

The Treasury Gender Equality Action Plan

2016-2020

We will widen and deepen the pool of future leaders in the Treasury by harnessing the talents of women at all levels and in doing so, ensure that the Treasury is an employer of first choice for women and men.

The Treasury's key program for gender equality is the *Progressing Women initiative (PWi): Strategic Direction (2016-2020)* which was endorsed by the Treasury's Inclusive Workplace Committee (IWC) in 2016. The *Treasury's Gender Equality Action Plan 2016-2020* provides a summary of key messages and actions from that direction.

Our vision

To widen and deepen the pool of future leaders in the Treasury by harnessing the talents of women at all levels and in doing so, ensure that the Treasury is an employer of first choice for women and men. In achieving our vision, we will build a more inclusive workplace in the Treasury, creating jobs and career pathways that staff value – at all levels and in all work areas.

Key achievements to date

The 'Women in the Treasury' project formally commenced in May 2011 with the release of a paper analysing data about the recruitment, retention and progression of women in the Department. Staff consultations emphasised our strength as an economic policy advising Department while also revealing elements of our culture that impeded women's careers.

The report led to a personal commitment by the Executive Committee to the Progressing Women initiative – a long term suite of strategies to create an inclusive workplace where all staff feel valued and have equal opportunity to reach their full potential.

These have resulted in positive change including:

- Forming the IWC to drive the PWi strategy;
- Increasing the proportion of women in the SES from 22 per cent in 2011 to 37 per cent in 2016;

- Driving ownership of the PWi at all levels of the organisation through the formation of PWi working groups and the APS-level cross group forum;
- Empowering EL and SES staff to challenge assumptions and stereotypes about men and women in the workplace through unconscious bias awareness training;
- Providing staff with the tools required to lead rewarding work and personal lives by introducing a flexible work policy;
- Inspiring staff at all levels by inviting high profile leaders to share their stories through the Treasury Leadership Series; and
- Supporting staff impacted by domestic violence as a White Ribbon Workplace.

Future priorities

The Progressing Women initiative: Strategic Direction (2016-2020) recommits Treasury to the Progressing Women initiative and outlines four areas of focus for the future:

1. Modernising the workplace

Workforce gender balance

The Treasury has achieved an equal representation of male and female staff at the APS and EL classifications for a number of years. The Department also achieved its target of 35 per cent female representation in the SES for the first time in 2016. The Treasury will adopt an immediate stretch target of 40 per cent representation by women with an overarching goal of achieving a 50-50 gender balance in the SES consistent with the *Australian Public Service Gender Equality Strategy 2016-19*.

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Gender pay gap

While there is no significant variation in the average remuneration of men and women at each classification, the mean salary of all men in Treasury exceeds the mean salary of all women. This is predominantly a product of the higher proportion of men at the SES classification. By continuing to grow the proportion of women in the SES, we anticipate that the difference in mean salary will reduce over time. The remuneration gap will continue to be monitored.

External recognition and accreditation

In 2016, Treasury was reaccredited as a Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace and accredited for the first time as a White Ribbon Workplace. We will reapply for accreditation as a Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace annually, and as a White Ribbon Workplace every three years.

As part of our ongoing commitment to supporting staff impacted by domestic violence, in 2016 the Treasury released a domestic violence policy and delivered mandatory domestic violence awareness training for all managers. Managers will be required to refresh their skills and knowledge about this issue every 18 months.



Flexible work

Access to workplace flexibility facilitates gender equality in the workplace as well as providing women and men with the tools and autonomy required to balance work and personal commitments. The Treasury's *Flexible Work Policy* adopts the 'if not-why not' approach to flexible work, meaning all roles may be worked flexibly as long as business requirements support the approach. In addition, the Treasury's *Staying in Touch Policy* allows staff to choose how much (if any) contact they wish to maintain with the Department during periods of long term leave. The Treasury will continue to facilitate greater connection and engagement with staff on leave to enable their successful return to work.

Although the Treasury has a number of staff who work flexibly or part-time, flexible work options have yet to be accessed by a critical mass of staff, particularly by men. Feedback suggests that the Department needs to mature its approach to job design, particularly in relation to the links between job design and flexible work. Embedding flexible work practices into the Treasury's culture will be a focus over the next four years.

2. Driving management capability

Learning and Development

The Treasury will expand the breadth and quality of its management and leadership development to ensure managers are well supported to successfully lead their teams. From 2016, it will be expected that all managers will complete formal management and leadership training. The Treasury's foundational management and leadership programs at the EL level will continue to be supplemented by workshops which address the importance of diversity within teams, unconscious bias awareness, inclusive leadership styles, job design and managing workplace flexibility. The Treasury will continue to participate in external development programs for both EL2 and SES officers.

The Treasury will also continue to encourage staff to engage with its informal mentoring network. This provides staff with a mechanism to connect with more senior individuals from across the organisation. Mentors are provided with training and support materials while mentees can view the experiences and interests of Treasury mentors on a dedicated wiki page.

The Department is committed to supporting greater participation of women on statutory and non-statutory Government Boards.

Staff continue to have the opportunity to participate in the *Treasury Networks* program. Based on the concept of a Lean-In Circle, Treasury Networks brings small groups of staff together to discuss issues relevant to gender, leadership and careers. Benefits include sharing experience with peers, improving confidence, empowering people to take on new challenges and network building.

PWi working groups

PWi working groups within each Group and State Office will continue to assist in the vertical and horizontal integration of the PWi within the Department. The working groups report and provide action plans to the IWC. As well as providing localised and targeted initiatives, the process has strengthened the relationships between junior staff and the Executive in addition to providing all with the opportunity to be active in the PWi. Staff have the opportunity to develop leadership skills that they may not get the ability to demonstrate in their day to day roles.

Performance Management

A review into the Treasury's Performance Management System (PMS) commenced in late 2016. This review is considering how the Department can better provide a more personalised and streamlined system that focuses on 'real time' feedback about performance, development and career aspirations. A new system is expected to be introduced for the August 2017 appraisal round.

Recruitment

The Treasury applies merit-based decision making in all recruitment processes and takes active steps to encourage a diverse pool of candidates and ensure gender balance on selection panels. The Manager, Talent Sourcing is responsible for monitoring the gender balance of shortlisting processes and asking '50/50 - if not, why not' when required. From July 2017, all members of selection panels will receive training in best practice interview and selection processes, as well as unconscious bias awareness training. The Treasury's recruitment framework is also being reviewed in 2017 to ensure it aligns with broader best practice.

Gender Balance on Boards

The Department is committed to supporting greater participation of women on statutory and non-statutory Government Boards. The Treasury has recently developed a Board Appointments Register which it is using to monitor and report on gender diversity for Government Boards under the Treasury portfolio, and provide regular gender diversity reports for the Office for Women (PM&C).

3. Fostering Potential

Potential and career discussions

SES potential is considered annually by the Executive Committee using an ability, aspiration and engagement model. The information guides decisions about placement into critical roles, secondments, development opportunities and succession planning.

From 2016, EL2 staff will participate in career discussions with their Deputy Secretary focusing on their aspirations, career plan and desired development opportunities. The Treasury will consider designing a framework to more explicitly support the careers of high potential EL2 and SESB1 women and men through sponsorship, coaching and participation in executive development programs.



The Treasury is increasingly being recognised for its active role in the promotion of gender equality in the workplace.

Sponsorship

The Treasury recognises the role of sponsorship in championing the careers of high talent individuals. Sponsorship has a particular role in the identification and development of individuals who may not self-identify as a future leader within the Department. Sponsorship will lead to positive outcomes for both the individual and the Department. A framework will be developed to further define sponsorship in the Treasury and how it can complement merit-based decision making.

4. External promotion and outreach

The Treasury is increasingly being recognised for its active role in the promotion of gender equality in the workplace. While this is currently being leveraged through contact with individual organisations, it could be extended further by increasing our engagement in external forums.

The Treasury will aim to grow the proportion of female economists who enter the workforce. While Australian research in the area is somewhat limited, initial indications suggest that fewer women graduate from studies in economics compared to men. The Treasury will endeavour to grow the pipeline of women economics students by building relationships between undergraduate students and the Treasury. The Treasury will collaborate with universities to connect Treasury women with women undergraduate students through sponsored lecturers, events and mentoring. The Treasury will also consider options to fast track women economics graduates into the Department.

The Treasury will also engage with other APS agencies to bring together a network of employers committed to engaging women economics graduates and will work with these agencies to increase the visibility and opportunities for women considering undergraduate and postgraduate study in economics.