

Women in Research Strategy 2016-2020

INTRODUCTION

La Trobe University is committed to actively championing gender equality to create and sustain a connected, innovative and caring organisational culture. We strive for research excellence through the provision of a robust research environment, dynamic research leadership and quality support for academic staff. The *Women in Research Strategy* outlines the current research environment and future objectives to enhance excellence. This will be achieved through supporting and attracting outstanding researchers and research support staff who are committed to our vision, creativity and innovation.

La Trobe is high performing in terms of the representation of women in our workforce with current figures at 63% women and 37% men. We also have a critical mass of women (30 percent and above) at all academic and professional levels with the exception of Vice Chancellor and Level E Academic in Central Administration which has a 25% female and 75% male split (There are 4 people in this category). This strategy will generate additional support to women at La Trobe by providing targeted opportunities to enhance research performance.

The *Women in Research Strategy* has been developed in response to the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) gender equity guidelines for administering institutions which stipulate that institutions must have specific strategies in place to support women in health and medical research. This strategy will fulfil this requirement and will also support the delivery of our *Future Ready: Strategic Plan 2013-2017 (Future Ready)* and our *Research Plan 2013-2017*.

Work is currently underway to coordinate and align gender equity initiatives across La Trobe. Our selection as a participant in the Athena Swan Pilot to progress women in Science has resulted in the formulation of a methodology to benchmark and measure success in this area. Our approach is aligned with this model and includes women involved in academic research as well as professional women who work in this field. This approach recognises that research is produced through a partnership of scholarly and administrative activities and provides a more holistic approach to enhancing our research performance.

STRATEGIC FOCUS

The *Women in Research Strategy* directly aligns with two of the four pillars of a distinctive La Trobe – ‘Research Excellence’ and ‘Brilliant Basics’. Excellence is the standard we set for our research and brilliant basics is the standard we set for our academic and professional services.

The Strategy ensures that La Trobe offers a culture where women are able to perform to the highest standards in terms of their scholarship, research and service. It also advances local and global efforts in this field, such as those championed by the NHMRC, Science in Australia Gender Equity (SAGE) and Athena Swan, to improve the representation of women in research and higher education. The success of this Strategy will bolster La Trobe’s reputation as an inclusive university where women are valued, recognised and supported, not only to succeed but excel as global leaders in research.

STATISTICS

La Trobe currently has a ratio of 62% women and 38% men working in research areas across the University. This figure represents academic and professional staff who are employed in fulltime, part time and casual positions. It does not include Higher Degree students unless they are employed by the University.

Statistics reveal that La Trobe is performing well in terms of the aggregate number of women in research across the University with the exception in Science, Health and Engineering (SHE) of 'Level D' (35% women) and in Arts, Social Sciences and Commerce (ASSC), 'Level E' (36% women), ESMC 1-3 (no women) and HEO3 (no women).

The following tables illustrate the aggregate levels as of July 2015 for fulltime and part time (continuing and fixed term) employees in the Colleges of Science, Health and Engineering (SHE) and Arts, Social Sciences and Commerce (ASSC) and Central Administration:

SHE	FEMALE	MALE	TOTAL
Academic			
LEVA	110 (67%)	54 (33%)	164
LEVB	204 (65%)	111 (35%)	315
LEVC	74 (51%)	69 (49%)	143
LEVD	30 (36%)	52 (64%)	82
LEVE	32 (51%)	30 (49%)	62
Professional			
ESMC 1	1 (50%)	1 (50%)	2
ESMC 2	1 (100%)	-	1
ESMC 3	1 (50%)	1 (50%)	2
HE02	2 (100%)	-	2
HE03	1 (33%)	2 (67%)	3
HE04	26 (83%)	5 (17%)	31
HE05	60 (82%)	13 (18%)	73
HE06	23 (50%)	23 (50%)	46
HE07	31 (79%)	8 (21%)	39
HE08	16 (69%)	7 (31%)	23
HE09	12 (69%)	6 (31%)	18
HE010	2 (67%)	1 (33%)	3
RES ASST	6 (100%)	-	6
Grand Total	632 (62%)	383 (38%)	1015

ASSC	FEMALE	MALE	TOTAL
Academic			
LEVA	18 (47%)	20 (53%)	38
LEVB	97 (60%)	63 (40%)	160
LEVC	39 (49%)	41 (51%)	80

LEVD	23 (48%)	25 (52%)	48
LEVE	13 (34%)	25 (66%)	38
Professional			
ESMC 1	-	1 (100%)	1
ESMC 2	-	1 (100%)	1
ESMC 3	-	1 (100%)	1
HE03	-	1 (100%)	1
HE04	7 (77%)	2 (23%)	9
HE05	38 (86%)	6 (14%)	44
HE06	11 (61%)	7 (39%)	18
HE07	10 (83%)	2 (17%)	12
HE08	11 (84%)	2 (16%)	13
HE09	4 (100%)	-	4
HE010	2 (100%)	-	2
RES ASST	3 (100%)	-	3
Grand Total	276 (58%)	197 (42%)	473

CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION	FEMALE	MALE	TOTAL
Academic			
LEVA	9 (100%)	-	9
LEVB	18 (85%)	3 (15%)	21
LEVC	6 (60%)	4 (40%)	10
LEVD	1 (33%)	2 (67%)	3
LEVE	1 (25%)	3 (75%)	4
Professional			
BNDA	-	1 (100%)	1
ESMC 1	11 (31%)	24 (69%)	35
ESMC 2	9 (52%)	8 (48%)	17
ESMC 3	5 (38%)	8 (62%)	13
ESMC 4	2 (40%)	3 (60%)	5
HE02	2 (50%)	2 (50%)	4
HE03	14 (51%)	13 (49%)	27
HE04	76 (74%)	26 (26%)	102
HE05	211 (85%)	35 (15%)	246
HE06	147 (65%)	79 (35%)	226
HE07	145 (63%)	82 (37%)	227
HE08	80 (53%)	69 (47%)	149
HE09	51 (51%)	49 (49%)	100
HE010	20 (47%)	22 (53%)	42
Grand Total	808 (65%)	433 (35%)	1240

The following table represents casual staffing figures for the same period:

AREA	FEMALE	MALE
SHE	1281 (64%)	712 (36%)
ASSC	624 (60%)	419 (40%)
Central Administration	854 (65%)	444 (35%)
TOTAL	2759 (63%)	1575 (37%)

CURRENT SUPPORT

La Trobe currently supports women in research through the provision of academic and administrative policies, documents, programs and activities. Our primary resources and activities are listed below:

KEY POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS

Published

- Workplace Behaviours Policy
- Work and Family Policy
- Children on Campus Policy
- Disabilities, Mental Health Illness and/or ongoing Medical Conditions Policy
- Equal Opportunity Policy
- Prevention of Workplace Bullying & Occupational Violence Procedure
- Sexual Harassment, Harassment and Discrimination Policy
- Staff Conduct and Compliance Policy
- Flexible Work Arrangements Policy
- Domestic Violence Support Policy
- Remuneration & Benefits Policy (includes Gender Pay Equity)

Pending Publication

- Breastfeeding Policy (November 2015)
- Staff Diversity and Inclusion Policy (Early 2016)

PROGRAMS

Athena Swan

La Trobe is an inaugural member of the Science in Australia Gender Equity (SAGE) pilot of the Athena SWAN Charter to improve gender equity practices, representation and retention in science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine (STEMM) disciplines. The program will provide SHE with access to a standardised, methodological framework for collecting data and identifying gaps and opportunities in gender equity processes. It uses research to identify and change practices that unfairly exclude, marginalise or disadvantage people, supporting organisations to remove barriers to progression and success for staff and students. This will provide a driving force for sustainable change in SHE.

Professional Programs

La Trobe has established mentoring and skills training programs that promote and seek to increase women's participation internal and external to the University.

- La Trobe Women's Network
- La Trobe Senior Women's Network
- La Trobe Mentoring Program (Mentees: 81% female and Mentors: 59% female)

We are also currently undertaking a major diversity and inclusion improvement program which will significantly enhance La Trobe's offerings from 2016.

Research Activities

The Research Office, ASSC and SHE host a variety of research fora aimed at supporting research activity across the University. While some of these have included research topics concerning women there has not been a targeted effort in this area.

GOALS, TARGETS AND STRATEGIES

The *Women in Research Strategy* builds on the abovementioned La Trobe resources and processes to provide a more targeted approach to supporting women.

The following four key goals encapsulate our main effort and are aimed at attracting, retaining, supporting and encouraging women to be exemplary research professionals and to achieve the research agenda outlined in *Future Ready* and our *Research Plan*.

GOAL 1

OPTIMISE THE RECRUITMENT, SELECTION AND RETENTION OF WOMEN IN RESEARCH		
Attracting and retaining high calibre women is crucial to the success of this strategy. Our researchers operate in an intensely competitive and dynamic global marketplace which demands constant innovation and excellence. La Trobe will actively seek, attract and retain the best quality academic and professional women to work in research. We will continue to encourage and enable staff to build their careers through academic and professional learning and development to improve our research performance through high level expertise and diversity of thinking. Our distinctive effort will make La Trobe a desirable destination for talented women in research.		
Strategies	Responsibility	Key Performance Indicators
1. Review recruitment procedures and processes to ensure language and practices are equitable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ HR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Produce a recruitment report and action plan, if required, to remediate any identified problems.
2. Establish identified 'women only' research grants aimed at attracting and retaining women.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Research Office ▪ SHE ▪ ASSC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establishment of grants.
3. Identify women working in research to be included in talent management and leadership programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SHE ▪ ASSC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The production of a register that identifies women in research from SHE and ASSC to be included in talent and leadership programs. ▪ An annual report that confirms the number of women in research included in talent and leadership programs.
4. Provide academic and professional development opportunities aligned to key milestones in a researcher's career.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SHE ▪ ASSC ▪ HR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A communications plan to be established that triggers alerts when opportunities are made available. ▪ An events program be established to provide targeted development.
5. Compile a register of professional development opportunities targeted at women.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Research Office ▪ HR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Completion of the register.
6. Analyse data associated with women in research annually to ensure problem areas are identified and mitigation strategies developed and implemented in a timely manner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Research Office ▪ HR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Completion of an annual Women in Research status report.
7. Complete a report into the promotion of women at La Trobe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ HR ▪ SHE ▪ ASSC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Completion of the report.

GOAL 2

BUILD A POSITIVE UNIVERSITY RESEARCH CULTURE THAT OPENLY VALUES WOMEN		
La Trobe is committed to investing in a culture that enables the production of excellent research. It is widely recognised that across many sectors women face challenges that impede their career progression. La Trobe is determined to actively break down barriers for women in research through allocating resources to overcome identified areas of disadvantage across the University. We intend to be leaders in this field and to share our knowledge and experience with research and other organisations who are interested in undertaking meaningful gender reform.		
Strategies	Responsibility	Key Performance Indicators

1. Targeted recruitment for women in senior positions (levels D&E and HEO10+).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ HR ▪ SHE ▪ ASSC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gender parity in senior positions.
2. Encourage women to access flexible work arrangements to enable work-life balance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SHE ▪ ASSC ▪ HR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Delivery of a flexible work arrangements communications campaign. ▪ Inclusion of flexible work arrangements in Career Success discussions. ▪ Provision of resources to HoS, HoD and other research leaders in actively encouraging and responding to requests for flexible work arrangements.
3. Schedule key meetings between the hours of 9.30am-3pm with dial-in access to accommodate women with childcare/carer responsibilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ University-wide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Communication from Heads of College to all staff about the new meeting requirements. ▪ All research meetings held between 9.30am and 3pm with dial-in access.
4. Record and/or live stream research events to enable greater access for women with carer/personal responsibilities which limits physical attendance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Event Co-ordinators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Events are recorded and/or live streamed.
5. Produce a communications strategy and plan aimed at profiling academic and professional women in research areas at La Trobe.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Research Office ▪ Marketing and Engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Completion of the strategy and plan. ▪ An items highlighting the value of women in research to be included in all editions of College News. ▪ Colleges to submit a quarterly item that profiles women's contribution to research for inclusion on La Trobe's News website and social media platforms.
6. Host research events that focus on women in research.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Research Office ▪ SHE ▪ ASSC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An events calendar created and delivered.

GOAL 3

OFFER RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES AND SUPPORT FOR WOMEN

La Trobe is committed to providing opportunities, support and infrastructure to assist staff at all campuses to build and maintain excellent research careers. We will develop our internal research capability through the provision of targeted research support for women in bidding for competitive grants and other funding opportunities. We will also ensure that female professional staff working in research areas are knowledgeable, trained and equipped to perform to their best. A unified team of exceptional academic and professional research staff will ensure that La Trobe is optimally placed to meet its *Future Ready* goal of global recognition for research excellence, creativity and innovation.

Strategies	Responsibility	Key Performance Indicators
1. Harness La Trobe's existing mentoring program to pair women with high performing researchers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ HR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create a stream within the mentoring program specifically aimed at women in research.
2. Develop a register of funding opportunities targeted at women.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Research Office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Completion of the register.
3. Introduce 'women only' research grants aimed at attracting and retaining women in research.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Research Office ▪ SHE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Feasibility study.
4. Establish a register of prizes and awards for women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Research Office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establishment of prizes and awards register.

GOAL 4

PROVIDE WOMEN WITH ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES TO ENHANCE THEIR RESEARCH PROFILE

La Trobe recognises the need to support and champion women in research through enabling them to build reputable and impactful research profiles. *Future Ready* reinforces that all staff are responsible for providing exceptional service with a focus on client needs. It also demands that staff maintain standards of academic excellence while thinking more commercially and innovatively to deliver impactful outputs and outcomes. This strategy supports women in achieving these goals through facilitating greater engagement with fellow research experts, industry and the media. We will equip women with the support tools necessary to develop an academic and public profile, while also celebrating their successes through University communications. Enhanced engagement and profiling will contribute to women at La Trobe being connected and publicly recognised for their expertise and value.

Strategies	Responsibility	Key Performance Indicators
1. Facilitate engagement between women in research and internal/external partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Research Office ▪ SHE ▪ ASSC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish a funding program for women to attend conferences which could include provisions such as paying for carer's support. ▪ Establish a women in research sub-group within the Women's Network at La Trobe.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop an internal secondment/work experience program for women within the University. ▪ Create a stream within the mentoring program specifically aimed at women in research ▪ Investigate the feasibility of establishing a secondment program for women to work in industry. ▪ Investigate the potential to establish joint scholarships for women at La Trobe with external partners.
2. Actively promote women's research via internal and external communications through a formalised communications strategy and plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Research Office ▪ Marketing and Engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Completion of a communications strategy and plan. ▪ Publication of a profile of key woman working in research in at least 50% of the editions of College News. ▪ Colleges to submit a quarterly item that profiles women's contribution to research for inclusion on La Trobe's News website and social media platforms.
3. Provide women with a specialist program in media profiling and training.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Marketing and Engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establishment and delivery of the program.
4. Internal funding procedures to include extensions to accommodate Maternity Leave, Parental Leave, and reduction in appointment from Full time to Part time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SHE ▪ ASSC ▪ HR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inclusion of this requirement in all relevant internal research funding documents.

Responsibility

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor & VP (Research), has overall accountability for the development, execution and monitoring of the *Women in Research Strategy*.

Monitoring

The *Women in Research Strategy* identifies initiatives to be implemented and specifies the performance targets against which progress is measured. It will be monitored through regular progress reports submitted via the Research Strategy Committee to the Academic Board, the Diversity and Inclusion unit to the Planning and Resources Committee, and the annual reporting process to the Workplace Gender Equality Agency.

Review

The University will review priorities annually to take account of emerging changes in the external and organisational environments.