



# Women in STEM Decadal Plan Champion

## **RESPONSE**

2019



> *Science & Technology Australia is committed to growing its national leadership for equity, diversity and inclusion in Australian STEM, and empowering others in the sector to work meaningfully towards better balance.*

## LEADERSHIP AND COHESION

STA commits to continuing leadership of equity, diversity and inclusion in STEM by **supporting and empowering the sector** to work towards genuine and inclusive diversity.

In 2017 we established the Superstars of STEM program to enhance the visibility of women in STEM and support the growth of public role models for girls and young women. This program also fast-tracks participants' careers. By 2020 we commit to **finalising training and providing opportunities for 90 Superstars, and commencing recruitment for a further 60.**

To amplify this impact, we commit to growing our capacity to **deliver unique in-place communications and leadership training for women** at all levels across the STEM sector.

We will continue to **highlight best practice approaches to gender equity** with the ARC, NHMRC and other funding bodies, and to provide advice and consultation to the Males Champions of Change in STEM.

Finally, as the peak body for science and technology, we commit to **supporting our member organisations to catalyse positive change at the grassroots level.** By 2020 we will produce a comprehensive suite of equity, diversity and inclusion policy and procedure templates, complemented by codes of conduct and other resources to empower STEM representative societies and associations to act in support of better outcomes for all researchers.

## EVALUATION: UNDERSTANDING WHAT WORKS

STA has built evidence collection, evaluation and evolution into our gender equity activities from day one.

We are proud that Superstars of STEM is an **Australian leader in impact assessment, reporting and response.** We commit to working with experts towards continual improvement in evaluation for this and other STA gender equity initiatives.

STA has established a partnership with the Centre for Public Awareness of Science at the Australian National University to **investigate at a deeper level the challenges experienced by women in research science.** We commit to developing this program of research.

By 2020, STA will also **advocate for a central repository of STEM gender equity data** supported by government, to inform government and sector decision making.

## CULTURE: INCLUSIVE AND RESPECTFUL WORKPLACES

As representative bodies and employers of the STEM workforce, STA members are uniquely positioned to support cultural transformation towards genuine equity, diversity and inclusion in Australian STEM workplaces. STA commits to supporting this transformation by **empowering members with policy frameworks, templates and training.**

Our Australian-first national survey of sexual harassment in STEM workplaces is informing our advocacy to create and promote inclusive and respectful work environments. Through our formal Memorandum of Understanding with NOW Australia, Australia's response to the #metoo movement, STA will continue to **advocate for changes to improve women's safety at work.**

STA has a focus towards 2020 on intersectionality and commits to supporting the establishment of national networks for LGBTQI+ and Indigenous STEM professionals. We'll also continue to offer **scholarship programs for the Superstars of STEM and Science meets Parliament,** which provide financial assistance to people in regional areas; with an indigenous background; or who identify as being part of the LGBTQI+ community.

## SUPERSTARS OF STEM: A CASE STUDY



**It is no understatement** to say that Science & Technology Australia has made a staggering difference in my life through their [Superstars of STEM](#) program. I received bespoke training, development and mentorship opportunities that have extended and enhanced my skillsets, attributes and networks, leading to exponential growth in my professional and public profiles. To cite only a few examples, I have built a strong social media presence from nothing; received accelerated promotion at work; been invited to give a TED talk and innumerable public lectures; and am receiving invitations to serve on national and international advisory boards at high profile institutions – all directly due to my participation in the Superstars program. The beauty and immeasurable significance of STA's impact is not only that their endeavours will continue to bear fruit in my life for many years to come (and indeed those of all 90 Superstars), it will also do so for the countless thousands of young women and girls with whom we interact and influence across Australia and the world”.

A/Prof. Ronika Power  
Associate Professor of Bioarchaeology, Macquarie University  
Inaugural Superstar of STEM

## VISIBILITY: YOU CAN'T BE WHAT YOU CAN'T SEE

STA's **leadership is deliberately and visibly diverse**, setting an example for the broad and varied membership that we support. Likewise, we have a policy of achieving **minimum 50% representation for women** on our event programs.

Through the flagship Superstars of STEM program, STA commits to directly **connecting thousands of school children in-person with diverse women scientists and technologists**, and connecting millions of Australians via social and traditional media.

STA established the ongoing **#NominateHer campaign** across social media platforms, encouraging people to nominate women for STEM awards and recognition. We commit to revitalising and amplifying this campaign through to 2020.

## EDUCATION: STRONG BEGINNINGS

As part of the Superstars of STEM we have reached more than 100 schools and over 15,000 students in all states and territories across Australia. In the next 12 months, we commit to **reaching a minimum total of 15,000 students**.

Through its policy and advocacy work, STA supports fair and equitable access for all Australians to high quality STEM education. We will continue this. We also commit by 2020 to working with state and federal policy makers to **improve evaluation of and action to address gender balance in senior secondary school STEM subjects**.



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ABN: 71 626 822 845



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