

# LIVED EXPERIENCE FRAMEWORK

Principles and practices  
for Lived Experience  
partnerships

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wa council of  
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## Acknowledgement

We acknowledge the spirit of the Uluru Statement from the Heart, accept the invitation to walk with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders towards a movement for all people living in Australia for a better future. This Lived Experience Framework supplements the work that needs to be done to ensure WACOSS's commitment to Voice, Treaty and Truth. We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the many lands on which this framework was developed across Australia and pay respect to their Elders, past and present.

## About WACOSS

WACOSS is the peak body for the community services sector in Western Australia and works to create an inclusive, just and equitable society. We drive social change with communities, through collective action and policy formation, strengthening community services and decision makers to ensure justice and equity. WACOSS is part of a network consisting of National, State and Territory Councils of Social Service, who advance the interests of people on low incomes who are made vulnerable by the systems in place.

We acknowledge and recognise that community organisations have established partnerships with lived experience individuals and affiliated organisations and that they bring unique strengths and perspectives with them.

## About the advocates

The advocates who worked on this framework brought with them a range of expertise and specialist skills that were shared in partnership with COSS policy officers from Queensland, New South Wales and Western Australia for the development of this framework. Their commitment to advocacy and social justice precedes this framework and will continue to influence and shape a more just and equitable Australia.

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## Note:

Throughout this document we highlight words in **bold blue** the first time they are used on each page to indicate that they are defined in the Glossary at the back of the document.

We note and respect the diverse stories and language each individual chooses to self-identify with (e.g. participant, community member, citizen, consumer, service user, recipient, people with lived experience and advocate); and likewise, organisations (e.g. consumer organisation, union, peak body, peer network and advocacy group).

For practical readability we use the inclusive terms **Lived Experience Advocate** and **Advocacy Group** throughout this document to refer to the individuals and organisations involved in Lived Experience partnering with community organisations.

# Purpose

## The purpose of this framework

This document outlines the principles and practices that WACOSS aspires to for working with people who have **Lived Experience**. These especially relate to partnering with **lived experience advocates** and **advocacy groups**. This framework is a resource for the community services sector and for advocates working in partnership with all levels of civil society.

Our vision is that:

- people with lived experience who engage in advocacy, can develop skills, knowledge, networks and meaningful leadership opportunities, and
- a growing number of lived experience advocacy partnerships result in effective systemic change that benefits people and communities.

Community organisations are encouraged to follow this framework to support lived experience partnerships that are informed by a **human rights approach**. However, it is not prescriptive, but rather suggests principles and practices intended to complement existing lived experience partnerships. Community organisations are encouraged to adapt this framework to their organisational strengths, resources, and specific needs.

This framework recognises, endorses and respects existing partnership frameworks and engagement protocols. These include the unique requirements for working with- in specific cultural, geographical or communal protocols developed by communities with which we partner. This framework is intended to work in conjunction with such protocols, and where they exist, they take precedence over this framework.

## Who are ‘people with lived experience’?

Lived experience is expertise gained from having a specific life experience. This ‘context expertise’ contrasts with academic or ‘content expertise’. Examples of but not limited to people with such lived experience expertise include:

- First Nations peoples
- People from a culturally and linguistically diverse background
- People with disability, mental health conditions or other chronic or severe health conditions
- People experiencing poverty, unemployment, underemployment or unstable housing
- People experiencing violence or recovering from trauma
- People with lower literacy or low educational attainment
- Young people and older people
- One-parent families
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer and Asexual individuals and communities
- People living in rural and remote communities
- **Intersectionality** includes any combination of the above groups

## Lived experience advocacy

People have a right to influence cultural, social, economic and political changes that affect them. Community organisations partner with lived experience advocates, and lived experience advocacy groups, recognise and supports their critical role in designing, implementing and evaluating policies, programs and social change that impact them. WACOSS and the advocates involved in the development of this document recognise and respect the fundamental contribution that people-led social movements have made towards a more just and equitable society; it is those who have forged the way forward for us to undertake this work.

Community organisational lived experience engagement arises:

- in the course of regular policy, advocacy and engagement work,
- from seeking out opportunities and activities to partner within, and
- from direct approaches by lived experience advocates and advocacy groups.

Lived experience advocates that community organisations may partner with include:



# Purpose

- Independent volunteers with lived experience who partner with a community organisation in any way to further promote, undertake and achieve systemic advocacy.
- A lived experience advocate who represents a specific advocacy group.
- People with lived experience who may hold formal roles within a community organisation.
- People with lived experience who attend any community organisational activity.

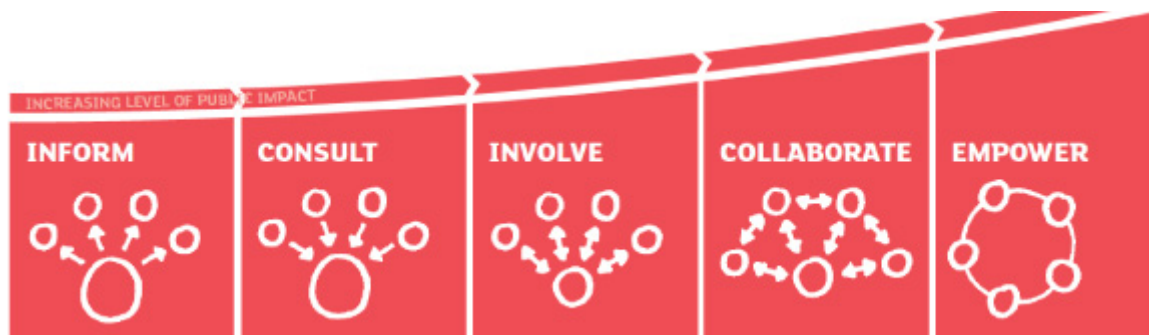
## Different types of lived experience advocacy

<b>Self-advocacy</b>	An individual communicating their own interests, desires, needs and rights.	<i>"I speak for myself"</i>
<b>Individual advocacy</b>	Walking beside an individual while supporting them to be well informed and their responses heard and listened to.	<i>"I will support you to speak for yourself"</i>
<b>Systemic advocacy</b>	Representing and advocating for the needs and interests of a group of people for improvements in policies and programs.	<i>"I speak for members of my peer group"</i>



## Different levels of participation

The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) spectrum of public participation distinguishes different levels of participation that are all important, each building on the previous. The higher the level, the closer it aligns with the principle of self-determination



<b>IAP2:</b>	<b>Inform</b>	<b>Consult</b>	<b>Involve</b>	<b>Collaborate</b>	<b>Empower</b>
<b>Principle</b>	Supports all types of lived experience engagement. Keeps people informed to assist in creating an understanding of the issues, options and opportunities.	Used to gather information, views and feedback from a variety of lived experience advocates and advocacy groups.	Active participation <i>throughout the process</i> to ensure concerns are directly reflected in developing solutions.	Working together in a joint process <i>throughout the decision-making process</i> , incorporating suggestions in decisions and actions.	Advocates develop their own processes and structures to identify issues and implement solutions. organisations have no greater say than other advocates.
<b>Practices</b>	Newsletters, press releases, advertising, public forums, fact sheets, websites, open houses.	Surveys, opinion polls, focus groups, planning projects, open public forums, submissions.	Advocates participation on committees, stakeholder research, workshops.	Consensus building, participatory decision-making, committees.	Provide skills, training, resources and tools for projects and initiatives.

Adapted from [Authentic Engagement: A Learning Journey](#), by Wilcox, & Pei (Tamarack Institute, 2018).

## Framework development and evaluation

This framework is a joint initiative of Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania, Northern Territory and Western Australia Council of Social Service representatives and **lived experience advocates** from a range of **advocacy groups** and social movements who brought much experience to the process. Many of the practice suggestions were developed in response to advocates' individual experiences of partnering for advocacy purposes.

Advocates shared their stories during the Framework's development to enhance the outcomes of partnerships for themselves, their peers, COSS colleagues and society at large. The COSS's involved in the development of this framework recognise the enduring contribution of people with lived experience to people-led social movements. They acknowledge and thank the lived experience advocates who have directly engaged with the process of developing this framework.

This **co-production** process reflects our **human rights approach** and our commitment to recognising people with lived experience as strategic actors. This framework will be evaluated on an annual basis; lived experience advocates and community organisations are welcome to offer feedback for the inclusion of updated versions (see Practice 6 and 7).





# Principles

## Principle 1. Empowerment - elevate the role and amplify the voice

Why this is important	How we can do it
Lived experience advocacy plays a critical role in shaping social, cultural, economic and political life, enabling a just and equitable society. Using our position of influence, community organisations can make room at decision-making tables for lived experience perspectives. Organisations can place <b>lived experience advocates</b> at the forefront of policy and program <b>co-production</b> , elevating their voice to speak for themselves and supporting them to build skills and knowledgebase to further self-advocate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Practice 1. Engagement</b> – entry, co-design and resourcing</li><li>• <b>Practice 2. Payment</b> - remuneration and reimbursement</li><li>• <b>Practice 3. Support and development</b> – induction, support, supervision, and training</li></ul>

## Principle 2. Co-production - involving early and throughout at all levels

Why this is important	How we can do it
Organisations recognise the critical role individuals and communities play when designing, implementing and evaluating policies, programs and social change that affect them. Organisations enable individuals to be strategic partners in the resolution of their <b>structural disadvantage</b> . Advocates aspire to full engagement throughout co-production of programs, policies and social change initiatives. Where possible, advocates and <b>advocacy groups</b> are engaged from inception, including the development of terms of the partnership. Organisations also aim to include the voice of lived experience in internal organisational processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Practice 1. Engagement</b> – entry, co-design and resourcing</li></ul>

# Principles

## Principle 3. Respect - value expertise and provide support

Why this is important	How we can do it
<p>Organisations value and respect the experiences, intellectual and other contributions of lived experience advocates, including their contribution to the priorities and strategic direction of organisations. This expertise deserves recognition, ownership, <b>remuneration</b> and celebration.</p> <p>Organisations enable advocates to contribute in a meaningful way by providing relevant training and professional development opportunities. Organisations provide a safe, trauma-informed environment for partnership work, ensuring people feel safe, comfortable, respected, heard and able to raise concerns. Organisations negotiate supports required by lived experience advocates prior to activities and retain confidentiality.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Practice 1. Engagement</b> – entry, co-design and resourcing</li><li>• <b>Practice 2. Payment</b> - remuneration and reimbursement</li><li>• <b>Practice 3. Support and development</b> – induction, support, supervision, and training</li><li>• <b>Practice 4. Intellectual property</b> and confidentiality</li><li>• <b>Practice 6. Relationship</b> – feedback, disputes and record-keeping</li></ul>

## Principle 4. Diversity - be accessible and represent equality

Why this is important	How we can do it
<p>Lived experience advocates are a diverse group. Diverse communities such as those from the First Nations, LGBTIQA+, culturally and linguistically diverse and disability communities experience historical and ongoing barriers to inclusion. Organisations recognise and value diversity by creating partnership opportunities that are accessible and inclusive, with flexibility and a range of options for lived experience partnerships. Organisations further recognise that contexts can be experienced differently by different people, and that disadvantage can be <b>intersectional</b>. Wherever possible, organisations seek to elevate a range of voices, recognising that one voice will not represent all voices, and are transparent about opportunities available.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Practice 1. Engagement</b> – entry, co-design and resourcing</li><li>• <b>Practice 3. Support and development</b> – induction, support, supervision, and training</li><li>• <b>Practice 4. Intellectual property</b> and confidentiality</li></ul>

## Principle 5. Self-determination and autonomy - confront oppression

Why this is important	How we can do it
<p>It is the choice of <b>lived experience advocates</b> whether to partner with an organisation, to shape the partnership and to exit anytime. Advocates self-govern and have <b>agency</b> for personal views without interference from organisations, who respect their chosen identity and story. Organisations recognise the value of maintaining <b>social capital</b> by investing in lived experience advocacy networks.</p> <p>Lived experience is often impacted negatively by oppressive use of <b>power</b> and <b>privilege</b> due to social, cultural, economic and political structures, including stigmatisation of lived experience and <b>paternalistic</b> policy and programs. Power and privilege also exist in lived experience partnerships. However, organisations will make every effort not to reproduce existing power dynamics by dominating partnerships, nor will they take paternalistic actions that reduce <b>autonomy</b> or <b>self-determination</b>.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Practice 1. Engagement</b> – entry, co-design and resourcing</li> <li>• <b>Practice 4. Intellectual property</b> and confidentiality</li> <li>• <b>Practice 6. Relationship</b> – feedback, disputes and record-keeping</li> <li>• <b>Practice 7. Learning</b> – exits, reflective practice, review and evaluation</li> </ul>

## Principle 6. Dignity - challenge stigma and be strengths-based

Why this is important	How we can do it
<p>Every lived experience advocate is worthy of honour and respect. Organisations approach all aspects of advocacy and community work with openness, warmth, respect, empathy, acceptance and authenticity. Organisations adopt a strengths-based approach, recognising the inherent strengths, assets and expertise of people with lived experience.</p> <p>Organisations actively promote the dignity of people with lived experience. Organisations will represent people with lived experience in a dignified manner, and advocate for dignified representation and respect of all people with lived experience. Organisations seek to challenge the stigma around lived experience where it arises, and to shift the narrative towards a <b>structural disadvantage</b> perspective.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Practice 1. Engagement</b> – entry, co-design and resourcing</li> <li>• <b>Practice 2. Payment</b> - remuneration and reimbursement</li> <li>• <b>Practice 4. Intellectual property</b> and confidentiality</li> <li>• <b>Practice 5. Media</b> and other third parties</li> </ul>

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## Principle 7. Partnership and accountability - build authentic relationships

Why this is important	How we can do it
<p>Working in partnership with people with lived experience is fundamental to a <b>human rights approach</b> to policy development, program delivery and social change.</p> <p>Organisations engage with lived experience advocates as genuine partners. Partners approach the relationship with openness, warmth, respect, empathy, acceptance and authenticity. All lived experience advocacy partnerships and activities are purposeful and have transparent, accountable outcomes with clear evaluation criteria by which success can be measured. Partnerships provide effective feedback and dispute resolution processes.</p> <p>Organisations identify and explain the purpose and process of partnership activities including the likelihood to influence outcomes. Partnerships operate in a professional manner, with mutual respect for confidentiality, communication, resourcing, decision-making and timing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Practice 1. Engagement</b> – entry, co-design and resourcing</li><li>• <b>Practice 2. Payment</b> - remuneration and reimbursement</li><li>• <b>Practice 3. Support and development</b> – induction, support, supervision, and training</li><li>• <b>Practice 4. Intellectual property</b> and confidentiality</li><li>• <b>Practice 5. Media</b> and other third parties</li><li>• <b>Practice 6. Relationship</b> – feedback, disputes and record-keeping</li><li>• <b>Practice 7. Learning</b> – exits, reflective practice, review and evaluation</li></ul>





# Practices

## Practice 1. Engagement - entry, co-design and resourcing

### Entry - early, diverse, accessible and representative

**Early.** Organisations identify opportunities for partnership with **lived experience advocates** throughout all aspects of their work, and advocate for the inclusion of lived experience voice in processes and activities. Organisations can use this framework to plan partnerships, seeking co-design opportunities at the earliest inception of an activity. This enables lived experience advocates to make an informed choice about participation and to shape the activity. There will be a range of participation options, recognising they may want to participate at varying levels.

**Diverse.** Organisations recognise, value and celebrate diversity, engaging broadly and ensuring perspectives of a diverse range of lived experience voices. Organisations also consider **intersectionality** of experiences when developing opportunities to partner. This might include engaging multiple voices on one issue. Organisations consider diversity in their own organisations, ensuring their recruitment processes encourage applicants from lived experience backgrounds, participation from people with lived experience in governance and other strategic processes, and by adopting internal policies around equity, diversity and inclusion.

**Accessible.** Organisations provide a welcoming and accessible environment and are responsive to varying needs, working with advocates to address barriers to engagement, to increase access and inclusion from diverse communities. This can include:

- engaging interpreters;
- adapting physical environments;
- providing additional notice time;

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- being flexible about meeting time of day or length;
- adapting the location or setting of an engagement;
- providing or adjusting allowance for transportation;
- adapting the language or structure of meetings to be less bureaucratic or jargonistic;
- being more accepting of emotionality;
- adopting cultural protocols and being flexible around cultural demands;
- providing child minding and/or enabling attendance by support workers.

Organisations recognise that the impacts of lived experience or cultural obligations might disrupt activities and plan for and be flexible around short cancellations and early withdrawal or non-completion of activities.

**Representative.** Lived experience advocates are invited to clarify whether their contributions are based on engagement with and representation of other people in an **advocacy group**, or whether they speak from their own experience only. Organisations value relationships with state-based advocacy groups, aiming to engage with them prior to or in addition to individual advocate engagement where appropriate. Where individual advocates are not connected to an advocacy group, organisations may provide the advocate with information about one, to provide an opportunity for them to build networks across advocates and enable peer support.

## Establishment - informing, co-designing and resourcing

**Information.** Advocates are given all critical information about a potential partnership activity, including a briefing on this framework, before deciding to engage (see Practice 3). There will be a range of participation options, recognising they may want to participate at varying levels.

**Co-design.** Wherever possible, organisations will co-design advocacy partnerships with lived experience advocates. This can include co-designing the purpose, intended outcomes, participation opportunities and any expectations such as keeping to agreed meeting times. Co-production also includes implementing the lived experience partnership activities and evaluating outcomes. Organisations ensure lived experience advocates are enabled to contribute to the priorities and strategic direction of organisational processes (e.g. strategic plans).

**Resourcing.** Organisations establish and source the required resources and skills needed for the activity. Resources may include technology, internet, transport, food or specific skills development. Organisations and lived experience advocates will confirm any gaps in resources and how to fill those gaps prior to the activity commencing, ensuring the advocates have enough time and accessibility to resources to adequately prepare for activities.

## Practice 2. Payment - remuneration and reimbursement

### Remuneration - honorariums and in-kind payments

Organisations value the time and contribution **lived experience advocates**, and remunerate them appropriately wherever possible. Organisations negotiate **honorariums** and **in-kind payments** with advocates prior to activities, based on the level of complexity of the activity and the level of skills and experience required. If significant preparation is required for the activity, the organisation pays an adequate amount for preparation. Wherever possible, remuneration will be at a minimum hourly rate, for a minimum of two hours. By negotiation and with mutual consent, certain activities may attract a different, one-off or pro rata payment structure, for example, participation in short phone interviews or short surveys.

Organisational resourcing does not always permit adequate **remuneration** of lived experience advocates and advocates also have the **self-determination** and **autonomy** to undertake advocacy partnerships regardless of remuneration. Organisations can negotiate in-kind payments with advocates. These may include free training, free leadership opportunities or other creative options that are negotiated prior to the activity (see Practice 3). Lived experience advocates should not be remunerated through unpaid 'work experience' or 'internships' by the organisations, to avoid exploitation of their labour.

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Social Security Legislation requires that all honorariums, rewards or gifts be reported as income within 14 days, with consequences for non-compliance. Organisations ensure adequate information is made available to advocates to make well-informed decisions.

## \* Lived experience advocate payment scale

*(May be negotiated and may include in-kind)*

	<b>General Attendee</b>	<b>Sponsored Attendee</b>	<b>Active Participant</b>	<b>Advisor</b>	<b>Consultant</b>
<b>Payment</b>	<b>No payment</b>	<b>No payment</b>	<b>\$40 per hour minimum</b>	<b>\$70 per hour minimum</b>	<b>\$100 per hour minimum</b>
<b>Forums, consultations, workshops or focus groups</b>	General attendance	Sponsored attendance (registration, travel, meals provided)	Specifically invited to attend	Co-design and co-produce	Engaged to lead forum, consultation, workshop or focus group
<b>Committees or Groups with Terms of Reference</b>	N/A	N/A	Member of service, system or strategic level committee	strategic level committee or sitting governance member	Engaged to provide impartial guidance, knowledge or expertise
<b>Recruitment or Selection panels</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	Member	Chair
<b>Other projects</b>	N/A	N/A	Special Projects or Duties	Special Projects or Duties	Engaged to lead policy, procedure, or resource development
<b>Media Interviews</b>	N/A	N/A	Media interview for print and/or radio	Media interview for print and/or radio	Media interview for television.
<b>Conferences</b>	General attendance	Sponsored attendance	N/A	Member of planning committee	Speaker (assume 1hr prep time)



## Reimbursement - out-of-pocket expenses

Regardless of remuneration arrangements, lived experience advocates are reimbursed for **out of pocket expenses** such as travel and parking, incidentals. This ensures that no advocate is left out of pocket or in distress after attending an activity that they have been invited to. (Refreshments are provided, including meals where appropriate.)

The **reimbursement** includes short notice activities such as a media or other advocacy requests. Reimbursement also covers short notice cancellations where the advocate has not received adequate notice that they are not required to participate in an activity or event.

## Practice 3. Support and development - induction, support, supervision, and training

### Induction, support and de-briefing

Advocacy can be complex, intimidating and potentially distressing. **Lived experience advocates**, should feel prepared and supported before, during and after engaging in activities.

**Induction.** Organisations will provide an induction process relevant to the activity. Every engaged advocate will be informed of their organisational contact person. Advocates will be familiarised with the context and expected process of an activity, and the supports and development opportunities available to them. This may include any organisational policies or procedures relevant to the activity (e.g. Occupational Safety induction).

**Preparation and support.** Lived experience advocates may need support to prepare their contribution and to assess the risks and impacts of sharing their story. Even the most experienced and resilient advocates can experience re-traumatisation when repeating and sharing their lived experience with others. Organisational contact people should be available throughout an activity and ideally be skilled in effective strengths-based, trauma-informed support techniques.

**Independent supports.** Lived experience advocates can be allocated an organisational employee who is separate from the partnership activity. This organisational member can act in an impartial role for the advocate to access if they choose. Advocates may also choose to be represented by an **advocacy group** of their choice to act in an impartial support role.

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**Supervision and debriefing.** . Recognising the impact and benefits of **reflective practice**, organisations commit to providing **supervision** and debriefing to the lived experience advocate during projects, after activities and upon exiting (see Practice 6 and 7).

**Referral.** Many lived experience advocates are well connected in their own lives. However, if an advocate expresses a desire for an external referral for relevant support, the organisation will facilitate this. This may include the option to access the organisational Employee Assistance Program if available, or another support pathway.

## Training and other development opportunities

Organisations take every opportunity to invest in professional development and leadership opportunities for lived experience advocates and advocacy groups where possible. Organisational recruitment also encourages people with lived experience to apply.

Lived experience advocates may be interested in a range of training, including media, government processes, policy development, leadership, public speaking, communications and social media, organisational policy, and so on. Organisations discuss a range of opportunities for development with advocates, including:

- Offering free in-house training opportunities.
- Leveraging off wider stakeholder relationships to provide free training opportunities.
- Invitation to relevant organisational professional development.
- Other such creative opportunities as discussed with lived experience advocates.

## Practice 4. Intellectual property and confidentiality

**Negotiated.** The **intellectual property** of **lived experience advocates** includes personal stories, media, podcasts, videos, and written resources. Organisations will negotiate the terms and conditions of the use of advocates' existing intellectual property prior to it being used as part of the activity and/or being distributed. These could include:

- lived experience advocate being consulted or having final say in an editing process,
- notifying lived experience advocate prior to the publishing or re-publishing of stories, or
- checking-in with lived experience advocate after the activity or publication.

**Existing.** An initial understanding is that any and all existing intellectual property remains under the lived experience advocate's ownership and can only be used with the advocate's permission for the express purposes of an agreed activity. Any further use of the intellectual property by the organisation should not occur without express permission from the advocate in writing (e.g. email, letter or contract).

**Newly created.** If there is an expectation the lived experience advocate will create intellectual property expressly for or during the activity, it is recommended the advocate and organisation negotiate and agree on the ownership of this intellectual property, and any future use. An initial understanding is that this work was procured by the organisation and is owned by the organisation, with creation credit given to the advocate (if they desire) and the advocate will be adequately remunerated.

**Confidentiality.** The organisation agrees that anything said of a personal nature by others in the process of organisational work is kept confidential by peers, organisation and stakeholders unless otherwise agreed to prior and with due consideration of the limitations of confidentiality.

# Practices

## Practice 5. Media and other third parties

### Third parties – referring, linking and supporting

**Request and referral.** Where appropriate, the organisation commits to elevating the voice of lived experience advocates and **advocacy groups** to speak for themselves. When a third party or the media approaches an organisation seeking people with a lived experience to engage with, the organisation will refer the request to a relevant advocacy group where available and appropriate.

**Linking and supporting.** When such a request is passed on to an individual lived experience advocate, the organisation encourages them to be linked in with and supported by a representative of an advocacy group of their choice. Organisations also promote the use of this framework to third parties to enhance consistency across the social service and change sector.

### Media – prepare, support, plan, address risks and stigma

**Prepare.** Lived experience advocates who engage with media need to be properly briefed and prepared. To help ensure consistency of media outcomes, advocates and advocacy groups can access media training. Organisations recognise communications officers are an essential resource for media engagement, including for lived experience advocacy.

**Support.** Organisational support for advocates negotiating with media will include emphasising self-care, doing post activity check-ins and providing access to counselling support (e.g. Employee Assistance Program), regardless of whether an advocate uses the services.



**Media plan.** Organisations develop an agreed media plan with advocates (and third parties, where appropriate), for a media activity to identify the goals of the activity for each party. These include their media preferences (e.g. radio, print, TV), media strengths (previous experience, training, or confidence / passion on specific issues), key messages, potential risks or unintended consequence and the level of identification or anonymity.

**Manage risks.** Engaging with media to tell a story in the public forum involves risks and potential consequences. The public has increasing access to information, and people sometimes publish without regard to consequences for individuals. Organisations have risk management tools to identify risks of engaging with media for lived experience advocates. If a risk is identified, they prioritise the goals and integrity of advocates over activities.

**Confront stigma.** Organisations uphold the dignity of people with lived experience by actively challenging stigma in the media wherever we see it. Organisations use strengths-based, dignified language in their own media activities.

## Practice 6. Relationship - feedback, disputes and record-keeping

**Competency.** Organisations invest in staff training across a range of lived experience competencies, including cultural safety, **privilege**, anti-oppression and **structural disadvantage**, support and debriefing techniques, being strengths-based, and trauma-informed.

**Growth opportunity.** Partners approach the relationship with respect, empathy, acceptance authenticity, and in the spirit of growth and learning. Lived experience partnerships celebrate the diversity of individuals and organisations by respecting their diverse perspectives and encouraging robust discussion. Feedback and disputes can provide opportunities for growth and development, for **lived experience advocates**, **advocacy groups** and for organisations. Each are encouraged to raise concerns as early as possible with an openness to learning opportunities.



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**Freedom of expression.** The lived experience advocate is free to express their views and to challenge any partnership activity without fear of repercussions. They are informed about and have access to complaints and feedback processes during and after work activities. These can include post activity check-ins on **intellectual property**, media exposure and evaluation

**Dispute resolution.** Organisations acknowledge the power imbalance between staff and advocates. Organisations have dispute resolution procedures that are trauma-informed and respect principles of **natural justice**. These provide access for both parties to a support person and to an external third-party representative if internal mediation does not resolve the dispute.

**Accountable record-keeping.** To ensure accountability, organisations have financial and human resource record-keeping procedures. These will cover the records of engagement and **remuneration** of advocates. In compliance with privacy standards, records will be kept for the required time periods and be available for advocates to access information about themselves.

## Practice 7. Learning - exits, reflective practice, review and evaluation

### Exits - voluntary and completion

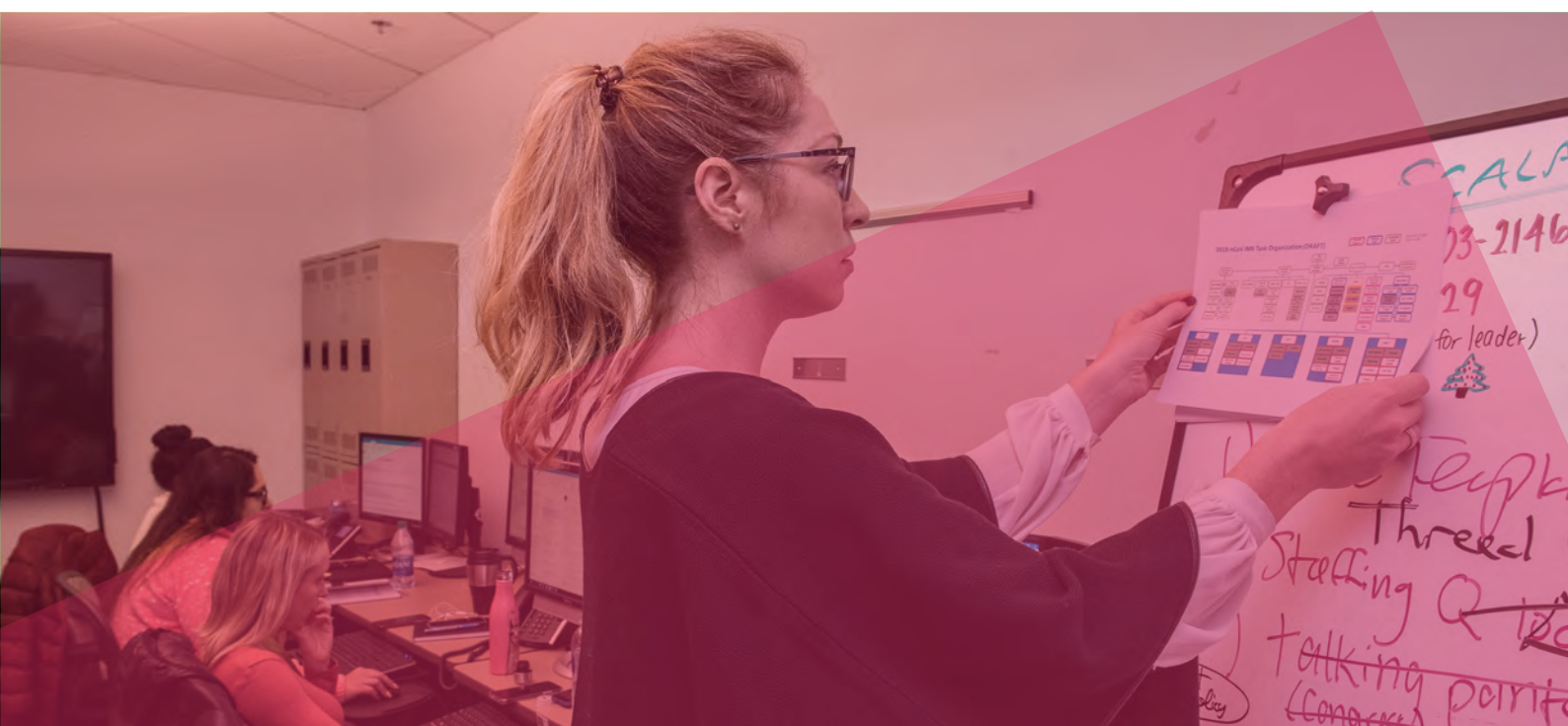
**Voluntary exit.** Lived experience advocates engage in partnerships with organisations at their voluntary discretion. It is their choice whether to partner and they retain the right to exit a partnership or activity at any time. If the advocate feels the activity is not meeting agreed outcomes, they can reconsider their level of participation. They are also invited to access the disputes process if appropriate (see Practice 6).

**Completion exits.** At the completion of a lived experience activity, the exit process includes the opportunity for both the organisation and the lived experience advocate or advocacy group to reflect on the process and activities. This includes aspects that worked and opportunities for learning. The advocate or their advocacy group will be notified regarding any known outcome of their work. Organisations recognise the importance of closing the feedback loop with advocates and advocacy groups. Significant learnings will be incorporated into future partnerships and this framework.

## Reflection and review – reflective practice and evaluation

**Reflection.** **Reflective practice** involves critically reflecting on processes and outcomes, sharing stories and any possible unintended outcomes and seeking additional support where necessary. Participants only share what they feel safe and comfortable with in recognition of their own **autonomy** over their advocacy and personal stories. Organisations and advocates explore how to incorporate learning into improved partnerships, activities and outcomes.

**Review and evaluation.** Continuous improvement processes include ongoing, regular review and robust evaluation of activity outcomes. Lived experience advocates are given every opportunity to contribute to the gathering, analysis and presentation of evaluation data. These reflection and evaluation processes form part of the reporting processes, including ensuring that outcomes are reported back to advocates, informing them and relevant advocacy groups of the influence and importance of their work.



# Glossary

**Advocacy group.** Organised groups of people affected by, and aiming to influence, policy, services, laws and systemic injustices, including consumer organisations and people-led social movements (e.g. disability, mental health, unemployed workers or anti-poverty).

**Agency.** The thoughts and actions taken by people that express their individual power.

**Autonomy.** The right of a group of people to govern itself or to organise its own activities.

**Co-design.** Jointly planning and testing services with people (community members, community groups, service-users, service-deliverers and service-procurers) who will interact with a service. This does not always involve these people in the delivery of the service.

**Co-production.** Jointly and actively shaping, delivering and evaluating services in an equal, power-sharing relationship with participants (community members, community groups, service-users, service-deliverers and service-procurers).

**Honorarium.** An honorary reward for voluntary services.

**Human rights approach.** All programs and activities contribute directly to the realisation of one or more human rights. Human rights law and principles are visible in policy, advocacy, and service delivery. This includes full participation by affected people in the development of systems; accountability of systems to affected people and empowerment of affected people.

**In-kind payment.** Free training, free leadership opportunities or other such creative and useful items that are negotiated prior to the activities commencing.

**Intellectual property.** Someone's idea, invention, or creation that can be protected by law from being copied by someone else. In the context of advocacy work, this may be but not limited to stories, experiences, media, art, and/or resource development.

**Intersectional.** Any combination of lived experience e.g. First Nations peoples with disability or low income people from diverse communities.



**Lived experience advocate.** People with lived experience using their experience to inform and take action to reform unique, systems, economic, social and political structures that impact them and their peers. They may also be a representative of an Advocacy Group.

**Natural justice.** A duty to act fairly with a right to a fair hearing and the avoidance of bias.

**Out of pocket expenses.** Costs such as travel, parking and incidentals that lived Experience advocates pay out of their own cash in order to carry out activities as agreed with the organisation.

**Paternalistic.** Thinking or behaviour by people in authority that results in making decisions for other people that prevents those people from exercising autonomy and being able to take responsibility for their own lives.

**Power.** The capacity of an individual to influence outcomes, decisions and the conduct or behaviour of others. The term 'authority' is often used for power that is perceived as legitimate by the social structure.

**Privilege.** This operates on personal, interpersonal, cultural, and institutional levels and gives advantages, favours, and benefits to members of dominant groups at the expense of members of other groups.

**Reflective practice.** Critical self-reflection on actions for continuous learning, paying attention to the values behind actions.

**Reimbursement.** The act of compensating someone to the value of expenses they have incurred as the result of engaging in an agreed activity.

**Remuneration.** Payment for time spent doing agreed activities or providing a service.

**Self-determination.** The right of a group of people to have full power over their own lives. Starting with the basic freedom to design a life plan, authority to control resources, support that is highly individualised and opportunities to be a contributing citizen of the community.

**Social capital.** Functioning social groups that include interpersonal relationships, a shared identity, understanding, norms, values, trust, cooperation.

**Structural disadvantage.** Disadvantage experienced by individuals or groups resulting from how resources are distributed, how people relate to each other, or who has power.

**Supervision.** Staff can review, reflect on and evaluate their work through discussion, reporting and observation with a peer, or a professional supervisor.

**Systemic advocacy.** The process of representing and advocating for the needs and interests of a group of people for improvements in services, government policies and community.



WACOSS strives for an inclusive, just and equitable society. We advocate for social change to improve the wellbeing of Western Australians and to strengthen the community services sector that supports them