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ROBERTA PERKINS LEGAL PROJECT LAUNCHES

VICTORIA'S FIRST TRANSGENDER LEGAL SERVICE

Free Online Launch Event - Monday 15 June, 3:30pm until 5:00pm

Victoria's first dedicated community legal service program for the trans and gender diverse community is officially launching this month. A partnership between [St Kilda Legal Service](#) and [Transgender Victoria](#), and an extension of the [LGBTIQ Legal Service](#), the **Roberta Perkins Law Project** is a two-year program designed to address the specific legal needs of the Victorian trans and gender diverse community. The project is a social innovation pilot funded by the City of Melbourne.

Following a visioning day workshop with community members in 2019, the Project was named by popular vote in honour of **Roberta Perkins (1940-2018)**. Roberta Perkins was a trailblazing Australian sociologist, writer and transgender rights and sex worker rights activist. Perkins wrote several books and academic articles on the lives of transgender sex workers and established the first assistance centre for transgender people in Australia.

To mark the official launch of the Project, St Kilda Legal Service and Transgender Victoria are hosting a **free online event** featuring guest speakers and a collection of Perkins' works, generously provided by the [Australian Lesbian and Gay Archives](#) (ALGA), on **Monday 15 June**.

Since quietly beginning late last year to conduct vital work in the community, the Roberta Perkins Law Project has delivered free services to Victorian trans and gender diverse clients needing specialist help with a range of legal issues. The demand for the service is strong, and it is clear the current team is only beginning to scratch the surface of the community's legal needs.

In order to ensure the longevity of both the Roberta Perkins Law Project, and the LGBTIQ Legal Service, ongoing funding is essential. Long-term financial support will enable the program to appoint a trans and gender diverse peer support worker, as well as an additional lawyer and researcher. These roles are integral when it comes to better understanding the barriers and stigma trans and gender diverse people face in the legal system. Further funding support will also be crucial to the program's ability to provide much-needed training within the justice and legal service sector to promote greater inclusivity, access to justice and equality for trans and gender diverse Victorians.

"Comprehensive trans and gender diverse inclusion training for all court staff, police, judiciary, lawyers and corrections staff is a key goal for the Roberta Perkins Law Project, and one that funding will help us achieve. We also strive to make changes to the Equal Opportunity Act, which will protect non-binary gender identities and intersex people, and amend corrections policies to better meet the needs of transgender and diverse prisoners" said **Sam Elkin, Roberta Perkins Law Project Lawyer and Program Coordinator**.

LAUNCH EVENT DETAILS

When: Monday 15 June, 3:30pm - 5:00pm

Where: Zoom (meeting details provided upon registration)

Registration:

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/roberta-perkins-law-project-virtual-launch-tickets-105925939336?aff=erelexpmlt>

Facebook event: <https://www.facebook.com/events/277951643359054/>

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