

Gender Equity @ CSU

More recognition for CSU's gender equity initiatives

Today, on International Women's Day, we're excited to open our second edition of CSU's gender equity update with the announcement of another award. On 25 February 2019, Charles Sturt University was awarded an Employer of Choice for Gender Equality citation (EOCGE) from the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA).



The citation is recognition of the hard work we have put in and the great things we do at Charles Sturt to promote gender equality, over and above that required by legislation. We achieved this through meeting criteria related to leadership; learning and development; gender remuneration gaps; flexible working and other initiatives to support family responsibilities; employee consultation; preventing sex-based harassment and discrimination; and targets for improving gender equality.

In 2018, the University released its [Workplace Gender Equity Strategy 2018 - 2022](#) and we were also among the first Australian higher education institutions to be awarded the [Athena SWAN Bronze Institution Award](#). The Employer of Choice for Gender Equality citation reaffirms our commitment to gender equality and is an exciting step forward.

We strongly encourage you to use the WGEA EOCGE logo in your own email signatures in addition to the Athena SWAN Bronze Award logo. You can obtain the logos by [emailing the team](#).

International Women's Day

Celebrated annually since 2011, International Women's Day was first held in 1911 by the Suffragettes. Today it continues to be a powerful platform globally that unifies tenacity and drives action for gender parity, while celebrating the social, cultural, economic and political achievements of women.



Heather Cavanagh, Jenny Roberts and Tracey Green

CSU is rich in its diversity and depth of strong, thoughtful and capable women across all areas and



Andy Vann

Jenny Roberts

Currently Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Students), Mrs Jenny Roberts' first job was as an administrative assistant in local government, before coming to higher education as an executive assistant to a Professor. She says hard work, dedication, encouraging role models, and a supportive family are the secret to her successful career path.

"I'm really proud of my background as a professional member of staff who is now a Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC). There aren't many DVCs with my background, coming into the sector as an executive assistant and working my way up through every level to be a DVC."

First joining CSU fourteen months ago, Jenny has worked in the higher education sector for the last 23 years, after needing a change from Local Government Administration. Jenny has worked as an Executive Assistant, a Policy Officer, Project Officer and eventually Director of Governance and University Secretary. At the urging of her academic boss, Jenny completed a Bachelor of Business Administration and then went onto a Masters in Tertiary Education Management. Being the first in her family to attend University, like so many other CSU students, Jenny knows how life-changing education can be, saying "I always feel proud that I was able to progress a career through a very non-traditional path. Hopefully young women can see that you can start as a secretary, and get to where I am today."

What motivates Jenny is the people. She believes in good systems, processes and frameworks, and brings this to her daily work, but seeing how education can have such an impact on people's lives is what makes her passionate about what she does.

levels of the university. To celebrate this diversity and to mark International Women's Day we're profiling three of CSU's amazing women.

We give thanks to all the women who contribute everyday to making CSU the vibrant, inclusive, impactful, inspiring and insightful workplace that it is.

Jenny hopes for a day when there will be generations that are not the first in their family, and knows this is a reality for her children. She cites her greatest personal achievement as having a career that could give her family a good life.

Reflecting on International Women's Day (IWD) 2019, Jenny emphasises the importance of celebrating diversity. She sees IWD as being about telling the stories of diverse women, explaining, "until I had great female role models, I thought I could never be a senior leader unless I changed myself to be like them. When a coach told me 'it's OK to not be like them as organisations need diversity to be successful,' I realised I could do it too. That's the power of International Women's Day."

"I am driven, particularly in supporting young women, and helping them to see that you can have a fantastic career through numerous pathways, not just a traditional one. You can have many roles, you can be a mum and have a career. What has been great for me is that the more diverse people you see in leadership roles, the more people can see themselves".



Jenny Roberts

The theme for IWD 2019 is #BalanceforBetter. The balance in Jenny's life comes from her two teenage daughters, and her fantastic and supportive husband who has been a stay-at-home Dad for the last fifteen years. However Jenny is quick to point out that when she is at home, she's not DVC (Students) of Charles Sturt University, she is just Mum.

She has never let her title define her, and her advice to individuals on how they can better the balance? "Be authentic, work hard but have fun. Do not let work take away from the enjoyment of yourself and your life".

Tamara Cumming



Tamara Cumming

While people often talk about the importance of early childhood learning opportunities, few people stop and think about the invisible work or wellbeing of those who provide such opportunities – the early childhood educators. And that's where Dr Tamara Cumming's passion lies. "I'm passionate about what I research because the work of early childhood educators is so important, so complex and so under-appreciated. Their everyday practice sets children up for life" said Tamara.

Tamara followed a diverse career path before joining CSU. Initially completing an Arts Degree and working in publishing, she was drawn to philosophies of child development. She completed a Certificate IV in Child Studies, before leaving the corporate world to work in a preschool. She later completed her Honours in sociology, focusing on the work of early childhood educators. Tamara joined the School of Teacher Education in 2014 as a lecturer and researcher in early childhood studies, and completed her PhD in 2015. In 2018, Tamara was awarded a CSU Research Fellowship to further support her work researching early childhood educators' wellbeing. She recently authored a white paper that informed the *Stories of the invisible children* report for CSU and Royal Far West. This work

advocates for improved health services for children and families in rural and remote areas. Tamara will also travel to Denmark in May this year to learn more about Danish approaches to managing emotional demands in human services work.

"I'm proud that I'm able to do research that has the potential to make a difference to people's lives – that I can use my skills to help others. I feel like my contribution is to make visible, parts of educators' work lives that are usually invisible, and advocate for attention to their wellbeing" Tamara explains.

Tamara comes from a long line of strong, deep-thinking women and was the first in her family to attend university. "I love celebrating International Women's Day (IWD). I feel connected to all the women who went before and those to come. IWD encourages women to think about what it means to be strong and how we can contribute meaningfully to society, whether through our work or family."

In 2017, Tamara, along with her husband and two sons, relocated from Sydney to Bathurst in an effort to establish a better work-life balance. Reflecting on the theme of IWD 2019, *Balance for Better*, Tamara says she tries to consciously prioritise doing those things that bring her joy, including regular restorative yoga. "For me, achieving balance means questioning things you take for granted but that might not be working, and fostering a growth mindset." Tamara adds, "I've learned to expect change and try to learn from it. It's also important to forgive yourself when things don't go the way you expected."

Kelly Linden

As Quality Manager for the Faculty of Science, Kelly Linden looks at the quality of subjects across the Faculty, with a particular emphasis on attrition, progress and retention in the first year. Kelly's passion for teaching was recognised in February with a Citation for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning at the 2018 Australian Awards for University Teaching (AAUT).

Kelly started her career in science with a PhD in physiology at Melbourne University, during which she combined teaching with research, discovering during this time that she wanted a future in teaching.



Kelly Linden

Kelly started at CSU 11 years ago as an anatomy and physiology lecturer, initially in Wagga, but then transferring to Albury to be closer to the Victorian mountains, which she loves. During her nine years in this teaching role, Kelly realised that there was a real gap between what internal and distance students received in terms of their lectures, so started creating online adaptive lessons for distance students using the Smart Sparrow platform. What started out as a single lesson in a first year anatomy subject, grew into Kelly creating a lesson each week for the course, for three semesters, as it was so popular and well-received. Over the years Kelly has refined and improved the lessons into a full suite for three anatomy and physiology subjects, and rates them as her proudest professional achievement. Kelly has been justly recognised and awarded for her amazing efforts by the AAUT.

Kelly is passionate about International Women's Day, noting that it presents a great opportunity to continue raising awareness of equity for women, bringing into focus the need for equity in pay and inclusivity. It's also something Kelly is mindful of in her work, saying "people want equal opportunities, you need balance across everything."

Kelly admits that it can be difficult to achieve a work-life balance, but finds that riding her horses on her 20-acre property helps her to switch off, clear her brain,

and practise mindfulness; but also to find inspiration for new ideas.

"Having an interest outside of work is really, really important" says Kelly, offering the advice that "if you find something outside of work that you're really passionate about, you're probably more likely to dedicate time to it, and really get into it."

Following on from Kelly's amazing achievements, she admits that she'd "like a holiday", but is continuing to create more Smart Sparrow lessons, enjoying adding the narrative and humour to them, and making them a sustainable resource into the future. It all works towards her passion for creating a fantastic first year experience for students.

CSU's Workplace Gender Equity Strategy 2018-2022 update

Rollout of the Unconscious Bias and Inclusivity training has begun, with sessions already run in Port Macquarie, Dubbo, Orange, two sessions in Wagga and the Vice-Chancellor's Leadership Team. The training will continue to rollout in Albury, Sydney, Canberra, Goulburn and two sessions in Bathurst. An abridged version of the training was also delivered to over 100 Residential Advisors as part of their induction.



Facilitators Kirsty Smith and Nic Steepe

Feedback collected from participants prior to and after the training are quite positive, with an increase in both awareness and identification of biases within themselves and those around them.

We are developing a 'train the trainer' model to ensure there are facilitators on each campus to run sessions later in the year as well as ongoing. If you are interested in becoming a facilitator, please [email the team](#).

Athena SWAN update

One of the actions in the Athena SWAN action plan for 2018 was to trial a Return to Research Scheme in the Faculty of Science. The scheme supports Faculty of Science staff who have decreased their research load for reasons including parental leave, carers leave or extended sick leave. It helps these people return to active research by providing funding to support activities such as working on external grant submissions, project development, and data collection and analysis.

The Scheme was so successful last year that the Faculty is continuing the Scheme again for 2019. Applications can be made at any time, but funding for this year's round must be used by the end of November 2019. Please [contact Jane Quinn](#), Associate Dean Research, for further information. In the next newsletter we'll talk with people who completed the scheme in 2018, letting you know how it helped them boost their research.

In other Athena SWAN news, the Self-Assessment Team are continuing to investigate ways of providing better support for people before, during and after they take parental leave; looking into contributing factors to CSU's current gender pay gap; and investigating equity issues experienced by sessional staff. The project team are also working towards securing Indigenous STEMM student placements and employment opportunities with CSIRO.

Australian Workplace Equality Index

Furthering our focus on diversity and inclusion, CSU is submitting to the Australian Workplace Equality Index (AWEI) this year. The index is the national benchmark for LGBTIQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans & Gender Diverse, Intersex and Queer) workplace inclusion, and drives best practice in Australia by setting a comparative benchmark for employers across all sectors. The results will provide our Diversity and HR teams with valuable feedback on how we are tracking, what we are doing

well and areas for improvement at an organisational level.

Additionally, we are participating in a survey to investigate the lived day-to-day experience and views of our employees. We invite all employees, **regardless of how you personally identify**, to participate and have your say in regard to our initiatives on LGBTIQ inclusion. Survey responses are anonymous, no personal data or IP addresses are collected. The survey can be [accessed here](#) until midnight on 31 March, 2019.

Both the AWEI and the survey are managed by Pride in Diversity, the national not-for-profit employer support program for LGBTIQ inclusion.

Please contact [Nic Steepe](#) or [Craig Hinley](#) in the Equity and Diversity Unit with any questions regarding this survey or the work that CSU does in this area.

Hot topic: additional support for childcare costs when travelling for work

CSU has a range of policies and procedures to assist those with family and caring responsibilities. The Dependent Care Support section within the Travel Policy is one example of this.

Staff who undertake work-related travel are entitled to claim up to \$40 per day (not per child) for additional care costs for dependants aged up to 16 (proof of age may be requested). This applies to both single day and overnight travel and isn't subject to accommodation and meal allowance limits.

To receive Dependant Care Support, simply include the cost in the 'Other incidentals' field when completing your online travel booking form. Then after you have travelled, contact CSU Travel to request payment.

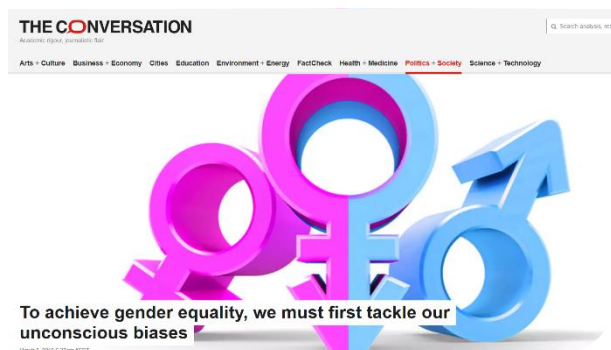


Want to know more about gender equity?

The issues surrounding gender inequality are complex and have ongoing impacts both here at CSU and in our everyday lives. The following links provide a quick introduction to the subject.

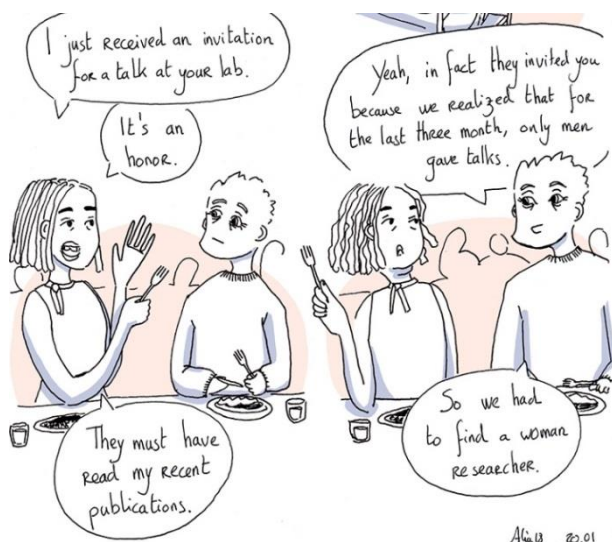
1. Unconscious bias, equity and gender equality

It's easy to think we live in a great country with strong legislation against discrimination, so how can gender inequity still exist? [This article](#) provides some examples of research that show how our unconscious biases – learned in early childhood – impact upon gender equity.



2. Illustrating casual sexism in science

Tired and frustrated by experiencing ongoing casual sexism, a group of female scientists have developed a series of [comics illustrating the inappropriate remarks](#) they hear regularly. This is real folks.



3. Students rate male teachers higher than females

[Recent Australian research](#) examining student experience surveys in higher education has found strong biases against female teachers, particularly from non-English speaking backgrounds. And the results vary markedly by discipline.

Key dates

There are lots of events and activities planned to support and promote gender equity at CSU.

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](#).

13 March Webinar: Why do we still need gender equity?

27 March Athena SWAN Self-Assessment Team meeting

10 April Webinar: Unconscious bias

24 April Athena SWAN Self-Assessment Team meeting

8 May Webinar: What is IDAHOBIT?

22 May Athena SWAN Self-Assessment Team meeting

5 June Gender Equity @ CSU newsletter published



For more information, to subscribe to newsletter updates or to get involved, please contact the team at: genderequity@csu.edu.au