



AUSTRALIAN
PRO BONO CENTRE

STRATEGIC PLAN

2017 — 2020

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

I am delighted to introduce you to the Australian Pro Bono Centre (**Centre**) 2017-2020 Strategic Plan (**Plan**).

The Plan sets out the actions, themes and priorities that will guide the Centre in delivering its two key strategic aims over the next 3 years. The Plan is designed to build on the exceptional results of the Centre in the last 15 years in driving the growth of pro bono legal service delivery in Australia. Australia is now considered to be a world leader in pro bono practice, supported by strong coordination and formal pro bono schemes.

The Centre is entering an exciting new stage while continuing to enhance the quantity and quality of pro bono legal service provided by Australian lawyers. The Centre is dedicated to generating new ideas and innovative solutions for pro bono service delivery in the context of changing social justice models addressing unmet legal need.

The Centre's core focus is on action and impact:

- to continue to grow enthusiasm for, and the capacity of, all Australian lawyers to provide pro bono legal service; and
- to build on its strong partnerships with key stakeholders to narrow the justice gap.

WHO WE ARE

The Centre was established in 2002 as an independent, not-for-profit centre of expertise at the University of New South Wales. It leads legal pro bono service delivery in Australia, with the principal objective of growing the capacity of the Australian legal profession to provide pro bono services that are focused on increasing access to justice for socially disadvantaged and marginalised persons, and furthering the public interest.

The Centre's work is guided by its Board, which includes representatives of community legal organisations, pro bono referral schemes and organisations, the private legal profession and universities.

OUR STRATEGY IN CONTEXT

The Centre is at the heart of the Australian legal profession's pro bono contribution. It has a key role to play in ensuring that pro bono legal practice evolves to address areas of unmet legal need and in leading the development of new ideas and innovative pro bono models to build pro bono engagement among Australian lawyers.

The Centre works closely with the legal profession, including the professional bodies, pro bono coordinators of law firms, pro bono clearing houses, the community legal sector through the National Association of Community Legal Centres and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services, legal aid commissions, law foundations, University law faculties and government.

The last decade has seen a rapid growth in delivery of pro bono legal services, especially by law firms in Australia. The Centre launched the National Pro Bono Aspirational Target (Target) in 2007, requiring signatories to use their best efforts to provide at least 35 hours of "pro bono legal services" per lawyer per year. Between 2008 and 2016, the number of Target signatories grew from 58 signatories (covering 3,000 FTE legal professionals collectively undertaking 115,334 hours) to 138 signatories (covering over 11,000 FTE lawyers collectively undertaking 402,216 hours).

In recent years, much growth has come from mid-size law firms. These firms have been a key focus area of the Centre. The Centre is also focusing its efforts more widely on supporting small law firms, sole practitioners, in-house lawyers and barristers undertaking pro bono legal work.

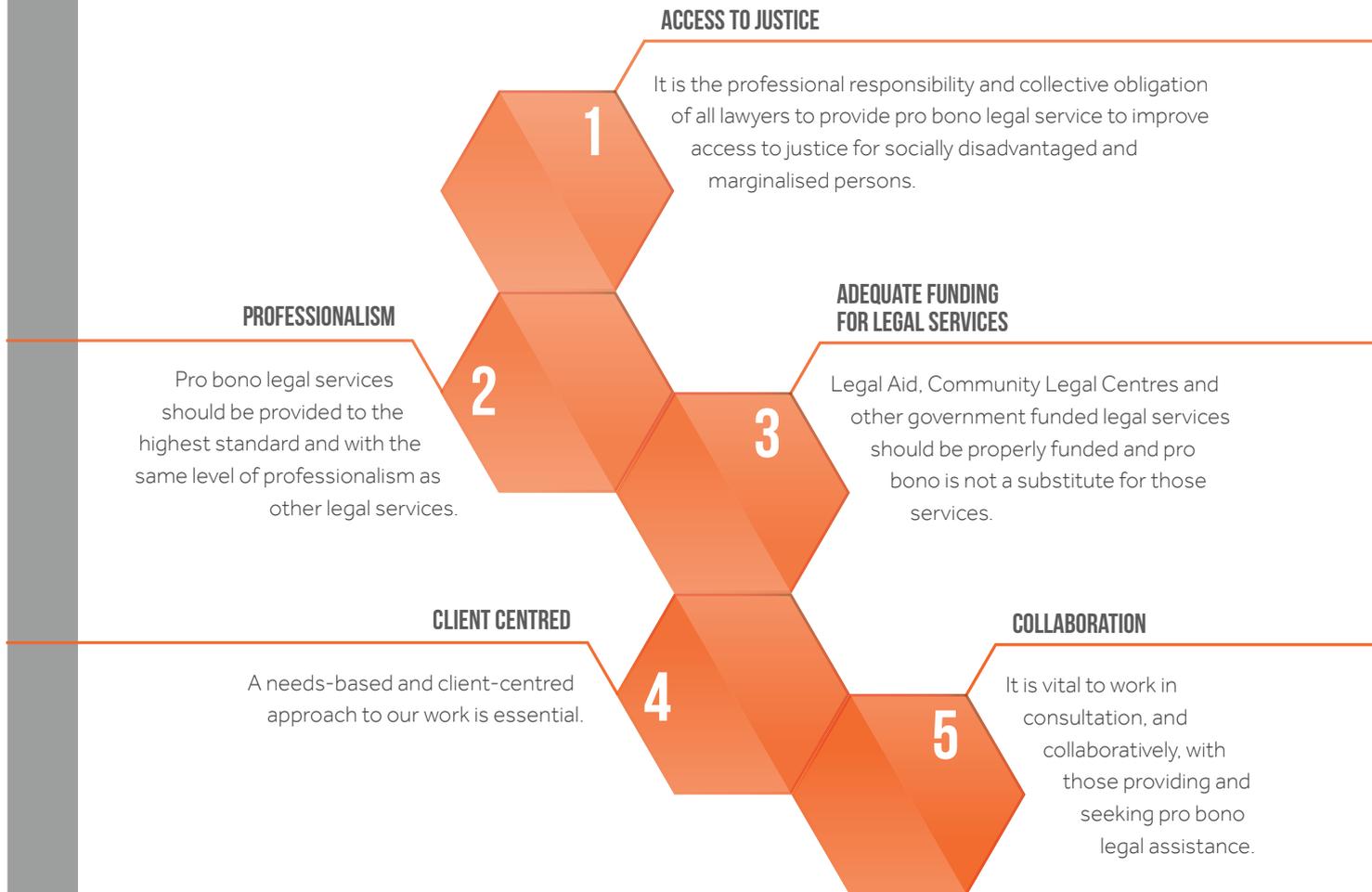
OUR VISION

OUR VISION IS EQUAL ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR ALL SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED AND/OR MARGINALISED PERSONS IN AUSTRALIA THROUGH PRO BONO LEGAL SERVICE.

WHAT WE DO

We promote access to justice by leading, supporting and encouraging lawyers to do pro bono legal work for socially disadvantaged and marginalised persons and the organisations that support them, and to further the public interest.

OUR VALUES



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The Centre has identified 2 overarching strategic priorities. These priorities inform our workplan and we will report against these priorities in our Annual Reports and at other opportunities.

STRATEGY #1:

STRENGTHENING AND PROMOTING THE PLACE OF PRO BONO LEGAL WORK (PRO BONO) WITHIN THE AUSTRALIAN LEGAL PROFESSION

- a. **Sustaining Commitment:** Promoting the pro bono ethos and sustaining the Australian legal profession's commitment to undertake pro bono.
- b. **Promoting Growth and Impact:** Leading advocacy for continuing growth in the provision of pro bono and enhancing its impact, especially in areas of unmet legal need, and by a broader range of Australian lawyers.
- c. **Policy Development and Law Reform:** Engaging in policy development, advocacy and law reform with key stakeholders on issues impacting on pro bono services, including the removal of any constraints or barriers to lawyers undertaking pro bono.
- d. **Thought Leadership:** Leading in the development of new ideas and innovative project and partnership models to build pro bono engagement among all Australian lawyers.
- e. **Community Building:** Strengthening relationships between members of the pro bono legal community to promote exchange of knowledge and to stimulate and encourage the development, expansion and coordination of pro bono.
- f. **Enhanced Public Visibility:** Raising the profile of pro bono through a wide range of media and maintaining a strong public presence as a centre of expertise within the legal assistance sector in Australia.
- g. **Events and Forums:** Convening and supporting events and forums to enhance communication about pro bono practice among key stakeholders and to celebrate the Australian legal profession's commitment to pro bono legal service.
- h. **International Relationships:** Developing and building networks with international pro bono programs and providers to strengthen research and guide development of pro bono policies and practice in Australia.



STRATEGY #2:

DEVELOPING EXPERTISE AND PROVIDING PRACTICAL ASSISTANCE TO FACILITATE PRO BONO LEGAL SERVICE (PRO BONO)

- a. **Expertise:** Developing and sharing expertise to advance national best practice in the delivery of pro bono.
 - b. **Practical Support:** Providing practical assistance, including practical guides and resource kits, to existing and potential pro bono providers and seekers.
 - c. **Communication:** Communicating news and insights about issues affecting pro bono practice in Australia.
 - d. **Research:** Conducting research to build knowledge of, and expertise about, pro bono.
 - e. **Reporting:** Collecting data and reporting on the pro bono work being undertaken nationally.
 - f. **Professional Indemnity Insurance:** Providing professional indemnity insurance, underwritten by Lawcover, to support eligible lawyers to undertake pro bono work on projects approved by the Centre.
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