



MONASH  
University

# WOMEN IN STEM DECADAL PLAN

**Monash University  
Response**

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**October 2019**

[monash.edu/gender-equity](http://monash.edu/gender-equity)





# LEADERSHIP AND COHESION

Visible leadership commitment to gender equality forms the cornerstone of our Workplace Gender Equity Strategy. We recognise that people are our most valuable asset and that fostering a culture of inclusion is crucial in order to utilise the talents of our diverse staff.

## LONG HISTORY

Our focus on gender equality and equity has been fundamental to our organisational strategy for more than three decades, beginning with the formal appointment of our first Equal Opportunity Coordinator in 1987.

This long history of the University's unwavering support for advancing gender equality has led to the development of many best practice policies and programs aimed at supporting and advancing women's careers. While many goals remain the same today, we have introduced new and innovative gender equity initiatives to accelerate progress and achieve positive change.

## LEADERSHIP COMMITMENT

The Vice-Chancellor and the senior management team have been instrumental in supporting new initiatives, setting ambitious goals and contributing to the implementation of our gender equity strategy.

At Monash, senior leaders are:

- visible advocates and positive role models of workplace flexibility
- actively engaged in the University's gender equity programs, events and initiatives
- trained in inclusive leadership aimed at reducing the negative impact of unconscious bias in decision-making
- leading the Panel Pledge campaign
- committing resources for continuous research, evaluation, development and innovation of Monash programs and initiatives aimed at achieving gender equality

The Vice-Chancellor is a Pay Equity Ambassador, helping to create change by promoting the University's commitment to pay equity and to reducing the gender pay gap.



## ADDRESSING GENDER DISPARITY

Addressing the under-representation of women in senior academic roles and advancing women's careers with a particular focus on STEMM is at the forefront of our gender equity strategy. Indeed, only 1 in 5 Professors in STEMM at Monash is a woman despite achieving close to parity at Levels A and B with this declining at Senior Lecturer, Associate Professor and Professor Levels.

The Athena SWAN Action Plan 2018-2021 sets out a wide range of gender equity activities across recruitment, selection, career progression, promotion, development, flexible work, career breaks and organisational culture.

The University has allocated strategic initiative funding to support the implementation of the Athena SWAN Action Plan and progress updates are reported six-monthly to senior leadership.

## GENDER EQUITY PROGRAMS

Supporting our gender equity goals, Monash operates a number of programs:

- Women's Mentoring Program
- Academic Promotion Sessions for Women
- Senior Women's Shadowing
- Advancing Women's Research Success Grant
- Grant Writing for Women
- Working Parents and Carers Resilience Program
- New Fathers in the Workplace
- STEMM Women Academic Network (planned launch Q4 2019)



# EVALUATION

## STRATEGIES TO MEASURE AND EVALUATE EFFORTS IN ACHIEVING GENDER EQUITY

Evaluation of our gender equality objectives and outcomes is ongoing and seeks to gather evidence on the effectiveness of our Workplace Gender Equity Strategy.

It includes conducting analyses of:

- Workforce data by gender, employment classification, contract types
- Recruitment data (applications, shortlists, offers and acceptances)
- Promotion applications and success rate
- Utilisation of flexible working arrangements and part-time work
- Utilisation and return rate from parental leave
- Resignations, redundancies and other exit reasons
- Gender Pay Gap



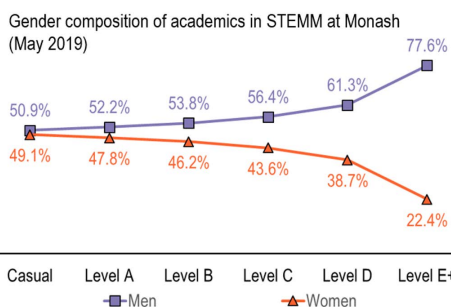
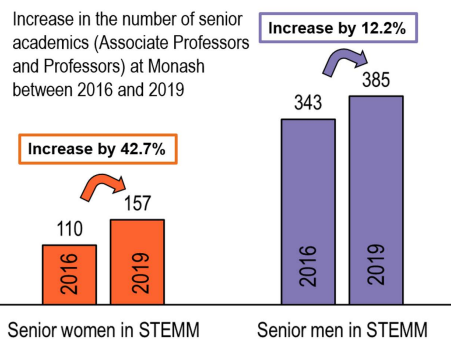
## STAFF CONSULTATIONS

In 2017, we developed and administered our inaugural Staff Equity and Diversity Survey and committed to running it biennially. The survey seeks feedback on people's experiences and perceptions of workplace culture, work allocation, academic career progression, promotion process, support for parents, carers and flexible work.

Findings from the Staff Equity and Diversity survey helped us establish benchmark measures for several key success indicators recorded in Monash University's Athena SWAN Action Plan 2018-2021.

Additionally, focus groups held with academic staff provided valuable insights on a range of gender equity matters and challenges that women continue to face in academia.

To evaluate experiences of our new recruits and to more fully understand reasons for exits, we invite input from relevant groups through surveys.



## GENDER EQUITY TARGETS

Clear and measurable targets are an essential component of our Gender Equity Strategy.

By 2022:

- we will reach **42%** of women in senior roles at Monash
- we will have **40%** of women among senior academics (Associate Professors and Professors)
- we will halve our organisation-wide gender pay gap

These targets, supported by senior leadership, represent key performance indicators for gender equity. They will help facilitate target setting in STEM disciplines where the focus on gender equity has gained unprecedented momentum and where the attraction and retention of talented women academics is now seen as paramount.

# WORKPLACE CULTURE

**Celebrating a diverse and inclusive culture is at the heart of the Monash University vision. Achieving true gender equity is central to that endeavour. We seek to develop an organisational culture in which staff of all genders, of a variety of cultural backgrounds, faiths and heritages participate equally at all levels.**

## FLEXIBLE WORKPLACE

We recognise workplace flexibility as a key enabler of gender equality and an essential foundation in the attraction and retention of talent.

Benefits of flexible working arrangements and a successful work-life integration are diverse, ranging from a satisfying workplace culture, to greater productivity and lower absenteeism.

We know that supervisors play a critical role in supporting staff who need to work flexibly which is why we provide training for managers to equip them with strategies to create successful, engaged and productive flexible teams.

## CHALLENGING STEREOTYPES AND PROMOTING INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP

Implicit or 'hidden' biases are prevalent in most contemporary workplaces and are a particularly important issue in the STEM workforce where it can account for many gender inequalities. In fact, research shows that implicit bias is often the reason for women's attrition from STEM professions and their under-representation in senior roles.

Our strategies addressing unconscious bias include:

- awareness raising activities (workshops)
- provide training designed to build a strong knowledge base around the key principles of diversity and inclusion and equip staff with inclusive leadership skills
- Vice-Chancellor and Senior Executive team are trained in Inclusive Leadership
- requirement for chairs of hiring and promotion panels to be trained in unconscious bias/inclusive leadership
- Gender Decoder is applied to all recruitment ads and job descriptions to reduce masculine-coded words

## SUPPORT FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

More than 40 per cent of Monash staff are parents with dependent children. We are fostering a culture in which caregiving responsibilities and the need for flexibility can be comfortably discussed between staff and supervisors. In addition to our paid parental leave options, we provide a range of benefits to support our staff:

### PROGRAMS AND WORKSHOPS FOR PARENTS

We recognise that becoming a parent is a time of transition and transformation. Our programs for new parents aim to support staff in navigating this complex transitional time by exploring typical challenges, potential roadblocks and how to more successfully manage expectations of self, supervisors, colleagues and other stakeholders.

In particular, workshops for new fathers have been received with much enthusiasm from both professional and academic staff for the opportunity to meet with other dads and discuss how to more successfully balance their careers and family commitments.



### ON-SITE CHILDCARE

We have formal arrangements with four childcare centres located at or near our main campuses with a combined capacity of ~340 children. The first childcare centre opened in 1967 at Clayton campus and is still in operation today.

## PARENTING ROOMS

We currently have 18 dedicated parenting rooms across our campuses and workplace locations. In circumstances where parenting facilities are not close enough for staff who continue breastfeeding on return to work, they can request a 'Mobile Mother's Kit' containing a mini-bar fridge, an armchair with a footrest and a lockable cabinet. The loan kit is delivered to their office location and it is available for an indefinite period.

## CULTURE OF RESPECT

Monash is a partner in Universities Australia's national campaign Respect. Now. Always. Our Respectful Communities team leads the implementation of all nine recommendations of the Australian Human Rights Commission Change the Course Survey.

The Safer Community Unit at Monash was set up to support staff and students who observe or experience concerning behaviour, to carry out investigations and respond to misconduct.

Staff experiencing family violence can apply for paid family violence leave. This leave is uncapped.

## ADVANCING INCLUSION IN STEM

A total of 13 committees currently operate in our STEM faculties and departments, each charged with advancing gender equity and inclusion.

Examples of actions aimed at developing an inclusive workplace include adopting a practice of 'core business in family friendly hours', offering mentoring, addressing unconscious bias in selection, promotion and driving awareness of intersectionality to better support gender diversity.



# VISIBILITY OF WOMEN IN STEM

Improving the visibility of talented women in STEM and increasing their representation in the public eye are crucial steps to promoting female role models and helping young women see that a career path in STEM is achievable.

## PANEL PLEDGE

Our panel pledge is a tangible way for members of the Monash community to influence change and challenge ongoing gender disparity on panels, at events and in other public fora. By taking the pledge staff commit to openly calling for gender equity on panels, at conferences and other professional events and actively supporting women's voices.

Promoted as part of our work on Athena SWAN, Deans of STEM faculties have joined this campaign and have spoken of its importance in media.



Professor Elizabeth Croft, Dean, Engineering

## SUPERSTARS OF STEM

Science and Technology Australia (STA) equips female academics with advanced communication skills to work towards equal representation in the media of women and men working in all fields in STEM. Two Monash researchers have been recognised among Australian female scientists as 2019/2020 Superstars of STEM:

Dr Sharna Jamadar, of the Monash Institute of Cognitive and Clinical Neurosciences (MICCN) and Monash Biomedical Imaging, along with Dr Kirsten Ellis, Faculty of Information Technology.

Our superstars are working to increase the public visibility of women in STEM and inspiring young women from diverse backgrounds to follow a career in STEM.



## HOPPER DOWN UNDER

In early 2019, a group of female technologists from around Australia began a campaign to bring a Women in Technology conference to Australia.

They sought support from the Anita.B.Org organisation, managers of the Grace Hopper Celebration.

Professor Elizabeth Croft, Dean of Engineering at Monash, provided a letter of support for the initiative, and the bid was successful, with Anita.B.Org agreeing to run 'Hopper Down Under' in Brisbane in July 2019.

Monash University sponsored the event and provided grants to allow 36 Engineering and IT students to attend. More than 15 staff from Engineering and Information Technology also attended the conference, where their engagement included key notes, technical presentations and workshops.

## CELEBRATING WOMEN AT MONASH

We understand that the lack of visible role models is often cited as a contributing factor to the attrition of women in STEM. In addition to promoting women's accomplishments through our media and Monash news, our STEM faculties developed websites and videos to support this important objective:

### Women in Science

[www.monash.edu/science/about/women-in-science](http://www.monash.edu/science/about/women-in-science)

### Women in Engineering

[www.monash.edu/engineering/about-us/women-in-engineering](http://www.monash.edu/engineering/about-us/women-in-engineering)

### Women in Information Technology

[www.monash.edu/it](http://www.monash.edu/it)

### Celebrating influential Monash women

[lens.monash.edu/@celebrating-influential-women](mailto:lens.monash.edu/@celebrating-influential-women)



## EDUCATION

We believe everyone deserves an equal opportunity to access and excel at university. Through mentoring, outreach programs and entry schemes, we're breaking down the barriers to success.

### STRENGTHENING ENGAGEMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT IN MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

Strengthening Engagement and Achievement in Mathematics and Science (SEAMS) is one of our many outreach programs supporting students to access and succeed in higher education. SEAMS represents an important opportunity for students to connect, interact, be inspired and discover the possibilities maths and science have to offer.

The program, run in partnership with the University of Melbourne, aims to increase equitable participation and attainment in science and maths in higher education.

### MONASH ENGINEERING GIRLS

Monash Engineering Girls (MEG) is a unique engagement program designed for young women who want to know about the possibilities of a career in engineering.

The program targets students in year 9 with the aim to retain their participation to year 12. During this time, young women participate in a range of special activities, VIP events and engineering workshops that help them gain an understanding of the many different types of engineering. MEG encourages girls to explore their skills, talents and discover their potential as future engineers while still at high school.

### WOMEN IN STEM AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAM

Monash University and our project partners host a free program, in which more than 200 female students in Year 10 take part in series of one-day workshops, culminating in a trip to Silicon Valley in USA for two successful teams who will win an immersive entrepreneurial experience in the global centre of technological innovation.



### SCHOLARSHIPS

A number of our scholarship schemes, both for future and current students are for women only to encourage and support them in their studies at Monash.

#### ENGINEERING

High achieving young women who wish to pursue an undergraduate degree in Engineering can apply for a "**Women in Engineering**" scholarship valued at \$5000.

#### INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Bright young women who wish to study Information Technology can apply for a "**Women in Information Technology**" scholarship valued at \$6000.

#### PHYSICS AND ASTRONOMY

All talented women accepted into Honours program at the School of Physics and Astronomy at Monash will be awarded a J.L. William Honours Scholarship valued at \$5000.

### ENGUINITY - CHANGE THE WORLD WITH ENGINEERING AND IT

This is Monash University's hands-on school holiday event for girls in year 10 who want to learn about the variety of career options available to engineers and IT specialists.

### WOMEN IN TECHNOLOGY MENTORING

The Women in Technology Alumni Mentoring program pairs eligible university students with an experienced alumni or industry mentor from the IT field.

The program is designed to support mentees in achieving their academic, career and personal development goals, building their confidence, career planning and networking skills.



## INDUSTRY ACTION

Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) have been identified as a key gap in industry efforts to address gender equity in STEM. We will seek opportunities to provide SMEs with guidance to addressing gender equity and developing diverse and inclusive workplaces.

### DRIVING CHANGE BEYOND OUR WORKPLACE

We are committed to driving change beyond our workplace and to externally advocate gender equality.

One of the ways we are taking action is by participating in the **Panel Pledge** initiative.

Recognising that gender disparity is particularly pronounced in the STEM industry, our academics and researchers in STEM disciplines are signing up to champion women's voices, advocating for their representation at conferences, industry panels and other professional events.

[monash.edu/gender-equity/panel-pledge](http://monash.edu/gender-equity/panel-pledge)

### TENDERS AND PROCUREMENT

We seek to extend our advocacy for gender equality through procurement guidelines that encourage gender equality across our supply chain.

Selected project-specific tenders now require organisations to address a range of diversity and inclusion elements under 'Corporate Social Responsibility'. Tender respondents are required to address how diversity and inclusion is managed internally within their organisation and what systems and processes are in place to ensure that inclusive language is used in recruitment (including advertising).

Furthermore, we ask tender respondents to demonstrate their commitment to building a diverse and inclusive workplace aligned with the objectives contained in Monash University Diversity and Inclusion Framework. The Framework articulates our gender equality and gender equity goals as one of the priority areas of focus.

We will continue developing our policies to ensure procurement, supply chain and employment practices actively support gender equality objectives.



### SUPPLIER ENGAGEMENT

Engaging with our suppliers offers an important opportunity to educate them about gender equality and seek to influence improvements in equity and diversity beyond our workplace.

In 2019 we developed comprehensive guidelines that set our expectations for companies contracted to facilitate training workshops, programs and courses at Monash, specifically in relation to supporting inclusion and respecting diversity.

From 2020, all supplier contracts will be accompanied with these guidelines to ensure that external facilitators we engage uphold our principles of inclusion and respect our equity and diversity goals.

Furthermore, all contractors who are issued a Monash University staff ID and therefore Monash University email address are included in invitations to participate in events such as *International Women's Day* and *Diversity and Inclusion Week*.

### FUTURE STEPS

Monash University Athena SWAN Committee will work with small and medium STEM enterprises to identify opportunities how to best support SMEs in their efforts to improve gender equity, develop more inclusive workplaces and achieve a greater representation of women.

Note: While our response to the 'Women in STEM Decadal Plan' focuses on examples to advance gender equity in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), it also contains references to programs and actions designed to support women's representation in Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Medicine (STEMM).

### CONTACT US

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