



## TEEN GIRLS HOPES THIS INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

In celebration of International Women's Day 2020, young women aged 10-16 from Tasmania, Victoria and the Pilbara speak on their hopes for a brand new decade.

**This is Us** will take place across three states during the month of March and sees young women from the award-winning **Project O** initiative lend their voices to campaign for equality and primary prevention. Young women from North West Tasmania, Frankston VIC and Roebourne in the Pilbara WA will join together, producing vibrant events where they advocate for change.

This is Us are invitation-only events where young women take to the stage and share digital portraits, immersive soundscapes and films they have made about the ideas and issues that are important to them. In Frankston, special guests will include Rosie Batty, Peta Murphy MP for Dunkley and the Victorian Commissioner for Children and Young People Liana Buchanan, and young women will present a demonstration of the Maori martial arts form, Mau Rākau, guided by Maori Project O Producer Fallon Te Paa.

Young people are our future but they are often left out of the national agenda, their voices unheard or treated with disrespect. Young women are maligned or typecast and rarely seen as the solution. Project O's extraordinary approach backs teen girls to lead grassroots change in their communities, supporting them to speak up, step out and be changemakers.

Project O is an initiative which has run for 5 years in 5 states and territories, enabling young women to lead change in remote and disadvantaged communities affected by gender inequality and family violence. Female mentors walk beside the young women, who develop new skills and contribute to their community, building confidence, resilience, leadership and agency as well as essential digital skills. Since 2015 over 800 young women have participated in Project O, hailing from Canberra ACT, Cooma NSW, Wynyard & Smithton TAS, Frankston VIC and Roebourne WA. Young women from Project O have met with the Prime Minister, the Governor General, the Minister for Women and the Leader of the Opposition, crowdfunded for women's shelters and had speeches read out in Federal Parliament. Project O is run by women for young women, and in 2016 won a Human Rights Award and in 2019 a VicHealth Award.

Project O is produced by Big hART, which has worked in over 50 communities across Australia for over 27 years, garnering over 45 awards. Big hART builds on what is strong, working with disadvantaged communities to build community and drive change, shining a light on invisible issues through transformational art.

This is Us is sponsored by Telstra, Creative Victoria, the Packer Family and Crown Resorts Foundations, Australia Council for the Arts, the Tasmanian Community Fund, the Tasmanian State Government, Perpetual, the Lord Mayor's Charitable Trust, the Angior Family Foundation, the Matana Foundation for Young People, Australian Government Regional Arts Fund, Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal, The Waterfront Wynyard, Wynyard High, SEVEN UP, Monterey Secondary College and Mahogany Rise Primary.

**This is Us will take place in Frankston on Friday 6th March at the Mechanics Institute, and on Saturday 14th March in Tasmania at the Waterfront Wynyard. Roebourne event to be announced soon.**



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