



UniBank



Centre for Social Justice and Inclusion



Strategies for Success—A sector discussion on
implementing gender targets in STEMM

Contents

Introduction	1
Context	3
Targets are a tool—a national STEMM discussion	3
Key factors for successful target implementation	3
Intersectionality—an emerging theme from the floor	4
Presentations	5
Setting the scene—UTS Provost, Professor Andrew Parfitt	5
Keynote—Libby Lyons, Director, Workplace Gender Equality Agency	6
Case Study 1—The Australian Academy of Technology and Engineering	8
Case Study 2—UTS Wingara Indigenous Employment Strategy	11
Case Study 3—MYOB developer program	12
Research and impact workshop—the role of middle managers in progressing gender equity	14
Discussion—implementation of gender targets and polices at participant organisations	17
Emerging themes	17
Recruitment, merit and selection bias	18
Retention and succession planning	18
Monitoring, evaluation and accountability	19
Intersectionality and inclusion	20

Introduction



(L to R) Verity Firth, Executive Director, Social Justice at the Centre for Social Justice and Inclusion; Assistant Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Fiona Brooks; Provost, Andrew Parfitt; and Mike Lanzing from UniBank.

Hosted by the UTS Centre for Social Justice and Inclusion and sponsored by UniBank, *Strategies for Success: Implementing Gender Workforce Targets in STEMM* was held over a full day on 25 July 2019. A full house of 100 participants attended, representing around 30 organisations from the higher education and research sector, the private sector, member organisations and peak bodies, and both NSW and Commonwealth government.

The day was structured around practical discussion, and heavily informed by a background briefing reviewing current developments on the use of workforce diversity targets and quotas in achieving organisational change.¹ As organisations move toward implementing ambitious reform, the symposium was a chance to learn from key organisations involved in driving sector transformation, and from academics and practitioners with research- and practice-based insights to share on practical implementation in 2019.

The morning session included a keynote and three in-depth case study presentations from representatives of organisations that have successfully implemented gender targets. The afternoon session was conducted as a strategy and information sharing workshop conducted under the Chatham House Rule. Presenters and panellists included:

- UTS Provost and Senior Vice President, Professor Andrew Parfitt
- Verity Firth, Executive Director, Social Justice at the Centre for Social Justice and Inclusion

¹ UTS Centre for Social Justice and Inclusion, BACKGROUND BRIEFING: *Strategies for Success: Implementing Gender Workforce Targets*, June 2019. Available online at: <uts.edu.au/partners-and-community/initiatives/social-justice-uts/centre-library/news-0/strategies-success>, accessed 27 August 2019.

- Libby Lyons, Director, Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA)
- Dr Margaret Hartley FTSE, CEO, Australian Academy of Technology and Engineering
- Dr Berice Anning, Manager, Indigenous Employment, UTS
- Sally Elson, Head of People Advisory & Talent, MYOB Group
- Alicia Pearce, Program Manager, Equal Futures Athena SWAN, UTS
- Dr Sue Williamson, School of Business, UNSW Canberra (workshop leader).

This report was written by Alicia Pearce, program manager of Equal Futures Athena SWAN at UTS, and Dr Linda Peach. The assistance of those who presented on the day is also gratefully acknowledged.

Context

Targets are a tool—a national STEMM discussion

At a time when national policy attention is focussed on increasing the number of women in STEMM as a result of the *Women in STEM Decadal Plan*,² the symposium was pitched to create knowledge, share insights and case studies, and promote discussion on the work that is already underway to implement gender equity targets in STEMM and beyond.

The Athena SWAN pilot in Australia has created a whole-of-sector focus on increasing the number of women in STEMM following decades of inertia and low representation in the STEMM workforce and pipeline. To date, successful Athena SWAN institutions have created targets to achieve better representation of women in relation to:

- Presence of women in recruitment (application, shortlisting and other targets)
- The number of women in senior leadership positions
- Pipeline and succession planning
- Gender pay equity targets
- The number of women on key organisational committees and governance bodies.

The trend toward targets is not limited to the STEMM research and education sector. As the symposium heard from WGEA director Libby Lyons, WGEA will also soon be making gender equity targets a mandatory prerequisite for its Employer of Choice Gender Equality (EOCGE) citation.

Key factors for successful target implementation

The symposium facilitated wide ranging discussion on workplace and pipeline issues affecting the setting and implementation of gender and diversity workforce targets in STEMM. General consensus across the discussions was that targets are more likely to succeed when they are integrated into ‘Business as Usual’ corporate and organisational models—they need to be included in planning, risk, reward and recognition structures in the same way as business streams like sales, and workplace health and safety.

² Australian Academy of Science in collaboration with the Australian Academy of Technology and Engineering, *Women in STEM Decadal Plan*, April 2019. Available online at: <www.science.org.au/womeninSTEMplan>, accessed 27 August 2019.

The collective wisdom from case studies, research and discussion concluded targets succeed when:

- They have strong and visible leadership commitment
- They are based on data collected and analysed to reflect reality for each organisation or unit
- They are tracked and monitored, and progress is reported regularly
- They are linked to KPIs, and specific people are held accountable for ensuring targets are achieved
- Recruitment and retention policies and processes are revised to support the achievement of gender balance targets
- The targets recognise and make room for intersectionality
- Innovative conversations and activities that progress gender equality are part of the organisational fabric.

Intersectionality—an emerging theme from the floor

In discussion throughout the day, and particularly in the workshop, participants raised the questions:

- How do we ensure that targets are implemented in a way that boosts inclusion for all women and does not privilege a dominant group at the expense of others?
- How can gender targets measure and support intersectionality?
- How does an intersectional focus actively assist with attraction and retention of an increasingly culturally and ethnically diverse pipeline cohort of girls and women in STEMM— including, for universities, our own students?

Participants noted that in their experience, setting and meeting gender targets was often conducted without reference to cultural diversity, Indigenous identity and disability. Questions from the floor noted findings from the Diversity Council Australia that ethnically diverse women are underrepresented in leadership positions, and asked how setting gender targets would avoid replicating structures that privilege hegemonic groups. This was followed up by discussion in the afternoon workshop where organisations asked each other: Who here is setting cultural diversity targets? Many participants indicated that this discussion was actively underway in their organisation.

Presentations

Setting the scene—UTS Provost, Professor Andrew Parfitt

“In the STEMM disciplines, where new discoveries have the potential to significantly benefit our economy, environment and society, we cannot accept the consequences of a continuing and systematic lack of diversity.”

UTS Provost, Professor Andrew Parfitt, opened the day, reflecting that despite recognition a quarter of a century ago that the gender landscape needed to change in the sector, and awareness that disruption would be needed at grassroots levels if change was to be significant and sustained, progress has been slow. Even with widespread understanding that diversity enriches communities of work, and that diversity of thought has a material impact on the success of organisations, gender equality in STEMM has improved only marginally. Senior academic roles in engineering and sciences continue to be held primarily by men.

“Past attempts at improving diversity by expecting the pipeline from schooling to the professions to yield results have not delivered the outcomes we wish for. After decades of effort we now need to look at different approaches, and invest the necessary resources.”

Setting targets and working consistently towards achieving them is important in any attempt to address gender inequality. As part of its successful Athena SWAN Bronze Award, UTS set a target of 40% academic women in STEMM by 2022, up from 36% in 2018. This has been embedded into corporate planning, with the staged target for 2019 set at 37%.

Keynote—Libby Lyons, Director, Workplace Gender Equality Agency

Libby Lyons, WGEA director, and a thought-leader and advocate for gender equality, delivered the timely symposium keynote on the emerging role that setting targets will play in the WGEA Employer of Choice for Gender Equality (EOCGE) citation.



Libby Lyons, Director, Workplace Gender Equality Agency.

The WGEA administers the Commonwealth *Workplace Gender Equality Act* (2012) and, since 2013, has collected data annually from around 5000 private sector organisations on around 5 million employees—a world-leading dataset on gender equality that other countries are beginning to emulate. One of the key aspects of the WGEAs advocacy for change in gender equality is that reform is being driven by private enterprise, not by government.

“The research tells us that businesses that have gender equality do better. It’s good for business—spend money on it in the same way you would spend it on improving sales.”

With six years of data to draw on, the statistics show a preponderance of men in decision-making roles in Australian employers—83% of CEOs are men, 75% of all board directors are men and 35% of boards have no women on them. Gender segregation across industries and occupations is a persistent problem that the WGEA data shows is not improving. Of particular concern is that the proportion of women in female-dominated industries has actually increased in the past five years.

Key matters to consider when setting and implementing targets include:

- Voluntary targets drive cultural change and enable organisations to set targets that are realistic in their organisational context
- For targets to work, they need to be approached as a business issue and people need to be made accountable for achieving them
- The process of setting targets should be data-driven and help to identify ‘hot spots’ where future efforts can be directed
- Progress towards targets must be consistently and continuously monitored, and there must be clear accountability around meeting and exceeding goals.

“If you want to improve health and safety for your employees, you give it a budget. Gender equality is no different—it’s a business issue.”

WGEA also administers the EOCGE citation, awarded annually to employers who have made an active commitment to achieving gender equality in their workplaces. The citation acknowledges organisations that have embraced a rigorous and detailed ongoing program to transform their workplaces and holds them publicly accountable to their commitment to improving gender equality for their employees. EOCGE citation criteria are reviewed annually and the bar is raised each year to ensure continuous improvement.

“Setting and monitoring targets will now be an integral part of the Employer of Choice for Gender Equality citation.”

In the next three years, EOCGE organisations will have to set specific targets for different areas of the organisation, with the aim of meeting targets of at least 40% women and encouraging employees of all genders to undertake flexible work and parental leave. Organisations will be required to set timeframes for achieving their targets and have active monitoring and tracking procedures in place.

Case Study 1—The Australian Academy of Technology and Engineering

The Australian Academy of Technology and Engineering (ATSE) has successfully met and set targets for better gender balance when electing members by:

- Setting a target in 2012 that 33% of elected members should be women
- Reinforcing this target by requiring that a minimum of 33% of all fellows elected per year be women
- Adopting a Diversity and Inclusion Policy that has set an end target: by 2025, 50% of new fellows will be women.

Its success has come about through a novel approach that has set targets as a percentage of total intake that is moderated each year, if necessary, by the ATSE board.

“It’s not a women’s issue; it’s the academy’s issue—Dr Margaret Hartley, CEO Australian Academy of Technology and Engineering

ATSE is comprised of learned experts that are elected as fellows through a process of closed nomination, with elections held annually. While the fellows all belong to the organisation as experts in their fields, they do not work together in the same workplace and bring a wide diversity of experience to the academy. They also provide input on a pro bono basis. The challenge is to motivate volunteers to engage in the academy’s gender equity policies. This is particularly so as ATSE has a history of gender imbalance since its inception:

- Of the 65 Foundation Fellows in 1975–1976, just two were women (3%)
- By 2008, on average, a non-targeted election process had delivered just over 1.3 women compared to 21.8 men per election.

A major governance review and reform from 2006–2008 created the academy as a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee. Led by the new board, the academy focussed on achieving greater gender equality, recognising the role the academy could play in promoting women in the technological sciences, and adopting recommendations to elect more women. However, without clear targets, early attempts were not successful. The first target was set in 2012.

“Do it incrementally, but don’t start too small. The 33% was achievable, but if we’d set it at 15%, we would have reached 15%.”



The decision to flag an enforced target by reducing the number of men elected in any one year was prompted by the observation that once the target of 33% women elected per annum was set, appointments reached 30% within two years but did not increase to the 33%. From 2015, the 33% target was ‘enforced’ as a minimum. This was achieved by reducing the number of male appointments possible if the requisite number of electable women had not been nominated.

“Merit has become weaponised. If you say you are choosing on merit, but you have only selected from a pool of all men—or all women—then you are not drawing on the whole pool of talent.”

Dr Hartley reflected that reinforcing that the target was a minimum had increased the number of women elected beyond that minimum, and had the potential to affect incremental change in the visibility of senior women in the technological sciences. Further, as women began to be elected in numbers, especially in leadership positions, their visibility and contribution engaged a large cohort of men who became champions for electing women fellows.

- In 2018, 44% of the new fellows elected were women
- In 2019, 13% of fellows are women
- Currently 55% of the Board of Directors are women.

Dr Hartley drew out key lessons from this process for participants:

- Leadership from the top is essential
- Setting targets will deliver results
- Results will plateau unless you are vigilant
- Set realistic 'stretch' targets—these may need to be incremental
- Keep policy and programs to support targets separate to the committee appointing candidates—make the process independent and robust
- Proactively work to create a pipeline of talent to ensure supply
- Keep checking how the cultural change is going and put measurement, evaluation and program development in place to support organisational reform
- Role models are important—people can only be what they see.



UTS Manager of Indigenous Employment, Dr Berice Anning (centre) with Dr Sue Williamson, UNSW Canberra (front right).

Case Study 2—UTS Wingara Indigenous Employment Strategy

UTS Manager of Indigenous Employment, Dr Berice Anning, addressed the history of Indigenous engagement in the higher education sector, acknowledging that while it is a long and arduous road, targets and quotas have been key drivers of success. As a result of a targeted approach via the Wingara Indigenous Employment strategy:

- UTS has the largest professoriate of Indigenous academics across the higher education sector in Australia—10 women and seven men
- Since 2015, the number of Indigenous academic staff at UTS has more than tripled from 11 to 34
- In 2019, UTS employed 64 fixed-term and continuing Indigenous staff, of which 41 were females and 23 were males
- In 2019, UTS employed 23 casual staff in academic and/or support roles
- UTS has improved its national ranking for the proportion of Indigenous staff overall, from 27th of 43 universities in 2011 to eighth of 43 universities in 2018
- UTS has improved its national ranking for the proportion of Indigenous academic staff, from 17th of 43 universities in 2015 to third of 43 universities in 2018.

UTS has committed to a 3% Indigenous employment target to be achieved by 2023. This is linked to the target outlined in the *Indigenous Student Assistance Grants Guidelines 2017* and the *Universities Australia Indigenous Strategy 2017–2020*.³ The UTS commitment to “Excellence in Indigenous education and research” is encapsulated in the *Wingara Indigenous Employment Strategy 2019–2023* (Wingara Strategy),⁴ which:

- Promotes the recruitment, retention and career development of Indigenous staff
- Builds Indigenous capability to achieve UTS’s high-level and ambitious strategic objective to be a world-leading university in Indigenous education, research and employment
- Increases employment opportunities and economic engagement for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff right across UTS in a whole-of-university approach.

³ Australian Government, *Indigenous Student Assistance Grant Guidelines*, December 2018. Available online at: <legislation.gov.au/Details/F2018C00933>, accessed August 2019.

Universities Australia in partnership with the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Higher Education Consortium (NATSIEC), *Indigenous Strategy 2017–2020*, 2017. Available online at: <universitiesaustralia.edu.au/policy-submissions/diversity-equity/universities-australias-indigenous-strategy-2017-2020/>, accessed August 2019.

⁴ UTS, *Wingara Indigenous Employment Strategy 2019–2023*. Available online at: <gsu.uts.edu.au/policies/wingara-strategy.html>, accessed August 2019.

“What are the key aspects that support targets? It’s the commitment from the top, commitment flowing from government legislation through to the policy and strategy areas in the organisation. Data management and reporting keep us on track as an organisation.”

The Wingara Strategy adopts an innovative approach to Indigenous employment. It is not only about the employment of Indigenous academics, but also about growing the number of support staff and senior professional staff while giving Indigenous academics space and time to include Community in their work. A unique aspect of the Indigenous community at UTS is the Elder-in-Residence program, which contributes to the well-being of Indigenous staff and students.

At UTS, strategies to support this approach include:

- Setting incremental targets—the 2019 target is that 2.2% of academic staff are Indigenous; 1.8% of all UTS staff are Indigenous
- Employing Indigenous students in part-time roles as cadets or interns within UTS, enabling them to gain work skills and experience
- Setting local area KPIs for improving Indigenous employment, with responsibility for meeting employment targets sitting with senior executives and managers
- Ensuring an Indigenous senior staff member oversees the Wingara Strategy—this dedicated position is important to ensure UTS achieves its targets, retains its Indigenous staff and successfully implements the strategy
- Supporting its target with a reporting framework, external and internal, which is essential to successful implementation
- Driving the strategy forward with executive commitment and oversight.

Despite progress, substantial challenges persist in increasing the number of Indigenous people in the university community at UTS and nationally. Improving Indigenous people’s access to university degrees, graduating them and employing them in academic and research roles or as support staff will ensure targets are met. An important next step is effectively growing the cultural competency for all staff to work more effectively with Indigenous staff.

Case Study 3—MYOB developer program

Sally Elson, Head of People, Advisory and Talent at MYOB Group presented the groundbreaking developer program at MYOB, an initiative designed to provide pathways for women into software development and to support MYOB to achieve better gender balance in its technology areas.

Across MYOB, 44% of staff are women and there are 31% women in the engineering division. MYOB instigated gender balance targets broken down by division that were based on a 40/40/20 threshold—40% male, 40% female and

20% of either gender. These targets are underpinned by strong reporting and monitoring structures into the business—reporting every month and every quarter—and a suite of programs to support women in the workforce. Five out of MYOB’s seven divisions meet the 40/40/20 threshold, but the organisation identified a need to target male-dominated areas for increased inclusion and gender diversity.

“We really needed to address this issue in a different way and think about how we could provide pathways for women into the field of software ... this is actually a software industry issue.”



Developer, piloted in 2016 and launched in 2018, was conceptualised as a way to attract and support women who might otherwise leave or not enter the tech space. The first pilot included three women and was advertised under an exemption from anti-discrimination legislation to target women. Developer was created to solve an identified set of problems:

- There are significantly fewer women in the tech talent pool—only 12% of tech graduates are women, so the focus of the program is on increasing the pool of talent available
- There is a need to address the gender diversity issues in software development
- Opportunity to provide a pathway for women who would not traditionally enter the field of software development due to life circumstances
- A way to develop software engineering competence in women candidates with a non-technical background

“We quite clearly said at the start, we didn’t want to just measure and reflect the talent pool in tech, we wanted to reflect the gender diversity in our communities.”

Examples of candidates for developer include MYOB’s current workforce, mothers re-entering the workforce, and women making a career change. The developer program provides:

- A paid scholarship at Coder Academy
- A paid salary while candidates learn
- Permanent employment at MYOB following Coder Academy
- Entrance into FMA as a Protégé Developer following Coder Academy
- A dedicated mentor.

The developer program aims to attract women to a tech career. The program pays a full-time salary for entry level candidates to learn how to code, creating technical competency in the candidate. After the Coder Academy, the candidate works for 12 to 24 months rotating through crews within the organisation, and then self-selects into a permanent appointment with a specific crew.

Research and impact workshop—the role of middle managers in progressing gender equity

The afternoon workshop facilitated by Dr Sue Williamson from UNSW Canberra addressed issues around setting targets for gender equality.

Dr Williamson’s research explores how middle managers can progress gender equality, including through the effective take-up of gender equality targets in organisations.⁵ It shows that while middle managers in the public sector often have good intentions, many have a shallow understanding of the issues that drive gender inequality, low awareness of gender equality policies, and tend to suffer from ‘gender fatigue’.⁶

The research also shows that engaging middle managers strategically in organisational culture change is a key catalyst to socialising and implementing organisation-wide strategies:

- Finding creative and innovative ways to keep conversations going about gender equality is important, as is creating a culture of awareness and change

⁵ Williamson S, Colley L, Foley M, Cooper R, *The role of middle managers in progressing gender equity in the public sector*, UNSW Canberra, the Public Service Research Group, the University of Sydney and CQ University, August 2018. Available online at: <5050foundation.edu.au/assets/reports/documents/Middle-Managers-and-Gender-Equity.pdf>, accessed August 2019.

⁶ Williamson S, ‘Backlash and gender fatigue. Why progress on gender equality has slowed’, *The Conversation*, March 2019. Available online at: <theconversation.com/backlash-and-gender-fatigue-why-progress-on-gender-equality-has-slowed-112706>, accessed August 2019.

- Managers in the research study particularly asked for toolkits about gender equality, including topics they can raise and simplified points about what they can say to their teams to generate thought and conversation
- Progress against targets needs to be monitored and people need to be held accountable—breaking targets down to small units so that changes can be seen in practical terms is important
- Reorienting the concept of ‘merit’ systematically in recruitment and promotion—there is a need to have conversations about how targets and merit are not mutually exclusive.

Dr Williamson noted that the merit principle was originally intended to overcome favouritism and bias, but is difficult to explain or measure and is often confused with the idea of “we just want the best person for the job”. This confusion can lead to acceptance of the status quo as being representative of ‘merit’. To counteract this confusion between merit and bias, Dr Williamson recommended a review of all HR processes, including selection criteria—how are they developed, and what are they actually measuring? Do the selection criteria take a person’s potential into account?

More than unconscious bias training is needed to challenge bias. Unconscious bias training needs to be followed up with post-training work and review, and bias ‘disruptors’ are needed. Examples of ‘disruptors’ included:

- Use of diaries for selection panels to help them avoid ‘groupthink’
- Having interviewees speak to each person on the selection panel individually
- Changing the way organisations ‘do’ recruitment, and other human resource processes—organisations should consider undertaking workplace interventions to create culture change through changed HR processes.

While initiatives are being implemented to improve women’s career development, they can tend to be ad hoc; opportunities can be limited, particularly in public sector environments; and the mentorship and sponsorship women need is patchy at best.⁷ Increasing opportunities for women’s career development can be supported by initiatives such as:

- Keeping a diary of how work is allocated, and reviewing the data for potential bias
- Addressing issues such as ‘office housework’—tasks which are often delegated by default to women
- Considering the issue of managers who express high levels of commitment to enabling flexible working but do not work flexibly themselves
- Addressing issues of trust with managers whose staff want to work from home—consider how to manage and monitor performance
- Thinking creatively about how to reorganise jobs and roles to better accommodate flexible working

⁷ Ibid. Williamson et al, August 2018.

- Ensuring that senior leaders and managers are role modelling appropriate behaviours, including flexible working
- Looking for ways to connect gender equality plans to meaningful and ongoing evaluation and avoid siloes.



Discussion—implementation of gender targets and policies at participant organisations



Participants self-selected into tables based on the level of development their organisation had reached in setting and implementing gender equity targets—‘beginner’, ‘intermediate’ and ‘advanced’. Each table was tasked with discussing and reporting back to the broader group on one of three questions:

- How can we counteract the ‘boys’ club’?
- What are the barriers to gender balance targets?
- How do HR policies and processes support or limit progress towards gender equality?

Grouping participants at levels of organisational development was designed to facilitate a fruitful sharing of expertise between groups addressing the same question from different positions. Often a ‘beginner’ group would raise a particular problem for an organisation on their table and were responded to by participants whose organisations had faced and overcome similar problems.

Emerging themes

In her remarks, Dr Williamson drew the following key themes from the workshop discussion:

- Recruitment, merit and selection bias
- Retention and succession planning
- Monitoring, evaluation and accountability
- Intersectionality and inclusion.

Recruitment, merit and selection bias

Bias in recruitment, and the issue of what constituted merit in recruitment, were key focusses. Participants asked: how do you start a conversation with staff who believe that changing the criteria for appointment meant that applicants with less 'merit' would be appointed? Discussion encompassed the way that merit is construed by organisations currently and how these discussions could be facilitated with staff who are implementing strategies for greater diversity.

Suggestions from delegates to address issues in recruitment and selection included moving towards hiring on potential and changing the focus of interviews for roles from relying solely on achieving key metrics such as research outputs or sales figures. One organisation talked about a pilot run where candidates were pre-interviewed with a specific focus on their capacity to manage diversity and contribute to inclusive organisational culture. The resulting appointees had a competitive edge in their capacity to contribute to positive workforce culture.

Ensuring selection panels have a diverse membership was raised, along with rethinking the qualifications needed for being on an interview panel. One group at a 'beginner' level suggested that selection panels should be gender balanced as a norm to prevent gender bias, and that specialist recruiters could work with HR and hiring managers in organisations to create more ethical recruitment practices. The intermediate groups responding to this question suggested equal attention needs to be paid to the way female staff are on-boarded at their organisation, to ensure that bias in the existing workplace culture doesn't result in disadvantage.

Intermediate groups discussing the primary barriers to gender balance targets noted that the initial challenge was in building a talent pool of women. They commented that the pool can be quite small, and an industry may be competing for a limited number of qualified people. Finding innovative ways to grow the pool of talent is vital. This could include partnering across industries or adopting some successful initiatives from other sectors.

The 'advanced' groups suggested that more focus should be given to the student experience to avoid losing a pipeline of talent. Finding ways to create better support channels, deal with biases beyond gender and create forums for open discussion and engagement were suggestions for improving the student experience. Students can also be influenced by the role models they are able to see among senior staff at universities, and the current lack of representation of culturally diverse women in these visible roles needs to be addressed.

Retention and succession planning

Beginner groups considering how HR policies and processes can impact successful targets noted that in their organisations, there can tend to be too much HR focus on recruitment and retention, and insufficient focus on the broader remit of HR and its abilities to influence how employment experiences in an organisation can support gender targets.

Intermediate groups discussing barriers to successful implementation of gender balance targets noted that fostering a 'retention culture' is key to improving

gender inequality. Activities and initiatives that can support a retention culture include:

- Development and support initiatives, mentorship, and flexible working
- Mentoring Circle program
- Leadership accountability at all levels
- Publishing data—bringing transparency and healthy competition into the process
- Translating policy into action
- Toolkits—helping middle managers to address inequality more effectively.

Participants noted that maintaining contact with employees through a feedback loop that allows leaders to understand whether people are happy and what they need to be more effective would be more useful than solely relying on exit interviews to find out after the fact that things could have been done differently to retain staff. The intermediate group discussing this question noted that workforce planning needs to be done well to create a retention culture.

Groups discussing how to counteract the boys' club suggested that gender equality needs to be visible at all levels of organisations, through promotion as well as recruitment. One key strategy was empowering male employees to become advocates for gender equity, providing scripts and skills to enable men to call out bias and subtly or overtly demeaning behaviour. It was suggested that this is a key aspect of implementing a zero-tolerance culture for bullying and harassment, as well as creating a culture that names bias and makes it visible to everyone present—enabling organisations to move toward a model that actively pursues equitable outcomes. An example given was setting place procedures to avoid all-male and all-white panels at events and conferences.

Monitoring, evaluation and accountability

Setting targets requires both ongoing monitoring and evaluation, and mechanisms to hold people accountable for achieving targets. Comments from delegates after the workshop indicated that ensuring accountability among staff can be a challenge for people implementing gender targets. Suggestions for how to ensure people are accountable included:

- Visible senior leadership support for the targets
- Having gender equity as a standing item on all committee meeting agendas
- Reporting on progress across the institution
- Incentivising accountability at all levels—providing bonuses for those who make their diversity targets and taking away bonuses from those who don't
- Transparency—when people publish data, it becomes a signal for who is achieving and who isn't
- Fostering a culture of peer accountability
- Healthy competition.

Beginner groups suggested that financial penalties for not achieving targets can be an effective mechanism in addressing gender inequality, and that zero tolerance for poor behaviour can increase levels of accountability. Advanced groups noted that data provides hard evidence, which is difficult to ignore, that can then be translated into action. The challenge for organisations is how to build an evidence base that systematically feeds into business-as-usual operations in the same way as any other business function.

Intersectionality and inclusion

Conversation around intersectionality and inclusion started from a general acknowledgement that many organisations' gender policies and targets don't make explicit the need to focus on cultural and other diversity at the same time as gender. Particular discussion was led by participants who raised the connection between visible cultural diversity in research and teaching staff in STEMM and the female talent pipeline: they noted that for many female students, "you can't be what you can't see". A critical mass of culturally diverse students is unable to see themselves in an environment where female role models in staff and leadership positions are often white. Programs to retain women and girls in the STEMM pipeline weren't seen to focus on critical aspects of those girls' and women's' experience that may be affecting attrition. Participants indicated that the broader Australian social context could not be separated from the culture within organisations.

Responding to these comments, participants asked each other: who here works for an organisation that is setting cultural diversity targets? Many participants indicated that a broad discussion at staff level was actively underway in their organisation, but only one participant indicated that their organisation was significantly along the path to structural change. Some participants indicated that they were not aware whether their organisation actively collected or collated data on staff's cultural background.