

2024 RECALIBRATE GENDER EQUITY AWARDS

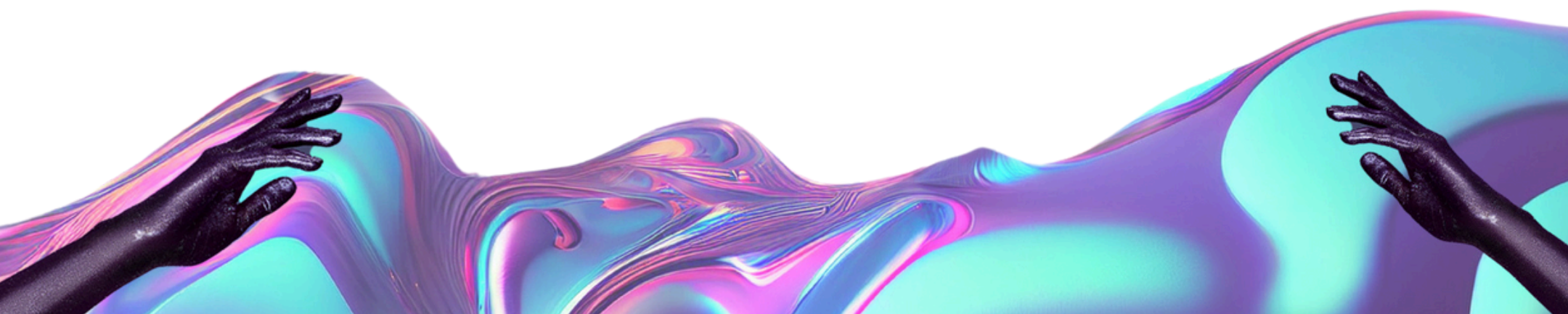
GENDER EQUITY AWARDS NIGHT PROGRAM

- ✔ If you have pre-ordered a special meal, please advise your waiter. Please note that whilst Crown Events will endeavour to accommodate requests for special meals for customers with food allergies or intolerances, we cannot guarantee complete allergy-free meals due to the potential of trace allergens in the working environment and supplied ingredients. Crown practises responsible service of alcohol.

ORDER OF THE EVENING

Entree
MC's Open & welcome people
Lisa Sweeney Speaks
Intersectionality Award
Senior Manager Award
First Nations Award
Manager Award
Break
Main Course
MC's resume
Penny Cottrill WGEA update

Awards Medium Orgs
Awards Employees
Awards DEI Manager
Awards SME
Break
Dessert
MC's resume
Minister for Women Hon. Natalie Hutchins
Award CEO - Board
Award Large Organisation
Award Enterprise Organisation





Hyperlinked : click to access the specific page.



COMPANIES

INTERSECTIONAL

ENTERPRISE

LARGE ENTERPRISE

MEDIUM ENTERPRISE

FIRST NATIONS

SMALL BUSINESS ENTERPRISE

INDIVIDUALS

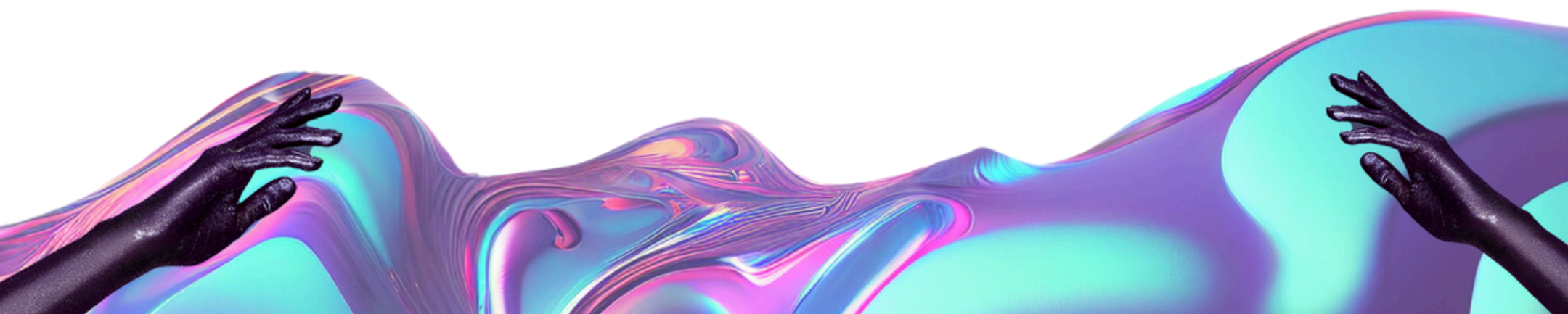
CEO-BOARD

SENIOR MANAGERS

**DIVERSITY & INCLUSION
MANAGER**

MANAGER

EMPLOYEE





INTERSECTIONAL



CAPGEMINI

Capgemini is dedicated to building an inclusive workplace by embracing diversity in all its forms. Recognizing the impact of understanding LGBTQIA+ communities, they redefined diversity as a spectrum that extends beyond rigid categories. This approach respects that people can identify in multiple ways—it's not just "either/or," but "both/and" across gender, culture, and identity. Capgemini's commitment allows employees to be their whole selves, reinforcing that the fundamentals of inclusion remain constant: everyone deserves respect, and assumptions about identity should be set aside. Their advice to others: don't limit anyone to a single definition, as inclusion means embracing the full complexity of who people are.



ENTERPRISE



Leading the Change in Inclusive Workplaces

The evolving legal landscape in Australia underscores the critical need for psychological safety in all workplaces. By adopting technology-driven solutions like PSI and PSI360, organisations can significantly improve employee engagement, decision-making, and performance, all while ensuring compliance with ISO 45003. Prioritising psychological safety not only fosters more effective and innovative workplaces but also promotes mental health and inclusivity—a win-win for everyone.

Inspiring Professional Women and Business Leaders

Diversity, equity and inclusion have rightfully assumed central positions in workforce strategy. However, concentrating solely on diversity, without giving due consideration to psychological safety, represents a substantial missed opportunity.

PSI: A Team Culture Program

DataDrivesInsight.com offers a two-level approach to psychological safety:

- Individual and Leadership Development
- Team Culture Enhancement: The PSI (Team Pulse Check)

“When people feel a true sense of belonging, great things can happen.”



CAPGEMINI

Capgemini's Relaunch Program has made a significant impact by empowering women to transition into technology roles, achieving an impressive 95% retention rate over the past four years. This program, aimed at reskilling women—many of whom had paused their careers or worked in different sectors—uses a combined top-down and grassroots approach. While leadership sets clear goals and KPIs, the program fosters engagement from the ground up through inclusive events and activities.

Genevieve, who joined the program after COVID forced her to close her retail business, describes her excitement upon acceptance: "Relaunch has created a learning pathway for me to update my knowledge and skills. It's given me an incredible opportunity to work with the brightest minds, tackling complex issues for clients." Supported by mentors and a strong network, Genevieve and her colleagues are building successful careers in tech, showing that Capgemini's commitment to inclusivity and support drives real change.

The CBRE logo, consisting of the letters "CBRE" in white, bold, sans-serif font, centered within a dark green square.

CBRE

CBRE's Pitch Pledge initiative, born from the Coalition of Champions for Change, is driving real change by advancing more women into client-facing roles. Through their Talent Accelerator Program, CBRE focuses on skill transferability, governance, and transparency, with 96% of participants feeling truly engaged. This program achieved notable results: 57% of participants received promotions, and 10% transitioned to brokerage roles. For Mel Wells, the initiative was transformative—boosting her confidence and helping her go from strength to strength. CBRE's commitment to this program exemplifies the positive impact of nurturing talent and creating pathways for women in client-facing positions.



MY NRMA

At the NRMA, gender equality is a cornerstone of their organisational values. As an Employer of Choice for Gender Equality and a certified Family Friendly Workplace, NRMA leads by example with policies such as offering paid super on all unpaid parental leave, closing the gender gap in retirement savings. Their commitment to gender equality extends across multiple areas, including actively supporting fathers through The Fathering Project, encouraging parental leave for both men and women, and fostering an inclusive workplace where both genders share caregiving responsibilities.

NRMA is also deeply committed to supporting domestic violence victims. Their dedicated project team provides flexible working, emergency accommodation, and funds to employees affected by domestic violence. They also support local women's refuges like the Nepean Women's Shelter, reflecting their holistic approach to workplace safety and wellbeing.

In leadership, NRMA has achieved a remarkable 50/50 gender balance, enhancing decision-making and innovation. Their Gender Equality Council, RISE, serves as a platform for employees to engage in conversations around gender issues, ensuring that policies are not only implemented but also continuously improved. NRMA's executive team provides strong support, prioritising gender equality across all levels, which is why they are recognised not just within their industry, but across the broader corporate landscape. Through their comprehensive, intersectional approach, NRMA continues to be a leader in promoting gender equality both in the workplace and the community.



ORIGIN ENERGY

Origin Energy has been advancing gender equity from the top down through a series of impactful programs and initiatives. One standout effort is their Career Renewal program, designed to help women who have been out of the workforce for up to 12 years transition back into the industry, with 12 participants successfully re-entering their careers. Origin's commitment goes beyond compliance, targeting a 40% representation of women at all leadership levels, including down to CEO-3 roles, by 2030. This is supported by tailored action plans within each business unit to ensure steady progress. Their Women@Origin network offers a supportive space for women, providing them with essential skills and advocating for their voices in leadership. In addition to being recognized as a Best Practice Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace, Origin has conducted a comprehensive gender pay gap analysis and set annual targets for improvement. The company has also introduced a prevention and response plan addressing intersectionality and safety, making the workplace safer for all, especially women. Furthermore, Origin's CEO has joined the Male Champions of Change (Energy) to drive gender equity within the sector, signaling the company's firm commitment to creating a more inclusive future.

THALES

At Thales, achieving gender equality is only the first step. They are committed to creating an inclusive workplace where all employees, regardless of their gender, origin, age, sexual orientation, culture, educational background, religion, or disability, can thrive. Thales recognises that gender diversity is essential for driving innovation, fostering collaboration, and achieving better business outcomes. This is reflected in their serious commitment to closing the gender pay gap, which is an important indicator of their progress in this area.

A key initiative in Thales' long-term strategy is its goal to achieve 25% representation of women in leadership roles by 2030. This ambitious target is part of their broader effort to diversify and renew leadership across the organisation. Thales continues to invest in attracting, developing, and retaining women, ensuring that gender diversity is embedded at all levels of the company. With these initiatives, Thales is positioning itself as a responsible and inclusive employer that values diversity and is committed to building a stronger, more innovative future.



VIVA ENERGY

Viva Energy has established itself as a leader in diversity, inclusion, and gender equality, understanding that a varied workforce is essential for innovation and long-term success. Achieving pay parity was a major milestone, complemented by groundbreaking policies like providing superannuation on unpaid and part-time parental leave at full-time rates for up to five years post-childbirth. Viva also prioritizes gender diversity in leadership, with nearly 45% of executive and senior leadership roles now held by women, and they've increased representation of women in refinery and operational roles to 25%, overcoming traditional barriers.

Through policies such as flexible work arrangements, 26 weeks of paid parental leave, mentorship programs, and gender recruitment targets, Viva is creating an equitable environment across all levels. Their RESPECT at Viva initiative fosters understanding and accountability for maintaining an inclusive culture, while CEO Scott Wyatt champions these values in the workplace and across the industry. Viva Energy's dedication to building a supportive, diverse, and family-friendly workplace has earned it recognition as a WGEA Employer of Choice for Gender Equality and a Family Inclusive Workplace certified by Parents at Work and UNICEF.



LARGE ENTERPRISE

Sponsored by LifePuzzle,
CEO Chandell Labbozzetta



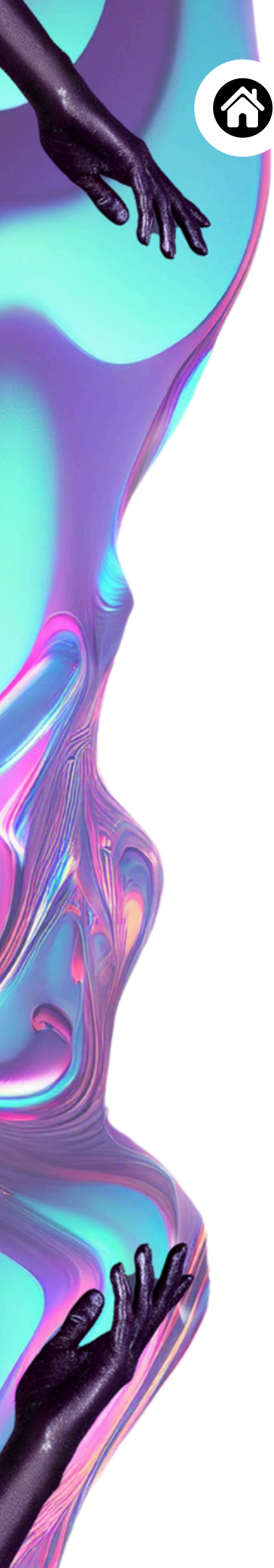
Chandell Labbozzetta talks about Women who step up to stand out.

At Life Puzzle we are dedicated to equipping transformational leaders who are authentic, engaged, and mission-focused. We developed our Multi-Tiered Leadership Program to address this issue and accelerate change in organisations, and since I've spent a lot of time delivering leadership training I've realised that there's a serious lack of the qualities that make a persuasive and influential leader on all levels.

Addressing the issues of Multigenerational workplaces, confronting Bias, Communication challenges and Equity, our innovative programs help Businesses accelerate scale, Leaders and their Teams amplify their skills, develop self-awareness, personal excellence, and the ability to create their future.

Through our programs, individuals and businesses unlock their potential by enhancing their communication skills and confidence. They learn to harness their unique raw skills, experiences, and personalities to their best advantage. Our clients master a variety of communication styles, enabling them to have effective conversations across different generations, personalities, work styles, and media.

Most importantly, our clients discover how to help others achieve their best, make their lives easier, and increase their efficiency.



This not only allows them to feel good about their work in the world, but also creates their desired income and lifestyle. The world we live in today is continuously undermining your sense of control and driving today's mental health epidemic. With the tools, techniques, and environment to take that control into your own hands and shape the future of your life and legacy.

One of the many emerging female leaders we worked with had this to say about our program: "Before working with the Team at Life Puzzle, I was tired, over-worked, under paid, taken advantage of, undervalued and didn't believe in myself or my amazing creative talents and abilities. I now feel strong and in control of my life and can confidently say that I have grown into my business-woman shoes. I have presence at home and Lead results at work. Chandell and Life Puzzle will change your life. You are missing out if you don't work with them."

To find out more or book an exploration call with our team visit <https://lifepuzzle.com.au/services/leadership-and-influence-program/>

LIFE 
PUZZLE



The Dentons logo, consisting of the word "DENTONS" in white capital letters inside a white arrow shape pointing to the right, set against a purple square background.

DENTONS

Dentons has demonstrated exceptional progress in gender equity through strategic initiatives that promote inclusion and support. Over the past few years, the firm has reduced its gender pay gap from 15% to 4.1% and increased the percentage of female partners from 12% to 36%. One standout achievement is the Family Leave Policy, which provides 26 weeks of paid leave for all direct carers—whether they are parents, grandparents, aunts, or other primary caregivers—ensuring equal access to support for all family structures. This flexible policy allows leave to be taken by any caregiver, regardless of gender, and enables them to split the leave as needed. Dentons also champions continuous learning and development, offering tailored programs to all staff and innovative mentoring practices that foster diverse perspectives and equitable success. Recognised by the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) as an Employer of Choice, Dentons continues to lead the way in creating a dynamic, equitable, and inclusive workplace where all employees thrive.



MONASH IVF

Monash IVF Group is committed to a holistic and inclusive approach to gender equity, embedding it as a core element of their workplace culture and organizational growth. Recognizing that equity goes beyond standard expectations, they have crafted policies that support all stages of the employee experience.

Key initiatives include gender-neutral parental leave, robust return-to-work programs, targeted mentorship programs that address individual needs by pairing emerging leaders with senior executives which increased our internal hires by 79% from 2019-2023, ensuring an equitable and inclusive recruitment process through their Attraction & Retention Strategy, creating greater awareness of wellbeing initiatives that directly impact our workforce i.e., Breast Cancer Awareness, and fostering safe spaces through actions such as providing pronoun badges and educational pieces that take the form of digital resources, webinars, and training, like gender affirmation guides, sessions for women in leadership, and FAQs on gender based challenges.

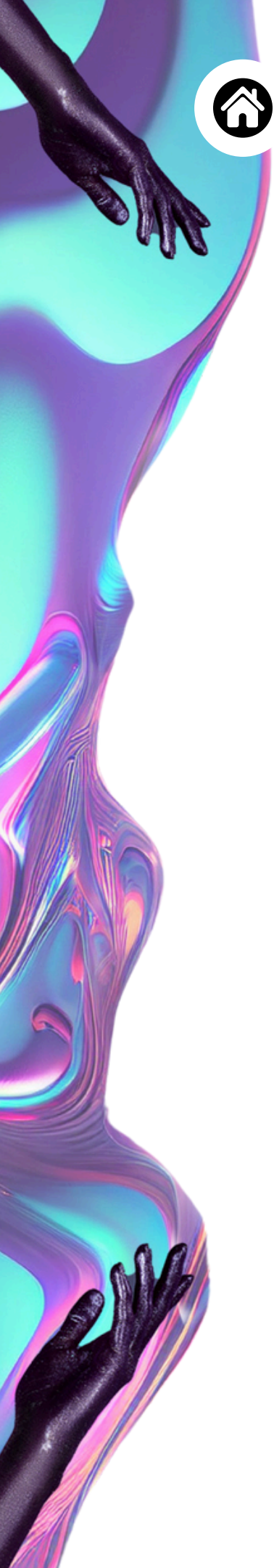
This commitment, rooted in the WGEA framework, includes training to reduce unconscious bias in hiring and regular pay audits to ensure fairness. Guided by their “Our People” strategy, Monash IVF Group continuously fosters a workplace where every employee feels safe to be themselves. They also use data-driven methods, such as engagement surveys and DEI scorecards, to ensure their efforts lead to meaningful change. With employee engagement rates increasing by 6% from 2022 – 2024, and recognitions like the WGEA Employer of Choice in 2023 and a Silver AWEI Award in 2024, Monash IVF Group is honoured to be nominated for the Recalibrate Gender Equity Award as they continue advancing their equity goals.



URBIS

Urbis has embedded gender equity into the heart of its mission to build inclusive and vibrant cities and communities across Australia. Recognizing the importance of fair and equitable practices, Urbis has launched a comprehensive Gender Strategy focused on transparency and accountability. This includes their Gender Pay Gap Strategy, which sets gender director targets with a goal of achieving 40/40/20 senior-level representation by 2027. Regular analyses ensure pay equity across the organization, supported by a National Inclusion Committee and a newly appointed Inclusion and Wellbeing lead.

The company's SOAR program exemplifies its commitment to women in leadership, providing one-on-One sponsorship for Associate Directors to enhance their confidence and visibility to prepare them for the role of Director. Additionally, Urbis actively supports flexible work policies, non-gendered parental leave, and career path awareness programs through partnerships like the Property Council's Girls in Property initiative. Urbis also takes pride in its bespoke Champions of Change program, an internal program focused on training, representation, and flexible working, which is currently being rolled out nationally. The organization's holistic approach to gender equity has yielded impactful results, with an engaged workforce recognized by the Workplace Gender Equality Agency and the Family Friendly Workplaces certification. These gender equity recognition certifications assist Urbis to keep advancing, listening to its people to address concerns and persistently strive for a gender equitable.



MEDIUM ENTERPRISE



AXE GROUP

Axe Group operates in the tech industry and stands out with an impressive 45% female workforce, achieved in just three years. Guided by the founders' commitment to flexibility and family-friendly values, Axe Group promotes a culture where everyone can balance career growth with personal needs. Employees enjoy flexible work options, including the ability to work remotely from overseas for up to a month, enabling their multicultural team to stay connected with loved ones abroad. Parental leave and flexible work arrangements are equally accessible to all, fostering an inclusive environment where career progression isn't hindered by life changes. One example is Suracha, who joined as a junior Java developer and is now a senior product manager, with the company's full support throughout her journey, including during parental leave for her two children. High retention and fair promotion practices underscore Axe Group's commitment to gender equity and supportive workplace culture.



BARWON WATER

Barwon Water is proud of the strides made within its Barwon Asset Solutions division, traditionally a male-dominated area. Through a focused engagement program, they clarified roles, modernized job titles, and revamped recruitment communications to highlight diversity. Female candidates were even offered the opportunity to connect with current female employees, providing a firsthand perspective on the work environment. This approach increased female applicants from just one or two to 20 out of every 100 applicants, with many ultimately hired. They're also maintaining relationships with candidates who weren't selected, ensuring a valuable talent pipeline for the future. This transformation exemplifies Barwon Water's commitment to fostering an inclusive and balanced workforce.



CUSTOM FLEET

Custom Fleet is leading the charge for workplace equity with its 2022 launch of a holistic Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Strategy. This bold initiative outlines a clear commitment to achieve the WGEA Employer of Choice for Gender Equality Citation by 2024—a recognition held by only 128 private sector employers. Integral to this effort is the implementation of meaningful actions, including the company’s first-ever Pay Gap Analysis Study in 2023, which identified disparities leading to pay adjustments for 65 women in 2024.

In 2023, Custom Fleet introduced a gender-neutral parental leave policy offering 12 weeks of leave for all parents and 18 weeks of superannuation contributions, fostering greater workforce participation and supporting women's financial security. Programs like Greenlight and Elevate empower women to grow into leadership roles through tailored development and mentorship opportunities, while inclusive recruitment practices and a partnership with Work180 ensure the company attracts and retains diverse talent.

With annual targets embedded in its business scorecards, Custom Fleet is held accountable for improving women’s representation and advancement. These efforts reflect the company’s dedication to progressing gender equality, positioning Custom Fleet as a leader in creating a more inclusive future for all.



ENVATO

Envato has achieved a remarkable year-over-year growth in female representation in executive and senior leadership roles, with our Envato Leadership Team now 2 over 50% female. This success stems from a revitalized Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) strategy, particularly focused on enhancing parental leave support. By collaborating with Grace Papers and launching a "keep in touch" program, they've created a smoother transition for parents, allowing them to stay engaged with their careers during time away. In addition, their investment in Equidi provides real-time visibility into diversity metrics, driving more informed decisions. These changes have resonated strongly with long-term team members, especially those who previously experienced different policies, creating a more inclusive and supportive workplace for all.



TELSTRASUPER

TelstraSuper is a leader in advancing gender equity, grounded in the values of care, customer focus, connection, curiosity, and ownership. Recognized as a Workplace Gender Equality Agency Employer of Choice, they go beyond standard practices to support women and close the superannuation gender gap. One such initiative, the "Super Boost," offers full-time super contributions for two years to employees returning from parental leave, regardless of part-time status. This benefit, potentially worth nearly \$42,000 by retirement for eligible employees, helps mitigate the effects of reduced retirement savings for parents, especially women. TelstraSuper also advocates for a fair workplace by promoting flexible work options, conducting thorough pay equity assessments, and ensuring gender balance in leadership roles—56% of their board is female. Their external advocacy efforts, including gender equity webinars, contributions to policy discussions, and supporting the Women in Super Mother's Day Classic, underscore their commitment to driving change across the broader community. Through these actions, TelstraSuper exemplifies how companies can lead by example in supporting women and building a more equitable future.



VICTORIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

The Victorian Chamber of Commerce and Industry has taken significant strides in gender balance, achieving a fully balanced leadership team with no gender pay gap. Their commitment to equity internally is supported by flexible work options that are championed across the organisation by all genders. The Chamber Change program reflects this dedication by empowering women in small and medium enterprises on their leadership journeys. The program, designed to inspire through role modelling and skill-building workshops, has already seen 350 participants, with 95% of attendees reporting that it provided valuable insights and guidance. This initiative exemplifies the Chamber's proactive approach to fostering an inclusive and supportive business environment for women leaders in Victoria.



FIRST NATIONS

SPONSORED BY:



TelstraSuper has over 30 years' experience in providing leading superannuation services. Originally established exclusively for Telstra employees, today TelstraSuper welcomes new employer partners and is open for everyone to join.

At TelstraSuper, we're committed to creating a community where everyone can develop, grow and achieve regardless of their gender identification.

Supporting the Recalibrate Gender Equity Awards is a way for us to drive change beyond our workplace and celebrate businesses that are putting equality at the forefront of their actions.

This is particularly important to us as a super fund, as despite more than 30 years of compulsory super, women still retire, on average, with around 28 per cent less super than men*.

And while there is no silver bullet to closing the gender savings gap, it's in everybody's interest, including employers across all industries, to do what they can to address the inequality in our community.

We're especially proud to sponsor the 2024 Indigenous Business award and to celebrate the excellence and achievements of First Nations businesses. These nominees have demonstrated innovation, resilience and entrepreneurial spirit, as well as having a strong focus on gender balance to improve our community.



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GERRBIK LAUNDRY SERVICES

Nicole Stewart, founder of Gerrbik Laundry Services, has carried forward her father's legacy by fostering a family-centric business culture. For 45 years, Gerrbik, a name that means "family," in Nicole's tradition Taungurung language has proudly supported employees' growth and success. One cherished story is that of Thi, whose aunt, a 30-year Gerrbik employee, recommended her for sponsorship. Thi has now been with the company for 17 years, during which time she's built a life in Australia, met her husband, and had children. Today, she manages operations, a role that reflects Nicole's belief in her team. "Seeing my staff reach important milestones brings me joy," says Nicole, highlighting Gerrbik's legacy of empowering lives through opportunity.



ETCS ELECTRICAL & FIRE

ETCS exemplifies a deep commitment to Indigenous inclusion and gender equity, championed by owner and director Rachel Molloy, a proud Aboriginal Gunai/Kurnai woman from Gippsland, Victoria. Drawing on her 15 years of experience at Marie Stopes International Australia and Planned Parenthood Federation of America, Rachel has been a trailblazer for advancing women's rights and equity. One of her notable achievements includes leading a social marketing collaboration with VACCHO and the Mildura Aboriginal Health Service, significantly improving health outcomes for Indigenous women—a project recognized in *The Marketing Book – 7th Edition 2016*.

Today, as the leader of a majority Indigenous-owned SME, certified by Supply Nation and a member of the Kinaway Chamber of Commerce, Rachel has embedded her passion for equity into ETCS's operations.



The company boasts a female workforce of 35%, including 13% in technician roles and 80% in leadership positions, demonstrating its commitment to breaking stereotypes in a traditionally male-dominated industry. Two female employees who began in administrative roles have since risen to leadership positions as HR Manager and Customer Service Team Leader, reflecting ETCS's dedication to fostering talent and succession planning.

Rachel's leadership also extends to creating a flexible work environment, particularly for working mothers, ensuring they can thrive personally and professionally. This inclusive culture and bold vision make ETCS a trailblazer in promoting diversity and a worthy recipient of this award.



NLA LOGISTICS

Nicole Appelton, founder of NLA Logistics and Trucking, is redefining possibilities for women and disadvantaged groups in construction and trucking. A strong advocate for gender equality, Nicole doesn't just offer jobs; she actively builds pathways to entrepreneurship. Her latest pilot program, specifically designed for Indigenous women, provides a step-by-step support system that helps them acquire their own trucks and establish their own businesses. This program takes a few years to complete and enables participants to fully pay off their trucks, empowering them with long-term financial independence and ownership. Nicole's dedication to inclusivity and empowerment is creating lasting change in the industry.



TRANBY ABORIGINAL CO-OPERATIVE

Tranby Aboriginal Co-operative, through its Yanalangami: Strong Women, Strong Communities program, has dedicated itself to fostering grassroots First Nations female leadership, equipping women to confidently navigate both corporate and cultural spaces. With over 100 Changemaker graduates of the Yanalangami program, these women are not only transforming their own lives but are also creating positive change in their communities. Katherine Stone's journey exemplifies this impact; she was awarded a place in the program in 2022, completing an intensive six-week online course and successfully becoming a Community Facilitator through Yanalangami's "Train the Trainer" Program to deliver in communities nationally. Katherine is now the National Program Manager for Yanalangami and spearheads all program training efforts, passing on her knowledge and passion to future First Nations leaders. Tranby's commitment continues to uplift and empower women, preparing them to make a lasting difference.



SMALL BUSINESS ENTERPRISE

SPONSORED BY:



Kerri Webster, Executive NAB Small Business Metro, Regional and Argi. On Why NAB is involved.

One of the best parts of my job is getting out to meet small business owners across Australia. That includes a whole lot of amazing businesswomen who are doing a brilliant job of making their dreams a reality – through their sheer tenacity, hard work and, at times, utter stubbornness.

Seeing and hearing up close what these highly impressive businesswomen are accomplishing – despite the odds – makes me all the more passionate about gender equity.

Because the fact is the barriers are still far too high for women. According to the latest State of Australian Startup Funding report, 75 per cent of female SME founders believe their gender has impacted their ability to raise capital – in stark contrast to just nine per cent of men.

It's also troubling to find out that only 1 in 4 female founders (or 26 per cent) feel supported by the wider Australian entrepreneurial community and startup ecosystem, compared with 57 per cent of men. However, none of this should come as a surprise. While funding of women-led businesses has doubled in recent times, the reality is it's off a tiny base of just two per cent.

Australia needs to do better – we all need to do better, including NAB. Whether it's providing supportive networks, smoothing access to finance, or simply being the person who mentors that new workmate, every one of us has a part to play.



Of course, organisations like Business in Heels are. By championing women to start and grow businesses, and fostering strong relationships to help female entrepreneurs thrive, it amplifies the truly powerful role women-led businesses play in our economy. NAB, too, is working to deliver gender equity. With some 33,000 employees, more than 9 million customers globally and half a million shareholders, we know it's one of our key responsibilities.

Right now, we're focused on achieving 40 – 60 per cent gender representation at every level of our business by 2025, a target which includes our colleagues who identify outside of the binary.

But we know there's still much more to do when it comes to true gender equity in the business world.

Until all business people have an equal say at the table – are able to feel confident their business idea will be received, and supported, completely free of gender bias – we cannot stop striving to do more. It's why it gives me great pleasure to present these awards – to recognise those who are going above and beyond to drive gender equity.



COULTER LEGAL

Coulter Legal has set a high standard for diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in the legal field. Recently, they launched a DEI committee with almost 25% of their team actively participating. Committed to inclusivity, they expanded parental leave to accommodate grandparents, already utilized twice and redefined carer's leave to allow younger employees the flexibility to support aging parents. Additionally, Coulter Legal introduced a unique leave policy that enables individuals to swap public holidays, ensuring all team members can honour their personal beliefs and needs. This comprehensive approach exemplifies Coulter Legal's dedication to creating a supportive and adaptable workplace for all.



GOGO EVENTS

GOGO Events is a purpose-driven business committed to uplifting marginalised women through its Inclusive Work Program. By focusing on well-being, empowerment, and modern work-skills the company helps women build confidence and gain financial security through securing and retaining safe, suitable employment. A standout example is a client who had been a victim of long-term domestic violence and unable to work for 12 years. Thanks to GOGO's unwavering support, she not only re-entered the workforce but now holds what she calls her "dream job" as a Special Services Officer at her children's school. GOGO Events continues to change lives, leaving no stone unturned in its mission to support marginalised women.



MF & ASSOCIATES

MF & Associates, established in 2019, has rapidly gained recognition for its commitment to diversity and inclusion in the cyber security industry. With 66% of their team identifying as women and 80% of leadership positions held by women, the company is breaking barriers in traditionally male-dominated fields. Their ethos—centered on trust, respect, and valuing every contribution—drives their success and culture. MF & Associates is known for giving back to the community through charitable donations, sponsorships, and a 2-day paid leave policy for staff to volunteer with non-profits. As Gold Sponsors of Women in ICT and active supporters of mentoring programs, they consistently champion diversity across the board which culminated in winning Australian Women in Security’s best place to work award. Their outstanding efforts were also recognized when they won the TechFast 50 award for the ACT region in 2022, proving that prioritizing diversity and inclusiveness leads not only to a strong company culture but also to significant commercial achievements. Recently, Fujitsu announced plans to acquire MF & Associates, recognizing the synergies in their shared focus on empathy, diversity, and inclusion.



The logo for _nology, consisting of the word "nology" in a white, lowercase, sans-serif font, with a white underscore character preceding the "n". The logo is set against a solid purple square background.

_NOLOGY

_nology is a company dedicated to empowering women and underrepresented groups through career transitions into the technology industry. By offering training, career placements, and full-time work opportunities, _nology addresses the diversity and skills gap in the tech sector.

_nology is directly impacting enterprise organisations' ability to protect future skills and benefit from investing in emerging talent while creating accessible opportunities for women to enter the tech workforce.

Notable organisations they partner with include ANZ, Sydney Airport and AGL who each have well-established grad & return-to-work programs but were drawn to _nology's talent being 87% career changers with valuable transferable skills - and their equal representation of women in training cohorts. Each have almost exclusively hired women from their available talent pools to support their strategic workforce goals.

Many organisations discover that _nology complements their existing in-house initiatives, and are overly impressed by the energy, passion, and professional maturity of their tech talent overall. Most now come to _nology to source their skilled women + non-binary individuals to support a more balanced gender composition within their teams.

According to hiring partner, Macquarie's lead engineer, _nology's recruits have brought novel ideas, creative problem-solving, and a fresh can-do attitude. Despite initial concerns about onboarding productivity, the _nology participants integrated swiftly and exceeded expectations, picking up procedures quickly and contributing daily with enthusiasm. Macquarie's experience demonstrates how _nology's focus on diversity, professional maturity, and transferable skill sets have elevated the proficiency of their engineering teams, driving both innovation and team success.



SIMPLIFY YOUR TECH

Simplify Your Tech is a business designed to empower female business owners by helping them build their own tech solutions, such as websites, funnels, and automations. Recognizing that many women have been conditioned to believe they aren't good with technology, the company's approach is rooted in patient, step-by-step guidance. Through a combination of education and support, Simplify Your Tech takes clients on a transformative journey—from being terrified to touch technology to proudly launching their own fully functional websites. By demystifying tech and making it accessible, Simplify Your Tech enables women to take control of their digital presence and grow their businesses with confidence.

Storyfolk

STORYFOLK

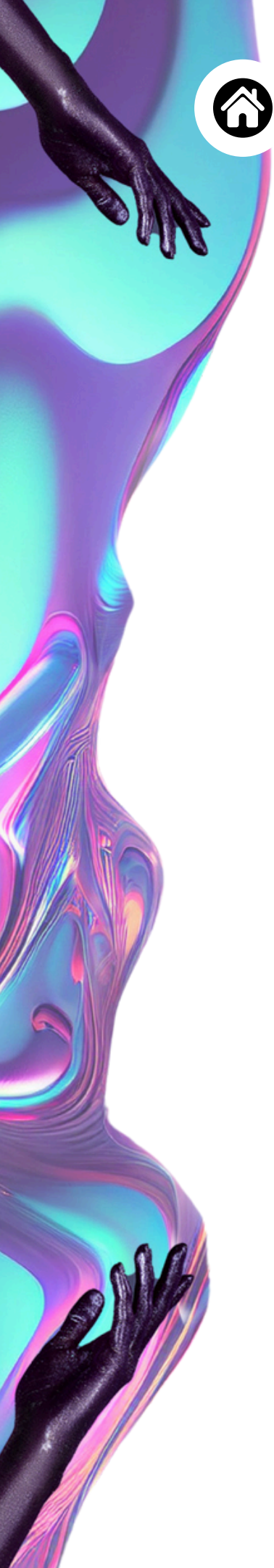
Storyfolk has embedded gender equity into the core of its operations, driven by a commitment to inclusivity in traditionally male-dominated industries. As a female-led agency, Storyfolk demonstrates that diversity fuels innovation and amplifies impact. Their work goes beyond creative boundaries, empowering women with disabilities through partnerships with organizations like Women with Disabilities Victoria and leading initiatives such as the National Centre for Action on Child Sexual Abuse. Through these efforts, Storyfolk inspires others to make equity and inclusivity central to their work across sectors.

**YOUR HART 2 HART**

DISABILITY • RESPITE • ALLIED HEALTH

YOUR HEART TO HEART / OFFICES FIRST

Kerrie Hart founded her business nine years ago with a clear purpose: to make high-quality care accessible and affordable for all. Today, that vision has expanded across Victoria, NSW, and Queensland. As a BCorp and Social Traders member, the business is deeply committed to both community and social responsibility. Partnering with universities, they provide students with hands-on experience, many of whom continue as part of their dedicated workforce. Jody, one of the company's outstanding support workers, joined with invaluable lived experience as a mother to a child with a disability. Her unique perspective has enriched the support they offer, allowing her to build strong connections with clients. Following in her footsteps, Jody's daughter, now training to be a doctor, recently joined as a support worker, continuing the family's legacy of compassionate care.



CEO - BOARD

SPONSORED BY:





ASHLEY MCGRATH

Ashley McGrath, as CEO of CEOs for Gender Equity, has made remarkable strides in promoting gender equity across all industries. She is almost ready to lodge her PhD, focused on accelerating the inclusion and diversity of women in the Mining industry. Ashley's research has identified key themes in what's working, what's not, program implementation and industry collaboration. Her commitment is evident as she balances her research with full time work and blended family life. Since stepping into the CEO role, Ashley has expanded the organization's membership from 30 to over 110 CEOs in two and a half years, representing over 400,000 employees in Australia. A particularly impactful moment was when a member CEO was inspired to take action on family and domestic violence through one of their events, sparking the development of a family and domestic violence program for employees in Australia. The program was so well received it is now being rolled out across the entire Asian region, further amplifying the awareness, prevention, and response to this crucial issue which was ignited through CEOs for Gender Equity.



BEN POLLACK

Ben Pollack is particularly proud of Urbis' gender equity achievements, especially the strides made in advancing diversity at the leadership level. Ensuring gender balance remains a priority in senior decision-making roles. Pollack is proud of the progress toward a 40:40:20 gender balance across governance groups, aiming for 40% female representation among Directors by 2027. While Urbis has long been a gender-balanced organization, notable imbalances at senior levels presented challenges. The initial increase in female director representation, from around 15% to 28%, eventually stalled, prompting renewed efforts.

Urbis introduced firm-wide and team-based initiatives to advance its diversity goals, including observer roles across governance bodies like the Board, Executive Group, and Inclusion Committee. These roles ensure diverse perspectives in decision-making and provide valuable experience to emerging leaders. Additionally, Urbis set 40:40:20 targets across all governance groups—40% men, 40% women, and 20% any gender—and established team-based gender targets with financial consequences to promote accountability.

To further support work-life balance, Urbis offers 18 weeks of paid parental leave and conducts regular pay equity reviews to ensure fair compensation across genders. The dedicated female sponsorship program, SOAR, provides mentorship and development opportunities for women, building confidence and equipping them with the skills needed for leadership roles. Urbis has also achieved WGEA and Family Friendly Workplaces Accreditation, underscoring its commitment to inclusivity. The Champions of Change program further engages senior leaders in promoting gender equality within the organization.

Pollack is pleased that Urbis is on track to meet its interim 2025 target of 35% female directors, an impressive milestone in a sector where male graduates still outnumber female graduates. By prioritizing gender diversity, Urbis continues to foster an equitable workplace, enhancing its ability to innovate, address complex challenges, and deliver exceptional outcomes for clients and communities.



JANINE GRAINGER

Janine Grainger, CEO and co-founder of Easy Crypto, has overseen the company's impressive expansion from New Zealand into Australia and South Africa. But beyond the company's growth, Janine is particularly proud of the inclusive and diverse culture they've created, with a remarkable 95% employee engagement rate. One of the core values at Easy Crypto is "got your back," and this has been demonstrated in the journey of one team member. She started as a fresh graduate, stepping into her first job in the challenging field of compliance within the complex crypto industry. Thanks to the company's encouragement, guidance, and commitment to fostering growth, she embraced her opportunities and, four years later, now holds the position of Head of Compliance. This success story exemplifies Easy Crypto's dedication to nurturing talent and supporting their people every step of the way.



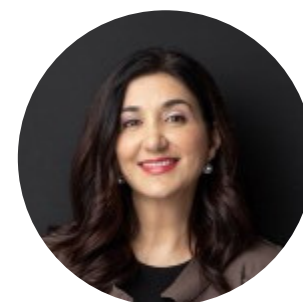
KAT MILNER

Kat Milner is the visionary founder of Simplify Your Tech, a company dedicated to empowering female business owners to build and manage their own technology in a way that's easy to learn, simple to use, and affordable. Kat began her journey as a tech coach for coaches and has since expanded her mission to help women embrace technology, breaking down the barriers of fear and complexity. One remarkable example is a health and wellness coach who initially struggled with technophobia, afraid to press even a single button. Through Kat's patient guidance, that same client is now pushing boundaries and confidently experimenting with various tech tools. Kat's approach proves that with the right support and guidance, anyone can master technology and use it to grow their business.



KERRY SAINSBURY

Kerry Sainsbury, CEO of Credit Success, is passionate about empowering women through financial education and awareness. She is proud of the impact she makes through her podcast and ebook, where she highlights the importance of understanding credit ratings and raises awareness of financial abuse, often a hidden part of domestic violence. Many women, unaware of the long-term implications of poor credit, have found support through Kerry's programs. One woman, left to run a business after her husband's death, was unintentionally driving it into the ground. Thanks to Kerry's educational resources and connections, she received the guidance she needed, ultimately turning her business into a success. Kerry's commitment to empowering women is changing lives and ensuring they have the tools and knowledge to thrive.



LISA ANNELISE

As CEO of the Diversity Council of Australia, Lisa Annelise has had a profound impact on workplace diversity and inclusion. She pioneered the Inclusion@Work Index, Australia's first national tool to help organizations benchmark their diversity efforts. Lisa has been a relentless advocate for policy reforms, focusing on creating safer, more equitable workplaces, particularly for marginalized groups. Her work has influenced significant legislative changes, such as updates to the Sex Discrimination Act and Fair Work Act, government-funded paid parental leave, and efforts to close the gender pay gap. Lisa's global advocacy has taken her to international forums, including the United Nations, where she has presented DCA's groundbreaking research. Her career achievements include launching the #IStandForRespect campaign, which saw over 220 Australian CEOs pledge to combat gender-based harassment and violence, and co-authoring Chief Executives Unplugged, a landmark book on women in the workplace. Recognized as one of The Australian Financial Review's 100 Women of Influence in 2018, Lisa continues to champion diversity, inclusion, and intersectionality in all her work.



MARIAM VEISZADEH

As a human rights advocate, lawyer, and inaugural CEO of Media Diversity Australia, I am deeply committed to advancing diversity and equity in all spaces, especially within the media industry. At Media Diversity Australia, I have led groundbreaking initiatives, including the *Who Gets to Tell Australian Stories* report, which highlighted the significant underrepresentation of Indigenous and non-European backgrounds in Australian newsrooms. This work has sparked important conversations and meaningful action toward fostering a more inclusive media landscape.

My advocacy extends beyond my current role. As a former executive at the Diversity Council Australia, I championed cultural diversity across workplaces, and I founded an anti-racism organization to amplify marginalized voices. My commitment to social justice is further reflected in my TEDx talk on privilege and systemic inequalities, as well as in my media commentary and published works.

A former refugee from Afghanistan, my lived experiences fuel my dedication to creating opportunities for underrepresented communities. My journey from refugee to advocate and CEO demonstrates the transformative power of diversity. Recognitions like the 2023 Asian-Australian Leadership Award and the 2015 Westpac Woman of Influence honour this work and inspire me to continue driving change. Winning the Gender Equity Award would be a collective celebration of the progress we've made toward an equitable society and a reminder to keep striving for a future where everyone, regardless of background, can thrive.



MAT FRANKLIN

Mat Franklin, the founder and Managing Director of MF & Associates, has made remarkable strides in promoting diversity and inclusion within the heavily male-dominated fields of cyber security and management consulting. His firm is known not only for its rapid growth but also for its commitment to gender equality, with 66% of the team and 80% of the leadership identifying as women—a rarity in this industry. Mat's approach is rooted in core values of trust, empathy, inclusion - highlighting the belief that everyone's contribution has value. His personal mission to break down barriers for women has led him to mentor and sponsor many, including young women in tech, executives, and even Indigenous women. His efforts have included funding leadership courses, supporting women-led conferences, and ensuring that women in his team have opportunities to thrive in a safe and supportive environment. Many of his employees were initially his mentees and chose to work at MF & Associates because of the inclusive culture he has cultivated, which culminated in the company winning Australian Women in Security's best place to work award, and Mat being recognised as Women In ICT's (WIC) male champion of change. Mat's leadership truly embodies the ethos of championing women and building a workplace where diverse voices are valued and empowered.



DR. MAUREEN MIGLIAZZO

Dr. Maureen Migliazzo, Chief Operations Officer at Dentons APAC, has reinvigorated the firm's culture with a focus on equity and resilience. While guiding the firm through COVID-19, she was also championing changes to the board that led to new strategy and policy under her 'no limitations' philosophy. The approach has reshaped gender equity at Dentons. Under Maureen's leadership, Dentons is now in its 7th year as a WGEA Employer of Choice, has seen the median gender pay gap drop to just 4.1%, well ahead of competitors and completed a policy overhaul that saw all references to gender removed from policy. New benefits including 5 bonus leave days for wellbeing, flexible public holidays, agile working and 26 weeks of flexible Family Leave were introduced. With parenting roles equalised, men are now taking the full amount of leave on offer, access to bonuses while on leave has become available and adjusted targets for a smooth transition back to work have led to the firm just celebrating a 100% return-to-work rate for the second consecutive year. Maureen's commitment to equity has also propelled female partnership representation from 12% in 2018 to now 36% today. She continues to embed equity into Dentons' strategic core, championing a future where equity and innovation are seamlessly aligned.



REBECCA FAHEY

Rebecca Fahey, Managing Partner at SLF Lawyers, has spearheaded a transformative shift in the firm's approach to gender equity and inclusion, moving from a diversity-focused mindset to a culture that actively supports individual merit and contribution. Under Rebecca's leadership, SLF Lawyers has taken deliberate steps to create a balanced workforce, with 66% of employees being women and female representation at the most senior levels, including a majority of Senior Partners. Recognizing the historical male dominance in law, SLF's People & Culture team, established in 2023, has made gender equity a priority through impactful policies that align with industry benchmarks and best practices.

The firm has introduced a gender-neutral parental leave policy, offering 4-8 weeks of paid leave for all parents, including those in non-traditional caregiving roles like adoption and surrogacy. This policy has enabled employees to return to work with flexibility, supported by clear transition processes. Additionally, Rebecca has championed an expanded Family & Domestic Violence Policy, which includes counseling for family members and legal advice, and a revised Flexible Work Policy that offers flexible arrangements to all team members. With policies that eliminate gender bias in pay and promote transparency in compensation, SLF Lawyers ensures that all roles are fairly compensated, with performance ratings moderated by a Remuneration Committee.

Rebecca's leadership has also seen SLF Lawyers achieve national recognition for its women leaders, with many female partners and rising stars reaching finalist positions in the Australian Law Awards. By fostering a respectful workplace, SLF Lawyers is making strides in addressing gender equity, setting an inspiring example in the legal sector.



ROBYN VERRALL

Robyn Verrall, founder of the nonprofit Harvesting Potential, has made it her mission to address food insecurity in First Nations communities and other vulnerable groups. Her dedication stems from a life-changing experience in 2011, when she brought a Christmas roast to a local elder, a woman who seldom left her home and needed assistance. Robyn prepared the meal, ready for the elder's visiting family, and went to store the rest in the freezer, only to find the fridge completely empty. This pivotal moment revealed the hidden food insecurity in her community and inspired Robyn to establish Harvesting Potential, where she works tirelessly to deliver affordable, accessible food. In addition to her nonprofit work, Robyn is active as Chair of Agribusiness, Food, Wine & Beverage and serves on the board for SA Leaders for Gender Equity South Australia, where she is devoted to empowering women and cultivating success.



SANDRA D'SOUZA

Sandra D'Souza, founder of Ellect, considers her proudest accomplishment to be creating and nurturing Ellect into a transformative force for gender equality in leadership and board roles. As one determined individual without governmental influence or official power, Sandra recognised that persistent gender disparities in leadership could not be overlooked.

Determined to address this gap, she established Ellect, an organisation designed to drive real change. An initiative under Ellect is the Ellect Stars program, which celebrates and honours companies that achieve meaningful progress in gender-balanced leadership. This recognition motivates organisations to strive for equality and sets benchmarks for inclusive practices. Sandra's leadership ensures that Ellect Stars goes beyond accolades—it represents a movement that redefines corporate diversity standards and fosters a culture where gender balance is seen as an essential component of success.

Sandra's passion for advocacy extends beyond recognition programs. Her book, "From Bias to Equality," became an Amazon No. 1 Bestseller, sharing actionable insights from leaders who have successfully embedded diversity into their organisations. Through these stories, she equips readers with strategies and inspiration to tackle systemic biases and champion inclusive practices.

Ellect Women, another cornerstone of her work, has become a vibrant community that connects, mentors, and empowers women to step into leadership roles. This supportive network serves as a source of inspiration, practical advice, and solidarity for women navigating their career paths toward leadership and boardroom positions. Sandra's journey from recognising a critical gap to creating a multifaceted platform that inspires businesses and individuals has redefined how gender equality is approached in leadership. Her efforts continue to push for a world where diversity in leadership is not an ideal, but a reality. The impact of Ellect and the initiatives Sandra has spearheaded have sparked real change, proving that even one person's dedication can ripple through industries, encouraging more balanced, inclusive leadership practices.



SARAH GUN

Sarah Gun, founder of GOGO Events, has created a business dedicated to transforming the lives of marginalised women, providing the opportunity to rebuild their confidence, skills, their sense of belonging and economic inclusion. Today, GOGO employs 10 permanent staff members. Another 10 women, all who have experienced marginalisation from the workforce, are employed as casual events staff as they transition to more reliable long term employment. One remarkable story is of a First Nations woman and mother of 11, who faced racism and intergenerational trauma. Starting with GOGO, she gained her Cert 2, then Cert 4, and is now completing her Diploma in Community Services, and working in her dream job supporting women exiting prisons to stay out of the Justice System. Through her efforts, she has helped reduce recidivism rates from 40% to an incredible 4% in the groups she has supported. Gaining employment for this woman meant challenging bias, incorrect information, and racism and challenging government processes. Supported by Sarah and the GOGO team, she fought for justice through system change and righting her own history. The ripple effect of Sarah's work is that she has empowered other women to use their lived experience and their voice to fight for a better and safer future for other marginalised women.



SENIOR MANAGER

SPONSORED BY:



Award Winning Gender Initiative Supporting Women Through Menopause & Menstruation

“Because it’s the right thing to do”

One in five Australian women find menopause or menstrual symptoms worrisome enough to interfere with their work, according to a landmark study by the Jean Hailes for Women’s Health organisation.

Together with Monash University, the research questioned 3,500 women across diverse racial and economic backgrounds on the way menstruation and menopause impact a woman’s experience in the workplace.

Of the respondents aged 45 to 64 years, over 60 percent said they had had “bothersome” symptoms in the past five years, while 17 percent said they had needed to take an extended break from work.

Hotel giant The Ascott Limited, Australia – which won the Business in Heels 2023 Gender Equity Award in the General Business (100-499 people) category – has tackled this particular workplace issue head on as part of its wider commitment to a number of gender equity policies.



“We put in place a number of life-changing policies at Ascott Australia,” explains Director of Sales, Shae Anderson. “I was part of the gender equality working group that came together to research and craft the gender equality policies. We spearheaded change in our business by talking to others who had implemented similar policies, understanding what roadblocks they faced, and by looking to the recommendations of the Workplace Gender Equality Agency. Then we ensured our new policies were supported all the way through the business.”

“Menstrual and menopause leave is an important pillar of our overall gender equity strategy, as these issues impact 50 percent of the workforce in a significant way,” says Shae.

Employees at Ascott Australia now receive an additional six days of paid menstrual and menopause leave per year, in a move that aims to meet a number of Ascott’s ongoing inclusivity goals, which include the removal of barriers to the full and equal participation of women in the workforce and the elimination of discrimination on the basis of gender, particularly in relation to family and caring responsibilities.



ADAM CARPENTER

As the Manufacturing Mill Manager at Kimberly-Clark in South Australia, Adam Carpenter has been a driving force behind increasing the representation of women on shift teams from 5% to 25%. Recognizing the need for cultural change, Adam implemented recruitment and onboarding strategies where women were introduced in cohorts, ensuring a more supportive and inclusive environment. One significant cultural shift was the introduction of job-sharing roles, which were initially designed to encourage female participation. Interestingly, this initiative has evolved, with 20 men now participating in job-share arrangements. Adam's efforts have not only diversified the workforce but also created a more flexible and equitable environment for all employees.



SENIOR MANAGER



ANGELA SMITH

As a Senior Partner at SLF Lawyers, she has cultivated a workplace culture that respects each individual's path to success, breaking away from the traditional "cookie-cutter" approach of the legal industry. This personalized support is evident in the story of one team member who started as a law clerk and was encouraged through her studies, integrated into the team, and later supported during a difficult life transition. Thanks to Angela's empathetic leadership and commitment to treating everyone as an individual, this team member has now advanced to become an associate. Angela's approach exemplifies her dedication to creating an empowering environment where team members can thrive on their own terms.



ANN GEEHMAN

Ann Geehman has made a lasting impact on diversity and gender equity at ANZ Bank, especially by fostering opportunities for women in IT leadership. Throughout her career, Ann has taken over teams with little to no diversity in their leadership circles. In her last four leadership roles, she has transformed these teams within six months, identifying and promoting female talent into leadership positions. Her efforts have led to high-performing teams with a mix of genders and cultures. Committed to long-term diversity, Ann ensures gender and geographic balance in succession planning, interviews a diverse slate of candidates, and actively cultivates a network of talented female leaders to strengthen ANZ's future.



CARLA FUENTES

Carla Fuentes, a Peruvian-born leader at Polaron, has significantly impacted the lives of migrants by helping them integrate into their new communities through improved education, health services, and fostering a welcoming environment. Her leadership has been pivotal not only in community work but also in growing the company by offering professional pathways for women based in Peru. One of her success stories is Alison, who joined as an intern and, with Carla's active encouragement and challenges, developed her English and confidence. As Alison's skills grew, so did her responsibilities, eventually leading her to become Carla's second-in-command. This growth enabled Alison to migrate to Australia, where she now leads a team of six. Recently, Carla entrusted her with leadership during a two-week absence, confident that she had empowered Alison to excel in the role.



CELINE DICKSON

Celine Dickson, a dedicated Financial Services Executive, Director, and Chair of Allianz's Networking Equity & Opportunity (NEO) Committee, has played a pivotal role in shaping careers through mentorship. Since 2019, NEO has mentored 378 employees, with over 100 participants each year. Personally, Celine has mentored 33 individuals since 2016, including Alex Clifford, whom she hired at AON and later brought to Allianz in 2020 as National Manager of the Small Business Portfolio. When Alex first met Celine, she struggled with confidence, but through Celine's guidance, coaching, and unwavering support over four years, Alex found her footing and achieved remarkable career success. Celine's mentorship is a testament to the profound impact she has on developing and empowering talent.



CHRIS LAMB

Chris Lamb's Deputy Commissioner NSW Public Service Commission contributions to gender equity span over two decades, marked by transformative initiatives across corporate, public, and sporting sectors. In the early 2000s, Chris established women's networks across two companies and three countries, while also pioneering the introduction and expansion of paid maternity and parental leave policies. As a board member of Diversity Council Australia for 14 years, Chris has been at the forefront of significant gender equity initiatives.

In 2016, Chris led a corporate program that made history by enabling the NSW Women's Cricket Team to become the first professional state women's sporting team in Australia. Continuing his commitment to fostering change, Chris enhanced parental leave provisions in the NSW public service in 2020, improving access for 450,000 employees. As a board member of Netball NSW since 2021, Chris supports the country's highest female-participation sport.

Throughout his career, Chris has been a prominent voice for gender equity, speaking at numerous forums and advocating tirelessly for meaningful change. His work has left an enduring impact across industries and communities, embodying a lifelong dedication to creating a more equitable future.



SENIOR MANAGER



EMILY SUTCLIFFE

Emily Sutcliffe's dedication to empowering women and girls in soccer has led to significant strides in the sport's inclusivity. Through her school holiday programs, she has introduced over 80 girls to soccer, showing them that a career in professional coaching is not only possible but can also lead to opportunities worldwide. Her program has inspired young women aged 15-18 to step into coaching roles, including Leisel, Makayla and Rosie, all of whom have risen as standout leaders. Rosie, originally from Geelong, has even been able to transfer her coaching skills to Melbourne, a testament to the broader impact of Emily's vision and mentorship.



JOANNE WOO

Joanne Woo, Global VP and Division Head of Marketing & Communications at ABB, leads the charge in promoting female role models in non-traditional roles and cultures through her impactful "Unstoppable" campaign. This campaign was inspired by a personal moment when her 8-year-old daughter, an exceptional runner, lost her shoe at the start of a race. Rather than stopping, her daughter sprinted ahead, finishing second and feeling proud of her perseverance. This moment of resilience deeply moved Joanne, prompting her to create a campaign that highlights women's tenacity in the face of challenges, encouraging them to keep going no matter the obstacles. Through "Unstoppable," Joanne has become a powerful advocate for women, pushing for greater visibility and representation in industries and cultures where they are underrepresented.



SENIOR MANAGER



MELINDA DAVIES

Melinda Davies, COO of Empowering Women in Trades, is proud to be driving change by leading with kindness and challenging the notion of gender-based industries. Her mission is clear: to empower women to enter trades, with an ambitious goal of achieving 30% female representation in the sector by 2030. Empowering Women in Trades runs a variety of programs, bridging the gap from schools to industry, helping participants overcome limiting beliefs and build confidence. Melinda takes pride in leading a team that also started with low confidence but has grown to inspire and support others. One success story highlights a woman who had been out of work for 2.5 years and struggling with self-belief. Through Empowering Women in Trades, she received practical help, including a fuel card, ongoing support, and an introduction to a potential employer. With this assistance, she recently began her apprenticeship as a diesel mechanic, a testament to the transformative impact of the program.



SENIOR MANAGER



MICHAEL READ

Michael Read, Executive Director of Barpa & Icon, has led transformative changes to increase female participation and leadership within the construction industry. By focusing on pay equity, fostering career progression, and supporting mentorship, Michael has helped create a more inclusive and equitable environment. One inspiring success story is Ruth De Rosa, who joined the company as a part-time receptionist 16 years ago. With the company's support, Ruth completed her construction degree in 2015 and is currently studying a Master in Construction Law. Today, she serves as a commercial manager, leading three business units—a testament to Barpa & Icon's commitment to developing talent and championing diversity.



SENIOR MANAGER



PRITIDA VINOD

Pritida Vinod plays an instrumental role in promoting gender equity through her deep commitment to mentoring and sponsoring women within our program. She has been a transformative influence, supporting talented women as they navigate obstacles, grow in their roles, and reach new professional milestones. One particularly impactful example involved a mentee who had been striving for a promotion over several years. Pritida worked closely with her to identify areas for development, strengthen her case for promotion, and refine her communication with leadership and stakeholders. Her guidance not only reinforced the mentee's resilience but led to her well-deserved promotion—a moment of pride for Pritida, who continues to see the power of mentorship in action.

Pritida is also dedicated to helping women develop the skills and experience necessary for senior leadership roles. Recognizing that many women possess talent and drive but lack certain experiences deemed essential for leadership, Pritida provides regular coaching to help them identify growth opportunities, such as strategic projects within their current roles. This support has enabled many women to gain critical decision-making experience, equipping them to move into senior positions.

Additionally, Pritida's commitment extends beyond mentorship to sponsorship, where she actively advocates for women by speaking up on their behalf in key meetings, nominating them for high-visibility projects, and recommending them for leadership development opportunities. This active sponsorship ensures these women are recognized by decision-makers and provided opportunities that align with their aspirations. By addressing both internal challenges, like self-doubt, and external barriers, such as visibility, Pritida is a crucial advocate for gender equity, driving meaningful change and growth for women in the program.



SENIOR MANAGER



SANDY THEFS

As General Manager of Table Games at The Star Entertainment Group, Sandy Thefs has been a champion for gender equity and professional growth. She has significantly increased the representation of women in her department, while also facilitating rewarding career transitions for employees, helping them reskill from gaming roles to areas like investigation. Sandy's support extends beyond career development, as she actively mentors female team members in financial literacy, ensuring they understand critical concepts such as compound interest. Her holistic approach to leadership not only fosters a diverse and inclusive workforce but also empowers her team with skills for long-term financial well-being.



SHEEZA SHAKIL

Known for her steadfast commitment to empowering women in the tech industry and sales, Sheeza has fostered a culture of mentorship and support. Her dedication extends beyond the workplace—she has been mentoring a refugee from Syria for three years, helping her navigate educational choices between engineering and architecture. Under Sheeza's guidance, this mentee recently graduated, a testament to the life-changing impact of Sheeza's support. Her role as Client Partner at Wipro has also contributed to the company's efforts in promoting diversity and inclusion, helping Wipro earn accolades for being a top firm for women in tech leadership. Sheeza's continued advocacy for gender equity makes her a deserving finalist



DIVERSITY & INCLUSION MANAGER



AMRITA VERMA

Amrita Verma, Diversity and Inclusion Manager at Quest Dubbo, is committed to creating a workplace where every employee can flourish. Recognizing the importance of balancing personal and professional lives, Amrita has implemented flexible work arrangements, particularly supporting working mothers and pregnant staff. These initiatives enable housekeepers, many of whom are school-age mothers, to adjust their schedules for school runs or breastfeeding breaks. Amrita also champions gender equity through thoughtful consumer habits, prioritizing purchases from businesses that promote equal opportunities.

In her quest to ensure inclusivity, Amrita provides equal learning and development opportunities for all staff, regardless of gender, background, or identity. Her unbiased merit and evaluation system is based on guest feedback, fostering motivation and excellence. Monthly staff meetings celebrate top performers, encouraging a culture of recognition and achievement.

Amrita's dedication to diversity is evident in her hiring practices, which bring together employees from varied ethnicities, including staff members from China, Indonesia, Nepal, India, Bangladesh, and Indigenous backgrounds. For Amrita, diversity goes beyond representation—it's embedded in the DNA of her business. By fostering a workplace culture that celebrates individuality and implements inclusive systems, Amrita ensures Quest Dubbo is a space where innovation, equity, and empowerment thrive.



ASHLEIGH CANTORI

Ashleigh Cantori has championed a transformative gender equity strategy that goes above and beyond – this overarching strategy includes a strategy committed to reducing the gender pay gap, national initiatives, industry benchmarking and national governance to foster a culture of equity and inclusion. Under Ashleigh’s guidance, the company has integrated gender pay reviews into every promotion and remuneration cycle, applying a rigorous gender lens to each decision. Additionally, introducing gender representation targets for all levels within the organisation. This approach not only reinforces pay equality for like-for-like roles but also aligns with the company’s commitment to balanced representation, following the 40/40/20 model. Ashleigh’s work is helping to create a workplace where gender equity is embedded into the culture, contributing to fairer and more balanced representation across all roles.



FIONA MACDONALD

In her role as Group Head of Diversity & Inclusion at ANZ, Fiona MacDonald has championed a comprehensive women-in-leadership action plan designed to tackle systemic barriers to gender equity. With a strategic focus on clarity, actionable planning, and robust executive sponsorship, Fiona’s leadership has resulted in a 5.4% increase in female representation in leadership since 2020, which is significant as digital transformation reshapes the bank and the financial services industry more broadly. Her efforts demonstrate how intentional and well-supported diversity initiatives can help close gender gaps and cultivate a more inclusive workplace for the future.



JACK MEEHAN

As the first Social Impact & Inclusion Manager at Dentons, Jack pioneered an approach to gender equity that focuses on genuine, impactful change. Known internally as the firm's 'corporate conscience', within two years, his initiatives have contributed to an 11% reduction in the gender pay gap. He did this by moving the focus from leadership to instead encouraging more men to enter female dominated areas in support functions by showcasing progression pathways at the firm. Jack believes equity goes beyond single-day events, establishing a culture of year-round inclusion to fight tokenism. He is dedicated to empowering women, especially those affected by socioeconomic challenges and through this lens led the creation of the Dentons Aspire scholarship (giving diverse women students in Perth funding and a summer internship at the firm) and introduced spaces that encourage collective growth rather than one-on-one mentoring. Women leaders are instead challenged to mentor external people, including those living with disability, First Nations interns, and women from developing countries. Jack also committed Dentons to pro bono work to address homelessness for elderly women, while creating employment pathways for the women to return to the workforce. He spoke of this issue to his 13000 plus followers on social media inspiring other organisations to join the effort. Jack uses social impact to embed positive change deeply within the firm, building a legacy of equity to empower anyone to succeed.



ROMAN RUZBACKY

Roman Ruzbacky's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) is rooted in his upbringing by his mother, a migrant woman of the sixties, single mother, one wage, two boys, unselfish, outspoken, and an unmatched determination. She instilled fairness, care and integrity for the work he does.

In his DEI work, Roman thrives on opportunities to introduce data-driven, disruptive solutions that lead to meaningful change to people. His work with Deakin University between 2009-2016 exemplifies this approach: by providing tools, KPIs, and data insights, he helped the institution establish social inclusion hubs, reduce the gender pay gap, and increase female representation in senior leadership. These initiatives empowered the university's female Vice Chancellor to advocate with authority and influence, reflecting the depth of Roman's impact.



TANYA HOSCH

As the AFL's Executive General Manager for Inclusion & Social Policy, Tanya Hosch has championed the Respect and Responsibility policy, establishing a supportive and secure process for handling cases of assault. This policy has transformed the experience for victims, with many women sharing unsolicited feedback on the positive resolution and support they've received—something that, in the past, would likely have made headlines, leaving women feeling exposed. Now, only stories shared by the women themselves reach the media. Additionally, Tanya has overseen the rollout of Respectful Relationships training to 36 teams, focusing on gender equity and respectful interactions with women and girls in the context of football. Her efforts ensure the AFL fosters an inclusive, respectful culture on and off the field.



MANAGER

SPONSORED BY:



University of
South Australia

Centre for
**Workplace
Excellence**

The **Centre for Workplace Excellence (CWeX)** at the University of South Australia is a globally recognised leader in workplace research, with a mission to empower organisations to achieve excellence in organisational productivity and employee wellbeing. CWeX focuses on four key research areas: designing future-ready organisations, engaging tomorrow's workforce, transforming workplace relationships, and promoting employee health, safety, and wellbeing. Through multidisciplinary research and collaborations with government agencies, industry practitioners, and community partners, we develop evidence-based solutions to improve workplace practices, drive positive change, and shape a better society.

CWeX has a wide portfolio, but diversity and inclusion is one of our core strength areas. CWeX researchers are investigating strategies to reduce sexual harassment at work, make workplaces more age- and gender-inclusive, and motivate organisations to become gender equality front runners.

CWeX is particularly proud of the work that we are doing to help employers close gender pay gaps. Our research demonstrates that a gender pay gap within an organisation's leadership team sabotages the organisation's diversity activities. In the presence of a gender pay gap, as an organisation appoints more women to the leadership team, its financial performance declines. The research highlights that gender inequality needs to be addressed as a systemic issue with multiple indicators.



When an organisation increases women's representation in leadership roles without addressing gender pay gaps in those roles, the organisation fails to benefit from its gender-diverse leadership. Gender pay gaps are often discussed as a problem for women, but our research emphasises that these gaps are also a problem for women's employers. The research evidence gives organisations a very practical reason to take pay gaps seriously.

CWeX's gender pay gap research has been featured on Channel 7 News and in HR Monthly, Yahoo!Finance, Women's Agenda, PublicAccountant, and other outlets. It received the 2021 Philip Brown Prize from the Securities Industry Research Centre of Asia-Pacific (SIRCA) and was described in the SA Chief Scientist's "Best of the Best" series as a "CEO must-read." Professor Carol Kulik, one of CWeX's senior researchers, is currently serving on South Australia's Gender Pay Gap Taskforce, a group that provides independent advice to the Minister for Women and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence on strategies to address South Australia's gender pay gap.

Learn more about CWeX and our research here:

<https://www.unisa.edu.au/research/cwex/>



MANAGER



DANIELA RUIZ

Daniela Ruiz, Team Leader at Polaron Language Services, is passionate about empowering migrant women in Australia. Having moved here as a professional migrant, she knows firsthand the challenges involved in building a new life. Actively engaged in multicultural groups, Daniella mentors Latin American migrant women, offering guidance and sharing her experiences to help them find their path. As a team leader, she brings this same spirit of mentorship to her colleagues, both male and female, inspiring them to believe in their abilities and reach their full potential. Through her leadership, Daniella fosters an inclusive community where everyone feels supported, valued, and motivated to contribute.



REN ZHANG

Ren Zhang's podcast, *Have You Eaten*, has blossomed with Coles' support to feature a diverse range of voices from Coles' immigrant frontline team members, putting a spotlight on women and their personal connections to food and family. Originally focused on the support office, the podcast now includes stories from community stores and First Choice Liquor team members, giving listeners an intimate look into how food ties people to their heritage. One notable story is from a team member from Shanghai, who moved to Australia 16 years ago and raised her children here. She shared how a familiar chili sauce from home—a product she can find at Coles—brings back memories of her life in China, keeping her connected to her roots while creating new memories with her family in Australia. Through these stories, Ren's podcast highlights the shared language of food in bridging cultures and honouring one's heritage.



EMPLOYEE

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At Business in Mentoring, we specialize in empowering organizations through innovative mentoring programs and leadership training that drive engagement, productivity, and sustainable growth. With over 120 experienced mentors, we scale seamlessly to meet your needs, offering solutions like Finding Your Voice and tailored one-on-one mentoring to help female teams thrive.

Our experiential communication training, featuring professional actors, equips leaders to handle emotional discussions with confidence and empathy. Guided by our vision of creating an equal workforce for all, we are transforming businesses into inclusive and thriving workplaces.

Using a state-of-the-art platform and certified training, we help organizations align teams with business goals while building inclusive, psychologically safe environments. From improving retention to fostering career growth, our programs are designed to help leaders and teams excel, creating meaningful, long-lasting change.



AURORA SASSONE

Aurora Sassone's proudest achievement is her commitment to empowering women, ensuring their voices are heard and their contributions recognised. In her role as the head of communications for Oracle ANZ, she has the privilege of showcasing the remarkable work of her colleagues, many of whom are women whose efforts often go unnoticed. Aurora finds it incredibly rewarding to bring these stories to the forefront, shining a light on the talents and achievements of women in her organisation and beyond.

Her passion for supporting others also extends to her role as a mentor, where she finds deep satisfaction in helping individuals overcome challenges and unlock their potential. For Aurora, nothing compares to witnessing a mentee succeed, gaining confidence, and realising their own strengths.

On a personal level, Aurora takes great pride in raising her two young sons, instilling in them the values of empathy, respect, and a sense of responsibility to contribute positively to the world. She views this as an important part of her legacy.

For Aurora, success is measured not only in her personal accomplishments but in her ability to uplift others, helping them find their voice and guiding them toward their goals. This dedication to supporting and inspiring others is at the heart of what she considers her greatest achievements.



EMPLOYEE



CAROL KULIK

Carol Kulik, a Bradley Distinguished Professor at the University of South Australia's Centre for Workplace Excellence, is at the forefront of groundbreaking research that reveals the detrimental effects of the gender pay gap on organizational performance. Her findings show that 80% of firms display a traditional pay gap at the executive level, with male executives earning 1.5 times more than their female counterparts on average. In some cases, this disparity is even larger, with male executives being paid 2.6 times more than female executives. Kulik's research further shows that in firms with such extreme gaps, adding women to top management results in a 2.2% reduction in return on assets annually. The message is clear: underpaying women signals low expectations of their contributions, ultimately limiting their influence in decision-making and diminishing the potential benefits of diversity at the executive level. Kulik's work provides concrete evidence that closing the gender pay gap is not just a matter of equity but is vital for improving organizational success.



REBEKAH ODGERS

Rebekah Odgers has journeyed from facing gender-based challenges in the legal industry to becoming a role model who inspires with her work ethic and genuine care for her team. Early in her career, she encountered significant obstacles, including restrictions around basic needs like bathroom breaks being counted against her lunch hour and off-handed comments in court. These experiences shaped her determination to create a supportive, empowering work environment. Now, as a leader, Rebekah consciously fosters an environment of respect and growth. One team member shared, "You are my manager for life... because you care deeply and have an insane work ethic." Rebekah's approach not only uplifts her team but also exemplifies the positivity she's brought to her workplace.



EMPLOYEE



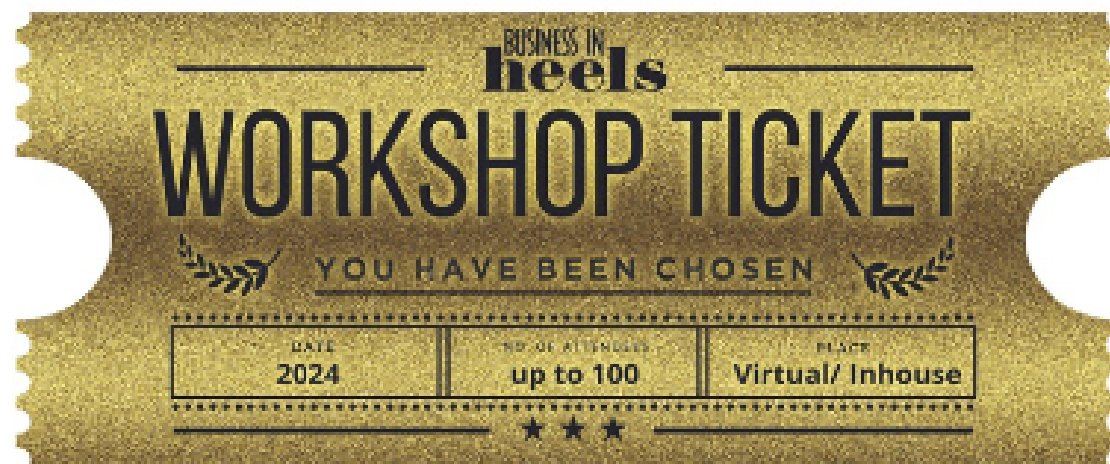
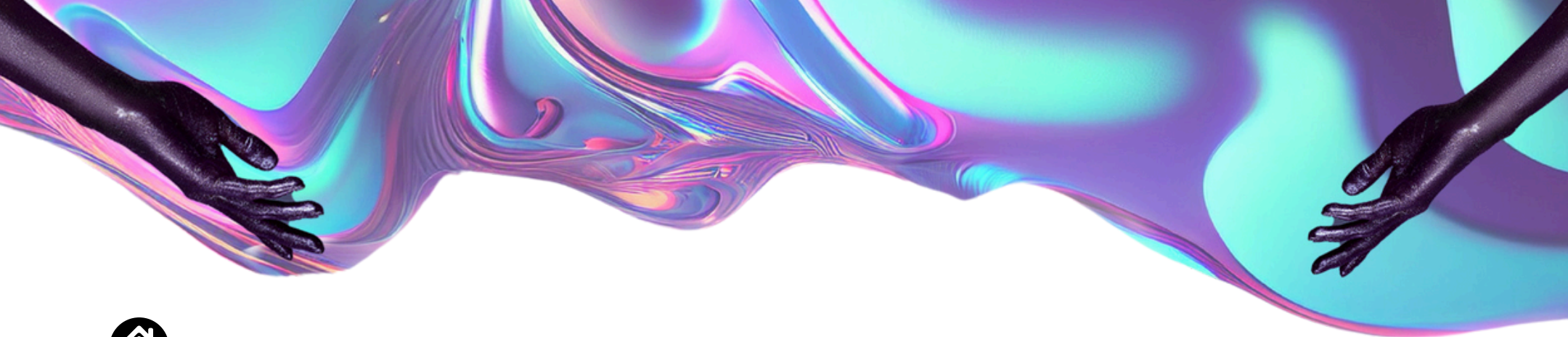
TAMMIE LUCK

As the Table Games Gaming Manager at The Star, Tammie Luck has created the “Keeping in Touch” program, a monthly initiative for employees on parental leave to discuss parenting challenges and milestones while staying connected to their workplace. Running for over a year, the program not only fosters a support network among returning parents but also provides facilities like a dedicated mothers’ room. Oana, a mother of three who has had all her children while working at The Star, shared her appreciation, saying that the support for parents has continued to improve, making her feel more supported now than ever. This initiative reflects Tammie’s commitment to a family-friendly workplace that values both personal and professional growth.

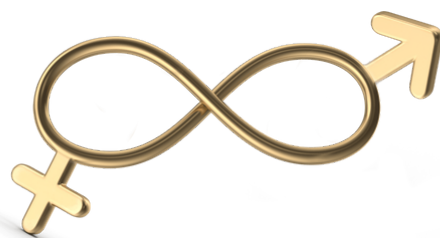
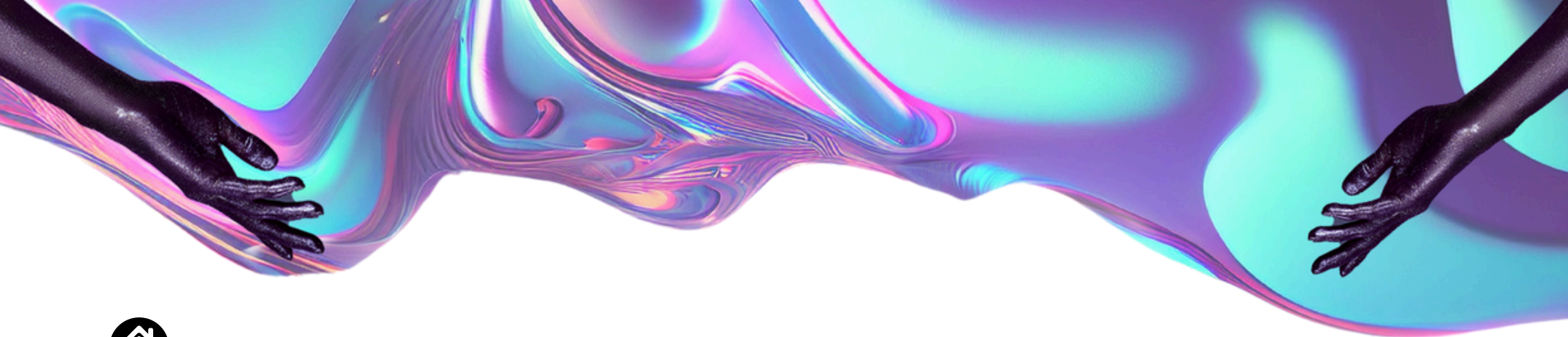


TRINELLE REBEIRO

Trinelle Rebeiro, Principal Auditor for Financial Crime at NAB, has been a volunteer champion for gender equity at NAB, dedicating her time and effort beyond her regular duties. Through her leadership in NAB’s gender equity employee resource group, she was instrumental in establishing internal equity awards that honor change-makers and allies on International Women’s Day. These awards include professional development opportunities, which Trinelle follows up on, reinforcing the benefits for both individual career growth and the business as a whole. Among the award recipients are Bettina, who dedicates her time to attending school fairs to encourage students to pursue STEM careers, and another winner who launched the “She Builds” program to help women at NAB transition into STEM roles. Trinelle’s voluntary efforts are fostering a culture of support, inspiration, and progress within NAB.



Golden Ticket winners, please email Lisa Sweeney at lisa@businessinheels.com.



Save the Date

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