

International Women's Day - 8 March 2017

SheWorks: Empowering change by advancing women

The [Felton Bequest](#) has joined forces with the Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation to announce seed funding of \$390,000 over three years for an exciting new social enterprise offering recruitment and post-placement support services to businesses wanting to attract more female employees.

[SheWorks](#) will fill the gap in the current recruitment system, by directly connecting women with sustainable employment opportunities.

[SheWorks](#) is a natural next step which comes from the already established *Fitted for Work* not-for-profit organisation whose vision is financial independence for women. Since 2005 *Fitted for Work* has supported more than 23,000 women to put their best foot forward to step out of disadvantage and into work.

While *Fitted for Work* gets women ready for work, the [SheWorks](#) enterprise facilitates them getting a job by connecting them to employers.

Donna de Zwart, CEO of *Fitted for Work* said: "The women we assist are aged 16-65 and come from many different backgrounds. Some are survivors of domestic violence, newly-arrived refugees, single mothers, early-school leavers, mature aged, women with a disability, or ex-offenders. They sometimes fall through the cracks of the current system as the 'hardest cases' but they all have one thing in common: they all want to work".

Fitted for Work's services include a personal outfitting and intensive interview preparation service together with a unique range of life-skills training, transition to work, work experience, mentoring and staying employed programs. [SheWorks](#) aims to go one step further, connecting women *Fitted for Work* has assisted to become work-ready with real and ongoing positions with employers who want to close the gap on women in their workforce.

"There is strong research and evidence to show that women are catalysts for change," said Ms de Zwart. "By helping women get work we also help their children, families, communities and benefit the Australian economy."

Sir Andrew Grimwade CBE, Chairman of the Felton Bequest Committee, said: "Alfred Felton passed away in 1904; just two years after women were given the right to vote in Australia. Through his generosity and foresight, enterprises like *SheWorks* are able to continue to help empower women. The Committee is very proud to support this initiative."

"We recognise the significant role of philanthropy to lead positive change. It is our responsibility as trustee to ensure the legacy of Alfred Felton is properly honoured, guided by the members of the Felton Bequest Committee. His bequest, while also well known as a leading source of support for the National Gallery of Victoria, was also directed to support initiatives such as this, that create opportunities and empower women and children," said Mick O'Brien, Equity Trustees Managing Director.

"[SheWorks](#) is a win-win proposition – employers who recognise its value and engage its services ensure its ongoing success and gain great employees; each of these women who become employees can then sustain themselves and their families and provide for their own future. We are proud to facilitate this initiative to empower change," he said.

Media Release



Last financial year, the Felton Bequest distributed nearly \$900,000 to support the development of ideas and catalytic projects that have the potential to enhance the physical and emotional health of women, children and young people in Victoria.

Interested employers can find out more about [SheWorks here](#).

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Media inquiries:

Alicia Patterson
Senior Manager – Marketing & Communications
03 8623 5396 / 0403 172 024
apatterson@eqt.com.au