

MEDIA RELEASE

Pay gaps closing faster in leading-practice employer group

2020 leaders in workplace gender equality announced

The Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) and the University of Queensland's AIBE Centre for Gender Equality in the Workplace released a new report today that demonstrates that a group of leading Australian organisations are closing their pay gaps faster than other employers reporting to WGEA. The release of today's report also coincides with WGEA's announcement of the list of 2019-20 WGEA Employer of Choice of Gender Equality (EOCGE) citation holders.

This report examines the actions taken by **WGEA Employer of Choice for Gender Equality citation holders** over a five-year period between 2013-14 and 2017-18 and provides a blueprint for gender equality in the workplace that any organisation can follow.

It confirms these citation holders have performed better on some key gender equality indicators than other organisations in WGEA's dataset. The report's key findings indicate that EOCGE organisations had:

1. A faster reduction in their gender pay gap than other reporting organisations. There was a **9.2 percentage point (pp)** drop in EOCGE organisations' total remuneration gender pay gap compared to a **3.7pp** decrease for other reporting organisations between 2013-14 to 2017-18.
2. A higher representation of women at all management levels when compared to other reporting organisations over this five-year period.
3. A stronger pipeline of women moving into senior management roles over the five years.
4. A higher representation of women on their boards. In 2017-18, just **8.9%** of EOCGEs had no female directors on their boards compared with **35.9%** across the other reporting organisations.
5. A higher proportion of female employees working full-time. **57%** of female employees work full-time in EOCGE organisations compared with **39%** in the general workforce.

Libby Lyons, Director of the Workplace Gender Equality Agency, said it was clear from the new report that the WGEA EOCGE citation had generated significant change within these organisations.

"This new research shows that positive and measurable improvements have been made by our EOCGE citation holders. These leading employers are closing their pay gaps and increasing their representation of women in management at a faster rate than other employers in our dataset. These findings alone demonstrate the tangible and positive impact of the EOCGE citation."

"As we have always known, this report also provides further evidence that change will not happen unless workplace leaders from the Board and CEO down are committed to gender equality as a business imperative and take action. My hope is that this insightful report will encourage other business leaders to embrace the commercial benefits of gender equality and create workplaces free of discrimination and bias for both women and men," said Ms Lyons.

Centre Director Dr Terry Fitzsimmons said the report provided a comprehensive overview of the strategies and policies that leading gender equality employers in Australia have implemented over the past five years.

"When analysing the Employer of Choice for Gender Equality citation data, we were looking at the 'best in class' from leading employers in terms of commitment to promoting gender equality.

"The report is a 'one-stop-shop' for organisations to find policies and practices to implement in their workplaces. It is a very practical report as it sets out exactly what is happening in Australian workplaces and how gender equality policies are being actioned and implemented, so organisations



do not have to guess what others are doing. They can actually gain insights into leading practice employers, the policies and strategies they have in place and how they are actually implementing them in practice.”

Today, WGEA also announced the list of 2019-20 WGEA Employer of Choice for Gender Equality (EOCGE) citation holders.

119 organisations have received the citation this year, which recognises employer commitment and best practice in promoting gender equality in Australian workplaces. There are 14 first-time recipients including manufacturing company Kellogg’s (Aust) Pty Ltd and construction firm Laing O’Rourke.

This year’s citation holders range from small professional services firms to very large organisations. Male-dominated, female-dominated and mixed industries are all represented.

“The WGEA Employer of Choice for Gender Equality (EOCGE) citation has always provided a rigorous and evidence-based guide for employers to develop and implement their own gender equality strategies and actions,” said Ms Lyons. “This year, we strengthened the eligibility criteria by placing even greater emphasis on accountability, outcomes, evidence and internal reporting processes.”

“I would like to congratulate all of our 2019-20 EOCGE citation holders for the extra effort and commitment it has taken to meet these additional rigorous requirements. As the research we released today demonstrates, these employers have reaped the many business and workplace culture benefits from implementing leading-practice measures in their workplaces.”

“Every one of these organisations are leading the charge for change towards gender equality in Australian workplaces. These astute industry leaders are showing other Australian businesses how to do it – that is create a better and more equal future for both women and men,” said Ms Lyons.

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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.

About the citation

The WGEA Employer of Choice for Gender Equality (EOCGE) citation is designed to encourage, recognise and promote active commitment to achieving gender equality in Australian workplaces.

The EOCGE citation commenced in 2014, replacing the predecessor citation, the EOWA Employer of Choice for Women. The citation is strategically aligned with the *Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012* (Act), reflecting the change in focus of the legislation to promote and improve gender equality for both women and men, while recognising the historically disadvantaged position of women in the workplace.

The EOCGE citation is a voluntary leading-practice recognition program that is separate to compliance with the Act.

Following a review of the EOCGE program in 2017, the citation was revised, effective from the 2019-20 period. The changes to the program include strengthened criteria against each of the citation’s seven focus areas and an emphasis on outcomes to demonstrate continuous improvement.

The criteria for the 2019-20 citation cover leadership, strategy and accountability, developing a gender-balanced workforce, gender pay equity, support for caring, mainstreaming flexible working, preventing gender-based harassment and discrimination, sexual harassment and bullying and targets for improving gender equality outcomes.