



*Pictured: COTA Victoria Senior Achiever Award winners with President Robert Caulfield and CEO Ben Rogers (back row).*

## **COTA Victoria Senior Achiever Award recipients honoured in the 2025 Victorian Senior of the Year Awards**

**Melbourne, 22 October** – Ten well-deserving older Victorians were today honoured with the Council on the Ageing (COTA) Victoria Senior Achiever Award as part of the larger 2025 Victorian Senior of the Year Awards program.

The COTA Victoria Senior Achiever Awards shine a spotlight on local champions within Victorian communities, with recipients going above and beyond to improve their cities, towns, shires, and boroughs, and the lives of those within them.

The ten COTA Victoria Senior Achievers for 2025 are:

- Steve Bentley
- Raissa Bolotnikova
- Terry Hart
- Pradeep Kanthan
- Geoffrey Mann
- Lesley McCarthy
- Tony Morrissey
- Nola Radiotis
- Mike Ridley
- Judy Turner

“Selfless acts of volunteering and leadership are central to opportunities that enrich older people’s lives, and contribute to a satisfying and positive ageing experience for all,” said Ben Rogers, CEO of COTA Victoria and Seniors Rights Victoria. “It’s incredible to see these COTA Victoria Senior Achievers uplifting their communities, inspiring those within them, and bettering their surrounds.

“We know that social connection is crucial to mental and physical health outcomes, and each of today’s ten recipients work tirelessly within their own communities to accomplish demonstrable results, draw people together, and help them to thrive.”

Additionally, the following Victorians were also awarded honours at today’s ceremony, as presided by the Governor of Victoria, Her Excellency Professor the Honourable Margaret Gardner AC, alongside the Victorian Minister for Ageing, the Honourable Ingrid Stitt:

- Aunty Jo Russell, recipient of the Emerging Impact Award
- Kate Donelan, recipient of the Positive Ageing Award
- Dilnaz Billimoria, recipient of the Promotion of Multiculturalism Award
- Dave Cox, recipient of the Veteran Community Award
- Patrick Templeton, recipient of the Premier’s Award for Victorian Senior of the Year

“COTA Victoria and Seniors Rights Victoria are delighted to continue working with the Victorian Government to honour those who’ve made significant contributions to communities all throughout the state,” said COTA Victoria and Seniors Rights Victoria President, Robert Caulfield, who also took to the awards stage to assist in the presentation of today’s COTA Victoria Senior Achiever Awards.

“We congratulate each and every COTA Victoria Senior Achiever, alongside those honoured in the larger awards program, and sincerely thank them for their commendable efforts in connecting communities, promoting cultural diversity, providing opportunities, and ensuring we can all age well.”

Select recipients of this year’s awards program will be featured in the coming weeks as part of COTA Connections, a radio program that airs each fortnight on Golden Days Radio 95.7fm, also available on-demand wherever you get your podcasts.

The 2025 Victorian Senior of the Year Awards program is one of many, many events that comprise the larger Victorian Seniors Festival. For more on what COTA Victoria and Seniors Rights Victoria have offered over the month of October, [head here](#).

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#### **Further information**

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#### **About us**

**Council on the Ageing (COTA) Victoria** is the leading not-for-profit organisation representing the interests and rights of people aged over 50 in Victoria. For over 70 years, we have led government, corporate, and community thinking about the positive aspects of ageing in the state.

Today, our focus is on promoting opportunities for and protecting the legal rights of people 50+. We value ageing and embrace its opportunities for personal growth, contribution, and self-expression. This belief drives benefits to the nation and its states alongside communities, families, and individuals.

**Seniors Rights Victoria (SRV)** is the key state-wide service dedicated to advancing the rights of older people and the early intervention into, or prevention of, elder abuse in our community. It is the only Community Legal Centre dedicated to preventing and responding to elder abuse within Victoria.

SRV has a team of experienced advocates, lawyers, and social workers who provide free information, advice, referral, legal advice, legal casework, and support to older people who are either at risk of or are experiencing elder abuse. SRV supports and empowers older people through the provision of legal advice directly to the older person.