

# Equity and Diversity in STEMM: Australia's current efforts

Dr Melanie Thomson  
@DrMel\_T  
[scimelt@gmail.com](mailto:scimelt@gmail.com)



**Twitter: @WomenSciAUST**  
**Web: [womeninscienceaust.org](http://womeninscienceaust.org)**

# ***Who are we? Women in STEMM Australia***

- [Women in STEMM Australia](#) is a non-profit organisation founded in 2014 which has grown into a nationally recognised association for women in science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine (STEMM).
- Our over-arching goal is to connect women in STEMM regardless of their discipline and profession. The momentum this has stimulated is exciting!
- Our website and social media profiles are our primary engagement platform and through these we connect with extraordinary people – hearing their stories, ideas and opinions, and networking like never before.
- Non-voting membership is free and our activities aim to benefit all women in STEMM.



**S A G E**

SCIENCE IN AUSTRALIA  
GENDER EQUITY

# SAGE Pilot of Athena SWAN

*A partnership program between*



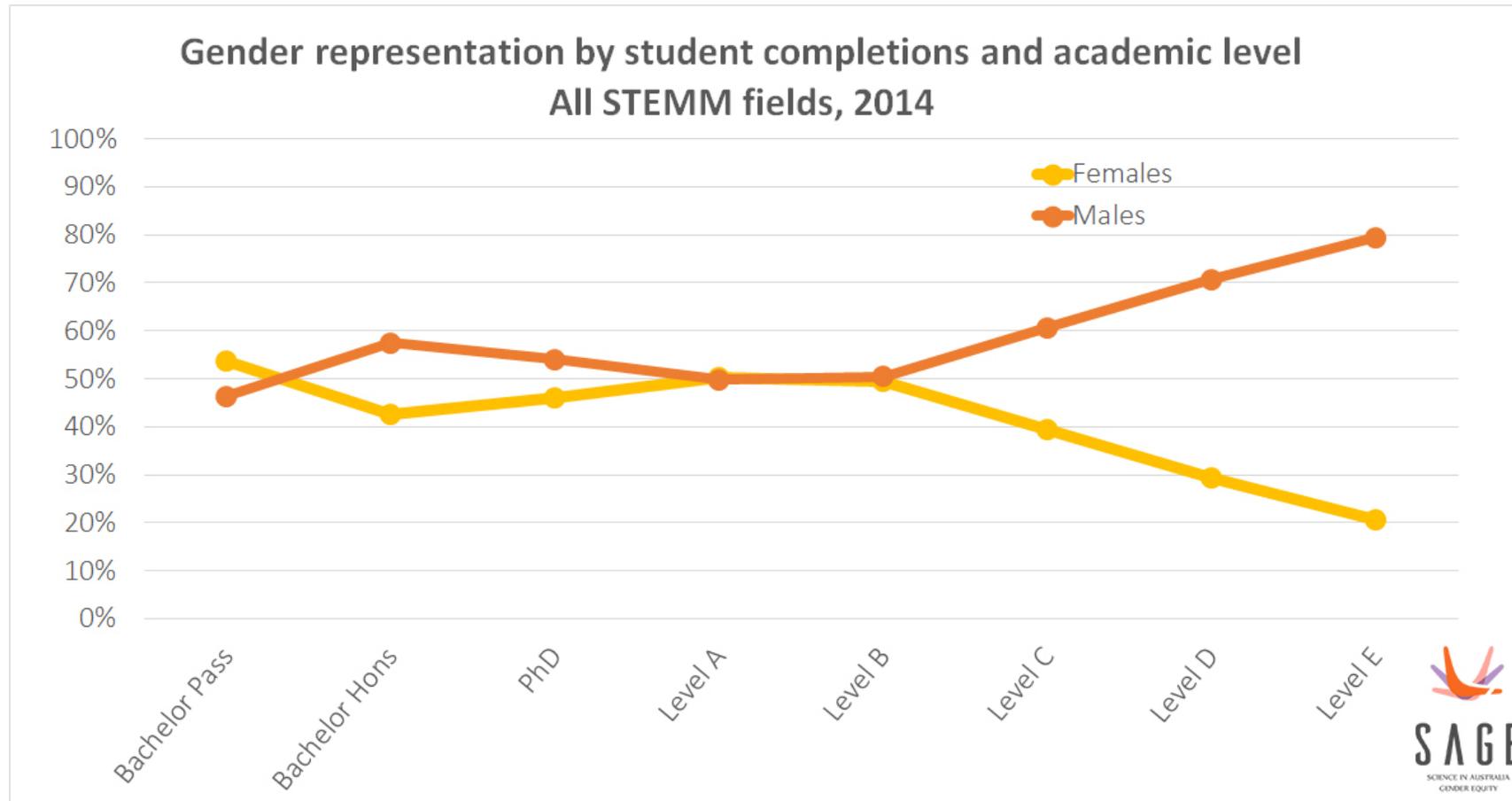
**ScienceGenderEquity.org.au**

*@SciGenderEquity* 🦋 *#SAGEPilot*





# Gender Representation in STEMM



Gender distribution of staff and students in STEMM fields. Source: Higher Education Research Data, 2014.

Source: Higher Education Research Data 2014. Data held by SAGE. See: [ScienceGenderEquity.org.au](http://ScienceGenderEquity.org.au)

# ***SAGE – Government funding under National Innovation & Science Agenda***



- **\$2 million** 2016-17 to 2019-2020
- **Core activities**
  - Support the expansion of SAGE program – annual intake, silver award materials (Institutional & Departmental)
  - Enhance structured programs of pre- and post-submission support
  - Undertake independent evaluation of the Pilot
  - Assess, recommend & transition to sustainable business model





# ***SAGE - Pilot of Athena SWAN in Australia***

- **Adoption of Charter** – Equality & Diversity including intersectionality
  - Institutions implement process & actions to demonstrate ability to attain Bronze Award – embedded into long term strategic planning and workplace culture
- Institutional **Commitment** to Charter
  - nominate **Primary Contact** - a senior STEMM professional with decision-making power in the institution & a **Secondary Contact** – another senior leader to work together with the Primary Contact & institution leading Athena SWAN activities
- Institution establishes **Self-Assessment Team**
  - Representation across the institution: range of positions (junior/senior; research/teaching; clinical; etc), STEMM schools and faculties, reflective of life-experiences (varying caring responsibilities and work patterns), have used institutional policies (eg. flexible work), diverse backgrounds, career pathways, expertise, aim for gender balance
- SAGE provides support program & activities & establishes **Award Judging Process & Panels**
- SAGE **confers** Awards, **communicates** Panels' feedback, **publishes** submissions, model practices & tool kit of resources



# ***SAGE Pilot Members***



- Australian Astronomical Observatory
- Australian National University
- Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation
- Baker IDI
- Bond University
- Burnet Institute
- Charles Sturt University
- CSIRO
- Curtin University
- Deakin University
- Defence Science and Technology Group
- Edith Cowan University
- Federation University Australia
- Flinders University
- George Institute
- Griffith University
- James Cook University
- Latrobe University
- Macquarie University
- Monash University
- Queensland University of Technology
- RMIT
- South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute
- Southern Cross University
- Swinburne University
- Telethon Kids
- University of Canberra
- University of Melbourne
- University of New South Wales
- University of Newcastle
- University of Queensland
- University of South Australia
- University of Sydney
- University of the Sunshine Coast
- University of Tasmania
- University of Technology Sydney
- University of Western Australia
- University of Wollongong
- Western Sydney University
- Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research



*“Gender equality is not a battle of the sexes, it’s a battle for equality, a battle that men and women must wage side-by-side. The empowerment of women is about the empowerment of humanity.”*

Elizabeth Broderick

Former Australia Sex Discrimination Commissioner

**MALE CHAMPIONS OF CHANGE** 

**Male Champions genuinely want to lead meaningful action that achieves change**

# ***Male Champions of Change: FOCUSED ON GENDER EQUALITY***

The heart of The Male Champions of Change strategy involves men of power and influence forming a high profile coalition to achieve change on gender equality issues in organisations and communities.

- We take the following approach to get moving, get momentum and accelerate our impact.
- **Meet at least four times a year as a group. As this is a leadership strategy, no delegates are accepted.**
- Agree on a shared purpose, clear priorities and publicly commit to using our individual and collective leadership and resources to advance gender equity.
- Establish a support team that works with us to ensure we deliver on our individual and shared commitments.
- Share our experiences, data and reflect on our own leadership.
- Listen widely and develop personal insights into the issues and opportunities for improvement.
- Work together to identify and implement progressive, high impact actions that disrupt the status quo and create meaningful and lasting change.
- Lead with action and advocacy, working within and across our organisations and collectively at a community level.
- Hold ourselves accountable, evaluating and sharing our experiences and results widely. We encourage our peers and teams to participate in the strategy.
- The approach is simple, practical and adaptable – but it does require commitment.

- With the support of the Australian Government's National Innovation and Science Agenda, the MCC STEM will lead and influence change in women's representation in STEM.
- The group represents the diversity of organisations working in the area and the members have a deep commitment to advancing gender equality within their own organisations and more broadly.
- The STEM MCC is in a unique position to influence change and challenge the systems and stereotypes in STEM that hold women back.

*“One of the things I’ve learnt is that if you don’t intentionally include, the system unintentionally excludes”*

Elizabeth Broderick  
Former Australia Sex Discrimination Commissioner

**MALE CHAMPIONS OF CHANGE** 

**Committing to the Panel Pledge**



# MALE CHAMPIONS OF CHANGE



## Gender Balance at Every Forum: The Panel Pledge

### Where are the women?

Many high-profile conferences, events and taskforces lack gender balance, despite there often being no shortage of qualified women. It is estimated less than 15% of panellists in Australia are women. Less than 12% of experts cited in business newspapers are women. Such optics have consequences.

**15%**  
of panellists in Australia are women

### What you can do

1. Commit to the panel pledge
2. Keep highlighting gender balance for forums
3. Actively encourage women's voices
4. Persevere

<http://malechampionsofchange.com/commit-to-the-panel-pledge/>

# *Reconciliation for inclusion of indigenous people in science*



WALTER AND ELIZA HALL INSTITUTE  
Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan 2016–2018



Walter+Eliza Hall  
Institute of Medical Research

DISCOVERIES FOR HUMANITY

- Reconciliation is the act of bringing into agreement or harmony
- In an Australian context, reconciliation is the bringing together of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians with Australians of other descent

<http://www.wehi.edu.au/about/institute-life/reconciliation>





## Reconciliation at WEHI

- Part of Reconciliation Australia's RAP program, second RAP in 2016
- Our vision for reconciliation
  - Equity in health outcomes
  - **Science by and for Indigenous peoples**
  - Realised through listening to and learning from Indigenous peoples
- Strategic plan 2015-2020 targets:
  - 2 new Indigenous interns annually
  - 3 honours students and 1 PhD student by 2020
- SAGE Athena SWAN pilot: Intersection between gender and Indigenous identity



## Our partnership with CareerTrackers Indigenous Internship program

- Commitment to nurture the next generation of Indigenous scientific leaders
- Careertrackers is a multi-year internship program for Indigenous undergraduates, based on U.S. model
- Currently in the third year of our partnership, supported 5 students to date, four have been outstanding young women (plus 2 new students in 2016/17)
- First MRI to be involved in program, traditionally operated in corporate sector
- Helps to build students practical research skills and understanding of STEMM careers
- Building pathways to further study- honours, PhD



## Building the pipeline for Indigenous students

- Indigenous students ~1.4% of university students nationally, less for STEMM
- Involvement in programs aimed at high school students:
  - Murrup Barak experience camp
  - SEAMS (Strengthening Engagement and Achievement in Maths and Science)
- Work experience opportunities
- Family/Community days, working in partnership with a local organisation
- Parkville Precinct: Great opportunities for shared contributions



# Walter+Eliza Hall

Institute of Medical Research

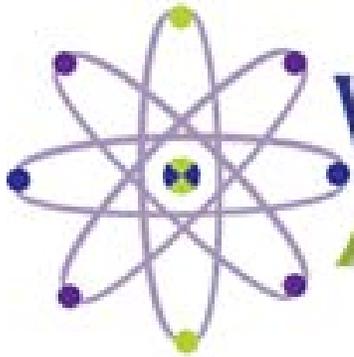
DISCOVERIES FOR HUMANITY



# Connecting Women in STEMM 2016...



With thanks to:



**Women in Science**  
**AUSTRALIA**



**Walter+Eliza Hall**  
Institute of Medical Research

**DISCOVERIES FOR HUMANITY**



**SAGE**

SCIENCE IN AUSTRALIA  
GENDER EQUITY

*A partnership program between*



**MALE CHAMPIONS OF CHANGE**