



Older Voices for Change

Expression of Interest (EOI) Information Pack 2026



Engender
Equality

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COTA Tasmania and Engender Equality

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**Older Voices
for Change**

Your story can change
lives and communities.

COTA Tasmania and Engender Equality



COTA Tasmania (Council on the Ageing) is the leading voice for Tasmanians as they age. We promote changes to our systems and culture so that all Tasmanians can age well. We value the diverse voices of older Tasmanians, and we learn from their experience.

Our vision is Tasmania is a place where all people are treated with respect, kindness and dignity, and where ageing is a time of opportunity, contribution and celebration.

Our mission is we challenge ageism and promote the rights, interests and values of all Tasmanians as they age.

COTA Tasmania's Lifelong Respect Program is a commitment to raising awareness, inspiring action and impacting long term change to help eliminate the abuse of older people.

As part of Lifelong Respect our Older Voices for Change Program is one way we are contributing to Tasmania being a place where all people are treated with respect, kindness and dignity throughout their lifetime.

Engender Equality works to end all family, domestic and intimate partner violence.

Believing women, victim-survivors and advocating for the rights of mothers to parent their children, and acknowledgement of gendered impacts across all social domains, is fundamental to our practice.

Our vision is communities living free from violence.

Our mission is we apply deep expertise of intimate partner violence to our offered services which includes:

- An individual approach - with trauma informed counselling and services.
- A community approach - with workplace training, psycho-education groups and public forums.
- A systemic approach - with education, research and advocacy.
- A social approach - promoting policy awareness and improvement.

Program Overview

Raising Voices, Changing Lives

Older Voices for Change (OVC) is an advocacy program offered by COTA (Council on the Ageing) Tasmania for older people with lived experience and expertise that raises their voices, changes their lives and those of others, by delivering education on awareness and prevention of elder abuse across Tasmanian communities. This education is delivered through the media, and online or face-to-face presentations.

COTA Tasmania worked with Engender Equality to facilitate our first lived experience advocacy program in 2023, and we are privileged to partner again with Engender Equality in the delivery of our second OVC recruitment program.

Why become an Advocate?

Everyone should be able to live their life with respect and free from abuse.

In Tasmania, the abuse of older people is defined as *“a single or repeated act, or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust, which causes harm or distress to an older person”*.

What this looks like in reality can include:

- Unexplained injuries or withdrawal
- Sudden money problems or missing belongings
- Being isolated from family or community
- Fear, anxiety or changes in behaviour

The abuse of older people remains largely hidden or unknown. The COTA Tasmania OVC program seeks to magnify and multiply the lived expertise of older people as unique change agents in the pursuit of raising awareness and preventing elder abuse.

Could you tell and share your story?

Consider sharing your story to help raise awareness, reach people and prevent abuses from happening. You can help to contribute to long term and impactful change. The program is voluntary with reimbursements for your time and associated expenses.

What you need to know

Due to the nature of lived experience and so we can best support your journey, there is a process to undertaking the training and formalising the role to become a COTA Tasmania OVC Advocate. You will find more about the process in this Information Pack.

We are actively recruiting from March through to April in 2026.

For more information or to have a chat about the program, please contact Julie Andersson at COTA Tasmania on 03 6231 3265 or email juliea@cotatas.org.au

Becoming an OVC Advocate

Eligibility

- Being over 65 years or over 50 years if Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.
- Being in a position to safely engage in speaking engagements with media and community groups.
- Being ready to go public and be recognised as a survivor of elder abuse.
- Being available and able to attend the training days.
- Having support networks and links to services.
- Not currently engaged in ongoing legal matters related to the experience/s of abuse.
- A resident of Tasmania.

What's involved?

It is important to prepare yourself for the five steps of involvement to complete the program and become an OVC Advocate.

STEP 1:



Are you ready to tell your story?

Telling your story can be hard. It's important to have a think about what this may mean for you and your safety. Go to the **Are you ready to tell your story? checklist** to help you prepare.

STEP 2:



Expression of Interest (EOI)

An expression of interest lets us know why you would like to join the program, some information about you and how you want to build your skills. Go to the **EOI Form** to see what you need.

STEP 3:



Interview

This is where we get to meet in person, have an informal chat and get to know a bit more about you and your interest in the program, based on your EOI. It also gives you the opportunity to ask us questions.

STEP 4:



Training

The training program is held online once a week over 4 weeks. You will meet other people, contribute and learn. See the **Training Framework** for an overview of what to expect.

STEP 5:



Post Training

After the training we will meet together with you to have a final chat about your readiness as a COTA Tasmania Older Voices for Change Advocate.

STEP 1:

SHARE YOUR STORY

Are you ready to tell your story?

Read through the following questions and makes some notes after each section, if this helps.

- Do I really want to share my story or am I feeling that I should?
- Is it safe for me to tell my story publicly?
- Are there any ongoing risks from the person who abused me?
- Are there people in my life who need to be aware of my decision to tell my story publicly?
- How might my family feel about my decision to speak out?
- What might the impacts of this decision be for them?

- What if I'm not happy with how my story is reported or responded to?
- How will I manage the emotions associated with sharing my story publicly?
- What information am I ready to share and what information do I want to keep private?
- What would happen if information I wanted to keep private about my experience was made public (e.g. uncovered by a journalist or shared by someone who knows me)?
- Am I involved in any ongoing legal proceedings that may be jeopardised by speaking out publicly?
- Are there any potential legal consequences from sharing my story?

Are you ready to tell your story?

If you would like to explore these questions in a safe conversation, or if these questions cause any concerns that you would like to discuss in more detail, please contact Julie on 03 6231 3265 or email juliea@cotatas.org.au.

STEP 2:

BUILD SKILLS

Expression of Interest (EOI)

We recognise that much of the following information we are asking is both personal and sensitive, this helps us to be aware of any potential risks and safety concerns for you and COTA Tasmania.

COTA Tasmania is committed to ensuring that your information is confidential. If you would like more information about our Privacy Policy, please ask us.

COTA Tasmania values diversity and welcomes applicants from diverse backgrounds, identities and experiences. This includes people from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, LGBTIQ+, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, and people with disabilities.

Please fill in the information requested on the following pages. If you would like help to complete the form, please ask us.

You can return this form to COTA Tasmania:

- in person at Level 12, 39 Murray Street, Hobart
- by emailing it to juliea@cotatas.gov.au.
- or by post to Julie Andersson, COTA Tasmania, PO Box 4679, Hobart, 7000.

Contact Details

Full name

Address

Postal Address

Phone/Mobile

Email

Gender

Pronouns

Date of Birth

Eligibility

1. Elder abuse is mistreatment or neglect of an older person by someone in the community they trust, such as an adult child or other family member, a neighbour or a friend. It can be psychological, financial, physical, social, coercive control, sexual, spiritual or neglect.

Have you experienced elder abuse and are you interested in engaging in raising awareness of elder abuse, including by publicly telling your story (anonymously if necessary)?

YES NO

2. Are you 65 years or older – or 50 an older if Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?

YES NO

3. Are you willing to undertake a risk assessment as part of the process of selection?

YES NO

4. Are you a current client of Engender Equality?

YES NO

5. Are you a resident of Tasmania?

YES NO

Background

6. How would you best describe your cultural background?

7. What key messages about your experience as a survivor of elder abuse would you like to get across?

8. What relationship did the person who abused you have to you? (i.e. partner, adult child, other family member, carer etc.)

9. How long is it since the abuse stopped?

10. Do you have a Restraining Order, Family Violence Order or Police Family Violence Order in place?

11. Are you involved in any current legal proceedings or family court proceedings?

12. Do you have any ongoing support and/or counselling services in place?

Additional information

13. Are you currently working or studying?

14. Have you had any media and/or public speaking experience?

15. What is your hope in participating in the Older Voices for Change Program?

16. Do you have any limitations on being able to make media comments or being identified in media? (Note: you can use a made-up name and decline to have your image appear, if required. This will be discussed further in training.)

17. Training will be held online. Do you have any challenges to participation in online training or need assistance to attend online training/meetings by Microsoft Teams? (e.g. assistance to access computer; assistance to use a computer, closed captions, Auslan interpreter, voice to text software)

18. Do you have appropriate technology and sufficient internet data to attend four (4) days of Microsoft Teams training?

Availability

18. Are you able to volunteer your time for talking to the media or participating in community awareness sessions, if you choose to do so, when opportunities arise?

Signed: _____ Date: _____

What happens next?

Thank you for completing this expression of interest. Your expression of interest will be assessed for suitability for proceeding to a pre-training interview prior to attending training for the program.

We will be in touch at the end of March to discuss the outcome of your application.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact Julie, COTA Tasmania Program Manager, Lifelong Respect, on 03 6231 3265 or email julieacotatas.org.au.

When you have finished this form, please email it to juliea@cotatas.org.au or post to Julie Andersson, COTA Tasmania, PO Box 4679, Hobart Tas 7001.

STEP 3:



Interview

The informal yet structured interview gives the opportunity to expand on the questions asked in the EOI, so we can gather more information, and you have the opportunity to ask questions.

Where possible, we will conduct interviews in person, otherwise interviews will be online.

We expect to conduct interviews during May.

STEP 4:

Keep Learning

Training

Training positions will be offered to successful candidates in June. There will be four (4) online training workshops in June and July.

Workshops are held once a week over a four-week period. The time of the training workshops is between 9.30am and 2.30pm with scheduled breaks.

Training Framework

Day One - Introduction to Lived Experience Advocacy

- Introductions
- Advocacy and key messages
- Understanding elder abuse
- Preventing elder abuse and ageism

Day Two - Introduction to Public Speaking

- Building your confidence, knowledge and skills in public speaking
- Shaping and communicating key messages
- How to respond to disclosures of elder abuse
- Understanding how media works

Day Three - Public Speaking and Community Engagement

- How to prepare for and present a speech
- Considering how much you would like to share as an Advocate
- Your role as an Advocate in the community

Day Four - Public Speaking and Advocacy in Action

- Shaping, delivering and practicing public speaking

STEP 5:



Post Training

After the training, your situation will be reassessed to determine whether it would be appropriate for you to join the Older Voices for Change program.

If it were decided that you were able to be part of the program, you would be asked to sign a volunteer agreement with COTA Tasmania.

Once part of the program, there would be no set expectations for you to perform media advocacy or public speaking. There are different levels of involvement, type of advocacy and anonymity, and you can opt out of representation at any time.

Values



Respect

We respect the contribution and experience of all Tasmanians as they age and support each person's right to make choices, be safe, and to participate in the community.

Diversity

We appreciate our differences and are inclusive of a broad range of perspectives and life experiences.

Collaborations

We foster meaningful relationships with older people, each other, our working partnerships, and all members of the Tasmanian community.

Trust

We are open and honest, and we take ethical action informed by evidence.



Ethical

We promote professional practices and service provision.

Inclusive

We are inclusive and embrace diversity.

Practice integrity

We challenge discriminatory behaviours and attitudes.

Expect safety

We ensure physical, psychological, and emotional safety.

Community focused

We facilitate community capacity.

Trust

We maintain trust by consistently applying our values, principles and service philosophy.