



Sydney, Australia to host the 5th World Conference Of Women's Shelters

[Wesnet](#) (Women's Services Network Inc.) is pleased to announce that together with the [Global Network of Women's Shelters](#) (GNWS), Australia will be hosting the [5th World Conference of Women's Shelters \(5WCWS\)](#) in Sydney from 15-18 September 2025.

This will be the first time ever held in the Southern Hemisphere.

Launched in New York last week at the [68th annual Commission on the Status of Women](#) (CSW68)—the UN's largest annual gathering on gender equality and women's empowerment—and locally in Sydney at the [Elsie Conference](#) celebrating the 50th anniversary of the first women's refuge in Australia—**5WCWS will be the world's largest conference by and for women's shelters and those working to end gender-based violence.**

1,000+ are expected to attend from over 100 countries.

This conference has a strong history, having been held around the globe four times previously, in the USA, Canada, Netherlands and Taiwan. Attendees have included shelter and refuge workers and NGO leaders from around the world from government, non-government, corporate sector and academics.

Karen Bentley, CEO Wesnet said "The 5WCWS will give a massive boost to the common goal: to end all violence against women globally. Women's shelters and women's specialist services have been recognised as crucial to ending violence against women and girls and other forms of gender-based violence. The global exchange at these world conferences offers a unique opportunity to share knowledge and collaborate on a worldwide systematic approach and combating violence against women and their children and to increase the safety, independence and strength of women worldwide. We are so excited to be able to host this continuing dialogue on a global scale from the past four world conferences".

Spanning over four days, 5WCWS will offer leading keynote speakers, concurrent sessions, workshops, an exhibition, pre- and post-study tours plus opportunities to collaborate.

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic and other global crises, for Sydney, winning the right to host this event is exciting. It will be six years since the last world conference which was held in 2019.

As BESydney CEO, Lyn Lewis-Smith said *“I am proud that Sydney has been chosen to host the 5th World Conference of Women’s Shelters in 2025, an incredible opportunity to have meaningful conversations about systemic approaches to combating violence against women and providing long-term support for women as they transition from short-term crisis care to full recovery from domestic abuse, trauma and deep loss. Business events are the ideal platform to raise awareness among governments, the corporate sector and international organisations to strive for real change in policy and power”.*

5WCWS will be held at a world-class venue—the [International Convention Centre Sydney](#) (ICC Sydney) which is Australia’s leading convention, exhibition and entertainment precinct, located at the intersection of the city’s academic, cultural and technology hubs.

Socially impactful events like 5WCWS are driving the future of the events industry, and the ability to make a social contribution remains an increasingly significant aspect of attendee expectations, as identified in ICC Sydney’s RESPECT: Shaping Events for Respect report developed in collaboration with @/McCrindle. Learn more here:

[RESPECT-Shaping-Events-For-Success-Report.pdf \(iccsydney.com.au\)](#)

As ICC Sydney CEO and Group Director – Convention Centres ASM Global (APAC) said *“At ICC Sydney, corporate social responsibility is a cornerstone of our business management framework and we strive to deliver events that drive a positive social impact. As a beacon for advocacy and change in our city, we are proud that ICC Sydney will host the 5th World Conference of Women’s Shelters in 2025, which will help to increase the safety, independence and strength of women in Sydney while bringing us closer to ending violence against women around the globe - empowering delegates to drive positive change in their local communities”.*

Australia looks forward to warmly welcoming delegates from around the world to 5WCWS.

[ENDS]

www.worldshelterconference.org

hashtag: #5WCWS

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Media enquiries

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If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic violence:

- In an emergency call the police on 000
- Call 1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732) to speak with a trained counsellor from the National Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence Counselling Service or access online counselling at 1800respect.org.au.