

Report on GEAR Forum November 2021

GEAR Forums provide an opportunity for the GEAR team to update women in the JCU community on JCU's actions towards gender equity, and to provide a space where women are welcome to raise and discuss equity issues that are important to them, and share their views and experiences. Forums are scheduled quarterly during 2021. GEAR Forums are confidential, with the GEAR Coordinators producing a confidential report that summarises the kinds of issues discussed across the Forums. GEAR Reports are used to inform the ongoing work of JCU in achieving gender equity.

On the 23rd and 24th November, approximately 40 JCU women joined two GEAR Forums. Each Forum began with a brief update on the actions currently in progress, and then broke up into smaller break-out groups to talk through whatever issues women wanted to raise. Below we give a brief summary of the discussion at the Forum.

Update to GEAR Forum from Coordinators

Completed & Ongoing Actions

- x The Workforce Diversity Dashboards that informed the 2020 Athena Swan Bronze Award submission have been updated to include data from the 2020 calendar year, and the two academic Divisions are working with PPA and the HR Systems team to integrate these dashboards into regular work.
- x Both academic Divisions are developing a consistent (but locally adaptable) means of keeping track of who does outreach work, and who participates in committees at the College and Division level. This can indicate any gendered patterns that may exist within Colleges and Divisions, but also makes it possible to better recognise the staff who conduct a lot of this often invisible work.
- x The JCU Women in Promotions workshop was recently delivered by Professor Sarah Larkins, and following feedback from women who have previously attended, focused on more interactive and workshop-style activities.
- x Two Equity & Diversity guides are now available on the GEAR website: the [Guide for Meetings, Conferences and Workshops](#) suggests best practice for organizing and chairing meetings, and the [Guide for Training Development](#) intends to support any staff who develop and/or deliver training at any level in the institution. We hope staff find these useful.

Actions in Progress

- x CSE has made progress with advertising ~~work~~ positions, and has a proposal to increase attractiveness of open positions for women applicants.
- x PDP forms will soon be updated to indicate that performance expectations are ~~pro~~ related to opportunity—so staff with periods of part-time work or significant leave have a proportional expectation of outputs. Further, both academic Divisions report that they are on track to ~~complete~~ long-term casual staff in the PDP process, should they choose to opt in, by the start of 2022 at the latest.
- x With Enterprise Bargaining underway, we encourage staff to pay attention to two items from the Gender Equity Action Plan. The first is around simplifying the parental leave clause, to ensure it is clear and interpreted the same across all parts of the university, and for JCU to consider the costs and benefits of extending paid partner leave. The second is to extend eligibility for ~~fixed~~ teaching specialist staff to apply for conversion to ongoing positions. JCU management have not yet presented their log of claims but we encourage all staff to take advantage of opportunities to provide feedback when they are available.

GEAR Forums in 2022

- x The Forums that were held across 2021 included more than 200 participants—some of these were women who attended multiple sessions across the year.
- x In 2022 we intend to hold face-to-face sessions, alternating between the two main JCUA campuses, with a remote attendance option in every quarter as well.

