

GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Place Naming and Public Art Service

Step 1: Define the issues and challenge assumptions (step 1 and step 2 are best discussed with a diverse group of stakeholders)

Women’s names and stories remain largely invisible and underrepresented in the names of public places and through public art. This issue isn’t just restricted to Australia and our towns, cities, states and territories – it’s a global issue requiring a multifaceted, systemic solution.

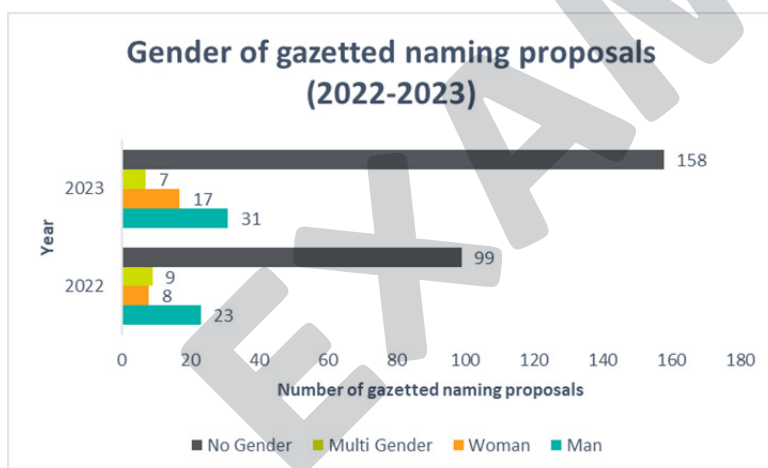
Place naming and public art policy and practice nationwide have been silent on the issue of gender equality until recently when the Victorian State Government included gender equality in the Naming of Places in Victoria Guidelines in 2022, established a 70% target for all new commemorative naming in Victoria’s Our Equal State and invested \$2.2M in public art of women by women. Until this point, it was assumed that place naming and public art was merit-based and measured by notions of success based on patriarchal terms including war, politics, business, land ownership and sport, all of which presented historic and current barriers to the full participation of women and gender diverse people.

In most cases, the naming and public art process is applied operationally with no strategic oversight, data collection and analysis, which perpetuates the issue.

Step 2: Understand the context – Collecting evidence – data, research and consultation

In 2023, Geographic Names Victoria (GNV) received 133 place name nominations in total – 30 were for people; 22 men and 8 women (30%) (see Table 1). These recent statistics demonstrate that while growth in the number of places named and those named after women had grown from previous years, a consistent, strategic and monitored approach with investment would be required to make progress and a positive gender impact.

Table 1: Gazetted naming proposals in Victoria 2022 and 2023



In 2022, research undertaken with Victorian Local Governments on place naming and commemoration identified that 1 in 5 places across the state commemorate a person and 1 in 10 of those commemorative place names honour women. The research also highlighted the ‘bronze gap’, with just 3% of all monuments and public art and 7% of full-body statues honouring women. This was a small and incomplete sample group but an important initial step in garnering a statewide picture of place naming and public art. Statues for Equality estimates just 3% of statues worldwide honour women.

Little global and country place naming data is yet available, but according to Alice Corona and Lorenzo Ferrari, OBC Transeuropa, Sheldon.studio, 30 of Europe’s biggest cities demonstrates that streets named after women make up only 9% of the streets dedicated to individuals.

Athens	4.5%	Debrecen	2.7%	Lyon	8.5%	Stockholm	19.5%
Barcelona	15.7%	Gdansk	6.2%	Madrid	18.7%	Turin	5.3%
Berlin	12.1%	Genoa	8.2%	Milan	5.0%	Vienna	9.8%
Brussels	8.0%	Katowice	6.2%	Palermo	8.1%	Warsaw	8.8%
Bucharest	5.6%	Krakow	6.6%	Paris	8.6%	Wroclaw	7.8%
Budapest	7.0%	Kyiv	6.3%	Prague	4.3%	Zagreb	5.6%
Chisinau	7.1%	Lisbon	10.5%	Rome	7.0%		
Copenhagen	13.4%	Lodz	8.4%	Sevilla	17.2%		

Add local data here:

- Audit – the gender gap, identity gaps, how many places are named per annum, how many each year are named after women (%) with no intervention, how long it may take to close the gap with a 70% target.
- Engagement – any consultation that has been undertaken recently on policy, committees, bank of names or naming of particular sites and what can be garnered from the community.

Step 3: Evaluate options

Option 1: negative gender impact – status quo. Doing nothing will continue to produce the same unequal results. Even small actions may still have a negative gender impact.

Option 2: positive gender impact – follow the recommended process for naming authorities as described in the Commemorative Place Naming and Public Art Equality Guide to advance commemorative place naming and public art equality. Establishing a target along with a multi-dimensional approach will be key to addressing the historic imbalance in public place commemoration.

Step 4: Finalise recommendations – Option 2

1. Undertake Place Naming & Public Art Equality Pulse Check to establish where you are at, understand gaps and guide action – see Pulse Check Commemorative Place Naming and Public Art Equality Guide
2. Finalise Audit and data analysis – see Section 1 Commemorative Place Naming and Public Art Equality Guide
3. Develop a Name Bank – implement a campaign to call for nominations of women to enable the establishment of a Bank of Names of Notable Women that can be drawn upon for place naming and public art – see Section 3 Commemorative Place Naming and Public Art Equality Guide
4. Develop or review place naming and public art policies – place (road, features and localities), naming policy, public art (including memorials Policy) – see Section 4 Commemorative Place Naming and Public Art Equality Guide
5. Establish a robust governance structure and ensure internal resources are available to manage place naming and public art – see Section 5 Commemorative Place Naming and Public Art Equality Guide
6. Look for areas to maximise commemorative justice – see Section 6 Commemorative Place Naming and Public Art Equality Guide
7. Develop an action plan to advance and monitor place naming and public art equality – see Section 7 Commemorative Place Naming and Public Art Equality Guide

Case Study – Bass Coast Council – Place Naming GIA <https://www.genderequalitycommission.vic.gov.au/case-study-gender-impact-assessment-place-naming>

Gender Impact Assessment resources – [How do I conduct a gender impact assessment? | genderequalitycommission.vic.gov.au](https://www.genderequalitycommission.vic.gov.au/how-do-i-conduct-a-gender-impact-assessment/)