

MEDIA RELEASE



Scentre Group's rising star awarded inaugural \$30,000 NAWIC NSW Executive Leadership Scholarship

Sydney, Thursday 28 September 2023: Australia's most generous scholarship for women in property and construction, the inaugural NAWIC NSW Executive Leadership Scholarship, has been presented to Scentre Group's Talia Keyes.

The \$30,000 NAWIC NSW Executive Leadership Scholarship was established in 2022 and was made possible thanks to the generous support of Lendlease.

Ms Keyes was appointed General Manager for Design with Scentre Group, the owner and operator of Westfield in Australia and New Zealand, in April 2023 and is the first female to hold the role. She leads a team of 165 design professionals across four states. Ms Keyes will use the scholarship to attend a Harvard Business School executive education course in Boston.

"We designed this scholarship to help the next generation of female leaders build the business acumen and skills they need to catapult into positions where they can drive change," says NAWIC NSW President Georgia Coulston.

"We received 14 high-quality applicants in the scholarship's first year and this is a testament to the strength of female talent ready for opportunities to lead. We are very grateful to the team at Lendlease, who are big supporters of NAWIC across Australia, and who understand that championing female leadership will strengthen our entire industry," Ms Coulston adds.

"Each year, this scholarship will help one female leader take her career to the next level. We are confident the scholarship will have a powerful ripple effect as a growing cohort of female leaders drive diversity and change throughout the construction industry," adds Stephanie Graham, Executive General Manager, Lendlease.

The scholarship applicants were assessed by a panel of five judges: Gabrielle Trainor AO, Acting Chair of Infrastructure Australia; Davina Rooney, CEO of the Green Building Council of Australia; independent infrastructure advisor Chris Lock; and past NAWIC NSW presidents Harriet Oldmeadow, Partner at Baker McKenzie, and Elizabeth Brookes, Partner at Lander & Rogers.

"The judging panel was impressed with Talia's sophisticated career plan, her clarity of vision and determination to enhance female participation in her spheres of influence beyond Scentre Group, whether as a Walkley Foundation board observer or with the Australian Institute of Architects," says judge Davina Rooney.

Among Ms Keyes' achievements, she led the development of Scentre Group's Design and Construction Gender Equity Action Plan, which includes targeted actions to increase female representation through training and mentoring, partnerships with key industry bodies and through behavioural change.

Ms Keyes led Scentre Group's community outreach plan to upgrade a government-owned domestic violence refuge in Western Australia. She has made a significant voluntary contribution through the Social Impact Hub and Australian Institute of Architects. She is also leading diversity and inclusion initiatives in Australia's media through her role as a board observer at The Walkley Foundation. She holds a Bachelor of Architectural Studies, and Masters qualifications in architecture, project management and business administration.

"When it comes to women in leadership, we often say 'You can't be what you can't see'. But the strong cohort of applicants this year shows us that there is a depth of female talent waiting for opportunities and, perhaps, for our industry, 'we can't be what we choose not to see'," Ms Coulston concludes.

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About the NAWIC NSW Women's Executive Leadership Scholarship

In 2022, NAWIC's NSW Chapter introduced a new scholarship program, supported through an auction prize donation by Cult and through the generosity of winning bidder, Lendlease.

This scholarship recognises women that have already made an impact on the construction and building industry, and who demonstrate potential as future leaders. The scholarship covers the cost of tuition fees, travel allowance and other related costs like childcare to the value of \$30,000 for the recipient to use towards an executive leadership program of their choice.

The 2023 scholarship is supported by generous sponsors, Lendlease and Cult Studio, through the NAWIC NSW Awards for Excellence auction in 2022. Cult's longstanding relationship with NAWIC NSW, together with Lendlease's continued support of NAWIC NSW's awards program, will support the development of an alumna of women who will be visible role models for future generations.

Following the inaugural presentation in 2023, the successful recipient will be announced at the NAWIC NSW Winners Series event, hosted by the company with the winning bid at the awards auction the previous year.

About NAWIC

Established in 1995, the National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC) champions and empowers women in the construction and related industries to reach their full potential. NAWIC's vision is an equitable industry within which women fully participate, and its values are: Courage, Inclusion, Resilience, Integrity, Safety & Wellbeing. See: www.nawic.com.au

About NAWIC NSW Chapter

The NAWIC NSW Chapter is a passionate group of women who volunteer their time and expertise to host and deliver a range of events aimed at furthering women in the construction industry. The committee and NAWIC members work in a variety of fields within the construction industry and the Chapter's activities are designed to address the diversity of these groups. NAWIC NSW's goal is to celebrate the achievements of female colleagues in the construction industry as well as to inform, educate and provide networking opportunities.

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