

Our Impact: Pro bono & responsible business

ANNUAL REPORT 2025 - 2026



Acknowledgement of Country

Barry Nilsson acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land on which our business operates across Australia. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and to Elders past and present.

Adelaide | Kaurna Country

Brisbane | Jagera and Turrbal Country

Hobart | nipaluna Country

Melbourne | Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Country

Sydney | Gadigal Country

Perth | Wadjuk Country





At Barry Nilsson (BN), we believe positive social and environmental impact should be embedded in the way we do business. Our firmwide initiative, the Impact Project, reflects this commitment by bringing together pro bono and responsible business efforts that continue to support our people, clients and communities while contributing to a more equitable, inclusive and sustainable future.

In FY26, our lawyers contributed over 10,700 hours of pro bono legal assistance, representing a 23% increase on the previous year and delivering more than \$2.9 million in free legal services. We continued to strengthen access to justice through legal assistance, lawyer secondments, mentoring, training and our national graduate placement program. This commitment was recognised at an industry level, with BN named a finalist for Pro Bono Program of the Year at the Australian Law Awards and BN Associate Tadayra Mujdrica recognised as a finalist for Pro Bono Lawyer of the Year at the Women in Law Awards.

This year also marked an important milestone in our reconciliation journey. We completed our 2024-26 Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan, launched our 2026-29 First Nations Employment Strategy, commenced development of a Cultural Learning Framework, and appointed BN Senior Associate Danielle Davis as First Nations Lead. We also continued to support pathways into the legal profession through three CareerTrackers interns undertaking ongoing multi-year internship placements across our Brisbane and Melbourne offices.

Through our pro bono and reconciliation initiatives, we invested more than \$220,000 to support communities across Australia.

Our focus on fostering an inclusive workplace continued to deliver strong outcomes, reflected in an 83% inclusivity score in our 2026 Diversity & Inclusion Survey. We expanded shared-care parental leave to 26 weeks, strengthened our commitment to gender

equity through an updated Equitable Briefing Policy, and established new governance arrangements and diversity targets to support long-term progress.

Environmental sustainability remained a key focus as we progressed the next phase of our decarbonisation journey. We implemented a certified Environmental Management System, continued actions under our Net Zero Plan and Decarbonisation Roadmap, and strengthened supplier engagement through implementation of our Supplier Code of Conduct. We also maintained 100% renewable electricity across all offices and a 99.9% reduction in Scope 1 and 2 emissions. Our sustainability performance continued to earn industry recognition, with BN achieving our highest EcoVadis rating to date, placing us in the 83rd percentile globally, and securing a CitySwitch Champions Award for the third consecutive year.

Beyond our workplace, we continued to support communities through volunteering, charitable partnerships and practical assistance, contributing over \$110,000 to a range of initiatives. This included our ongoing partnership with the Two Good Foundation, supporting women rebuilding their lives following family violence and homelessness through employment pathways, volunteering, social enterprise procurement and charitable giving.

This report reflects the commitment, expertise and generosity of our people, who transform firmwide commitments into practical action across pro bono, reconciliation, diversity and inclusion, environmental sustainability and community engagement. Together, these efforts create lasting impact for the communities we serve.



Katie Swain

Head of Pro Bono & Responsible Business and Principal

Cover Image: Our Melbourne team volunteered with RSPCA Victoria in support of their mission to end cruelty to all animals.



BN team members participating in the Walk for Justice in Sydney to support victim-survivors of domestic and family violence.

Pro Bono & Access to Justice

At BN, pro bono is a core part of our firmwide commitment to creating a positive social impact, improving access to justice and strengthening community organisations through the skills and expertise of our people.

Through our pro bono strategy, we continue to build long-term partnerships with community legal centres and not-for-profit organisations, focusing on areas where our lawyers can deliver both immediate assistance and lasting sector-wide benefit. As a signatory to the National Pro Bono Target, we remain committed to providing at least 35 hours of pro bono legal assistance per lawyer each year while expanding opportunities for our people to contribute meaningfully to their communities.

Our focus remained on partnerships that address unmet legal needs while building sustainable capability within the community legal sector. Through secondments, legal assistance, mentoring, training and strategic projects, our lawyers supported individuals experiencing family violence, homelessness, financial hardship, discrimination, and other forms of disadvantage. We also continued to expand our graduate placement program, providing early-career lawyers with hands-on experience in community legal centres across Australia and supporting frontline services responding to increasing demand for legal assistance.

PROVIDING PEACE OF MIND WHEN IT MATTERS MOST

Through our longstanding partnership with Cancer Council, BN provides pro bono estate planning assistance to people living with cancer, many of whom are navigating end-of-life decisions. Given the complexity and sensitivity of these matters, timely legal assistance is critical, with lawyers often responding at short notice to ensure clients can put arrangements in place without delay.

Many clients are supported in their homes, hospitals or palliative care settings while undergoing treatment or receiving pain management. Often accompanied by family members, they are faced with significant decisions at a time of considerable emotional and physical strain.

Working alongside clients and their families, our lawyers help navigate complex conversations and ensure their wishes are clearly understood and documented. Critical decisions often relate to the future care and financial security of the client's spouses and children, as well as the client's own medical decision-making arrangements.

Helping clients formalise their wishes provides reassurance that their loved ones will be cared for in accordance with their intentions. For many families, this support removes a significant emotional and administrative burden.

By removing financial and practical barriers to legal assistance, this work helps bridge a critical gap in supportive cancer care while preserving a person's dignity, autonomy and choice. Most importantly, these services allow clients to focus on their health and wellbeing knowing their affairs are in order.

BUILDING CAPACITY FOR VICTIM-SURVIVORS OF FAMILY VIOLENCE

This year, our partnership with Women's Legal Service Victoria focused on strengthening capability across the legal assistance sector. Through two six-month secondments to Women's Legal Service Victoria's Education & Engagement team, BN lawyers supported training and capacity-building initiatives designed to improve responses to family and sexual violence.

One secondee, drawing on their experience in family law and family violence matters, supported the design and delivery of training programs, including the Emerging Lawyers Program, which helps develop the next generation of lawyers working across community legal centres. A second secondee contributed to the delivery and evaluation of training initiatives, providing feedback on family law content, participant engagement and the practical application of training materials.

These contributions helped strengthen the capability of professionals supporting victim-survivors of family violence and supported the delivery of more consistent, informed and trauma-aware services across the sector. By sharing practical expertise and supporting professional development, our partnership extends beyond individual client outcomes, helping build long-term capacity within the legal assistance sector to respond to increasing demand for services.

DEVELOPING THE NEXT GENERATION OF PRO BONO LAWYERS

Our graduate pro bono placement program continues to be a defining feature of our pro bono practice. The program enables graduates to undertake structured placements with community legal centres and justice organisations across Australia, including services supporting women experiencing family violence, young people, First Nations communities, refugees and people experiencing homelessness.

Graduates undertake these placements one day per week over a six-month period while continuing their commercial practice rotations, providing sustained support to community organisations while gaining valuable experience working directly with clients and communities experiencing disadvantage.

These placements not only expand access to legal assistance for community legal centres facing growing demand, but also help foster a strong culture of service and social responsibility from the outset of our lawyers' careers.

LOOKING AHEAD

Our focus will remain on delivering pro bono work that creates both immediate and lasting impact. In addition to providing legal assistance to individuals experiencing disadvantage, we will continue investing in partnerships that strengthen the capacity of community organisations and the broader legal assistance sector. Through secondments, graduate placements, mentoring and specialist legal support, we aim to support more sustainable access to justice while fostering a strong culture of service and social responsibility across BN.

Our pro bono impact

- **\$2.9 million in free legal services**
- **10,700 total pro bono hours** (a 23% increase on last year)
- **Exceeded the National Pro Bono Target** of 35 hours per lawyer
- **\$50,000 support** for community legal services
- **30 secondments** with community legal centres and justice organisations
- Australian Law Awards Finalist – **Pro Bono Program of the Year**
- Women in Law Awards Finalist (Tadaya Mjdrlica) – **Pro Bono Lawyer of the Year**



BN's Tadaya Mjdrlica and Katie Swain attending the 2025 Lawyers Weekly Women in Law Awards.

Reconciliation

Reconciliation remains central to our commitment to creating a more equitable and inclusive Australia. This year, we completed our 2024-26 Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), launched our 2026-29 First Nations Employment Strategy and commenced development of a Cultural Learning Framework, further embedding reconciliation across our workplace, culture and operations.

We formally recognised the importance of First Nations leadership by appointing BN Senior Associate Danielle Davis as the firm's First Nations Lead. Danielle continues to play a critical role in shaping and guiding our reconciliation initiatives, including the RAP, First Nations Employment Strategy, Cultural Learning Framework, CareerTrackers program and firmwide cultural events.

Creating pathways into the legal profession remains a priority. Through our partnership with CareerTrackers, we hosted three First Nations university students through multi-year legal internship placements across our Brisbane and Melbourne offices, providing professional development, mentoring and practical workplace experience.

We continued to invest in initiatives that build cultural understanding and support truth-telling. During National Reconciliation Week, we welcomed proud Wiradjuri woman and Stolen Generations survivor Brenda Matthews to our Melbourne office, where she shared her personal journey of healing, reconciliation and bringing together her Aboriginal and foster families. We also celebrated National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week across our offices through cultural learning opportunities and community engagement initiatives.

We also continued our longstanding support of Indigenous Lawyers Queensland's Mullenjaiwakka (Lloyd McDermott) Oration, maintaining our sponsorship of the event since its inception. The Oration honours Australia's first First Nations barrister and provides an important forum for dialogue and education on issues affecting First Nations peoples, while promoting greater visibility of First Nations leadership within the legal profession.

We further embedded reconciliation into everyday practice by expanding the use of Traditional Place Names across our external communications, including office location references in social media posts.

Beyond our workplace, we supported educational opportunities in remote communities through the donation of 60 laptops and accessories to Ti Tree

School in the Northern Territory. The donation has helped improve digital access and literacy for students and connect them with educational opportunities beyond their region, demonstrating how practical support can help create meaningful opportunities for young people.

LOOKING AHEAD

As we commence the next phase of our reconciliation journey, our focus will be on implementing the First Nations Employment Strategy, finalising the Cultural Learning Framework and developing our next RAP. Together, these initiatives will strengthen employment pathways, cultural capability and First Nations inclusion across BN while contributing to positive outcomes for First Nations peoples and communities.

Our reconciliation impact

- Completed our **2024-26 Innovate RAP**
- Appointed BN Senior Associate Danielle Davis as **First Nations Lead**
- Launched our **2026-29 First Nations Employment Strategy**
- Commenced development of a **Cultural Learning Framework**
- Hosted **three CareerTrackers legal interns**
- Continued sponsorship of the **Mullenjaiwakka (Lloyd McDermott) Oration**
- Hosted **Brenda Matthews** during **National Reconciliation Week**
- Expanded the use of **Traditional Place Names** across external communications
- **Donated 60 laptops and accessories** to Ti Tree School in the Northern Territory valued at more than \$33,000
- **236% increase in procurement spend with First Nations-owned businesses**, exceeding \$1 million

Diversity & Inclusion

At BN, we believe that a diverse and inclusive workplace strengthens our culture, improves collaboration and enables our people to perform at their best. We are committed to creating an environment where everyone feels respected, valued and supported to contribute their unique perspectives and experiences.

This year, we continued to progress our Diversity & Inclusion Strategy, focusing on workforce diversity, inclusive leadership, culture, community engagement and accountability. Our work remains centred on supporting the needs and experiences of women, parents and carers, culturally and linguistically diverse people, people with disability, neurodivergent people, LGBTIQ+ people, and First Nations peoples.

Creating opportunities for connection, learning and reflection remained an important part of our approach. Throughout the year, we recognised and celebrated a range of significant dates, including International Women's Day, Lunar New Year, Wear It Purple Day, Autism Awareness Month and the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. These initiatives helped foster greater awareness, understanding and inclusion across BN.

We also continued to build inclusive capability through firmwide education and engagement initiatives. This included D&I foundational training for all new staff, expert-led discussions on everyday bias, and a client and staff event exploring the importance of belonging at work. Alongside these initiatives, we supported a range of community partnerships and fundraising activities, including DV Safe Phone, Share the Dignity, The Big Issue and our expanding employment partnership with JobSupport.

A key milestone this year was the introduction of our updated Equitable Briefing Policy, which strengthens our commitment to supporting gender equity within the legal profession. The policy includes a target for 30% of briefs and instructions, by volume and value, to be awarded to women barristers and mediators by FY27, helping create greater opportunities and visibility for women across the legal profession.

We established new diversity and inclusion targets under BN's three-year strategic plan, including an increased 45:45:10 gender leadership target by 2028. We have also committed to improving the experience and inclusion of minority groups across BN. Together, these initiatives help ensure diversity and inclusion remain embedded in our culture, decision-making and long-term success.

LOOKING AHEAD

We will continue to build an inclusive workplace where our people feel supported, valued and able to thrive. Our focus remains on embedding diversity and inclusion across all areas of the firm, strengthening accountability, supporting equitable opportunities for career progression, and fostering a culture where everyone can contribute and succeed.

Our D&I impact

- **83% overall inclusivity score** in our latest staff D&I survey
- **85% of staff** reported a **sense of belonging** at BN
- **84% of staff** reported they can be their **authentic selves at work**
- Extended **shared-care parental leave entitlements to 26 weeks**
- Donated **over 400 period products** through our firmwide **Share the Dignity product drive**
- Expanded our **JobSupport employment partnership** to our **Melbourne office**
- Introduced an updated **Equitable Briefing Policy**, including a target for **30% of briefs and instructions by volume and value to be awarded** to women barristers and mediators by **FY27**
- Established **Terms of Reference** to strengthen governance and accountability for D&I initiatives
- Continued sharing a **firmwide monthly D&I newsletter** highlighting events, stories and resources



BN Brisbane team members celebrating Wear It Purple Day.

Environment & Sustainability

Environmental sustainability continues to underpin our approach to responsible business. We recognise the important role organisations play in supporting the transition to a low-carbon economy and continue to embed sustainability into our operations, decision-making and long-term strategy.

This year, we strengthened the systems and initiatives that support our long-term environmental performance. This included implementing a certified Environmental Management System and progressing actions under BN's Net Zero Plan and Decarbonisation Roadmap. As our sustainability program continues to mature, our focus has increasingly turned to reducing emissions across our broader operations and supply chain. We advanced supplier engagement initiatives, commenced implementation of our Supplier Code of Conduct, and introduced a revised Business Travel Policy that encourages virtual collaboration and, where travel is required, supports lower-emission travel and sustainable accommodation.

We also continued to maintain significant environmental outcomes achieved in recent years, including 100% renewable electricity across all offices and a 99.9% reduction in Scope 1 and 2 emissions from baseline levels. These achievements have provided a strong foundation for the next stage of our decarbonisation journey.

BN's environmental performance continued to earn industry recognition. During the year, we achieved our highest EcoVadis sustainability rating to date, placing BN in the 83rd percentile globally and continuing a trend of year-on-year improvement in sustainability performance. We also received a CitySwitch Champions Award for the third consecutive year, recognising our ongoing commitment to environmental sustainability and continuous improvement.

LOOKING AHEAD

As we continue to advance our sustainability objectives, our focus will be on the next phase of our decarbonisation journey, including strengthening supplier engagement, embedding sustainability considerations into procurement decisions and supporting lower-emission travel practices. Together, these initiatives will help reduce our environmental impact while creating long-term value for our people, clients and communities.

Our environmental impact

- Implemented a **certified Environmental Management System**
- Continued implementation of BN's **Net Zero Plan and Decarbonisation Roadmap**
- Maintained **100% renewable electricity across all offices**, achieved five years ahead of target
- Maintained a **99.9% reduction in Scope 1 and 2 emissions** from baseline levels
- Introduced an updated **Business Travel Policy** supporting lower-emission travel practices
- Advanced **supplier engagement initiatives** and implementation of the **Supplier Code of Conduct**
- Achieved our **highest EcoVadis sustainability rating to date**, placing BN in the 83rd percentile globally
- Received the **CitySwitch Champions Award** for the third consecutive year
- Supported **National Recycling Week, Plastic Free July, Earth Hour and Clean Up Australia Day**



BN's Laura Pruscino and Tadaa Mujdrica accepting the CitySwitch Champion Award 2026.



BN's 2026 graduates volunteering with FareShare in Brisbane during their graduate program induction.

Community

Supporting stronger and more resilient communities remains an important part of our commitment to responsible business. Through charitable partnerships, volunteering, fundraising and in-kind support, we seek to create meaningful and lasting impact in the communities where we live and work.

PARTNERING WITH TWO GOOD FOUNDATION

A key highlight this year was our continued partnership with Two Good, a charity and social enterprise supporting women rebuilding their lives after family violence and homelessness. Through a combination of employee volunteering, charitable giving, social enterprise procurement and in-kind support, BN contributed to initiatives that provide employment pathways, financial independence and improved wellbeing outcomes for women participating in the program.

During FY26, we contributed more than \$50,000 through donations, volunteering and social enterprise

procurement. Our people packed and donated 300 Love & Care Packs, funded 174 meals for women living in shelters, and supported the delivery of the Love Through Lunch Christmas initiative for women and children living in refuges. We also supported Two Good's 'Work Work' program and wrap-around services to help facilitate employment pathways for women rebuilding their lives.

In addition, BN donated 14 mobile phones and accessories valued over \$11,000 to support women participating in the Two Good program, helping provide access to essential tools that support independence, employment and connection.

Our ongoing partnership has supported outcomes beyond immediate assistance, helping create pathways to employment, financial independence and long-term wellbeing for women rebuilding their lives. In FY26, Two Good funded more than 23,000 employment hours, paid over \$963,000 in wages, employed 49 women experiencing significant disadvantage, and provided more than 30,000 meals through its social enterprise programs. Participants also reported significant improvements in wellbeing, confidence and career readiness.

CHARITABLE SUPPORT

Our people continued to make a meaningful contribution to communities across Australia through volunteering, fundraising and workplace giving initiatives. Volunteer participation was supported through BN's paid Volunteer Leave, enabling employees to contribute their time and skills to causes aligned with their values.

We participated in volunteering opportunities supporting organisations including FareShare, Ronald McDonald House, RSPCA, OzHarvest, Hobart City Mission and Two Good, contributing time to initiatives addressing food insecurity, animal welfare, homelessness, family violence and community wellbeing.

Community support also included office-led fundraising and Christmas giving initiatives firmwide. This year, our offices supported organisations including Royal Flying Doctor Service, Backpacks 4 SA Kids, Friends with Dignity, Hobart City Mission, TLC for Kids, CaringKids Care Bags, Second Chance, Clean-Up Australia and Lifeline, donating gifts, essential items and financial support to vulnerable individuals and families in local communities.

BN also donated laptops, mobile phones and accessories to charities, community legal centres and schools.

LOOKING AHEAD

We will continue to strengthen our community partnerships and expand opportunities for our people to volunteer and support organisations creating meaningful social impact. Through strategic partnerships, charitable giving and practical community support, we remain committed to building stronger, more resilient communities.

Our community impact

- **\$157,000+** contributed to charities and not-for-profit community organisations
- **\$50,000+** in support provided to Two Good
- **\$50,000 in technology and equipment donations** supporting education, access to justice and community wellbeing
- Packed and donated **300 Love & Care Packs** for women living in shelters
- Funded **174 meals** for women rebuilding their lives
- **416 hours of charitable volunteering** throughout the year



BN's 2026 graduates preparing meals at FareShare in Brisbane as part of their graduate program induction.

