



Charles Sturt
University



Gender Equity at Charles Sturt

The year that was



As we get ready to wrap up this challenging and unusual year, we're looking back on the year to update our readers on both the Workplace Gender Equity Strategy and the Athena SWAN projects.

Workplace Gender Equity Strategy

This year had its share of difficulties, but we also have much to celebrate in the gender equity space, and the progress we have made with the *Workplace Gender Equity Strategy 2018-2022*.

We started the year with news that Charles Sturt University received the Workplace Gender Equality Agency Employer of Choice for the second consecutive year. We were among 13 Higher Education sector

recipients, down from 20 the previous year. Also, in the recognition space, Charles Sturt ranked 6th in gender equality and 4th in reducing inequalities globally in the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings.

We were able to continue the rollout of Unconscious Bias & Inclusivity training sessions, totalling 333 Charles Sturt colleagues trained, with plans to continue these in 2021. We expanded our external engagement and successfully delivered a session to NSW Health Staff. Word is also spreading, with a recent request from the Office of the Official Secretary to the Governor-General and planning has begun to deliver this training to their staff in early 2021.

We worked with Pip Southwell from Three Rivers University Department of Rural Health to develop an Unconscious Bias and Inclusivity training module, one of four new elective modules in STRIVE, the student leadership program run by Kerry Silverson. This was launched in September and builds upon both the existing Diversity and Equity module, as well as the new First Nations module.

We conducted an analysis of the gender composition of University Committees, finding that 30 out of the 67 committees have balanced gender composition. This audit and analysis will be conducted annually, but highlights that we still have some work to do to ensure balanced representation (with a 20% variance).

Key staff were involved in the recent review of the Academic Promotion Policy, supporting procedures and guidelines conducted by Kai Jensen from Policy Train. We advocated for panel members to attend Unconscious Bias and Inclusivity training and a



requirement of 40/40/20 gender composition for the committees.

The Sustainable Futures program has been a key area of focus, with Equity and Diversity staff providing feedback and analysis of equity and diversity impacts during Organisational Review 1, and will do the same for Organisational Review 2, to ensure these considerations were front of mind during the process.

Looking ahead to 2021, the *Workplace Gender Equity Strategy 2018-2022* will be revised and extended as key inputs into the enabling plans for the 10 Year University Vision and Strategy, including the People & Culture and Equity, Diversity and Inclusion plans. Another key priority area during 2021 will be the Workplace Gender Equality Agency Employer of Choice Citation which is due for submission in October. We look forward to working with you all to continue to improve gender equity in all areas of the University.

Athena SWAN

As for all of us this year, the Athena SWAN project has had a challenging and unusual year. We've seen widespread and rapid changes in workplaces and gender equity outcomes and issues across the country. There will be much to analyse and understand over the years ahead. Alongside these global changes, much closer to home SAGE (Science and Gender Equity Australia) the auspicing body for Athena SWAN here in Australia, has been developing the pathway from Bronze to Silver Awards.

Unlike the UK, Australia will not pursue individual departmental-level awards but instead focus on institutional level Silver Awards with the scope for departments/schools/divisions etc to develop their own goals and actions within the overall institutional plan. Between now and Silver Award applications we will report on each area of our current Bronze Action Plan and will need to be awarded five Cygnet Awards for each area to then be eligible to apply for Silver.

Much like the sweeping changes brought on by COVID-19 and the challenges our sector has been subsequently facing, the pathway set out by SAGE has offered us an opportunity to stop and take stock of where we are, what we have learned over the last two years of implementing our plan and reset our course to suit our current needs, goals and capacities. Getting our current Action Plan compliant with the new pathway and attuned to Charles Sturt's vision, values and strategy has been the major piece of work for the Athena SWAN team over the last few months and will continue into early next year.

Amongst this big picture work, we have managed to get some 'wins' on the board this year. Although we had to transform it into a virtual event, we held our inaugural 'Dean's Leadership Lunch' in October. It was a wonderful event, please see the article in this issue to read more about it. We have also piloted a 'Gender Parity of Presenters Guideline' in the Faculty of Science at major events across the year. The Guideline, used by event organisers, requires events to have gender parity at best-practice ratio of 40:40:20 and encourages organisers to think about diversity, inclusivity and accessibility when putting together events, keynote speakers and panels. The organising team for CSU EdX also trialled the guideline for us, which was the biggest event it was piloted at and we appreciate the effort and support from the team! We will now incorporate the feedback and learning and refine the guideline ready to implement as business as usual next year. Many thanks to all the organisers who participated this year.

We recently also became a 'Women in STEM Decadal Plan Champion'. The Women in STEM Decadal Plan, developed by the Australian Academy of Science in collaboration with the Australian Academy of Technology and Engineering, offers a vision and opportunities to 2030 to guide stakeholders as they identify and implement specific actions they must take to build the strongest STEM workforce. The Plan closely aligns with our goals and the principles of Athena SWAN and we are very proud to be an official champion. To see our Champion Response visit <https://www.stemwomen.org.au/champions>.

And lastly, we welcomed Biomedical Sciences (BMS), Associate Head of School, Andrea Crampton as an Athena SWAN champion in her School. Appointed at 20%FTE Andrea is working towards implementing Athena SWAN goals and principles in ways that address the goals and challenges specific to BMS. This is a first for Athena SWAN here at Charles Sturt and it has been encouraging to see how an institution-wide Action Plan can be brought to life at a local level and begin to make significant change in culture, processes and systems. We are thankful to Andrea and Head of School Rod Hill for the leadership and support for gender equity and look forward to learning from and supporting School-based gender equity, diversity and inclusion work.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to and supported Athena SWAN this year. We are looking forward to pressing on and making more positive changes next year.

New Gender and Feminist Studies Network (GaFS) at Charles Sturt – Donna Bridges



Who we are:




The Gender and Feminist Studies Network (GaFS) is a new and emerging initiative. We are inclusive of the divisions and are tri-faculty. We embrace all staff, academics & professionals, as well as HDR students.

We are also aligned with the Gender Equity and Athena SWAN initiatives at Charles Sturt and advance the United Nations Social Development Goal – 5: Gender Equality (SDG5).




The central idea that drives the GaFS Network is that gender and feminist studies need to be more prominent and visible at Charles Sturt. Therefore, the GaFS Network seeks to advance and promote scholarship, research and activities carried out by staff. Our mandate is to enhance opportunities and promote new work in this research space.

The GaFS Network focus is on the interrelated and overlapping areas of gender studies and feminist studies. Both areas are underpinned by feminist theory and include investigations, critical analysis and activism related to gender equality/equity, identity and sexuality. We are interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary and aim to be a nationally and internationally recognised network that shares knowledge, collaborates on research projects and provides leadership in gender and feminist studies.



Our co-leaders are:

-  Dr Donna Bridges (Faculty of Arts and Education)
-  Dr Larissa Bamberry (Faculty of Business, Justice and Behavioural Science)
-  Dr Chelsea Litchfield (Faculty of Science)

Why join the GaFS Network?

-  Make your research, scholarship and activities visible at Charles Sturt, nationally and internationally
-  Be part of joint scholarship, research and activities at Charles Sturt in the area of gender and feminist studies
-  Enhance your opportunities for collaborations and establish relationships with research

partners – at Charles Sturt, in our communities, nationally and internationally

-  Encourage, support and connect with HDR students in this area
-  Promote and support internal and/or external research collaborations and the development of larger research teams and partnerships to facilitate critical research mass within the university





What will we be doing in 2021?

We are currently setting up a website




<https://gendernetwork.csu.domains/> – this is an emerging site where member can promote their work and research – however, in the New Year, with help from DIT, we will be moving into the Research Office space. This will give us the capacity to be more searchable by people outside of Charles Sturt and will allow us to showcase the Network more prominently within Charles Sturt.

We are looking for member ideas for the website *and* members who have website 'skills'.

Our first meeting of the GaFS Network in late January will be our official 'opening'. Please come along. An unofficial agenda will be to:

-  Discuss our identity and purpose
-  Consider opportunities for events over 2021 (and extending invitations/participation to local community and national and international stakeholders)
 - E.g. There may be an opportunity to run an International Women's Day online event inclusive of members working on scholarship, research and/or activities related to women's equality, empowerment and identity
 - E.g. There may be an opportunity to run a Mardi Gras online event inclusive of members working on scholarship, research and/or activities related to LGBTIQ+ equality, empowerment and identity
-  Explore opportunities for collaboration within Charles Sturt and wider networks
-  Explore opportunities for members of the Network to work jointly on research projects, writing projects, workshops

If you would like further information, please contact:

-  Dr Donna Bridges – FoAE – dbridges@csu.edu.au
-  Dr Larissa Bamberry – BJBS – lbamberry@csu.edu.au
-  Dr Chelsea Litchfield – FoS – clitchfield@csu.edu.au

Dean's Leadership Lunch

On October 22nd we held our inaugural Dean's Leadership Lunch, hosted by Faculty of Science Executive Dean, Professor Megan Smith. An initiative of Athena SWAN, the Dean's Leadership Lunch is a celebration of STEMM women's leadership. It is an opportunity to come together to acknowledge all that STEMM women leaders have achieved so far, reflect on what leadership means in this current context, and develop their leadership skills and opportunities further.

Though it had to be a virtual lunch we welcomed over 35 women from both our academic and professional streams and from across our STEMM schools in the Faculty of Science and the Faculty of Business, Justice and Behavioural Sciences. It was a wonderful opportunity to bring together women leaders from across so many schools and campuses to share their experiences, learnings and ideas around leadership generally as well as what it means to be leaders and find opportunities in the kinds of challenges we've experienced in 2020.

We plan to hold the event every year for at least the life of our Bronze Award and are looking forward to growing and improving the event – and hosting it in person in the future! Thank you to Professor Megan Smith and all the STEMM women who came along and confirmed what we already know – that Charles Sturt is lucky to have so many accomplished and motivated leaders working hard every day to make Charles Sturt to an inspiring and impactful place to work and study.

Women's Health News Hub



Charles Sturt University is proud to support the launch of Women's Agenda Women's Health News Hub, providing vital news and information to support women of all ages in living their best life.

The initiative came about after a recent report conducted by Women's Agenda, which found that 39% of women put off seeing a doctor or specialist during the pandemic, and almost half reported that their physical and mental health is worse or significantly worse than prior to COVID-19.

Fiona Nash, Strategic Adviser – Regional Engagement and Government Relations at Charles Sturt University, says the University's partnership will help get more

women heard on health, particularly reaching into regional and rural Australia.

"When we create platforms for important conversations, we are creating platforms that enable society to grow and prosper – and that's why Charles Sturt University is thrilled to be the launch partner of the Women's Health Hub."

Fiona says the university is committed to improving women's health options, with their research and teaching covering the physical, mental and spiritual health of women.

Faculty of Science Executive Dean Professor Megan Smith says providing more health news and information to women has never been more important.

"We are very pleased to partner with Women's Agenda to ensure women across Australia get the information they need to live well and create a world worth living in. It's never been more important, as we face unique challenges that can impact upon our physical and mental wellbeing."

"As a leader in regional and rural healthcare education, we have seen, for instance, the health effects – mental and physical – of the drought followed by the bushfires, and of course, the global pandemic. So, we are committed to ensuring women have the support and services they need to be resilient and thrive."

[Visit the Women's Health News Hub here.](#)

Senior Women's Forum – Guest Speaker

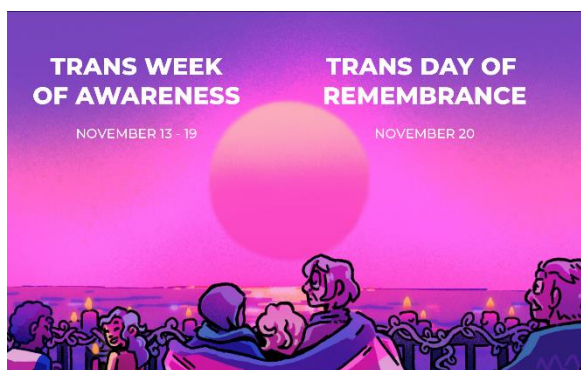
The Senior Women's Forum had a guest speaker for their final meeting held on the 2nd December 2020, Professor Jill Blackmore.

Dr Jill Blackmore AM FASSA is Alfred Deakin Professor in Education, Faculty of Arts and Education, Deakin University, Australia. Her research interests include, from a feminist perspective, globalization, education policy and governance; international and intercultural education; educational restructuring, leadership and organisational change; spatial redesign and innovative pedagogies; teachers' and academics' work.

Prof. Blackmore has been on advisory committees, statutory authorities related to education and gender equity. She has provided policy advice to the OECD, governments, private and professional organisations and developed evaluation frameworks on a range of issues. At Deakin, Professor Blackmore has been in senior management as founding Director of a Strategic Research Centre and Chair of Academic Board involved in strategic planning and leadership capacity building.

The recording of the session [can be found here.](#)

Trans Awareness Week and Trans Remembrance Day



Trans Awareness Week was held from the 13th -19th November. Trans Awareness Week is to help raise the visibility of trans and gender diverse people through education, sharing stories and experiences, and advancing advocacy around the issues of prejudice, discrimination, and violence that affect the trans community.

Trans Awareness Week is held in the week leading up to the 20th November, Trans Day of Remembrance, which is an annual observance that honours the memory of the trans lives lost to acts of transphobia and discrimination. We remember those we've lost, celebrate our strength in the face of adversity, and commit to fighting transphobia to create a better, safer, and more inclusive world.

Below are some resources that may be of interest to you, and within your wider network:

[TransHub 101 – learn the basics](#)

[Trans 101: Gender Diversity Crash Course](#)

[Minus18! – Trans Awareness Week](#)

[GLADD – Trans Awareness Week](#)

[The Radical Copyeditor's Style Guide for Writing about Transgender People](#)

16 Days of Activism



The annual UN 16 Days of Activism campaign ran from the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women on 25 November, to International Human Rights Day on 10 December. The global campaign draws attention to the gendered drivers of

family violence and significant impacts it has on women and children. The theme for 2020 was *Orange the World: Fund, Respond, Prevent, Collect*. To learn more about this year's concept, please click [here](#).

We would also like to take this opportunity to remind you of the video released in 2019 – [Charles Sturt supports 16 Days of Activism](#). The video aims to raise awareness, challenge stereotypes and promote respect, based on the [Know Your A-Z](#).

Hot topic: Changes to Domestic Violence Leave Process

It was recently raised with the Division of People and Culture that there was an issue within the Web Kiosk function where a staff member was unable to take more than 3 consecutive days of Domestic Violence Leave without uploading evidence. The Leave Manual states: *"the employee **may be required** to furnish evidence to support any period of absence on family or domestic violence grounds exceeding three days"*.

After consultation with the Acting Director - Partnerships, Executive Director of People & Culture and the Systems Team, the positive outcome has been the removal of the Web Kiosk requirement of providing a medical certificate for Domestic Violence leave, and the provision of documentation is to be left to the manager's discretion.

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.

[The Pandemic and Women's Careers](#)

Explore the results of a survey done by 'Women's Agenda' around the impacts of the pandemic on women's careers across the country and across a range of sectors.

[Unequal Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Scientists](#)

This journal article examines the effects of the pandemic on men and women scientists, across different disciplines in a US context. It offers interesting insight into the varied challenges opportunities of this year.

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