
- And importantly, calls for more women to be commemorated going forward
- There are 22 women recognised on the map
- Some of the women are well-known, others relatively unknown and their stories were harder to find
- They include politicians, activists, educators, artists, community organisers and leaders, nurses, athletes and a saint
- Most are individual women. There are some groups of women who achieved great things together
- Most of the women were local, with significant ties to Port Phillip
- There are 4 First Nations women commemorated on the map
- 'HerStory' was a collective effort, drawing on the knowledge, expertise and passion of many people





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Challenges and conclusion

- "Great men" – reframe naming practices to include women
- Public nominations are male dominated – educate
- Space and place for non-binary persons – new approaches

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The most relevant SDGs related to the presentation and theme of this session



**SUSTAINABLE
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International Federation of Surveyors supports the
Sustainable Development Goals

THANKS!

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