

At the Paul Ramsay Foundation, we believe in a world where all people can live their best lives.

Our purpose is to help end cycles of disadvantage in Australia by enabling equitable opportunity for people and communities to thrive.

**Our commitment to human rights**

The values on which the Paul Ramsay Foundation was founded place people and communities at the centre of our work. Respecting and promoting human rights is central to achieving our vision of a world where all people have the opportunity to thrive.

The Paul Ramsay Foundation is committed to respecting and promoting human rights across all areas of our operations. Human rights principles underpin our approach to ending cycles of disadvantage in Australia, which involves:

- **Influence:** Through collaboration, advocacy and policy change, influencing duty bearers<sup>1</sup> to undertake structural and systemic reform to respect, protect, promote and fulfil the human rights of rights-holders<sup>2</sup>.
- **Build:** Demonstrate the case for positive human rights change by building insights, data, knowledge and capability in the areas we work.
- **Invest:** Supporting and partnering with organisations and communities across Australia to build the agency of rights-holders to drive the change they want.

This Human Rights Commitment Statement outlines the principles and range of actions that guide the Paul Ramsay Foundation to embed human rights across all aspects of our operations and impact. This commitment recognises our foundation’s role:

- as a funder
- as an employer
- as an investor
- as a purchaser of goods and services
- as a partner and an enabler.

This Human Rights Commitment Statement demonstrates the Paul Ramsay Foundation’s public commitment to operationalising human rights principles across all areas of our operations and the expectations of our employees, partners and communities with whom we work.

1. Duty-bearers are state or non-state actors, that have the obligation to respect, protect, promote, and fulfil human rights of rights-holders. 2. Rights-holders are individuals or social groups that have particular entitlements in relation to duty-bearers. 3. Universal Declaration on Human Rights, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, Convention on the Rights of the Child, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

**Our principles**

The principles that guide our approach to human rights are based on the Paul Ramsay Foundation’s core values of **Respect for People, Humility & Integrity, Courage & Innovation, Learning & Curiosity** and **Authenticity**.

We recognise that implementing our foundational values through a human rights based approach requires:

- 1. Respect for human rights standards:** We are committed to respecting and promoting human rights principles and standards as enshrined in internationally recognised instruments<sup>3</sup>, and are guided by the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.
- 2. Integrating human rights frameworks and initiatives across all our operations:** Human rights are not a standalone concept that operate in isolation, but instead must be incorporated as a holistic approach across all our business operations and ways of working.
- 3. Engaging, empowering and elevating the voices of community:** Tackling the structural issues that create and perpetuate inequality requires building agency for people and communities and actively supporting their participation and empowerment.
- 4. Strong collaborative partnerships:** We know that ending cycles of disadvantage is an enormously complex challenge that cannot be solved alone, quickly, or with simple solutions. Collaboration and working meaningfully with communities and organisations is essential to disrupting disadvantage and creating opportunities that will help people and communities to thrive.
- 5. Transparency and accountability:** Principles of transparency and accountability are central to good governance and the realisation of human rights. We recognise that transparency and accountability to the people and communities with whom we work is critical to building and maintaining respect and trust, promoting participation and empowerment, and creating enabling environments for change.
- 6. Situating the local within the global:** Our approach is deeply aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, which recognise that ending poverty and disadvantage goes hand-in-hand with strategies to improve health and education, reduce inequality and ensure economic inclusion.



### Our Action Plan

To implement the actions noted in this Commitment Statement, the Paul Ramsay Foundation will be guided by an Action Plan that details how we will put our principles into practice across our various roles and operations.

#### ***Respecting human rights as a funder***

The Paul Ramsay Foundation invests in communities and organisations across Australia. Our approach to philanthropic funding extends beyond traditional grant-making. We fund a range of strategic initiatives, from early exploration to substantial investment to impact investing.

To date, we've granted to more than 200 partners, and invested in a portfolio of impact investments.

As one of Australia's largest charitable foundations, we recognise that we are uniquely positioned to help shift the conditions causing inequities. Our strategic impact areas have been identified by taking a targeted approach to ensure that we focus on the most pressing human rights issues and challenges.

Through our approach of investing, building and influencing, we explicitly focus on a human rights based approach that supports and enables directly affected people and communities, while working to change the systems and barriers that cause and perpetuate disadvantage and prevent people and communities from reaching their full potential.

Self-determination and agency are central to achieve our vision of a world where all people and communities can live their best lives, based on the strong belief that people and communities have the power and the right to determine the solutions to their challenges.

#### **Over the next 12 months, we will:**

1. Strengthen our human rights approach by ensuring that our strategic impact areas focus on supporting and empowering directly affected communities
  - Build the capacity of communities and community organisations
  - Elevate the voices of directly impacted people and communities
2. Strengthen our impact assessments across our program priorities
  - Identify and focus on compelling human rights issues
  - Improve our ability internally to assess our maximum opportunity for influence and impact
3. Strengthen our transparency and accountability with our funding partners
  - Provide regular information through newsletters and reports on our work
  - Provide forums for partners to hear about our work, meet other partners and collaborators and encourage feedback about how we work



Hellen, employee of The Bread & Butter Project, a social enterprise bakery that provides training and job opportunities for people seeking refuge and asylum in Australia



***Respecting human rights as an employer***

Through our operations, the Paul Ramsay Foundation employs around 70 people across our organisation.

As an employer, we recognise that we have a duty to respect and promote the rights of our team and create a safe and inclusive workplace.

Respecting human rights as an employer requires building a human rights culture within our organisation. We operationalise this responsibility to respect and promote human rights through our people policies and programs, including:

- promoting equitable opportunity and ensuring diversity and inclusion in our workplace
- adopting a zero tolerance approach against sexual harassment, bullying and discrimination
- supporting learning and curiosity and ensuring the professional development of our talented people, and
- ensuring conditions of work that promote flexibility and support health and well-being.

We also recognise that embracing a human rights culture within our organisation will increase our ability to work effectively with our partners communities and organisations to deliver our vision and purpose.

**Over the next 12 months, we will:**

1. Deliver targeted human rights training for our team
2. Strengthen the diversity of our workforce, including a focus on increasing the involvement of our diversity and inclusion champions
3. Support inclusive leadership, including through employee support programs and cultural awareness training
4. Embed our ongoing commitment to improving the health and wellbeing of our staff through ongoing human rights and wellbeing initiatives

***Respecting human rights as an investor***

PRF recognises the importance of respecting human rights in our investments by seeking to prevent or mitigate adverse impacts, even if contributions to those adverse human rights impacts is not direct. As an important first step, within the next 12 months we will codify and build on existing practice within a rewritten Investment Policy Statement which reflects our commitment to responsible investing and other ESG matters.

***Respecting human rights as a purchaser***

We recognise our significant role as a consumer, engaging with over 220 suppliers each year.

As recognised in our Modern Slavery Policy, we are committed to addressing modern slavery in our business operations, including in all procurement activities. The Modern Slavery Policy also outlines our expectations for the conduct of our supply chain and contractors.

**Over the next 12 months, we will:**

1. Seek to build on our commitment to improve our practices
2. Support partners to improve their business operation practices



Children's Ground, an organisation focused on transforming how systems work with First Nations communities



***Respecting human rights as a partner and an enabler***

As one of Australia’s largest charitable foundations, we recognise that we have a unique opportunity to work with our partners across the community, government, business and philanthropic sectors to respect and promote human rights.

We understand that advantage and disadvantage are multidimensional, and that we need to act systemically to create impactful lasting change. Our targeted approach to grant making recognises that we must work collaboratively alongside our partner communities and organisations to find ways to create change together.

Our focus on long-term partnerships means that we must build human rights capacity both within the Paul Ramsay Foundation as well as within the partners with whom we work, including our philanthropic peers and the community, business and government sectors.

**Over the next 12 months, we will:**

1. Deliver events, workshops and training designed to increase awareness and education on human rights principles and standards for our team, our partner organisations and communities
2. Increase our collaborative advocacy with partner organisations on key human rights issues

***Embedding our principles and continuous improvement***

This Human Rights Commitment Statement represents a public commitment to operationalising human rights principles across all areas of our operations. We commit to ongoing transparency and accountability through measures including:

- regularly reviewing and updating this Statement to ensure that our commitments and actions remain relevant and appropriate
- continuing to make information readily available about our strategic priorities and operations, and
- providing clear accessible information about processes to receive any complaints or concerns about how we operate.

The Paul Ramsay Foundation recognises that the human rights environment and opportunities and challenges may change over time.

Maintaining our values and ensuring that people are always at the centre of our work requires a culture of learning and continuous improvement to ensure that we constantly review and improve how we embed our human rights principles into our operations.

**Over the next 12 months, we will:**

1. Further strengthen our human rights governance and oversight we will improve our tracking, monitoring and reporting on human rights to executive levels and the Board to enhance oversight of human rights issues and opportunities
2. Develop a human rights and ethical decision making framework, to help guide us in our strategic decision making
3. Review our Strategy and program priorities against salient human rights issues
4. Advance our work alongside and with First Nations communities, with the leadership and support of the Paul Ramsay Foundation’s First Nations Advisory Council and other internal capability building initiatives, informed by our current work, to establish a framework for working with First Nations communities
5. Continue to strengthen listening to and understanding of lived experience and expertise across all our programs priorities and initiatives



Good Cycles, a social enterprise creating safe and inclusive job opportunities that reduce barriers to secure employment