



THE
NAWIC
JOURNAL
2023



At Built, there's more than one way forward to shape your career.

As one of Australia's largest and most diverse construction groups, Built proudly supports women in construction and offers endless opportunities to grow your career.

Our people are given real autonomy and opportunities to lead by example, solve complex challenges and make a real difference.

We foster an agile, authentic and inclusive culture, enabling our people to forge new pathways while advancing their careers and our industry forward.

If you're looking to make your mark join us and build your career with Built.

built.com.au

Built



**THE NEW WAY
FORWARD**

CONTENTS

ABOUT NAWIC.....	1	SMALL BUSINESS	
SHIFTING THE DIAL.....	2	<i>Laura & Juanita share their story</i>	45
CHAIR'S FOREWORD.....	3	SMASHING BARRIERS	
GENERAL MANAGER'S FOREWORD.....	4	<i>Landmark pledge another step forward in smashing concrete walls turning women away from construction careers</i>	47
THE NAWIC BOARD OF DIRECTORS.....	5	THE LEAKY PIPELINE	
AUSTRALIAN CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY FORUM		<i>A NAWIC changemaker podcast series</i>	49
<i>A strong friend of NAWIC</i>	7	WOMEN IN WASTE	
MOIRA'S JOURNEY.....	8	<i>Creating sustainable futures</i>	53
THE LEAKY PIPELINE.....	9	SETTING NEW STANDARDS IN CONSTRUCTION.....	55
KICKING FLEXIBILITY GOALS? THAT'S A TEAM EFFORT		HAVING THE HARD CONVERSATIONS	
<i>Collaboration, upskilling & determination. Partnering with the AFLW is helping John Holland disrupt the status quo in construction.</i>	11	<i>Why Washroom Dignity matters to all people</i>	57
BROADS RISE TOGETHER		NOT YOUR AVERAGE CEO.....	59
<i>You can be what you see & what you hear!</i>	13	NAWIC MEMBERSHIP SURVEY 2023.....	61
EMMA'S BRIGHT IDEA		THE PSYCHOLOGY OF WOMEN IN POWER.....	63
<i>You can be what you can see - illustrating the way forward</i>	15	CAREER SPOTLIGHT	
CREATING A PSYCHOLOGICALLY SAFE WORKPLACE		<i>Cost & Commercial Manager</i>	66
<i>for women in construction</i>	17	2022 NAWIC NATIONAL AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE.....	67
MEET NAWIC MEMBER <i>Jess McKenzie</i>	19	2022 NAWIC AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE WA.....	72
WHY PERSEVERANCE MATTERS		2022 NAWIC AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE VIC.....	75
<i>One woman's struggle to find her place in 'a man's world'</i>	21	2022 NAWIC AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE QLD.....	78
THE NATIONAL DIESEL DIRT & TURF EXPO		2022 NAWIC AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE NSW.....	81
<i>welcomes its association with NAWIC</i>	23	2022 NAWIC AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE TAS.....	85
OUR JOURNEY TO BECOMING AN EMPLOYER OF CHOICE		2022 NAWIC AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE NT.....	88
FOR GENDER EQUALITY <i>John Holland</i>	25	2022 NAWIC AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE SA.....	91
DOING SOMETHING ABOUT THE MISSED OPPORTUNITIES		2022 NAWIC AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE ACT.....	94
<i>Why Nigel Gorman is painting a different picture for trades</i>	29	CONSTRUCTION CONVERSATIONS	
CELEBRATING & SUPPORTING FEMALE APPRENTICES		<i>NAWIC member stories</i>	97
<i>Bunnings Trade & NAWIC collaboration</i>	31	FOSTERING FEMALE TALENT IN CONSTRUCTION	
EMPOWERING WORKING PARENTS IN CONSTRUCTION		<i>NAWIC QLD breaking the mould at Bray Park Careers Day</i>	99
<i>Advancing work-life balance by nurturing growth, diversity & well-being</i>	33		
PARENTHOOD IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY.....	37		
UNDERSTANDING THE CHALLENGES OF CONSTRUCTION			
WOMEN <i>NZ perspective</i>	39		
EMBRACING WANDERLUST			
<i>Navigating boundaries of land & society</i>	43		



In 1995, NAWIC Australia was founded in Melbourne, on Wurundjeri land of the Kulin Nation.

We pay our respects to the traditional owners of this land and waterways, as well as elders, past, present and emerging.

We extend this respect to all indigenous peoples of this continent and its adjacent lands, recognising their cultures as the oldest continuous living cultures in human history.

We recognise the deep spiritual connections and relationship Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have with community, as well as the lands, oceans, waterways, air and sky.

We acknowledge that the land we live, work and play on always was and always will be Aboriginal land.



Editor: Vicky Young **Designer:** Nikala Drager

Cover: A snapshot of the Alchemy Construct team (top, L-R) Jason Smith, James MacDonald, Michael Nguyen, Ivana Stevanja, Freddie Vine (bottom, L-R) Alankrita Negi, Jeanette Kallin, Ben Nicolson, Monica Alvarez Pinto. **Photographer:** Kristoffer Paulsen

Publisher: NAWIC
PO Box 8327, Glenmore Park 2745

T: 1800 767 977
E: admin@nawic.com.au
W: www.nawic.com.au

NAWIC assumes no liability or responsibility for any inaccurate, delayed or incomplete information, nor for any actions taken in reliance thereon. The information contained about each individual, event or organisation has been provided by such individual, event organisers or organisation without verification by us.

The opinion expressed in each article is the opinion of its author and does not necessarily reflect the opinion of NAWIC. Therefore, NAWIC carries no responsibility for the opinion expressed thereon.

©The NAWIC Journal 2023. Any form of reproduction of any content from this publication without the written permission of NAWIC is strictly prohibited.

ABOUT NAWIC

At NAWIC we welcome women in construction from all walks of life, cultures, ages and career stages. Our members work in remote and regional locations, in the city, by the coast, on farms and in factories, as sole traders and in large commercial and government enterprises and infrastructure. NAWIC members work onsite on the tools, in the office and a hybrid of these, are apprentices, business backbones, male allies and CEO's, and everything in between. Our corporate members are organisations with a genuine commitment to workplace gender diversity and inclusion.

Whether you are beginning your career, looking for a new chapter or refining your lifetimes work, at NAWIC you will find a diverse community of like-minded people; great people doing great work.

A not-for-profit and the Peak the Body championing the diverse collective of women and non-male identifying people in construction, NAWIC provides a forum for its members to meet and exchange information, ideas and solutions. Our members have an opportunity to expand personal and business networks, maintain awareness of industry developments, improve skills and knowledge and make a contribution to other women in the construction industry.

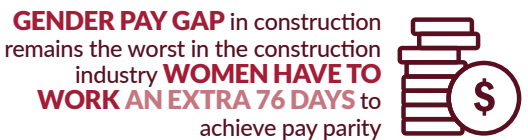
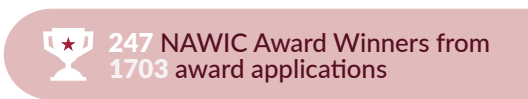
We rise together.



SHIFTING THE DIAL

Three years ago, NAWIC set an audacious strategic goal to work with industry and government to increase female participation in construction to 25% by 2025. To achieve this NAWIC has worked tirelessly to support, celebrate and collaborate, amplifying the voice of our members and improving the outcomes for women in construction including:

Across the industry this is snapshot of our progress over the past three years and the opportunities for improvements:



Targets and quotas in construction

From our Government perspective gender diversity requirements for construction projects currently vary by state and territory:

- In Victoria, publicly funded construction projects valued over \$20m must meet quotas set out in the [Building Equality Policy](#). From 2024, action will be taken against non-compliance.
- Instead of quotas, in NSW the [Women in Construction strategy](#) outlines a target for women to occupy 15 per cent of trade and non-traditional roles by 2030.
- There are no quotas or targets in Queensland, but project-based initiatives exist. The state's National Association of Women In Construction (NAWIC) chapter has also set a target to increasing female participation in front-line trade roles to 11 per cent.
- The ACT government is working to establish the [Women in Construction Procurement Policy](#). The policy, including proposed gender quotas for government-backed projects estimated at \$5m or more, is expected to be released by the end of 2023.
- WA, TAS and the NT do not have quotas or targets, but limited gender diversity initiatives are underway.

From a Federal Government perspective, we applaud the 50/50 gender balance with the newly appointed National Construction Industry Forum. NAWIC will continue to provide input with both Federal and State Governments and advocate for our members.

We take this opportunity to thank our tireless NAWIC volunteers, who give so generously of their time, to advance the outcomes for women in construction. With the collective work of so many we can continue to rise together. **n**

CHAIR'S FOREWORD



After being introduced to NAWIC while working in the USA, Paula Gerber established NAWIC Australia 28 years ago in 1995. Upon returning to Australia, Paula contacted everyone possible and ended up with 100 women in a room to discuss the creation of a community of women in construction.

Fast forward 28 years and NAWIC Australia now represents over 11,000 members and 274 corporate members, hosts over 200 events with more than 9,000 attendees annually and hands out \$150,000 of scholarships. The National team is made up of 14 staff members and there is an established chapter council in every state and territory of Australia which is proudly run and supported by more than 250 volunteers. Our National Board of Directors, made up of 8 women with varied backgrounds and experiences, is making the shift from a purely operational board to becoming fully strategic and stepping up in guiding the organisation as a whole. What a difference 28 years, a lot of passion and the need for genuine change can make!

So, how far has the dial shifted in that time within the industry? The statistics for women in construction have not increased drastically. In 2023 according to ABS women in construction still only make up 13.6% with women in trades at 3%. The biggest difference we have been able to see is that there is a shift in the positions of the women in the industry. Once upon a time, you would never come across a female business owner, CEO or site supervisor. While there are still not a huge number of women in these roles, we are seeing them become more and more common. This really does prove that you can be what you can see and the more that we hear the success stories of these trailblazing women, the more chance that others too will take up the gauntlet and push the boundaries even further.

NAWIC has gone from a space for women to network and build relationships to now being established globally in countries beyond the USA including Canada, New Zealand, South Africa, UK, Qatar, Singapore and Papua New Guinea with more looking to build a new NAWIC community. The conversations between the global affiliates and the relationships being built are invaluable. There are some exciting plans in the pipeline so be sure to keep an eye out as more details are released!

NAWIC is always looking for new ways to support, promote and encourage change. This year we have been part of some very exciting new partnerships that do just that. We joined forces with Bunnings to deliver the Trade Women in Apprenticeships Award which received more than 1,750 applications nationally. The successful 10 applicants were awarded packs valued at over \$10,000. Hearing and reading the stories of these applicants was so inspirational. Congratulations again to the winners and best of luck on starting out your construction journey.

As part of our advocacy pillar it is important for NAWIC to accurately be able to represent our members and so the NAWIC survey for

2023 was an opportunity to make sure that we are doing just that. The survey revealed that 41.9% of respondents are challenged by sexual harassment and 54.7% by bullying. 46.1% of respondents disagree or strongly disagree that men do enough to support women in the industry. One result that I found interesting was that 23.4% of respondents feel that women in the industry do not do enough to support each other. There were some positive takeaways as well with 81.2% of respondents stating that they agree or strongly agree that the role of women in construction is changing for the better. Thank you to those that took the time to share their views and please keep an eye out for the 2024 survey to ensure that your experiences and thoughts are being voiced.

There are many inspirational and some very challenging stories shared in this edition of the NAWIC journal. I urge you all to take the time to read them and distribute them with your network as well. Through sharing our stories we make everyone in the industry more visible, more accountable and we push for change to make things better.

I am very often asked about what NAWIC is doing in the education space to show those that aren't in the industry what construction is about. When young children think of construction, the first image that comes to mind is a man holding a hammer. When parents of young children think of construction they think of cat calling tradies and horror stories of women being assaulted at work. Mature aged construction entrants think of an industry that is not supportive and challenging to be part of. Those of us in the industry know that there are some incredible employers within construction where these stereotypical scenarios would never happen.

So how do we fix this? We all need to speak up! Speak up when you see something that isn't ok. Be part of the change and do not stop speaking up until you are happy with your work environment and the industry around you. Speak up and share the success stories and the good times. Speak up and educate those around you about the huge range of roles that exist in construction. There is a job for everyone waiting for them in this incredible and rewarding industry no matter what their experience, skills or background. Speak up and insist that your employers are more inclusive and speak up to government and demand that they do more to support us all. The improvements that are needed to our industry are not just fixing women's problems, they are for everyone!

Let's get loud, let's all be part of the change and together let's not stop until we are part of an industry that is inclusive and supportive of everyone! ■

Christina Yiakoupi
National Chairperson, NAWIC

GENERAL MANAGER'S FOREWORD



Welcome to the latest edition of the NAWIC Journal, where we proudly shine a spotlight on the remarkable achievements, contributions, and stories of women and allies in the construction industry. With each issue, we strive to elevate the voices of trailblazers, innovators, and advocates who are shaping the future of this dynamic field.

In a traditionally male-populated industry, the women who choose to pursue careers in construction demonstrate resilience, determination, and a passion for breaking barriers. They are architects, engineers, project managers, tradeswomen, backbones, and leaders who are rewriting the narrative and inspiring generations to come.

Our Journal is dedicated to showcasing the diverse talents and expertise that women bring to the construction sector. We believe in the power of representation and the importance of highlighting the achievements of women who have shattered glass ceilings, defied expectations and paved the way for others to follow.

Throughout the pages of this issue, you will find captivating stories of women who have made a significant impact in various construction disciplines. From groundbreaking projects to innovative technologies, from empowering initiatives to personal triumphs, their journeys will inspire and empower readers from all walks of life.

We delve into the untold stories of women who have overcome adversity, challenged stereotypes and forged their own paths in a male-populated industry. We explore the strategies employed by organisations to promote diversity and inclusion, and we celebrate the successes achieved by women-led initiatives that are transforming the construction landscape.

This year was the first of many firsts for NAWIC. It was the first time in 28 years that

NAWIC reached over 10,000 members and over 220 corporate members. It is such an honour and privilege that our members have chosen to be part of the NAWIC family. To our members and sponsors new and returning, we welcome you, we are grateful for you and we hope to support you as best we can. Our amazing and dedicated volunteers spend countless hours ensuring events are planned and tailored for our members and that they represent you in front of Government and Industry.

This year we held our Inaugural National Awards for Excellence. To pay tribute to NAWIC's humble beginnings, there was no better place than to host the event in Melbourne. What a spectacular event it was. Over 200 guests joined us to celebrate three outstanding winners. Our winners and their achievements are highlighted throughout the Journal.

One of my favourite pieces we worked on and continue to work on, is our leaky pipeline strategy. Our leaky pipeline highlights the areas in which the construction industry must improve to attract, retain and empower our women. With the stats of women in construction barely shifting – still, at 13%, it is important that we look at the issues that are prevalent in the industry and that we take steps to fix them. Whilst the title 'leaky pipeline' can be seen to have negative connotations, it is an opportunity for everyone to acknowledge that we do have some problems, and they must be fixed to move forward.

We must look at what is working well and continue to highlight the strengths of the industry, as this is how we will attract great people. Once we have these people, how do we retain them? It isn't enough what is currently being done as they are leaving just as quickly as entering.

It can be easy to turn a blind eye to what issues lie beneath the surface, however, growth comes with being uncomfortable.

It is time that the industry and the people within it start to get uncomfortable.

Our journal is more than a publication—it is a platform for dialogue, empowerment, and change. We encourage readers to engage in the conversation, to share their own experiences, and to collaborate in building an industry that reflects the rich tapestry of talent and perspectives within it. We focus on highlighting the strengths women bring to the industry and how our male champions are helping to remove the entrenched barriers that exist in construction.

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to the exceptional women and men who have generously shared their stories, insights, and expertise for this issue. Their courage and dedication serve as an inspiration to us all, reminding us that gender should never be a barrier to achieving greatness.

Finally, we extend our gratitude to our readers—both women and men—who support and champion gender equality in the construction industry. Your commitment to creating an inclusive and diverse environment paves the way for a stronger, more vibrant industry that embraces the full potential of its workforce.

Together, let us celebrate the achievements of women in construction and work tirelessly to create a future where gender equality is the norm. We will continue to strive for 25% by 2025 so that together we can shift the dial and attract, retain and empower our women in construction.

Enjoy this edition of the NAWIC Journal and let us continue to build a better, more inclusive world. [#werisetgether](#) □

Lauren Jabej
General Manager, NAWIC

THE NAWIC BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**CHRISTINA
YIAKKOUPIS**
National Chairperson

Christina is a Civil Engineer with over 10 years experience working in construction. In her current role as a Contracts Administrator working for De Martin & Gasparini, one of South-East Queensland's major concrete supply, pump and place contractors, she discovered her love of concrete and working with people of all backgrounds to deliver on a range of challenging projects. Christina joined the NAWIC QLD Chapter in 2011 and led the awards team before stepping into the Vice President role. She was elected to the National Board in 2017 and became Chair in 2022. Christina loves to hear and share the tough and inspiring stories of those working in construction and celebrating the amazing achievements of the women and their allies in this challenging industry. By speaking up we are all doing our bit to encourage that they can be what they can see.



SAMANTHA WOODWARD
Vice Chairperson

Samantha is the Founder and Managing Director of THINK SAVVY - an organisation that provides services and high-tech solutions in the governance, risk, safety and compliance spaces. THINK SAVVY collaborates with medium and large enterprises nationally and internationally. Samantha has twenty plus years of experience in non-traditional working environments, including the mining and resources sector and the construction industry. As a woman in STEM, Samantha also has a passion for software technology and effectively bridges the divide between operational priorities and technology solutions, through demystifying technology. Prior to joining the NAWIC Board, Samantha held various roles in the NAWIC VIC Chapter including President and Sponsorship Chair. In her Director role, Samantha is an active voice for increased engagement of women and girls in the construction industry. She aligns herself with the priorities of celebrating women and encouraging them to be bold and brave while also advocating for industry change.



JENNIFER GILLETT
Director

Jennifer is an industry leader with more than twenty years of experience in building and construction. For NAWIC she is the QLD immediate past president and current Vice Chair of the National Board. Jennifer has also served on the QLD Government's Ministerial Construction Council and Building Construction & Maintenance Category Council, plus industry leadership and diversity committees for PCA and AIPM. Jen was recently appointed to the PCA QLD Retirement Living Committee.

Her roles have equipped her with leadership skills, strategic development capability and the joy of empowering others to achieve. Her lifelong love of sport and adventure have seen her trek through the Borneo Jungle, the great Bibbulmen Track in WA and climb Mt Everest. Jennifer was capped QLD's first Centurion player for Brothers Rugby Union, and she also serves on the board of QLD's Rugby Union Women's Committee. Jennifer is classically trained in operatic voice, as a mezzo soprano having performed at the Sydney Opera House and QLD Performing Arts Centre.



LOREN HICKEY
Director

With degrees in Civil Construction and Engineering, Marketing and Public Relations, Loren is a Precontracts Professional with close to 15 years of experience in the construction industry. Loren leads the teams that fuel the overall sustainability of some of Australia's largest construction companies through the development and delivery of successful work-winning outcomes. She is an active member of the industry, recently stepping down from the role of Deputy Chair of the Infrastructure Association of Queensland (IAQ). She has been an active Member of the National Association of Women in Construction since 2015 and has previously held board roles for Queensland Rugby League and a government-funded Community and Social Housing organisation. In 2022, Loren was appointed as a Board Member of the Board of Professional Engineers of Queensland and will soon complete her Master of Construction Law at the University of Melbourne.



LYN O'BRIEN
Director

Lyn has more than 15 years of expertise across pre-construction and management roles. With hands-on experience spanning domestic and international markets, together with broad-reaching industry relationships, she is focused on providing high-quality levels of delivery and building long lasting client relationships. Lyn's collaborative leadership style ensures she consistently delivers responsive outcomes that are structured to the unique requirements of every client and project. Lyn is a National Director of NAWIC and was awarded the 2022 LHQ Outstanding Leadership Award for Women in Construction. She holds a Bachelor of Construction Economics and Masters in Quantity Surveying.



KYLIE JUDD
Director

Kylie's love of technicality and project management led her to a career in construction management. With a background in Civil Engineering and Management, Kylie has fulfilled multidisciplinary roles including Site Engineer, Design Engineer and Quantity Surveyor across her career. She has worked nationally in Perth and Melbourne, as well as internationally, having spent 5 years in Dubai, UAE. Currently, Kylie is working as an Assistant Project Manager working for Multiplex, and is based in Perth. Throughout her career, Kylie has always been extremely passionate about the future of women in construction, and enjoys encouraging, motivating and mentoring within the community. She hopes that we can all play our part in working towards a more inclusive and empowered future for all.



LISA MARTELLO (nee Hogben)
Director

Lisa is a Director, Infrastructure Delivery at HKA, a global professional services and advisory firm, and the lead for HKA's infrastructure advisory business in Victoria.

Lisa is an elected Board Director with the National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC), Chair of NAWIC's national Diversity and Inclusion Portfolio, a Professional Mentor with the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre, co-founder of anti-racism podcast All Hands on Deck and Founder and Content Creator of daily construction catharsis Instagram and LinkedIn account Catching Bees.

Lisa is a senior infrastructure delivery leader with over 15 years of experience working on major rail and construction projects in the UK and Australia. Lisa is particularly passionate about inclusive leadership, workplace culture, and diversity. Lisa is skilled at setting up and transforming teams for high performance and happiness, leading in complex stakeholder environments and optimizing relationships between contractor and client.



JESSICA EVANS
Director

As a Client Relationship Manager at Taylor Construction, Jessica focuses on building long-term, genuine partnerships and is driven to provide the industry's highest customer experience. Her business development and relationship management skills have been honed through her years of experience in the construction industry in both Australia and Asia. Additionally, Jessica sits on the Beneficiary Review Committee at the Property Industry Foundation (PIF), a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to bringing the property and construction industry together to build homes for homeless youth. [n](#)

NAWIC acknowledges the contributions, dedication and service of Miriam D'souza and Kristine Scheul who concluded their respective terms on the board in November 2022.

AUSTRALIAN CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY FORUM

A strong friend of NAWIC

The Australian Construction Industry Forum (ACIF) was created in the year 2000 to bring together the main associations in the industry, increase dialogue and make progress on many of the issues in the industry. ACIF currently has 25 member associations and represents around 250,000 employees in the industry. We meet four times a year, rotating in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Canberra, and often meet with relevant ministers and building regulators.

NAWIC has been a member of the Australian Construction Industry Forum since 2019. Since that time, promoting greater and fairer female participation in the construction industry has become more prominent on ACIF's advocacy agenda. For the past few years, advocating for improved female participation has been an ACIF Policy Priority, which along with other policy priorities we send in hardcopy to all federal Members of Parliament and Senators, and to all of the relevant State and Territory Ministers. This is particularly important in election years, and we expect and receive responses from the main parties.

Improving female participation in construction is part of ACIF's efforts to improve the culture of the construction industry, and is linked to mental health and reducing the number of hours worked, two other issues that ACIF advocates. Improving mental health and reducing working hours in construction creates a better environment for men and women, and makes the construction industry more appealing to teenagers considering their career path.

On 24 February this year, I enjoyed attending NAWIC's National Awards Lunch in Melbourne, and the speeches were both inspirational and entertaining. I also attended a NAWIC roundtable the previous day, on how to best 'move the dial' for women in construction. Changing the culture of the construction industry – and perceptions of job roles in society more generally – is not quick or easy, but together we can make a difference. Things have and are improving in a number of areas in construction, but there is still a long way to go, and we have much work to do. □

Dr James Cameron
ACIF Executive Director



Christina Yiakkoupis, Lauren Fahey and Dr James Cameron at the NAWIC National Awards Lunch on 24 February 2023.

MOIRA'S JOURNEY

Moira Linton's journey is one of determination, perseverance, and commitment. After working at the Department of Transport and assisting with projects such as the development and construction of the EastLink and Peninsula Link projects, Moira took a liking to heavy machinery and what they could do. She loved the powerful force of the excavator, what it could achieve in a small amount of time and found demolition fascinating. It was only natural that she took the reins of the business including the machinery and teams that went with it. Moira wanted to be a guiding light for other women in the industry and prove that women can do it even better, especially given the demolition sector has very few women.

After meeting her then husband in 2010, they established a demolition business. Having observed her parents run their own business for more than 40 years, Moira was aware of what it took to make it happen. Like many women in the construction industry, Moira worked full time whilst also being the backbone of their demo business. This time was both rewarding and exhausting. Very few knew how much Moira was putting into the business at the time, but this experience and knowledge empowered her with the unique skills to go out on her own. Taking on more than the business admin, Moira delved into the technical detail of demolition and all aspects of site and business management.

A period of grief followed with Moira separating from her husband and business partner. This fuelled her determination to obtain a demolition licence with the VBA in her own right and carve out her own future. Her dad who passed away in November 2022. He was her greatest supporter and advocate, always encouraging her to take on bigger and more challenging projects, to be an inspiration and to strive for further than she could have even imagined for herself.

With a particular focus on commercial demo, her project list also includes 300 residential homes in a very short amount of time! Moira prides herself on assisting her clients through the process, ensuring a professional service and helping her clients enjoy the journey of demolition. Moira's clients describe her as highly capable, efficient and an exemplar in the industry. "Melbourne Wide, with Moira at the helm, are by far the best demo operation we've engaged with. They are super responsive, exceptionally organised and capable onsite, and nothing is too much of a challenge. It's really refreshing to work with such a professional outfit in an industry full of many cowboys. We love working with Moira and her team" says Ben Campbell, Master Builder and Director of Building Evolution in Melbourne.



Moira came to join NAWIC in 2022 after researching ways in which she could connect with support and networking opportunities specific to women in construction. Happily, Moira encourages others to join NAWIC, including her colleagues from Repurpose It.

Not only in the demolition space but also as a leader in business Moira is a huge inspiration. She advocates for women in construction. Moira is called upon by the media to provide commentary on issues affecting the building industry, most recently appearing on the ABC National News to discuss GDP and the current state of construction. A member of the VIC Master Builders, Moira is often seen at NAWIC events engaging and supporting women. Moira and her business partner Joanne Ramselaar, won our local Council's Wyndham Business Award in the Trade & Construction (Small) category.

Moira is focused on learning and evolving. She is now challenging herself to demolish all the structures listed in the Building Code with only three left to achieve. She has demolished restaurants, a golf course clubhouse, a supermarket, multi-unit apartment building, commercial and office spaces, factories, public buildings, redundant childcare centre and beach-front toilet block.

We can't wait to hear what's next for Moira and her team at Melbourne Wide Demolition! 

THE LEAKY PIPELINE

The construction industry faces a challenge known as the “leaky pipeline”. Which refers to the gradual loss of female talent and representation as women progress in their careers.

At NAWIC we take a strategic view across the career lifecycle of our members, starting at their high school education and exposure to construction career opportunities, through to accessing growth opportunities such as senior management, business sale, and participation at board level. This is our industry’s pipeline of human resources.

However, the leaky pipeline remains an ongoing challenge as women advance in their careers. NAWIC recognises the need to focus on attracting, retaining, and supporting women in construction. Ensuring they have equal access to safety, economic security, and fulfillment.

To increase female participation in construction together we must stem the leaks across each stage of our pipeline. Together we need to develop ways that we can proactively attract, retain and grow women to that they may enjoy the safety, economic security and career fulfillment the industry has to offer.

Priority objective

Working with Industry and Government we have a collaborative goal of achieving 25% female participation by 2025. Their commitment demonstrates dedication toward breaking down barriers and fostering an environment that promotes diversity, inclusion, and equal opportunity for women.

Key recommendations to Government and Industry

NAWIC proposes key recommendations for both government and industry stakeholders. These recommendations align with NAWIC’s advocated strategies spanning across all stages of women’s careers in construction. By embracing these strategies, both industry and government can actively support the attraction, retention, and growth of women in construction—a step towards creating a more balanced and thriving workforce. Recognising that addressing the leaky pipeline requires a collective effort from all stakeholders involved is crucial for achieving gender diversity. Through collaboration shared responsibility targeted strategies can

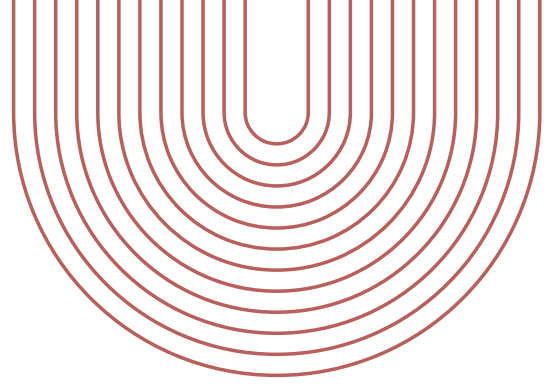
be implemented within the construction industry—leading towards overcoming challenges while fostering an inclusive environment for women. With determination and dedication, NAWIC is primed to spearhead and lend assistance toward these endeavours. Through close collaboration with both the industry and government, NAWIC aims to bring forth beneficial shifts within the construction sector.

Attraction of new women into construction

- **High School stage: Grow awareness of career options**
 - Education programs to raise awareness and provide access to construction pathways
 - Early learning materials showing women in diverse range of construction roles
- **Apprenticeships & University study phase**
 - Implement the 12 QLD recommendations ‘Breaking Down Barriers Report 2022
 - Establishment of National Gender Equality Strategy
 - Develop quotas and/or incentives for more female teachers in TAFE & Uni environment

Retention of women in construction

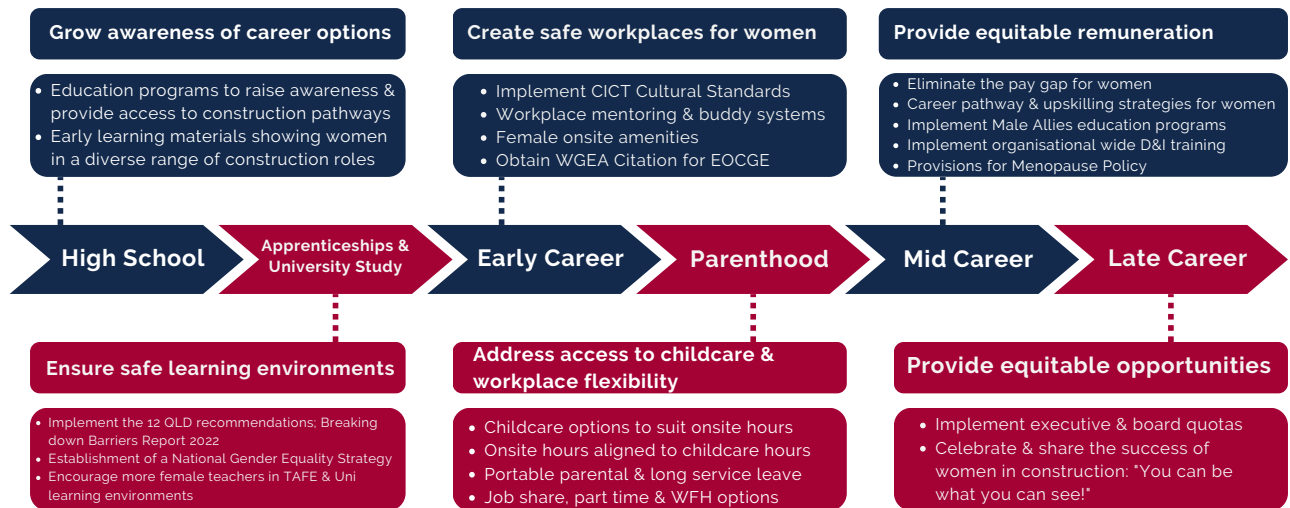
- **Early Career stage: Address access to childcare & workplace (see our WOT Parenting resources on page 37)**
 - Affordable and flexible childcare for all parents
 - Childcare options to suit onsite hours
 - Onsite hours aligned to childcare hours
 - Portable parental & long service leave
 - Job share, part time & WFH options
- **Parenthood stage: Create Safe Workplaces for women**
 - Implement CICT Cultural Standards
 - Workplace mentoring & buddy systems
 - Female onsite amenities (read about the Washroom Dignity initiative on page 57)
 - Obtain WGEA Citation for EOCGE (read about our member organisations who have achieved this on page 47)



Our Vision 25% BY 2025



How Industry and government can improve attraction, retention and growth of women in construction by addressing the needs of women over the lifespan of their careers.



Outcomes 25% participation is a stepping stone to 30% participation where we know real cultural change occurs
 Improving female participation yield's social and economic benefits including profitability, workplace safety and innovation

- Mid career phase - Provide Equitable Remuneration
 - Paygap reporting (see WGEA article on page 47)
 - Late Career phase – Provide equitable opportunities for leadership
 - Eliminate the pay gap for women
 - Career pathway & upskilling strategies for women
 - Implement Male Allies education programs (read Nigel's story on page 29)
 - Implement organisational wide D & I training
 - Provisions for Menopause Policy

- Late Career Phase
 - Implement executive and board quotas

Follow on our socials to keep across the tangible actions that the Advocacy Committee is urging industry and government to implement, so that together we can stem our leaky pipeline and see women in construction flourish.

Have something you would like to raise or that needs to be addressed for women in construction? Please raise it with your local Chapter Committee Member or by emailing admin@nawic.com.au

KICKING FLEXIBILITY GOALS? THAT'S A TEAM EFFORT

Collaboration, upskilling & determination. Partnering with the AFLW is helping John Holland disrupt the status quo in construction.

From club captains to star forwards – John Holland has proudly welcomed some of the biggest names in the AFLW into its ranks.

It's all part of an industry-leading partnership to create flexible employment pathways for athletes and shift the dial on diversity.

The program itself is disrupting the way we approach recruitment.

John Holland joined forces with the AFLW back in August 2022 as the principal sponsor of the AFL's *Workplay* platform – a networking and careers portal connecting athletes to employment opportunities and resources.

A year on, the partnership has gone from strength to strength, with players recruited across John Holland's national projects and offices.

When she's not taking to the field for the Western Bulldogs, you'll find Deanna Berry working hard as a Social Procurement Coordinator.

Deanna admits her transition to the construction industry came with some pre-conceived notions of the 'boys club.'

"This day and age someone has to be the change, and I want to be someone who changes the way women are seen in the workforce in every capacity.

"Whether it's on site or an office job, we need to see more women. The more we show we can do it, the more the stigma is crushed which is very important."

Deanna is one of many players who've joined John Holland in a flexible role that allows them to meet their football commitments.

"The support I have around me is very important – I'm in a dual career and I want to excel in both. Having a flexible employer means I can get my work and everything else done in the day."



Tara Bohanna – one of John Holland's AFLW partnership ambassadors

John Holland Safety Coordinator and AFLW Gold Coast SUNS Captain, Tara Bohanna, has inspired others at speaking events, reflecting on her experiences made possible through flexible working policies and the determination needed to achieve her ambition of playing in the AFLW.

"I feel extremely lucky to be able to pursue both my passions thanks to the flexible working opportunities at John Holland," said Tara.

By flexing her work week and working alternate shifts, Tara can attend all scheduled training sessions and other AFLW-related commitments.

"The ability to equally dedicate my time to my football career and my dream job out on project sites delivering life-changing

infrastructure is rewarding, fulfilling, and almost too good to be true," said Tara.

Tara recognises that skills learnt on the footy field are relevant for everyone working in construction, particularly the importance of building effective and cohesive teams and always keeping sight of your goals.

"The support of John Holland and my work family inspires me to do better out on the field and allows me to give both my passions 100 per cent."

Tessa Doumanis and Maggie MacLachlan, both from the Port Adelaide Power agree.

Tessa, who's studying psychology, has joined the John Holland SA Water team as a HSEQ undergraduate, with a focus on helping the team manage psychosocial hazards under the revised Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) laws.

Maggie is splitting her time between an admin and environment role. Both players have leveraged their sporting backgrounds to adapt to a new work environment seamlessly.

Pre-season training is still a couple of months away, but applying the flexible work policy available to them at John Holland means these women can balance work, training and – in Tessa's case – study requirements.

"Everyone here is aware of the (training) requirements, and we'll just make it work. It's not an issue," says Sevan Simonian, Senior Project Manager on the SA Water team. Sevan is just one of the many leaders who are leading the way with support for their team to be able to do flexible working, however that may look.

CEO Joe Barr says the partnership is disrupting the business-as-usual approach to recruitment within construction to attract and retain all talent in flexible roles.

"We're working hard to better position construction as a flexible, inclusive and rewarding career for people from all backgrounds, and break down some of those ageing stereotypes."



Tessa Doumanis with manager Leong Charlesworth in Adelaide

"Skilled construction professionals are at the heart of our work, and to realise the full potential of our projects, we need more boots on the ground."

For the partnership, the athletes, and their work teams to thrive, John Holland recognises that success in working flexibly requires a focus on outcomes, rather than presenteeism.

"For all our people, we support a variety of flexible working options. Alongside our country's top athletes, we have people who need various flexible arrangements to do their best at work," says Chief People Officer Sarah Elliott.

"There are so many possibilities to consider that can alter when, where and how you work, and these possibilities are only limited by what we can imagine.

"That's how we transform lives." **n**

BROADS RISE TOGETHER

You can be what you see & what you hear!

I have a Labrador named Daisy, who is as Labrador as any Lab can be. Big and goofy and clumsy. Loves people, food and mud. Park time is like paradise. But while she likes all other dogs, she LOVES other Labradors. And the connection is mutual. I guess it's pre-programmed somehow, but the way they recognise same in each other, and just click – instant running partners and wrestling best buddies – it's joyous to watch.

I tell you that, because that's how I feel about Broad Radio and NAWIC. The minute I discovered you, I saw our alignment – and I wanted to run with you!

But let me go back a step and put this in context. I've been in the media for 20 years – radio and TV and columns and all of the things that give you an audience. It's been an extraordinary, and honestly at times quite surprising, gift of a career, which has included MC work. It's through this work that I first connected with NAWIC (cue my waggy tail!).

I could rave for hours about how truly incredible the NAWIC Awards are. I've loved every minute of learning about and meeting the women that are recognised on these nights, and I've been profoundly inspired by their leadership, creativity, innovation and vision.

Equally, the women behind the scenes at NAWIC – all brilliant, passionate, trailblazing leaders committed to creating change within an industry they love.



As an outsider, I'm intensely aware that my world of performance, writing and broadcasting is very different from your world of engineers, designers, construction, business women, the list goes on. You built this city, we just talk about it.

But we do have one very key thing in common. And that is female representation – or lack there of. Women make up only 13% of workers in the construction industry. While in radio, of the voices you hear, only 27% are female. And it's much less for First Nations women, women of colour, women with disabilities, LGBTQIA+, gender diverse, or that rarest of terrifying creatures – women over 40.

Like NAWIC, I've looked around an industry I love, and made the commitment to push for change. For lots of reasons. Obviously, gender equality is the basis for a fair and thriving society. That's a given. And equal participation of genders is critical to businesses succeeding, and also the individuals within that industry feeling safe and confident to reach their full potential.

But it's critical we have equal and diverse voices in radio, because think about the impact media has on a city – actually a whole society. The media shapes behaviours and attitudes, it normalises beliefs and experiences, validates whole sections of the community. If your voice is missing from radio, then you are effectively erased from mainstream discourse. Which impacts on your health, safety and happiness. It's not an exaggeration to say under-representation of women in the media is one of the reasons women are disadvantaged in all other areas of life – including the construction industry.

I spent 15 years doing breakfast radio, loving every minute of it. But I was almost always the only woman on air, and off air the gender imbalance carried through and got much greater with every level of management. The culture reflected that, and I felt it. In the way I made myself amenable or small, in whether I was listened to or respected, in an unspoken sense that I didn't quite belong at the table. Sound familiar?

And even as I write this I'm aware of my privilege as someone who was in a higher status position, and great fortune in that



my team was like a family and I was generally surrounded with kindness. I have thought often about how hard it is for women who are without those supports.

So it's for those women that I decided to create a radio network for women, by women. And for the millions of women who don't hear their stories or their voices reflected back to them on mainstream media. We're called Broad Radio, and we're about getting as many diverse women as possible on the microphone (and as producers and managers and all the roles of course!).

We're building an app, creating our content behind the scenes, working hard to raise investment, so that we can launch our live radio by the end of the year. Meanwhile we've also launched our podcast production studio – Broad Generation – which is how we're elevating women's experiences and stories right now. Aaaaannnddd, de-dah! How together we've made a podcast with NAWIC.

Hosted by NAWIC General Manager, Lauren Fahey, The Leaky Pipeline brings you conversations with women who have smashed out their own path in the construction industry – and it's brilliant. Lauren is great, the experiences shared are fascinating and illuminating, and as a whole the series is so critical in shifting that dial towards lifting that participation well above the 13%.

This podcast brings me so much waggy-tail joy, because my dream of running alongside NAWIC has come true. It's a powerful collaboration that means a lot to me, and Broad Radio. We might be from different worlds, but our commitment to making pathways for women and girls is the same. We know, when we work together, we energise each other and lift each other up. And that makes us unstoppable. **n**

Jo Stanley
Founder of Broad Radio

You can check out our Podcast Launch on the page 49.



EMMA'S BRIGHT IDEA

You can be what you can see - illustrating the way forward

In 2022 Emma Wallace was selected from a large number of very worthy applicants. This is what Emma has been working over the past 12 months:

It is crazy to think that around this time last year I had a bit of an idea of something that, then turned in to a full-blown plan after receiving the NAWIC Bright Ideas Grant in 2022. Soon, I will be able to say I am an author and illustrator. What a blast!

The idea I proposed for the NAWIC Bright Ideas Grant in 2022 was to write and illustrate a kids book to inspire and expose primary school aged children (particularly girls) to the breadth of job opportunities available in the construction industry; illustrating a diverse and representative workforce with the ethos "If you can see it, you can be it."

You can check out some sneak peeks of illustrations and progress of the book by having a look at my Instagram: [@emmawallace.designs](https://www.instagram.com/emmawallace.designs)

Once I had completed my application for the NAWIC Bright Ideas Grant, I was determined to bring this book to life! I really sprang into action last year, researching, brainstorming, and exploring the framework for the story.

Someone mentioned to me that the book should rhyme, which I just thought there was no way that I could do that (I'm trained as an engineer, not a writer) ... BUT... I made it rhyme too!

I wrote the manuscript in January, then my attention was on the illustrations and character development. By May this year, I had a solid draft with manuscript and illustrations, with my





focus on researching and finding a publisher. This was the most challenging aspect of the process; writing & publishing is completely out of my industry. I leaned on my contacts and asked around A LOT.

And now I have a publisher! I am working with Hardie Grant Media; it has been such a fun and inspiring process. You can expect to see the book out in the world early 2024.

I am so excited to share the finished story with everyone. If you are interested in getting a copy and would like to be notified when it is available for purchase, you can go over to my website and sign up to my mailing list: <https://www.emmawallacedesigns.com.au/>

The Bright Ideas Grant was what enabled me to run with this idea. I would strongly encourage anyone who has a niggling idea in the back of their head to get it down on paper and get it in action by applying for the NAWIC Bright Ideas Grant.

About the grant

\$20,000 seed funding will be awarded to support a woman, group or partnership to launch a new business venture, programme or idea related to the construction industry.

We know that women are innovative and adaptive. Small business can suit women well as they can choose their own work hours, balance other commitments and be their own leader. Now is the perfect time to support a fresh start or give your fresh idea a 'leg up' alongside usual employment. **■**

To learn more about the 2023 NAWIC Bright Idea Grant please visit:

nawic.com.au/NAWIC/Scholarship/Grants__Scholarships

CREATING A PSYCHOLOGICALLY SAFE WORKPLACE

for women in construction

The construction industry has traditionally been male dominated and often requires physical and psychological strength and tolerance to cope with changing work conditions. Site-based construction work can be physically demanding and detrimental to workers' wellbeing. Research has shown that people who work in construction face high levels of depression, anxiety, stress and burnout driven by a workplace culture that is often characterised as a 'conflict-ridden', 'dog-eat-dog' environment that exists within a 'culture of blame'. As reported by MATES in Construction, construction workers are six times more likely to die from suicide than from an accident at work. Clearly, more needs to be done to support the mental health and safety of people who work in the construction industry.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics reports that female workers accounted for only 13.4 per cent of the workforce in the building and construction industry in Australia in 2022. Female workers in construction face unique challenges that can lead to elevated rates of work-related stress and psychological injuries compared with their male counterparts. The existence of these heightened challenges also make it more difficult to attract more female workers to the industry. Researchers highlight that gendered 'rules' used in the construction industry can have a negative impact on the wellbeing of female workers, who often endure these challenges in silence. Numerous studies have documented the difficulties experienced by women in this sector, which include cultural and structural barriers such as harassment and discrimination, limited networking opportunities, and long and inflexible working hours. These challenges can often result in poor career prospects and high levels of stress for women.

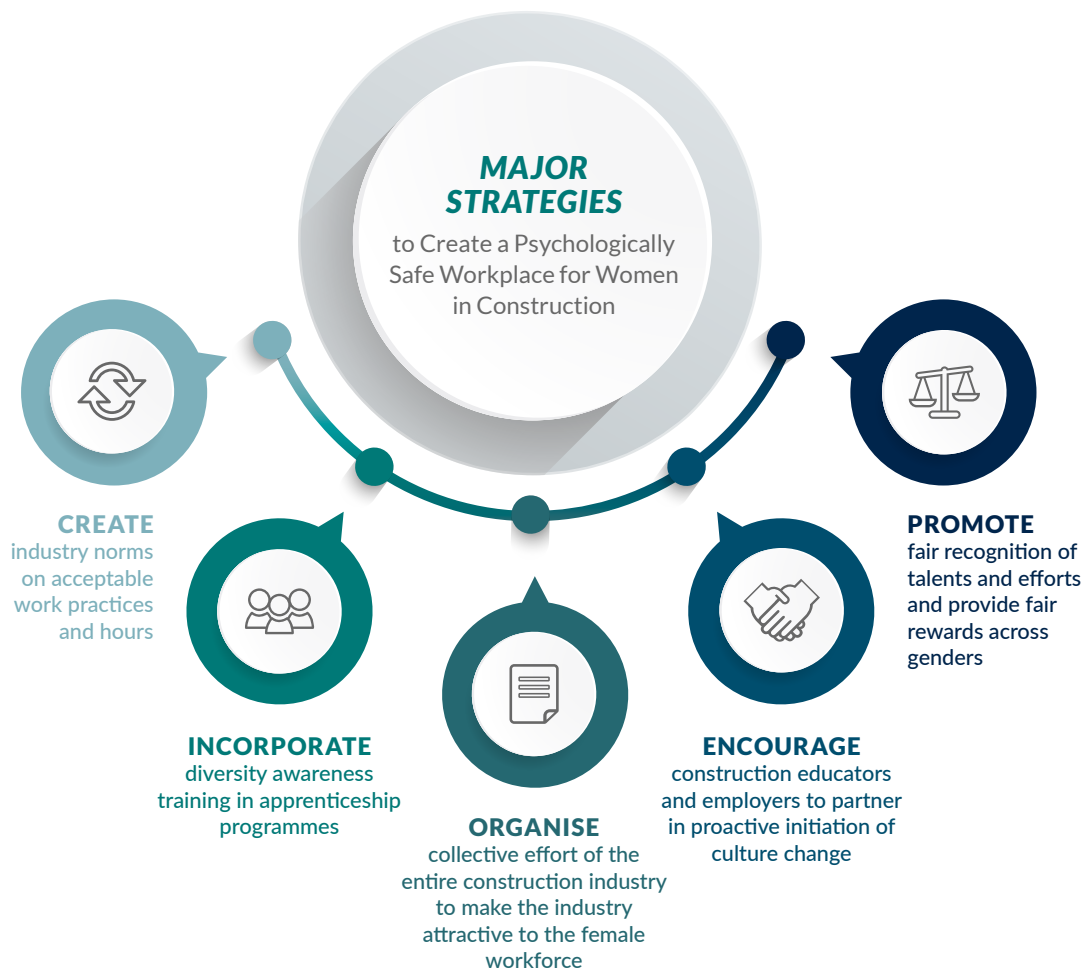
Researchers further highlight that female construction professionals experience high levels of stress because of industry norms such as time pressure, excessive workload and long work hours. Sexual harassment and discrimination are also identified as significant stressors for women in the

construction industry. In contrast, the most critical challenges faced by tradeswomen on construction sites are exclusion, lack of acceptance, stereotyping, and often being subjected to inappropriate language and behaviour by male co-workers. Most tradeswomen feel they are a minority group working in a masculinised work culture in which they are expected to be mentally tough to withstand the many challenges they face, often with little support from co-workers. These issues can have a significant impact on the resilience of women working in construction and underscore the need for greater support and inclusion in the industry.

Research has also shown that women's early enthusiasm for construction-related professions and careers in the sector often declines with increased exposure to the workplace. This highlights the urgent need to identify effective strategies for creating a psychologically safe workplace for women in construction, both on-site and off-site.

Researchers argue that creating a psychologically safe workplace for women must begin in the classrooms where construction workers receive their tertiary education and apprenticeship training. They further recommend that construction educators and employers should work together to proactively initiate a cultural shift in the industry by addressing gender bias through the conscious creation of a female friendly, inclusive culture. Such a culture can be achieved by promoting a sense of belonging for women in the industry and providing gender-appropriate support systems and resilience training for emerging construction tradeswomen. To set tradeswomen up for success in their careers, construction scholars advocate the development of resilience at the early stages of apprenticeship and suggest that vocational training providers incorporate diversity awareness training into their apprenticeship programmes.

According to key researchers in the field of construction safety and wellbeing, there are three particularly crucial steps to creating a psychologically healthy workplace for female



construction workers. The first step is to establish industry norms on acceptable work practices and hours that consider the unique challenges faced by women in the sector. The second step involves promoting fair recognition of talents and efforts, as well as a fair reward system across genders. This step also includes fostering inclusiveness and ethical conduct within the industry by implementing measures to eradicate discrimination, bullying and sexual harassment. The third step requires a collective effort from the entire construction industry, including government authorities related to construction, major construction clients, and contractors and construction industry associations. Researchers argue that employer support is vital for the survival of tradeswomen in the construction industry.

Currently, there are no specific action plans in place for the construction industry to create a psychologically safe workplace for female workers. Ongoing research by our team

at the University of South Australia is currently developing recommendations for specific strategies to reduce the harmful effects of work-related and non-work-related factors that contribute to suicide ideation among female construction workers to improve their mental wellbeing. This project is a collaboration with MATES in Construction and is funded by the same university. The outcome of this research is expected to provide practical solutions for creating a psychologically safe workplace for women in construction. □

Dr Aparna Sambraveera
Lecturer, UniSA STEM, University of South Australia

Professor Rameez Rameezdeen
UniSA STEM, University of South Australia

MEET NAWIC MEMBER

Jess McKenzie

Fortune favours the brave, and a wild shift from paramedics to electrical contracting has seen NAWIC member Jess McKenzie flourish for 16 years in the industry.

A job during university is usually just a way to keep the lights on while preparing for your real career. But for Jess, it turned out to be quite the opposite.

The 34-year-old is a project director at Stowe Australia – one of the nation's larger electrical contractors. Jess studied two years of paramedicine but reached the conclusion that it wasn't for her. While studying, she was working admin at Stowe. In a moment of complete 'serendipity', Stowe advertised apprenticeships at the same time Jess decided to step away from paramedics.

She thought she'd give it a go. "I applied for a position and got it," Jess said. "I spent four years doing my apprenticeship, and continued studying management courses once I had finished. "My father and grandfather were both electricians, so I am a third-generation sparky, but when I was considering career choices at high school I never would have imagined I'd end up in the industry I am in."

Jess' study path came in the form of a four-year Certificate III in Electrotechnology, followed by a Certificate IV Project Management and a Diploma of Building and Construction, both of which were done via night school.

Hands-on work

Jess started out with a lot of hands-on stuff as she progressed through being an apprentice, grade and leading hand. She helped coordinate on-site installations which included work on switchboards, submains and cable trays all the way to general lighting and power.

"This is the reason you get to drive past jobs you have completed – to tell your family and friends – 'I built that!'" she said.

From there, Jess' roles moved further into the area of managing others. Through her roles as project coordinator, project manager and on to director, Jess handled laying the groundwork for foremen, leading hands and grades.

"At a high level, our job is to ensure the design is correct and approved by the client, the procurement of all materials is



correct and on-site when the team needs it, ensure there is enough labour on-site, and the programme allows enough time for us to complete our installation," she said.

While managing complex projects with tight deadlines can be stressful, Jess said the variety and innovation in the industry made every day fun.

"I know I am biased, but I find the electrical industry very exciting," she said. "Projects and technology are constantly changing and evolving, which allows you to constantly learn and experience new systems, concepts and ideas. Our team is very lucky as we have been able to complete many complex and interesting projects over the years."

The next generation

Her seniority within the ranks at Stowe has resulted in Jess mentoring other project managers within the company.

"My advice to any other leaders in the industry is to not overlook the importance of your teams' culture. "Happy teams



are more successful and productive. Also, leaders should always look after and listen to your team members. They are the biggest asset you have and are a wealth of knowledge, information and ideas. “No one can build a project alone. It is the cumulative effort of many that achieves success.”

As a woman in a typically male-dominated industry, Jess has noticed a sea change of late.

“More and more I see higher numbers of women, indigenous and other minority groups on-site in integral roles,” she added. “I think it is great the industry is growing and changing to encompass everyone who wants to be involved.”

Jess said Stowe had a strong culture of embracing diversity and inclusion in its workplace, which allowed it to foster a welcoming atmosphere. She said Stowe’s Melbourne construction workforce was 10 per cent female and five per cent Indigenous. The Melbourne contingent

was bolstered by a 2023 apprentice intake that was 25 per cent women. “I think it’s important to note Stowe does not hire personnel to meet targets or quotas, but because we want team members who are the best people for the job,” Jess said. “It is this mentality that has helped us grow what I think is the strongest team in the electrical industry.”


A spark

So what drew Jess to stay in the industry for so long? “A major factor that has kept me involved in the construction industry for 16 years are the people, especially the people in my team,” she said. “I am so lucky to work with such supportive, hardworking, fun individuals. It makes coming to work a pleasure. I look forward to seeing them every day.” Jess is also a long-standing member of the National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC), having been part of the organisation since her fourth year as an apprentice. A notable member in her own right; Jess credited fellow NAWIC stalwart Fiona Mitchell for getting her involved with the organisation.

“Fiona is a wonderful advocate for women in construction and has an amazing amount of experience in the industry,” Jess said. “Fiona nominated me for a NAWIC award for female apprentices, which I won. The experience I had working with Fiona on my application and then meeting everyone at the awards night, showed me what a supportive environment NAWIC was. “It is great to be around other women in construction and hear about their experiences and ideas.”

Jess continues to mentor the next generation of leading hands, grades and managers in Stowe, which includes the growing female demographic. Jess said ever since she got started in NAWIC, she’s encouraged others to join.

“Some people don’t realise women in construction do not always get to work side-by-side other women, and this is especially true for women in trades,” she said. “A group like NAWIC is invaluable to provide that touchstone for women to talk to other women and assist in the sharing of information and networking.”



As featured in The Tradie Magazine.
tradiemagazine.com.au/meet-nawic-member-jess-mckenzie/

Want to share your story?

We’d love to hear from you at communications@nawic.com.au

WHY PERSEVERANCE MATTERS

One woman's struggle to find her place in 'a man's world'

My story dates back to when I was 14 years old, which was 22 years ago. As a child, I was always engaged in activities like playing with toy cars, assisting my father in fixing cars, building and demolishing things using tools and power tools. I even helped with general labour when we had our house extension done.

On one side, my maternal grandfather was a businessman who owned multiple businesses, while on the other side, my paternal grandfather was a carpenter. Growing up, I had the privilege of experiencing the best of both worlds: being involved in family businesses and getting hands-on experience.

During my high school years, if I wasn't taking computer classes, I was always interested in woodwork, automotive, and metal work. My aspiration was to become a mechanic. However, when I was 14, the high school I attended didn't believe that I genuinely wanted to pursue a career as a mechanic. To discourage me, they arranged for me to do work experience at a local Holden dealership. Little did they know, it was like waving a red flag in front of a bull. They placed a car-obsessed teenager with a brand new, shiny, red VX SS Commodore and it truly captured my attention.

Needless to say, I loved it. The guys at the dealership were surprised and accommodating. They were fascinated and supportive of having a female who wanted to be a mechanic. Even the general manager of the dealership was on board.

The following year, I enrolled in VCAL (Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning) with my high school. This program allowed me to attend TAFE one day a week, work in my chosen field one day a week, and attend school for three days a week. Consequently, I found myself in a class with other students pursuing the same path, but I was the only female.

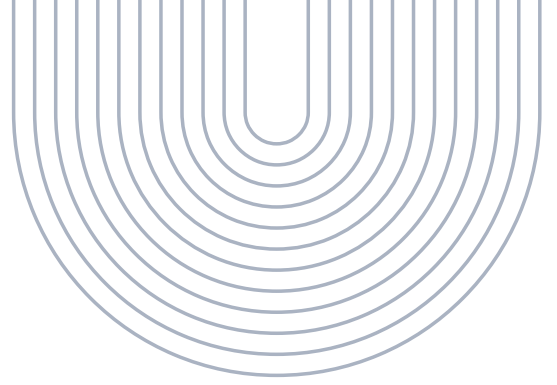
Being 15 at the time and the lone girl in classes of boys, and working only with men, was a challenge. I faced bullying, name-calling, and rumours both at school and TAFE. Although I tried my best to ignore and block out most of it, it started to wear me down. Fortunately, the teachers at TAFE took me under their wing and supported me, ensuring I didn't lose sight of my ultimate goal of becoming a mechanic. My careers teacher at high school was also very supportive. They allowed me to service the teachers' cars, drive them around the car park, and even taught me defensive driving on the school oval with the Motorkhana car we were building. Everyone was cheering me on, except for the kids my age. It was a foreign concept for them to see a female pursuing a "male" job. They believed girls couldn't be mechanics.



Unfortunately, the situation didn't improve when I started my one-day-a-week work placement. The previous experience at the Holden dealership seemed like a dream compared to where I ended up. I was placed in a small, rough mechanic workshop with unruly, old men wearing singlets and beards—exactly what you would picture in a pub out west. The place had a single toilet with a stack of explicit magazines in the corner. Their centrefolds adorned the walls of the toilet and lunchroom.

As you can imagine, for a just-turned-15-year-old girl, it was overwhelming. I endured the degrading comments they made every single day because I wanted to be a mechanic more than anything else. I was determined to prove to all the doubters that girls belong in the automotive world and that I could do the job just as well, if not better, than the men.

I lasted in this workplace for 9 months before pleading with my school to place me elsewhere. They complied, and I went back to the Holden dealership. I was warmly welcomed back.



High school Year 10 ended, and I applied for an apprenticeship through the VACC (Victorian Automotive Chamber of Commerce). Unfortunately, I didn't get it. Their reasoning was, "We would prefer it if you finished high school in case you change your mind, but here is a traineeship where you can complete your Certificate II in Automotive and continue at Holden." I saw through that excuse as a veiled attempt to avoid hiring me because I'm female. However, to avoid any discrimination claims, they made me an offer. As I was almost 16, and had no other offers, I accepted. I was determined to become a mechanic.

The following year went well, better than the previous one. I remained at the Holden dealership, attending Year 11 and going to TAFE one day a week. I made male friends and started fitting in, talking and acting like the boys. In fact, at times, I was even worse than the boys and felt that I had to act this way. By that point, it was all about survival. I was so determined to achieve my goal, that I had to survive. The year flew by, and before I knew it, I had two options: find an apprenticeship or return to full-time school. My school had already informed me that if I stayed, I would be expelled for absenteeism due to only attending three days a week for the past two years. Therefore, I went off to look for a job.

Every single place I went to responded with comments like, "Oh, you're looking for a reception job," "We don't hire female apprentices; they distract the guys too much," "We want you to finish school first," or "Ha! You wouldn't last a day." All of this only made me stronger and more determined to achieve my goal. The VACC still wouldn't take me on because I hadn't finished high school (they required a minimum Year 10 qualification to be an apprentice).

Eventually, I stumbled upon a small mechanic workshop I hadn't visited yet. I walked in there wearing board shorts, thongs, and a t-shirt (as I had almost given up hope) and asked for a job. I was told, "Sorry, we have just hired someone, but leave your number, and if it doesn't work out, we will let you know." That's it. I've had enough! I'm done! I can't do this! I kept saying in my head as I walked home, holding back tears.

That afternoon, I received a phone call. "It hasn't worked out with the person we hired. We'll give you a two-week trial. Can you start tomorrow?" In that moment, everything came rushing back—the passion, the drive, the excitement. Finally, someone was willing to give me a chance. I started the next day.

I stayed there for two years, working on the owner's race cars, removing and rebuilding transmissions, rebuilding differentials and engines, and servicing cars. I was doing it. I was a mechanic - an apprentice, but a mechanic nonetheless.

Unfortunately, due to rising fuel costs, I was laid off. Last hired, first fired. At that time, there were only two of us left: a qualified mechanic and myself, but I still required supervision.

Despite being near the completion of my apprenticeship (which was shortened because my Certificate II counted towards my Certificate III), no one was willing to hire me. I managed to find occasional weeks of work here and there and eventually completed my Certificate III, but I continued to encounter the same excuses as before. A more prominent one was the presence of other females trying to enter the industry, causing issues. Those who joined solely for male attention created a stereotype.

After obtaining my qualification, I decided to leave the industry. I spent some time working in female-dominated jobs until I entered the field of traffic control. That drive I once had returned, and I worked tirelessly each day to learn and surpass my male counterparts. I aimed to challenge the stereotypes surrounding some women, that they either couldn't do the job or were only seeking male attention.

It was three months until I was driving a utility and handling traffic control at work sites. Within four months, I advanced to working on high-speed projects for local and state governments. In just nine months, I had my own work crew and managed my own sites.

After two years in the industry, I enrolled in a traffic management design course, meeting the minimum requirements. Once again, I found myself as a woman in a male populated world. However, I proved to everyone that I was capable.

Since then, I have made several job and position changes, always moving upward and continuously raising the bar, refusing to let anyone hinder my progress. And now, here I am, in a place I never imagined I would be. I never thought I would still be in a male populated industry 22 years later, witnessing the remarkable transformations in trade industries compared to when I was 14. I still aim high and persistently strive to demonstrate to men that women can excel too. We can accomplish anything when driven and determined. **■**

(Authors name withheld for privacy reasons.)

THE NATIONAL DIESEL DIRT & TURF EXPO

welcomes its association with NAWIC

Now in its eighth year, the National Diesel Dirt & Turf Expo has become the premier earthmoving and construction event in Australia.

The Expo attracts hundreds of exhibitors and thousands of visitors each year. It's an exciting environment where manufacturers and dealers mount impressive and informative displays featuring the latest technology advances in heavy equipment, tools, accessories, digital services and finance.

The National Diesel Dirt & Turf Expo attracts many overseas visitors, including technicians and professionals who have come to share their knowledge and to introduce innovations designed to boost the productivity, safety and efficiency of fleet owners, local government, infrastructure services suppliers, operators and equipment owners.

Growing industry diversity

Each year, the diversity of interests of Expo visitors expands. You can see people from construction, fleet management, public space maintenance, local government, site services, transport and special vehicles, tools, material handling, environmental services, waste management and site remediation.

As well as seeing all the major brands, it's a great place for emerging manufacturers and distributors to showcase new solutions across a huge range of applications. The Expo is also the ideal place where visitors from the industry come to compare notes and build relationships through networking opportunities. All this adds up to knowing what products and services are out there to make businesses more efficient, safe and profitable.

Sponsors play a large role in spreading the word about the Expo and understandably this major event attracts like-minded businesses. NAWIC has identified a great opportunity through its partnership with the National Diesel Dirt & Turf Expo as part of its efforts to raise the profile of women in the construction industry.

Expo welcomes NAWIC Participation

Manager of the National Diesel Dirt & Turf Expo, Marti Zivkovich said, "We warmly welcome having NAWIC on board as a sponsor as we believe the industry has much to gain from the skills, expertise and much needed input from knowledgeable and capable women who wish to participate in the industry.

"Today, women are able to fulfill any role within the construction industry. Equipment design and technology mean that you don't need muscle to operate machinery and there is absolutely no reason why any woman cannot do any job in this industry.

"We are aware there are many issues affecting the construction industry workplace and the ability of women to enter it. However, all it takes is the will to ensure women and men have equal opportunities, including remuneration, safety, management support, on-site amenities, accommodation of shared family commitments and flexible hours. These and other matters need to be brought to the attention of employers and the industry in general to enable the full productivity potential of women to be realised", Marti said.





Women can fill any construction role

Vicky Young from NAWIC said, “Already, many women have a deep industry involvement, ranging from machinery operators to construction supervision, management, engineering and technical services. Women already in the construction industry know just as much about machinery operation, costs and technology as anyone. Our association with this major event is an exciting opportunity for us to showcase the role of women in the industry and educate the industry.

Mart Zivkovich agreed, saying, “At the National Diesel Dirt & Turf Expo visitors can compare technology, equipment and services. Large crowds of people who come from the earthmoving, construction, grounds maintenance, safety, financial services, asset management, transport and material handling industries visit the Expo to make informed purchasing decisions. Where there are so many suppliers in the one place, it makes a lot of sense to visit Australia’s largest construction Expo.

“It is important for management of organisations involved in the industry to understand there are large numbers of highly skilled knowledgeable and capable women out there who ready and able to fill many key roles within the industry. This message can be shared through important industry events such as the Diesel Dirt & Turf Expo.

“Equal opportunity and gender equality are serious issues and NAWIC’s involvement with the Diesel Dirt & Turf Expo is a great opportunity to bring these to the front by encouraging



employers and industry managers to take a proactive role in providing a happy, safe and equal work environment where women can take their rightful role in this industry, just as in any other field of employment.

“It’s great to see such passion, commitment and professionalism from the NAWIC team and we wish them all the best for moving forward. We are happy to promote the role of women in construction and assisting in meeting their goal of achieving a 25 percent minimum female participation across all of the construction industry by 2025” Marti added. □

The 2024 Diesel Dirt & Turf Expo is on April 12th-14th at The Sydney Dragway, Eastern Creek, NSW.

www.dieseldirtandturf.com.au

OUR JOURNEY TO BECOMING AN EMPLOYER OF CHOICE FOR GENDER EQUALITY

John Holland

Having a workforce that best reflects the communities in which we work is something that we're deeply passionate about at John Holland.

It's the foundation of how we work each and every day.

That's why March this year was such an important month for our business. For the first time, John Holland received the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) Employer of Choice for Gender Equality citation.

It's big for John Holland – and big for our industry.

The citation is recognised as the gold standard certification for employers committed to workplace gender equality.

Receiving the nod is a major endorsement of the policies and programs already in place at John Holland to make us more diverse, equitable and inclusive.

We know that this citation doesn't mean it's "job done" for John Holland. Far from it.

It signals to our current and future employees and stakeholders that we're taking meaningful strides to support greater equality both within John Holland and the broader industry.

Pursuing the gold standard

Our journey to becoming an Employer of Choice dates back to 2019.

The idea of receiving the citation was floated by a number of employees, who encouraged senior leadership to recognise the positive impacts it would have for our existing employees and for our ability to attract and retain a more diverse workforce.

In the year that followed, there was a significant amount of work happening within the business to ensure John Holland was in the best position for success.

One of the critical first steps was to ensure all of our leaders were on the journey with us and that they appreciated the importance of the citation to demonstrate our commitment to a more diverse and inclusive John Holland.

We also wanted to listen to a broad range of employee groups and ensure John Holland had the right programs and policies in place to make a genuine impact.



Sarah Elliot with project team members on International Women's Day



Sarah Elliot at Sydney Football Stadium (built by John Holland) with executive leaders and team members celebrating inclusion during WorldPride



A set back and win to show change

As we approached the application due date in 2021, it became clear that we weren't quite yet ready to apply.

Put simply – we needed more time to embed sustainable policies and programs (not just tick a box) to advance gender equality in our workplace.

That's why we made a bold call not to progress with our application as planned and instead gave ourselves another year of development, while bringing our people on the journey with us.

Some perceived that taking extra time was a 'setback' – but we saw it as an opportunity.

During the year that followed, we started to see the fruits of change.

There were a number of clear signals that we were on the right track with our journey to receiving this citation.

This included our people having deeper conversations and building a greater understanding of what diversity and flexibility in the workplace actually means.

From there, we began a process of implementing a number of key pieces of work, later identified by WGEA as instrumental to us receiving the citation. These included:

- A Gender Equality Strategic Plan that applies a 40/40/20 framework across recruitment and development to achieve gender equity targets, including greater representation of women in leadership positions.
- Equal access to paid parental leave for all John Holland people, resulting in 35 men taking primary carer leave in 2022 compared to only six in 2021.
- Focused programs for leaders on the importance of inclusion and diversity, building inclusive behaviours and challenging unconscious biases.
- Embedding flexible work practices regardless of gender, and breaking down barriers to new ways of working flexibly.
- Empowering athletes to take up flexible roles in construction, with an industry-leading partnership between John Holland and the AFLW.



Sarah Elliot
Chief People Officer

All of this helped us align our people and teams behind shared goals that we wanted to achieve for gender equality and step out the additional work we needed to do by 2025.

What it all means

Today, John Holland is in esteemed company. We've joined more than 130 businesses nationally that currently hold the citation, and very few of these are in the construction industry.

The call to action is clear. It's on us to break down barriers, shatter stereotypes, and continually shift the dial on diversity.

We know that we need the best people and ideas to help us transform lives. Today, women make up nearly a quarter of our 5,500-strong workforce – and we're striving to shift from 31 per cent to 40 per cent staff roles by 2025.

We're making positive changes to attract more women and people from diverse backgrounds to our industry. This includes providing development opportunities so they can become the senior leaders of tomorrow.

We've made policy changes that allow dads to take up primary carer leave with ease - supporting their spouse's careers and putting an end to the era of men being too afraid of taking parental leave and putting their families first, because it'll be perceived as a 'weakness.'

In fact, we've made so much progress with this that the number of men taking primary carer leave went from six in 2021 to 35 last year – a more than 500 per cent increase in 12 months. This citation is about much more than just ticking boxes. It's about authentically driving cultural change within our business and the broader construction industry.

I am proud of the progress we have made however this is just the start.

We still have a long way to go – and we're up for the challenge. ■



This is how we flex!

At John Holland 72% of our people access flexible working arrangements.
(According to our employee engagement surveys).

What does yours look like?



**JOHN
HOLLAND**





Parental Leave Pause



LET US KNOW

Contact NAWIC administration
to update your details.

*Here to help
when you need it*



NAWIC Member Assistance Program
Free Confidential Help from Trained Mental Health Professionals

Call 24/7 1300 878 379

DOING SOMETHING ABOUT THE MISSED OPPORTUNITIES

Why Nigel Gorman is painting a different picture for trades

I've been involved in the Painting & Decorating Industry for the past 30 years; I have consulted on training packages over the last 20 years and have been involved in training apprentices for the last decade. I've always championed women as having a valuable contribution to make to the skilled trades and feel the benefits of their inclusion should not be underestimated.

I was involved in the Master Painters Association Qld for over 10 years, from the 90's through to 2011 during that time I sat on both state and federal boards in various positions including President of Qld for 3 years and Chairman of the MPA Federal body. I sat on many industry committees and have been privileged to be involved with NAWIC for many years, and watch it grow into what it has become today.

In 2011 after a workplace accident, I started Aussie Painters Network, it's a free information service for the painting

industry, we publish the Aussie Painting Contractor Magazine, 126 editions since our inception. Aussie Painters Network have a training facility that I utilise for training apprentices of which, 30% of those I train are women. I run all female training days to which we invite NAWIC, Mates in Construction, Busy Sisters and others to let the apprentices know that here is support for them if they need it.

Throughout my career, I have always had women backing me and mentoring me through the good times and the bad, which is probably why it always felt wrong they wouldn't be more equally represented in all industries. In the early 2000's I employed a mature aged woman as an apprentice and found that when she was on-site that the male members of the team seemed to behave better and watch their P's and Q's. I also found that on repaint jobs the clients felt a lot more comfortable knowing that there was a woman in the house.





Nigel Gorman

Over the years, I have trained over 500 apprentices with approximately 100 of those being women. I have found that women are more particular when it comes to the quality of work produced, and generally their inclusion on-site adds value in numerous ways to the workplace.

Personally, I feel that people should be able to follow their passions and be able to do what they wish, and if that's getting into a trade, all the better! I am a firm believer that if someone wants to do something they should be given the opportunity to achieve, regardless of gender.

Over the decades, I have witnessed major change in the construction industry with more women coming into the trades. I remember older male generations would look down on women being involved though I have always seen the lack of women in construction as a missed opportunity for both the 50% of the population they represent, and for those in industry whose sectors would be improved for their presence.

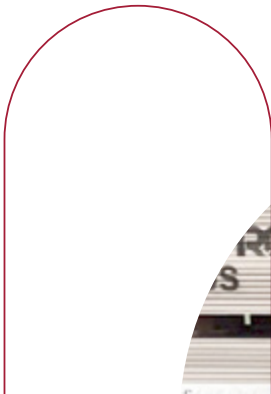


When you look back through history, during the World Wars, it was the women who stayed at home in Australia, and quietly and competently assumed the skilled roles of those men who went to war to fight for what we have today. It's a great shame that we didn't better recognise this contribution of women enough to continue to promote their abilities in the trades, following those extreme times. Participation today would be far greater and the industries much more equitable.

I hope we continue to remedy these missed opportunities for female inclusion over the years which would have greatly benefited our workplaces. I look forward to seeing further change where women become a large force of 30% or more in the construction industry! **n**

CELEBRATING & SUPPORTING FEMALE APPRENTICES

Bunnings Trade & NAWIC collaboration



*Christina Yiakkoupis
– NAWIC Chair with Ruby, QLD.*

To help celebrate National Women in Construction Week, we were excited to announce a new initiative in 2023 aimed at supporting women in a trade during the early stages of their career; the Bunnings Trade Women in Apprenticeships Award. Bunnings Trade partnered with NAWIC, Australia's leading professional association for women in construction, to deliver 10 successful apprentices and their employers support packs worth over \$10,000 as well as on-going professional and wellbeing support.

Together we are committed to providing meaningful support to help achieve better gender equality and foster a more inclusive and diverse construction industry. We applaud and congratulate all the apprentices who put themselves out there and applied. You are all champions, each are pioneer women in construction. Keep building dreams!

After receiving more than 1,750 submissions from apprentices spanning 15 different trades, we were excited to announce the winners of our inaugural Bunnings Trade Women in Apprenticeships Award. The award aims to support women undertaking apprenticeships across Australia and help kickstart their trade careers.

The 10 successful apprentices were presented with support packs valued over \$10,000, which included Bunnings gift cards, Hard Yakka workwear and a 12-month NAWIC membership, including a personal mentor. Entry submissions

were judged by a panel of Bunnings team members, NAWIC members and industry experts.

Together, we're committed to helping foster a more inclusive construction industry and look forward to seeing all women in apprenticeships continue to thrive and grow. We congratulate all the winners of our inaugural award and thank all those who applied.



Lisa Hogben – NAWIC Board member with Lara, VIC.



Monique Little – NAWIC President TAS with Angie, TAS.

BUNNINGS TRADE WOMEN IN APPRENTICESHIPS AWARD | 2023 WINNERS

Angie, TAS, Carpenter | Tasharn, NSW, Carpenter | Jessica, WA, Painter
Ruby, QLD, Plumber | Lara, VIC, Plumber | Kezia, SA, Tiler
Maddy, ACT, Cabinet Maker | Erikah, NSW, Mechanic | Kristen, ACT, Landscaper
Kirsty, SA, Electrician

Thanks to our partners Bunnings Trade for their generous support of this program.

#werisetgether 

EMPOWERING WORKING PARENTS IN CONSTRUCTION

Advancing work-life balance by nurturing growth, diversity & well-being

The construction industry in Australia is a significant contributor to the country's economy, accounting for nearly 8 percent of the GDP and employing 1 in 10 people. With the industry poised to play a crucial role in rebuilding the economy post-COVID, it is vital to address gender equality and workplace flexibility within the sector. The Australian Constructors Association (ACA) has set ambitious targets to promote diversity, inclusion, and work-life balance, recognizing the need to empower working parents, particularly mothers, in the construction industry.

Gender equality is a key aspect that the ACA aims to achieve. The construction industry has traditionally been male-dominated, and addressing the wide pay gap is crucial for creating a more balanced workforce. The ACA's goal of ensuring that 75 percent of its members become certified Employers of Choice within five years is a significant step towards promoting gender equality. By encouraging construction companies to adopt inclusive practices and provide equal opportunities for women, the industry can improve diversity and create a stronger, more vibrant workforce.

Workplace flexibility is another critical area where the construction industry can make significant strides. Traditionally, the sector has been associated with long working hours, high stress levels, and poor work-life balance. However, by implementing flexible work plans for employees, both on-site and in office roles, the industry can address these issues and create a healthier and more productive workforce. Flexible work arrangements can allow working parents to balance their professional and family responsibilities, improving job satisfaction and overall well-being.

One of the challenges faced by working parents, especially mothers, in the construction industry is the lack of corporate support. The Motherhood Penalty, a phenomenon where being a mother negatively impacts a woman's career, exacerbates the challenges faced by women in the industry. To overcome this, companies need to go beyond offering traditional solutions and explore innovative ways to support working parents.



Embracing a work culture that allows for emergency family care days and providing assistance in securing reliable childcare are essential steps towards empowering working parents in the construction industry. Creating a safe space for returning mothers to pump breast milk is another important consideration that can promote their well-being and significantly contribute to creating a supportive work environment.

Supporting working parents is not just a moral obligation but also a smart business move. Numerous studies have shown that empowering employees to maintain a work-life balance leads to increased productivity, supports business growth, and generates greater profits. By attracting and retaining top talent through increased paid parental leave and other family-friendly policies, companies can reduce attrition rates and improve overall productivity. For example, when Google expanded its leave policy from 12 to 18 weeks, the

rate at which new mothers quit dropped by 50%, leading to substantial cost savings for the company.

While flexible working hours may not be readily applicable in the construction industry due to the nature of the work, companies can still support working parents through education and organizational adjustments. Clear communication, proper scheduling, and coordination with colleagues and suppliers can help parents working on construction sites strike a balance between their professional and personal responsibilities. The industry's focus on hourly wages and collaborative teamwork can present opportunities for companies to implement split shifts, ensuring employees have the necessary flexibility without disrupting project time lines.

Implementing split shifts in the construction industry can bring various benefits to both employers and employees. This scheduling approach allows employees to maintain a work-life balance by accommodating personal commitments and other needs, such as medical appointments or childcare. Flexibility in working hours leads to improved productivity, higher job satisfaction, and reduced employee stress and burnout. Moreover, split shifts enable better coverage during peak times, control labour costs, and attract a wider pool of job candidates, enhancing the overall efficiency and competitiveness of construction companies.



In conclusion, the Australian construction industry plays a pivotal role in the country's economic recovery post-COVID. To ensure long-term success and sustainability, the industry must prioritize gender equality, workplace flexibility, and support for working parents. By committing to diverse and inclusive practices, offering family-friendly policies, and exploring innovative solutions like split shifts, the construction sector can create a more supportive and productive work environment. Empowering working parents not only benefits individuals and families but also drives economic growth and strengthens the industry as a whole. It is essential for construction companies and industry organizations to take proactive steps towards empowering working parents and fostering a culture of inclusivity and support. □

Angela Hucker

DO YOU WANT TO FEEL MORE EMPOWERED?

**Are You Passionate About Creating A Better Culture In The Construction Industry?
Do You Want The Keys To Thrive, Succeed and Shine?
Discover How By Joining **The EPIC Experience!!****

This is a **LIMITED** opportunity to become a VIP Founding Member. You will get specialised support from a female leader in the industry with more than 20 years experience. For <\$2 per day, you will enjoy the following exclusive benefits:



Coaching & Mentoring:

Ongoing guidance to help with navigating obstacles, unlocking your potential, and ensuring you achieve your goals.



Accountability Group:

Receive support and motivation from like-minded professionals in the community throughout your journey.



Premium Support:

Enjoy unlimited 360-degree email and phone support, so you have all the guidance and assistance you need to succeed.



Vibrant Community Network:

Connect with fellow trailblazers, share experiences, and build lasting relationships within our exclusive community.



Exciting Challenges:

Engage in long-term and short-term challenges, and win amazing rewards and prizes along the way.



Invaluable Resources:

Access a treasure trove of resources to support your growth and equip you for success.



Claim Your Membership Today By Emailing
support@epicservices.group



Is gender on your agenda?

Gender pay gaps in the construction industry are set to be published from next year, now is your last chance to get ahead of the curve

At equidi, we help companies close their gender gaps by providing real-time dashboards that ensure you can easily see gender pay and representation gaps across every part of your business.

We're an Australian start-up that understands the challenges in the construction space including GEAP plans and requirements - we can help you make real and meaningful change with our platform and advisory services.

- ✓ **Dashboards:** real-time data, analytics and insights for Boards, Executives and HR Teams
- ✓ **Actions:** research driven and tailored strategies to help your business improve gender equity
- ✓ **Tools & Resources:** to take the guess work out and help you on every step of your gender journey
- ✓ **Reporting:** automated board and compliance (WGEA) reporting
- ✓ **Gender Endorsement logo:** to show you're a committed gender equity employer - use for your job advertisements or other comms



NAWIC members - scan the QR code to book in your free gender equity consultation or to find out more email: natalie@equidi.com





EVERY CHILD

Deserves to grow up in a safe home.



YOUR DONATION DOUBLED

CAN YOU SUPPORT A CHILD IMPACTED BY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?



Friday, October 20 is our annual Little Friends Giving Day, proudly supported by the LJ Hooker Foundation. Make a donation before October 30 to support children impacted by domestic violence, and it will be **DOUBLED** by our matching sponsors.

JNINE & CO

Elevate your Employee Wellbeing Initiatives
BY INCORPORATING MENSTRUAL WELLNESS

Jnine & Co champions menstrual wellness in the workplace and at home.

We promote period positivity in the workplace by partnering with organisations to implement Menstrual Wellness policies and practices that complement Workplace Wellbeing, Diversity and Engagement initiatives.

Our signature Workplace Period Toolkits offer a great starting point to promote menstrual wellness in your organisation. Subscribe via our website and save – or get on board and connect with us about a customised solution.

Build on this with workplace training on subjects such as Endometriosis in the Workplace, Periods at Work, Menopause and more. Contact us today.

Become an Employer of Choice, demonstrate diversity, improve engagement and decrease absenteeism by looking after your 'people who period'

— SHOP NOW —

Want a FREE gift?

Add a pack of Eco Pain Heat Patches (4 pk) to your cart and apply code NAWICGIFT to receive your heat patches FREE!

NB: A minimum order amount of \$50 is required



🌐 hello@jnine.com.au

✉ jnine.com.au



PARENTHOOD IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

Parenthood is a complex journey, both personally and biologically. In Australia approximately 1 in every 18 pregnancies is via IVF. We are also seeing increases in same sex families, single parent families and parenting by fostering and adoption. Workplaces need to be aware that as society evolves so does our understanding of the diversity of needs that parents and carers have.

Some of our NAWIC members are on the tools, tradespeople or have hybrid roles that require them to work onsite during their pregnancy. With the NAWIC Women on Tools committee in Queensland, we have created some resources to support those undertaking this journey. Whether you are thinking about starting a family, are an employer of a pregnant woman or an onsite woman who is pregnant, the most important priority is ensuring clarity of communication and safety for all involved.

A NAWIC Member Story

Tess is 6 months pregnant, her doctor has advised her to go on light duties. Tess is a tiler by trade. Her employer worked with her to find suitable solutions whilst she was pregnant. Her light duties now include:

- overseeing apprentices and guiding them on jobs
- quoting jobs
- dealing directly with customers, and
- invoicing

Tess and her employer have agreed that when she is ready to return to work they'll discuss what duties she is able to perform, any changes in her hours and create a plan to get her back into her role.

This is a great example of a collaborative and respectful relationship between Tess and her Employer. It has prioritised Tess's workplace safety and demonstrates positive and open dialogue between all parties.

Michelle Hands, a UK based Engineer who spent considerable time onsite, became an internet sensation when she shared her workplace pregnancy journey. In her blog - www.womeninconstructionsummit.com/blog/michelle-hands-pregnant-construction-worker, Michelle wrote about the initial conversation she had with her employer.

"So, one day, around 15 weeks I plucked up the courage to tell my boss. To my totally surprise his reaction was so positive and he instantly announced "we need to make sure you take it easy on site" and "how long would you like to work for?" I felt like a huge weight had been lifted off my shoulders. Quickly, the news spread and on that afternoon, I was treated like royalty".



NAWIC Resources for Tradies & Babies

Sometimes the hardest thing to do, is start a conversation! Especially when it is on a topic or situation not normally encountered and you anticipate that it might be uncomfortable or be received negatively.

This NAWIC guide 'Tradies & Babies' covers everything from the initial conversation, throughout the pregnancy and post-birth – for both Employees and Employers (as well as self-employed people). Key topics being addressed include the roles, responsibilities, rights and obligations of each party and options you may want to explore.

Needs of Parent's in Construction based workplaces

NAWIC held a 'Shifting the Dial' webinar Event in October 2022. From the online survey conducted with the 100+ attendee's during the event, the respondents indicated the largest issue with encouraging females in the industry is retention. NAWIC understands and advocates



Apto's High Vis Pregnancy Shirt



NAWIC 'Tradies & Babies' resources can be downloaded at nawic.com.au.

for companywide strategies which ensure women's safety and job security in the construction industry, particularly for parents and carers. This can include flexibility around shift times and part time work to better suit facilities hours of operations.

NAWIC continues to work with both Government and Industry to ensure that the needs of our members are heard and action is taken to improve the experiences of women during the parenthood stage of their careers. The key areas of NAWIC's advocacy for the retention of women in construction include addressing access to, the flexibility and affordability of childcare such as:

- Providers better aligning childcare options to suit onsite hours
- Workplaces adjusting onsite hours aligned to childcare hours for parents
- Ensuring access to portable parental & long service leave for all construction workers
- Promotion in industry to encourage workplaces to create and support job share, part time & work from home options

Jayco, for example, have done amazing work in this space with creating 4-hour shifts during school hours to address their labour shortage issues and importantly make their company a great place for women to work. Access to affordable childcare is another way we can address retention issues. Many State Governments have this on the agenda and we look forward to seeing childcare reforms in the coming years make a big difference to the cost equation of work and care. **n**

Questions?

NAWIC Members can contact our [Member Assistance Program](#), a free service available 24/7 on 1300 878 379. Our trained mental health support team can discuss any questions or concerns you may have about the parenthood journey (or any other matter) in a completely confidential manner.

Additional Reading

www.fairwork.gov.au/leave/maternity-and-parental-leave/pregnant-employee-entitlements

www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/parental-leave-pay

www.womeninconstructionsummit.com/blog/michelle-hands-pregnant-construction-worker or contact Human Rights in your respective State.

UNDERSTANDING THE CHALLENGES OF CONSTRUCTION WOMEN

NZ perspective

There is growing interest in the mental ill-health of the construction workforce. This is a pivotal issue requiring critical and multidimensional solutions. The gender dimension has not received the much-needed attention confirming the arguments on the underrepresentation of the female construction workforce. The industry-wide status is a tough, macho culture that promotes stressful working conditions. In New Zealand, women make up about 13-15% of the NZ construction workforce (MBIE, 2021). New women entrants fluctuate between 16-18% (Sweet Analytics, 2020). Bringing additional women into the construction workforce represents a potential opportunity for the future. It will help address current skills shortage challenges. While there are continuing efforts to address the imbalances of the male-dominated industry, extant literature suggests that the situation could contribute to mental health challenges (Galea et al., 2021). From a global perspective, little has been done on mental health research on women in construction. Our preliminary scoping of the literature shows that the USA seems to be the most active in mental health research in women, followed by Australia. Apart from these two countries, there is a lack of extensive studies in similarly developed countries. Therefore, this study seeks to establish the mental health challenges experienced by the female workforce in the New Zealand construction industry.

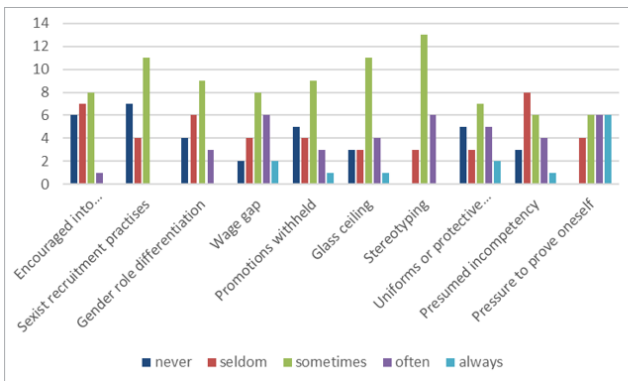
Global mental health challenges – Global perspective

The mental health challenges analysed in this article are based on evidence from global literature. Gender-specific mental health challenges relating to women in construction were identified from our scoping of 27 related articles from 2010 to 2021. Within the analysed articles, 26 challenges were identified, as presented in Figure 1. Significant themes that emerged from the analysis of the 26 challenges were grouped into three areas of concern. These are benevolent

sexism, hostile sexism, and job conditions. Benevolent sexism refers to attitudes about women that make them inferior to men, even though they may appear positive. Our study found benevolent sexism to include being encouraged into stereotypical industries, sexist recruitment practices, gender role differentiation, wage gap, withheld promotions, etc. see Figure 1. The second theme is hostile sexism, which negatively views women who act differently from the traditional gender roles. Our study identified nine concerns, such as gender and sexual harassment, bystander behaviour, masculine culture, etc. As highlighted in Figure 1, the third theme relates to general job conditions that could present challenges for women in construction. Some of those identified include lack of flexible work arrangements, job pressures, unpleasant work environments, and low gender representation, to mention a few.



Figure 1: Evidence from the literature of the challenges faced by women in construction.



Figures 2a: Experiences with benevolent sexism

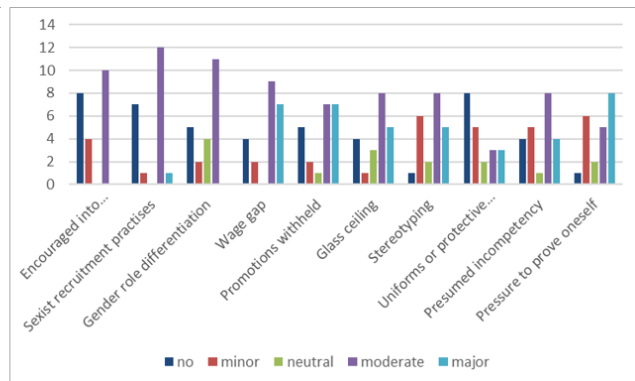


Figure 2b: The effects of benevolent sexism

Challenges from New Zealand perspective

We presented the 26 challenges identified from extant literature to women working in an office environment (mainly consultants) during an interview within the New Zealand context. The interview questions raised were semi-structured questions with open and closed-ended questions. The questions were structured in the three categories of the challenges (benevolent sexism, hostile sexism, and job conditions). The participants were asked to indicate on a multi-point scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being never and 5 always, how often they experience these mental health challenges. They were further required to indicate how much these challenges affect them on a multi-point scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being no effect and 5 major effect. A total of 22 women were interviewed and they were presented a list of concerns regarding benevolent sexism, hostile sexism, and general job conditions. Most of the 22 participants were architects (36%), followed by 32% project managers, and 23% were engineers. Within this context, our survey sought to understand the challenges these women experience within the construction industry and their effect on them.

Benevolent sexism

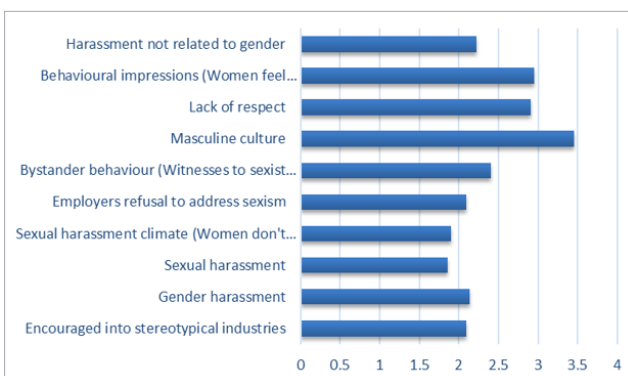
In our study under the category of benevolent sexism, we conducted a frequency analysis to determine the number

of times that the concerns were experienced by our participants. Figure 2a presents the findings diagrammatically. Focusing on the 'often' or 'always' responses, it is interesting to see that 12 participants (54.5%) encountered pressure to prove oneself, 8 (36.4%) experienced wage gap, and 7 (31.8%) indicated that their uniforms or protective equipment are not gender inclusive.

Independent of how many times the participants experienced diverse forms of benevolent sexism, the frequency analysis (Figure 2b) that shows the effects of such experiences informs us about the actual impact of benevolent sexism on our participant's mental health. Looking at the highest impact (i.e. from moderate to major), 16 participants (72.7%) were significantly affected by wage gap, 14 (63.6%) by promotions being withheld, and an equal number of 13 (59.1%) by pressure to prove oneself, stereotyping, glass ceiling, and sexist recruitment practices.

Hostile sexism

Figure 3a presents the rankings provided by the participants regarding their experiences with hostile sexism. Some of the responses revealed that women almost always experienced 'Masculine culture' followed by 'Behavioural impressions', which means women felt pressured to act like males to "fit in". The third-ranked challenge under this category is 'Lack



Figures 3a: Experiences with Hostile sexism

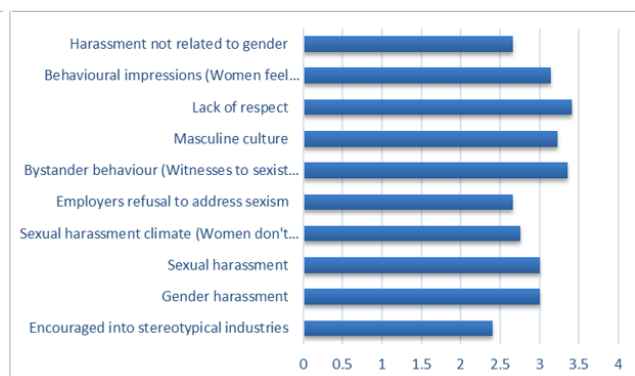
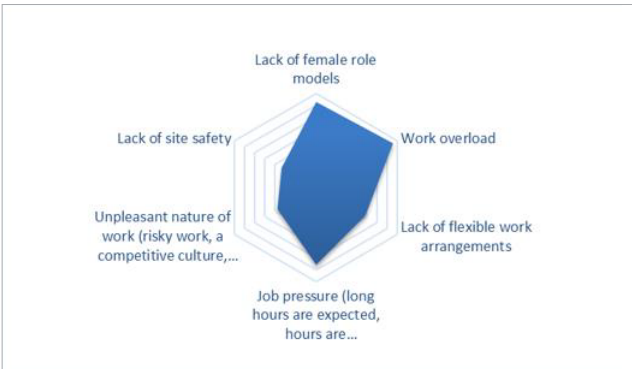
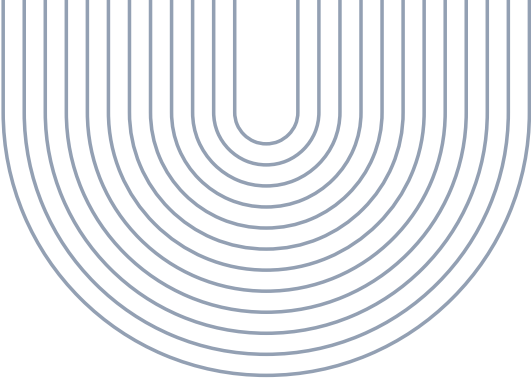


Figure 3b: The effects of Hostile sexism



Figures 4a: Experiences with job conditions

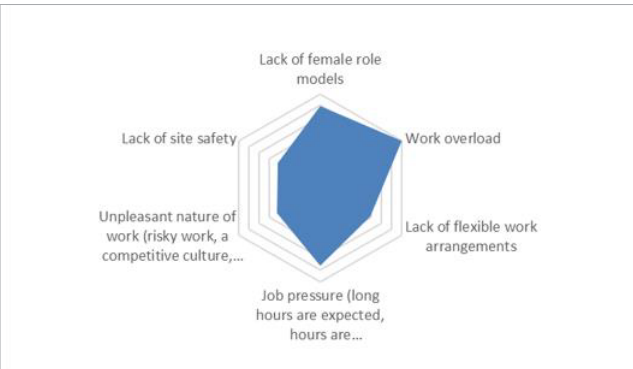


Figure 4b: The effects of Job conditions

of respect'. Further, 'Bystander behaviour' (witnesses to sexist behaviour do not speak out) and 'Harassment not related to gender'. It is important to note that in terms of the effect of these challenges on women's mental health, lack of respect was highly ranked (see Figure 3b). Other well-ranked challenges with significant effects are 'Bystander behaviour', 'Masculine culture', 'Behavioural impressions', 'Gender harassment', and 'Sexual harassment', but with a little margin between them.

General work conditions

Another critical area that our research focused on is the general work conditions. From Figure 4a, it is evident that 'Work overload' was the most selected challenge that impacted our study participants in their work environments. This is followed by 'Lack of female role models', 'Job pressure (long hours are expected, hours are unpredictable, there is excessive work)', 'Lack of flexible work arrangements', 'Unpleasant nature of work (risky work, a competitive culture, unsanitary conditions)', and 'Lack of site safety'. Our study further ascertained the effect of these key work conditions on the study participants. A similar response pattern was observed (see Figure 4b).

References

Galea, N., Powell, A., Salignac, F., Chappell, L. & Loosemore, M., 2021. When following the rules is bad for wellbeing: The effects of gendered rules in the Australian construction industry. *Work Employment and Society*.
 MBIE (2021). Introduction to construction sector workforce issues. Online Report Accessed from <https://www.mbie.govt.nz/dmsdocument/19152-introduction-to-construction-sector-workforce-issues>
 Sweet Analytics. (2020, August 2). Construction workforce demographics. <https://sweetanalytics.co.nz/content/construction-workforce-demographics/>

Conclusion

Our study clearly shows that the challenges faced by women in the New Zealand construction industry mirror those from the extant literature. Therefore, to reduce these challenges experienced by the construction women's workforce, their voices must be part of the discourse within industry settings. At the least, this will change current exclusionary perceptions within the industry. Also, an enhanced understanding of how mental health is experienced by this significant sub-set of the construction workforce will be helpful. Please watch out for our future work in this area, particularly the recommendations for improvement. ■

Authors
**F.E. Rotimi, M. Burfoot, N. Naismith,
 M. Mohaghegh & M. Brauner**

Note: We would like to acknowledge the School of Future Environments AUT for providing the funds for this exploratory research.

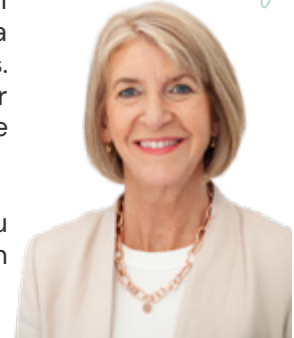
The power of finding your own uniqueness

By
Annette Gray

Have you ever wondered what is the best way to love your job?

Over my career I have made some key pivots, starting in teaching, then moving into corporate learning and development, becoming a leadership coach and now being fortunate in running my own business. My career has taught me loving your job is about finding what your uniqueness is in how you do your job. And your uniqueness is not the same as anyone else's.

Finding your own uniqueness and what you love at work will help you be more engaged with your work, you will come alive and you will even perform better. But first you need to notice them.



What can you do to find what you love at work?

Here are some great tips that can work at an individual, team and organisational level.

- ✓ **For you:** Start noticing day to day in your job the activities you seem to gravitate to and love doing? What brings you alive and takes no energy?
- ✓ **Your team leader:** Help them know what your strengths are and the activities you do that you absolutely love doing. Be very detailed about this. I love to teach and develop others is too general. For example, I love to teach and develop leaders and mentors in the construction sector particularly the ones who are open to doing things differently and open to learning.
- ✓ **If you are a leader or mentor:** Check in with your team members weekly and ask them these questions (as Marcus Buckingham suggests in his book *Love + Work*):
 - i. What activities did you love last week?
 - ii. What activities did you loathe last week?
 - iii. What are your priorities this week?
 - iv. What help do you need from me as your leader?

It does not matter if you don't do this check in brilliantly, the frequency is what matters (Buckingham:2022). It can even be done via text and still have the same impact as you show you care.

- ✓ **At an organisational level:** Help leaders to create rituals of the 15 minute weekly check ins and encourage mentors to support people to grow and learn about the things they love.

So start being like a forensic scientist in starting to notice when do you come alive and time flies? Or when does time stand still and you are clock watching?

Once you can find what your uniqueness is in how you do your job, then focus on those strengths, you will then be able to create great personal and professional satisfaction because you are doing a job you truly love.

About Annette Gray – Founder and CEO, Annette Gray Consulting

Annette has been a leadership coach and mentor for over 22 years. She develops leaders and mentors to use a coaching approach to how they lead and mentor so they can support women to thrive at work. For the last 8 years she has developed mentors on the NAWIC NSW Mentoring program. She is passionate about helping women progress in the construction industry and enjoys partnering with organisations to do this.

Connect with Annette at www.annettegray.com.au or annette@annettegray.com.au.

EMBRACING WANDERLUST

Navigating boundaries of land & society



Saba Adil Malik

Pakistan, a land of lush green valleys, fabrics that weave a cultural tapestry and an aroma of spices that tantalize your taste. Where the sun rises over the convergence of the three major mountains of the world and sets at the edge of the Arabian Sea.

Nestled in one these mountains is a small village in the North. Originally from the capital city, I had recently graduated as an architect and had the rare opportunity to join an interdisciplinary team. Which was instructed to document and present urban intervention scenarios for that village in the North. During daylight we would draw, design, and iterate the process. At evening we would explore the rugged terrain, the breath-taking vistas that surrounded us and have tea.

I've carried a passion for travelling from work to my everyday life. Mostly found with a camera hanging on one of my shoulders and a small size sketchbook packed away in one of my pockets. It not only allows me to capture what's around me; but to also record impressions and ideas holding the essence of the places I've been to and the people I've encountered along the way.

It was on this trip the notion of exploring a new part of the world crept into my mind. Growing up speaking native and regional languages, English was my fourth language which narrowed down my exploration to English speaking countries. I was fortunate enough to land a scholarship in Australia and few months later had a student visa in my hands to study Urban and Regional Planning in Adelaide and I embarked on my adventure.

Fast forward the coming years, there was a gradual realisation of being 'different' when I entered the construction industry as a Muslim female individual. After answering a colleague at the lunch table for the 7th time that I'm from Pakistan and not Afghanistan, India, or Iran. The realisation of a protective bubble the international student life had created. Where a significant portion of the student body consisted of international students, and participation in extracurricular activities lead to exposure to diverse ethnicities and their cultures.

An exposure that was largely missing in the workforce. Some micro-inequalities I faced stemmed from lack of knowledge and more importantly lack of desire to gain that knowledge and be enlightened. I observed a culture of silence and being sent on a loop of hierarchy chase in multiple workspaces rather than appropriate confrontations and acknowledgements that would have paved a path to inclusivity. Being in such an environment gave rise to situations where there would be hesitations in providing me training and hence seen as a last priority for choice to enrol on a project. This led to repressed self-development, and birth of a negative self-image.

Some common remarks I've heard multiple times:

- Assuming any brown coloured skin is from India. There is a whole range of South-Asian countries to list.
- Assuming all Muslim individuals are strict, narrow-minded, terrorist associated individuals. Restricting women in construction-based projects on these fictitious fears.
- Assuming all Muslim women who wear hijab (headscarf) or not are oppressed.
- Commenting on the skin colour and accent in a 'joking' way to say you don't fit in.

As challenging way-finding has been in the industry, there is a positive side of the spectrum where some present day workplaces have made sincere efforts towards promoting gender equity and fostering a culture of ethnic inclusivity.

I'd like to quote some examples from my current workplace (PointData). PointData is a proptech company that constructs planning algorithms using planning polices and codes to create property AI informing development potential for the residential sector. I work as a Planning and Data Analyst as part of the Planning and Delivery Team. The company by large has an empowering and supportive environment.

There are weekly team meetings to promote even workflow, identify areas where upskilling may be necessary, discuss variety of tasks and ensure there is alignment in communication and expectations.

What PointData has done:

- Spare meeting room converted to a prayer room.
- Work from home and hours adjustment during Ramadan
- Halal food in social events
- Team lead talking and having discussions about Pakistan
- Reading up about Pakistan and asking questions (across the company)
- Taking the team out for lunch before Ramadan

Performing just some of these basic steps can lead to exposure and change in perspective for individuals and workplaces. And those who are struggling can start off by following any of the steps listed below.

What to do:

- Do your own research, read or watch a YouTube video.
- Talk to a fellow Muslim who is of balance views to better enlighten yourself rather than assume.
- Have non-alcoholic beverages for Friday drinks (I drink juice and choccy milk all the time)
- Have team building activities that centre around culture awareness and insight. E.g, morning teas that celebrate Eid.
- Management positions to hold a basic amount of cultural awareness and knowledge.

Some solutions that management level can incorporate:

- Engage with the Australian Muslim Community and work towards clarifying misconceptions about Islam and the South-Asian Women in general.
- Understand the difference between measures and practice. Having diversity doesn't necessarily mean inclusivity is being practiced. Bring educational activities or team building exercises focused around cultural awareness to better intercultural relations.
- Have a policy framework that carries a check to ensure the behaviour is being implemented and have quarterly or as required meeting with your ethnic team members to see how they're progressing along. - Do not highlight or use as a justification that a women's professional growth is limited because she's a minority in her team. If there is an absence of female professionals in the field, equal support should be provided by male colleagues and managers. Gender should not be the limitation here.

In the end, I'd like to just step back and say any individual is good or bad by their behaviour and not because of the religion. Which all comes down to practicing compassion and humanity as the highest moral values we have to each other. ■

Saba Adil Malik

SMALL BUSINESS

Laura & Juanita share their story

One of the best things about our industry is the diversity of people and roles, the many ways women can carve out unique, interesting and rewarding careers. NAWIC took the opportunity to speak with two extraordinary women about their respective journeys in construction and their collaboration on Eve Workwear.

Getting Started

LAURA: I started out over 20 years ago in a small town in Ireland. I was not ready for university, and I knew straight out of school that I wanted to do something different. Every avenue I tried to get into a trade was a dead end. I had no family members or peers in a trade who could show me the way. I finally managed to get some work doing wall and floor tiling which became my first apprenticeship. I remember walking through the gates at a new hospital which was being built; this felt like exciting and important work.

JUANITA: I completed a Bachelor degree straight after school. University was the only option at the time. Looking back on that time, if a trade had been offered, I would have jumped at the chance!

I worked in Marketing and Business management before we started *Eve Renovation* in 2010. I completed my carpentry apprenticeship and did everything; book keeping, HR, contract administration, marketing and managing the day-to-day operations of our construction company.

Career Highlights

LAURA: Wow highlights, there are a few! Receiving my qualifications for both apprenticeships were great moments, and going on to get my builders license was a huge achievement. 10 years in business was a moment to celebrate!

JUANITA: Operating a construction business for 12 years while also launching a clothing brand was the most difficult and also the most rewarding thing I have done.



What is Eve Workwear and why did you start this business?

Eve workwear is a clothing brand that was developed out of a need for working women to have suitable clothing available to them. Until recently, women didn't have a choice with their workwear, they had to wear men's clothing. Eve is not just for construction trades but whatever work looks like. Eve is for women who need clothing they can rely on.

What are the challenges you have experienced in starting a workwear company?

We have experienced many challenges since our inception 11 years ago. As my Dad said, pick your battles and step around those who want to block you! This advice has served us well.

Having suitable clothing available is a barrier to women's participation in construction. As women are the minority in many workplaces, it is seen as not a priority for companies to supply female workwear. It is often up to the women to find clothing and purchase it outside of their uniform allocation.

When we first launched Eve renovations – we launched with the tagline ‘the female difference’ to encapsulate our different approach to building. On a job one day a male tradie, said ‘Oh yeah, and what is the female difference?’ Our response was if he didn’t know by now, he will never know! You learn to be sure about yourself and quick to stand your ground on a construction site.

Any advice to others looking to start a small business?

There no sense in sugar coating it. It’s similar to working on the tools in the construction industry; owning and operating a small business is HARD WORK! Women make up a majority of small business owners in Australia. We aren’t afraid of hard work.

If we can’t achieve working for someone else (often because we are women), then starting your own business is an obvious choice. Laura and I started Eve Constructions when Laura was told by her old boss when she said she wanted to be a Builder. At that stage she only had her Tiling trade – he told her to stick to what you are good - tiling! It was the push we needed to go out on our own.



Where to next?

LAURA: My hope for the construction industry is that women on the frontline are seen as an essential part of the industry, not an inconvenience or something that has to be incorporated into a businesses ‘corporate plan’. It is no longer a man’s world and the construction industry needs to support and reflect this.

Diversity is a must: not only gender, but race, religion, and sexual orientation. Seems simple, doesn’t it?

How and why did you both get involved in NAWIC Women on Tools?

As disrupter’s we wanted to try and create change. We had already established a female construction company and we wanted to encourage other business leaders to get out of their comfort zones to make significant changes to attract women to the industry.

The benefit to being part of NAWIC is to be able to communicate with women who are working towards a similar goal. It makes a huge difference.

JUANITA: We hope to be around to see the significant shift for women working on the frontline – where things like having a toilet onsite with sanitary bins is ‘normal’ and having women’s workwear provided by businesses to employees is an expectation, a part of employment – not something else we have to fight for.

It’s up to each and every one of us to try and make the change happen! Whether it is correcting someone when they use the term tradesman or passing on the details of women owned and operated businesses – we can all help, no matter how small it seems. □

SMASHING BARRIERS

Landmark pledge another step forward in smashing concrete walls turning women away from construction careers

The time for talking is over. We need to smash down the concrete walls that are keeping women out of the industry." This vision for Australia's construction sector from NAWIC founder Paula Gerber still rings true two years on.

But it's also true the industry has reason to acknowledge the steady progress made on dismantling these walls.

Data from the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) shows the actions that businesses in construction, mining and other skilled trades are taking against entrenched gender segregation in the workforce are making a difference. There's been a growing number of women taking up jobs in construction in the past five years

Since 2018, the proportion of women in the construction workforce has increased from 17% to 24%, while for mining it's improved 3.3 percentage points to 20%. However, despite this improvement, they remain two of Australia's most male-dominated industries.

It's heartening to see a strong appetite among employers and peak representative bodies, like NAWIC, to role-model change.

Further, the current cohort of 128 employers that have been recognised with WGEA's Employer of Choice for Gender Equality (EOCGE) citation includes NAWIC members Holding Redlich, Norman Disney & Young, Investa, Laing O'Rourke, John Holland and Woolworths.

There was also the recent pledge from the Australian Constructors Association (ACA) mandating flexible work plans for employees and every project, and, committing that three-quarters of its members will be certified as a WGEA Employer of Choice by 2028.

Making such commitments will improve construction workplaces for both men and women and increase the talent pool of workers needed to sustain the industry.

WGEA is pleased to work with the industry to identify opportunities for change and embed the approaches and actions that leading employers are implementing to improve representation, opportunity and reward for women and men at work.

EOCGE citation is public recognition of an organisation's commitment to gender equality

The EOCGE criteria reflect rigorous, evidence-informed policies and actions that contribute to advancing gender equality in the workforce.

It's a high bar, and this recognition sends a positive signal to all employees that their employer is committed to creating an equal experience for women and men.

Workforce data reported to WGEA by EOCGE employers offers a glimpse into what can be achieved when an organisation intentionally prioritises gender equality.

And an analysis of their performance, against results for non-EOCGE employers, indicates that with intentional leadership and a commitment to gender equality, an employer can make progress to reduce their gender pay gap.

EOCGE employers have an average gender pay gap of 17.4%. This is 26% lower than non-EOCGE employers. Further, EOCGE employers have more women on governing bodies (37%, compared to 31% for others). They're also driving cultural change in the workplace, with a higher proportion of male managers taking primary carer's leave.

This doesn't mean these employers are at the end of their gender equality journey but it's a sign of the progress that businesses can achieve with a long-term strategy that's firmly rooted in deliberate, intentional action.

For example, evidence shows making paid primary carer's leave available for each parent, regardless of gender, can lead to an increase in employees returning to work after leave, higher job satisfaction and staff morale, and reduce the cost of recruitment and training that flows from a business retaining, rather than losing, employees when they become parents¹.

Roadmap to citation: Steps to apply

EOCGEs are proving that enlightened employers can reap benefits to improved employee satisfaction, productivity and profitability with innovative actions for gender equality at all levels of the organisation.

1. WGEA, 2019, Designing and supporting gender equitable parental leave



Mary Wooldridge

WGEA accepts new applications for this voluntary leading practice recognition program each year. Successful organisations hold the EOCGE citation for two years.

The criteria spans seven focus areas that reflect the latest academic research in how employers can improve workplace gender equality.

The application process also requires consultation with the workforce to confirm that employees agree there's a zero-tolerance approach to gender-based harassment and sexual harassment, and that managers genuinely create environments within their teams that support equality for all employees. This step ensures EOCGE employers are not simply putting strategies in place, but that they are striving to firmly embed gender equality in company culture.

All employers who wish to apply for the EOCGE citation for the first time need to enrol in the program in the [WGEA Employer Portal](#).

Enrolments for the 2023-25 EOCGE program open from 1 August 2023 and covers the 12 months from 1 October 2022 to 30 September 2023.

WGEA's full 2023-25 guide to citation is on the Agency's website at www.wgea.gov.au/what-we-do/employer-of-choice-for-gender-equality.

For employers not yet ready to apply for an EOCGE citation – but that want to better understand how their workplace is performing on gender equality – [WGEA's website](#) also supports employers to understand why gender equality is good for business, and provides step-by-step guides for action and case studies of employers that have already implemented change.

CEOs often admit to WGEA that they wish they hadn't waited to address gender equality in their workplace, with one leader recently saying: *'once you go down this path and see the benefits, you wish you had started earlier'*.

Start investigating and implementing change today. Action you take now will play a part in breaking down the concrete walls keeping women away from a career in construction. ■

Mary Wooldridge
WGEA CEO

THE LEAKY PIPELINE

A NAWIC changemaker podcast series

Welcome to our new podcast.

In this podcast we will be exploring the challenges and opportunities related to gender diversity in the construction industry. Women make up only 13% of workers in the construction industry, but at the National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC), we are determined to change this statistic. We have a goal to increase female representation in the industry to 25% by 2025.

To get there it's not just about recruiting more women, we need to shift the culture within the industry. Creating an environment that not only attracts women but also supports and retains them.

Join Lauren Fahey, the host of 'The Leaky Pipeline' and General Manager of NAWIC Australia as she discusses the challenges, opportunities and what it means to be a changemaker.

In this podcast series, you'll hear from women with a range of experiences in the construction industry, who share the difficulties (*6am is just not a time women can get to work with kids*) the assumptions (*they thought I was the stripper*) and their thoughts on how we make construction a more diverse and inclusive workplace and why that's a good thing for everyone.

Search for 'The Leaky Pipeline' wherever you get your podcasts.



Episode 1: Professor Paula Gerber – NAWIC Australia Founder

When she graduated from Uni, like many Aussies, Paula got a backpack and a one-way ticket out. Paula found herself doing her Construction Law Apprenticeship in California and then the UK where she was most often the only woman in her workplace.

Once mistaken onsite for a stripper, Paula is now a highly respected Professor at Monash University and a sought-after spokesperson in both the construction and legal industries.

Upon her return to Australia Paula sought about creating a local chapter of NAWIC to build her tribe. She called every woman who'd ever picked up a hammer and had over 100 women in the room to discuss the creation of a community of women in construction! 28 years on we have over 10,000 members in NAWIC.

One of the things that struck Paula at the start of forming NAWIC was that so many men were keen to join. Why? Because it's the only association that spans the whole of industry in Australia.

Cognitive Diversity is Paula's term that describes the antidote to group think. You get a much more holistic approach to solve problems and that's one of the key reasons we need to encourage more women and greater diversity in construction, Paula says.

Paula has carved out a career in both law and academia where she now has the research to prove what she always knew; greater diversity delivers great commercial outcomes. Being sexualised or treated in a paternalistic way has been the hardest part for Paula. She often observed the perception that she couldn't understand construction. Paula has frequently experienced mansplaining through analogies related to baking, highlighting an unconscious bias that implies women are not considered equals and must repeatedly prove their intelligence.



Episode 2: Christina Yiakkoupis – Chair of NAWIC Australia

Christina had her heart set on becoming an architect, however, is grateful she accepted a scholarship for engineering instead! She loves the diversity of her career and reflects on the significant improvements that she has observed in the industry.

On creating cultural shift in construction, change happens from the top. Boldly calling upon government to implement targets and quotas, Christina says this is important because it starts conversation. It's a catalyst for business to do better, to not only attract but retain women.

"Let's be very clear," Christina says, about bullying and gender bias: "It's not ok, never was ok, never will be ok."

On confronting sexist comments Christina is often met with "It's just a phrase". Christina doesn't back down and there is no bystander effect for her. She calls it out, urges us all to do the same and tell people to find another way to express themselves. Christina says we all can be the tiny steps toward cultural shift.

In her career Christina now feels empowered, and she feels much more confident to speak up. She observes people are much more aware of the misconceptions that women can't do a lot of trade roles. Advances in technology mean 'it's no longer ok to be out there on your own lifting 50kg'. Safety is for all people. Now the work environment has changed so much, it's safer for everyone.

On getting to 25% participation by 2025 Christina says all organisations need to look at what they are doing and do better. She encourages women to be more visible, be louder!



Episode 3: Kerry Neil

Kerry started her career as a Marine Biologist working in the ports and shipping industry. Today she is GHD's General Manager for South Australia and the NAWIC National President's Choice Award winner for 2022.

Kerry discusses how it's not easy to get into construction and students don't often get to see the rewarding opportunities available to them when they are in that 'dating game' exploring career options.

Busting common myths Kerry dives into the subject of menstruation and childbearing: this does not denigrate women's capability to do their jobs. Physical ability needs to go into the back-room Kerry shares. People are now being seen for their technical capability and working with their heads. Kerry urges "Don't discriminate our opportunity, instead let's have

a conversation and fix the environment". Similarly, Kerry says don't mistake 'heat in a conversation' for a hormonal issue, rather let's consider why someone is passionate.

Her observations of the construction industry over her career span from male dominance, conflict and isolation, and the shift to environments to improved work practices and people being seen for the capabilities they bring. There is work to be done; from improving mentoring and intentional action through having role models to observe. Sharing stories is important to help create a new generation of people in industry.

Kerry's pledge is to bring her voice, to open up the conversation, and to share her journey so people can see what's possible.

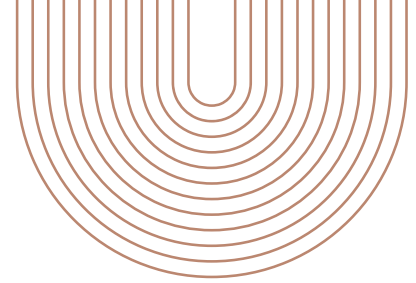


Episode 4: Emma Sckrabei

Emma has spent her previous chapter as Head of Community for Gininderry – an exemplar project, a joint government and industry initiative to attract and retain women in construction. As she launches into her own business “The Umbrella Project” Emma reflects that industry associations have a real role to play. Her own experience in the ACT stems from building a pipeline for women in construction, to recruit and retain new talent in the industry.

NAWIC and the Office for Women obtained a grant to develop a curriculum-based model to develop the pipeline for women in construction. Targeted at years 7-10, the program included learning about construction, diving into gender equality, focusing on the industry and exploring a wide range of roles including ‘Try a Trade’ experiences and work experiencing and mentoring. 110 young women, in year 9 and 10, related to people in industry and given work experience, providing exposure and creating change.

Emma says the magic wand would be getting industry to sponsor a ten-year curriculum and career development program. She pledges to keep talking and building the momentum around women’s participation in construction.



Episode 5: Rebecca Hanley

Rebecca Hanley is the dynamic Managing Director at Laing O'Rourke.

Like most women in construction, Rebecca's path hasn't been linear, and in that journey lies her superpower! Bringing to the table a diverse mix of start-up and big corporate, industrial, product and retail, Rebecca is candid about what it takes to lead one our Australia's largest construction companies.

At the heart of Rebecca's determination and passion is her mission to create a better world. Straddling each of the continents, armed with a CPA, an MBA and fluency in multiple language, Rebecca's passion is a force to be reckoned with.

Her experience ranges navigating the intricacies of construction to her role as a guiding force at Laing O'Rourke. Rebecca's story serves as a testament to determination, leadership and an intrinsic passion for creating a better world. Her mantra: "Cognitive diversity gives you better results, better responses, better decision making and more holistic leadership styles."

Buckle up as in this episode we delve into the moments that have shaped Rebecca's career – the good times and those big learning experiences. We explore the obstacles she overcame and how she built personal resilience. We will examine how Rebecca's vision has transformed Laing O'Rourke into a key player in the regions construction industry.

Rebecca pledges to be part of the cultural change and be a diversity leader.



Episode 6: Miranda Swift

When she shared her story to an auditorium full of NAWIC Members and Allies there was barely a dry eye in the house. Miranda Swift, a cadet engineer working at Northrop, has captured the admiration and recognition of many by winning the esteemed NAWIC NSW University Scholarship 2022.

Not content just to shine in her own right, Miranda has created opportunities to support aspiring female engineers too. Whilst navigating her own steep journey Miranda has carved out time and capacity to help others just like herself, truly embodying the NAWIC mantra "we rise together".

In this episode, we are fortunate to delve into Miranda's journey that brought her into the world of engineering, her insights on what it is like coming from a regional town and the significant experiences that have propelled her to become an innovator. Grab the tissues and be prepared with be filled with hope and admiration.

Miranda's pledge focuses on using her platform to support young women entering the industry and empowering them to achieve new heights.

The Leaky Pipeline Podcast can be found on Spotify, Apple Podcasts and Google Podcasts. Don't forget to subscribe and be notified when each new episode drops. 📌

WOMEN IN WASTE

Creating sustainable futures

Agriculture is taking a hard look at its waste problem. It's time we did that in construction, too.

Innovating in the construction industry is a tough sell. Rising costs, staff shortages and complex projects can reduce the appetite for evolution and the adoption of new systems and processes. Not to mention the fact that, unlike in agriculture – where markets and regulators are increasingly scrutinising production practices from paddock to plate – construction customers really just care about the finished product.

So it's little surprise that measures to deal with construction waste are often at the very bottom of the priority list. In an industry that's known for breaking things down only to build them back up again, sustainability programs are often seen as a nice to have.

However the waste issue isn't going anywhere and the Australian construction industry needs to rise to the challenge. Quickly. According to the latest National Waste Report 2022, the construction and demolition industry produces a whopping 38% of Australia's waste, 29.0Mt in total. In the Northern Territory, where NTEX is based, more than a third of the Territory's waste comes from construction, making our waste issue consistent with the national percentages.

But at NTEX, we're flipping the script and proving that, with a little ingenuity, it's possible to transform construction's reputation from one of waste and destruction to a sustainable industry doing good for people, planet, and profit.

Taking on the circular economy

Truthfully, prior to COVID the environmental sustainability of our operations wasn't high on our agenda. Our endeavours into sustainable business practices began in earnest in July 2020 when we purchased our first concrete recycling machine from Germany. We've since purchased a second larger machine that produces a really refined aggregate product. After a lot of trial and error, our recycling processes are now an industry-leading yet practical example of how a circular economy system in the construction industry can work.

The process starts with the implementation of pre-demolition audits to identify waste streams and existing hazardous

materials and contaminants that may prevent safe recycling opportunities. Commonly found contaminants of concern include asbestos, Hexavalent Chromium (Cr6), PFAS, and lead-containing paint, but comprehensive testing for heavy metals, miscellaneous inorganics and other potential contaminants is also carried out. This process helps to safely manage hazardous and contaminant-containing materials from the get-go, preventing cross contamination of waste material streams and maximising recycling, reuse and repurposing opportunities. Determining the relevant recycling paths generates opportunities to create usable products in civil construction. Primarily the remanufacture of concrete and asphalt waste into aggregate products that have been incorporated back into residential, civil and infrastructure projects across the Northern Territory.

In three years we've managed to recycle over 60,000 tonnes of waste concrete and asphalt from landfill.

NTEX now averages a 93% recyclable rate on all demolition projects conducted for the Northern Territory state and federal governments, defence departments and private industry. Taking into consideration that the industry's average recyclable rate hovers at around 76%, this represents a significant increase.

We don't say this to boast or grandstand. If we can do it, anyone can. So we're determined to bring as many businesses along for the ride as we can.





Eileen Breen

The creation of SustainAbility

The sustainability initiatives we put in place for NTEX highlighted that many of our processes and programs are transferable to businesses beyond construction.

This led to the foundation of SustainAbility, a project designed to support rural and regional businesses develop and implement their own sustainability initiatives. Through SustainAbility, we advocate for sustainability initiatives and circular economy strategies that increase profitability while also contributing towards positive impacts for people and the environment.

To date we have engaged with over 200 individuals, businesses and organisations, delivering sustainability and circular economy education, ideas and practical solutions. We're also proving that any business or organisation, no matter the size or industry, can develop sustainability plans that create positive change through impactful action.

Looking beyond the construction industry

Assisting other businesses to create their own sustainable and circular programs through the SustainAbility project provided an imperative to look beyond construction for inspiration and opportunities.

This meant revisiting my roots: the agricultural sector.

The agriculture, fisheries, and forestry industries currently generate 9.8 million tonnes of pre-farm gate waste every year. Pre-farm gate waste refers to the waste generated before the product leaves the farm and it comprises 13% of Australia's total waste.

At 9.8 million tonnes, agriculture's pre-farm gate waste problem is only one-third the size of the construction waste problem. But in a sector known for innovation, it isn't surprising that agriculture is looking for solutions.

Following a deep dive into the scale of the problem, AgriFutures Australia engaged stakeholders from across every industry touchpoint and came up with a whopping 64 innovations that could be implemented to reduce pre-farm gate waste. From the obvious, like replacing plastic tree guards with compostable ones, to the truly mind blowing, like creating power from almond waste, each potential solution is an opportunity to deliver a more sustainable future.

Some of these solutions are transferable to construction, however the real opportunity lies in conducting similar research to uncover targeted opportunities for our industry. Imagine the power of stakeholders across every facet of construction coming together to solve the challenges presented by construction and demolition waste.

It could turn the 93% recyclable rate on NTEX's demolition projects into an industry standard. Or find innovative ways to deal with asbestos materials, treated timber, and other hazardous waste that the industry currently cannot recycle.

I truly believe it's time for our sector to take inspiration from industries like agriculture, and work collectively to find solutions that transform how we produce and manage construction waste. ▣

Eileen Breen

SETTING NEW STANDARDS IN CONSTRUCTION

The culture of Australia's construction industry is taking centre stage as the topic de jour with all participants - government, industry and unions. It seems the days of clinging to the old adage "this is how we've always done it" are finally fading away. The industry is progressing, and there are some key initiatives fast-tracking this change.

The Culture Standard is a great example and one that holds personal significance for me. As the Chair of the Construction Industry Culture Taskforce, I have witnessed first-hand the power of collaboration among the NSW and Victorian governments, the Australian Constructors Association, leading academics and independent contributors in developing the Culture Standard.

The idea behind the Culture Standard is that it will form part of government procurement processes. By incorporating cultural requirements into procurement, we can achieve the essential leap forward that the industry desperately needs. This will create a more equitable playing field for all bidders, removing the race to the bottom solely based on time and cost considerations.

The momentum behind the Culture Standard is building. Key projects in NSW and Victoria are serving as testing grounds to establish the foundation for future widespread adoption by government agencies and even the private sector. Promising signs on improved wellbeing and productivity are already emerging from these pilot projects which are implementing the requirements of the standard, including, importantly, a 50-hour cap for any worker across a five day week.

While it is not a single silver bullet, the impact of the Culture Standard cannot be overstated. It has the potential to fundamentally change the way the industry operates, for the better. By emphasising the importance of cultural

considerations in procurement, we are taking a significant step towards reshaping the industry's values and priorities, its productivity and its positioning as an employer of choice.

Our study *The Cost of Doing Nothing* told us the economy was \$8bn worse off each year because of the embedded industry norms that have led to acute labour shortages, among the highest rates of bad mental health of any industry and the lowest gender diversity and a widening pay gap. All while productivity in the industry is where it was last century and before.

Importantly, cultural change is not just a job for government. Constructors themselves are acutely aware of the urgent need for immediate action and their pivotal role in driving change. Credit to the Australian Constructors Association (ACA) for taking active steps in areas within its control. Serving as a further catalyst for change, the ACA has made a game-changing pledge that signifies a collective recognition that the construction sector must evolve at the grassroots level. The pledge aims to promptly implement the flexibility and diversity pillars outlined in the Culture Standard.

Other countries are moving toward legislating flexible working arrangements and ACA members have decided not to wait for Australian governments to follow suit. They have pledged to establish workplace flexibility policies that guarantee every employee genuine access to flexible work arrangements. The impact on workers and the industry will be significant. It will create a healthier and more inclusive workplace environment, improve the attractiveness of the industry to a broader range of skilled individuals, such as women and younger workers, and improve industry productivity.

As part of the pledge, 75 per cent of ACA members aim to attain the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) citation

 <p>Time for life</p>	 <p>Wellbeing</p>	 <p>Diversity & Inclusion</p>
<p>Time for Life: Ensuring our workforce is provided adequate time to rest and pursue life activities outside of work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better working hours • Flexible working arrangements 	<p>Wellbeing: Ensuring the occupational health and mental wellbeing of our workforce is prioritised.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support mental health • Proactive management of health risks • Schedules that enable wellbeing 	<p>Diversity & Inclusion: Ensuring the industry can attract and retain a diverse range of people to work in our industry.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone can feel welcome and included • Provide suitable amenities • Address gaps in pay and representation

Culture Standard Overview

by 2028. Currently, only four construction companies out of 128 private sector organisations have achieved the citation. It will help close gender pay gaps faster and help shift the industry to one that supports more equal sharing of caring responsibilities at home. The WGEA certification process also requires employee confirmation that there's a zero-tolerance approach to gender-based harassment and sexual harassment, and that managers

genuinely create environments within their teams that support equality for all employees. Recent commonwealth legislation has imposed a positive duty on employers to actively prevent workplace sex harassment and discrimination, so the WGEA process underscores this new requirement.

The time has come for this vital, and in so many ways magnificent, industry to undergo a profound cultural shift, and we are witnessing positive strides in the right direction. ■



Gabrielle Trainor

AO, Chair of the Construction Industry Culture Taskforce

As a non-executive director and advisor, Gabrielle Trainor has had more than 25 years on the boards of public and private sector entities. Her current positions include as Interim Chair of Infrastructure Australia, Co-chair of BuildSkills Australia, and as a member of the program oversight committee of Victorian Government's Major Transport Infrastructure Authority. She is a director of WAM Global and Built Group Pty Ltd and a board member of the Western Parkland City Authority. She is also a Commissioner of the AFL.

HAVING THE HARD CONVERSATIONS

Why Washroom Dignity matters to all people

Initial Hygiene, a leading provider of hygiene solutions, proudly announces the recent launch of the Washroom Dignity initiative, that supports providing free period and incontinence care products in the workplace.

This ground breaking campaign, driven by the collective vision of the team at Rentokil Initial and advocacy groups for equity, equality and inclusion in the workplace in Australia, emphasises the importance of prioritising Washroom Dignity for all individuals regardless of their age or gender. We firmly believe that by raising awareness and taking proactive steps, individuals and organisations can make a profound positive impact while upholding the principles of dignity and respect.

The initiative successfully hosted two engaging face-to-face events in Melbourne and Sydney in May, followed by a highly informative webinar in June.

The launch events held in Melbourne and Sydney were instrumental in shedding light on the urgent need for washroom facilities that cater to all genders, as this issue significantly impacts the health, well-being, and mental safety of employees. Esteemed experts from the leading advocacy groups, like NAWIC, NAWO and WORK180 shared invaluable insights during these sessions, addressing critical topics such as menstruation, incontinence, and the overall importance of inclusive washroom amenities.





Key takeaways from the experts' presentations include:

- Lack of washroom amenities that cater to all genders is causing a significant impact on the health well-being & mental safety of our employees
- If you intend to address menstruation or incontinence in the workplace, start by asking your employees what they need
- Periods are a bloody big deal for people who menstruate
- 20% of Aussies have taken a sick day because their workplace didn't cater to their menstrual or incontinence needs
- 1 in 5 Aussies experience bladder weakness on a frequent basis

- Financially & Culturally, the Construction industry needs women to join the industry
- Inclusive leadership can lead to psychological safety
- A sense of belonging can lead to a 56% increase in productivity and a 50% decrease in staff turnover

To further disseminate these valuable insights and generate broader awareness about diversity, equity, and inclusion (DE&I) in workplaces and educational facilities, please download and share the video recording of the Washroom Dignity launch webinar with colleagues and social circles. The recording can be accessed via the [following link](#).

For those seeking a deeper understanding of how the principles of washroom dignity can be tailored to their specific business, Washroom Dignity offers personalised one-on-one deep dive sessions. Please contact Olha Lyeskakova, Senior Marketing Manager at Initial Hygiene on olha.lyeskakova@rentokil-initial.com, for a detailed presentation and deeper insights: you will explore how implementing Washroom Dignity can transform your company and add value to your business.

To learn more about Washroom Dignity and access additional resources, please visit www.initial.com/au/hygiene-services/washroom-dignity.

NOT YOUR AVERAGE CEO

Cocooned in a blanket, clutching a bunch of grapes and trying to remain vertical, Lauren Streifer, Founder and CEO of 3 self-made international businesses (so far) and newly appointed CEO of the peak industry body for public transport in Australia and New Zealand, is suffering from debilitating morning sickness that just refuses to sod off! (It's 4:30pm).

Despite growing a small human which is making her feel like she's "constantly on a boat", Lauren still somehow manages to radiate a charismatic, excitable and highly infectious energy that makes you want to back her for prime minister, ask her to be your best friend and outstay your welcome.

Lauren took up the role of CEO at the Public Transport Association of Australia and New Zealand (PTAANZ) in April this year, and she also owns and runs 3 fast-growing companies, with diverse offerings but common values:

- Streifer & Co - a stakeholder and CEO advisory firm.
- Skillsy - An immersive, practitioner-led education and training company.
- One in a Million Publishing - a children's publishing house focused on heart-centred stories and quirky characters.

As heart-centred stories, Lauren's is up there.

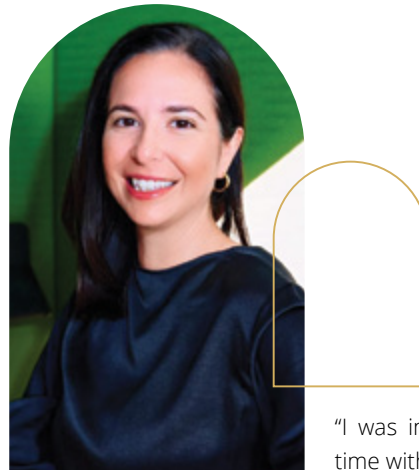
Growing up in New York as "the poorest kid in a rich area", life hasn't always been easy for Lauren, but she learnt from a young age how to relate to people from all walks of life.

Thanks to her creative stay-at-home mother, and her Inventor father, you could say that the blend of adventure, curiosity and caring that guides Lauren's endeavours is in her DNA.

Lauren's father was heavily involved in her education, and he believed in an immersive approach to learning.

"If I had a school project about Native Americans, a book simply wouldn't do! My father would drive me to a reservation and get me to interview the local Chief!"

These early experiences, coupled with an increasingly difficult home environment, sparked a thirst for knowledge and a tenacity which saw Lauren win a full scholarship to Tulane University, New Orleans to study International Relations and English.



"I was in foster care at the time with barely any money.

Not only did I need to secure a full scholarship, but I could also only afford to make two applications, because in the US, not only does university education cost a fortune, but you have to pay to apply."

During her studies, Lauren interned at the Australian Consulate and earned the chance to study in Australia for a spell, and that's where she met a boy.

Ok, that was a trick, this is not a love story. It wasn't 'the boy' - he wasn't a keeper, but he did turn out to be the person we can thank for bringing Lauren to our fair Australian shores permanently! Yay for us.

In Australia, Lauren's career went from strength to strength. She was successful in securing a place at Melbourne's Monash University to study an MSc in Diplomacy and Trade, and then bagged a dream job working in project management and Asia-Pacific relations for the Australian Government where she spent 5 years before taking a career break to travel for a year.

With itchy career feet, Lauren spotted an opportunity at Roads Australia - the peak body for roads which brings together industry, government and communities to optimise integrated transport and mobility.

"The role was a policy director, and when I spoke to the recruiter, they said "don't even bother applying".

I decided to anyway, and I got called 5 times on the night of the interview because they were so afraid I would take another job!"

In her 7 years at Roads Australia, Lauren progressed from policy director to executive director, making friends and building her network and skills along the way.

When the CEO job came up in 2019, Lauren applied but was not successful.

Hugely disappointed and not knowing what to do next, Lauren reached out to the people she trusted for advice and did the only logical thing - took a longgggg holiday!

"I had fun, I wrote children's books, made new friends. I was getting so many phone calls from people asking for advice, that I thought to myself, 'I wonder if this could be a business.'"

When Lauren returned from her travels, her beans were refilled and that Streifer tenacity returned full pelt. She set herself a target. Little did she know, it would turn out to be the beginning of something special.

"I set myself a goal to meet 50 CEOs and pitch my idea - like a self-made Dragon's Den!"

And she did just that!

Lauren organised meetings with 50 CEOs, asking questions about viability, challenges, opportunities - what would you want? What wouldn't work? What would you support?

Later, when Streifer & Co (Lauren's first business) was born, none of those 50 CEOs gave her business, but they championed it to others. It created a "we built it together" mindset and a tribe of supporters.

Four years on, Streifer & Co helps leaders make a global impact, by providing advice on strategy, stakeholder engagement, coaching and events. Streifer & Co's clients include CPB Contractors, CDSE, SICE, Berkshire Hathaway and Save a Child's Heart.

Our CEO Extraordinaire didn't stop there. Lauren founded One in a Million Publishing shortly after returning from her travels because, after searching the world, she couldn't find picture books with the heart-centred messages she wanted to share (I'm not crying you are).

Since its creation in 2020, One in a Million Publishing has reached almost 5,000 children and donated more than 300 books.

You could say that creating the change she wants to see in the world is kind of Lauren's thing, and her next brainchild, Skillsy certainly falls into that category!

"I wanted to create the thing I wish had been there for me, because there is no 'induction' to the infrastructure industry."

Reusing the Streifer & Co build-up model, Lauren met with "tonnes of leaders". She asked them if they would send people to an Introduction to Infrastructure program - they all said "YES. How can I help?"

Lauren cut the same deal with herself that she had done 3 years earlier with Streifer & Co:

"I decided that \$30,000 of my own money was all I would invest and if I ran out of money, I would quit.

Skillsy was profitable within one year".

In early 2022, Skillsy was born! Formed on one simple idea - why do industry and government leaders have access to

information and connections that may take someone several decades to build? If we are all in this together - isn't there a fairer way?

Popular with industry powerhouses, small businesses and Australian state governments alike, Skillsy allocates 10% of all spots to scholarships for disadvantaged groups, and engages industry partners and practitioners to provide credible, practical and tangible courses and programs that set people up for success.

"I was that lemonade stand kid! I didn't plan to be an entrepreneur, but I thought it would be lovely! I have always been driven by ideas not money."

When you would think Lauren would have nothing much else on her 'Life To Do List', she has found herself growing two more things! One is her biggest project yet - a baby! Due later this year, baby Streifer will join Lauren, her partner Andrew and their stepdaughter Vivian - everyone is VERY excited.

The other is her new role as CEO of Public Transport Association Australia New Zealand - an independent public transport association with over 80 member organisations. It represents a projects and operational workforce of over 150,000 people and a multi-billion-dollar industry.

Lauren has always been a community-builder, and she plans to channel that ethos into her role at PTAANZ, continuing their 20-year legacy as the premier peak industry body and creating new opportunities for networking, celebration, innovation and connection, and I don't know about you, but with a CV this dazzling I think she is the right woman for the job!

"This is a once in a generation opportunity, with all state governments committed to public transport and renewable energy, to create the cities and regional centres that we want for generations to come."

As I come to terms with the fact it's probably high time I left Lauren's house, it's time for some advice from this wonder woman for the budding CEOs and entrepreneurs out there. Get your pens out.

- You've got one shot - research the hell out of it!
- You can have it all! Just not all at once.
- Leave life open to the magic of randomness.

And with that, I leave Lauren to her bunch of grapes and motion sickness. 🍷

Since the time of writing, we are happy to announce that Lauren gave birth to a little boy called Smith. Congratulations to Lauren, Andrew and Vivian on your new arrival.

Liza Hogben

NAWIC MEMBERSHIP SURVEY 2023

Earlier this year NAWIC surveyed our members to gain their input and understand more about the issues they face. Of the 373 respondents 94% were female identifying and 86.8% were aged between 25 and 54.

Respondent snapshot

- **62.21%** have Construction or Project Management roles
- **50.72%** work in Commercial construction
- **47.7%** work in Roads, Rail & Infrastructure
- **32.45%** identify as Christian/Catholic
- **10.19%** live or work regionally
- **9.54%** belong to the LGBTIQ+ community
- **8.6%** identify as being neurodiverse
- **4.3%** report having a disability
- **1.79%** are Tradies

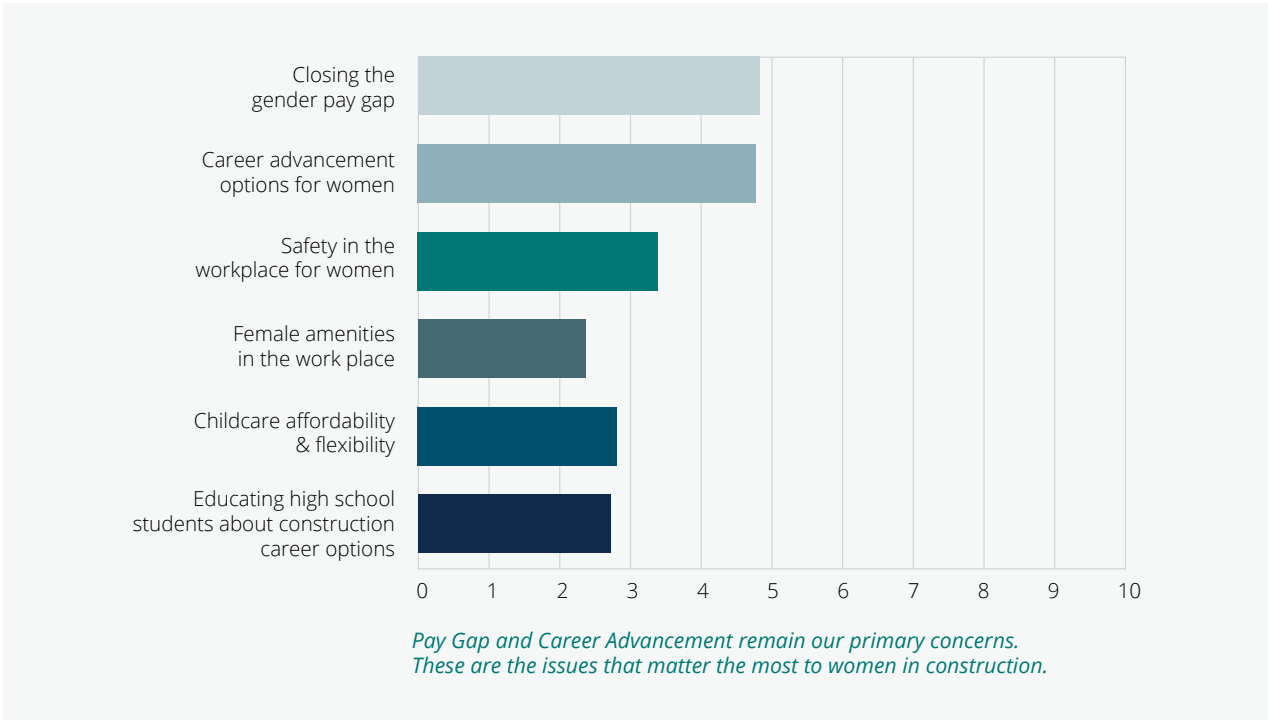
This is what the data tells us - "We love working in construction!"

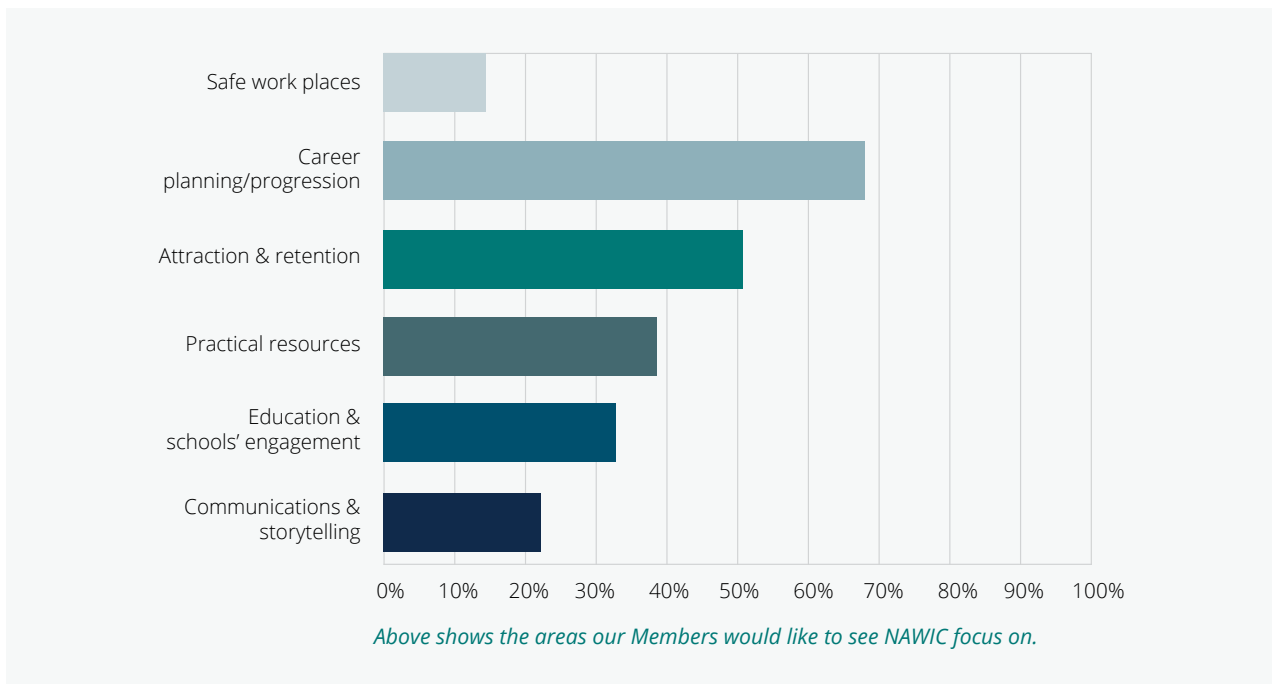
The overwhelming response indicates our members:

- Love their job
- Feel valued, respected and heard
- Have equal access to training, opportunities, mentors and career advancement, and
- Work with great people

On Parenting in Construction

- **40%+** of respondents have left the industry and then returned for Caring Responsibilities
- **62%** of respondents work more than 40 hours per week
- **7.28%** have adult caring responsibilities
- **32.88%** have child caring responsibilities





Our lived experience responses tell us that our Members are still challenged by:

- Sexual harassment = **41.89%**
- Bullying = **54.72%**
- Discrimination = **53%**
- Intimidation = **51.62%**
- Microinequalities = **65.14%**
- Physical Assault = **7.84%**

Observations of the current state of play

- **81.24%** Strongly agree or Agree the role of women in construction is changing for the better
- **61.66%** Strongly agree or Agree that women in our industry empower each other

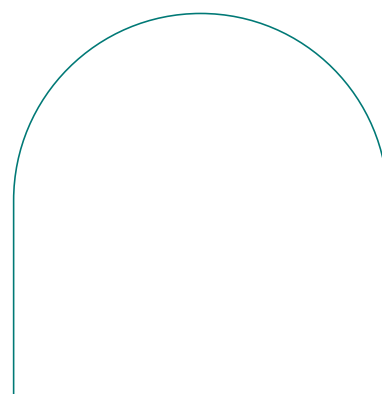
In terms of support each other:

- 23.38% tell us women in the industry do not do enough to support each other
- 46.12% disagree or strongly disagree with the statement that men do enough to support women in industry

What does the industry need more of:

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Mandated targets for females in construction roles	7.86% (29)
More education and career paths for females	29.27% (108)
More flexibility in the workplace and in work hours	39.57% (146)
More women in leadership	45.26% (167)
Cultural change	32.52% (120)
Respect at work	27.64% (102)
All of the above	40.38% (149)

We thank the respondents for contributing to this important research. This will form the basis of our strategic planning and advocacy initiatives for the year ahead. **■**



THE PSYCHOLOGY OF WOMEN IN POWER

She may have been voted out of parliament and forced to stand down at the time; but Julia Gillard's passionate statement around 'misogyny' delivered on 9 October 2012 was significant enough to add a second definition of the word 'misogyny' in the Macquarie Dictionary¹. This article explores the psychology of women in power and its specific implications for the construction management industry in Australia. By examining the challenges faced by women in leadership roles and the potential benefits they bring, we can gain valuable insights into how to continually improve our multi-billion-dollar industry.

When examining how the human brain is wired, it is necessary to understand that despite living in the modern world injected with virtual realities and technology, humans are from the 'stone-age'. Scientifically proven, it is evident that *'whilst you can take humans out of the stone age, it is impossible to take the stone age out of a human'*. Part of this ancient behaviour includes fighting ferociously when threatened for the purpose of survival². For this reason, the recent rise of women in power and leadership positions has perhaps subconsciously put others in threatened and vulnerable positions whether they comprehend this or not. The realisation of this is essential for all genders to break the barriers and enable the continued growth of women in leadership positions.

A threatened position includes the perception that women in power or leadership positions may create a false threat to the masculinity of a male. In a three-part study undertaken by Ms Leah Sheppard (Ph.D) of Carson College of Business



at the Washington State University, the results identified that women who adopted a more 'administrative' style of leadership had less back-lash than those who were overly ambitious. Today, there should be no room for this sort of bias. The insecurities of others are not our issue.

During the last decade, we have observed the construction industry focus on many diversity and inclusion initiatives whilst targeting equal opportunity and making the well-being of workers a priority. An example of this is seeing the shift to

1. <https://www.macquariedictionary.com.au/blog/article/75/>.

2. Steven Pinker, *How the Mind Works* (New York: Norton, 1997).

a five (5) day working week and improving policies around bullying, harassment, and parental leave. It is important to understand that these changes are relatively new and for example; the *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* (Cth) and the *Paid Parental Leave Act 2010* (Cth) only being established after the 1980's. Reverting to the previous discussion points, we as humans need to understand that change is not an 'event' but rather a 'psychological experience'. Parts of our brains referred to as the 'amygdala' are responsible for perceiving change as a 'threat' and subsequently releases the hormone that is responsible for the fear, fight, or flight reaction³. For this reason, the climbing of women in power naturally and most commonly see their counterparts fighting for their survival.

The 'fighting for masculinity and survival' characteristic however is a dying breed. A study undertaken by the Diversity Council of Australia identifies several key findings relating to the discussion points of this article. These include that employees are more satisfied with working for leaders who have care-giving responsibilities and that paid parental leave is crucial is retention. The results also clearly identify statistics that leaders who are women more actively support the growth and development of employees and perhaps this is a result of the absence of insecurity and the fight to maintain the alpha status⁴. To accompany these findings, the Australian Institute of Business confirms that 79% of Australian employees consider their growth and development a crucial item in job satisfaction⁵.

After considering the above-mentioned points and assuming that women in leadership roles are appointed based on



merit; the majority of backlash is due to the insecurity and psychological drivers of others that are not our problem. Change is inevitable and research identifies that women in power are essential for employee satisfaction that directly drives the performance of a business. In the current fragile economy, there's little room left for minds that don't evolve, develop, and help our people and businesses succeed. □

Ms Jo Matai
**Commercial Manager (Construction),
 Lendlease NSW**

3. <https://www.emersonhc.com/change-management/people-hard-wired-resist-change#:~:text=Part%20of%20the%20brain%E2%80%94the,actually%20protecting%20you%20from%20change.>

4. <https://www.dca.org.au/research/project/working-future-national-survey-employees.>

5. [https://www.aib.edu.au/blog/career-development/job-satisfaction-what-really-matters/.](https://www.aib.edu.au/blog/career-development/job-satisfaction-what-really-matters/)



Annual Report 2023



**CONTACT NAWIC
ADMINISTRATION
FOR YOUR COPY.**

CAREER SPOTLIGHT

*Cost & Commercial Manager
(Also known as a Quantity Surveyor)*



Name: Doris Tang
Role: Graduate Cost and Commercial Manager
Company: Arcadis
Location: Hybrid – both onsite and in the office

To become a Cost and Commercial Manager/Quantity Surveyor, I studied a degree at QUT: Bachelor of Urban Development (Honours) (majoring in Quantity Surveying and Cost Engineering).

As a quantity surveyor, my responsibilities focus on helping to estimate costs, material quantities and project timelines. A key part of the role is to liaise with a range of other teams working on the project, helping it to stay on track in terms of budget and on time.

Why I love my role

We work in a fast-paced industry; no two days are the same. I love the feeling of satisfaction when I drive past projects that I used to work on and be proud to be able to say that I was a part of it.

Other 'Surveying Careers' careers include:

- Land Surveyor – measuring and mapping any part of the earth's surface, including any natural or artificial features. It includes surveys for land subdivision, engineering, construction, mapping and property development
- Building Surveyor – advises on issues pertaining to building permits including onsite inspections



www.kapitolgroup.com.au

KAPITOL
GROUP

Proud supporters of women in construction





2022 NAWIC

awards for excellence





2022 NAWIC NATIONAL

awards for excellence

*The Commons, Melbourne VIC
24th February 2023*

The 2022 inaugural NAWIC National Awards for Excellence were held in February 2023 in Melbourne and hosted by NAWIC Chair Christina Yiakkoupis and the hilarious Jean Kittson OAM. Jean is an accomplished author, public speaker, actor, and comedian who gained national attention through her appearances on ABC and much more.

Awards for Excellence take place across all chapters throughout the year, and our National Awards are a celebration of the most outstanding candidates from all states and territories.

Our National Awards would not be possible without our wonderful judges. We are so grateful to these committed individuals who give their time and expertise on our award panels.



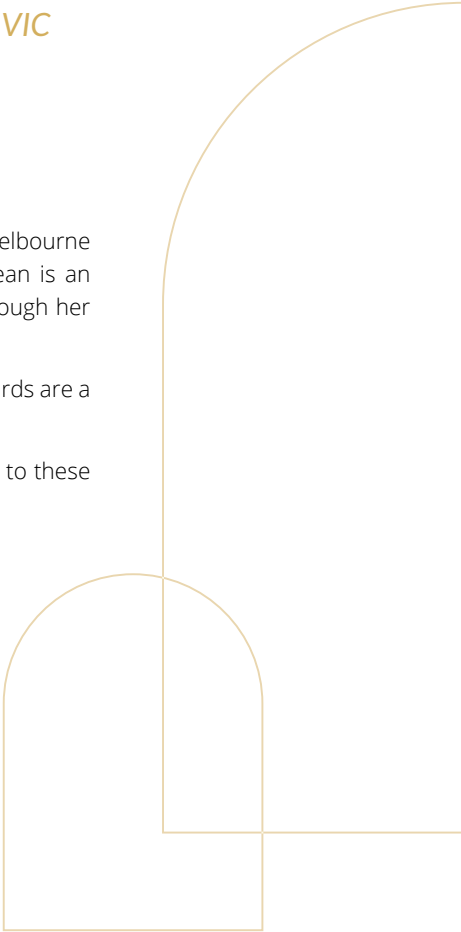
NAWIC NATIONAL CRYSTAL VISION AWARD

Winner: Emma Sckrabei, Umbrella Creative

We were so pleased to announce the NAWIC National Crystal Vision Award winner for 2022, Emma Sckrabei is the Director at Umbrella Creative; Emma was the winner of the Australian Capital Territory Lendlease Crystal Vision Award in 2022.

Proudly sponsored by Urban Core, The National Crystal Vision Award recognises individuals or businesses that actively advocate for and strive to empower and champion women in the construction industry. Our nominees are all winners of their state-based Crystal Vision Award for Excellence from 2022. We congratulate all the nominees for their vision and commitment.

Congratulations Emma! Thanks so much for the important work you do!







NAWIC PRESIDENTS' CHOICE AWARD

Winner: Kerry Neil, GHD

We are so pleased to announce the NAWIC Presidents' Choice Award winner for 2022 was Kerry Neil! Kerry is General Manager, South Australia at GHD; Kerry was also the winner of the Business Professional Award in the SA Awards for Excellence in 2022.

Proudly sponsored by Webuild, the Presidents' Choice Award recognises overall outstanding achievements of an individual or company in the construction industry. The award celebrates individual or company achievements that innovate and inspire the construction industry toward lasting and positive cultural change for construction 2022 is the first year the award has been offered. We would like to congratulate the nominees for their exceptional work and contribution to the industry.

Congratulations Kerry! Thanks so much for the important work you do!




NAWIC NATIONAL BUSINESS AWARD

Winner: Laing O'Rourke

Offered for the first time in 2022, the NAWIC National Business Award aims to recognise businesses that strive to increase women's participation in construction. Organisations were sought that proactively change the construction culture to foster and support female employees and leaders, and who advocate through action, greater gender balance and equity in the construction industry.

We congratulate all wonderful businesses that submitted nominations and are pleased to acknowledge the 2022 winner Laing O'Rourke.

Congratulations to the team at Laing O'Rourke! Thanks so much for the important work you do! 



2022 NAWIC WA

awards for excellence

Optus Stadium, Perth WA
11th November 2022



SWAN GROUP CRYSTAL VISION AWARD

Winner: Eleanor Robson, Laing O'Rourke

Ellie is a Senior Project Engineer for Structures on the Great Eastern Highway Bypass Interchanges Project with Laing O'Rourke, who has worked on large scale projects in Perth, Sydney and London over the past 11 years.

Ellie has achieved incredible things in her career to date and no doubt will continue to do so into the future.

Her journey, like many, has not been without its challenges. Ellie actively chooses to bring her authentic self to work every day, having the courage to be vulnerable and the willingness to share experiences has allowed her to smash through barriers and bias.

In her role as a Senior Project Engineer, she demonstrates leadership on site delivering complex engineering scopes and managing diverse, multi-disciplinary teams. She has played an integral part in breaking down diversity barriers on site, creating a safe and inclusive workplace for everyone, and making people feel they belong and can contribute equally. Ellie is passionate and displays absolute joy for her work which is contagious. She volunteers her time on the NAWIC education committee and the mentoring program, as well as more informal mentoring arrangements with young engineers and implemented and leads the Laing O'Rourke STEM+ Programme in WA.

Ellie truly embodies all that NAWIC stands for, using her platform as a Senior Project Engineer for the betterment of women in many ways!



STANTEC DIVERSITY & INCLUSION AWARD

Winner: Cynthia Calderon, Clough

Cynthia is the Head of Corporate Affairs and Stakeholder Engagement at Clough and has been instrumental in the implementation of several company-wide initiatives and projects.

As a senior leader at Clough, Cynthia is a champion for change, a strong advocate for diversity and inclusion and an activist for all people in the construction industry. Numerous company initiatives, partnerships and policies have been implemented because of Cynthia's championing, efforts to push the boundaries and challenging traditional policy making to ensure Clough as a business encompasses true inclusivity.

Cynthia's contribution spans strategy, diversity and inclusion, sustainability, flexible and remote work policies, Indigenous engagement, corporate social responsibility, parental entitlements, and policy reforms, LGBTIQ+ allyship and domestic violence support.



CURTIN UNIVERSITY EXCELLENCE IN SUSTAINABILITY AWARD

Winner: Grace Hahnel, ARUP

Grace is a structural engineer at Arup who has been driving the sustainability agenda both locally and nationally. Grace's commitment to sustainable living, from growing her own food at home to performing

LCA's (Life Cycle Assessments) on multimillion dollar projects is inspiring and making real change.

Grace had her university paper titled 'Life Cycle Assessment of Structural Flooring Systems in WA' published in the Journal of Building Engineering, has presented at several sustainability forums, and since joining Arup has trained as a Whole Life Cycle Coach, representing Australasia globally.

Grace has been pivotal in creating a better understanding and awareness of the impact our buildings are having which as a Perth first, becomes the stepping stone for the industry to create reductions.

HASELL EMERGING TALENT AWARD

Winner: Saba Munir Ahmed, Aurecon

After moving to Australia and raising a young family for 8.5 years, Saba re-entered the industry and joined Aurecon as an electrical engineer as part of the Program Delivery Services (PDS) team in 2020.

Within the first 2 weeks of joining Aurecon, Saba grew the National RDC Program team by 200% and cleared a backlog of 800+ overview tasks in the following 6 weeks.

While liaising with project managers and coordinating a team of technical engineers, she developed and implemented new procedures for managing and prioritising tasks and created a standard onboarding package to allow new starters to commence work independently.

With only 3.5 years industry experience, Saba has gained significant exposure working on complex and varied projects, going above and beyond to develop more streamlined processes.

Saba also volunteers on a number of Diversity and Inclusion initiatives, inspiring others with her story as a mother successfully returning to work despite a long career gap raising a young family.



ADCO CONSTRUCTION TRAINEE, APPRENTICE OR STUDENT OF THE YEAR AWARD

Winner: Chelsea Douglas, Acciona

Chelsea is an undergraduate engineer working part-time for Acciona on the Metronet New Bayswater Station Project while completing her second year of a double degree in Bachelor of Engineering (Civil and Construction) and Bachelor of Science (Mining) at Curtin University.

Since joining the project in 2021, she has proven herself to be an integral member of the team, demonstrating an understanding of scope, drawings and specifications that are beyond her experience level and current role.

Chelsea is also currently mentoring 38 female students from John Forrest Secondary School as part of a Girls in STEM program. Throughout her participation, she has become a role model for younger generations of girls thinking of pursuing a career in construction and engineering by demonstrating that women can break down the barriers of two typically male-dominated industries.

RPS TRADESWOMAN OF THE YEAR AWARD

Winner: Jazzmin Stevenson, Downer



Joining Downer in 2020 as a Flashbutt Welder, Jazzmin is an undeniably talented tradeswoman and has since been promoted to supervisor. Working in the Pilbara under tough conditions she leads by example, working in tight timeframes in a highly

physical environment she quickly and efficiently delegates tasks – planning and problem solving – all while working under pressure that she describes as ‘exhilarating’!

Jazzmin is leading the way for women in trades as a welder, partner, mother and leader in the rail industry. As part of a very small group of women in the Pilbara on the rail, Jazzmin is helping change the perception of women working in her field and is unapologetic about her no-nonsense approach to breaking stereotypes.

BUILT CREATING THE BEST PROJECT AWARD

Winner: Josephine Macri, Built

In her current role as Project Engineer at Built, Jo is leading the Westralia Square II project, a structural steel and CLT (cross laminated timber) building. Her role includes the development and delivery of the Façade, Canopies and various other areas of the project.

Jo’s excellent communication and interpersonal skills enabled her to quickly forge relationships with all subcontractors, designers, engineers and Built team members which has fostered a unified and effective work culture.

Without previous experience in this new and unique form of construction, Jo went above and beyond by taking ownership of the challenging design coordination and delivery by creating inclusive initiatives to bring together the various stakeholders to maintain the integrity of the design, the building methodology and the programme.



Event photography: Rift Photography.



ARUP ACHIEVEMENT IN HEALTH, SAFETY & SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AWARD

Winner: Michelle Clarke, RPS

Michelle is a passionate and dedicated Project Manager at RPS and is responsible for managing a number of corporate social responsibility initiatives including providing pro bono Project Management services for a local women's accommodation project in Fremantle.

Prior to joining RPS, Michelle was the Chairperson of 'GHD in the Community' committee where she had an incredibly positive impact on all involved. Through a collaborative STEM program with a local primary school, Michelle arranged for Engineers, Designers and PMs to attend the school's STEM classes to increase student skill level and generate interest in a career in STEM. She also organised and facilitated a yearly excursion for the students to visit the GHD office to compete in 'STEM Olympics'. The outcome of this initiative saw extraordinary impact not only on the students, but also the staff involved, with increased job satisfaction and staff retention, positive mental health impacts and increased productivity.

CONNECT RESOURCES BUSINESS & LEADERSHIP AWARD

Winner: Ashleigh Freeman, Downer

Ashleigh has proven herself as a trusted expert, leader and role model across the business, going from strength to strength, consistently over-exceeding expectations and delivering well rounded business outcomes. Joining the Infrastructure Projects WA (IPWA) team at Downer in April 2021 as People & Culture Operations Manager, Ashleigh has been at the forefront of the Senior Leadership team, making it her personal mission to re-design the People and Culture team to better respond to the needs of the business.

Ashleigh is a strong advocate for the resources and construction industry, and as a strategic, big picture thinker, she knows her impact on the physical infrastructure being built, fuelling our economy, and providing career opportunities. Ashleigh has proven herself to be an approachable and understanding leader enabling staff to feel comfortable, safe and valued in the workplace.

Advocating for a number of support functions at Downer along with implementing graduate and apprenticeship programs, Ashleigh has been instrumental in supporting employee experience, engagement, culture and retention. She is a tenacious leader who has been instrumental in her business' success – all while wearing pink and listening to Taylor Swift!



TBH OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN CONSTRUCTION AWARD

Winner: Jillian McGinley, Laing O'Rourke



Jillian is a dedicated, ambitious and courageous woman who has worked within the delivery teams of some of Western Australia's major projects. The growth of her career took a pause with the birth of her twin girls. With a passion to return to work, she progressively increased her days, duties and responsibilities, all while having an open dialogue about her journey and some of the challenges she has faced along the way.

Jillian is currently working on the METRONET Morley to Ellenbrook Line project, as the only female commercial manager on the project who reports directly to the Alliance Commercial Leader. Her contribution to the project has been recently recognised by the client, becoming a featured female lead on the METRONET advertisement campaign. Balancing the demands of work and home life, Jillian is proactively advocating for better support of women returning to the construction industry following parental leave, and openly shares her story in the hope it will bring awareness to mental health and help others. **■**

2022 NAWIC VIC

awards for excellence

Grand Hyatt, Melbourne VIC
4th November 2022



JOHN HOLLAND CRYSTAL VISION AWARD

Winner: Caroline Boyce, Lendlease

Judges agreed that Caroline has forged a strong reputation through many years of passionate advocacy and sponsorship in the industry. Her role allows her to influence workplace culture both at Lendlease and in the many organisations Lendlease partners with. Caroline uses this influence to steer the industry towards practices that drive equality and psychological safety in the workplace and enable women to thrive. She is known for championing talented women across the industry and for opening doors wherever possible. As a senior workplace strategy consultant at Lendlease, Caroline sponsors young women within the industry promoting them to achieve their full potential in understanding organisational culture. A keynote speaker, innovative mentor and leader for organisational support of women, judges were impressed at Caroline’s personal commitment to improving the wellbeing of women being a champion for women in the industry. During her 16 years in the industry, Caroline has developed a thorough, research-based approach to organisational culture and a passion for developing new ways of working.



ICON AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AS A BUSINESSWOMAN

Winner: Chi Shankar, Premier Cranes & Rigging

Chi Shankar has had an enormous impact since joining Premier Cranes & Rigging resulting in demonstrated economic growth, brand strengthening and workforce wellbeing. Chi was a standout submission for the judges capturing the true essence of Excellence as a Businesswoman of the year. From Chi’s strategic planning to build the business to a scale capable of leading the current infrastructure boom, through to developing a sustainable growth plan, Premier Cranes & Rigging have an incredible Chief Executive Officer at their helm. With her forward thinking, strong client engagement and negotiation skills, Chi helped grow Premier Cranes from a handful of staff, to a three level office, yard and a second depot with 160 team members. During Chi’s executive leadership as a COO and now CEO, the business turnover increased by 53%. Chi achieved this by transforming the business structure, and culture, in what the judges considered an incredible feat.

ACCIONA AWARD TO AN OUTSTANDING STUDENT, APPRENTICE OR TRAINEE

Winner: Taryn Bitzas, Symal/ Swinburne University of Technology

Taryn was a standout nominee, impressing the judges from the get-go with her involvement in an array of education and social experiences – from Tasmania to LA to Engineers Without Borders. What really stood out in Taryn’s submission, was her ability to take control when her project manager contracted Covid. During this time, she rose to the challenge and excelled in ensuring all critical activities were completed and project milestones met, despite being the only engineer on-site. This required a certain level of skillset, demonstrated initiative and a drive to succeed. All qualities Taryn clearly possesses.





LENLEASE AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN BUILDING & CONSTRUCTION

Winner: Stefania Calati, CYP Design & Construction Joint Venture

Stefania Calati is the Building Manager – Arden Station based at the Metro Tunnel Project’s North Melbourne site. Stefania is responsible for the planning and construction management of all below-ground and surface-based civil construction works. Stefania project managed all aspects of the station entrance arch construction. From construction engineering and procurement through to transport, installation and finishing works. This included 15 arches which were made from precast concrete lined with more than 100,000 hand-laid bricks made up of 45 individual segments and seven support columns, each weighing between 45 and 60 tonnes. Facing the unprecedented challenge of a two-week, construction industry-wide shutdown just days prior to installation works starting, Stefania led her team to safely and successfully plan for, lift and install the arch segments over a period of three weeks – two weeks ahead of program – with no time lost due to injury. Stefania is committed to fully participating in the construction industry. She is inspired to leave a legacy based on her contribution to significant Victorian infrastructure projects and bringing forward a new generation of engineers.

ROBERTS CO AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING DESIGN

Winner: Rebecca Muscat, Lendlease



Rebecca is the Senior Design Manager overseeing Lendlease’s Pathway to 144 Mental Health Beds Project. The client’s requirement to utilise modular design and construction techniques provided significant challenges, particularly as this was the first time this technique had

been used in mental health facilities in Australia. The judges were particularly impressed at how Rebecca managed to incorporate the client’s aspirations into the design while maintaining constructability. In one instance, competing requirements led Rebecca to reach back into the broader Lendlease business to understand previous experience, as well as engaging with third-party specialists to understand possible outcomes and associated time and cost impacts. In consultation with the client, a satisfactory outcome was achieved. This saved time and cost as well as obtained data to inform future projects for the client.

BUILT AWARD FOR COMMUNICATION, STAKEHOLDER & MEDIA MANAGEMENT

Winner: Ashleigh Bojanic, Hansen Yuncken



Ashleigh played an instrumental role in the effective delivery of strategic marketing and communication campaigns during construction and completion of the Victorian Pride Centre. Involved from its inception during pre-tender stage, right through to post project completion, she has played an integral role in the production, scheduling and deployment of all media, communications

and stakeholder relations. Shrouded with controversy, the project was fraught with a myriad of complex and evolving challenges such as managing the diverse needs of a politically divided community. Flexibility to respond to these challenges, combined with a highly and consultative collaborative approach was fundamental to the project’s success. Congratulations Ashleigh – you are now proudly part of a legacy – a unique Melbourne icon – changing the narrative of Australian pride forever.

CPB CONTRACTORS AWARD FOR HEALTH, SAFETY, ENVIRONMENTAL AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

Winner: Jennifer Boyd, Lendlease

Jennifer is the Environment Health and Safety (EHS) Coordinator on Lendlease's Royal Melbourne Hospital Pathway 144 project, a refurbishment and expansion of an existing mental health facility at The Royal Melbourne Hospital (RMH) in Parkville. The scale of the EHS challenge within an operating brownfield hospital has been immense, with a wide variety of EHS challenges occurring on a daily basis. This included working with asbestos and other hazmat risks, dust control in a live hospital, infection control, and risk factors related to the age of the buildings and existing services. Jennifer's 'Working in the hospital' safety campaign educating site workers as to the requirements and expectations of them when working in a live hospital environment was highly commended. Not only did it include measures around infection and dust control as well as overall behaviour the campaign also considered and promoted mental health support for site workers who may be confronted with distressing and emotionally charged situations due to working alongside a live hospital environment. Jennifer's efforts have been recognised internally for their excellence and her positive collaboration to achieve broad buy-in and a safe workplace culture. And now, the wider industry has recognised her amazing achievements.



SYMAL AWARD TO AN EMERGING LEADER

Winner: Cassie Kiepas, Johns Lyng Group

It's rare to find an individual in the construction industry that exudes leadership and displays a passion for her role and the people around her more than this year's Emerging Leader award winner Cassie Kiepas. Judges were inspired by Cassie's tireless endeavours in taking up the challenge during the height of the COVID pandemic to build and lead a large team that has had to manage a doubling in insurance related repairs over this time. What was super impressive was that Cassie stepped up from a junior position to take up the challenge, and at the same time took on extra training and study to upskill her professional qualifications. Cassie's leadership skills were further demonstrated through her efforts in developing and driving new systems to manage the volume of claims within the business all of which are now embedded into the Johns Lyng way of business. Cassie remains instrumental in training and developing staff in the new systems which she developed within Johns Lyng Group. Cassie's ability to build relationships, build culture and form a strong team around her epitomises what the emerging leader award is about. Cassie is a terrific role model for our industry who will continue to inspire more females to begin a career in construction and no doubt positively develop the industry as a whole.



MULTIPLEX AWARD TO A YOUNG ACHIEVER

Winner: Dev Chandraratne, North Western Program Alliance

Dev's nomination was a great example of real leadership and change. Her drive to make a difference in addressing the issues of the climate change crisis, identifying opportunities and seeking commitment and buy-in from senior project managers is the exciting direction we need our future leaders to be heading in. Realising the construction industry's substantial carbon footprint, she identified opportunities to reduce emissions at a large scale, creating long term benefit to the community. Dev's drive and push to collaborate with her project teams meant that the sustainable opportunities are embedded in her projects throughout the construction lifecycle. This was shown through improved sustainability calculation methodologies by creating a program wide approach for estimating baseline energy and materials emissions for the Level Crossing Removals Projects Bell to Moreland and Glenroy. Judges loved that Dev's work was recently recognised by the Green Building Council of Australia, being named Future Green Leader of the Year for 2022, as it only strengthens her position as our winner for Young Achiever at the NAWIC awards. **n**



2022 NAWIC QLD

awards for excellence

Royal International Convention Centre, Brisbane QLD
7th October 2022



QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT OF A WOMAN IN ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY AWARD

Winner: Abigail Heywood, Lendlease

One of the notable winners was Abigail Heywood from Lendlease, who received the Queensland Government Award for Outstanding Achievement of a Woman in Environment and Sustainability within the construction industry. Heywood's commitment to environmental and sustainable practices in construction earned her this well-deserved recognition.



BESIX WATPAC ACHIEVEMENT IN HEALTH & SAFETY AWARD

Winner: Amanda Nicolo, Built QLD

Amanda Nicolo from Built Qld was honoured with the BESIX Watpac Award for Achievement in Health & Safety. Nicolo's dedication to ensuring the well-being and safety of workers in the construction industry was acknowledged through this prestigious award.



TAFE QUEENSLAND TRAINEE, APPRENTICE, OR STUDENT OF THE YEAR AWARD

Winner: Allyson Burrows, Apprenticeships Queensland

Allyson (Ally) Burrows, representing Apprenticeships Queensland, won the TAFE Queensland Trainee, Apprentice, or Student of the Year award. This recognition highlighted Burrows' exceptional skills and commitment to her craft, exemplifying the potential for growth and success within the construction industry.



ADCO CONSTRUCTIONS ACHIEVEMENT AS A BUSINESS WOMAN AWARD

Winner: Rachel Turner, Front Porch Properties

Rachael specialises in creating modern classic dream homes for her clients, with a unique story book charm. As a Licenced Builder, Rachael brings together her design and building knowledge to translate a client's vision into their dream home through a strong focus on end-to-end service, affordable custom design, high quality interiors and modern finishes.

CORRS CHAMBERS WESTGARTH DIVERSITY AWARD

Winner: Jump Start Program, Multiplex

The Jump Start Program by Multiplex was awarded the Corrs Chambers Westgarth Award for Diversity. This program's commitment to fostering diversity and inclusivity within the construction industry earned them this prestigious recognition.



MULTIPLEX ACHIEVEMENT IN CONSTRUCTION (GENERAL BUILDING) AWARD

Winner: Rebecca Wood

Rebecca Wood stood out as the winner of the Multiplex Award for Achievement in Construction (General Building). Wood's exceptional achievements in general building construction demonstrated her expertise and dedication to excellence.



CONSTRUCTION SKILLS QUEENSLAND TRADIE OF THE YEAR AWARD

Winner: Emma de Roisa, Soil Cyclers

Emma de Roisa from Soil Cyclers was named the Construction Skills Queensland Tradie of the Year. This award recognised de Roisa's exceptional skills and expertise, showcasing her as a role model for aspiring tradies in the construction field.



SEYMOUR WHYTE ACHIEVEMENT IN CONSTRUCTION (CIVIL WORKS) AWARD

Winner: Yasmin Edlin, CBGU JV Cross River Rail

Yasmin Edlin, part of the CBGU JV Cross River Rail project, received the Seymour Whyte Award for Achievement in Construction (Civil Works). Edlin's outstanding contributions to civil works in construction showcased her talent and expertise in this specialised area.

ACCIONA EMERGING LEADER AWARD

Winner: Yasmine Edlin, CPB Contractors

Again, Yasmine Edlin from CPB Contractors, was honored with the Acciona Emerging Leader Award. This award highlighted Edlin's exceptional leadership skills and her potential to make a significant impact in the construction industry.



NATIONAL CRYSTAL VISION AWARD 2021

Winner: Dominique Gill, Urban Fit Outs & Construction

A special moment during the ceremony was the presentation of the National Crystal Vision Award, which recognises individuals or businesses actively advocating for and empowering women in the construction industry. Dominique Gill, from Urban Fit Outs & Construction, was the deserving recipient of this prestigious award. The National Chair of NAWIC, Christina Yiakkoupis, presented Gill with this esteemed honour.



JOHN HOLLAND CRYSTAL VISION AWARD

Winner: Protech

Protech, a renowned organisation, was awarded The John Holland Crystal Vision Award for advancing the interests of women in the construction industry. This award recognized Protech's outstanding efforts in promoting gender equality and empowering women within the construction sector.



QBCC YOUNG ACHIEVER AWARD

Winner: Holley Morton, Lendlease

Holley is passionate about supporting women in the construction industry and actively supports and advocates the engagement and education of women in the sector. She is a member of the NAWIC Education and Mentoring Committee and dedicates her time to school and university students at career and open days as well as key speaker events, sharing her story and helping provide a real-life narrative as to what a career in construction can look like for women.

QUT ACHIEVEMENT IN DESIGN AWARD

Winner: Holly Ramsay, ADCO Constructions

Holly's work ethic is to 'challenge the norm', add value, instil innovation, and push boundaries. She believes that it is a design managers responsibility to strive to deliver a better built environment for clients and communities beyond the minimum requirements but within programme and budget. This ethos is evident in the innovate alternate designs that she consistently champions for her clients resulting in a superior product, delivered on time and within budget. **n**



2022 NAWIC NSW

awards for excellence

The ICC Ballroom, Sydney NSW
24th November 2022



LENLEASE CRYSTAL VISION AWARD

Winner: Laing O'Rourke

"Any gender, any birth, any child" is Laing O'Rourke's industry-leading equal parenting policy that provides six months' leave on full pay regardless of gender. The policy also includes parents who adopt, welcome a baby via surrogacy, or suffer a pregnancy loss. Laing O'Rourke currently has 24 women and 16 men taking parental leave, and the policy raises the bar for construction companies around Australia.



ADCO CHAMPION OF CHANGE

Winner: Steve Kiddle, John Holland

Described as a "force of nature" by his colleagues, Steve Kiddle is Construction Director on the \$4.9 billion Rozelle Interchange Project. Steve's commitment to diversity is multi-faceted. Among his 51 Women in Construction 'pledges', Steve has collaborated with subcontractors to create employment opportunities for female tradespeople, championed flexibility, mentored female engineers, developed a school STEM outreach program and introduced unconscious bias training.



TRANSPORT FOR NSW TRADESPERSON SCHOLARSHIP

Winner: Allyssa Hudson, Lendlease

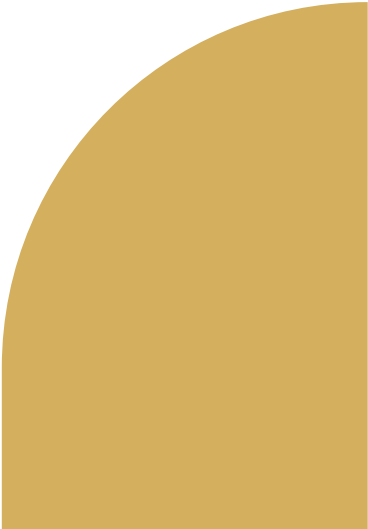
A third-year building and construction apprentice with Lendlease, Allyssa Hudson left behind university study for, in her words, the satisfaction of hands-on work and the opportunity to contribute to society. She has since worked on several significant projects while meeting site challenges head on. Allyssa has developed a strong skills base and is working towards a site manager role.



ROBERTS CO AWARD FOR CONTRIBUTION TO A PROJECT'S DEVELOPMENT

Winner: Deanne Forrest, Transport for NSW

As the Project Director on the \$2 billion M12 motorway, Deanne Forrest is passionate about delivering infrastructure projects that are sympathetic to the local environment, heritage and community. Balancing commerciality with big picture thinking, Deanne embraced innovative project management approaches, elevated engagement with Indigenous people and prioritised community needs by relocating, rather than closing, a popular bike trail.





FERROVIAL PROJECT MANAGER OF THE YEAR AWARD

Winner: Ashma Husna, Transport for NSW

As Senior Project Manager on the \$2.6 billion Sydney Gateway, Ashma Husna is expertly navigating the complexities a challenging, high-traffic construction site. Her investment in relationships and proactive communication has accelerated construction timelines, while her commitment to team building has fostered a collaborative culture so one of Australia's most complex projects is delivered on time and budget.



CPB CONTRACTORS AWARD FOR CONTRIBUTION TO SUSTAINABILITY

Winner: Megan Lohrisch and Ciere Kenny, Lendlease

After working together for less than three years on as many projects, Megan Lohrisch and Ciere Kenny found a way to reduce embodied carbon with a

new aluminium façade panel system. By thinking beyond business-as-usual, the pair sourced a supplier that uses hydroelectricity in aluminium smelting, driving down embodied emissions by 34%, and achieving an Australian first that will hit our shores in late 2022.



LAING O'ROURKE FUTURE LEADER SCHOLARSHIP

Winner: Emily Crozier, Laing O'Rourke

A civil engineer working on the Transport Access Program at Pymble Station, Emily Crozier is passionate about creating meaningful places which reflect the diversity of the communities they serve. Whether it's her engagement

with UTS' Women in Engineering program, her volunteering in schools to promote women in STEM, or her pioneering outreach program for Indigenous high school students, Emily exemplifies a commitment to give back.

HASSELL INNOVATION IN DESIGN AWARD

Winner: Amy Clark, Aurecon



Lead Engineer with Aurecon, Amy Clark delivered several innovations on the upgrade of Sydney's Central Station Metro. The project, compared to "open heart surgery", constructed the top level first before tackling the deep excavation beneath. Amy also championed ambitious 3D modelling, digitisation and a commitment to sustainability that reduced materials and embodied carbon by 40%



MPA AWARD FOR ACHIEVEMENT IN CONSTRUCTION, REFURBISHMENT AND FITOUT

Winner: Erin Doyle, Mirvac

As construction Project Manager for the heritage-listed Locomotive Workshops in South Eveleigh, Erin Doyle repurposed the space to create everything from a grocer to a gym, a blacksmith to a one-of-a-kind subterranean storytelling travelator tunnel. Erin's thoughtful reimagining has delivered an exemplary heritage refurbishment for the people of New South Wales.

JOHN HOLLAND AWARD FOR TEAM INNOVATION

Winner: Project 5: A Weekend for Every Worker - Roberts Co, Health Infrastructure and University of NSW

When Roberts Co bid for the Concord Hospital Redevelopment Project it challenged the status quo with a five-day work week. Health Infrastructure NSW was on board and a partnership with UNSW was formed to study the impact. 'Project 5: A Weekend for Every Worker' identified improvements to work-life balance, work hours and job security, and its evidence-based approach makes a strong case for change.



RICHARD CROOKES BUSINESS WOMAN OF THE YEAR

Winner: Liz Westgarth, Hassell

As Global Head of Design at Hassell, Liz Westgarth has spearheaded two transformational strategies: one to achieve gender balance across the business by 2028 and another to ensure all Hassell's design projects are net zero emissions by 2030. With Liz as champion, Hassell has hit the 30% mark for women in leadership positions and is on track to achieve its net zero target.



GENERATE PROPERTY GROUP UNIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIP

Winner: Miranda Swift, Northrop

Studying a double degree in civil engineering while balancing full-time work as Northrop's youngest cadet engineer in Newcastle, 21-year-old Miranda Swift already has five years of construction industry experience under her belt. An ambassador, mentor and keynote speaker, Miranda is developing sustainable design solutions while partnering with an Australian workwear company to create an inclusive range of office wear for young girls.



ACOUSTIC LOGIC REGIONAL WOMAN OF THE YEAR

Winner: Vivien Murnane, Transport for NSW

Wollongong-based Vivien Murnane balances strong technical skills with innovative thinking to deliver infrastructure that enhances connectivity, builds community and respects local heritage. The \$258 million Batemans Bay Bridge replacement project, for instance, involved complex deconstruction in a sensitive marine park. Vivien developed new technical requirements for projects over navigable waters that are now being used across NSW. ■



Jump Start your way into construction

Designed by Multiplex women, our Jump Start initiative encourages women into construction using our projects as vehicles to educate and inspire.

Beginning as a grass roots pilot at a project in North Sydney in 2018, Jump Start now forms an important part of our national diversity and inclusion commitment, with a focus on widening the pool of female talent for our entire industry.

Jump Start includes a range of activities for different ages and interests, from structured programs for tertiary and trade pathways, to site tours designed to engage kids early.

For high school students, it offers a chance to join a Multiplex delivery team in a range of site walks, mentoring sessions, interactive workshops and panel discussions – and continue their journey with Multiplex and their subcontractors through career and work experience opportunities.

Our aim is to show students, their parents and guardians, and teachers what it's really like to work in construction and the diverse range of rewarding careers on offer.

"After participating in the workshop today I'm going to walk away with more confidence to pursue a trade. Seeing the girls on site made me feel I can do this. My advice to girls would be to go for it!"

Carolyn, St Clair High School

For information or to register your interest in any of our Jump Start activities, please email info@multiplex.global.

2022 NAWIC TAS

awards for excellence

Peppermint Bay, Woodbridge TAS
4th November 2022

CONTRIBUTION TO DESIGN AND CRYSTAL VISION

Winner: Poppy Taylor



Poppy is the Founding Director of Taylor & Hinds Architects after graduating from the University of Tasmania in 2006 and receiving the Tasmanian Emerging Architects Prize in 2011, Poppy established her firm with her husband Mat in 2013.

Every project produced by the practice is a collaborative undertaking and designed with intention for liveable, functional and memorable designed environments for people. Poppy's contribution to the Tasmanian architecture landscape is felt across many aspects of the industry recognised in her awarding of the 2022 Crystal Vision Award.

Poppy's acute sensibility as a practitioner is defined by her capacity to clearly communicate spatial ideas and to understand the technical elements of her projects. Her acknowledgment of respectful restoration practices and a careful program of renewal of Bozens Cottage was guided by the custodial sensibility of the client and feeling a responsibility to the house socially - as well as historical. They named the cottage after its previous owner, Bozen Stuart Pennicott (b.1936-d.2017), whose family had lived in the house for over a century.

Her architecture promotes a view of historic workmanship while simultaneously projecting an engaging future and has earned her the Contribution to Design Award for 2022.

ACHIEVEMENT BY A TRADESPERSON

Winner: Caitlyn Carriere

Caitlyn completed her apprenticeship in late 2022 as a carpenter through Master Builders Tasmania. She is currently employed at Fairbrother Facility Management as a Maintenance Planner in Tasmania. Prior to her career in construction, Caitlyn spent five years working in various roles in the hospitality industry.

Her decision to enter the construction field stemmed from a desire for greater independence, particularly in being able to work perform works on her own home without relying on others. Caitlyn's journey began at TAFE, where she obtained her Certificate II in Construction and discovered her aptitude for the trade. Subsequently, she was offered an apprenticeship in which she gained hands-on experience in commercial construction. Projects included the construction of new local school buildings and ambulance stations, among others.

Caitlyn's path in construction was not without its challenges, although she did not initially plan for a career in this field, her determination and perseverance in the face of diversity and stereotypes she continued to embrace the opportunities it presented. Caitlyn's determination to never feel helpless and to succeed at her goals, clearly demonstrates promise for the future within our industry.





ACHIEVEMENT IN CONSTRUCTION

Winner: Amanda Allen

Amanda Allen is a Senior Project Manager within the TasWater Capital Delivery Office (CDO), holds a steadfast accountability for the outcomes of the projects she oversees.

The project nominated for recognition is the Chimney Saddle Clarifier Upgrade, a vital infrastructure component responsible for supplying up to 32 million litres of treated drinking water daily to the Greater Launceston area.

Amanda fostered a culture of innovation within her team, encouraging them to think differently. This approach extended to early engagement with contractors, resulting in the development of creative construction methods that allowed for critical infrastructure upgrades while keeping the infrastructure operational. The project was ultimately completed nearly five weeks ahead of schedule and significantly under budget.



ACHIEVEMENT IN CONSTRUCTION

Winner: Krista Capuano

Krista Capuano of the TasWater Capital Delivery Office (CDO) in Hobart, her role responsible for overseeing the contractual aspects of a significant alliance. This alliance comprises of TasWater, CPB Contractors & UGL. Collaboratively working to execute a substantial capital works program valued at over \$1.7 billion. This extensive initiative is set to continue its operations throughout Tasmania until June 2025, with Krista playing a pivotal role in ensuring the smooth and efficient execution of contractual obligations within this alliance.

After leading an extensive approval process, Krista and her team Hobart successfully delivered a market engagement strategy and established a series of panels. Close to 200 “framework” contracts were engaged, featuring pre-agreed terms, rates, and conditions in collaboration with key local businesses. These panels eliminated the need for complex procurement procedures.

Krista has further expanded this framework by engaging additional companies, fostering increased competition and diversifying the organisation’s capabilities. This expansion now encompasses a wide range of services, including crane hire, design, precast concrete, and others, reinforcing the organisation’s capacity to excel across a diverse array of projects.



EMERGING TALENT AWARD

Winner: Frances Roberts

Frances is a carpentry apprentice working on architectural residential projects with In2Construction. Prior to her apprenticeship, she completed a Diploma of Interior Design and has recently completed her Bachelor of Design at UTAS with a HD. Frances is passionate about combining her design and construction skills to form a truly comprehensive understanding of the built environment.

In 2021, Frances participated in Keystone's Building Something Big campaign which was created to promote the Tasmanian construction industry and boost recruitment. Although highly nerve-wracking, Frances was determined to overcome her fear and participate in this campaign to show other women that working in the trades is not only possible, but immensely fulfilling and empowering. Most recently Francis has joined the Tasmanian Chapter committee to help further her campaign and further give back to industry.

Frances also hopes her dedication and subsequent high performance at University contributes to the de-stigmatisation of the trades as pathways for the 'non-academic', while simultaneously laying the groundwork to forge stronger understandings between the fields of design and construction in the future.



CONTRIBUTION TO A PROJECT OR ORGANISATION

Winner: Sharon Archer

Sharon Archer is the Procurement Manager for the TasWater Capital Delivery Office (CDO). With a background as a chartered civil/structural engineer and postgraduate degrees in construction law and business, Sharon possess over two decades of experience in both design and construction. Her unique perspective combines engineering expertise with procurement skills, making them a valuable asset to the organisation.

Passionate about nurturing the skill set of her colleagues within the CDO team, Sharon's background equipped her with the ability to effectively communicate across various team members. Sharon manages a team of four professionals while juggling the responsibilities of a full-time role with flexible working hours enabling Sharon to effectively balance the demands of her role with the needs of their young family.

Sharon firmly believes that active engagement with the contracting community is of utmost importance. This approach ensures that the projects undertaken by her team are structured in a manner that maximises the utilisation of local capabilities and resources.



NEXT STEP AWARD

Winner: Mariah Jardine

Mariah was the Business Development Manager for Access Solutions Tasmania, Mariah demonstrates a consistent drive for helping people and strives to set an example for young women entering the industry across her many years working in the construction industry.

Through her role at the time of the award with Access Solutions, Mariah was able to not only provide equitable opportunities and assistance for women but was able to extend her reach into the accessibility community, quickly realising the need for better understanding of accessibility needs and how adoption of new technologies could improve quality of life for many people.

Mariah remains firmly entrenched within the residential construction industry, feeding her passion as the Communications and Marketing Chair with the Tasmanian Chapter, enabling her to provide back to the sector, and is an active advocate for NAWIC's mission of #25by25 all whilst juggling full-time work and role as mother to her 4 year old daughter. Mariah was also selected to represent Tasmania as the President's Choice for 2022 in the NAWIC National Awards. □

2022 NAWIC NT

awards for excellence

Mindil Beach Casino Resort, Darwin NT
8th July 2022



JAYTEX CRYSTAL VISION AWARD

Winner: Leisha Armstrong

Leisha is the Managing Director of Johnny Cool Darwin (JCD). JCD is an electrical and HVAC&R contracting company formed in Darwin in 2009. At present, JCD have 16 full time staff and apprentices.

She is always looking for opportunities to support women in construction. This includes work placement for a recently employed apprentice, continuing to be an example of what is possible, mentoring and leading staff across the board, not just women but also encouraging male staff to consider their views on women within the industry.



PCM GROUP OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN CONSTRUCTION AWARD

Winner: Angela Cranston

Angela is a consummate professional with over 25 years' experience working in construction industries across the globe. As a Filipino woman and qualified Civil Engineer, she has defied deep-rooted cultural stereotypes in her homeland and in the Middle East by holding Senior commercial delivery roles on large scale projects, including billion-dollar hospitals and iconic, landmark buildings such as the 'The Palm' Gateway Towers in Dubai. Having originally left the Philippines for Dubai out of necessity to provide greater financial support for her family, she eventually moved to Australia (as a single Mum) in 2008 in search of a better quality of life. Angela has spent the entirety of her 14 years in Oz working for Lendlease's QLD/NT Building Business. In that time, she has overcome language barriers in the workplace and unconscious bias as an Asian female. Despite this, she has continued to flourish as a Senior Contracts Administrator working across a wide range of sectors including prisons, hospitals, airports and defence. She has spent the last 8 years in the Northern Territory working on Federal Government Defence Projects, namely the \$195m Delamere Bombing Range and Tindal Stage 6 KC30, which is a \$1b investment in National Security.



TURNER & TOWNSEND EMERGING TALENT FOR OFFICE PROFESSIONAL AWARD

Winner: Bunty Cook

Bunty is a dynamic Civil Engineer with design and construction experience across a range of industry sectors including civil hydraulics and civil construction, tunnelling, health, and defence. She balanced a 2-year Civil Design Internship with her studies in NSW, before prolonging her degree and switching to night classes to take up an opportunity with a civil construction company working full-time on the Crown Sydney Resort Hotel. This complex Project included a unique top-down basement excavation on a contaminated site, 14m below sea level, and was the subject of Bunty's Honours Thesis - where she compared the innovative practices used on the Project with traditional methods to provide valuable insights for the betterment of industry. Bunty joined Lendlease in 2019 as a Graduate Engineer on the NorthConnex Tunnelling Project, where she managed the concrete pours for 15km of tunnel structure. She has since been involved in front-end 'work winning' for Lendlease, led the fit-out packages on the Concord Hospital Redevelopment and is now a Project Engineer on the \$1b RAAF Base Tindal Stage 6 KC30 Defence Project in the Northern Territory - heading up the Permanent Living-In Accommodation and New Air Movements Terminal packages.



BARPA SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND/OR DIVERSITY AWARD

Winner: Laing O'Rourke

Laing O'Rourke delivers projects as diverse as the environments in which they are built, from landmark commercial buildings in capital cities to Indigenous housing in Australia's remote north. Their expertise extends to high security military bases and data centres and vital health and educational facilities in urban and regional centres. The business also holds significant experience in delivering across the health and science sector with a keen understanding of how hospitals work and the specific requirements of health clients. Their highly trained and committed people understand the challenges of modern construction, the stakeholders involved, and how to work collaboratively to deliver their clients' aims. They combine their expertise with purposeful technology, deploying innovations like digital engineering and AI to produce powerful results. By leveraging the right technology, they know they can spark positive change for their clients, their projects and the wider industry. That's why their 2025 mission is to be the construction sector's recognised leader for innovation and excellence. Laing O'Rourke was the first major construction company to develop a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) that was officially endorsed by Reconciliation Australia. The RAP is endorsed by the Laing O'Rourke Executive and details the business' long-term approach to reconciliation.



DOWNER LEADERSHIP AND MENTORING AWARD

Winner: Georgia Davey

Georgia is the portfolio leader for development and delivery of the PDS program in the Northern Territory. Over seeing a team of 14 project managers (PM) and support staff that run approximately 70 projects of varying sizes, disciplines, and complexities on the Defence estate.

Responsibilities include ensuring that projects stay on budget and schedule and assisting in implementing recovery plans with the responsible PM if challenges arise. Reviewing phase reports, financials, variations, schedule proposals, tender submissions, and other project related deliverables. Developing programs for professional growth with team members. Conducting audits and reporting to the Project Management Office, client, and stakeholders.



ECOZ ACHIEVEMENT IN HEALTH, SAFETY AND/OR ENVIRONMENT AWARD

Winner: Belinda Wilson

Belinda's journey within the Construction industry began at age 21 as a receptionist for a small building company. She soon developed a passion for the industry, particularly in the areas of compliance and continuous improvement. Her strong work ethic and systematic approach would inevitably guide her career into the areas of Health and Safety and Quality Management. Fifteen years later at age 36; Belinda's commitment to the highest industry standards and excellence sees her as the HSEQ Compliance and Contracts Manager for Jaytex Construction. Belinda is an integral part of the company's leadership team; having input into operations, strategic direction, growth, and performance of the company. She is also the only woman in the leadership team. Belinda's commitment to Health and Safety within the industry was recognised as a finalist in the 2019 NAWIC NT Awards for Excellence in the Sitzler Award for Achievement in Health & Safety & Environment category. In 2021 she won the High Commendation Master Builders award for Women and Construction. Belinda is also a contributing member on the Defence Industry Network Board committee. In the spirit of true leadership; Belinda's aspirations go beyond herself; thriving on training others and observing their personal and professional growth and achievements.



**INTRACT ACHIEVEMENT BY
INDIGENOUS WOMAN AWARD**

Winner: Renae King

Renae is a proud Indigenous woman who joined the C&R team in 2021 to assist with the project administration requirements of the Palmerston Fire Station Project. The role was newly created for the project and included operating, maintaining, and developing the daily administration procedures of the project, producing accurate and timely project specific reports to deadlines and working closely with management to ensure the project success. Responsibility and

accountability are a key focus for C&R Constructions, to help achieve this, Renae works in consultation with all stakeholders onsite to provide administrative support. Renae's previous roles have included, Project Managing Indigenous PreEmployment Programmes and Managing the Post Office in Wadeye Indigenous Community. Renae then became Passport Officer at Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and then moved into construction and transport roles. Renae's extensive experience in various industries means she brings a diverse skillset to her role at C & R Constructions. Renae has a keen eye for detail that sees her achieve and exceed project KPI's and her strong

interpersonal skills are key elements in building relationships onsite and delivering C & R Constructions' superior quality projects. Renae promotes cultural awareness onsite and mentor's Indigenous employees, assisting them to understand the need for Work Health and Safety practices and Chain of Command procedures onsite. C&R Constructions adheres to the Indigenous Participation on Construction Projects and to achieve this Renae's role also includes collating information and documentation for Indigenous Development Plan (IDP) reports which demonstrate the company's commitment to inclusivity and local employment. C&R Constructions is committed to staff retention and Renae plays an important part in providing key team support for all C&R personnel.



**GTNT GROUP TRAINEE, APPRENTICE OR
STUDENT OF THE YEAR AWARD**

Winner: Brieanna McSweeney

In the 3.5 years Brie has been with TGen, she has excelled at her apprenticeship and demonstrated commitment and willingness to learn. She is an asset to the both the electrical and maintenance teams. She is a skilled, motivated and ambitious worker. She supports her team and endeavours to encourage a positive workplace culture across onsite.



**MCMAHON SERVICES
TRADESWOMAN OF THE YEAR
AWARD**

Winner: Emily Jennings

Emily Jennings is Downer NT's Production Foreman who lives in Darwin with her husband and her dog named Frank, who by all accounts has a big head and 6 toes.

In her down time Emily is found at the gym, spending time with friends and family and enjoying the outdoor lifestyle with fishing and camping.

Emily first moved to Australia from the 'Garden of Ireland' – Wicklow, where the TV series the Vikings is filmed, in 2017 when she first began her career in construction. Starting in Traffic Management, Emily has since worked for Downer in the Spray Seal team participating in several remote projects as well as local Darwin Asphalt projects.

Emily has since then proved herself to be a large contributing member of the Downer NT team and was asked to join the production team here in Darwin. Starting as the first female in the crew Emily has over and over again excelled in her duties and it's because of her talent that she was recently promoted to be the first Downer NT Production Foreman.

Emily has said that her current professional goals are to continue to enjoy the role she is in and to continue to challenge herself with whatever may come her way professionally. ■

Event photography: Belong Group.

2022 NAWIC SA

awards for excellence

Jackson Square, Hindmarsh SA
18th November 2022



The South Australian 2022 NAWIC Awards for Excellence were held in November at a new venue in South Australia, Jackson Square in Hindmarsh. Hosted by Katrina Webb, the event had the largest attendance to date with 300 attendees, creating a vibrant energetic atmosphere of people celebrating and shining a spotlight on the incredible women in our industry and their supporters.

The quality of the nominations were outstanding and we also had our highest nominations to date, with thirty eight nominations across the six categories. Once again, our award sponsors handed out beautiful hand-blown glass trophies by local artist Emma Klau.

Special guests included Samantha Woodward (NAWIC National Vice Chairperson), Lisa Hogben (NAWIC National Board Director) and the Honourable Katrine Hildyard (MP).



NAWIC SA Council Members – Amanda Brady, Rebecca Lamont, Danica Trimboli, Laura Cornthwaite, Rachael Sharp, Suzie Bartold, Julia Gentile, Sian Dodd

SHAPE CONTRIBUTION TO DESIGN AWARD

Winner: Catherine Johnson

Catherine Johnson, is a Services Manager at Hindmarsh, where she has worked for the past 10 years. She started her career as a Mechanical Services Design Consultant, before transferring into the construction industry. Catherine was nominated for the Contribution to Design Award for her successful delivery over the past four years, of the award winning ANU Research school of Physics. This facility contains 29 specialist gases for experimentation, with many gases being highly toxic and hazardous. Catherine led the Hindmarsh team to develop the technical scope of works, running HAZOPs, finalising designs, through to managing construction - including witnessing and final building commissioning.



MYKRA PROJECT ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Winner: Eloise Foale

Eloise is a Project Engineer for Lendlease, nominated for her contribution to the Unley High School Project completed in April 2022. Eloise was responsible for delivering a new three-story building, an extension to an administration building, the refurbishment of various existing school buildings, and the development of an outdoor undercover learning space. She was required to step into the roles of Site Supervisor and Construction Manager on many occasions throughout the project and successfully closed out the project while all other key project personnel were on long term leave, demanding she perform functions and make decisions at a senior level.



BADGE EMERGING LEADER AWARD

Winner: Jenna Macdonald

Jenna is a Senior Acoustic engineer at Resonate and at any one-time can be working on 20+ projects. She was nominated in the Emerging Leader Category for the exceptional service and quality advice she provides clients and her passion for the industry. These skills have been recognised by clients as well as colleagues, with Jenna quickly becoming a direct contact for some of Resonate's regular customers due to her positive persona and high-quality work output. Her passion extends beyond work, mentoring students at The University of Adelaide and keeping her community safe as a volunteer firefighter in two CFS brigades. Her ambition and drive have also helped Jenna get promoted to a senior position after only five years and given her the opportunity to lead some of SA's largest projects. Jenna looks forward to continuing to engage with committees and organisations with values which align with her own, such as NAWIC, so she can continue to make change and normalise conversations around topics she is passionate about, such as psychological safety and inclusion.

WGA BUSINESS PROFESSIONAL AWARD

Winner: Dr Kerry Neil

As General Manager for GHD South Australia, Kerry has made significant strides as a decision maker to advance GHD's business growth and workplace inclusivity. Using her business acumen and strong people and leadership skills, Kerry has implemented inclusivity initiatives to unite her workforce and create safe spaces for LGBTIQ+ people.

Leveraging her network, Kerry has positioned GHD on steering committees to influence South Australia's infrastructure pipeline and gain executive sponsorship for key client projects. Lastly, as an Environmental Scientist, Kerry has helped define GHD's environmental, social and governance goals to help GHD achieve its net zero carbon emission target.

Kerry was also awarded the President's Award as a stand out nomination amongst all categories for the evening.





Rebecca Lamont, Zoe Steele, Nikki Naidu, Katrina Webb

Event photography: Trim Photography.

SARAH CONSTRUCTIONS CRYSTAL VISION AWARD

Winner: Emily Petrov

Emily is a Senior Structural engineer at GHD and has been a devoted and passionate member of the GHD Structural team for 19 years, further undertaking the role of GHD South Australia’s Inclusion and Diversity Champion in her career. She is a strong advocate for promoting STEM careers to young females in schools and universities, promoting the growth of diversity, connection, and gender equality within the technical industry. As the first female engineer for the GHD Building Engineering team, Emily has been a leading force in the advancement of women’s inclusion in her workplace with significant involvement in creating initiatives to do so.



ENERVEN GRADUATE OF THE YEAR

Winner: Shannon Wark

In the short time since joining Das Studio, Shannon has meaningfully contributed to projects and business endeavours with responsibilities far beyond that of a typical Graduate of Architecture. Imperative to the growth of Das, from 5 into a practice of 19, Shannon has worked across feasibility studies and grant applications whilst influencing and shaping the creation of new ventures. Shannon’s selflessness and generosity is far-reaching, both within the studio and wider community. This is evident in her active participation within the AIA’s Emerging Architects and Graduate Network (EmAGN) committee and her sessional tutoring position at the University of South Australia. **n**



2022 NAWIC ACT

awards for excellence

| Hotel Realm, Canberra ACT
| 18th November 2022

CRYSTAL VISION AWARD

Winner: Emma Sckrabei, Riverview Projects

Emma is an advocate for women within the construction industry. She has changed the lives of many disadvantaged and disconnected women through Ginninderry's SPARK training and employment initiative and continues to fight for social inclusion in every meeting, conversation and decision she can influence.

Emma has brought much more than bricks and mortar to the Capital Region. Her drive for inclusion by removing barriers and stigma for women in construction has left a lasting contribution, where her colleagues and peers are challenged to speak up, speak out and be bold to make the world (and our industry) a better place.

Many great initiatives have been implemented by Emma to assist in bridging the gender gap in construction. Our business has been involved in some of these initiatives directly (Women in Construction Pathways Program), so we have seen the first hand impact these have had on not only on our company, but the construction industry in general.



ACHIEVEMENT IN DESIGN AWARD

Winner: Savita Gaonkar, Fluxion Consulting

Savita brings with her experience working on diverse range of projects from Residential sector, Hospitality, Health facilities and Institutional projects including Universities, Cultural & Heritage buildings. Her work is influenced by previous experience in Science & Technology and demonstrates an attuned acumen for research, analysis, and digital interface. As a testimonial she has received CIT Building & Environment Award and Building Science Forum Prize.



Savita has excellent leadership skills with experience in practice management, mentoring, leading large multidisciplinary team of sub-consultants as a Principal Design Consultant. She has an in depth understanding of contractual obligation, compliance, technical, client requirements, stakeholder management, and her architectural knowledge is invaluable.

AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AS A BUSINESSWOMAN

Winner: Sarah Burrows, Manteena Group

Sarah is a highly skilled professional with nearly 20 years' experience across all facets of commercial construction. As Project Director and Bid Manager, Sarah is one of Manteena's senior leaders, operating across the end-to-end delivery of projects, from leading the bid strategy and pre-construction operations, through to design management and oversight of onsite project delivery.



Viewed as a stand out leader and role model, judges also commended Sarah on her extensive and diverse career, as well as her multifaceted experience on a number of high profile and complex projects. Her proactive role in providing ongoing guidance to her junior colleagues in a challenging environment was also highlighted and recognised by judges as an outstanding contribution to her organisation.

Event photography: Ben Appleton, Photox.

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION AWARD

Winner: Kate Evans, Major Projects Canberra

Judge 1: "Kate Evans is managing a very complex project that everyone in our community will need to access at some point in their lives. What stood out to me is not only the recognition of the complexity, but the practical steps to ensure that inclusion is prioritised in the build and meet the variety of needs. The consumer and clinical engagement was particularly strong which led to the facilitation and establishment of Consumer Design Principles.

She also seemingly left "no stone unturned" by ensuring the consumer and clinical perspective were from a broad group including both directly with individuals and via a range of community and government bodies. Going to great length to ensure engagement was authentic including in her own time. Her professional background also allows her to further "translate" this within the industry to establish a patient led health space.

To me Inclusion is about giving everyone a voice in the room and this was a true example of how to do this."



ACHIEVEMENT IN ENGINEERING AWARD

Winner: Catherine Johnson, Hindmarsh Construction

Catherine Johnson is an exceptional Mechanical Engineer who has worked for Hindmarsh for 10 years. Catherine started her career as a Mechanical Services Design Consultant, before transferring into the Construction industry. She has spent the last 4 years delivering the award-winning ANU Research School of Physics.

Judges praised Catherine's design coordination skills which contributed to the successful delivery of this project.



EMERGING LEADER OF THE YEAR AWARD

Winner: Jessica Bramwell, Manteena Group

After over a decade in the publishing industry, Jess discovered an affinity for the construction industry as an interior designer and then cabinetmaker, before finding her passion in site safety. Jess' vibrancy and enthusiasm in her role, helps bring safety to the fore of each of her projects.

Jess is the only female Safety Advisor at Manteena, and has both an academic and trade background, and provides an example to other female employees who are just beginning their careers, as well as those who are side-stepping from other industries into construction. Jess has been able to extend her influence to women in all roles across the company, due to the wide-ranging interface that Safety has with all facets of the company.

As a worker and volunteer for SALT since 2017, Jess has been bridging the gap between white- and blue-collar workers in her advocacy of greater female participation in the industry.

INNOVATION IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY AWARD

Winner: Jessica Stewart, Ginninderry

Ginninderry, a Joint Venture between Riverview Developments and ACT Government's Suburban Land Agency, has a vision of being a sustainable community of international significance in the Capital Region.

As Sustainability Manager, Jessica has been crucial in upholding this vision; her role exemplified in the form of Strathnairn, Ginninderry's first suburb and the ACT's first all-electric suburb.

This innovation required considerable planning and two years of extensive research and stakeholder engagement that ultimately resulted in a new way of constructing new communities for future generations, aligning with the ACT Government's commitment towards Net Zero Emissions by 2040. Designing for an all-electric suburb also presented the challenge of having to draw up smarter, more sustainable and ultimately cheaper-to-run homes.

Put simply, this innovation would not have eventuated without Jessica's vision, ambition and drive.



MENTOR OF THE YEAR AWARD

Winner: Jenny Edwards, Light House Architecture and Science



Jenny is sole owner of Light House Architecture and Science, a multi-award-winning business that integrates science with design to deliver highly efficient, climate resilient homes — new and renovated — in the Canberra region. Light House also provide testing and retrofit advisory services for households with smaller budgets.

Jenny's team is 50% women. She provides a super-flexible work environment and is passionately supportive of women participating in male-dominated areas. Jenny is not an architect, builder or engineer. She is a small business owner, scientist and leader. She doesn't fit neatly into any industry category or have a formal networking club. Her club is *Women Getting Stuff Done*.

Judges lauded Jenny for achieving the position that she did and altruistically passing on wisdom about that journey to mentees.

Judges also highly rated Jenny for successfully mentoring, supporting and progressing women into other leadership roles within their own firms, at the highest levels of their construction-related fields, including business-ownership.

TRADESWOMAN OF THE YEAR AWARD

Winner: Julia Bedin, Martin Donnelly

Judges commended Julia's entry on:

- Great detail of life experience and what drove Julia's inspiration to become an electrician
- Some excellent initiatives to be involved in, particularly for the encouragement of other women into building and construction
- Excellent apprenticeship experience, demonstrated growth in both apprenticeship and post trade
- Great aspirations, inspiring
- Well written submission showing her authentic self



Julia is not a stranger to winning awards, having previously clinching the NECA Tradeswoman of the Year award. A staunch advocate for other young women in trades, Julia has participated in the NAWIC mentoring program, providing mentorship for the *Ginninderry Spark* and *Master Builders ACT Women in trades* program. Julia is an ambassador for *Build Like A Girl*.



LEADERSHIP IN CONSTRUCTION AWARD

Winner: Alysha Obst, BMD Group

Alysha is a Civil Engineer at BMD Group, with over 14 years' experience contributing to versatile and major construction projects across Queensland and the Australian Capital Territory. She is a result driven individual, with a demonstrated record for managing major civil projects within brownfield environments involving complex services works, traffic management, and community and stakeholder interfaces.

A mother of three and a project manager of multiple concurrent infrastructure and development projects, Alysha is an exceptional leader and role model at work and home. She is dedicated to the engineering profession, and uses her significant experience to empower and support her teams. The true definition of a leader, Alysha is a highly experienced and technical engineer whose point of difference is in her empathetic, confident and humble approach.



AWARD TO AN OUTSTANDING STUDENT, APPRENTICE OR TRAINEE

Winner: Amy Adams, Huon

Amy Adams is a Canberra region local and has completed her schooling and ongoing education in the region. Amy's passion for machinery and mechanics began from a young age where she grew up on a farm and the inspiration behind pursue a qualification, and career relating to mechanics and subsequently, construction.

Amy started her apprenticeship at Huon in 2021 and has been an integral part of the mechanical team. She is currently studying her apprenticeship in heavy vehicle commercial mechanical technology through CIT Fyshwick where she is enjoying learning about servicing operations on various types of vehicles, hydraulic systems and diagnosing mechanical issues. Following her completion of her heavy commercial vehicle apprenticeship Amy intends to continue studying, working towards obtaining her mobile plant mechanical qualification. **n**

CONSTRUCTION CONVERSATIONS

NAWIC member stories

At NAWIC we exist to share our stories, amplify our voice and support each other in our journey to great work. Across our socials, at our events and often in our Award nominations we hear about experiences where NAWIC Members, female and female identifying people, find it harder in the workplace as a result only of their gender.

How do we create cultural change?

First, we must understand the problems. It is only then we can shine a light on the issues and create pathways for improvement. We asked women in construction all over Australia to channel their inner Beyoncé; 'If I were a Boy' and tell us what sprang to mind when they heard this phrase. Here's what they said:

I wouldn't have to hide that I was trying to start a family.

This is something women often feel the need to conceal. So how do we fix this?

Creating a supportive work environment is essential to ensure that women feel comfortable when discussing their plans of starting a family. Here are some key strategies that can help achieve this objective:

1. Implementing Family Friendly Policies
2. Encouraging Open Communication
3. Demonstrating Supportive Leadership (Leaders should also take parental leave and encourage family life balance)
4. Providing Parenting Support Programs
5. Organise training sessions that focus on diversity, inclusion and unconscious bias.
6. Let's acknowledge and celebrate family milestones within the workplace.



By following these steps, we can cultivate a supportive workplace where everyone feels valued and supported throughout their journey, in balancing work and family responsibilities.

Stay open, to making changes in line, with the changing needs and preferences of your employees.

I wouldn't constantly question myself and I would make sure everyone in the room had a chance to speak.

Let's break down this statement into two sections. The first is self-doubt.

Women, in the workplace often face feelings of insecurity that can stem from factors within the work environment and a lack of self-confidence. One of the contributors is the presence of gender bias and stereotypes which can lead women to doubt their abilities and constantly feel the need to prove themselves. Additionally the unequal opportunities and underrepresentation of women, in leadership positions can give rise to imposter syndrome, where women question their skills and their value.. The challenges of balancing work and family responsibilities can add a layer of pressure as societal expectations tend to burden women. All these factors combined create an environment where women may struggle with feelings of insecurity and self-doubt ultimately impeding their professional development.



The second part to this statement, is allowing everyone to feel heard. This is a struggle for most women in meetings.

In order to foster an inclusive work environment, it's crucial to ensure that everyone in the meeting has the opportunity to speak up and feel like their voice is heard. The key is creating a supportive space that welcomes perspectives. One way to achieve this is by encouraging listening and refraining from interrupting when someone is sharing their thoughts. It can also be helpful to establish a speaking order or a "raise hand" system to ensure that everyone has opportunities to participate. Keep an eye out for individuals who might be less vocal and gently redirect the conversation to include their input. It's important to value and acknowledge contributions, from all participants to reinforce their sense of worth. Additionally employing brainstorming techniques and providing feedback channels can foster creativity. Create an atmosphere of open expression without fear of judgment. By implementing these practices you can cultivate a meeting environment that's inclusive, respectful and appreciates every individuals voice.

By putting these solutions into action you can strive to decrease self-doubt and cultivate an environment that's more inclusive and encourages participation making sure that every voice is acknowledged and respected.

What comes next?

Some of our members report using these lived experiences to share with their teams and their business leaders, to inform help them understand the often unintended bias's women experience in the work place. Once awareness is created you can explore ways in which your organisation may work towards creating systemic improvements and drive cultural change.

In our efforts to empower women and promote gender equality, we are excited to announce an initiative, on our social media platforms. We will be focusing on highlighting the challenges that women face in both their personal and professional lives. Additionally, we will be sharing some helpful solutions to address these issues. We truly believe that by shedding light on these matters we can help raise awareness and foster an understanding within our community.

However, we can't achieve this without your input. We encourage all our members to engage with these posts and to share your experiences and provide insights, on the solutions that have worked for you. Together we have the power to make an impact. **#werise together**

If you found any of the content raised in this article triggering, please do reach out to the NAWIC Member Assistance Program on 1300 878 379 available 24 x 7 – it's a free confidential service staffed by trained mental health practitioners available to NAWIC members. **■**

FOSTERING FEMALE TALENT IN CONSTRUCTION

NAWIC QLD breaking the mould at Bray Park Careers Day

The construction industry is evolving rapidly, and embracing gender diversity has become crucial for its growth and success. Recognising the importance of empowering women in construction, the Queensland Chapter of the National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC) partook in a ground-breaking event, the QLD Bray Park Careers Day. This article serves as a case study, highlighting the impact of this event and encouraging other construction organisations worldwide to host similar initiatives that foster inclusivity and provide opportunities for women in the field.

The QLD Bray Park Careers Day, attended by our very own NAWIC Queensland Chapter representatives, aimed to bridge the gender gap in the construction industry by inspiring and engaging young women. Held at the prestigious Bray Park High School, the event attracted students from various educational institutions, industry professionals, and influential leaders. Through a range of interactive sessions and networking opportunities, the Careers Day provided invaluable insights into the diverse career paths available in construction.

Key Highlights and Impact:

1. Engaging Workshops: The event featured engaging workshops led by experienced professionals across different disciplines. Participants had the opportunity to gain hands-on experience in areas such as architecture, engineering, project management, and sustainable construction practices. These workshops provided valuable exposure to various career options and helped dispel myths surrounding women's roles in the industry.

2. Inspiring Panel Discussions: A series of panel discussions brought together accomplished women leaders in the construction field. These influential speakers shared their personal journeys, triumphs, and challenges, inspiring attendees and fostering a sense of community. The panel discussions encouraged open dialogue about breaking gender barriers and provided guidance on navigating the industry's unique challenges.

3. Mentorship and Networking: The QLD Bray Park Careers Day also facilitated mentorship and networking opportunities. Seasoned professionals and industry leaders volunteered as mentors, offering guidance and support to aspiring women in construction. These connections enabled students to establish valuable industry contacts and gain insights into career progression.

4. Exhibitions and Demonstrations: The event included exhibitions and demonstrations showcasing the latest technologies, materials, and innovations in the construction industry. Attendees had the chance to interact with cutting-edge tools and equipment, promoting an understanding of the industry's evolving landscape and exciting opportunities.

The Bray Park Careers Day made a significant positive impact on the local community. With NAWIC's representation to increase awareness about the construction industry and its rewarding career prospects, the event empowered individuals, particularly women and young females, to





consider construction as a viable and fulfilling career option. The event also served as a catalyst for promoting diversity and inclusivity within the industry, emphasising the importance of equal opportunities for all.

The event witnessed an impressive turnout, with a diverse range of participants, including students, parents, educators, and industry professionals. The lively atmosphere was filled with excitement and curiosity as attendees actively engaged with exhibitors, exploring interactive displays, asking questions, and seeking valuable insights about various construction trades and professions.

The success of the QLD Bray Park Careers Day serves as an inspiration for other NAWIC chapters and construction organisations to host similar events. By replicating this initiative, NAWIC chapters Australia wide can:

1. **Foster Gender Diversity:** Careers Days provide a platform to promote gender diversity in the construction industry, attracting and inspiring more women to pursue careers in this traditionally male-dominated field.
2. **Create Awareness:** These events raise awareness about the wide array of career options available within construction, encouraging young women to consider and explore these paths.

3. **Provide Role Models:** By featuring accomplished women leaders in the industry, Careers Days showcase relatable role models, offering inspiration and guidance to aspiring professionals.

4. **Facilitate Networking and Mentorship:** The mentorship and networking opportunities offered during Careers Days create valuable connections, facilitating career growth and development for women in construction.

The NAWIC Bray Park Careers Day was an unequivocal success, accomplishing its objectives of inspiring, educating, and empowering attendees. The event created a dynamic platform for engagement, networking, and learning, leaving a lasting impact on all who participated. As the construction industry continues to evolve and grow, events like these play a vital role in shaping the future workforce and fostering a vibrant and inclusive community of professionals.

NAWIC's unwavering commitment to supporting and promoting women in construction was clear throughout the event, making it a shining example of progress and opportunity. The success of the NAWIC Bray Park Careers Day is a testament to the collective effort and dedication of organisers, volunteers, exhibitors, and participants, all of whom contributed to making it an outstanding event. **■**



#WERISETOGETHER



NAWIC
THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF WOMEN IN CONSTRUCTION