Inclusive Communities

Gender Equity Strategy

2023–2026

Australian National University

University Experience Division

Acknowledgment of Country

We acknowledge and pay our respects to all Indigenous peoples and communities across this Country.

We recognise our ongoing relationship with the Ngunnawal and Ngambri peoples, the Traditional Custodians of the Canberra region, on whose lands we live and work.

We honour and celebrate the First Australians, whose cultures are among the oldest continuing cultures in human history. We recognise the rich histories told through the songlines of these ancient lands and pay our respects to Elders past and present, as well as to all who continue to care for Country, culture, and community.

We acknowledge that these lands were never ceded.

Foreword

Since the launch of our Gender Equity Strategy 2022–2025, our university has continued to advance meaningful progress towards a more fair, inclusive, and safe environment for all members of our community. Many of the actions outlined in this Strategy have already been completed or are on track, reflecting our strong commitment to sustained and measurable change. We reported on our progress in early 2025 and will provide a further update in early 2026 as we continue to deliver on our goals.

Over recent years, the university has continued to strengthen its policies and enhance its gender equity governance, while expanding support services and deepening engagement with staff, students, and stakeholders. These efforts reaffirm our commitment to a culture of respect, fairness, and accountability.

As we look ahead, the higher education sector will enter a significant period. In 2026, the National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence will come into effect, bringing with it new standards and expectations for universities across the country. In anticipation of this important milestone, we are proposing an extension of our current Gender Equity Strategy through 2026. This extension, accompanied by targeted updates, will ensure the ANU is fully prepared to meet the requirements of the Code and continue to lead in the prevention of, and response to, gender-based violence.

This period will also serve as a bridge to our next phase of work. In 2026, we will undertake a thorough consultation process with the ANU community for a renewed Gender Equity Strategy to guide our efforts from 2027 onward. This collaborative approach will strengthen our current foundations, address emerging needs, and centre the voices and experiences of our community.

Our commitment to gender equity remains firm. With continued commitment and collaboration, we will build a university where gender equality is lived every day, and where every member of our community feels safe, respected, and empowered to thrive. We thank all those who have contributed to our progress to date and look forward to working together as we enter this next chapter.

Executive summary

This is the Australian National University's (ANU) first Gender Equity Strategy. This document supports and enables Pillar 4 of the ANU Strategic Plan 2021-2025, helping our institution to become a standard bearer for equity and inclusion, and embodying our values of respect and inclusion. It is the first step towards achieving our vision:

> ANU will be a place where people of all genders experience a safe, supportive, and enabling environment to work, study, and live in. Everyone's aspirations can be fully realised, and all backgrounds and experiences are celebrated and supported. People with diverse lived experiences and intersecting identities are represented and thrive at all levels of our institution, and our gender equity efforts acknowledge the diversity of barriers and opportunities experienced by people of different genders and sexes.

The strategy works across four key areas to achieve this vision, namely 1) culture and behaviour, 2) leadership and governance, 3) environment, and 4) policy and systems. Through extensive consultation with our community, together with a review of good practice and research in gender equity work and cultural change, this strategy has been developed to address identified cultural, structural, and attitudinal barriers to gender equity.

The strategy provides overarching guidance on how ANU will approach gender equity work, together with some centrally coordinated actions required to achieve our vision. An Implementation Plan supports the progress towards and completion of these central actions. Alongside this, local area Action Plans will play a key role in directing tailored and meaningful activity across Portfolios, Colleges and Schools acknowledging the diverse cultures and context within the university. To enable effective and evidence-informed practices, the university will also develop and share gender equity guidance and resources. These will support all areas to identify and address their specific barriers and contribute to genuine and sustainable gender equity progress

Our community and our leaders understand that we have a lot of work to do in pursuit of gender equity for all within our institution. By working together, being transparent and accountable, using evidence and data, and reflecting often, we will take bold and important steps towards realising our values of being an inclusive and respectful institution which values diversity.

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Our 2035 vision

ANU will be a place where people of all genders experience a safe, supportive, and enabling environment to work, study, and live in. Everyone's aspirations can be fully realised, and all backgrounds and experiences are celebrated and supported. People with diverse lived experiences and intersecting identities are represented and thrive at all levels of our institution, and our gender equity efforts acknowledge the diversity of barriers and opportunities experienced by people of different genders and sexes.

How will we get there?

Our vision will be enabled by an enduring, whole-of-University commitment to gender equity. We integrate local-level and central approaches to equity, embrace an intersectional understanding of everyone's diverse strengths and needs, and continually work towards maintaining safety and wellbeing in our community. We will be guided by the following principles:

- We work collaboratively by listening, understanding, and responding effectively to what we hear from our staff and students;
- We communicate our intentions at all levels of the University, working in a transparent and accountable way to our community;
- We explicitly embed our commitment to gender equity in policy and practise, and consider all decisions and actions for the impact they have across genders;
- We are inclusive and foster a culture of belonging and wellbeing;
- We use evidence, data, and best-practise to shape our decision-making; and
- We reflect, evaluate, and renew our strategies as we learn and face new challenges.

Implementation

This strategy is the first in a sequence of strategies guiding us to our 2035 vision. Through achieving our objectives across this period, we will build organisational capacity and maturity:

Formative
2023-2026

Crystallising the agenda, developing capability, and establishing the foundations for gender equity.

Maturing
2027-2030

Increasing sophistication of initiatives, evaluation and review of progress towards equity.

Integrated
2031-2035

Gender equity is ingrained in core business, and accountability systems are fully functional.

Figure 1: Simplified Gender Equity Organisational Maturity Model[1]

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[1] The language in this diagram has been adapted from the dynamic Diversity DNA Stage Model in Strategic Diversity Leadership: Activating Change and Transformation in Higher Education (Williams, 2013).

Importantly, different parts of the University will move at different speeds towards achieving these gender equity goals – the timelines above are a broad guide for setting milestones for our work. Some areas are advanced in applying innovative practise to further gender equity at ANU, and others face discipline-specific and historical challenges to creating an equitable environment. As we move through the stages of this model, we hope to transition to a more intersectional approach to equity matters more generally, and to reach a stage where a broader Equity Strategy is developed in support of our equity and diversity efforts across a range of identities and experiences, rather than having a siloed 'gender' strategy separate from our other work.

This strategy aims to support collaboration and learning between areas in order to build capacity across the institution to implement formal and informal mechanisms to address gendered barriers. A Gender Equity resource and guidance kit will recognise this and provide guidance on assessing the organisational maturity of local areas using a staged maturity model[2], with mechanisms and examples of practise that can be applied at all stages of maturity. Such mechanisms and examples will also be informed by the experiences of local areas.

This strategy will work with a suite of guidance documents to help achieve our objectives and realise our vision. Combining high-level strategic principles in this strategy, local-area action plans (to be developed by Colleges and Portfolios in response to this strategy), and best-practise tools and mechanisms to facilitate our success, we will create a dynamic network of learning and knowledge sharing around ANU. In addition to the high-level actions listed in Annex A, the University will provide an annual report demonstrating the actions undertaken to implement the strategy's key focus areas. A copy of the current annual report can be found at https://services.anu.edu.au/business-units/inclusive-communities
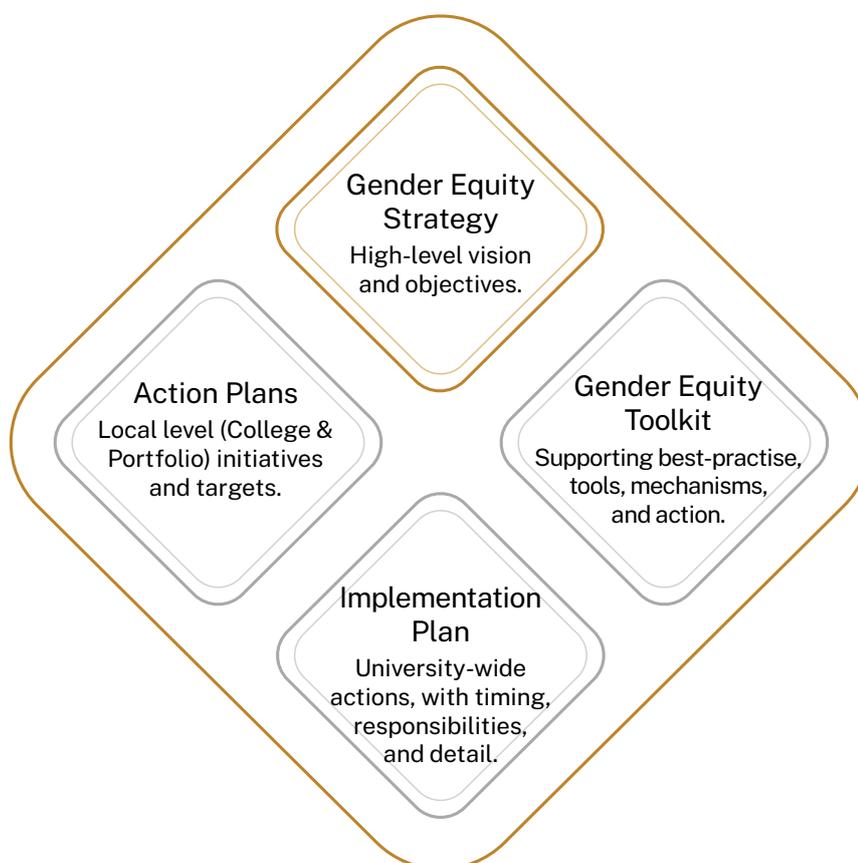

Figure 2: Relationship between the Gender Equity Strategy and key implementation tools.

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[2] This model will be an adapted version of the Diversity DNA Stage Model in Williams (2013).

Governance

This strategy is aligned with the ANU Strategic Plan 2021-2025, which commits the University to becoming a standard bearer for equity and inclusion. In addition to enabling a high-quality student and staff experience, gender equity and inclusion are key enablers for our institution to meet its key strategic goals of conducting more innovative research that transforms society and creates national capability, delivering a student experience equal to the world's best, and strengthening our national mission and meeting our unique responsibilities as Australia's national university. This strategy complements the work underway in the ANU Sexual Violence Prevention Strategy by contributing to the reduction of drivers of sexual violence.

This strategy is owned by the DVC Academic, and progress is overseen by the Safety and Wellbeing Committee of Council. A report will be made annually on progress made against this and other equity strategies.

This strategy is part of the University's Strategic Planning and Performance Framework: it will inform the annual cycle of planning, budgeting, evaluating, and reporting for ANU. This framework ensures that all strategic objectives are addressed and achieved in a cost-effective and coordinated manner. This will provide systemic backing for the strategy's outcomes.

This strategy will be reviewed in 2026 by the Safety and Wellbeing Committee of Council, in consultation with key stakeholders for the development of the strategy for the next phase of organisational maturity.

Context

The evidence is clear: communities that foster and value diversity of thought, identity, and experience are more resilient and robust, have better wellbeing, and enable community members to strive for their goals more confidently. Being guided by the ANU Strategic Plan 2021-2025, we commit to building our capacity to lead the advancement of gender equity at ANU and more broadly. This strategy lays the foundations for this goal: starting with initiating cultural and behavioural change in our institution and leadership, addressing systemic and policy barriers to gender equity, and taking a close look at immediate work and study environments as well as how policies and systems influence equity. Through this work we can advance our journey to ameliorating the gendered disadvantages that permeate our institution. Our work will impact our community and assist in propagating gender equity around our nation and globally.

Our commitment to gender equity is demonstrated through the work of the ANU Gender Institute, ongoing projects and initiatives led by the Inclusive and Respectful Communities team and the Ally Network, the former Gender Equity Working Group and Family Friendly Committee, the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion team, and the Global Institute for Womens' Leadership. Our ongoing annual reporting and gender equality target section from 2026 against the Workplace Gender Equality Act and the contributions of Colleges, Schools, Portfolios, and Divisions demonstrates a commitment to improvement and provide us with opportunities to expand those initiatives. This strategy also supports continued progress towards the SAGE (Science in Australia Gender Equity) Athena Swan accreditation program. Additionally our membership with the Champions of Change Coalition will continue to support our gender equality work through provisions of resources, tools and education.

Yet, gender inequality still exists within our institution, and harmful gender stereotypes affect people of all genders. These inequities originate in entrenched power structures and cultures within ANU which have been resistant to action towards gender equity. Though there are a range of notable examples of work under way to address these barriers, some in our community noted during the discovery phase of this strategy's development that there are still pockets of our University that see efforts to improve the state of equity and diversity to be in opposition to our goals pertaining to excellence (see Annex B).

Gender equity is more than ensuring 50/50 representation in our population: it is about ensuring that the experiences of all people are equitable, inclusive, and foster belonging regardless of gender. A 50/50 framing also ignores the need for us to foster belonging and success beyond binary genders. In addition, intersectional complexities relating to gender inequity such as those related to race, indigeneity, ethnicity, disability, sexuality, class and socio-economic factors, and caregiver status must also be considered in our work towards gender equity. Barriers created by implicit and explicit misogyny, racism, colonialism, ableism, transphobia, homophobia, interphobia, and other forms of discrimination coalesce with gender-based barriers for people in these groups. We also know that sexual assault and harassment are still occurring in our community, and that actions to improve gender equity will flow into work to reduce drivers of gender-based violence. Reports over the last five years, including those authored by student leaders, the National Student Safety Survey, and the Australian Human Rights Commission evidence how they are connected. Cultural and systemic barriers will be a key focus in our work, as they are for many Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility initiatives. There will be many opportunities for shared achievable outcomes as work progresses on this and other strategies and plans.

Our data

To establish how the ANU Gender Equity Strategy can deliver on our vision, we must understand where we are on our gender equity journey. At our formative stage of gender equity maturity, staff and student population composition data is a useful tool to guide our thinking and to identify where to focus our initial efforts. The current quantitative data available is limited for these purposes. ANU does not collect gender data; it only collects data on sex, and uses a binary approach with the available options limited to male, female, and an aggregate 'other' category. The analysis below uses this nomenclature for consistency and is not intended to normalise the gender binary nor erase experiences of intersex staff and students, but to work within the limitations of our current data. It is also reliant on what staff and students have formally reported to ANU under strict and dated definitions and regulations, which may also be constrained by individual comfort levels reporting accurate data to powerful institutions. This approach will be changing from November 2025 and categories of data collected will align with the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2020 standard for sex, gender and sex orientation variables, which defines gender as a social and cultural concept relating to an individual's identity, expression and experience. This strategy aims to improve how we collect data using our current systems to support gender equity efforts.

Our Workplace Gender Equality (WGEA) data (WGEA Report 2024-2025_0.pdf) provides us with a broad picture of our community.

In many areas our HR data demonstrates that female staff are only recently being appointed to senior academic roles in significant numbers. Transgender, gender diverse and intersex staff and students are in many ways made invisible in our systems, curriculum, and services, and continue to face transphobic behaviour which is unacceptable and detrimental to their health and wellbeing, as well as our goals relating to inclusion and belonging. In addition, both staff and students who have identified as female are also more likely than male staff and students who have identified as male to identify as a person with disability or as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person. As such, intersectional factors may be compounding inequities for female staff and students more extensively than for male staff and students.

Whilst improved quantitative data collection will help provide insight into the composition of our community and a better understanding of where gaps in equity and belonging for people of all genders exist, it does not give us any information about the gendered experiences of staff and students. As such, we need to balance our use of qualitative and quantitative data to better understand the experiences of our community to advance gender equity. Neither qualitative nor quantitative data alone can give us a clear picture of the status quo. Integrating both will help identify priorities and monitor progress in removing barriers to participation and success. Using qualitative data collected through mechanisms, such as focus groups and consultation, together with the quantitative data we will continue to collect, will help us to achieve this goal. We will build our capabilities to collect further wellbeing and work/study satisfaction data using our current systems and report in a gender-disaggregated way, as well as collect data outside of the gender binary to fully reflect the diversity of our community.

[3] Transphobic behaviour refers to the occurrence of actions, incidents, language, and attitudes which discriminate against and disrespect the rights of transgender and gender diverse people.

Action areas

To achieve our vision for gender equity, we have identified the following key areas for action for 2023-2026:

- Culture and Behaviour
- Leadership and Governance
- Environment
- Policies and Systems

These areas are not exhaustive of the work needed, but they address some of the key gendered barriers facing our community today while laying the foundations for future improvements. A table of actions follows in Annex A, which pertains to the action references in the objectives. Further detail regarding the implementation of these actions will be provided in the Implementation Plan.

Culture and Behaviour

Our goal is that staff and students experience a culture that is characterised by an inclusive and engaging environment for all (women, men, transgender, and gender diverse people).

Creating a culture of gender equity, inclusion and shared language requires all members of our community to have a common understanding of the University's inclusive values. Building these values into staff and student orientation and induction activities will form the basis for a collective understanding of our University's commitment to equity and inclusion, and help to set and maintain expectations for behaviour that promotes gender equity. **(Action 1.1)**

Once new members of our community are inducted, and for those who are already here, our culture, strategies, and processes must be communicated continually, clearly, and transparently: this holds members of our community accountable. Senior leaders must be supported to understand and take responsibility for ensuring that gender equity objectives are clearly communicated and actioned at College, School, Portfolio, and Divisional levels. **(Action 1.2)**

Leveraging the university's existing meeting and committee structures at all levels, from local areas to divisions and central governance, to embed gender equity as a standing focus of collaboration and dialogue. By using these established networks to share good practices, exchange learnings, and promote coordinated action, the university can cultivate a culture of continuous improvement and shared responsibility for advancing gender equity across all areas of academic and professional life. **(Action 1.3)**

Creating space for equitable recognition of achievements relative to opportunity and personal circumstances, and a culture that values flexible working arrangements whilst acknowledging the demands on our institution to perform highly is key to creating an inclusive environment. As a part of our workload modelling and performance appraisal processes, we must ensure that factors such as higher rates of remote working and parental leave taking by women do not disadvantage those who choose to exercise this right, while remaining consistent with the ANU Enterprise Agreement. We need to continue to build a culture that supports success for all people. We also must expand our understanding of what flexibility can entail, looking to other sectors for guidance on how to promote success and wellbeing for a wider group of people. **(Actions 1.4, 1.5, and 1.10)**

Fostering values of equity and inclusion in our student body is key to enabling equal study, social, and residential opportunities for our diverse student body. For example, we understand that the diverse experiences of BIPOC (Bla(c)k, Indigenous, and People of Colour) and CALD (culturally and linguistically diverse) students, international students, postgraduate coursework and HDR students face unique systemic challenges in their studies. We must work to understand the many student cultures across diverse settings, in particular in residential spaces and social settings, working with student leaders to identify and support cultural changes where needed. This includes supporting diverse student voices and providing opportunities for learning about the University's values of inclusivity in practise. **(Actions 1.6)**

Gender equity is the responsibility of our entire community. Resourcing and senior leadership capability must be directed to support gender equity initiatives to reduce a culture of 'volunteerism' that has historically borne the load of this work. Those who are expected to work to improve the state of gender equity at ANU must be formally recognised for this. Equity work must not fall onto specific groups of people, and the responsibility must be distributed amongst all levels of leadership at ANU. **(Actions 1.7 and 1.8)**

Finally, when we get things wrong, it is important that we have a culture of reflection, and the ability to learn and move forward. We will take on a trauma-informed and person-centred approach in our prevention and response of gender-based violence and inequities. We will strengthen and promote channels for feedback and complaint, be responsive when feedback is provided, transparent on any actions taken, enable progress towards gender equity and facilitate better wellbeing and belonging for all by opening channels to be heard. We must create space for historically marginalised voices to be heard and feel supported and be proactive about inviting all staff and students to participate. **(Action 1.9)**

Leadership and Governance

We are creating capable and empowered leaders and governance systems which enable gender equity to progress and improve staff and student experiences within our institution.

Our leadership and governance are the people and systems that facilitate strategic guidance, culture-setting, and prioritisation at ANU.

Our leaders and managers at all levels must demonstrate an understanding of and be accountable for the development and implementation of appropriate gender inclusive practices. In addition, representation of a range of lived experiences and backgrounds in leadership and management positions can support the aspirations of our staff and students. Our leadership at all levels must drive and represent the gender inclusivity we wish to foster in our community: this will look different in different parts of our University, but all should be striving for meaningful gender balance at all levels of study and employment. To keep track of these actions and progress towards our vision, the Safety and Wellbeing Committee of Council will report annually on the progress against strategy actions , supported by annual data reporting from Planning, Data & Analytics , People and Culture and our WGEA reporting and Inclusive and Respectful Communities team. **(Actions 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3)**

Leaders need resources, knowledge, and skills to advance gender equity for all staff and students. We must facilitate capacity building through training and the development of resources which support understanding of key skills and tools needed to enact gender equity. **(Actions 2.4 and 2.5)**

It is expected that strategic gender equity leadership will be driven at the College and Portfolio level through local plans. The plans will look at staff and student recruitment, retention, and progression, including staff promotion, as well as inclusion and culture. As a part of understanding the career and study pipelines, we must ensure that barriers posed by casualisation, precarious and insecure work, and caregiving responsibilities are recognised and mitigated, particularly for people in historically excluded groups. This equips us to direct investment to areas which best facilitate equality of opportunity. These local plans will be incorporated into the annual College and Portfolio plans, which set out their priorities, key actions, and deliverables for the year, and are discussed and reported against in the pre-existing planning and performance dialogue process. **(Action 2.6)**

To drive evidence-informed leadership and decision-making, ANU must improve its data collection. Expanding data collection approaches using our current systems to reflect the diversity of our staff and student community, including accurately representing our transgender and gender diverse community members, is key to understanding the strengths and needs of our University. **(Action 2.7)**

To create an environment where every individual's gender identity is recognised, respected, a seamlessly affirmed through our systems and practices, the ANU must aim to embed dignity, inclusion and equity into the core of our organisational culture, ensuring that all people can participate authentically in our community. **(Action 2.8)**

Student leaders play a significant role in shaping cultures at ANU, including in the classroom, in our residences, and a range of other student spaces. ANU must be a place where all students graduate with an ability to demonstrate understanding of equal opportunity principles and the ability to advance equity in the environments they will go on to engage with and inhabit. **(Action 2.9)**

Environment

We want staff and students to see themselves and their needs reflected in the physical, digital, and social environments around them. This includes our language, our grounds, and buildings, and how we use our common spaces.

The language we use shapes and frames the conversations we have about gender and gender equity at ANU, and the interactions we have with each other: it also has the ability to foster a culture of inclusion and belonging. As such, we will establish and communicate a common lexicon (building on Annex D) to align our understanding of the gender equity goals we are striving for and the barriers that exist. To support this, the need for targeted educational initiatives around concepts such as gendered pronouns and inclusive language must be explored. **(Action 3.1)**

We understand the impact the environment in which we live, study and work can have on our sense of belonging. Well-considered buildings and grounds can foster belonging and inclusion: for example, the increasing provision of gender-neutral bathrooms and appropriate parenting spaces are examples of how our facility design can encourage greater equity and inclusion. Our facility design can also improve safety and have an impact on sexual assault and harassment prevalence: ensuring that lighting and security provision is consistent across our physical spaces plays a key role in this. **(Action 3.2)**

As our language and spaces evolve to better reflect our community, so too must our gatherings. When people get together at or through ANU, we want everyone to feel welcome and able to participate fully. Protocols for teaching, meetings, and events will be established to ensure we are inclusive for people of all genders. **(Actions 3.3)**

Finally, our curriculum ought to appropriately reflect the types of leadership and values we want to support in our community. So too should the way we conduct research, with research outcomes in relevant areas looking to deliver value for people of all genders. It is important to ensure that a diversity of scholars are included in reading lists, that different gendered perspectives are embedded in curricula and discussions, and that the ability to have respectful and safe discourse in conversations about gendered issues is fostered in our teaching pursuits. Equally, it is important that our modes of delivery do not adversely affect our gender equity goals, and that the potential for flexible delivery to improve access for students with care giving responsibilities is considered. **(Actions 3.4, 3.5 and 3.6)**

Policies and Systems

Our policies and systems must promote inclusion, belonging, and success within our community.

All University policies, processes, and priorities must be developed with a strong consideration of how decisions and actions can impact upon people based on gender characteristics. We refer to this as using a 'gender lens' when approaching our work. Alongside gender, we also recognise the added impact that intersectionality of attributes such as race, indigeneity, ethnicity, disability, sexuality, class and socio-economic factors, and caregiver status can have on our community members. Supported by training and experts in our community, those with carriage of strategy development must inspect and evaluate all University documents and processes to develop a deep understanding of their gendered implications. **(Actions 4.1 and 4.2)**

Policies for particular focus when reviewing for inclusivity include those concerning:

- Bullying and discrimination
- Caregiver and parent support
- Caring responsibilities for elderly parents and family members
- Discretionary resource allocation and investment
- Flexible working and workplace adjustments (including for people with disability)
- Gender affirmation (including the updating of names and gender markers for staff and students across all ANU systems and platforms)
- Promotions and recruitment
- Recognition, prizes, and scholarships
- Workload management (including equitable teaching and service allocation guidance)
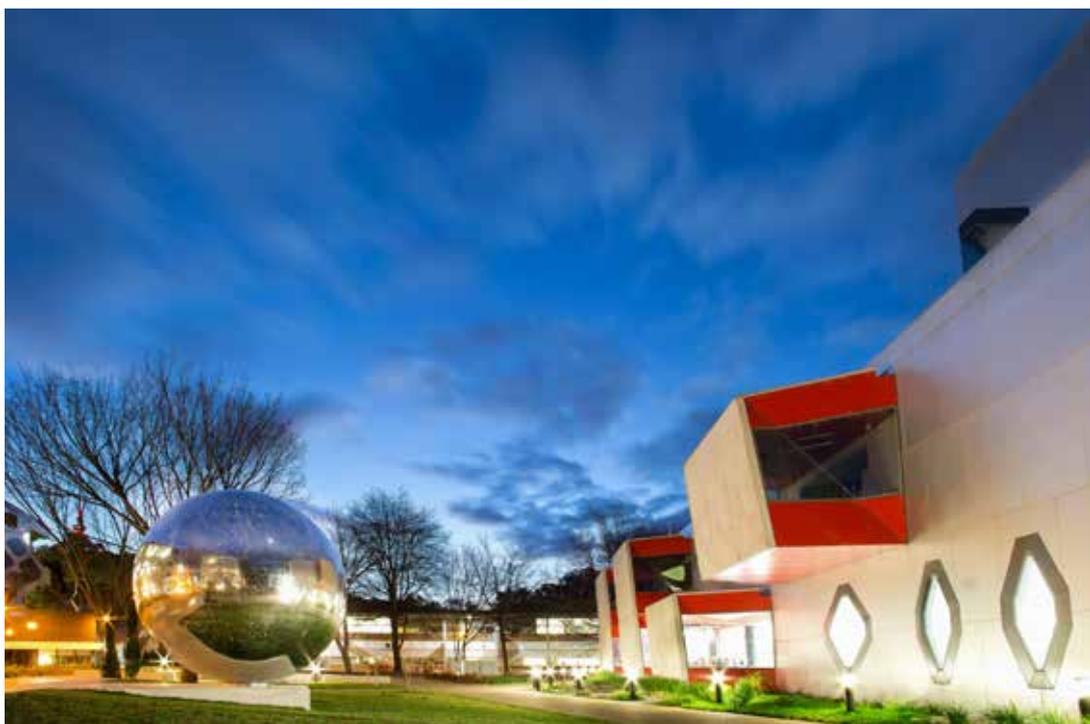
Annexures

Annex A – Action List

The actions below correspond to those referenced in the objectives. Further detail about the actions, including examples of work needed, resourcing allocations, and more detailed timelines and milestones, will be included in the Implementation Plan.

	Our culture and behaviour		
Item	Action	Deadline	Responsibility
1.1	Embed the Rights, Relationships and Respect suite of modules, that include clear expectations around respectful conduct, gender equity and bystander intervention, a standard requirement of staff and student induction and orientation processes.	Dec 2025	For staff: People and Culture Division with Colleges For students: DVCA
1.2	Deliver a communications campaign to promote gender equity values and vision to the community.	Feb 2026	Inclusive and Respectful Communities and Chief Marketing Officer
1.3	Assign all existing committees, working groups, and meeting structures across the university, schools, colleges, divisions, and local areas the responsibility to promote collaboration, exchange local good practices and learnings on gender equity, and act as conduits for advancing gender equity practices.	Dec 2023	All university meeting structures at school/college/division and local areas
1.4	Train managers on non-discriminatory performance discussions and the Guideline on Assessing Achievement Relative to Opportunity.	July 2026	People and Culture Division
1.5	Produce guidance and training for managers and supervisors regarding skills for the development and implementation of appropriate gender inclusive practices.	July 2024	People and Culture Division
1.6	Work with all halls of residence and their student leaders to develop local approaches and plans for improving the state of gender equity, identifying areas where further training for staff is needed.	Dec 2024	Residential Experience Division
1.7	Ensure that all areas of the University have easy access to HR resources to undertake equitable recruitment, retention, and promotion practises.	Jul 2024	People and Culture Division

Item	Action	Deadline	Responsibility
1.8	Evaluate mechanisms that recognise and celebrate staff and student work towards gender equity.	Dec 2023	For staff: People and Culture Division For students: University Experience Division with Colleges
1.9	Test, evaluate, and improve staff and student complaints and appeals processes to ensure a supportive, responsive, well-promoted, and transparent complaints management system.	Dec 2023	For students: Student Administration and Academic Services Division For staff: People and Culture Division
1.10	Evaluate existing programs and structures aiming to support staff and students with caregiving responsibilities and develop a plan for remediation where gaps are identified.	Dec 2024	For staff: People and Culture Division For students: University Experience Division

Our leadership and governance

Item	Action	Deadline	Responsibility
2.1	All Colleges and Portfolios to identify a member of their executive to lead on IDEA matters (such as gender equity) and engage in cross-College/Portfolio exchange of ideas and initiatives.	Dec 2023	Colleges and Portfolios
2.2	Provide an annual College and Portfolio level gender equity data report to SMG that analyses, benchmarks, evaluates and reports on the gender composition of the staff and student community, as well as the gender pay gap.	Dec (annually)	Planning and Service Performance Division
2.3	Establish a reporting mechanism to oversee and drive the implementation of this strategy, ensure a consistent approach to gender equity across the University.	July 2023	Safety and Wellbeing Committee of Council
2.4	Strengthen ongoing training and mentorship opportunities for staff leaders to develop the capability required to foster gender equity at ANU, being guided by the principles of this strategy.	July 2024	People and Culture Division
2.5	Draw on the Champions of Change 7 Switches report as a framework for embedding gender equity in all decisions and process development	Dec 2026	People and Culture Division
2.6	Develop local plans which address improvements to gender equity for academic and professional staff, and students. Local data, targets, and success metrics must be included. Plans will be available for all staff and students to view and refer to.	Dec 2023	Colleges and Portfolios

Item	Action	Deadline	Responsibility
2.7	Develop a mechanism to accurately represent transgender, gender diverse, and intersex people in our current systems where they wish to disclose this information.	Mar 2026	Student Administration and Academic Services Division, and People & Culture Division
2.8	Develop good practice gender affirmation guidelines which includes a process for changing gender markers and names in ANU systems	Feb 2026	Inclusive and Respectful Communities and People and Culture
2.9	Work with student associations and residences to understand opportunities for student leader professional development to support their ability to lead and drive gender equity within the student cohort.	Jul 2024	University Experience Division

Our environment

Item	Action	Deadline	Responsibility
3.1	Consult with the trans and gender-diverse community to develop and deliver a targeted educational campaign around gendered pronouns and inclusive language.	May 2026	Inclusive and Respectful Communities
3.2	Undertake an audit of the built environment and develop an action plan to improve the state of our facilities in relation to being an inclusive, safe, welcoming, and respectful of all genders and backgrounds (including cultural backgrounds, disability, and caring responsibilities).	Dec 2026	Facilities and Services Division
3.3	Establish and promote University protocols for meetings and events to ensure we are inclusive for people of all genders.	Jul 2024	Inclusive and Respectful Communities
3.4	Increase research staff engagement with existing training opportunities provided by Inclusive and Respectful Communities, including through the Rights, Relationships and Respect in Research and Rights, Relationships and Respect at Work modules and Ally Network training.	Dec 2025	Inclusive and Respectful Communities
3.5	Develop and distribute teaching resources for teaching staff to promote gender-inclusive curriculum, prevent harassment, and create a safe and welcoming learning environment for women and gender-diverse students	Dec 2026	DVC Academic Portfolio with Colleges
3.6	Undertake a review of how the shift back to in-person learning as a dominant mode of delivery impacts on gender equity for students.	Dec 2024	PVC Education and Digital which Associate Deans Education

	Our policies and processes		
Item	**Action**	**Deadline**	**Responsibility**
4.1	Develop and implement a policy assessment tool to identify and address barriers to gender diversity and inclusion in the policy development and review process. Key considerations include: • Bullying and discrimination • Caregiver and parent support • Caring responsibilities for elderly parents and family members • Discretionary resource allocation and investment • Flexible working and workplace adjustments (including for people with disability) • Gender affirmation (including the updating of names and gender markers for staff and students across all ANU systems and platforms) • Promotions and recruitment	Dec 2026	People and Culture Division
4.2	Work with policy owners to identify and review key policies to ensure there are no barriers to inclusion, in accordance with the ANU Enterprise Agreement, including policies concerning: • Bullying and discrimination • Caregiver and parent support • Caring responsibilities for elderly parents and family members • Discretionary resource allocation and investment • Flexible working and workplace adjustments (including for people with disability) • Gender affirmation (including the updating of names and gender markers for staff and students across all ANU systems and platforms) • Promotions and recruitment • Recognition, prizes, and scholarships • Workload management (including equitable teaching and service allocation guidance)	July 2024	Safety and Wellbeing Committee of Council

Annex B - Community Engagement

The Gender Equity Working Group commissioned focus groups to gain a greater understanding of the gender barriers experienced by ANU community members. Informed by earlier research undertaken for the Athena SWAN Bronze accreditation, the Taskforce decided to organise the focus groups around the following topics:

1. Manager and supervisor experiences of operationalising gender equity at ANU

2. Trans and gender diverse experiences at ANU

3. Parents and caregiver experiences at ANU

4. The pipeline: recruitment and career progression at ANU

One-on-one interviews were also conducted, and written submissions were made by participants who were unavailable for the scheduled focus group times. Overall, 25 people were involved in this exercise, spanning a variety of genders, ages, student statuses, staff positions, and cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

This report outlines the main feedback received on each of the four topics. The common themes that emerged can be summarised as follows:

- **Culture and commitment:** Across the different focus group topics, participants explored some of the features of the University's culture as they pertain to gender equity. Participants spoke about a disconnect between messaging and initiatives coming down from senior leaders and the implementation of such initiatives at the local level. In general, both staff and students agreed that their experiences were highly dependent on the colleagues, peers, and leaders around them. A discussion of the University's competitive culture and its impact on working cultures also emerged.

- **Workload and work-life balance:** Unreasonable expectations regarding output from staff working reduced hours were seen to be a gendered barrier to success at work by many participants. Equally, many participants spoke about cultural barriers to taking leave or taking advantage of the COVID-19 reduced workload initiative, with high burdens for justification for a need to reduce workload being placed on already overworked staff.

- **Transgender and gender diverse experiences:** The University is seen as frequently failing transgender and gender diverse staff and students. From cultural and attitudinal barriers, systemic and structural erasure, lack of dedicated services and facilities, as well as inconsistent approaches to inclusion and equity around the University, transgender and gender diverse staff and students face significant challenges to inclusion and success at ANU.

- **Work conditions:** Insecure and casualised work were flagged as barriers that are amplified for people with marginalised genders. For transgender and gender diverse people, insecure work creates a disincentive to 'come out' and live authentically in the workplace for fear of backlash. For people with caregiving responsibilities, often women, it creates additional challenges to accessing workplace flexibility, reduced hours, and leave.

- **Caregiver experiences:** Caregivers at ANU experience many of the challenges mentioned above. Some of the key barriers to success for staff with caregiving responsibilities include the University's culture around workplace flexibility and reduced hours, high informal burdens of proof for leave taking, expectations of full-time output on part-time hours, and lack of sufficient or appropriate dedicated parenting and caring facilities, such as parenting rooms.

- **Communication and training:** Across the board, staff and students agreed that many of the University's systems, policies, and processes are opaque and difficult to navigate. Some of the processes in question include changing of name and gender markers, accessing parental leave which is often complex, misconduct processes and reporting, and identified position recruitment. Improved communication of, and access to, these systems was called for by many participants.

Annex C - Language and Definitions

	Equity, diversity, and inclusion definitions
Term	**Definition**
Accessibility	The extent to which a service, facility, or initiative can be reached or entered. This can apply to both physical and digital environments and impacts on an individual's ability to fully participate in their education and career. This word is normally used to describe **access** for people with disability, but it can be extended to the availability of spaces, information, and services for any group.
ANU Community	In the context of this strategy, all individuals affiliated with ANU, staff members and students.
Barrier	An obstacle that prevents access to full participation and success in study, work, or life in general. In this context it is a gendered obstacle to accessing opportunities, information or services related to one's education and/or career.
BIPOC	BIPOC refers to all people who self-identify as one or more of the following: Bla(c)k, Indigenous and People of Colour. This definition includes, but is not strictly limited to: mixed-race or multi-racial people, people who are white-passing (i.e., are perceived to be white due to skin colour and other identifying features), and Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people. This definition is not intended to conflate the experiences of the distinct groups within this acronym.
Belonging	The experience of being accepted and included by those around you. Belonging at ANU means that everyone feels like a full member of the community, should they wish to be, and can thrive.
CALD	CALD refers to all people who self-identify as culturally and/or linguistically diverse. Usually, this group encompasses people who are born or have strong cultural or linguistic ties to a place other than Australia or a language other than English.
Discrimination	A distinction, exclusion, restriction, or preference resulting in unequal treatment or harm to an individual or group. Under Commonwealth legislation it is illegal to **discriminate** against someone on the basis of characteristics including sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex status.
Diversity	A mix of people in an organisation or community with a range of different personal, social, and professional experiences and identities. This can include differences among people with respect to age, class, ethnicity, gender, health, disability, race, sexual orientation, religion, physical size, education level, job and function, personality traits, and other human differences.

Equity, diversity, and inclusion definitions

Term	Definition
Equity	Fairness, ensuring everyone has access to equal opportunities, regardless of differences in personal experiences or characteristics. In this context based on a person's sex and gender. This does not always involve treating everyone the same: it involves recognising that everyone is different and providing individuals and communities with the things they need to ensure that everyone has the same opportunities.
Equality	The absence of discrimination and the presence of equal opportunities, in this context based on a person's sex or gender. It means providing the same opportunity to each person, including access to and control of social, economic, and political resources, with protection under the law.
Inclusion	A state where the diversity of people is respected and celebrated, where goals and contributions can be successfully achieved. Inclusion at ANU means that everyone is visible, heard and valued.
Intersectionality	A concept that recognises the complex interaction of different social markers that create disadvantage and privilege in society. Intersectional factors magnify, shift, and transform opportunities, challenges, and barriers. For example, gender intersects with age, race, ethnicity, class, socioeconomic status, disability, sexual orientation, and geographical location to shape social inequalities.

Sex and gender definitions

Term	Definition
Sex	A category assigned at birth on the basis of perceived biological characteristics such as genetics, reproductive organs, and other traits. Sex is usually categorised as **male**, **female**, or **intersex**.
Gender	Gender is a socially constructed classification that describes a person's identity, constituted through a set of social, psychological, and emotional traits including name, outward appearance, mannerisms, and dress. People can describe or express their gender identity as a **man**, a **woman**, **non-binary person**, **gender diverse perso**n, or as something else. **Woman** can include both cisgender and transgender women. **Man** can include both cisgender and transgender men. Gender is independent from the sex one is assigned at birth (e.g., male, female, intersex, etc.). As such, a person's sex and gender may not necessarily correspond in the traditional ways some might expect – that is, someone with typically female sex characteristics may describe their gender as being a woman, a man, non-binary, or something else.
Cisgender	Someone whose gender conforms to the dominant social expectations of the sex they were assigned at birth: for example, someone who was assigned female at birth (their sex) identifying as a woman (their gender) would be considered cisgender or cis.
Transgender	Someone whose gender does not conform to the dominant social expectations of the sex they were assigned at birth: for example, someone who was assigned female at birth (their sex) identifying as a man or non-binary person (their gender) would be considered **transgender** or trans.

Other definitions

Term	Definition
Caregiver	A person who regularly or intermittently looks after a child, elderly person, family member, or person with disability. Caregivers are sometimes referred to as **carers**.
LGBTQIA+	This acronym stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual/ace-spec. This acronym can be used as an umbrella term to describe people who sit outside of heteronormative, cis-normative expectations, and is sometimes used interchangeably with the word queer.
Sexuality	Describes the way people relate to others in a platonic, romantic, or sexual way. Sexual orientation can be fluid and people may describe it differently at different times. Some ways people might describe their sexual orientation include **heterosexual**, **homosexual**, **bisexual**, **pansexual**, **asexual**, **aromantic**, **queer**, or as something else.

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