

Our vision:

a just marketplace, where people have power and business plays fair

Our purpose:

To make life easier for people experiencing vulnerability and disadvantage in Australia

We use our skills in the law, financial counselling, policy and campaigning to make consumer markets fair. We do this by:

Assisting and empowering people – by advising them about their rights, connecting them with services, and supporting them to be capable self-advocates.

Supporting an effective community sector – by enabling community workers to help their clients through training, outreach and legal assistance.

Shaping a fairer system – by leading change to policy, laws and industry practice. We also litigate in the public interest and work to improve access to justice.

Our policy and advocacy work is informed by our experience assisting and representing people in Victoria and has a national reach. We're an independent organisation, based in Melbourne, and collaborate extensively.



strategic plan 2017-2021



Our values:

Fairness – we believe in a fair deal for all

Respect – we care about and respect our clients, colleagues and partners

Excellence – we use our specialist knowledge and reflective practice to deliver highly professional services and effective campaigns

Courage – we act boldly and courageously in pursuing our vision

Our priorities 2017-2021

1. Assist and empower people through financial counselling, legal assistance and representation.

We will match services to the abilities and needs of people we help, and regularly evaluate our services to improve outcomes. Our litigation will be high impact and strategic.

2. Support an effective community sector.

Financial counsellors, community lawyers, social workers and other community workers support the most vulnerable people in Victoria. We will help them help their clients through outreach, training and legal assistance.

3. Shape a fairer system and more effective consumer markets.

We will work independently and with others to ensure markets work for people experiencing disadvantage or vulnerability. We will craft, support and collaborate on powerful stories that inspire systemic change.

4. Enhance the systems, structures and processes that support our people to do a great job.

We will recruit and retain expert staff and committed volunteers. We will support them through specialised training and development, effective technology and a highly integrated work environment.

2021 and beyond

In five years' time, we will be known for changing the lives of people who need it most through:

- Impactful financial counselling and an effectively targeted consumer legal advice service.
- High-impact representation services, supporting the most marginalised, including Aboriginal Victorians.
- Strong relationships with community workers. Our outreach, training and legal advice strengthens the community sector's ability to identify and help people with consumer issues.
- Innovative, high-quality tools and resources for people and community workers capable of self-help.
- Being trusted and regularly sought after by policy-makers, regulators, dispute resolution services and business.
- Our client stories and data distinguishing our policy analysis and research from other policy contributors.
- Leading high-impact campaigns and consumer activism that shapes a fairer system.
- Creating influential media content that informs the community and amplifies the voices of real people.

We will prepare ourselves for the next ten years and beyond by exploring new ways to deliver services, seeking out and applying new technologies, and developing new ways to involve people in consumer advocacy.