

MC: Shungu Patsika



Shungu Patsika is a Senior Financial Counsellor in the National Debt Helpline at Consumer Action Law Centre. Born and raised in Zimbabwe, Shungu became a financial counsellor shortly after emigrating from South Africa during the Global Financial Crisis. From the outset, he has demonstrated a passion for helping people overcome adversity while contributing to a just marketplace, epitomised by successfully advocating for clients who testified at the Financial Services Royal Commission. Shungu firmly believes financial counselling is a vocation and proudly contributes to the sector through training and professional supervision.

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The Hon. Nick Staikos MP **Minister for Consumer Affairs** **Minister for Local Government**

Nick Staikos is the state member for Bentleigh. Nick was elected in 2014. He was appointed Deputy Government Whip in the Legislative Assembly and the Secretary of the Parliamentary Labor Caucus in 2018. In 2020, Nick became Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasurer. In 2022, he was appointed Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier. And in 2023 he became Parliamentary Secretary for Multicultural Affairs in addition to continuing in his role as Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier.



In 2024, Nick was appointed Minister for Consumer Affairs and Minister for Local Government.



Brendan Coates

Brendan Coates is the Housing and Economic Security Program Director at Grattan Institute, where he leads Grattan's work on housing, retirement incomes, and superannuation.



He is a former macro-financial economist with the World Bank in Indonesia and consulted to the Bank in Latin America. Prior to that, he worked in the Australian Treasury in areas such as tax-transfer system reform and macro-economic forecasting, with a strong focus on the Chinese economy. Brendan holds a Masters of International Development Economics from the Australian National University and Bachelors of Commerce and Arts from the University of Melbourne.

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Noel Lim

Noel Lim is the Founding CEO of Anika Legal, a not-for-profit legal service with a vision of a world where everyone can access justice. Anika Legal provides free legal support that empowers renters to thrive in safe homes. The organisation has supported 1000 people in Australia to maintain safe, secure, affordable homes. Noel is a Westpac Social Change Fellow (2025) and was a finalist for the Victorian Young Australian of the Year (2023) and NFP Emerging Leader award (2023).



Erin Turner



Erin Turner is the CEO of the Consumer Policy Research Centre, a think tank that champions ideas to make markets fairer for Australians. She is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and a board member of the Australian Financial Complaints Authority (AFCA) and Way Forward. Erin is the Chair of ARC Justice, the community legal centre in Central and Northern Victoria, which includes her hometown Shepparton on beautiful Yorta Yorta Country.



Eirene Tsolidis Noyce

Eirene Tsolidis Noyce is a Senior Policy Officer at Consumer Action Law Centre, specialising in consumer's rights to affordable and renewable energy. As a consumer advocate, Eirene draws from her experience in community-led campaigns for First Nations justice and climate action. Eirene was the co-founder and Secretary of the Renters And Housing Union from 2020-23 where they represented Australian renters' rights to safe, secure and affordable housing, including at the International Union of Tenants Congress in 2023. From 2022-23, Eirene practiced as a Financial Counsellor specialising in mortgage responsible lending matters and family violence at Westjustice / Mortgage Stress Victoria.



Selden Koolman



Selden Koolman is a Digital Organiser for Better Renting. While she worked in neuroscience for a number of years, she also has a background in anti-austerity organising, electoral campaigning, and workplace labour organising. She is interested in uniting her experiences in activism, neuroscience, and media production to radically change our housing system and the way we think about renting, renters, and homes.



Dr Heather Holst

The Victorian Government appointed Dr Heather Holst as Commissioner for Residential Tenancies to hear advice about the needs of renters. With many years of experience working in the housing, and homelessness sectors as a volunteer, direct service worker, manager and researcher, Dr Holst is a strong champion for the rights of Victorian renters. This includes residents of rooming houses, caravan parks and residential parks.



Rob Burgess



Rob Burgess is a general financial counsellor with Mortgage Stress Victoria. Prior to that he spent many years as a journalist, writing amongst other things about finance, investment and economics and frequently referencing the Home Equity Access Scheme and its pre-cursor, the Pension Loan Scheme.



Dr Venkat Narayanan

Venkat Narayanan is an expert in qualitative analysis, housing markets and survey techniques. He has successfully led several research projects and is a leading expert in taxation and related policies. He has successfully completed projects commissioned by the Australian Tax Office. His main research expertise is in taxation with a special interest in property and policy analysis.



Deborah Fewster

Deb Fewster is the Director of Policy and Advocacy at the Victorian Council of Social Service (VCOSS), the peak body for Victoria's social and community services sector and the state's premier social advocacy body.

In this role, she leads a team of policy experts and project coordinators working towards a Victoria free from poverty and disadvantage. The team's work spans vast areas of social and economic policy. At the heart of this work is a strong focus on housing justice.



VCOSS pursues its advocacy goals using a wide variety of methods. However, Deb is particularly passionate about collaboration and is deeply invested in strong cross-sectoral coalitions for change.

Outside of her day job, Deb is a Non-Executive Director on the boards of St Mary's House of Welcome in Fitzroy and her local Neighbourhood House, Prahran Place. She is a previous Co-Deputy Chair of the Domestic Violence Resource Centre of Victoria (now Safe and Equal).



Lody Stewart

Lody is a seasoned financial counsellor with a wealth of experience as a consumer advocate and strong commitment to supporting vulnerable clients.



She leads FCA's strata levy payment difficulty reform project, the open banking pilot project, and writes content for the Financial Counselling Sector Toolkit and National Debt Helpline website. Lody is also the consumer representative on the Banking Code Compliance Committee.

Lody has previously worked as a financial counsellor, before that, Lody held senior roles in the investment, insurance, and financial services sector for more than 25 years.

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Melissa Clare

Melissa Clare is the Policy Director, Community Engagement for the Australian Banking Association.

Melissa brings over 15 years of experience in banking and nearly 20 years of experience in developing and managing partnerships with community stakeholders to enhance engagement for large organizations. She has worked at several banks in the areas of corporate affairs, customer advocacy and community engagement – with a focus on access to banking, women's safety, and financial abuse. Melissa has also worked in the telecommunications and not-for-profit sectors.



Daniel Chafer



Daniel has worked in the Local Government Rates & Revenue space for close to 25 years in a variety of municipalities. He is the Revenue Coordinator with the City of Ballarat and is the president of the Revenue Management Association, an industry body representing Local Government Rates and Revenue professionals from across Victoria.

Dan Nicholson

Dan Nicholson is Deputy Ombudsman at the Victorian Ombudsman.

He held leadership positions in government, non-government organisations and independent statutory entities, and worked in Australia and SE Asia.

His interests and specialties include the legal assistance sector (legal aid and community legal centres), human rights law, criminal law, administrative law, project leadership, strategic advocacy and policy reform.



Linda Burnett



Linda Burnett manages the Renter Support Services Team at Tenants Victoria. The team is made up of financial counsellors, a social worker and a rooming house outreach worker. They bring their specialist skills to work alongside lawyers in an integrated service supporting people experiencing rental stress on both an individual and systemic level.

Previous roles in Mortgage Stress Victoria and knowmore legal service have left Linda with a love of working in the multidisciplinary space and an appreciation for the benefits of providing a wraparound service for people experiencing financial hardship.

Annie Woodger

Annie Woodger is Policy Lead at Tenants Victoria. She came to Tenants Victoria in early 2024 after a long career in the state government working on criminal law policy in areas such as family violence law reform, victim's policy, terrorism and sentencing law. Before that she worked as a criminal lawyer and at the Victoria Law Foundation as a researcher and developing community legal education resources – often in partnerships with local government and Victoria Legal Aid.



Since joining Tenants Victoria she has been learning all about rental law and looking for ways to better integrate Tenants Victoria's multi-disciplinary services into its policy development and advocacy work at this critical time for housing security.



Kellie Davis

Kellie brings a strong passion to her financial counselling work, backed by 5 years of experience in generalist, small business and disaster recovery roles. She enthusiastically joined FCVic as the Disaster Recovery Lead in January 2025.

Having worked extensively in bushfire and flood recovery, Kellie has developed a deep commitment to assisting communities impacted by disasters. Her firsthand experience with the challenges these communities face fuels her dedication to advancing social justice in disaster recovery, with a focus on the critical role of financial stability.



Anastasia Magriplis

The Asylum Seeker Resource Centre (ASRC) is Australia's largest human rights organisation providing support to people seeking asylum. Anastasia joined ASRC as the Director Advocacy and Campaigns in 2019 after a long career in the not for profit sector in Queensland and New South Wales. Since 2020, Anastasia has headed the Humanitarian Operations and Resilience Programs at ASRC.

Humanitarian Operations and Resilience delivers services which seek to stabilise people who face extensive barriers to accessing their rights. Programs she oversees include Intake and Triage, Bi-Cultural Engagement, Housing, Emergency Relief and Aid, Food Bank, Community Meals, Health Services, Employment, Education and Empowerment. The ASRC provides services to people through the Footscray and Dandenong Centres serving more than 7000 people each year.



Alysa Coleman



Alysa Coleman is a financial counsellor at Casey North Community Information and Support Service. Prior to that she spent several years working in mortgages and superannuation, and then in disability advocacy, communication accessibility, and training with Scope and the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA). Her work was focussed on communication access and awareness for people with disability, as well as individual support planning. She brings this finance experience and passion for advocacy to her role as a Financial Counsellor, and to her role as an FCVic Board Member.

Rachna Madaan Bowman

Rachna holds a Masters in Business and Diploma in Community Services (Financial Counselling). She is the Head in SECL's Financial Wellbeing Program following a career in retail banking. Rachna is a consumer representative on the Australian Banking Association's consumer outcomes group. She was formerly a consumer representative on the Financial Ombudsman Service consumer liaison group. In 2023, Rachna was awarded the prestigious Jan Pentland Prize for her significant contributions to financial counselling and advocacy.



Jessica Brauer

Financial Counsellor, Colac Area Health

