

2016-17 Budget Estimates Hearing

Public Accounts and Estimates Committee

Martin Foley MP

Minister for Equality

May 19 2016

2015/16 Portfolio Achievements

Laying the foundations for the Equality agenda

- Appointment of Victoria's first Gender and Sexuality Commissioner
- Establishment of a whole-of-government LGBTI Taskforce to advise on priorities.
- Establishment of Justice Working Group and Health and Human Services Working Group to ensure programs and services are inclusive of LGBTI communities.

Removing discrimination from laws and services

- *Adoption Amendment (Adoption by Same-Sex Couples) Bill* passed.
- *Relationships Amendment Bill 2015* passed.
- Commencement of the *Sentencing Amendment (Historical Homosexual Convictions Expungement) Act*, accompanied by an expungement scheme.
- Advocating across the community for LGBTI equality, removing discriminatory stigma

Victoria continues to lead the nation on equality

The **2016-17 State Budget** provides funding to support:

Community

Strengthening the sustainability of LGBTI organisations

Equality

Combatting homophobia, biphobia and transphobia

Infrastructure

Developing Pride centre

Investment of \$21.5M in the Equality Portfolio

Investing in community

\$4 million for an LGBTI Grants Program

The investment will provide LGBTI organisations with the support they need to ensure Victorians live free from discrimination.

Two programs:

- Organisational
- Community leadership

Organisational grants will support the core operations, program development, and/or strategic planning activities of LGBTI community organisations.

Community leadership grants to support potential and future LGBTI leaders to undertake professional development programs and strengthen their leadership capacity.

Investing in equality

\$2.M to combat homophobia, biphobia and transphobia

Discrimination on the basis of sexuality and gender identity affects LGBTI health and wellbeing.

Poorer health outcomes, reduced social participation, avoiding care and support because of actual or fear of prejudice.

Initiatives include a rural and regional focus to ensure all Victorians have access to support

Whole of Government initiative involving Government departments, Victoria Police and non-government organisations such as beyondblue.

Investing in infrastructure

\$15M to establish a Pride Centre

The Centre will bring together and showcase the LGBTI community; integrate advisory, health and support services; and feature community spaces to provide a safe social and service environment.

A hub for LGBTI groups and organisations, sharing ideas and resources to further their work in supporting equality, diversity and inclusion across the state.

Final design, location and timeframe for the establishment of the Pride Centre will be agreed in consultation with the LGBTI community.

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Support for the budget

“It's been 35 years since the decriminalisation of homosexuality in Victoria and this investment in services and facilities for LGBTI Victorians is a mark of how far we have come.

Investments in the LGBTI sector are paying off, and improving the health and wellbeing of LGBTI Victorians.’

Sean Mulcahy, Co-convenor, Victorian Gay and Lesbian Rights Lobby

"We have some incredible community organisations in Victoria, and it's so important to have the autonomy of an LGBTI-run space where we can come together and support each other, as well as provide a safe, welcoming space for our community members.“

Simon Ruth, CEO, Victorian Aids Council