

Engagement Partnerships Framework

2025 – 2029





Contact details

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Acknowledgement

In the spirit of unity and respect, BreastScreen Victoria acknowledges the First Peoples of these lands and waterways.

We recognise their deep connection to the earth and the importance of holistic wellbeing as we embark on our shared journey of breast health.

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Introduction

BreastScreen Victoria is an accredited part of BreastScreen Australia – the national population screening program for breast cancer, jointly funded by both the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments. The service is delivered through a network of contracted providers that provide breast screening and reading and assessment services to clients across Victoria. This includes over 55 Screening services, 8 Reading and Assessment Services and 2 Mobile Screening services.

This Partnerships Framework outlines our approach to building and sustaining collaborative relationships that supports community engagement and communities, integrated healthcare, and capacity building. It reflects our commitment to equity, inclusion, and innovation, and provides a structured model for engaging with stakeholders across sectors.

By fostering purposeful, inclusive, and respectful partnerships, we aim to enhance awareness, improve access, and ensure that all individuals, regardless of background or circumstance, feel welcomed and supported in their breast screening journey.

About BreastScreen Victoria

BreastScreen Victoria operates a population-based breast cancer screening program that aims to reduce the impact of breast cancer and save lives through early detection.

We are contracted by the Victorian Department of Health to deliver breast screening in Victoria as part of the national BreastScreen Australia program. The program is jointly funded by the Australian and State and Territory Governments. Our services are quality assured and accredited under the BreastScreen Australia National Accreditation program. Performance is measured against the National Accreditation Standards.

We provide free breast screens (mammograms) to women and the trans and gender-diverse community aged 40 and over without breast symptoms, targeting those aged 50–74 years who are proven to benefit the most from population-based screening.

Strategic context

The BreastScreen Victoria Partnerships Framework 2025–2029 is grounded in and guided by our [Strategic Plan 2025–2029](#). It reflects our commitment to equity, inclusion, and innovation in breast cancer screening and community engagement.

At its core is a focus on equity, recognising that individuals experience health and access differently based on intersecting aspects of identity such as culture, gender, ability, and socioeconomic status.

This Framework provides a clear, structured approach to how we identify and develop partnerships to support community engagement activities.

Purpose of the Engagement Partnership Framework

This partnership approach prioritises collaboration and capacity building with key stakeholders, including community organisations, healthcare providers, and government agencies. It is designed to foster inclusive, place-based strategies that reflect the diverse needs of Victorian communities.

This Framework aligns with BreastScreen Victoria’s Strategic Plan 2025–2029. Specifically, it aims to:

- Enhance equity for priority communities through innovative approaches and partnerships.
- Increase community awareness of breast cancer prevention and early detection.
- Improve access and equity in women’s health through new models of collaboration.

The Framework provides practical guidance for staff and partners, including:

- Principles to guide our communications and engagement approach.
- A matrix to tailor the level of engagement to the activity and context.

In BreastScreen Victoria’s engagement context, a partnership is a strategic, non-financial relationship with an established organisation, designed to achieve shared goals and deliver mutual value.

Scope of the Engagement Framework

This Partnerships Framework applies to community engagement activities undertaken by BreastScreen Victoria. It is designed as a guide for the BreastScreen Victoria team when working with established organisations in a non-financial relationship.

The Framework will be used with:

- **Community-based partnerships** with organisations serving priority populations, including First Nations communities, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) groups, LGBTIQ+ individuals, people with disabilities and women from lower socioeconomic backgrounds.
- **Healthcare collaborations** with primary care providers, hospitals, and allied health professionals to integrate breast screening into broader health promotion efforts.
- **Capacity-building initiatives** that strengthen the ability of partners to promote breast screening and support clients through the screening journey.
- **Communications and promotional partnerships** that support the dissemination of clear, culturally appropriate breast screening information through partners' existing communication channels and networks.



Our role

BreastScreen Victoria plays a central role in fostering partnerships that advance breast cancer screening and health equity across the state.

What is the role we play?

- **Leadership in health promotion:** We lead initiatives that raise awareness about breast cancer prevention and early detection, especially among under-screened populations.
- **Facilitator of partnerships:** We initiate and nurture relationships with community organisations, healthcare providers, and government agencies to co-design and implement engagement and communication strategies.
- **Equity champion:** Inclusive practices and ensure that our partnerships reflect the diverse needs of Victoria's communities.
- **Capability builder:** We support our partners with tools, training, and resources to strengthen their ability to promote breast screening and support their communities.
- **Evaluator and learner:** We monitor and evaluate partnership outcomes to continuously improve our approach and share learnings across the sector.



Our purpose

The purpose of BreastScreen Victoria's Partnerships Framework is:

To support and empower diverse communities and partners to engage, connect, and collaborate in promoting equitable access to breast cancer screening in Victoria.



Principles for Partnership Framework

Purposeful

- We begin every engagement with a clear understanding of what we want to achieve.
- While our engagement will be driven by our strategic priorities, we must be aware of our stakeholders' objectives, environment, expertise and level of influence.
- We aim to conduct focused and meaningful engagement in every interaction, with a shared agreement on what successful outcomes look like.
- By planning our communication and managing expectations, we aim to build lasting goodwill with stakeholders.

Inclusive

- We identify relevant stakeholders and aim to make it easy for them to engage.
- We identify and involve the people and groups who take part in our work, influence it, or are affected by it. This includes people who can be harder to reach because of things like language, culture, age, where they live, or mobility.
- We provide our stakeholders with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.

Timely

- We involve stakeholders from the start and agree on when and how to engage.
- We will clearly identify and explain the engagement process, and negotiate timelines with stakeholders, where possible.
- This includes meeting schedules, and response times for information requests or feedback.

Transparent

- We are open and honest in our engagement and set clear expectations.
- We will provide information so stakeholders can participate in a meaningful way and will foster a culture of sharing ideas.

Respectful

- We acknowledge and respect the expertise, perspective, and needs of partners.
- We understand that engagement is a two-way process. We are open to alternative views and to listen as well as speak.
- We respect our stakeholders' expertise and appreciate the benefits of mutual learning.
- We recognise the different communication needs and preferences of stakeholders and endeavour to meet these wherever possible.

Range of partnerships

Our partnerships span a range of interactions. By tailoring our approach across five levels—Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate, and Empower—we ensure that each partnership has a purpose. These levels of engagement are adapted from the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum (2007).

Level of impact

	Networking	Coordinating	Cooperating	Collaborating
Type of partnership	Involves the exchange of information and resources, with minimal integration or commitment. This requires little time and trust between partners.	Involves exchanging information and coordinating activities around common objectives	Involves sharing resources and require greater investment of time and trust.	This is the most intensive level of partnership, requiring a high degree of planning, resource sharing, and organisational commitment. Collaborating partners often see changes in their core work and increased interdependence
Engagement level	Inform	Inform Consult Involve	Inform Consult Involve Collaborate	Inform Consult Involve Collaborate Empower
Example	<i>A local community group receives BreastScreen Victoria newsletters and shares them with their members. They attend occasional network meetings but are not involved in planning or delivery of activities.</i>	<i>BreastScreen Victoria and a multicultural health service align their outreach calendars to avoid overlap and maximise reach. They share updates and coordinate attendance at community events but operate independently.</i>	<i>A disability organisation works with BreastScreen Victoria to organise the mobile screening service for screening. They share staff time, transport resources, and jointly support clients through the screening process.</i>	<i>BreastScreen Victoria and a First Nations health organisation co-design and co-deliver a culturally safe screening event where BreastScreen Victoria Mobile screening service is deployed for screening They share governance, and evaluation responsibilities, and adapt their internal processes to support the partnership.</i>

The continuum has been adapted from VicHealth’s The partnerships analysis tool for establishing, developing and maintaining partnerships for health promotion.

How we measure partnership success

We evaluate the success of partnerships across the continuum in a range of tailored indicators.

These may include:

- Number of breast screens delivered
- Client feedback and satisfaction levels
- Duration and sustainability of the partnership
- Demonstrated evidence of co-design and shared decision-making

In addition to these measures, we consider:

- Alignment with shared goals and strategic priorities
- Equity of participation and representation across communities
- Efficiency in resource sharing and service delivery
- Quality of communication and trust between partners
- Capability building and organisational learning outcomes
- Adaptability to emerging needs and innovation in approach
- Broader community impact, including increased health literacy and engagement

This comprehensive approach ensures that partnerships are not only productive but also equitable, sustainable, and responsive to the communities they serve.

Accountability

We will ensure transparency and demonstrate the impact of our partnership framework through regular reporting and communication:

- **Board reporting:** Partnership outcomes and progress will be included in our standard Board reports to maintain oversight and strategic alignment.
- **Partnership newsletter:** Distributed twice a year to inform about new initiatives and achievements.



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