



THE
LADY MUSGRAVE
TRUST



18TH ANNUAL FORUM ON WOMEN & HOMELESSNESS



STRONGER TOGETHER OR SMARTER APART

Collaboration, competition and
the choices that shape our sector



Thursday, 6 August,
9am – 4pm



Room Three Sixty,
QUT Gardens Point Campus

Proudly presented by The Lady Musgrave Trust, in partnership with Q Shelter, QCOSS, Micah Projects, QUT's Centre for Justice, BYS, the Department of Housing and Public Works and the Department of Women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Multiculturalism.





Solving homelessness requires more than individual effort. It demands connection, trust and a willingness to work differently. The choices we make – to collaborate or compete – shape outcomes for families every day.

But collaboration is not simple in a system under strain. When organisations compete for scarce resources, working together becomes harder. Fragmented funding, policy settings and service pressures can unintentionally pit organisations against each other, leaving families at risk of falling through the cracks.

At the same time, women experiencing homelessness navigate their own form of competition – for housing, support and the chance to rebuild their lives. Their experiences lay bare how uneven opportunity can be and how small shifts in practice can transform the trajectory of a life.

The pressure is building. A tsunami of converging crises is bearing down on the sector: record rental crisis, rising mortgage defaults, escalating fuel costs and cost-of-living pressures. Services are already stretched beyond capacity, in a system not designed to cope with this level of demand. The question is no longer whether the wave is coming, but whether our sector is connected enough to withstand it.

The Lady Musgrave Trust's 18th Annual Forum challenges the sector to think and act differently.

For the first time, the Forum will run as a full-day event. creating space for deeper conversations and practical learning. This is not a talk-fest – participants will collectively explore why collaboration is so difficult in this system and cocreate a focused set of shared principles and concrete commitments for how we work better together under current pressures.

The conversation will stay honest about what practice actually looks like on the ground. Rather than trading success stories, the Forum will sit with the harder truths; including how collaboration can be powerful and fragile at once and draw on voices from beyond the housing sector to show that genuine, embedded multidisciplinary work is possible, not just a pilot. It will also ask what prevention means in everyday practice, not only as a policy aspiration.

Bringing together government, philanthropy, community organisations and lived experience, the Forum will move beyond discussion into action. Led by Dr Ingrid Burkett, Co-Director of The Good Shift, participants will unpack the tensions between collaboration and competition, challenge assumptions and explore practical ways to shift the system.

This is a Forum for those ready to rethink how our sector operates and willing to leave with shared principles, practical commitments and a clearer, more connected way forward.

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GUESTS ARRIVE

8:30AM– 9:00AM

Welcome To Country and blessing

9.00 AM

Refiti Tovi, Turrbal Dippil

Welcome, opening and housekeeping

9.05 AM

Dr Ingrid Burkett, Co-Director, The Good Shift

Victoria Parker, Chief Executive Officer, The Lady Musgrave Trust

Rowena Macguire, Centre Director, Centre for Justice, Queensland University of Technology

**Minister for Housing and Public Works
and Minister for Youth**

9.20 AM

*The Honourable Sam O'Connor MP, Minister for Housing and Public Works and
Minister for Youth, Department of Housing and Public Works*

Lived experience opening reading

9.30 AM

Micky

PANEL DISCUSSION

How the system shapes behaviour and where it breaks collaboration

9.40 AM

Explore how policy setting and funding models shape the way the housing and homelessness sector operates. This session examines how systems can unintentionally drive competition between organisations and governments and how funding structures and policy frameworks intersect to create fragmentation. It will look at the critical points where system design either enables or undermines collaboration and what needs to change to better support effective ways of working.

Facilitated by:

Dr Ingrid Burkett, Co-Director, The Good Shift

Panelists:

Dr Ellenah Mackie, General Manager, Sector Services, Department of Housing and Public Works

Matthew Cox, Executive Director, The Bryan Foundation

Aimee McVeigh, Chief Executive Officer, Queensland Council of Social Services (QCOSS)

Caitlyn Wheatley, Youth Ambassador

PANEL DISCUSSION

Beyond good intentions: The partnership puzzle

10.15 AM

Everyone agrees collaboration is essential to solving complex social challenges – but agreement doesn't make it easy. This session explores why partnership can be so difficult in practice and highlights real examples of collaboration, from innovative approaches to housing delivery and cross-sector partnerships reshaping how services work together.

Facilitated by:

Dr Ingrid Burkett, Co-Director, The Good Shift

Panelists:

Victoria Parker, Chief Executive Officer, The Lady Musgrave Trust

Fabian Webber, Program Development Manager, Roseberry Queensland and Community Lead, Central Queensland Zero Initiative

Rebecca Hinton, Practice Lead for Service Integration, Brisbane and Ipswich, Q Shelter

Candace Staun, Lived Experience, on behalf of Footprints

Madeleine Belfrage, Senior Consultant, ARTD

MORNING TEA

10.45 AM

PANEL DISCUSSION

The system in the dock: A live scenario for collaboration

11.15 AM

When people seek housing, safety and support, they encounter a web of services, policies and pressures that can either open doors or close them. This extended session puts that web under the spotlight, using a live case study to ask what really helps, what harms, and what it would take to act differently together.

Borrowing from the style of a public inquiry, a small panel of key system players – from government, local services, lived experience and funders – act as provocateurs, examining a real-world scenario from multiple angles. Instead of set-piece speeches, they respond to focused questions about where collaboration works, where it breaks, and what might have happened differently within the constraints they face.

Participants are not just watching; they are part of the inquiry:

- A 'spare seat' on the panel stays open so people from the floor can briefly step into the conversation – adding what they see from their part of the system, naming unintended consequences, or challenging comfortable assumptions.
- Short table reflections punctuate the scenario, for example:
 - » "At this point in the story, what would happen if this was your region or service? Where is collaboration most likely to falter?"
 - » "What is one thing your part of the system could realistically do differently at this moment in the case?"

- Two quick Mentimeter check-ins gather sector-wide insights and questions in real time, such as:
 - » naming the system settings most obviously driving competition in the scenario
 - » suggesting small but concrete collaborative moves that could change the trajectory.

The aim is not to reach a single verdict, but to surface the critical moments, trade-offs and blind spots that shape people's pathways – and to generate sharper insights and questions to carry into the afternoon's principles and commitments work.

Panelists:

Sara Parrott, Chief Executive Officer, Hand Heart Pocket

Maria Leebeek, Chief Executive Officer, Gold Coast Youth Service

Amanda Park, Team Leader, Safer Lives Mobile Service, Micah Projects

Tamika Bennett, Youth Ambassador, Youth Advocacy Centre

Kirby Cook, General Manager, Frontline Services, Department of Housing and Public Works

SHOWCASE

Housing, homelessness and older women: Evaluation, engagement and arts-based knowledge translation

12.20 PM

Explore how the Footprints Housing Older Women Support Service (HOWSS) supports women aged 55 and over who are experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness. Led by QUT in partnership with Footprints Community, this project brings together surveys, interviews and creative workshops to learn what's working, where gaps remain and how services can better support women to find and keep safe, stable housing. This project will be available to view over lunch.

Rowena Maguire, Centre Director, Centre for Justice, Queensland University of Technology

LUNCH

12.30 PM

Lived experience reading

1.15 PM

Willow Lees

Professor Evonne Miller, Director, QUT Design Lab and Project Lead, Footprints Project

1.20 PM

WORKSHOP

1.25 PM

Doing things differently: Collaboration principles and practice shifts

This interactive session moves beyond brainstorming to co-create shared principles and practical shifts for collaboration under current "tsunami" pressures. Drawing on the tensions, examples and critical moments surfaced throughout the morning, participants will work in groups to identify what enables collaboration in this system, what gets in the way and what's needed to make collaboration and prevention real in practice. Each table will draft a small set of non-negotiable principles for how we work together. Participants will then commit to one or two tangible shifts to trial over the next 6–12 months.

Facilitated by:

Dr Ingrid Burkett, Co-Director, The Good Shift

Wrap up, what's next and close

Anthony Jones, Chair, The Lady Musgrave Trust

Dr Ingrid Burkett, Co-Director, The Good Shift



From conversation to commitment: Follow-up session

QCOSS and QShelter will lead a focused follow-up to support participants to turn their personalised Forum commitments into real action.

In the weeks following the Forum, you'll receive a short summary of the shared collaboration principles and anonymised examples of the practice shifts organisations have committed to trial, along with prompts to support reflection

and next steps. Over the following months, you'll be invited to join two online "learning forward" sessions - a chance to share what you're testing, learn from others, and surface where support is needed.

This is an opportunity to stay connected, build momentum, and be part of shaping what meaningful collaboration looks like in practice.





Thank You

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