

Foreword

I am very pleased to present the University of Wollongong's response to the Women in STEM Decadal Plan.

Addressing the six opportunities identified in the Decadal Plan has allowed us to recognise our achievements in advancing gender equity in academia, and promoting science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine (STEMM)* as career choices for women and girls. It has also helped us to define where our Science in Australia Gender Equity (SAGE)/ Athena SWAN Bronze Institutional Award Action Plan can be most effective in achieving excellence and advancing the careers of women, trans and gender diverse individuals in STEMM and across the University of Wollongong (UOW).

Gender equality is critical to an organisation's success and crucial for society as a whole. As UOW's Vice-Chancellor, I am continually working to ensure that this message is conveyed to all staff and students, particularly in the traditionally malefocused STEMM disciplines. All people working at UOW should feel they are able to access and enjoy the same rewards, resources and opportunities regardless of gender. We are proud that the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) recognises UOW as an Employer of Choice for Gender Equality.

Gender equality and gender pay equity is, and will continue to be, a priority at UOW, and we are always making changes to strengthen this commitment. This year we have appointed Associate Deans in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (AD-EDI) in every faculty, who will work collaboratively with our staff and leadership to champion EDI, and have refreshed our Research and Innovation Strategy with a commitment to addressing historical inequities by increasing the diversity of academic appointments, as well as a commitment to values-based and diverse leadership. In 2020/2021 we welcome our new Chancellor Ms Christine McLoughlin FAICD, and new Vice-Chancellor Professor Patricia Davidson, who will continue to champion and reinforce UOW's commitment to gender equality.

On behalf of UOW, I pledge our ongoing commitment to achieving gender equity and look forward to supporting the Australian Academy of Science and the Australian Academy of Technology and Engineering to deliver the Women in STEM Decadal Plan.



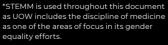
Professor Paul Wellings CBE Vice-Chancellor and Principal











Front cover image: Ruby O'Driscoll (Bachelor Mechanical Engineering student). Right: Winged sculpture by Bert Flugelman.







Leadership

UOW is a leader in gender equity within the Australian higher education sector. Our 2020-2025 Strategic Plan recognises our culture as a strategic enabler which is critical to achieving our vision for the future:

"As we adapt quickly, we will remain grounded in our institutional values, and we will continue to champion inclusion, diversity, and gender equity to create a welcoming environment for everyone."

In particular, in 2020-2025, UOW will focus on strengthening equity and diversity policies and strategies, by implementing our Athena SWAN Action Plan to advance the careers of academic women, trans and gender diverse individuals, and achieve our target of 40 per cent women in the professoriate.

UOW is the only Australian university to concurrently hold four major achievements in equity and diversity recognition:

- SAGE/Athena SWAN Bronze Institution Award;
- WGEA Employer of Choice for Gender Equality citation;
- Australian Workplace Equality Index (AWEI) Bronze Employer Award;
- Selected to participate in the Department of Education, Skills and Employment's Career Revive Initiative.

UOW is proud to be among the first cohort to have received an Athena SWAN Bronze Institution Award in 2018. Our 29-point Action Plan is a road map for achieving excellence and advancing the careers of women in STEMM and across UOW. We are mapping our EDI landscape with a view to streamlining and standardising processes and governance as well as sharing good practice.



Left: Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) Professor Jennifer Martin AC. Right: Incoming Vice-Chancellor Professor Patricia Davidson



To embed our Action Plan for gender equity across the institution, we have appointed Associate Deans Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (AD-EDI) in each faculty. ADs (EDI) are tasked with collaboratively designing, implementing and delivering annual gender equity plans for their schools and faculties, and reporting through to the SAGE Athena SWAN Implementation Committee.

Over the coming 12 months, UOW will be recommending the Panel Pledge to all our staff to address the imbalance of representation by women at public and academic forums.

UOW Vice-Chancellor Professor Paul Wellings CBE is a role model for gender equity, work-life balance and the prevention of discrimination and harassment. He affirms his commitment through both internal communications to staff and students, and external platforms such as alumni events, Universities Australia events, key regional conferences and UOW Council events, promoting his commitment to improving UOW's gender equity performance.

At UOW, women hold many leadership positions in the senior executive and faculty executive within STEMM disciplines, and actively advocate for a non-gendered workplace culture. In 2020 the following roles are held by women: Chancellor; Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Innovation; Deputy Vice-Chancellor Health and Communities; Executive Dean Faculty of Engineering and Information Sciences; Executive Dean Faculty of Science, Medicine and Health. In 2021 UOW will welcome its first female Vice-Chancellor, with the appointment of Professor Patricia Davidson.

UOW Council has a target of 40 per cent female representation, and currently exceeds this at 47 per cent of membership. Women also make up 47 per cent of Academic Senate membership, with Chair and Deputy Chair positions regularly held by women.

UOW's two major research governance bodies, the University Research Committee (URC) and Research Integrity Committee (RIC) also actively maintain gender balance (currently URC 45 per cent women, RIC 59 per cent women).

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PARTNERSHIPS

UOW has worked closely with Australian partners throughout our Athena SWAN journey, including the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation (ANSTO) and the University of Newcastle.

UOW has a strong international relationship with the University of Surrey through the Universities Global Partnership Network (UGPN). Surrey holds both Institutional and Departmental Bronze Awards.

In 2017 UOW collaborated with Surrey on an ERASMUS (European Region Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students) bid which was successful. The application was based on further enhancing the relationship between the two institutions, developing peer review practices for Athena SWAN applications and sharing global best practices in equality and diversity. Exchange visits were undertaken in 2018 and 2019. These visits included meetings with key staff across a range of equality and diversity functions and provided valuable insights on how to strengthen UOW's gender equality and diversity initiatives in preparation for the pathway to an Athena SWAN Silver award.

UOW was selected to host the 2019 Equity Practitioners in Higher Education Australasia (EPHEA) biennial conference. This conference brought together hundreds of experts from across the higher education sector to explore how educational institutions can embrace knowledge, skills, experiences and cultures of people from diverse backgrounds.

The COVID-19 pandemic poses specific challenges for gender equality for both students and staff across the higher education sector. UOW is proud to partner with leading universities and sector organisations, including the Australian Academy of Science, in the newly formed 'Higher Education Senior Equity Practitioners Advisory Group on Gender and COVID-19', and is a signatory to the Joint Position Statement on Preserving Gender Equity as a Higher Education Priority During and After COVID-19.

FUTURE PLANS

A strategic objective of UOW's 2020-2025 Research and Innovation Strategy is to address historical inequities by increasing the diversity of academic appointments (e.g. women, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander researchers and other under-represented groups).

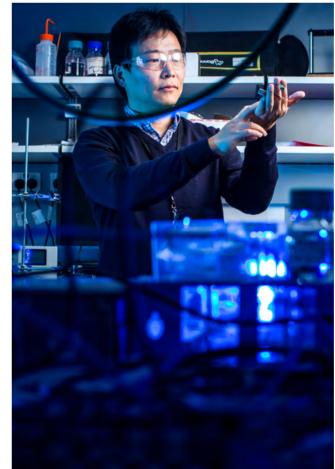
UOW's 29-point Athena SWAN Action Plan aligns with this strategic objective, and provides specific target activities which will allow us to achieve excellence and advance the careers of women, trans and gender diverse individuals in STEMM. Many actions have already been achieved, and our future plans include the following actions which are in progress at the date of publication:

- Develop and implement an online exit interview tool to capture reasons for exit, identify trends and remedial actions.
- Analyse gender balance of all fixed-term allowance recipients, review policy and identify actions to address imbalance.
- Implement e-recruitment system to capture and report on gender equity data at critical points in the recruitment process.
- Increase gender diversity on longlists and shortlists for STEMM Level D, Level E and Heads of School positions.
- Develop and implement online unconscious bias training for selection committees and promotion committees to raise awareness of the impact of bias in decision making.
- Implement a standard pre-leave checklist for staff about to commence parental leave, including what arrangements are in place for teaching, research and governance/service whilst on leave.
- Examine how the Return to Work Grant could better accommodate research activities for primary carers returning from parental leave.
- Incorporate more practical examples of flexible work in information for staff and supervisors.
- Review and relaunch information for Managers' HR Toolkit to educate managers on parental leave entitlements for women and men.
- Update school gender equity plans to include data on:
 - Workload allocation by gender
 - Reporting of gender balance of seminar speakers
 - Participation in outreach activities.
- Develop content for EO Online to raise staff awareness of transgender and intersectionality.

Clapham (Indigenous Health) and Director of Ngarruwan Ngadju research program. Left: Professor Jun Chen is Associate Dean Equity Diversity and Inclusion at UOW's Australian Institute for Innovative Materials. Right: Professor Alison Jones MD is Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Health and Communities) and Executive Dean, Faculty of Science, Medicine and Health.

Top: Professor Kathie











Left: Associate Professor Sarah Hamylton applies Geospatial technology to the study of tropical coastal

Right: Associate Professo Kerrylee Rogers, whose research focuses on coasta and aquatic ecosystem change, adaptations to climate change, and opportunities for mitigating climate change through conservation and restoration

Evaluation

At UOW, equity diversity and inclusion is everybody's responsibility. Our approach is directed by creating shared responsibility and combines a range of evaluation strategies including external review, reporting, policy review, and ground-up approaches to incorporate insights from all staff.

UOW has reinforced our commitment to facilitating inclusion, diversity and gender equity by setting representation targets for senior academic women and challenging gendered assumptions in policy. In 2013, UOW set a target to achieve 28 per cent female representation in our senior academic level by 2018. By 2016 we had exceeded this and revised our target to 40 per cent by 2025. As at December 2019, the percentage of women at Level D and E was 33 per cent.

To improve our ability to evaluate gender equity, UOW has completed, or is in the process of introducing, a number of systems enhancements including:

- A new e-recruitment system with capacity to capture and report on gender equity data.
- A review of our Human Resources system requirements, to include new capability to include gender data across a range of functions.
- An online exit interview tool to identify trends and drive
- An easier way for employees to provide and update their equity and diversity information data online at any time.
- The recording and reporting of Vice-Chancellor's Award recipients by gender.

Reflection and review is an integral part of the equity diversity and inclusion journey. UOW seeks assistance through the professional guidance of a number of external agencies.

For five consecutive years the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) has recognised UOW as an Employer of Choice for Gender Equality.

In 2019, UOW was the only university to successfully apply for the Department of Education, Skills and Employment's Career Revive Initiative which aims to support regional businesses to attract and retain skilled women returning to the workforce after a career break.

In 2020, UOW again achieved an Australian Workplace Equality Index (AWEI) Bronze Employer Award. The AWEI drives best practice in Australia in LGBTOI+ workplace inclusion and sets a comparative benchmark for Australian employers across all sectors. In 2020, UOW was also recognised as one of the top three regional employers for this award.

UOW regularly seeks feedback on staff lived experience of gender equality through:

- Parental Leave and Return to Work Survey run biennially
- Gender Equity Survey run biennially
- 'Voice' Workforce Survey (including gender equity questions) - run triennially.

Equity and diversity performance is reported regularly to UOW Council, UOW Council Sub-Committees and the senior executive. UOW monitors and analyses data across many areas to help set and meet gender equity targets, including:

- Reviewing policy and identifying actions to address gender imbalance of attraction and retention allowance recipients (particularly at Level E).
- Reporting on pay gap analysis biennially.
- Evaluating the effectiveness of recruitment gender diversity targets on driving an increase in the proportion of women appointed to Level D, Level E and Head of School positions in STEMM.
- Monitoring the proportion of STEMM academic women participating in internal and external research grant submissions to be on par with the proportion of women employed in STEMM disciplines.

School gender equity plans will now include data on workload allocation by gender, reporting on the gender balance of seminar speakers and participation in outreach activities.

The SAGE/Athena SWAN Implementation Committee chaired by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Innovation meets six times per year. Minutes of meetings, progress reports and other relevant documentation are available on our website, and updates will be provided to staff regularly through UOW's staff newsletter.

A Gender Equity Working Party has been formed, aimed at developing longer-term gender equity initiatives from a 'coalface' perspective and developing strategies to overcome barriers to career progression for early- and mid-career researchers in STEMM.



Workplace culture

At UOW, we are committed to providing a diverse and inclusive workplace, and are proud of our culture that aims to provide equal opportunity regardless of gender. Our policies and practices are continually being refined to support gender equality, and we have workplace flexibility arrangements that provide all genders with career opportunity and healthy work-life balance. We commit to removing barriers to selection, advancement and opportunities for women in our workplace.

PARENTS AND CARERS

Parental leave entitlements (for birth and adoption) include:

- 14 weeks full pay, or 28 weeks half pay;
- shared paid primary carer leave where both parents are UOW staff;
- up to 12 months unpaid parental leave;
- partner leave of up to 10 days (non-primary carer);
- superannuation paid to staff on paid and unpaid parental leave;
- paid foster parent leave of 5 days.

When returning to work, primary carers can access the Return to Work Grant, equivalent to 12 weeks salary, which can be taken as any combination of:

- extended leave
- salary supplementation to make up the difference between normal salary and their new part-time rate;
- a lump sum into their research account to support research assistance, teaching relief, and/or training and development.

This Return to Work Grant has been in place at UOW for over 10 years. As an early adopter of this type of support, UOW provides one of the most generous and flexible schemes in the higher education sector. The grant has a >90 per cent take up rate of those returning from parental leave. We are currently examining how the grant can better accommodate research activities for primary carers returning from parental leave.

The Parental Leave – Guide for Expectant Parents is a dedicated webpage providing information on parental and adoption leave. UOW will be incorporating further practical examples of flexible work in information for staff and supervisors. We will be particularly focusing on ensuring men who are about to become new parents are fully aware of their leave and flexible work entitlements and are encouraged and supported by their workplace to make use of their full entitlements. We will also be reviewing and relaunching our Managers' HR Toolkit to educate managers on parental leave entitlements for women and men.

UOW provides a range of on-campus and off-campus childcare options including three early education and care centres providing long day care and vacation care service.

UOW provides Parents' Rooms, available for staff, students and visitors needing to attend to specific needs of young children including feeding an infant or to store chilled items, including expressed breast milk.

Top: Dr Monique Francois, NHMRC Emerging Leadership Fellow, with her baby Olivia.

Bottom: Materials scientist Professor Marc in het Panhuis is joining a small handful of Australian men leaving the workplace temporarily to assume the role of primary caregiver.



RECRUITMENT

UOW places diversity statements in all job advertisements and includes the Athena SWAN logo to encourage underrepresented groups, including women, to apply. UOW was granted a five-year exemption from section 126 of the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW) to specifically recruit women in underrepresented areas.

UOW's Vice-Chancellor requests female candidates on all shortlists prepared by external recruitment agencies.

To improve the gender balance in Head of School positions within STEMM faculties, future recruitment processes will be required to demonstrate sourcing of female applicants.

CAREER PROGRESSION

UOW's biennial Leadership Program for Senior Academic Women was developed as a result of a recommendation from the Workforce Diversity Reference Group and forms part of our SAGE/Athena SWAN commitment. The Program was awarded a prestigious Australian Institute of Training and Development (AITD) Award in 2018. In 2019 the program was enhanced with the addition of one-to-one coaching over three months to support career plan implementation. Our target is to increase STEMM participants in the program by at least 25 per cent.

We provide structured career development programs tailored to both early-career academics (ECA) and mid-career academics (MCA), which offer one-to-one mentoring and a range of workshops and networking opportunities. Women have been well represented among program participants over the last decade (60 per cent of ECA program participants; 55 per cent of MCA program participants), and many have gone on to secure prestigious awards, fellowships and senior appointments.

Academic women applying for promotion are proactively supported. Each year UOW identifies academic women who are eligible for promotion, to increase the overall number of female applicants. The DVC(R&I) hosts an annual event with academic women eligible to apply for promotion to professor, to increase numbers of women at this level where they are most underrepresented, and meetings are held with unsuccessful female applicants to provide detailed feedback. Our Tuning Your Promotion Prospects program has been helping women achieve promotion for over a decade, and is fully subscribed each year.

Equity Fellowships are offered each year to assist staff, mainly academic women and Indigenous Australians, who are facing difficulties completing their PhD program because of equity issues.

The UOW Early Career Academic Network (ECAN) brings together early career academics to offer peer support and guidance to develop a successful academic career.



RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY

UOW's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy assists our staff to proactively manage workforce diversity to ensure equity and respect for all employees. It is underpinned by a suite of diversity and inclusion policies including the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, Bullying Prevention Policy, Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy, and the Respect for Diversity Policy.

UOW's Inclusive Language Guideline assists staff and students in using language that is free from demeaning inferences and negative stereotypes that may discriminate against groups in our community, including women. These guidelines are also applied to policy.

A new role of Workforce Diversity Officer was created to support gender, sexuality, disability and cultural diversity.

UOW developed and maintains the EO Online equal opportunity training module (currently in use at 22 Australian universities). EO Online content is reviewed and updated annually, with current plans to include new content to raise staff awareness of transgender and intersectionality. Mandatory biennial completion of EO Online was introduced for all staff at UOW in 2019.

UOW has commenced unconscious bias training for senior executives and management and promotion committees.
Online unconscious bias training for selection committees is a future target.

The UOW Linking Women's Network is an initiative which provides a program of events throughout the year that both support and empower women across the University, as well as a forum for women to share ideas and provide mutual support for their career development.

UOW is a partner in Universities Australia's national Respect. Now. Always. campaign and implemented a number of measures to increase safety and support for students and staff.

CURRENT AND FUTURE ACTIVITIES

Our Athena SWAN Action Plan has delivered:

- A review of new staff induction to incorporate commitment to Athena SWAN and ensure new starters are aware of flexible working practices.
- Provision of proactive feedback to academic women unsuccessful in promotion applications to help them set future goals.
- Recommendations for including non-gendered toilets in new building works and re-labelling selected existing toilet facilities.
- A transgender policy to provide guidance to staff and supervisors during transition.

We will also be developing and implementing a standard preleave checklist for staff about to commence parental leave, including agreed arrangements for teaching, research and governance/service whilst on leave.



Visibility

UOW is committed to recognising, celebrating and advocating for women in STEMM, and ensures they receive equal visibility and active promotion in all our activities.

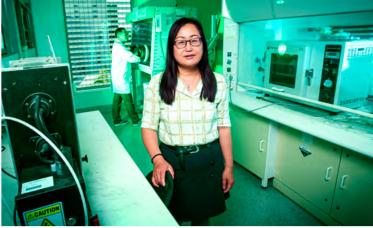
UOW's Gender Equality webpage promotes our commitment to gender equality to both external and internal audiences, and provides access to a range of further information, reports and staff opportunities. This webpage carries the UOW Vice-Chancellor Professor Paul Wellings' commitment that "gender equality is critical to an organisation's success and crucial for society as a whole, and we are continually working to ensure that the message is conveyed to all staff and students, particularly in the traditionally male-focused STEMM disciplines".

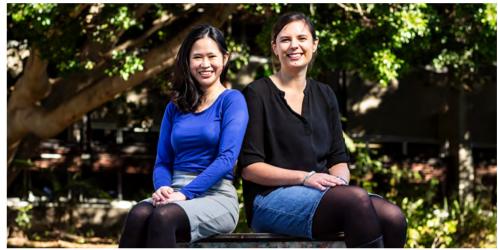
The Vice-Chancellor and DVC(R&I) have produced videos, available on our website, about their vision for gender equality at UOW, each providing personal insight into their passion for gender equality and the importance of good equity, diversity and inclusion practices for UOW.

The UOW SAGE/Athena SWAN Gender Equality Conference Sponsorship program was introduced in late 2019 to ensure equality of voice and equity of participation at UOW-sponsored conferences that prioritise equality together with quality.

UOW launched the 'Women of Impact' initiative in 2016 to recognise the outstanding contributions made by academic women across all levels and disciplines. More than 40 academic women – over half in STEMM – were celebrated at the launch ceremony. Their stories are published in a booklet and continue to inspire on the UOW website.







Clockwise from left: Women of Impact; Stefania Perrachi, UOW 3MT winner 2020 – and People's Choice winner at the Asia Pacific 3MT Final; Distinguished Professor Zaiping Guo, an ARC Future Fellow at UOW's Faculty of Engineering and Information Sciences (EIS) and the Australian Institute of Innovative Materials (AIIM); Drs Dom Tanner and Yee Lian Chew – Soapbox Science Sydney 2019.

UOW celebrates International Women's Day annually, often featuring academic women in STEMM. We host an annual all-staff event to raise awareness of diversity and intersectionality, featuring UOW academics who research in this area.

The Vice-Chancellor's Awards have been expanded to include an award recognising staff members who are promoting diversity and inclusion. Candidates for other awards are required to include an Equity Diversity and Inclusion statement in their application.

Visibility of academic women is actively ensured in UOW's research profiling events, including TEDxUWollongong and the UOW Big Ideas Festival, through even ratios of female and male presenters. Visibility of strong role models is also ensured at outreach events, such as the Festival of STEMM (2018) where approximately 70 per cent of speakers and presenters were women.

UOW's marketing team reviews images associated with marketing material, social media and website feature stories to ensure that appropriate diversity, including gender balance, is achieved.

UOW was proud to support the inaugural 2019 Soapbox Science Sydney event, which is a novel public outreach platform for promoting women scientists and the science they do. Two inspiring ECR academic women from UOW were selected as speakers in 2019, and we followed this up with four speakers selected as well as corporate sponsorship in the 2020 event.

Education

UOW has a coordinated STEMM outreach program which will continue to promote engagement of women in STEMM through:

- UOW STEM* Camp for Girls, a 4-day camp that has run annually for more than 10 years. Young women entering Years 10 and 11 find out what it is like to study STEMM and participate in hands-on workshops.
- UOW Early Start Discovery Space, providing pre-school aged girls with equal access to science and engineering based interactive play.
- UOW Science Space, the only dedicated science experience in NSW, which has been inspiring primary school aged girls (and boys) for over 30 years.
- UOW In2Uni Schools Program, which intensively engages with girls (and boys) in targeted schools and communities to enable awareness and aspirations towards higher education.

UOW secured funding under the first round of the Australian Government Women in STEM and Entrepreneurship (WISE) program to host the Festival of STEM, a unique week-long activity held in February 2018 which provided a range of STEMM activities to 2,500 Year 8 and 9 students. At least 50 per cent of the participating students were girls. We will continue to pursue opportunities to host high-profile STEMM events in future years.

Our support for young women in STEMM continues once they decide on a degree at UOW. Our female STEM Ambassadors provide a critical first point of contact and role model for prospective students. The UOW Women in STEM Student Society provides a network which supports women during their studies and to enter non-traditional STEMM employment.





Industry action

As an Athena SWAN Bronze
Award organisation, and Women
in STEM Decadal Plan Champion,
UOW will continue to promote
gender equality in our interactions
with existing and future industry
partners. We will continue to seek
opportunities to collaborate with
SAGE NSW Regional Network
members to identify collective
actions to advance gender equity
both within higher education and
in the STEM sector more broadly.

UOW is keenly aware that there is an underrepresentation of academic women engaging in collaborative commercial research with industry partners. Our Innovation and Commercial Research team encourages engagement by demonstrating diversity in marketing materials, seeking participation from a cross-section of researchers and industries, and aiming for gender equality in expert representation at events. UOW is fostering growth by identifying women who are emergent leaders and researchers involved in translational research and proactively introducing them to the idea of commercial funding to allow their research to contribute to immediate commercial needs.

The iAccelerate business incubator and accelerator is a unique program run by UOW. iAccelerate is a thriving community of like-minded entrepreneurs, growing their impact through education, mentoring, seed funding and other support among inspiring surroundings at UOW's Innovation Campus. In 2019, 47 per cent of iAccelerate start-up business founders were women, which is well above the national average of 22 per cent (2018) for this traditionally male-dominated sector. UOW's support of women in entrepreneurial roles, translating their learning and research into business ventures, is actively addressing gender equity amongst SMEs.



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