



Gender Equality Action Plan 2023–26

Secretary's message



The *Australian Public Service Gender Equality Strategy 2021–26: Realising the benefits for all* was introduced to drive practical and impactful action for lasting change across the Australian Public Service. In partnership with the Australian Public Service Commission, we support the recommendations in the strategy and are committed to contributing to and progressing gender equality in Finance and across the Australian Public Service (APS).

The business case for gender equality has never been clearer. Not only is gender equality the smart and pragmatic course, but the principled choice in achieving a safer, inclusive and more equitable working environment for all.

A gender inclusive workplace facilitates the attraction and retention of employees of all genders. It fosters a supportive culture where employees feel more supported, bring their whole selves to work and have sustainable work life practises. Enhancing gender equality in Finance will allow us to capitalise on the diverse range of talent that is on offer for us as an organisation.

The Department of Finance Gender Equality Action Plan is a part of our broader diversity and inclusion goals. Our action plan's objective is to achieve equal opportunities for all through the removal of barriers that inhibit the full and equal participation of all Finance staff in the workplace, particularly those barriers relating to family and caring responsibilities. Finance will also continue to strengthen our workplace culture, making it free from harassment and all forms of discrimination.

I am pleased to outline our commitment to implementing the *Australian Public Service Gender Equality Strategy 2021–26: Realising the benefits for all*. This whole of APS strategy recognises that leaders at all levels play a role in implementing positive change, and sets out the six key action areas for individual agencies to implement:

- Leadership and Accountability
- Respectful Workplaces and Empowered People
- Shifting Gender Stereotypes
- Flexible Ways of Working
- Gender Data
- Leveraging our External Influence.

Gender equality benefits all of us. Embracing it is essential for our country's economic prosperity, and embedding this in our core values leads to a safer and healthier society and workplace. I encourage you to take time to understand how our Gender Equality Action Plan can be implemented in your teams and focus on how you can equip yourself with the knowledge and skills to take responsibility and action to maintain a professional, safe and gender equal workplace culture.

Jenny Wilkinson
Secretary, Department of Finance

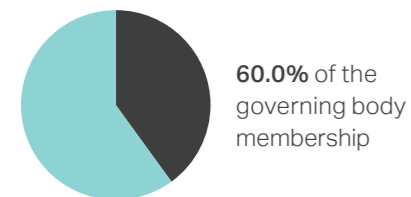
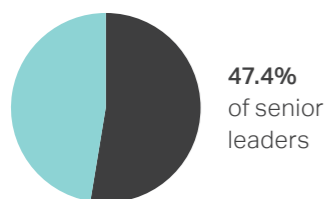
Gender Equality in the Department of Finance

Finance will continue to contribute to the efforts being undertaken across the Australian Public Service, including participation in the Workplace Gender Equality Agency Public Sector Reporting Program, and the annual Australian Public Service Employee Census.

We will focus on measuring our progress and success through 6 themes outlined in the *Australian Public Service Gender Equality Strategy 2021–26*. While Finance performs very well against most indicators, we are committed to building on this success by implementing our Action Plan and ensuring staff are empowered and encouraged to contribute to lasting change and respectful workplaces.

Leadership and accountability

As at 31 December 2022, women in the department represented:



Respectful workplaces and empowered people

From the Finance 2022 census respondents, 9.0% of women and 8.0% of men staff said they had experienced bullying, harassment or discrimination in the last 12 months. In Finance, 2.0% of women stated they had faced gender-based discrimination in the last 12 months.

In creating a respectful workplace, 80.0% of women and 84.0% of men agreed that the agency supports and activity promotes an inclusive workplace culture with 88.0% of women and 89.0% of men agreeing that their supervisor ensures that everyone can be included in workplace activities.



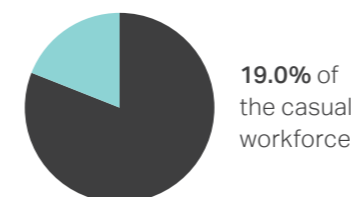
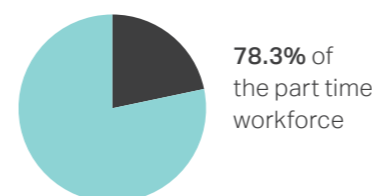
Shifting gender stereotypes

As at 31 December 2022, women represented 35.0% of staff employed in the ICT and Digital Solutions job family.

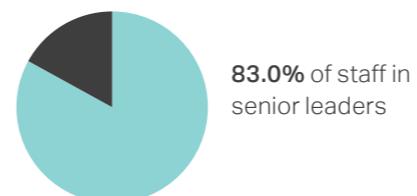
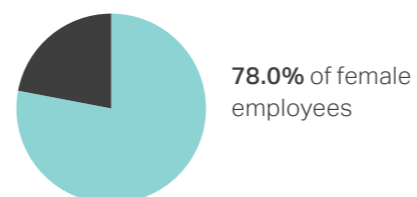
During the 12-month period of 2021 a total of 140 women and 48 men took parental leave.

Flexible ways of working

As at 31 December 2022 women comprised 51.8% of the Finance workforce. Women represented:



In the 2022 Census, 41.0% of Finance respondents identified as having caring responsibilities, 53.0% of whom were female. Of all staff surveyed, 74.0% were satisfied with their ability to access and use flexible working arrangements, including:



Gender data

As at 31 December 2022, women comprised 51.8% of the Finance workforce.

Our gender pay gap for 2021 was 4.2%, down from 6.1% in 2020. This compares to the national gender pay gap at 22.8% in 2022.

In the 2022 calendar year, women comprised 56.0% of all internal promotions. In the same 12-month period women who were internally promoted comprised 18.6% of the total ongoing female staff cohort as at 31 December 2022. The male internal promotion rate was slightly higher at 19.4% for the same period.

Women who applied for Finance roles in the 2022 calendar year were more likely to be found suitable than men, with 26.8% of female applicants being selected for a merit pool compared with 21.0% of male applicants. Even though women comprised a smaller proportion (47.2%) of the total applicants, 53.3% of total candidates in available merit pools were women.

Of the 28.0% of Finance census respondents who indicated they wanted to leave their position immediately or within the next 12 months, 49.0% of those respondents were women.

The separation rate for women was 19.9% while the separation rate for men was 19.0%.

Leveraging our external influence

We will maintain our engagement with and establish new relationships with other APS Gender Equality Networks to enhance awareness of gender equality challenges across the public service.

Our procurement processes meet the standards set out in the *Workplace Gender Equality Procurement Principles* and we will continue to maintain this best practice.

We will maintain the delivery of events with speakers that represent gender equality issues and provide opportunities for our staff and senior leaders to represent the department in different forums to promote and discuss our journey.

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APSC Action	APS Gender Equality Strategy Action Area 1: Leadership and Accountability	To progress gender equality, Finance will...	Lead Area/s	Commence by
MS1a	Leaders are visible role models at any level and show their commitment to gender equality through their actions and words. Senior leaders should consider how to support gender equality leadership in their organisation.	Identify roles for our senior leaders in gender themed events as part of the Finance Culture and Diversity Event and Communications Calendar. This will include at least one networking event for SES and/or Executive Level Staff.	Staff Culture and Diversity Networks Human Resources Branch (HRB) – HR Strategies	Annually
		Incorporate the theme of gender equality into an SES Forum.	HRB – HR Strategies Corporate Engagement	Annually
		Review current diversity training for leaders and management for gender equity offerings.	HRB – HR Strategies	June 2023
MS1b	Agencies publish (on the internet) targeted plans for gender equality— informed by data and aligned to agency priorities.	Publish our Gender Equality Action Plan on the Finance website.	HRB – HR Strategies	May 2023
		Review our Gender Equality Action Plan objectives on a regular basis using gender data as part of workforce dashboards.	People and Culture Committee Cultural Network Leadership Group (CNLG) Staff Culture and Diversity Networks	Bi-Annually
MS1c	Dedicated resources and governance arrangements are in place to support the work. Gender Champions and employee led gender networks are involved. Regular tracking of progress and impact is transparent to employees.	Maintain active Gender Champions at senior levels including oversight through the Cultural Network Leaders Group and the Finance Diversity Champion.	HRB – HR Strategies Diversity Champion	Bi-annually
		Review progress on our Gender Equality Action Plan on a biannual basis, and champion the APS Gender Equality Strategy through an annual staff communication.	Staff Culture and Diversity Networks and Champions CNLG HRB – HR Strategies	Bi-annually
MS1d	Agencies include commitment to gender equality and inclusion in induction and recruitment materials, including roles and expectations of all employees.	Review induction and recruitment materials to outline our commitment to gender equality, and include links to the relevant agency policies, and training resources on harassment, discrimination and bullying.	HRB – Recruitment and Resource Management HRB – HR Strategies	June 2023
		Implement the Finance Employee Value Proposition framework which promotes and embraces gender equity and diversity.	HRB – Recruitment and Resource Management HRB – HR Strategies	May 2023
1a	The Secretary will be accountable for implementing the Strategy and will consider options to demonstrate their commitment.	Report on the implementation and progress of the strategy through the APS Agency Survey.	HRB – HR Strategies	Annually
		Demonstrate our commitment to staff on an ongoing basis through the Secretary hosting internal gender themed events.	HRB – HR Strategies Secretary Staff Diversity and Culture Networks	Annually
1b	Leaders, at all levels, will engage with employees about the strategy and discuss ways everyone will contribute to ensure there is both individual and collective accountability. A focus on inclusive behaviours is important to promote gender equality and will lead to a positive workplace culture for all genders.	Integrate conversation guidance on inclusive behaviours and creating a positive workplace culture into existing performance checklists and guides.	HRB – HR Strategies	July 2023
1c	Informed by data and the diverse experience of employees, agencies will seek to understand the gender imbalances (across all levels), the drivers that underpin them and will consider whether specific targets are an appropriate method to drive action and provide incentive for change.	Maintain diversified and detailed sources of data used for gender reporting to support workplace and organisational culture decision making.	HRB – HR Strategies	Ongoing
		Contribute to reporting initiatives including the Workplace Gender Equality Agency public sector reporting, the annual APS Remuneration Report and research conducted in collaboration with the APSC.	HRB – HR Strategies	Annually

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APSC Action	APS Gender Equality Strategy Action Area 2: Respectful Workplaces and Empowered People	To progress gender equality, Finance will...	Lead Area/s	Commence by
MS2a	Leaders reinforce standards of behaviour through the prevention of gender-based harassment and discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault and bullying. Policies outline strategies for prevention, formal reporting and review processes and consequences.	Review and update our <i>Managing and Addressing Inappropriate Workplace Behaviour</i> policy in light of the Respect@Work report, Report on the Independent Review of Parliamentary Workplaces, APS Census data and Comcare guidance.	HRB – Employee Relations HRB – HR Strategies	November 2023
		Communicate updated advice on appropriate workplace behaviours to all staff.	HRB – Employee Relations	Ongoing
		Provide formal training opportunities for managers and all staff on appropriate workplace behaviours.	HRB – HR Strategies HRB – Employee Relations	June 2023
MS2b	Supporting employees experiencing family and domestic violence (FDV): agency FDV policy is well-communicated and sets out supports available. Manager training is provided and includes an emphasis on an individual-led approach to support, noting that access to a secure workplace, phone and computer can be very important.	Review and update the FDV policy in consultation with staff.	HRB – HR Strategies HRB – Employee Relations	July 2023
		Integrate FDV issues and policies into existing manager training.	HRB – HR Strategies HRB – Employee Relations	November 2023
		Communicate FDV policies and promote the toolkit resources to all staff, including the FDV leave entitlement of 10 days per annum.	HRB – HR Strategies HRB – Employee Relations	Bi-annually
2a	Agencies will strengthen approaches to preventing and responding to bullying, sexual harassment and sexual assault in the workplace.	Review and update agency guidance and policy on bullying, sexual harassment and assault, and the management of bullying and harassment claims.	HRB – Employee Relations	May 2023
		Provide formal training opportunities for all staff and managers on appropriate workplace behaviours.	HRB – Employee Relations HRB – HR Strategies	June 2023
2b	Agencies will review internal and outward facing communication for gender inclusive language and images. This will include agency intranet, internet, internal policy documents and recruitment ads.	Review internal and external communications and style guides for gender inclusive language and images in consultation with Diversity Networks.	HRB – HR Strategies HRB – Recruitment and Resource Management Corporate Engagement Section	July 2023
		Deliver inclusive language training and have this accessible to all staff through the Learning and Development calendar.	HRB – HR Strategies	May 2023
2c	Agencies will provide ongoing access to superannuation resources and awareness sessions to all employees with a particular focus on annual entry level and graduate intakes (e.g. agency induction).	Ensure superannuation awareness sessions are accessible to all employees.	HRB – Employee Relations	Bi-annually
		Offer superannuation awareness session in entry level and graduate induction programs.	HRB – Recruitment and Resource Management	Annually – February

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APSC Action	APS Gender Equality Strategy Action Area 3: Shifting Gender Stereotypes	To progress gender equality, Finance will...	Lead Area/s	Commence by
MS3a	Ensuring gender diversity in selection processes, including internal processes and EOIs. Selection panels are gender-balanced and are equipped to identify any potential bias during the process.	Review and update advice and guidance for selection panels to support EOI and external selection processes.	HRB – Recruitment and Resource Management	February 2023
		Ensure all selection panels are gender balanced.	HRB – Recruitment and Resource Management	Ongoing
		Provide a revised training program to selection panel members on unconscious bias.	HRB – Recruitment and Resource Management HRB – HR Strategies	August 2023
3a	Agencies will create opportunities to strengthen gender representation in select occupations (e.g. STEM and service delivery) and talent pipelines, in a targeted way, taking into account the broader labour market.	Expand opportunities for STEM and data entry level roles through our entry level programs.	HRB – Recruitment and Resource Management	Annually
		Increase awareness and participation in career planning advice provided through the Coaching at Finance program and Employee Assistance Program for staff.	HRB – HR Strategies	May 2023
3b	The APSC, in consultation with agencies, will review APS-wide parental leave provisions, with a view to creating more flexible parental leave entitlements to enable a greater choice for parents. This seeks to enable more equitable sharing of caring responsibilities.	Work with the APSC to implement findings of the Maternity Leave Act Review.	Australian Public Service Commission (APSC) HRB – Employee Relations	To be determined
3c	Agencies will be proactive in offering parental leave and flexible work arrangements to all employees including those with caring responsibilities. Managers will favourably consider requests for flexibility for all supporting partners who have permanent caring responsibilities reflecting a strong commitment and support for flexible ways of working.	Review our flexible work policies.	HRB – Employee Relations	July 2023
		Review and update our flexible work policy guidance for managers to support flexible work practices.	HRB – Employee Relations	July 2023
		Integrate flexible work practices and job design principles into our management and leadership training.	HRB – HR Strategies	May 2023
		Explore opportunities to run staying connected sessions for staff on long-term leave to receive updates on changes in the organisation, and network with other staff.	HRB – HR Strategies	February 2025

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APSC Action	APS Gender Equality Strategy Action Area 4: Flexible Ways of Working	To progress gender equality, Finance will...	Lead Area/s	Commence by
MS4a	Provide access to flexible work through gender-neutral, flexible work policies for all employees. Leaders and managers at all levels are able to role model flexible work where it is appropriate for the individual and the organisation.	Maintain our flexible work policies.	HRB – Employee Relations	Ongoing
		Provide flexible work policy guidance for our managers and senior leaders to support flexible work practices.	HRB – Employee Relations	May 2023
MS4b	Managers are equipped to value and support all types of caring responsibilities, including elder and disability care, such as through flexible ways of working.	Maintain flexible work policies.	HRB – Employee Relations	Ongoing
		Provide flexible work policy guidance for our managers and senior leaders to support flexible work practices.	HRB – Employee Relations	May 2023
		Integrate guidance on flexible work practices and policies into management and leadership programs.	HRB – HR Strategies	July 2023
4a	Agencies will review flexible work policies and practices to ensure they provide for a variety of contexts and settings.	Regularly review our flexible work policies to ensure currency of context and settings.	HRB – Employee Relations	Annually
4b	Agencies will provide new parents a flexible, supportive and enabling environment in line with the Australian National Breastfeeding Strategy: 2019 and Beyond, which could include maintaining accreditation as a 'Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace'.	Maintain 'Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace' accreditation.	HRB – Employee Relations HRB – HR Strategies	Annually
		Increase awareness of arrangements in place to support breastfeeding parents through our Induction program, staff communications and diversity led events.	HRB – Employee Relations HRB – HR Strategies	May 2023
4c	Agencies will enhance manager capability, including people management, and equip managers to lead flexible teams.	Increase manager confidence and capability in leading hybrid teams through formal training programs and peer learning activities such as EL2 Connect.	HRB – HR Strategies	May 2023
4d	Agencies will consider advertising all APS positions as full time, part-time and job share.	Review and update advice to our managers in considering employment options for full time, part-time and job share prior to advertisement in all APS positions.	HRB – Recruitment and Resource Management	June 2023

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APSC Action	APS Gender Equality Strategy Action Area 5: Gender Data	To progress gender equality, Finance will...	Lead Area/s	Commence by
MS5a	Agency-level gender pay gap is known and tracked to understand the pay gap at both whole of agency and classification level.	Complete internal annual analysis of the remuneration metrics following the release of the annual APS Remuneration Report and present to the Executive Board.	HRB – HR Strategies	Annually
		Compile and analyse gender and diversity data prior to negotiation of a new Enterprise Agreement to support the bargaining process.	HRB – HR Strategies HRB – Employee Relations	July 2024
MS5b	Tracking data on gender composition: gender disaggregated data across all classifications, geographical locations and key job types is tracked.	Present to the People and Culture Committee gender data by classification on a quarterly basis for review as part of workforce dashboards.	HRB – HR Strategies	Quarterly
5a	Agencies will progressively build their capacity and capability to collect, analyse and publish (internally) gender disaggregated data across all people-metrics. Agencies will collect and publish (internally) data disaggregated by other diversity and inclusion variables. This information will support agencies to better target their gender equality initiatives.	Explore additional data metrics for inclusion in management reporting, including uptake of flexible working arrangements by gender.	HRB – HR Strategies HRB – Employee Relations	May 2023
		Produce data on gender related training to support HR policy and designing corporate service delivery offerings.	HRB – HR Strategies	Annually
5b	Agencies will review their policies and processes for entering into an Individual Flexibility Agreement (IFA) with an employee to ensure there is equality of opportunity (a level playing field) for all genders. This will include reviewing the number of current IFAs by gender. Agencies will implement any necessary changes to the process and monitor impact.	Review the process for approving IFAs to ensure access for all genders and maintain monitoring for gender data.	HRB – Employee Relations Executive Board	December 2023
5c	The APSC, in collaboration with APS agencies, will develop a strategic research plan to better understand gender dynamics in the APS workforce. Priority research projects identified in the research plan will leverage the socio-demographic data and workforce information held by the APSC, including through research partnerships with the academic community.	Participate in APSC led research to better understand gender dynamics in the APS workforce.	HRB – HR Strategies	To be determined in consultation with APSC.

APSC Action	APS Gender Equality Strategy Action Area 6: Leveraging Our External Influence	To progress gender equality, Finance will...	Lead Area/s	Commence by
MS6a	Agencies will drive change beyond the workplace through: - senior leaders speaking about gender equality at public engagements - using all avenues to continue to promote gender equality, including through suppliers.	Identify appropriate gender equality events of interest for all staff to attend, including opportunities as speakers.	HRB – HR Strategies Staff Culture and Diversity Networks	To be reviewed annually
		Review our procurement training and guidance to ensure the inclusion of compliance with the <i>Workplace Gender Equality Procurement Principles</i> .	Chief Financial Officer Branch	To be reviewed annually
6a	Agencies will continue to progressively embed or strengthen gender equality outcomes in the course of their everyday work. This includes considering how policy development and service delivery design may impact genders differently.	Maintain productive working partnerships across the APS, in particular Gender Equity networks in other departments and governments, to identify best practice policy design and development with a view to improve the outcomes for all genders.	HRB – HR Strategies Gender Equity Network	Ongoing
6b	Agencies will demonstrate leadership on gender equality beyond their workplace in their relationships with industry and communities.	Identify opportunities, including conferences, to engage across the APS, with state and territory governments, with industry and the community to promote gender equity.	HRB – HR Strategies Staff Culture and Diversity Networks	Ongoing