



Women in STEM Decadal Plan Champion Response

NBN Co

A Message from Stephen Rue, Chief Executive Officer



Hello,

I am proud to present **nbn**'s Women in STEM Decadal Champion response.

At **nbn** we foster a diverse, equitable and inclusive workplace that helps our people bring their whole selves to work. This is good for our people because it reflects our values and promotes a culture of psychological safety in which everyone can thrive. It is good for our company because it allows us to leverage different perspectives, backgrounds and experience. It is also good for our customers, our industry partners and the communities we serve, because this inclusive culture drives the innovation that delivers better solutions and, ultimately, helps us fulfil our purpose to lift the digital capability of Australia.

As at 30 June 2022, **nbn**'s female representation in management roles was at 32.4 per cent. We are working towards lifting this to 40 per cent by 2025. **nbn** also believes strongly in gender pay equity, and this has seen us reduce the gap between males and females from 14 per cent to 1.1 per cent in the past six years. We will use every opportunity to close it altogether.

Our **nbn** Equals employee network offers information and education for our people and the next generation of leaders, with the goal of creating a workplace where all employees have full and equal access to rewards, resources and opportunities, regardless of gender. Our people are encouraged to participate in mentoring programs, including early career and school student mentoring, and we also work with industry to encourage girls and young women to consider careers in STEM.

The Women in STEM Decadal Champion response laid out in this document is linked to **nbn**'s Diversity, Equity & Inclusion and Gender Equity strategies, and outlines our goals for strengthening our organisation as an employer of choice – for women, and for everyone.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Stephen Rue'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized.

Stephen Rue
CEO, NBN Co

It's amazing to think that at the start of the millennium it didn't exist – yet now the **nbn**[®] network supports so much of what we do every day. It's truly changed the Australian way of life.

The company was established in 2009 by the Commonwealth of Australia as a Government Business Enterprise (GBE) with a clear direction – to design, build and operate a wholesale broadband access network for Australia.

Our purpose is to *lift the digital capability of Australia* and we've done just that – creating a network that criss-crosses a country, and allows internet retailers to provide reasonably priced broadband services to consumers and businesses.

The network is the digital backbone of Australia and is constantly evolving to keep communities and businesses connected and our nation productive.

We believe everyone should enjoy the benefits, so we're breaking down the barriers which prevent some of our most vulnerable people from taking advantage of the digital world.

And we know we are going to be around for a long time and that's why we take sustainability seriously - it's all about looking after people and the environment so we hand down a healthy planet to our children. We work hard to have a sustainable business so we can invest back into the network right across Australia.

Because we're Australia's network. We're the **nbn** network.

Our Values



We Care



We are Fearless



We are One Team



We Deliver



8.5 million homes and
businesses connected



4,600 employees

Organisation Overview¹

¹ Based on [2022 nbn Annual Report](#)



Opportunity One

Leadership

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Opportunity One: Leadership



Achieving 40% senior female representation by 2025

- Increased by 4% in four years to 32.4% as of 30 June 2022.
- Company communications and reporting illustrate the importance of gender equity and achieving our 2025 target through:
 - Regular updates from Chief Executive Officer Stephen Rue in senior leader forums and company messages
 - Improved dashboards that will accelerate progress across all teams
 - Including the 2025 target as one measure of success in our 2025 strategic initiatives.

Leaders at the helm of nbn's Gender Equity Strategy

- Leaders have a defined role in how they own and drive gender equity outcomes.
- We're increasing female talent pipelines through external recruitment.
- Our annual Navigate program is increasing senior leader sponsorship of our female talent to drive internal career mobility and retention.
- Ongoing features of **nbn's** senior female leaders in male-dominated science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) domains to support the attraction of female talent to industry.
- We provide executive coaching for women promoted into new and bigger roles, ensuring support and success in their careers.

Collaborating with external organisations

- Our external partnerships are furthering gender equity across the industry, including:
 - Parents At Work
 - WORK180
 - The Inclusion Circle and Australian Business & Community Network (ABCN).
- We collaborate with several educational institutions to change young females' perceptions of STEM.





Opportunity Two

Evaluation

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Opportunity Two: Evaluation



Transparency on our progress

- We communicate our commitment to achieving 40% senior female representation and our progress internally and externally.
- We are also focused on effectively understanding and benchmarking our gender equity progress.
- Our 2025 target and gender equity success measures are regularly measured, tracked and reported to the:
 - NBN Co Board
 - **nbn** Executive Committee; and
 - Internal stakeholders.
- Progress against our 2025 target is also reported to the public via our [Annual Report](#).

Gender equity through recruitment

- We have a 50% female talent target in all recruitment.
- We strive for gender-diverse interview panels.
- Hiring managers are coached on **nbn**'s diversity goals to be applied throughout the recruitment and selection process.

nbn's Gender Equity Strategy

- The strategy and recommendations were finalised in 2022 based on:
 - external research
 - over 50 internal interviews and focus groups
 - data analysis
 - a review of the **nbn** employee lifecycle; and
 - stakeholder consultation.
 - Several recommendations are already in flight.
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Opportunity Two: Evaluation



nbn's Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Strategy

- The DEI strategy was refreshed in 2022, building on our solid foundations and momentum.
- The DEI vision is to enable the full contribution of our people, unleashing diversity of thought to deliver our company's purpose.
- Our priority is to consciously create and maintain an inclusive environment where our people feel safe, respected, a sense of belonging and empowered to succeed.
- To support our DEI strategy, in 2023 and 2024, all **nbn** people leaders will participate in 'Inclusive Leadership' development as the company introduces Inclusion as a core competency for all leaders.
- People leaders also participate in programs that support and advocate for gender equity.

Sustainability at nbn

- **nbn's** [2022 Annual Report](#) affirms our ongoing commitment to diversity, inclusion, and the UN Sustainable Development Goals on gender equality.





Opportunity Three

Workplace Culture

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Opportunity Three: Workplace Culture



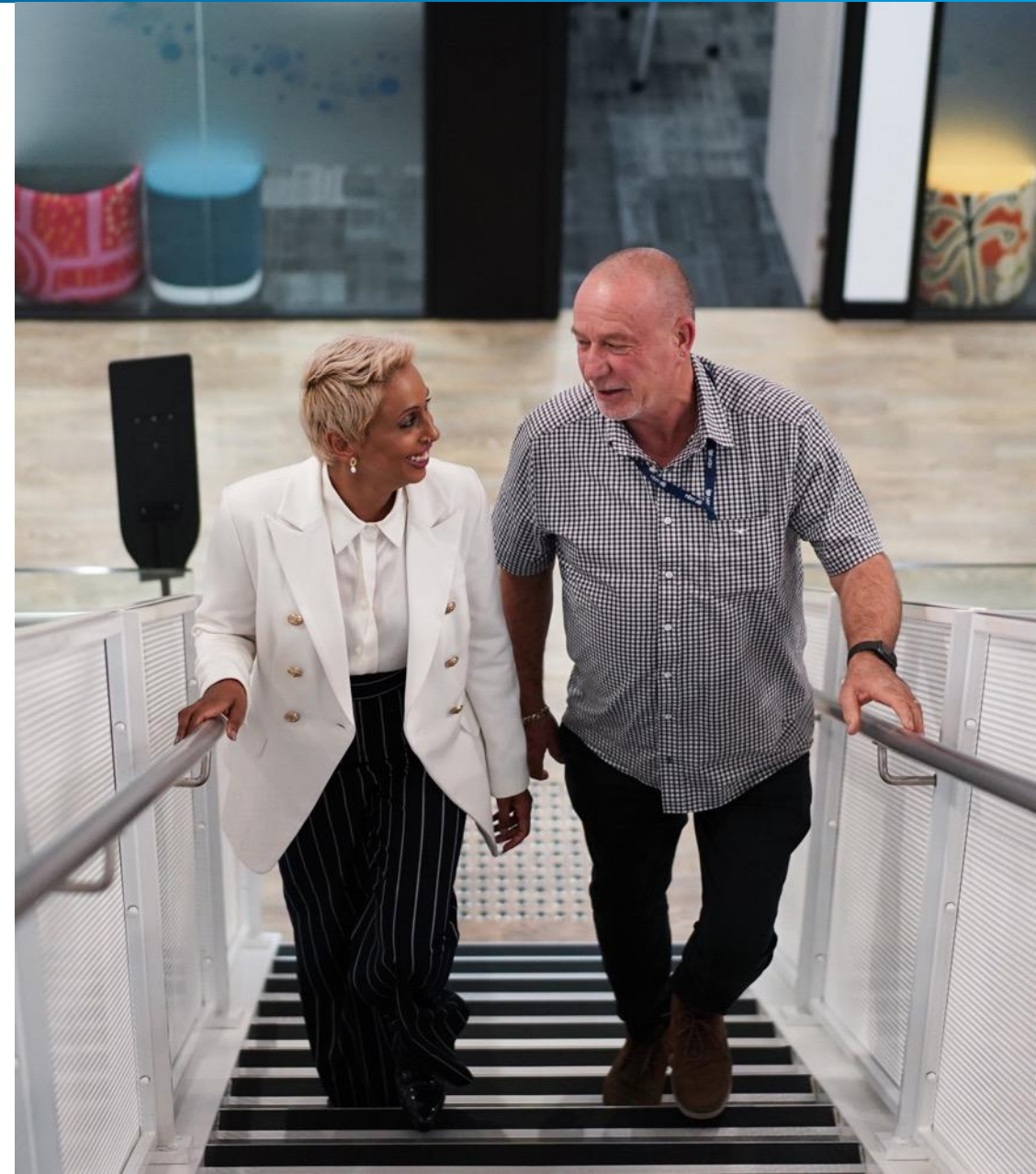
An engaged workforce

- Female and male engagement were on par at 81% in **nbn**'s 2022 annual employee engagement survey.
- Female engagement increased by 4% between the 2021 and 2022 annual surveys.

Employees leading gender equity at nbn

nbn Equals is an employee-led group working to create a fair and equitable workplace ensuring equal access to professional opportunities, development and success, regardless of gender.

- Approximately 1,000 employees volunteer in our **nbn** Equals Gender Equity group.
- **nbn** Equals demonstrates our commitment to gender equality, with female and male co-leadership, including:
 - Chief Corporate Affairs Officer Felicity Ross (Executive Co-Sponsor)
 - Chief Network Engineering Officer John Parkin (Executive Co-Sponsor)
 - General Manager Access Simplification Zander Pain (Co-Lead)
 - General Manager Data and Analytics Corporate and Transformation Christina Hall (Co-Lead)
- The **nbn** Equals leadership team form part of our DEI Community of Practice.
- The Practice connects, collaborates and amplifies the impact of DEI initiatives across the company.



Opportunity Three: Workplace Culture



Mentoring across and outside of nbn

- In 2021, **nbn** Equals led its first-ever Virtual Mentor Walks, involving:
 - 400 people partnering for mentorships across the company; and
 - women and men sharing their stories about **nbn**'s inclusive parental leave policy.
- **nbn** also collaborates with external partners to host mentoring and career days encouraging female students into STEM careers.

Our Navigate Sponsorship Program

- Our annual Navigate program provides up-and-coming internal female with talent sponsorship opportunities from senior leaders.
- Navigate ensures equitable participation in company career development learning and experiences for female talent.
- The program drives internal career mobility and female talent retention.

Achieving pay parity

- **nbn**'s gender pay gap has decreased from 14% to 1.1% over the past six years.
- We're committed to closing the gap and will use every opportunity to reach pay parity.

A market-leading parental leave policy

- **nbn** continues superannuation contributions on unpaid parental leave to reduce the superannuation pay gap for women at retirement.
- Our parental leave policy provides equity, recognising both women and men as primary carers.
- Since 2019, over 115 male employees have accessed **nbn**'s parental leave entitlements as primary carers.
- We also support employees as they adjust when returning from parental leave, working part-time whilst being paid full-time for up to six months.



Opportunity Three: Workplace Culture



Creating flexibility in the way we work

- We support our people and provide a safe and supportive working environment, including flexible work.
- We operate in a hybrid work environment coming together in workplaces to connect, learn and celebrate while empowered to work from home where it makes sense.
- The flexibility of hybrid working means our people can thrive at **nbn**, achieving a healthy work/life balance.

Inclusive practices

- We have a female talent focus when undertaking our regular market mapping exercises.
- We apply an inclusive lens to all job descriptions and advertisements.

Fostering a safe and respectful workplace

- We have taken action following a review of the Kate Jenkins report on *Safe and Respectful Workplaces*.
- **nbn** implemented a first responder strategy for any sexual harassment claims.
- *Safe and Respectful Workplaces* will form part of our DEI Strategy, particularly regarding gender.





Opportunity Four & Six

Visibility & Industry Action

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Opportunities Four & Six: Visibility & Industry Action



Visible female leadership

- We recognise that visible female leadership helps lift women's profile in STEM and position **nbn** as an employer of choice for women.
- We continue to feature stories on **nbn**'s senior female leaders, and enable them to tell their stories, across our social media, public website and internal communications.
- Our female executive leaders in STEM domains continue to be profiled and featured on external platforms, including:
 - Chief Operations Officer Kathrine Dyer on [smh.com.au](https://www.smh.com.au); and
 - Former Chief Information Officer Debbie Taylor on [technologyreview.com](https://www.technologyreview.com).

Taking action together with the industry

- We established a Telecommunications & Technology Gender Diversity Industry Forum in May 2022.
 - The quarterly forum includes **nbn** and Retail Service Providers, suppliers and vendor organisations.
- We've established a three-year partnership with the National Farmers Federation (NFF).
 - The NFF partnership includes **nbn**'s ongoing Diversity in Agriculture Leadership program sponsorship.
 - We also make an annual pledge to NFF demonstrating the progress **nbn** has made in gender diversity, equity and inclusion.





Opportunity Five

Education

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Opportunities Five: Education



Building the STEM pipeline

- We proudly work with educational institutions nationwide to encourage girls and women to take on learning, and support STEM careers.
- We also explore collaborations and coaching options in regional Australia.

Code Like A Girl

- Our **nbn** employees volunteer with the Code Like A Girl initiative, encouraging learning pathways for young girls in regional Australia for STEM, coding and engineering careers.

#LeadLikeaGirl

- We support #LeadLikeaGirl in partnership with Jonathan Thurston's JT Academy.
- The program operates in over 50 remote Indigenous locations Australia-wide.

P-Tech

- We participated in a federal government-funded initiative focusing on increasing the uptake of cyber in schools known as P-Tech.

Cybersecurity

- We partner with Skilling Australia and the industry on an annual cybersecurity program at Camberwell Highschool in Melbourne.
- **nbn** is a founding member of the Steering Committee for the program.
- In the year, students solve cybersecurity-related problems identified by the faculty and industry, including **nbn**.
- Student registrations have grown each year, particularly from female pupils.
- Many **nbn** employees mentor the Camberwell Highschool students one-on-one during the year.



Opportunities Five: Education



Goals program

- Our pilot program with First Nations' students from Northlakes High School in New South Wales is now becoming a three-year mentoring curriculum.

Digital empowerment

- Our mentor program with Molong Central School in Central West NSW will grow to include over 1,500 regional, rural and remote students over three years.

STEMpreneur

- We collaboratively developed this technology focused program for Year 5 and 6 students rolling out in 2022.

Laptops4Learning

- We donate surplus **nbn** laptops to lift the digital capability for low socio-economic students without a device at home.





Thank you