

# 2022 AusLSA SUSTAINABILITY PROFILE



**Gadens**  
**Headcount:** 581 (FTE)  
**Floor Area:** 12,292m<sup>2</sup>  
**Number of Offices:** 4

Gadens is a leading, independent Australian law firm with offices in Adelaide, Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney. We have over 80 partners and 600 staff across Australia.

Our vision is to be recognised as a leading Australian law firm, and help people achieve their purpose in a complex world. Our culture includes our values, and our values reflect the essence of the firm - they underpin everything we do and guide our daily behaviour. We promote individuality and diversity while instilling pride in the firm and are committed to equality in the workplace.

Gadens recognises that our enduring success requires economic growth that both protects and promotes social equity and ecological sustainability. We strive to create a culture where the principles of sustainability and sound corporate responsibility are embraced and lived by our people every day. We seek to make a difference in the world by contributing to the development of the communities in which we live and work. We are committed to giving back, and our people participate in projects that make a difference. We recognise the importance of fostering sustainable communities, minimising our impact on the environment and taking responsibility for our environmental footprint.



## OUR PEOPLE SUMMARY AND HIGHLIGHTS:

Gadens' people programs align with our strategic intent of being an employer of choice. Priority areas are:

- Flexibility:** We recognise that our people need to achieve an effective balance between work and other commitments, and that a flexible workplace is essential to attracting and retaining high performing people. We have a number of policies and initiatives in support of this aim.
- Inclusion and diversity:** We engage with staff to create an environment that promotes individuality and diversity. Our Indigenous Intern Program has been operating for over 15 years, and we are part of the CareerTrackers program.
- Health and wellbeing:** Our wellbeing initiatives support a healthy and balanced lifestyle, providing opportunities for staff to mentally and physically unwind through a range of activities.
- Learning and development:** Our L&D Framework has been designed to deliver focused, career-long L&D to improve skills at all levels and support career progression. This covers technical and business skills training, and support for education assistance.
- Corporate social responsibility:** We maintain a culture of sustainability and sound corporate responsibility. We assist the communities in which we live and work, enhance access to the legal system and embrace social responsibility.

**GENDER EQUALITY**

**37% FEMALE PARTNERS** **60% FEMALE LEGAL STAFF** **73% FEMALE NON-LEGAL STAFF** **68% FEMALE SENIOR PROMOTIONS**

**INITIATIVES:**  
 • International Women's Day • Pay Equity Ambassador • LCA Diversity and Inclusion Charter • Equitable briefing pledge (e.g. CommBar/LCA) • Female advancement, mentoring and coaching • Training - Gender awareness unconscious bias • Gender sensitive promotion and recruitment • Internal D&I networks or committees • Equal pay controls • DCA major sponsor

**INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE**

**D&I INITIATIVES:**  
 • Recruitment and promotion for D&I • Internal D&I networks or committees • Membership - DCA • LCA Diversity and Inclusion Charter • Training - Awareness and unconscious bias • Staff Surveys - D&I

**LGBTQ INITIATIVES:**  
 • IDAHOBIT • Wear it Purple Day • Pro bono support • Training - LGBTQ awareness

**FLEXIBLE WORKPLACE**

**26 WEEKS PAID PARENTAL LEAVE** **2 WEEKS SECONDARY CARER** **80% RETURN TO WORK AFTER PARENTAL LEAVE**

**INITIATIVES:**  
 • Flexible work hours • Part time options • Job sharing • Remote working tools and systems • Support for flexible working • Time in lieu • Unpaid leave • Carer's leave • Study leave • Volunteering leave • Purchased leave • Career breaks • Phased retirement • Adjusted KPIs after absences • Sabbaticals • Domestic abuse leave • Family leave

**PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING**

**INITIATIVES:**  
 • R U OK? program • Psychological support/EAP • Domestic abuse strategy • Mental health office champion

**PHYSICAL WELLBEING**

**INITIATIVES:**  
 • Ergonomics program • Proactive health checks • Flu vaccinations • Internal exercise sessions • Gym memberships • Team events • Wellness awareness and promotion • Onsite fruit and healthy catering • Life & TPD insurance • Ergonomics program - offsite • Health EAP

## OUR ENVIRONMENT SUMMARY AND HIGHLIGHTS:

Sustainability and Social Impact is one of the firm's key strategic pillars. Gadens has also adopted the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals framework and pledged to reach Net Zero by 2030.

Gadens aims to be recognised as an environmentally responsible business that respects the environment and communities in which it operates. We believe our commitment to managing our operations in an environmentally sustainable manner will maximise value for the firm and all our stakeholders.

We are committed to minimising adverse environmental impacts and reducing our environmental footprint by continually reviewing operations and improving the efficiency of our natural resource consumption.

Our initiatives are focused around:

- Achieving net zero emissions.
- Reducing our power consumption and minimising energy use.
- Reducing paper usage or only using carbon neutral, acid-free paper from farmed trees.
- Moving towards a more electronic way of working across the firm.
- Making environmentally sustainable procurement decisions and ensuring our key, discretionary suppliers are adopting sustainable business practices wherever possible.
- Improving our waste management and recycling practices, including recycling coffee cups and providing reusable kitchen items to staff.

**CLIMATE ACTION**

**INITIATIVES:**  
 • Telecommuting • Green Star rated buildings 4-6 star • National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting (NGERs) compliant reporting • Teleconferencing facilities and training • Policy on flight offsets • Earth Hour • Ride to Work Day • End of trip facilities • Climate Active Program • NABERS Energy Rating • Climate Active - Carbon Neutral • Efficient building and lighting automation • Renewable Electricity • Energy audits in previous two years

**GROSS EMISSIONS**  
 660t - 1.1t per employee

**BUILDINGS** **87%** **0%** **1.1%** **583t** **88%**

**TRAVEL** **0.01%** **11.2%** **0.51%** **77t** **11.7%**

**CARBON OFFSETS & RENEWABLES** **24%** **100%**

**NET EMISSIONS**  
 0t - 0t per employee

**ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT**

**INITIATIVES:**  
 • CitySwitch Green Office

**RECYCLING OFFICES**

**% office availability**

**PAPER USAGE**

**INITIATIVES:**  
 • Paperlite office program • Green accredited paper purchase specification • Follow me printing • Recycled paper purchase specification

**PAPER CERTIFICATION:**  
 • Forestry Stewardship Council (FSC) certified • NCOS Certified Carbon Neutral • Other Certifications

## OUR COMMUNITY SUMMARY AND HIGHLIGHTS:

As a law firm, Gadens has a privileged and professional standing that confers a responsibility to contribute to the betterment of our community. This includes our professional and ethical responsibility to enhance access to the legal system, assisting disadvantaged and marginalised people and embracing the concept of corporate social responsibility.

Gadens is a signatory to the Australian Pro Bono Centre's National Pro Bono Target, which encourages lawyers to subscribe to a voluntary target of 35 hours of pro bono work per annum. We are committed to meeting or exceeding this target across the firm.

The five key priority areas that form the basis of our pro bono program are:

- Homelessness
- Indigenous Australians
- Refugees and asylum seekers
- Women and children in need
- Mental health

Current projects include:

- CareerTrackers Indigenous Internship Program
- Partnerships with various community legal centres including MVLs, MHLc and ASRC.



**INDIGENOUS RECONCILIATION**

**INITIATIVES:**  
 • Reconciliation Action Plan • Cultural awareness training • NAIDOC Week • National Reconciliation Week • Internships and employment • Scholarships and student mentoring • Affirmative ATSI procurement • Pro bono support • Collaboration for reconciliation • Funding and donations • Indigenous Business Month • CareerTrackers participation

**NON LEGAL VOLUNTEERING**

**INITIATIVES:**  
 • NFP Boards • Organised staff volunteering • Paid volunteer time • Blood donations • Skilled volunteering program • Community volunteering • Arts support • CPD for community sector lawyers

**CHARITABLE GIVING**

**INITIATIVES:**  
 • Firm donation program • Charitable foundation • Workplace giving • Matched funding for employee donations • Internal appeals and collections • External charity events and appeals

**LEGAL PRO BONO**

These icons provide limited information about the firm's legal pro bono commitment. More extensive information is reported by the Australian Pro Bono Centre and on individual firm's websites.

**Click for further information from AusLSA:**

## OUR GOVERNANCE SUMMARY AND HIGHLIGHTS:

Gadens has an Operational Risk Management and Compliance Framework that is underpinned by our values and prescribes our approach to corporate governance, risk management and compliance with legal and regulatory requirements. The framework incorporates extensive business continuity and disaster recovery protocols.

Our interaction with clients, contractors and suppliers is guided by this framework. For each decision that is made, we undertake an analysis of the likelihood and impact that a particular risk or group of risks may have on the firm's operations, and ensure that mitigating controls and / or actions are put in place to minimise the likelihood of occurrence or impact. In support of our actions, we have policies and procedures in place that govern the firm and ensure our compliance with all relevant laws.

Our Operational Risk Management and Compliance Framework covers the following areas:

- Governance and Ethics, Sustainability,
- Workplace Health and Safety (WHS), Procurement, and
- Quality, Business Continuity.

Our Boards and Executive Management Teams operate within the above governance framework and are accountable for their respective areas of responsibility. Equity and other partner meetings are held as required.

**CODE OF CONDUCT /RISK MANAGEMENT**

**SUSTAINABLE SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT**

**SUPPLIER STANDARDS COVER:**  
 • Human rights • Environmental impacts • Fair labour practices • Community development • Indigenous inclusion • Gender equality • Modern Slavery • Diversity and Inclusion • Fraud bribery & corruption

**SUSTAINABILITY REPORTING**

**REPORTING COVERS:**  
 • Standalone environmental sustainability report

**AUSTRALIAN LEGAL SECTOR ALLIANCE**