



Women in STEM Decadal Plan

SAHMRI Response
Updated 2021



01

LEADERSHIP AND COHESION

FROM SAHMRI EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
PROFESSOR STEVE WESSELINGH



SAHMRI is a young and rapidly-growing organisation. I am proud of the vibrancy in our organisation, our start-up culture and our aspiration to *Embrace Diversity, Demand Equity* as one of our key values. In our efforts to live up to this value, I am particularly encouraged by the support our whole organisation has demonstrated for our LGBTIQ+ community, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander reconciliation events and International Women's Day celebrations. In trying to achieve gender equity in senior STEMM researcher positions, I acknowledge that SAHMRI was falling into the practice of responding in traditional ways and that traditional 'cultural norms' were being established without a clear and specific drive to setting all aspects of our institutional culture. This recognition and the desire to improve the situation became the impetus to apply for an Athena SWAN award to demonstrate our long-term commitment to a more equitable workplace for all. We were recently accredited at the Bronze level, recognising our achievements to date.

SAHMRI is committed to deliver on its promise to apply an equity and diversity lens to all aspects of its operations, creating an environment which facilitates success for all. We support the Australian Women in STEM Decadal Plan, with our commitment outlined below.



Professor Steve Wesselingh
Executive Director, SAHMRI



SAHMRI IS

- Recognised for its commitment to Gender Equity through the SAGE Athena SWAN Bronze Award, which is aligned with our Institute's Strategic Plan (2019-2024)
- Committed to delivering its Gender Equity & Reconciliation Action Plans
- Committed to having senior leadership represented on SAHMRI's Gender Equity Committee (Executive Director, Deputy Directors, Chief Operating Officer, Chief Finance Officer and HR Manager)
- Proud to have delivered a structural reorganisation, with a Gender and Cultural Equity Impact Assessment, achieving gender equity at our Deputy Director level and Research Program Leadership level
- Delivering the SAHMRI Leadership Program (annually) with 15 SAHMRI Leaders; 50% of places are reserved for women and at least one place reserved for an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander employee
- Recognising our leaders through SAHMRI's annual leadership awards (STEMM and non-STEMM professionals; Gender Equity and Inclusion criteria included)
- Committed to female leadership across our organisation. In addition to Research Program Leadership, SAHMRI also employs a number of women in senior leadership positions – Including:
 - Deputy Director/Theme Leader, Women & Kids
 - Chief Operating Officer
 - General Counsel
 - Human Resources Manager
 - Chief Science Storyteller
 - Director, Research Support Services
 - Manager, Quality, Risk & Safety
 - Director, Health Policy Centre
 - Manager, Research Office
 - Deputy Theme Leader, Precision Medicine

SAHMRI WILL

- Invest in an electronic performance management system as a commitment to support improved performance management and development conversations across SAHMRI
- Implement a Talent Management Framework to support an upwards trajectory for female talent
- Increase female representation in Senior academic STEMM positions from 33% to 40% by 2021
- Increase female representation on SAHMRI Committees (Research Advisory, Research Governance, Research Executive, Gender Equity, Appointment)
- Achieve equal gender representation on the SAHMRI Board (target set to achieve 50/50)



02

EVALUATION

As a rapidly growing, medical research organisation, timely evaluation of programs and processes will underpin our successes.

SAHMRI WILL CONTINUE TO

- Evaluate its progress against its four-year [Athena SWAN Bronze Action Plan](#)
- Maintain a long-term data dashboard with current analysis of data around workforce data trends that help evaluate Gender Equity
- Deliver against our current priorities for gender equity:
 - Enhancing visibility and representation of women by celebrating their contributions
 - Promoting career progression for women
 - Embedding flexible work arrangements into SAHMRI's culture
- Perform ongoing organisational gender equity analysis (survey, focus groups) promoting co-development of Institute-specific priorities, including wide stakeholder engagement
- Invest in ongoing salary benchmarking against national Medical Research Institutes
- Undertake annual pay equity gap analysis, overseen by Executive Director and Theme Leaders

*Image: Professor Lisa Butler's team lead the nation in prostate cancer research.
L-R: Swati Irani, Natalie Ryan, Dr Maggie Centenera, Professor Lisa Butler, Joanna Gillis and Dr Nicole Moore.*



03

WORKPLACE CULTURE

SAHMRI is working hard to promote positive workplace culture and has implemented a number of initiatives to support diversity in the workplace.

THESE ACTIVITIES INCLUDE THE

- Launch of a *Diversity & Inclusion Policy*
- Continuation of *SAHMRI Mentoring Program*
- Introduction of two-weeks *Paid Parental Leave* for secondary care giver
- Introduction of paid *Cultural Leave*
- Continuous focus on provision of *Prevention of Bullying, Harassment & Discrimination* education (both face to face and online options available)
- Release of online training module for *Flexible Working Arrangements*
- Launch of *Leadership & Teamwork* Lunch & Learn sessions
- Continued support of *Wear it Purple* event to promote LGBTIQ awareness
- Launch of pilot *Parenting Network Session* (How to Juggle the Struggle)

SAHMRI is committed to continuing the parenting network sessions and developing an online Recruitment & Selection training module and Unconscious Bias training module.

Image: SAHMRI Staff celebrate and support the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia (IDAHOBIT).



04

VISIBILITY

SAHMRI has an ongoing commitment to increasing and promoting the visibility of women in STEM, as stepped out in our [Action Plan](#) and includes:

- Undertaking regular, quantitative analysis of the visibility and representation of diversity in communication material (media, social media, print and online collateral)
- Achieving equal gender representation on selection panels
- Achieving equal gender representation of speakers within the Institute's Seminar Series
- Celebration of women through recognising International Women's Day Event
- Training the next generation of emerging leaders to *Communicate with Impact*, improving their ability to increase their own research visibility

Image: SAHMRI scientists on International Women's Day (L-R standing) Dr Karen Hawke, Dr Odette Gibson and Dr Camille Short, (sitting) Dr Amy Hughes and Jordan Andrews.



05

EDUCATION

SAHMRI strongly supports the notion explored in the Women in STEM Decadal Plan that ‘you can’t be what you can’t see’.

WITH THIS FRONT OF MIND, SAHMRI IS

- Training the next generation of researchers in an environment with an active gender equity lens
- Training the next generation of emerging leaders to *Communicate with Impact*, improving their ability to share research stories, and their personal journeys to gender equity
- Delivering a Research Masterclass program, now in its third year, to showcase careers in STEMM for Research Project Students from across the state
- Welcoming all school students from R-12 to visit us weekly on the SAHMRI Schools Tour Program
- Running two School Work Experience programs annually to promote STEMM careers to school students and ensuring 50% gender representation of students participation

Additionally, SAHMRI is committed to:

- Increasing participating of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students across all programs, recognising the importance of an intersectional lens

*Image: Dr Xuemin Wang,
Head of Laboratory, Cell Signalling
and Gene Regulation Laboratory.*



06

INDUSTRY AND COMMUNITY ACTION

SAHMRI is proud to share our values and to drive gender equity and diversity with community and external stakeholders by:

- Sharing information about SAHMRI's vision, priorities and goals on weekly public tours, and regularly through external communication platforms (eg. email newsletters, social media)
- Inviting the community and our corporate partners to share in days of recognition and celebration (eg. International Women's Day).

Image: SAHMRI Tour Program attendees taking in the view from Level 8 the SAHMRI flagship North Terrace facility.

2021

UPDATE



LEADERSHIP

What activities in the past year have our leaders taken to achieve gender equity (including any commitments or partnerships)?

- In 2020 SAHMRI implemented a Talent Management Framework.
- The SAHMRI Performance & Pathways program was launched in July 2020 as an improvement to the existing performance review system.
- SAHMRI Leadership Program has been in high demand since its inception. We have increased the participant number from 15 to 18 for both the 2020 and 2021 programs. Half of the positions are reserved for women and two places are now reserved for Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander employees.
 - *67% female participants in 2019 – 1 participant who identifies as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.*
 - *78% female participants in 2020 – 2 participants who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.*
- Annual Leadership Awards continue for 2021 with one STEMM and one Non-STEMM Leadership Category.

EVALUATION

What strategies and processes have been put in place in the past year to measure and evaluate gender equity efforts.

- In early 2021, a progress audit was undertaken against SAHMRI's Athena SWAN bronze award action plan, with approximately 70% of actions now being implemented or in progress.
- Each year in July, a scissor graph is created to depict where the pinch point for equity in gender representation sits within the Level A – E STEMM. Since 2015, female representation at Level D has increased from 20% to 71%.
- We continued to undertake annual pay equity gap analysis for STEMM employees and ensure any disparities are analysed and resolved quickly. All gender pay gaps are now within 5%, other than level D which is a 10% gap in favour of females.
- Exit survey participation has increased from 13% in 2015 to 50% in 2020.

Image: Researchers from SAHMRI's Women and Kids Theme. L-R: Dr Karen Best, Dr Beverly Muhlhauser, Associate Professor Philippa Middleton.

WORKPLACE CULTURE

What activities have been used to shift the internal workplace culture to foster retention and progression of women. Which activities have made the biggest difference?

- SAHMRI's Diversity & Inclusion Policy was launched in 2019.
- Paid Parental Leave for the secondary care giver was introduced in 2019.
- Paid Foster Care/Placement Leave was introduced in 2020.
- Paid Community Services Leave was introduced in 2021.
- In October 2020 SAHMRI undertook a complete review of its practices to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace and continues to work through an action plan to implement recommendations. As at March 2021, the following has been implemented:
 - *SAHMRI's Prevention of Bullying, Harassment & Discrimination Policy has been sent to multiple SAHMRI Committees and Working Groups for consultative review and feedback.*
 - *De-identified incident reports of both informal and formal grievances pertaining to bullying, harassment, sexual harassment & discrimination are reported to the SAHMRI Board, the SAHMRI Gender Equity Committee and are available for the SAHMRI Community to view via the SAHMRI Intranet.*
 - *SAHMRI has trained 12 new Contact Officers (9 female) to be a point of contact (in addition to the HR team members) to discuss any Bullying, Harassment, Sexual Harassment or Discrimination grievances.*
 - *Employee completion of online training for both Prevention of Bullying, Harassment & Discrimination and Cultural Awareness have now been made a requirement of both the Probationary Process and the Performance & Pathways Program.*

EDUCATION

What activities have inspired, supported and/or encouraged the teaching/learning of STEM for girls and women.

- SAHMRI's Work Experience Program for year 11-12 students continues, with one position in each program being reserved for a student who identifies as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.
- The Neville Fazulla Aboriginal Health Scholarship has been established in recognition of the contribution Neville Fazulla made to Aboriginal health both within South Australia and nationally. His life's work was dedicated to improving the health system's response to the unique needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The objective of the Scholarship is to increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people studying at university within non-clinical health related fields, acknowledging the importance of non-clinical roles within the health workforce. Two scholarships were awarded in March 2021 to two bright young Aboriginal women.
- SAHMRI's Capacity Development Program partners with the Aurora Foundation to place Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and graduates into Internship positions at SAHMRI.

COVID-19 RESPONSE

Outline the steps SAHMRI took to mitigate the potential negative impacts of covid-19 on gender equity.

- SAHMRI established a Wellbeing Toolkit (in COVID times) intranet page that included available services (including mental health), and financial support services. The Wellbeing kit webpage also had insights on helping staff 'keep fit and healthy' during this time.
- A Microsoft Teams channel has been created for SAHMRI's Parenting Network to provide an ongoing forum for all parents at SAHMRI to network and learn from each other (prior to COVID SAHMRI held some lunch and learns in the SAHMRI auditorium for this network)
- The SAHMRI Gender Equity Committee continues to analyse SAHMRI's termination statistics with a COVID lens to assess the impact of the pandemic on females in the workforce.
- Networking groups and meetings were moved to online forums. Pre-COVID the SAHMRI Social Club held a board games night and during COVID this activity was moved online to maintain relationships and help mitigate feelings of isolation.
- Regular face-to-face presentations and trainings were delivered in online platforms.
- A COVID-19 survey was launched in April to all employees:
 - *69% participation rate overall*
 - *66% of participants were female*
 - *94% overall engagement rate in terms of SAHMRI's response to the pandemic.*

“The world needs science, and science needs women.”

Ms Irina Bokova

Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).



ABN: 54 141 228 346

SAHMRI North Terrace, Adelaide SA 5000

P +61 (0)8 8128 4000 **E** hello@sahmri.com

PO Box 11060, Adelaide SA 5001

www.sahmri.org

Follow us on:

f www.facebook.com/sahmri

t www.twitter.com/sahmriAU