



# Colin Biggers & Paisley Foundation Pro Bono & Community Impact Report

2023—2024



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## COVER ARTWORK



**Shaun Namarnyilk**  
*Rock Art Style*  
Mixed media on canvas

Shaun Namarnyilk, born 1979, is a Buralldja man from Gunbalanya, Western Arnhem Land, the son of Rita Nadjongorle and Bundy Namarnyilk. Shaun is an experienced artist, tour guide, musician, and storyteller. His evolving artistic aesthetic draws inspiration from the ancient rock art stories and styles found at Injalak Hill and other significant sites in the region.

Shaun's previous work as a ranger caring for the Stone Country of West Arnhem Land gave him privileged access to remote and inaccessible rock art sites. This experience deeply informs his work. Inspired by the knowledge and aesthetics of his ancestors, he creates remarkable contemporary paintings that explore a wide range of subjects. These include traditional knowledge, sacred spirit beings, and current affairs, such as the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the Gunbalanya community and the unique challenges and benefits of living in a remote location.

To achieve the visual textures of ancient rock art, Shaun mixes colored pigments and ochres, creating backgrounds that reflect the rock surfaces themselves. He skillfully employs the West Arnhem 'x-ray style' technique, leaving his canvases exposed to the elements and building layers to give his artworks a weathered, timeless quality.

Shaun's grandfathers include the notable artists Djawida Nadjongorle, Spider Namirrikki, and Jimmy Namarnyilk. His rich artistic lineage further strengthens his connection to the cultural heritage of the region.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Colin Biggers & Paisley acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we work across Australia, and pays our deep respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

## ABOUT US

Colin Biggers & Paisley is a leading national legal practice in our industries of focus, including insurance, property, construction, transport and logistics, education, aged care, faith-based enterprises and government. Our 500 people across Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney, including 70 partners, are practical, personable and outcome focused.

We have the capacity and the expertise to deliver on complex national and multinational projects, and act for major corporations, finance and insurance companies, government departments, large private organisations and individuals.

## PURPOSE

**Our purpose is to work collectively to build and secure the future of our clients, colleagues and community.**

For our clients, that means we are invested and we are loyal. To do our best by them, we invest in people with the right combination of legal, business, interpersonal and critical thinking skills, as well as in the right technology to enable them. When it is needed, our close-knit, expertise-based teams collaborate effectively to identify and solve complex issues.

For each other, that means we value our collegiality, we respect and support one another, and we celebrate diverse contributions.

For our communities, that means we take a socially minded approach to provide active support and service where they are needed most, particularly through the work of our Colin Biggers & Paisley Foundation.

As we look to the future, Colin Biggers & Paisley remains focused on the foundation it was built upon: excellence in legal advice, service, systems and outcomes.

**COLIN  
BIGGERS  
& PAISLEY**  
LAWYERS

# INTRODUCTION: MESSAGES FROM LEADERSHIP

**NICK CRENNAN**  
Managing Partner  
Colin Biggers & Paisley



I am delighted to present Colin Biggers & Paisley's Pro Bono & Community Impact Report. At our practice we believe in strong, active participation in our communities. We also believe that leadership is important, particularly on issues aligned with our core values of loyalty, respect, integrity and balance.

Since the formation of our Colin Biggers & Paisley Foundation in 2015, we have supported significant social impact by bringing together our entire offering, including pro bono legal services, volunteering, community contributions, and responsible business practices.

We continue to proudly utilise our skills, knowledge, expertise and influence to promote and protect the rights of women, children and youth, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

This Report showcases just some of the outstanding work of our Colin Biggers & Paisley Foundation and our people. It is clear that our pro bono and community contributions are creating positive social impact not only for our community partners, but also for our employees, our organisation and our profession more broadly.

**TAMARA SIMS**  
Head of Pro Bono  
& Responsible Business  
Colin Biggers & Paisley



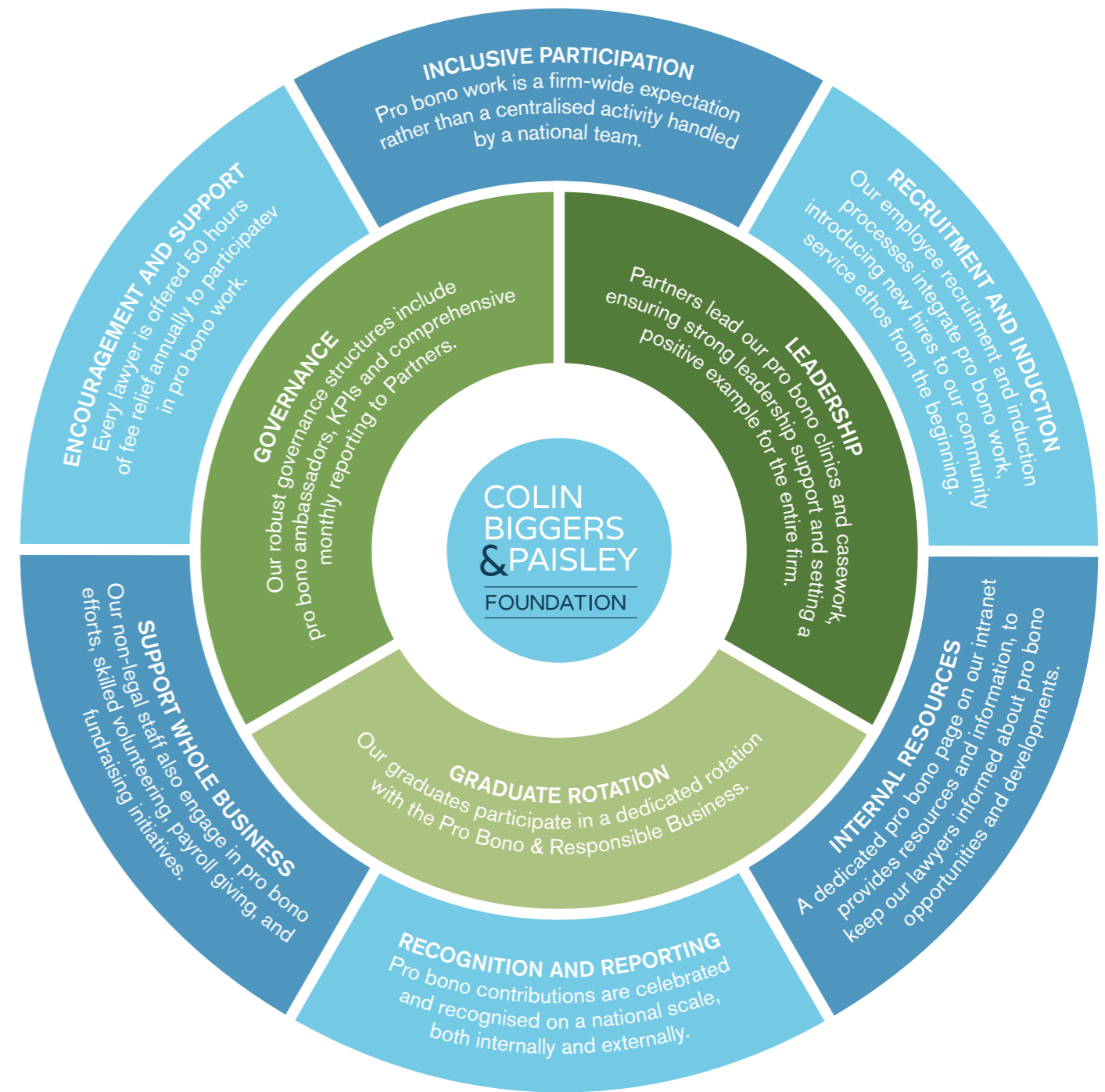
As the head of the Colin Biggers & Paisley Foundation, it is a great pleasure to share this Pro Bono & Community Impact Report.

At Colin Biggers & Paisley, we have embedded a robust pro bono and responsible business culture into every aspect of the business, ensuring that community service is a shared and celebrated commitment among all our people.

Colin Biggers & Paisley's comprehensive approach to pro bono and community impact not only supports those in need but also enriches the professional lives of our people, fostering a firm-wide commitment to making a difference.

Thank you to all our staff, partner organisations, and community stakeholders for your incredibly impactful contribution to social justice and community support during FY2023/24.

# CULTURE & IMPACT: OUR PRO BONO AND RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS APPROACH



# Colin Biggers & Paisley Foundation



## THE COLIN BIGGERS & PAISLEY FOUNDATION'S GOALS ARE TO:

- Improve access to justice
- Create access to opportunities
- Create a business our people are proud to work in
- Create a business clients are proud to work with

We are committed to improving access to justice, reducing unmet legal need and playing a leading role in making the justice system work better. We also believe in strong and active participation in the communities in which we operate.

We focus our efforts in promoting and protecting the rights of:



Women



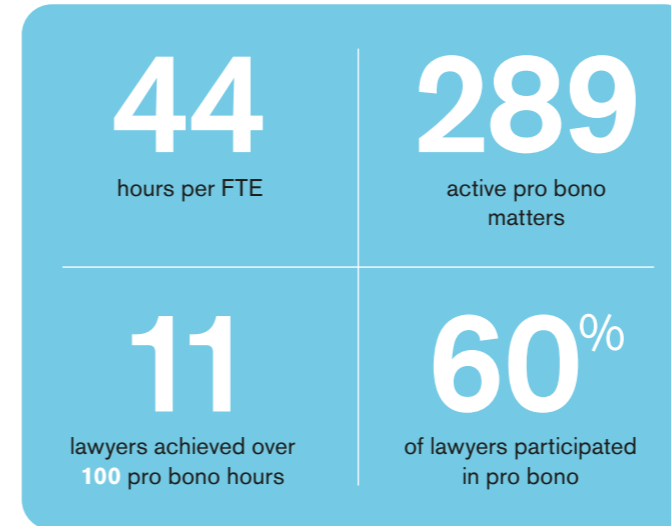
Children & Youth



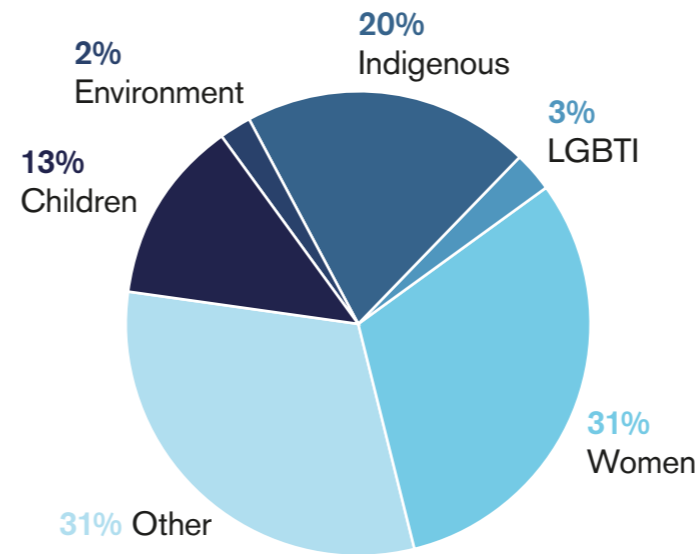
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Peoples

## BY THE NUMBERS: OUR PRO BONO AND RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS INITIATIVES

### PRO BONO LEGAL SERVICES



### Our pro bono clients:

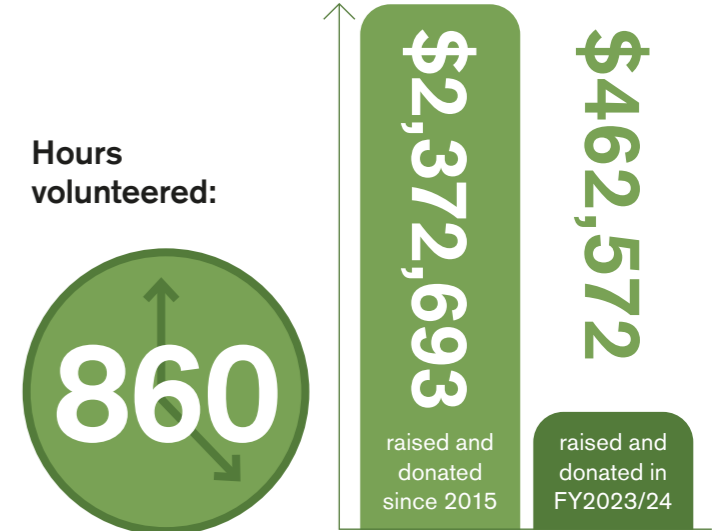


10,133 pro bono hours =

**\$3,261,264**

13.8% increase in pro bono hours from FY23

### COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTIONS & VOLUNTEERING



### RECONCILIATION

**\$142,690** supporting First Nations' businesses

**90%** increase from last year

First Nations clients assisted with pro bono support:

**40**

Colin Biggers & Paisley people that participated in cultural awareness activities:

**144**

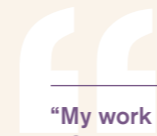
# OUR FOCUS ON Women



## KEY INITIATIVES & PARTNERS IN FY2024

- United Nations' 16 Days of Activism for the Elimination of Violence Against Women
- International Women's Day 2024 – Count Her In: Invest in Women. Accelerate Progress. Speaker events in Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne.
- Victim-Survivors of Violence Project Partnership with Women's Legal Service NSW, Women's Legal Service Victoria, and YouthLaw Victoria.
- International Women's Development Agency
- Sister Works
- Women's Legal Service Qld
- RizeUp Australia

## INITIATIVE



"My work on Women's Legal Service NSW files has been incredibly rewarding, both personally and professionally. Since August 2022 I have had carriage of 15 Women's Legal Service client files and have made 12 applications to Victims Services for counselling and financial support. All 12 applications have resulted in successful outcomes for our clients. I have helped secure over \$65,000 in compensation and 100+ hours in counselling for victims of violent crime."

CLARE ASHLEY  
Solicitor, Colin Biggers & Paisley. Women's Legal Service NSW volunteer



"At the International Women's Development Agency (IWDA), we are incredibly grateful to have a pro-bono partnership with Colin Biggers & Paisley who have provided us with pivotal support across the organisation since 2015. Over the past year, in addition to financial contributions to our partnerships, Colin Biggers & Paisley's generosity of time and expertise has enabled IWDA to secure improved disability access for staff and visitors; improve our contract management and controls; and increase protection of IWDA and our partners' Intellectual Property rights. A huge thank you to the team at Colin Biggers & Paisley, this work would not be possible without them."

BETTINA BALDESCHI  
CEO, International Women's Development Agency

## United Nations' 16 Days of Activism for the Elimination of Violence Against Women

In November 2023 Colin Biggers & Paisley participated in the United Nations' 16 Days of Activism for the Elimination of Violence Against Women with the theme: *UNITE! Invest to prevent violence against women and girls.*

Over 16 days we showcased our pro bono and responsible business partnerships with not-for-profits and community clients working on the front line to assist vulnerable women and girls. We shared internal communications with all staff and external social media posts to raise awareness and share the actions we are taking to create a world free of violence towards women. Each communication spotlighted one or more of our community partners, including the International Women's Development Agency, Women's Legal Service NSW, YouthLaw, Refugee Legal and RizeUp Australia.



INITIATIVE

## RizeUp Australia

The Colin Biggers & Paisley Foundation partnered with RizeUp Australia as our Major Charity partner. Over the last two years, we raised and donated over \$120,000 and provided 75 hours of pro bono support to RizeUp.

Colin Biggers & Paisley staff were also involved in RizeUp's Homes Volunteer program, assisting with setting up 17 homes for families fleeing Family and Domestic Violence; and RizeUp's Annual Christmas Toy Appeal by purchasing gifts for children in need.

“Volunteering to help a family start a new life after domestic violence is a rewarding experience. We assisted with a “home set-up” which involved fitting out the entire dwelling with furnishings. It was touching to see the thought and care that is put in by the RizeUp team to coordinate the decor so as to create a welcoming new home.”

SARA WAINWRIGHT  
Solicitor, Colin Biggers & Paisley  
RizeUp volunteer



INITIATIVE

## Victim-Survivors of Violence Project

The Colin Biggers & Paisley Foundation's Victim-Survivors of Violence Project is an initiative designed to address the critical legal needs of women and children affected by gender-based violence. Partnering with Women's Legal Service NSW, Women's Legal Service Victoria, and YouthLaw Victoria, the project provides specialised pro bono legal support and representation, particularly for victims of domestic, family, and sexual violence in NSW and Victoria.

Through substantial pro bono hours, advocacy for policy reform, and financial support, Colin Biggers & Paisley has significantly improved access to justice for many women, children and youth affected by violence. The project's holistic approach not only addresses immediate legal needs but also contributes to long-term systemic change, fostering a more just and equitable society.

**81 victim-survivors**  
provided with legal advice, and representation

**1,278 pro bono hours**  
contributed, including comprehensive casework, gathering evidence, drafting submissions and facilitating clients' navigation of the justice system.

**1,664 pro bono hours**  
contributed via the three days per week secondment of a Colin Biggers & Paisley lawyer to YouthLaw in Victoria.

**\$17,508 donated**  
to support the work of Women's Legal Service NSW, Women's Legal Service Victoria, and YouthLaw Victoria.

**Significant role in advocating**  
for systemic change including submissions to the Australian Law Reform Commission's Issues Paper on the Justice Response to Sexual Violence in Australia

INITIATIVE

## Women's Legal Service NSW

Women's Legal Service NSW is an independent non-profit organisation which provides a voice for women in NSW, and promotes access to justice, particularly for women who are disadvantaged by their social and economic circumstances.

Since 2015 Colin Biggers & Paisley has provided Women's Legal Service NSW with a range of in-kind, pro bono, legal research and financial support. Our partnership with Women's Legal Service NSW brings increased capacity for sector advocacy, client representation and access to justice for women in need.

“Colin Biggers & Paisley have provided invaluable research assistance to inform Women's Legal Service NSW and broader sector advocacy. This has strengthened the supports offered to victim-survivors of gender-based violence through the NSW Victims Support Scheme. This work is important to ensure the Victims Support scheme is accessible and meets the needs of victim-survivors. Law reform work has included identifying and analysing themes emerging in submissions in response to the statutory review of the Victims Rights and Support Act. Colin Biggers & Paisley have also taken on matters to ensure women are represented and can access the Victims Support Scheme.”

KATRINA IRONSIDE  
CEO, Women's Legal Service of NSW



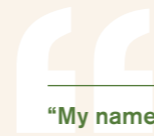
# OUR FOCUS ON Children & Youth



## KEY INITIATIVES & PARTNERS IN FY2024

- School-Based Apprenticeship and Traineeship program for high school students
- Auburn Girls' High School Mentoring and Work Experience Program
- Shalvey High School Mentoring Program
- Youthlaw Young People's Legal Rights Centre Program
- Marrickville Legal Centre – Youth Project
- Logan QLD – Breakfast & Reading Program

## INITIATIVE



“My name is Layla Chahrouk and I graduated from high school whilst simultaneously undertaking a traineeship with Colin Biggers & Paisley. I completed this School-Based Traineeship by combining work and training with a Certificate III in Business, which also counted towards my HSC. Overall, the best aspect of working as a trainee was being immersed in a whole new environment as opposed to my usual high school lifestyle.

“Coming from a Lebanese background and being raised by an independent, strong single-parent I’m happy to say that my mum and I are extremely proud of how far I’ve come. I’ve been accepted at UTS to study a Bachelor of Construction Project Management. However, I have decided to defer for a year and do a TAFE course in Residential Drafting.

“Although having high expectations for my ATAR whilst simultaneously juggling a traineeship was slightly challenging, I can’t imagine myself if I had not chosen to do this. I wouldn’t have the work ethic or the time management skills that I have now acquired, nor would I have the confidence to go head-first to do the things I love.

“After 2 years of working at Colin Biggers & Paisley, going to school, and achieving my dream university offer, I am now also employed by this same company. So, if I can do it, so can you!”

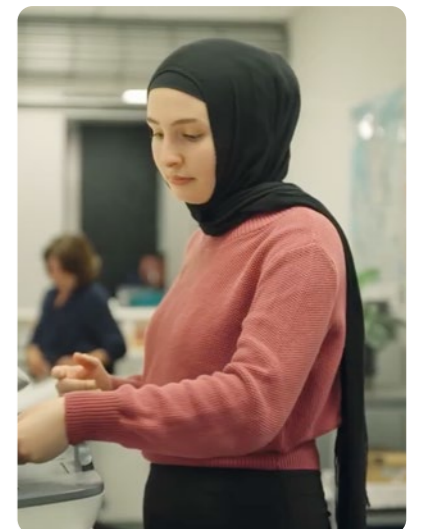
LAYLA CHAHROUK  
Colin Biggers Paisley  
School-Based Trainee, Sydney

## School-Based Apprenticeship and Traineeship Program

The School-Based Apprenticeship and Traineeship program is an initiative by the NSW Department of Education that offers senior high school students the opportunity to combine paid employment with vocational training in a specific industry area.

As part of Colin Biggers & Paisley’s commitment to youth employment and education, we support the School-Based Apprenticeship and Traineeship program in our Sydney offices.

In 2022 we employed Layla Chahrouk as a School-Based Trainee while she completed Years 11 and 12 of her Higher School Certificate (HSC) at Auburn Girls High School. In 2023, Layla successfully completed her Certificate III in Business traineeship, her HSC and is currently employed one day per week in our Office Services Team while she attends tertiary education.



INITIATIVE

## Shalvey High School Mentoring Program

“Being a volunteer mentor for the program is a rewarding experience as it allows you to engage with some brilliant young minds from diverse backgrounds. Whether its giving them a glimpse of what corporate life might look like or reassuring them that it is OK to be uncertain of what their career path looks like, is something that the students really appreciate.”

DAVID CHONG  
Special Counsel, Colin Biggers & Paisley  
Mentoring Program volunteer

“The mentoring program has been a transformative experience for our students, providing invaluable guidance, support, and inspiration. It has opened doors to new opportunities and empowered our students to realise their full potential. It has been great to watch the students’ attitudes and rapport with the mentors develop from the first session with their mentors to the final session once the trust has been built.”

JACQUI MORRISON  
Teacher and Student Leadership  
Coordinator, Chifley College Shalvey  
Campus



This mentoring program developed by Colin Biggers & Paisley in collaboration with Chifley College - Shalvey Campus and the NSW Department of Education aims to empower students, build confidence, develop resilience, and raise aspirations. The program targets Year 10 students at Shalvey Campus, a public high school in western Sydney where many students face intergenerational disadvantage and complex social issues.

The Mentoring Program pairs 15 Colin Biggers & Paisley volunteers with 15 students for five sessions throughout the school year. Each session, spanning two hours, focuses on introducing students to the corporate environment, offering insights into career pathways, and providing guidance on academic and professional development. The program also has a significant impact on the volunteer mentors, providing them with opportunities for personal growth, leadership development, and improved coaching skills.

INITIATIVE

## Youthlaw

“As part of the graduate program, I completed a 5 month pro bono secondment rotation with Youthlaw three days a week. I was involved in the Legal Pod Program and assisted young clients with various civil matters such as fines, debts, Victorian Civil & Administrative Tribunal, and freedom of information requests. Many Youthlaw clients had experienced the out-of-home care system including residential or foster care. It was wonderful to work with vulnerable young people and help them to resolve their burdensome legal matters. It was rewarding to know that our work is helping clients to move on with their lives. My experience was eye-opening and exposed me to a different side of the law and how I could use my legal skills to help others.”

SARA KONG  
Colin Biggers Paisley, Graduate Solicitor  
Youthlaw volunteer

“Youthlaw values the ongoing commitment of Colin Biggers & Paisley in supporting young victims of crime with their legal work. The feedback from our young clients is that they appreciate the consistency, diligence and compassion shown by Colin Biggers & Paisley’s pro bono lawyers. Colin Biggers & Paisley has also provided invaluable support to keep Youthlaw’s Legal Pod Program for out of home care leavers running over the last two years by providing staffing to both coordinate the program and providing ongoing legal support directly to young people.”

JAMES TRESISE  
Principal Lawyer and Senior Manager,  
Youthlaw

Youthlaw is a community legal centre based in Carlton, Victoria that provides legal advice and representation to young people under the age of 25 all across the state.

Colin Biggers & Paisley seconds a lawyer to coordinate and run Youthlaw’s innovative ‘Legal Pod Program’ which provides legal support for young people who have exited the out-of-home care system, including foster care, residential care and kinship care. Transition to independent living can be difficult for many young people, so each Legal Pod client is assigned a small team of lawyers for a period of up to three years.

We also provide ongoing legal advice and representation to young people who have experienced family, domestic and sexual violence as victims of crime.





## Marrickville Legal Centre – Youth Project

Marrickville Legal Centre is a not-for-profit community legal centre based in Sydney's inner-west, serving people all across NSW. Many clients are young people who lack experience in dealing with everyday matters.

Dedicated Colin Biggers & Paisley lawyers and secondees assist with a range of different matters including car accidents, traffic fines, underpayments at work, consumer disputes, discrimination, identity fraud and victims' compensation.

With Colin Biggers & Paisley's pro bono support, access to justice is enhanced through timely, professional, and non-judgmental advice. In addition to enabling the service to provide ongoing representation, the support prevents legal problems from developing by drawing on Colin Biggers & Paisley's extensive expertise and experience.



“Colin Biggers & Paisley’s commitment to early intervention is reflected in support of community legal education projects such as a workshop one of their lawyers ran for over 100 girls on bullying. The girls engaged with the case studies and were empowered by relating it to their own lived experience which leads them to be mindful of the broad impacts of online behaviour.”

“With the Colin Biggers & Paisley secondees’ assistance, we’ve also created a series of short, 15 second videos to bust some bullying misconceptions via social media. This series will be launched for Youth Week. We would not have been able to work on these initiatives with our limited resources.”

“Lastly, court users who have not received legal help prior to arriving at court receive on the spot assistance. Secondees provide advice and representation, promoting better outcomes for the community. Guilty defendants who take responsibility receive a more lenient sentence by entering appropriate pleas and enrolling in rehabilitation. The risk of reoffending is significantly reduced.”

JASON TEOH  
Solicitor, Marrickville Legal Centre



# OUR FOCUS ON Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Peoples

### KEY INITIATIVES & PARTNERS IN FY2024

- First Nations' Wills Clinics in Victoria and QLD with Nairn Marr Djambana and YFS Legal
- Weave Youth & Community Services
- Warrnambool Aboriginal Co-Op
- First Nations Engagement Week
- Ngalaya Law Awards
- Colin Biggers & Paisley Indigenous Cadetship
- Arts Law Centre - Artists in the Black and Adopt A Lawyer Programs
- Hermannsburg Potters Aboriginal Corporation
- Injalak Arts & Crafts Aboriginal Corporation
- Bindi Mwerre Art Centre
- Walkatjara Arts Centre
- Maruku Arts Centre
- Waralungku Arts Centre
- Pro bono for First Nations clients
- Increased procurement from First Nations' businesses

INITIATIVE

## First Nations' Wills Clinics

“I am profoundly grateful for the partnership and bond we have cultivated with the Colin Biggers & Paisley Foundation through the Indigenous Wills Clinic program. The team of lawyers who participated were dedicated to ensuring our Elders felt empowered and respected throughout the process - this was truly inspiring to witness. The workshop not only demystified the process of creating a will but also provided invaluable one-on-one consultations with legal experts that our community would not otherwise receive. Thank you to Colin Biggers & Paisley - what once seemed like a daunting task became a culturally safe and efficient experience for our community members.”

DEB MELLETT  
General Manager, Nairn Marr Djambana

“It is accepted that our First Nations people have a low rate of will making. The partnership between YFS Legal and Colin Biggers & Paisley to deliver a culturally safe First Nations wills and enduring power of attorney clinic meets an unmet legal need of our First Nations community. This clinic empowers our First Nations people to be self-determining and secures their legacies by reflecting their wishes and cultural position. This clinic provides a direct benefit to our First Nations clients and protects their families. YFS Legal are proud to partner with the Colin Biggers & Paisley Foundation to provide this culturally safe service.”

CANDICE HUGHES  
Principal Solicitor, YFS Legal

In Australia only 4% of First Nations adults have a will, compared to 55% of the general population. Unfortunately, over 70% of disputes regarding probate involve First Nations' Australians.

In November 2023, we continued to run our successful pro bono First Nations' Wills Clinic programs across Victoria and Queensland. Approximately 30 Indigenous Elders were assisted with information about and drafting of their wills and end of life documents, in partnership with 'Nairn Marr Djambana' in Frankston, Victoria and 'YFS Legal' in Inala, South Brisbane.



INITIATIVE

## Weave Youth & Community Services

“I can't speak highly enough of the support and expertise Colin Biggers & Paisley continues to provide to Weave. Nothing is too much trouble and everyone we have encountered at Colin Biggers & Paisley has been a pleasure to deal with and such a genuine supporter of and advocate for our work.

As a grass roots not for profit organisation Weave simply could not afford to pay for the invaluable advice and expertise we so generously receive from the Colin Biggers & Paisley Foundation.

This is a law firm that is clearly genuinely committed to social justice and equity, and we are very grateful for their partnership and friendship.”

SIOBHAN BRYSON  
CEO, Weave Youth & Community Services



Photograph by Tristan Stefan Edouard

Weave is a community-based organisation with over 45 years of 'walking alongside' their clients in Sydney's Redfern, Waterloo, La Perouse and Woolloomooloo communities. Weave provides wrap around casework support, assisting young people and families to thrive in areas of housing, employment, education, mental health and connecting to culture. Reducing the overrepresentation of Aboriginal young people in the criminal justice system is a key priority for Weave. Weave supports around 2,000 people per year, with over 70% of participants identifying as Aboriginal.

The Colin Biggers & Paisley Foundation's partnership with Weave covers a wide range of legal matters, including reviewing leases, policies, funding contracts, trademarks, insurance, risk, privacy, employment law and complex issues of consent. Colin Biggers & Paisley staff are welcomed at Weave community events, and they in turn have joined Colin Biggers & Paisley at our key events.



INITIATIVE

## Worn Gundidj Aboriginal Co-Op Ltd



Worn Gundidj is an Aboriginal owned and operated cooperative, on Gunditjmara country, near Warrnambool, Victoria. They offer a range of services and opportunities to Indigenous and non-Indigenous community members, including Worn Gundidj at Tower Hill (cultural tours, programs, events and programs), Worn Gundidj Bush Foods (a range of bush foods, from grains to ice cream) and Worn Gundidj Plant Nursery.

Colin Biggers & Paisley has worked alongside Worn Gundidj to help it achieve its objective to grow, become self-sustaining and independent of grant funding. Colin Biggers & Paisley Partner Morgan Lane and our Corporate and Commercial team have assisted Worn Gundidj with a range of legal matters including drafting service agreements, terms and conditions, e-commerce and Working With Children Check appeals.



“Worn Gundidj would like to acknowledge the time and professional advice that Morgan and the team provided in the setup of our eCommerce site and the advice for the service agreement with Timboon Ice Creamery to develop Worn Gundidj Bushfoods Ice Cream.

Colin Biggers & Paisley also assisted several Community Members overturn their unfair Working with Children Check rejections. This has been a game changer for these people as it has now enabled them to apply for employment positions that they would otherwise have not been able to.

The generous work that Colin Biggers & Paisley completed has not only empowered individuals but has also broken some barriers to employment and wellbeing of our community, positively contributing to the Closing the Gap targets.”

MANDY HAMILTON  
Operations, HR & Administration Manager,  
Worn Gundidj Aboriginal Co-Op Ltd



Colin Biggers & Paisley Foundation

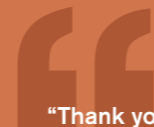
INITIATIVE

## Ngalaya Ball and First Nations Law Awards Sponsorship

Ngalaya is the peak body for First Nations lawyers and law students across NSW/ACT, with the mission to support and grow the next generation of First Nations law makers. Since 2019, Colin Biggers & Paisley Foundation has proudly supported Ngalaya with its student cadetship program and student sponsorships.

In October 2023, the Colin Biggers & Paisley Foundation supported the Ngalaya Ball and First Nations Law Awards by sponsoring the 'First Nations Senior Law Student of the Year Award'. This award is for current First Nations law students in their 4th or later year of a combined law degree; or 1.5 years or later of a 3 year law degree, living and studying in NSW/ACT. The 2023 Award recipient was Sharleigh Crittenden. Sharleigh is a Wiradjuri woman in her final year of a combined Bachelor of Criminology and Criminal Justice/Bachelor of Laws, and is an Indigenous Research Cadet in the Faculty of Law and Justice at UNSW, Sydney.

The Ngalaya and Colin Biggers & Paisley First Nations Law Scholarship is available to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander law students studying in NSW and the ACT. The scholarship was established in 2021 by Ngalaya, and is funded by Colin Biggers & Paisley. Luca Sawyer, a 4th year Wiradjuri woman studying at UNSW received the Scholarship in 2024.



“Thank you to Colin Biggers & Paisley and Ngalaya, receiving this scholarship means a lot to me as it comes at a time that it has a considerable positive impact on my financial situation. Not only has it allowed me to get on top of my bills but has provided stress relief enabling me to realign my focus on my studies.”

LUCA SAWYER  
2024 Ngalaya and Colin Biggers & Paisley  
First Nations Law Scholarship recipient

INITIATIVE

## First Nations Engagement Week

During September 2023, the Colin Biggers & Paisley Foundation hosted a number of events for our First Nations Engagement Week, providing opportunities across our offices to engage in and celebrate local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander traditions, flavours, arts and knowledge.

Colin Biggers & Paisley staff across Australia were invited to participate in a range of cultural activities including:

- A cultural walk along Birrarung Marr (River of Mists and Shadows) with Koorie Heritage Trust in Melbourne CBD
- Aboriginal painting workshop with Wendy Rix in Brisbane
- A bush tucker workshop with Bush to Bowl in Sydney
- Staff lunches provided by First Nations catering businesses Café Dreaming, Goanna Hut, FigJam & Co., Bunji Catering and Pawa Catering
- An indigenous book library from our collection of First Nations books, including biographies, novels, children's books and poems.



INITIATIVE

## Colin Biggers & Paisley Indigenous Cadetship Program



“From the moment I entered Colin Biggers & Paisley I have considered myself incredibly lucky to have the constant support and understanding of my team and the organisation. The importance of learning about and acknowledging First Nations peoples has been ever present. I have always felt safe, included, supported and welcomed within Colin Biggers & Paisley. I have also become more confident, not only in who I am but, in my studies as well.

The cadetship has provided me with an opportunity to apply my legal study to real-life experiences. Working within the pro bono team has allowed me to contribute to improving access to justice for people who are marginalised and disadvantaged, opening my eyes to the different social justice issues impacting people and organisations. One aspect that stands out is working with community legal centres that assist children and youth, learning about the mechanisms and legal issues that children and young people face when in contact with the justice system. I was able to apply different laws to the issues impacting these people and assist them to navigate their next steps.

Working as an Indigenous Cadet at Colin Biggers Paisley has been an amazing opportunity while completing my law degree. I am looking forward to learning so much more as I continue with my cadetship.”

GRACE SLATYER  
Indigenous Cadet, Colin Biggers & Paisley

Since 2022, the Colin Biggers & Paisley Indigenous Cadetship Program has helped increase employment of First Nations’ people within the field of law and business services. The cadetship program supports our commitment to provide equitable career opportunities and actively promote the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within our business.

Cadets are offered part-time employment for the duration of their law degree and the opportunity to build new skills, knowledge and experience, while gaining a greater understanding of our clients and their businesses. We support our cadets as they complete their studies by offering, formal mentoring, professional development, networking opportunities and conference attendance.

In 2023, we welcomed our second cadet, Grace Slatyer. Grace is a proud Aboriginal woman who originates from the Juru mob in Queensland. She currently lives on Dharug Country (NSW) and is in her final year as an undergraduate Law student at Macquarie University.



INITIATIVE

## Arts Law Centre — Artists in the Black and ‘Adopt a Lawyer’ Program



“Colin Biggers & Paisley has been a very generous supporter of Arts Law over many years, particularly in facilitating lawyers to provide Artists in the Black services. They assist us in many ways including in our document review services, outreach to remote Aboriginal communities, by providing pro bono advice and in direct ongoing relationships with Aboriginal art centres as part of our ‘Adopt a Lawyer’ program. It is support like this that enables Arts Law to extend its reach across a broad range of artists and arts organisations throughout Australia. We couldn’t do it without them.”

DONNA ROBINSON  
Director, Artists in the Black Legal,  
Arts Law Centre



The Arts Law Centre of Australia is a national not-for-profit community legal centre for the arts, providing advice, resources and training to artists and arts organisations on a range of legal and commercial matters. Arts Law Artists in the Black provides legal support specifically for First Nations’ artists and not-for-profit arts organisations, usually via community outreach to remote communities. Through the initiative, volunteer lawyers provide in-person pro bono legal advice, assistance, and representation on a range of legal issues, including copyright, intellectual property, contracts, licensing agreements, defamation, arts funding and estate planning.

Colin Biggers & Paisley has a longstanding partnership with Arts Law’s Artists in the Black, including our long-term commitment to the ‘Adopt a Lawyer’ program which sees law firms commit to 3 year partnerships with First Nations arts organisations.

Colin Biggers & Paisley has supported dozens of First Nations’ artists and art centres through Artists in the Black and are proud to partner with both Hermannsburg Potters Aboriginal Corporation and Injalak Arts & Crafts Aboriginal Corporation through the ‘Adopt a Lawyer’ program.



INITIATIVE

## Artists in the Black: Wurrumiyanga, Bathurst Island

“The opportunity presented to travel to the Northern Territory and Bathurst Island to contribute to and see first hand the environment, the passionate people and the community of artists was unique. I left with an enduring vision and greatly enhance imagination of what could be and how I could help further.”

ANDREW LOGIE-SMITH  
Partner, Colin Biggers & Paisley



In May 2024, Andrew Logie-Smith, Partner, travelled to Wurrumiyanga, Bathurst Island, to meet with the artists, art centre managers and arts workers at Ngaruwanajirri Art Centre, Bima Wear and Tiwi Designs. He visited art centres on Melville and Bathurst Islands with the Arts Law Centre’s Artists in the Black program.

The artists Andrew met with work across a broad range of practices reflecting the Tiwi Islands’ rich cultural and artistic history – painting, mainly with ochre, carving, weaving, print making, textile printing and fashion. The strength of Tiwi culture is reflected in there art centres from a population of fewer than 3,000 people.

The fundamental importance of art centres and women’s centres where art is practiced, as community hubs and as economic centres for their communities was a highlight.



INITIATIVE

## Adopt a Lawyer: Injalak Arts & Crafts Aboriginal Corporation

“In May 2024, I spent four days in the Northern Territory providing legal advice to First Nations artists at Injalak Art Centre through Arts Law Artists in the Black and our Adopt a Lawyer partnership. Injalak Art Centre is in Gunbalanya, a large remote town of around 1,200 people in Arnhem Land, about 300km east of Darwin. The Centre supports a diverse range of arts practices and through this outreach clinic I was able to directly support First Nations artists by providing access to legal assistance in their community.

The artists were particularly interested in talking about copyright and licensing, along with learning more about the importance of wills, and specifically how to ensure their will protected the copyright and royalties of their artworks after they pass away. As First Nations artwork becomes increasingly popular and prolific, it is vital that artists understand their rights and feel empowered to exercise them.”

TAMARA SIMS  
Head of Pro Bono & Responsible Business,  
Colin Biggers & Paisley  
Artists in the Black and ‘Adopt a Lawyer’  
volunteer

Based in remote Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory, Injalak Arts has over 200 active members, including artists, weavers and craftspeople from Gunbalanya and surrounding homelands. Inspired by culture, country, community and language, their talented artists create sculptures, fabrics, weavings and natural canvases year-round.

In February 2024, Colin Biggers & Paisley were delighted to begin our 3-year ‘Adopt A Lawyer’ partnership with Injalak.



INITIATIVE

## Adopt a Lawyer: Hermannsburg Potters Aboriginal Corporation

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“In July 2023 I was fortunate to support Artist in the Black outreach clinics to remote and regional communities in the Northern Territory. We visited Bindi Mwerre Art Centre in Alice Springs, Walkatjara and Maruku Arts Centres near Uluru and the Hermannsburg Potters who are also Colin Biggers & Paisley ‘Adopt a Lawyer’ partners. At each art centre we connected with the artists and the staff. We provided advice on estate issues, the Public Trustee, prepared wills and reviewed existing wills. We also spoke to artists about their intellectual property rights, licensing, copyright issues, consignments of art works to galleries, royalty payment structures and other legal matters.

“It was such a pleasure to have the opportunity to sit with the artists while they worked and to discuss their wishes and what it meant for them to be able to provide for their families during their lifetime and after they have passed.”

CONOR SHERIDAN  
Senior Associate, Colin Biggers & Paisley  
Artists in the Black and ‘Adopt a Lawyer’ volunteer

The community of Ntaria (Hermannsburg) is located approximately 125km west of Alice Springs, Northern Territory. The Hermannsburg Potters are a dedicated group of Western Arrarnta artists creating vibrant handmade ceramic pots that encompass collective and individually lived histories in their distinct Country. The Hermannsburg artists continue a 40-year legacy, sculpting and painting their visual histories and contemporary settings that speak to their cultural beliefs, traditions and values.

Since 2017, the Colin Biggers & Paisley Foundation has worked closely with Hermannsburg Potters as a key partner through the ‘Adopt a Lawyer’ program. Our lawyers have provided Hermannsburg Potters with advice on intellectual property including licensing and copyright, contractual matters relating to consignment of art works to galleries, constitutional advice to the organisation and legal advice and drafting of wills for the potters to ensure their wishes are followed on their passing.

Colin Biggers & Paisley is also honoured to share Hermannsburg potter Anita Ratarara’s artwork entitled *Thepa Ntjaarra (Many Birds)* in the publication of our current Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan.



# OUR FOCUS ON Responsible Business Initiatives

## KEY INITIATIVES & PARTNERS IN FY2024

- The Indigenous Literacy Foundation Major Charity Partnership
- Marrickville Legal Centre – Lawyer Secondments
- Refugee Legal
- Rural Doctors Foundation Ltd
- The Lawyers' Weekly – 30 Under 30 Awards
- Award: Top 30 Best Workplaces to Giveback 2023
- Zurich Volunteer Event – Plate it Forward
- Australian Legal Sector Alliance (AusLSA) Reporting
- Justice Connect
- LawRight Queensland
- Annual Modern Slavery Statement
- Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan

## INITIATIVE

“

The level of support that The Indigenous Literacy Foundation has from all areas of Colin Biggers & Paisley is truly wonderful – not only from the funds raised to support our programs but also from your genuine interest in learning about our work in remote Communities. This is exactly what we ask of our corporate supporters, to invest in Community literacy aspirations and an investment in people and culture to make sustainable change in access to opportunity. Special thanks to everyone at Colin Biggers & Paisley for the latest donation which will enable us to get over 3,800 culturally relevant and safe books into remote communities in 2024 - a great contribution to our work.”

BEN BOWEN  
CEO, The Indigenous Literacy Foundation

### Fundraising: Colin Biggers & Paisley Graduate Teams

Colin Biggers & Paisley Graduate teams from our Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne offices hold an annual fundraising challenge to raise funds for our major charity partner. Through a series of events including trivia nights, cocktail parties, online auctions and raffles the 2023 graduates raised \$19,545 for The Indigenous Literacy Foundation.

### Fundraising: Colin Biggers & Paisley Christmas Appeal

The Colin Biggers & Paisley Foundation's 2023 Christmas appeal also raised \$18,328 for The Indigenous Literacy Foundation. This money was raised through our 'Final Hour Appeal', where staff choose to donate their final hour of work to our major charity partner; and through our Christmas gift donations, where staff elect to donate the value of their staff Christmas gift, instead of receiving it themselves.

## Indigenous Literacy Foundation

In FY2023/24 Colin Biggers & Paisley Foundation launched a major 2-year partnership with The Indigenous Literacy Foundation, a community-led organisation that works to ensure access to culturally appropriate literacy materials for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in remote communities across Australia.

To help support The Indigenous Literacy Foundation's work, Colin Biggers & Paisley is providing a range of pro bono legal services, donations, fundraising, employee contributions, in-kind support and volunteering. During the partnership, our staff have the opportunity to contribute to equity of opportunity for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, ensuring they have future choice in education, health and wellbeing.

In FY2023/24 a total of \$38,583 was raised and donated to The Indigenous Literacy Foundation, along with four hours of pro bono services valued at \$2,050.



INITIATIVE

## Marrickville Legal Centre – Lawyer Secondments



“My secondment at Marrickville Legal Centre (MLC) was immersive and transformative. I attended MLC three days a week, working alongside other MLC lawyers to deliver frontline services to clients seeking legal advice, including tenancy law, employment law, criminal law, civil law, family law and insurance law. MLC’s client base ranges from young people to the elderly, with many clients being particularly vulnerable. This experience taught me the importance of connecting with clients beyond their legal issues and understanding their backgrounds to deliver advice tailored to their unique circumstances. Witnessing the direct impact my advice had on the client’s lives gave my role as a lawyer a renewed sense of purpose and meaning.

“As part of my secondment, I attended Burwood Local Court with MLC each Thursday for Apprehended Violence Order (AVO) list days. We provided a duty lawyer service, advising clients before their hearings. These clients typically faced charges such as drug possession, affray or common assault, and often had AVOs against them. Whilst challenging at times, this experience developed my core legal skills, requiring me to set aside subjective feelings and provide impartial advice based on the facts. It also taught me advocacy skills as I appeared before the Magistrate on behalf of particularly vulnerable clients who were unable to self-advocate.

“At times, my experience was emotional and confronting. Hearing clients’ stories taught me invaluable skills, both as a lawyer and as a human being. It emphasised the importance of listening and being compassionate, while also being a strong, reliable figure for clients.

“Overall, my time at MLC was eye-opening and has shaped the lawyer I am today.”

REBEKAH STERNBERG  
Graduate, Colin Biggers & Paisley  
Marrickville Legal Centre volunteer



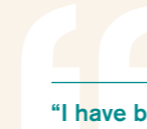
INITIATIVE

## Refugee Legal

The Colin Biggers & Paisley Foundation works closely with Refugee Legal, Australia’s largest provider of free specialist legal assistance fighting for the rights of people seeking asylum, refugees and disadvantaged migrants.

Since 2021 a total of 28 lawyers and non-lawyers from Colin Biggers & Paisley have volunteered with Refugee Legal ensuring access to justice and assistance with protection claims for Refugee Legal clients. Our lawyers have assisted asylum seekers through various Refugee Legal Clinics, including:

- Fast-Track Clinic
- Temporary Protection Visa Clinic
- Safe Haven Enterprise Visa Conversion Clinic
- Afghanistan Clinic
- Ministerial Intervention Clinic



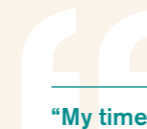
“I have been volunteering with Refugee Legal for over a year. It has been an eye opening and humbling experience, not only in understanding the complexities of migration law, but in assisting the clients who have been courageous enough to seek a better life for themselves and their family”

MARY KINNA  
Special Counsel, Colin Biggers & Paisley  
Refugee Legal volunteer



“Volunteering with Refugee Legal Clinics has been a rewarding and educational experience. From preparing applications, to drafting applications for Ministerial intervention and speaking with refugees through interpreters to obtain instructions, it presents as an opportunity to apply legal and interpersonal skills in a unique context. It’s also allowed me to obtain a better understanding of the political and social issues faced by refugees in their home countries. I highly recommend others to volunteer.”

TREVOR HO  
Special Counsel, Colin Biggers & Paisley  
Refugee Legal volunteer



“My time working in the Refugee Legal Clinics has been an enjoyable experience where I have been able to assist those who may otherwise be unable to access the support they need. The work undertaken, is not complex and provides a varied experience where you have the opportunity to make a real difference in people’s lives. Some of the clients are in positions where they have been unable to see their family for multiple years. Whilst our role is only small, it can make a huge difference to those we assist.”

JOSHUA WARD  
Solicitor, Colin Biggers & Paisley  
Refugee Legal volunteer



“Our collaboration with Colin Biggers & Paisley has played a vital role in the work of Refugee Legal especially across our Fast Track Clinic, Temporary Protection Visa Conversion Clinic and Ministerial Intervention Clinic. Following the Federal Government’s announcement last year to provide a pathway to permanent residency for temporary protection visa holders, Colin Biggers & Paisley volunteers have provided critical support to clients assisting to draft submissions and applications for individuals and families seeking permanent protection in Australia. In 2021, both legal and non-legal volunteers from Colin Biggers & Paisley also assisted in our Afghanistan Clinic which was established following the Taliban’s takeover of Afghanistan. Volunteers assisted with intake calls, reviewing Refugee and Special Humanitarian Visa applications and finalising applications for lodgement, providing vital support to Refugee Legal. Colin Biggers & Paisley’s pro bono assistance has changed the course of many people’s lives for the better.”

DAVID MANNE  
Executive Director, Refugee Legal

Refugee Legal:



INITIATIVE

## Rural Doctors Foundation

“Rural Doctors Foundation is most grateful for the support and knowledge that Colin Biggers & Paisley provided during the development of our innovative new GP service for rural health practitioners, GPs4RuralDocs. The pro bono expertise, guidance and encouragement we received played a critical role in the formation of this vital program. This support was invaluable and allowed the us to reinvest the savings into the delivery of the GP service.

“The team at Colin Biggers & Paisley went above and beyond the professionalism expected from such a reputable firm. From the very beginning they took the time to understand our needs and championed our cause, showing true warmth, care and authenticity every step of the way.

“Rural Doctors Foundation is truly thankful for our partnership and their dedication to helping us make a difference to the health and wellbeing of our rural healthcare practitioners so they can continue to care for their communities. We look forward to our ongoing partnership.”

FRAN AVON  
CEO, Rural Doctors Foundation



INITIATIVE

## The Lawyers’ Weekly — 30 Under 30 Awards



Clare Ashley Solicitor in Colin Biggers & Paisley’s Sydney Dispute and Investigation team was finalist in The Lawyers Weekly ‘30 Under 30 Awards’ 2024 Pro Bono/Community Lawyer awards.

Clare’s nomination highlights her commitment to pro bono and the community. As a graduate Clare rotated through the Responsible Business team and was seconded to Marrickville Legal Centre. Since settling in the Dispute and Investigations team, Clare has worked on Women’s Legal Services NSW Victims of Crime pro bono matters. This nomination is a testament to her hard work assisting family and domestic violence survivors.

“I am honoured to have been named a finalist in The Lawyers Weekly 30 Under 30 Awards 2024 in the category of Pro Bono/Community Lawyer. Pro bono work is, and always will be, an integral part of my practice. At Colin Biggers & Paisley (and thanks to the excellent work of Colin Biggers & Paisley’s Pro Bono & Responsible Business Team, led by Tamara Sims) I am privileged to have the opportunity to volunteer with and for various community legal centres and not-for-profit organisations.

“I strive to help cultivate a culture in which the resources that my colleagues and I have at our disposal are regularly and excellently used to help those who may not otherwise have access to justice.”

CLARE ASHLEY  
Graduate, Colin Biggers & Paisley  
‘30 Under 30 Awards’ Finalist.

INITIATIVE

## Top 30 Best Workplaces to Give Back by GoodCompany

Colin Biggers & Paisley is proud to be awarded the Top 30 Best Workplaces to Give Back across all sectors. Awarded by GoodCompany, the national award recognises organisations that excel in providing the purposeful benefits that workers want including paid volunteer leave, payroll giving with matched donations and meaningful pro bono programs.

At Colin Biggers & Paisley we strive to involve all our people in community programs and initiatives that make a substantial and positive difference. We actively pursue an inclusive and diverse workplace, we support access to justice through our pro bono legal services and we are deeply committed to making a positive contribution to the communities around us.



INITIATIVE

## Australian Legal Sector Alliance

Colin Biggers & Paisley has been a member of the Australian Legal Sector Alliance (AusLSA) since 2017. As a member of AusLSA, we work to promote best practice sustainability commitments and performance across the legal sector and report on our environmental footprint annually. In doing so, we are ensuring our accountability to the sustainability mission and acknowledging our responsibility within society and as a member of the Australia legal sector.

INITIATIVE

## Insurance Team Host Zurich For Volunteer Event – Plate It Forward

In February 2024 our Colin Biggers & Paisley Insurance team hosted client Zurich for a very special Plate Up Together cooking class and dinner at Kyiv Social in Sydney – a social enterprise run by Plate it Forward, a Colin Biggers & Paisley Foundation charity partner, whose mission is to foster economic inclusion for marginalised communities.

Plate it Forward CEO and Founder Shaun Christie-David spoke about his unique business model - a combination of premium hospitality venues and sustainable charitable initiatives, including six social enterprise restaurants, a catering and events business, meal donation initiative, and training and career development programmes. Revenue is derived from trading income from its for-purpose business units, which is reinvested back towards its organisational purpose of driving social change.

By participating in this event, 160 meals were donated to community members facing food insecurity, making a positive impact on Colin Biggers & Paisley’s and Zurich’s local community.



# Our Team



**NICK CRENNAN**  
Managing Partner



**STEPHEN THOMPSON**  
Pro Bono Lead Partner



**TAMARA SIMS**  
Head of Pro Bono and  
Responsible Business



**DAISY JOHNSON**  
Responsible Business  
Manager



**REBEKAH STERNBERG**  
Graduate



**AMBER SELVAN**  
Graduate



**GRACE SLAYTER**  
Cadet



**SARA KONG**  
Graduate



**JOEY CHALITA**  
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