



Charles Sturt  
University



# Gender Equity at Charles Sturt

## Athena SWAN in 2021

Like everywhere across the sector, last year posed challenges and opportunities for Athena SWAN here at Charles Sturt. While much of our work slowed, we were also given the chance to reflect and reassess our goals and priorities and where we wanted to direct our attention and energy in this changed landscape. It was not only COVID-19 that required us to pivot but SAGE, the national governing body of Athena SWAN, released the much-anticipated pathway forward towards Silver Awards.

With universities and research institutes from Cohorts 2 and 3 of the national Athena SWAN Pilot successfully going through the accreditation process the national Pilot was brought to a close and Athena SWAN formally instituted as a permanent part of the gender equity landscape in higher education and research. A key part of looking beyond the Pilot was to establish what the Silver Award pathway would look like here in Australia. As those familiar with Athena SWAN would know, we have borrowed much from the original UK scheme, but have also adapted and altered the scheme to fit the Australian context. So, the Silver pathway will look a little different here.

Between now and when we need to submit a Silver Award application (late 2023 - early 2024) we will need to successfully apply for five 'Cygnets Awards'. Each of these Cygnets will be based on 'Progress and Impact Reports' submitted to SAGE that outline how we have reduced or removed the barriers to gender equity in STEMM that we identified in our original Bronze Application. Once we have our five Cygnets we will be

eligible to apply for a Silver Award. More information about that application and what will be required is forthcoming.

In the meantime, what we need to do is get 'Cygnets Ready'. And that means taking a little time to revise, reassess and reconsider our original Bronze Action Plan and discern if it still fits our Strategic vision, goals and capacities. Given the cumulative effects of COVID-19 across the sector, and those specific to our context here at Charles Sturt, the requirement to reconsider and adjust our Action Plans could not be more opportune. It gives us a chance to stop and consider the lessons we have learned from trying to implement the original Action Plan over the last two or so years and see how we can build on what has been working well, and adapt what has not worked so well. But it also offers the opportunity to ask if the challenges we saw a few years ago, are still the challenges of today, or if we have new barriers in STEMM gender equity that more urgently need our attention now.

For the immediate months ahead then the key work of the Athena SWAN team and those key stakeholders who have responsibilities in the Action Plan will be to assess our current priorities, capacities and goals, in line with the work across the wider University on Strategy Review, and reset and refresh our Athena SWAN vision for the next three years. We look forward to being able to share a Revised Action Plan with the Charles Sturt community as it develops, and for finding new ways to get more of our staff and students involved in bringing to life the greater gender equity for which Athena SWAN is ultimately aiming.

### Thank you and Farewell (for now) – Dr Kim Doyle

It has been an adventurous learning experience being the Athena SWAN Project Manager these last two years. But for now, I am headed off for a while, on what I imagine will be another steep learning curve, to welcome our first baby.

I wanted to thank everyone who has been involved in and supported the work of Athena SWAN over the time I have been in the role. I especially would like to thank all of those members of the Self-Assessment Team who gave generously of their time when I was new in the role, to teach me all they knew about the project and offered so much support and wisdom during a difficult transition for the project. In the time since that Team came to an end there have been many colleagues who have shared and given much to the work Athena SWAN is trying to do and I want to thank all of you too.

Change projects, as we all know, are by their nature difficult, often slow and they only keep moving forward because of the efforts of many.

It has been a privilege to be a part of the journey so far, and I look forward to hearing how the Charles Sturt community keeps working for and achieving greater gender equity in STEMM.

### Welcome to the world Mr Henry

Kim has given permission to share the wonderful news of the arrival of Henry born 13<sup>th</sup> April 2021.

Henry is a beautiful, healthy, and happy baby. Kim and her partner are also doing well 😊



### Welcome to Ms Clare Ellis – Athena SWAN Project Manager



We would like to welcome Clare to Charles Sturt, who will be backfilling Kim's role while she is on parental leave.

Clare has a background in the higher ed Equity & Diversity space, working at UNSW in the Student Equity role, and was involved in the Strategy, introduction and implementation of Champions, and work to inform the equity and diversity 'big picture' at UNSW.

Clare has begun settling into the Wagga Wagga campus and reading up on the background and current context of Athena SWAN. Please make Clare feel welcome to the team! 😊

### Unconscious Bias & Inclusivity Training – Governor General's Office

As previously mentioned, Kim and Nic travelled to Canberra at the end of February to deliver two training sessions to staff of the Official Secretary to the Governor General. Despite some negative media associated with this, overall, we trained 28 staff members, and the results are on par with Charles Sturt results and training sessions delivered to External Stakeholders. We look forward to running more sessions both internally and externally in the second half of 2021 so keep an eye out for these.





## Upcoming seminar: Violence against Women in Regional and Rural Areas

The Gender and Feminist Studies Network and Athena SWAN/Equity & Diversity will be hosting a seminar on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> July from 2pm-3:30pm.

The outcomes of the session are:

- Raise awareness about specific and unique problems associated with violence against women in rural and regional areas
- Understand more about violence against women and those with intersecting identities (First Nations, Disability, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse, LGBTIQ+)
- Raise awareness about issues related to service delivery
- Draw attention to the need for funding – lack of funding and resources to support women experiencing DV and their children
- Encourage research and scholarship that is praxis focused – with the aim of benefiting Charles Sturt University communities
- Promotion of internal information relating to this topic (15 days of domestic violence leave, above national average, Subject Zero)

Confirmed speakers are:

- **Tracey Willow** – University of Wollongong and Community Development Practitioner
- **Lorraine Murphy** – Central West Women's Centre, DV expert, front line counsellor
- **Jenny Rolfe** – President of the Wagga Women's Health Centre
- **Kevin Jones** – Manager, Uniting Aboriginal Permanency Support Programme Dubbo
- **TBA** – NSW Police Domestic Violence Liaison Officer

Simply log in to ZOOM and click on this link: <https://charlessturt.zoom.us/j/63285383938>

## #PinkBox Dignity Vending Machines

The Dignity Vending Machine is a vending machine that dispenses a **free** period pack which has six tampons and two pads in it. The machine is there to help those who menstruate.

Share the Dignity believe that access to period products is a right, not a privilege and that no one should ever have to choose between eating and taking control of their period. This resonates strongly with Charles Sturt and our commitment to gender equity.

Jessica Biles, Tracey Parnell and Kerry Read from Albury initially suggested Charles Sturt apply to have a Share the Dignity vending machine on campus – what a wonderful initiative.

We recently met with key stakeholders from Division of Facilities Management and External Engagement who were all supportive of rolling this out on each of our campus locations.

Applications for Wagga, Albury, Orange and Dubbo have been submitted and we are awaiting the approval. Port is in progress, and Bathurst will be after August, as the site identified is currently being renovated.

Keep a look out for the upcoming installations on your campus!

For more information, please visit the [Share The Dignity website](#)



## Gender composition of University Committees

The second analysis of gender composition of University Committees was recently undertaken and presented to the Equity & Diversity Committee.

This is an action item within the *Workplace Gender Equity Strategy 2018-2022*. The strategy is to ensure gender representation for CSU Management, Academic, Governance and other University Committees with the measure of success being *Gender composition for University committees to be balanced with a 20% variance*.

It was found that 34/64 committees analysed have balanced gender composition, where 30 did not.

The next step is to write to the Presiding Officers and provide suggestions to improve this.

A comparison from last year will also be presented at the next Equity & Diversity Committee.

### Invitation to submit a proposal for edited collection

Gender and Feminist Studies Network is seeking proposals for chapters orientated toward research, activism, collaboration, and practice for an edited book preliminarily titled '*Gender, Feminist and Queer Studies: Research & Praxis in a Time of Conservatism*'.

While the proposal will be subject to review, we have been in discussion with Routledge, a respected academic publisher highly ranked on a number of international metrics, and are quite confident of attaining a contract for a *Routledge Handbook* – for examples of Routledge research handbooks see [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).

This book will be about the intersection of activism and practice with research and scholarship in the areas of gender, feminist, and queer studies in an era of increasing conservatism. The collection will be interdisciplinary spanning the fields of gender and sexuality, women's studies, masculinities and LGBTIQ+ studies. Theoretical contributions from the areas of gender, feminist, queer, sociological and psychological theories are encouraged. The focus of the book is on the people and environments where we live and work, and the sociocultural and political contexts in Australia and internationally.

The goal of chapters will be to consider issues related to gender, feminist and queer studies in the context of Australian conservatism, and challenges to and erosion of equity, diversity and inclusion, human rights and freedoms.

For those interested please submit by email a chapter abstract of no more than 300 words to [gender@csu.edu.au](mailto:gender@csu.edu.au) by the **22<sup>nd</sup> July 2021**. Please be as detailed as possible, noting research questions, the issues to be addressed in relation to gender, feminist and queer studies and a statement of the empirical and/or theoretical contribution of the piece. Final chapters will be a maximum of 6,000 words (including references). Co-authored and collaborative studies with community partners, industry and international partners in the field are encouraged.

For more information, please contact Donna Bridges - [dbridges@csu.edu.au](mailto:dbridges@csu.edu.au)

### Want to know more about gender equity?

Gender equity and equity more broadly encompasses a wide range of issues, stories, and challenges both here at Charles Sturt and across our communities. The

following articles and resources give an insight into some of these issues and stories.

#### [Women's Agenda – STEM specific newsletter](#)

Feel free to subscribe to receive all the latest news for women in STEM, a useful resource for everyone.

#### [Women in STEM on the lessons from an unprecedented year](#)

Women's Agenda speaks with several women leading in STEM– both established and emerging– to gauge their perspective on the pandemic and the lessons we can learn from an unprecedented year.

#### [Gender norms: hope among the complexity and adversity](#)

Insight recently spoke to Dr Donna Bridges to explore the complex issues around gender norms.

### Key Dates

There are lots of events and activities planned to support and promote gender equity at Charles Sturt. In addition to those activities listed below, keep an eye out for announcements in What's New and check for updates on the Gender Equity [webpage](#).

4<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> July

[National NAIDOC Week](#)

14<sup>th</sup> July

Seminar: Violence against Women in Regional and Rural Areas

14<sup>th</sup> July

[International Non-Binary Peoples Day](#)

August

[Bluestocking Week](#)

6<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> September

[Women's Health Week](#)

October

[Mental Health Month](#)

For more information or to get involved please contact the team at: [genderequity@csu.edu.au](mailto:genderequity@csu.edu.au)