



Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Framework

2021 – 2025

1.

Introduction

ACU's Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Framework (GEDIF) 2021–2025 advances the university's strong commitment to gender equality, diversity and inclusion that has been achieved through the Gender Equality Strategy and Action Plan (2015–2020). The GEDIF reframes our commitment to align with evolving regulatory and community expectations.

ACU's frameworks, policies and programs, which are responsive to internal and external drivers and enablers, are leading practice and demonstrate the university's commitment to gender equality. These have resulted in ACU being recognised as an Employer of Choice for Gender Equality by the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) for more than 10 years. Further advancing our commitment, the university signed on to the SAGE Athena Swan Bronze Award accreditation process in 2021.

All drivers and enablers, aggregated within the GEDIF, support the university to continuously review, analyse and identify barriers to gender equality, and proactively develop a range of responses and interventions that are whole-of-university approaches to overcoming barriers.

2.

Drivers and Enablers

ACU's approach to supporting gender equality, diversity and inclusion through the GEDIF is consistent with ACU's mission, in particular its focus on respect for human dignity and pursuit of justice and the common good.

This is alongside the legislative obligations that both inform and guide the university in the development of the GEDIF and action plans to support its implementation, outlined below.

LEGISLATIVE AND COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS

- Federal and state anti-discrimination legislation
- Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012
- Victorian Gender Equality Act 2020

KEY EXTERNAL DRIVERS AND ENABLERS

- Universities Australia's Respect. Now. Always. initiative
- WGEA Employer of Choice for Gender Equality (EOCGE) citation
- Pope Francis's encyclical *Laudato si'* and *Amoris Laetitia*, St John Paul II's *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, including Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower women and girls
- SAGE Athena Swan Bronze Award accreditation

3.

Action planning

The GEDIF will be supported by an action plan which will be regularly reviewed and updated where required to meet changes in requirements and expectations. The action plan will be guided by the following principles:

- alignment with ACU's mission, vision, values and strategic intent
- progress of requirements arising from the Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 or Victorian Gender Equality Act 2020, to maintain recognition of the WGEA Employer of Choice for Gender Equality citation and support the university's success in applying for the Athena Swan Bronze Award
- consideration of stakeholder requirements and expectations
- accountability at all levels of the university to contribute to GEDIF achievement
- consultation with the university community, drawing on the Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Survey and myVoice staff engagement survey to inform the process
- engagement with individuals to capture a comprehensive range of factors that enable inclusiveness
- an evidence-based approach, drawing upon workplace and workforce data.

4.

The Framework

The Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Framework 2021–2025 is a platform for continuous improvement and change. It aims to ensure the university community is safe and welcoming and values diversity in all its forms, recognising that this contributes to a richer student and staff experience, which reflects the communities we serve.

- The GEDIF is built on three pillars that encapsulate ACU's commitment to gender equality, diversity and inclusion:
- a culture of inclusiveness
- equity and access to opportunity
- valuing our people.
- The GEDIF will work to embed inclusiveness and opportunity for staff members at all stages of the employee lifecycle, with actions seeking to provide an experience that supports all staff to reach their full potential.

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A CULTURE OF INCLUSIVENESS

Grounded in our mission and values, ACU is committed to fostering an inclusive culture that values the diverse contributions of all staff.

ACU actively seeks to provide a culturally safe environment that supports staff who face barriers related to their gender and membership of less represented diversity groups. In doing so, we seek to enable all staff to communicate openly about issues and concerns that impact their feelings of safety, challenge themselves to perform to the best of their abilities, and contribute to the university's success.

EQUITY AND ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY

ACU ensures there are genuine and equitable opportunities for success in all phases of the employee lifecycle.

This occurs through understanding and recognising how individual differences in people's lived experiences, related to their gender and membership of other less represented diversity groups, can create challenges, and ensuring that systems, policies and processes enable success for all by addressing barriers to success where these are identified.

VALUING OUR PEOPLE

ACU values the contribution of all staff members, provides support that aligns with their changing needs across their life stages, and responds to their diverse lived experiences.

This is ongoing work that will evolve through consultation with staff from diverse backgrounds and experiences, furthering the university's understanding of staff needs and challenges, and providing targeted and effective support that enables all staff to make a valued contribution.



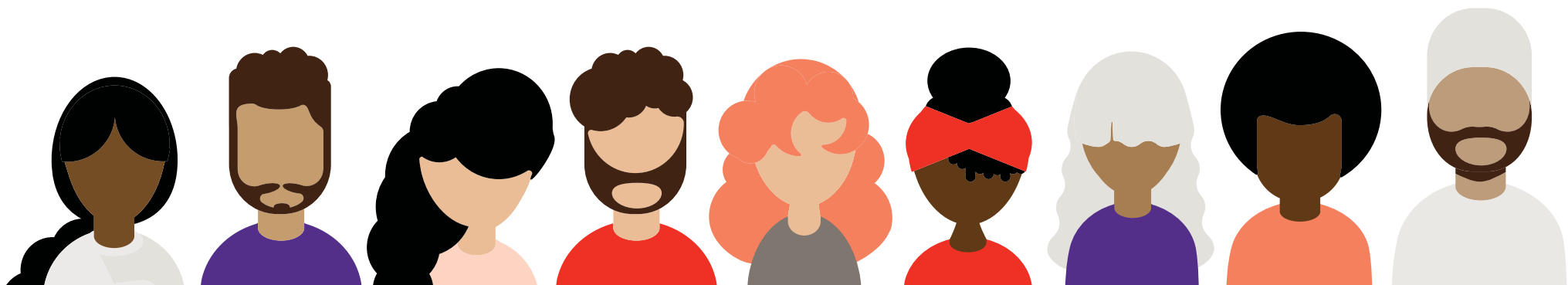
| GOALS | SUCCESS MEASURES |
|--|---|
| A CULTURE OF INCLUSIVENESS | |
| ACU LEADERS AT ALL LEVELS WILL VISIBLY CHAMPION GENDER EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (GEDI) BY DEMONSTRATING: | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accountability for contributing to the implementation of the GEDIF • active engagement with the university’s gender equality, diversity and inclusion programs, events and initiatives • visible advocacy and actions as positive role models of inclusiveness, flexibility and respect • commitment to building organisational capability to understand and engage with gender equality, diversity and inclusion, and individual and collective accountability for outcomes • the Vice-Chancellor and President (VCP) is a Pay Equity Ambassador, helping to create change by promoting the university’s commitment to pay equity • the VCP promotes the university’s commitment to achieving gender pay equity in internal and external forums. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GEDI objectives are achieved. • EOCE citation is awarded. • SAGE Athena Swan Bronze Award accreditation in 2023. • ACU staff engagement survey results relating to the university’s culture of respect and inclusiveness are maintained or improved compared with previous survey results. • The VCP is an active advocate for pay equity in their role as a WGEA Pay Equity Ambassador |
| UNDERSTANDING OUR WORKFORCE INFORMS OUR ACTIONS | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular analysis and reporting of the GEDIF’s progress will be undertaken using workforce and employee survey data. This will be socialised across all levels of the university community. • Determine future data requirements that will effectively capture and report on workforce indicators for members of less represented groups where required. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender representation is measured for a range of employee indicators and reported to the university annually. • Enhanced data measures are captured in People and Capability systems by December 2022. |
| ANALYSIS OF GENDER REPRESENTATION IN ACU’S WORKFORCE | |
| <p>Data analysis will measure the gender proportion in the following categories and inform action planning to address inequity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gender pay equity • gender composition at all levels of the workforce • gender composition of governing bodies • workplace sexual harassment • recruitment and promotion • gendered work segregation • leave and flexibility. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual reporting, action recommendations and implementation addresses identified inequities. • Gender representation for relevant gender composition indicators aims for a minimum of 40 per cent participation of both genders |
| A CONSULTATIVE APPROACH TO WORKPLACE CHANGE AND GROWTH ENABLES ALL VOICES TO BE HEARD | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACU will create an environment where campuses are culturally safe for staff from a range of backgrounds to ensure they are empowered to speak freely and provide input that influences decision-making process about matters that impact their workplace experience. • Regular consultation with the university community on opportunities for greater inclusion and accessibility of our university environments will continue to be undertaken. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACU staff engagement survey results relating to involvement and inclusiveness maintained or improved compared with previous survey results. • Representation in university forums, meetings, panels and committees to ensure membership includes members of traditionally under-represented diversity groups. |

| GOALS | SUCCESS MEASURES |
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| A CULTURE OF INCLUSIVENESS | |
| ACU ENHANCES ITS UNDERSTANDING OF CULTURAL SAFETY | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural safety awareness training programs and resources will be developed and implemented. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong participation rates in cultural safety awareness training. ACU staff engagement survey results related to the university's culture of respect and inclusiveness are maintained or improved compared with previous survey results. |
| ACU CONTINUES TO PRIORITISE PROVIDING A SAFE AND RESPECTFUL WORKING AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Vice-Chancellor and President and senior leadership will publicly state their commitment to zero tolerance of sexual harassment, discrimination and bullying. All staff will participate in discrimination, harassment (including sexual harassment and sexual assault) and bullying awareness training at least every two years. The university will regularly review discrimination, harassment and bullying policies, processes and other related resources to ensure they meet legislative requirements and community expectations. Processes will be in place that provide targeted support for staff reporting incidents of harassment, discrimination and/or bullying. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number and type of complaints received and how they're resolved is reported annually to the university community. ACU staff engagement survey results relating to the university's culture of respect and inclusiveness are maintained or improved compared with previous survey results. All managers and staff complete discrimination, harassment and bullying training at induction and at least every two years thereafter. |
| FLEXIBLE WORK PRACTICES CONTINUE TO BE EMBEDDED IN ACU'S CULTURE | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The university will continue to support staff by providing a range of options to work flexibly and communicating about options and access to flexible work to the university community. Flexibility information sessions will be conducted that inform both supervisors and staff. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff usage of flexible work arrangements are monitored and reported to the university annually. ACU staff engagement survey results relating to flexibility are maintained or improved compared with previous survey results. |
| RECOGNISING ACHIEVEMENTS | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The university will actively pursue external recognition of its equity, diversity and inclusion achievements. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SAGE Athena Swan Bronze Award accreditation in 2023. |

| GOALS | SUCCESS MEASURES |
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| EQUITY AND ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY | |
| POLICIES AND PROCESSES | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACU will ensure its policies, practices and processes related to recruitment and selection, staff development and promotion enable success, including the consideration of the impact of gender and other diversity-related factors in the employee experience. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACU's policy development and review process embeds consideration with a GEDI lens. Appointments, promotions and retention rates of staff by gender and members of less represented diversity groups are monitored and reported to the university community annually. |
| APPOINTMENT PROCESSES | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACU will review its appointment policies, practices and approaches to attract a diverse range of candidates from under-represented groups and to address unconscious bias in the workplace, particularly in selection processes. Measures for gender and members of less represented diversity groups for applicants and shortlists will be put in place and monitored and, where appropriate, recommendations and actions will be implemented to address any inequities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of unconscious bias training for hiring managers and chairs of selection panels. Once data measures are in place, the diversity profile of new appointments and shortlisted candidates is monitored and reported annually |
| DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACU will explore providing targeted development opportunities that support gender equality, address barriers to success and enable all staff to reach their full potential. Women and members of less represented diversity groups will be encouraged to participate in targeted professional and career development programs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation rates in training programs by gender and members of less represented diversity groups are monitored and reported on annually and align with the diversity in ACU's workforce. |
| SUCCESSION PLANNING AND CAREER PROGRESSION | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACU will create an environment where campuses are culturally safe for staff from a range of backgrounds to ensure they are empowered to speak freely and provide input that influences decision-making process about matters that impact their workplace experience. Regular consultation with the university community on opportunities for greater inclusion and accessibility of our university environments will continue to be undertaken. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data measures are enhanced to capture the number of internal appointments and promotions by gender and members of less represented diversity groups by December 2022. Progress occurs that demonstrates staff at all levels reflect the diversity of the broader community over the term of the GEDIF. |
| ACHIEVEMENT OF GENDER PAY EQUITY REMAINS A PRIORITY | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A gender pay gap analysis will be completed annually and actions will be identified to address identified inequity. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACU's gender pay gap analysis is produced annually, actions are taken to address any identified inequity, and this is reported to staff. |

| GOALS | SUCCESS MEASURES |
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| VALUING OUR PEOPLE | |
| THE UNIVERSITY WILL EMBED INCLUSIVENESS AT ALL STAGES OF THE EMPLOYEE LIFECYCLE | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACU will review its practices and processes across all stages of the employee lifecycle to ensure they are fair, equitable, transparent and inclusive, enabling improved representation of women and members of less represented diversity groups. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased staff participation and engagement by gender and less represented diversity groups in staff engagement surveys. Feedback from consultation with staff, by gender and members of less represented groups, informs the development and review of practices and is positive. |
| CARING RESPONSIBILITIES | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACU will support staff with their requirements at different life stages to reduce barriers to their contribution at the university and personal success, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - parenting/grandparenting responsibilities - care for family members with a disability - eldercare. ACU will review and, where required, enhance non-leave measures to support staff with caring responsibilities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback from surveys/consultation regarding support for ACU staff who are parents and have other carer's responsibilities is positive |
| REWARD AND RECOGNITION | |
| <p>ACU will ensure that all staff are aware of and have access to opportunities for reward and recognition, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> academic promotions internal career progression for academic and professional staff members, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - internal advertisement of vacancies - internal secondments - temporary appointments career development programs, including programs for emerging leaders and study support options grants and research awards. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data measures are enhanced to capture the number of applications for promotions and other internal career advancement opportunities by gender and less represented diversity groups and are reported annually to the university from 2023. Gender representation in academic promotions application outcomes aligns with the proportion of applicants by gender. |
| STAFF ENTITLEMENTS AND BENEFITS | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The university will proactively communicate with all staff members about entitlements and benefits available to them, with a focus on targeting specific groups that can experience disadvantage. This includes areas such as superannuation and salary packaging for women and members of less represented diversity groups. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation rates in information sessions and programs developed and implemented for women and members of less represented diversity groups increase over the life of the GEDIF. Feedback indicates increased awareness of, and engagement with, staff entitlements and benefits that aim to enhance financial wellbeing. |

| GOALS | SUCCESS MEASURES |
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| VALUING OUR PEOPLE | |
| STAFF WELLBEING | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACU will ensure its approach to supporting staff wellbeing focuses on the dignity of the human person and take proactive steps to work collaboratively with staff impacted by wellbeing issues to support their recovery and return to the workforce. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACU staff engagement survey results relating to wellbeing are maintained or improved compared with previous survey results. |
| CELEBRATING ACHIEVEMENTS | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The university will increase the visibility of the achievements of women and others who identify with less represented diversity groups, so providing role models for students and staff who identify with them in internal and external forums and all university communication channels. ACU will develop a GEDI website and Workplace group to highlight achievements of women and members of less represented diversity groups. The university will regularly report on the progress of its Athena Swan Bronze Award application progress and actions taken to meet GEDI objectives. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> University communications, publications and profile mentioning staff achievements reflect increased diversity over the life of the GEDIF. Athena Swan Bronze Award accreditation in 2023 |



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