

## MEDIA RELEASE

### Meet the gender equality change makers: Leading Australian businesses in 2022 announced

The Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) has today named the latest list of Australia's Employers of Choice for Gender Equality (EOCGE).

120 Australian employers are now carrying the WGEA yellow tick to certify they are driving progress to make their workplaces equal, including 12 new companies awarded the prestigious WGEA certification this year.

Together, these organisations employ approximately 320,000 Australians, offering benefits to those workers such as family-friendly workplaces through paid parental leave and flexible working policies.

Employees looking for a certified company to work for have the most options in the Professional Scientific and Technical Services group, with 47 Employers of Choice; followed by Financial and Insurance Services (21 Employers of Choice) and Wholesale Trade (13 Employers of Choice).

The WGEA citation is awarded following a rigorous application process with a range of stretch criteria, designed to measure the actions organisations are taking to advance gender equality outcomes for their employees. Compared to other organisations in the Agency's dataset, the WGEA Employers of Choice for Gender Equality are set apart by a range of factors, as seen in their data:

- Lower gender pay gaps: EOCGEs have an average gender pay gap of 18.9% compared to 23% for others. They conduct pay audits annually, and track and report gender equality metrics to their Boards.
- Higher proportion of women on boards: 35% of EOCGE employers have women on their boards, compared to 28% in others.
- Longer periods of parental leave: 14 weeks on average; compared to 10.7 weeks, with leave available to new employees as soon as they join an EOCGE organisation.
- Superannuation on parental leave: 100% of EOCGEs pay super on employer-funded parental leave, including 18% who are also paying it on the Government scheme; compared to 81% and 7% respectively in non-EOCGE employers.
- More male managers are taking parental leave: Nearly 29% of all managers taking primary carer's leave in EOCGE organisations were men, compared to 15% in non-EOCGE organisations.

These organisations have a demonstrated commitment to advancing change not only in their organisation, but as leaders driving gender equality in their wider industries too.

Director of the Workplace Gender Equality Agency, Mary Wooldridge, says the bar for certification is raised each year to challenge companies to continue maintaining leading practice standards in workplace gender equality.

"Our WGEA Employers of Choice for Gender Equality emerge from an evidence-based assessment as Australia's leading change-makers, who are driving and embedding gender equality in their workplaces and business practices.

"Critically, these organisations are delivering on a formula that sees better support structures in place for working families; stronger actions to address pay inequalities; and strategic recruitment and promotion practices that help to encourage the full participation of women at work."

Ms Wooldridge said [research into the cohort of Employers of Choice](#) - produced in partnership with the University of Queensland – has analysed the actions they are taking compared to other organisations.



“It proved the outcomes of this approach are paying clear dividends: our WGEA Employers of Choice are closing their pay gaps faster, have a higher proportion of women in management, a stronger pipeline of women moving into senior management, a higher representation of women on their Boards and a higher proportion of female employees working full-time than other employers,” she said.

“We extend our congratulations to these leading employers and look forward to working with them closely to help accelerate positive change across all Australian workplaces.”

## About the Employer of Choice citation

The Employer of Choice for Gender Equality citation is a voluntary, leading-practice recognition program. It is designed to encourage, recognise and promote organisations' active commitment to achieving gender equality in Australian workplaces.

All employers in Australia with 100 or more employees report annually to WGEA to comply with the Commonwealth *Workplace Gender Equality Act*.

The citation holders are companies who then choose to go through an additional evaluation process, passing a range of evidence-based criteria under seven focus areas.

These criteria cover leadership, strategy and accountability, developing a gender-balanced workforce, gender pay equity, support for caring, mainstreaming flexible working, preventing gender-based harassment, discrimination and bullying and driving change beyond an employer's workplace.

The assessment process examines the employees' lived experience, along with the CEO's commitment to driving and influencing equality outcomes not only within their businesses, but in their industries too.

### **The WGEA citation is awarded for two-year cycles. Key requirements include:**

- Gender equality metrics must be tracked and reported to the Board annually.
- A gender pay gap analysis must be conducted annually and a target must be set to reduce an organisation's overall gender pay gap (this is not like-for-like gaps).
- The overall gender pay gap must be published in the EOCGE application, which must be made available to employees.
- Targets must be set to increase the representation of women in manager and non-manager categories and on the governing body, and for men in non-manager categories, where their representation is less than 40%. Progress on targets must be reported in subsequent applications.
- Must provide at least eight weeks paid parental leave for primary carers with no eligibility period.
- The CEO and managers must role-model flexible working and it must be promoted to both women and men regardless of caring responsibilities.
- All employees must have completed training on the prevention of gender-based and sexual harassment at induction and at least every two years.
- Employer must have had no judgment made against it by a court or other tribunal related to gender-based discrimination and sexual harassment in the past three years.
- Must have procurement guidelines that encourage gender equality across their supply chain.
- CEO's public commitment to gender equality and participation in external events and programs.
- Organisations must regularly survey their workforce and meet thresholds on support for gender equality.

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**About the Agency:** The Workplace Gender Equality Agency is an Australian Government statutory agency charged with promoting and improving gender equality in Australian workplaces. [www.wgea.gov.au](http://www.wgea.gov.au).

## **WGEA Employer of Choice for Gender Equality citation holders 2022**

**120 Australian employers are certified as Employers of Choice for Gender Equality as of March 2022:**

- 12 are new WGEA citation holders for 2022.
- 91 are re-certified to continue their status for another two years:
  - Two have been continuous citation holders since it commenced in 2001.
- 17 are mid-way through their two-year citation.