

THE MERLE PLEDGE GUIDELINES



What is the Merle Pledge?

Many high-profile conferences, events, task forces and media outlets lack gender balance, despite there often being no shortage of qualified women to contribute.

To address this, in 2020, The University of Queensland tailored the panel pledge concept to create an initiative known as the Merle Pledge.

Named after Merle Thornton AM – one of Brisbane’s most legendary feminist activists and authors, and who is also a UQ alumnus and former staff member – the pledge is an effort to substantially improve women’s representation in public and professional forums, by encouraging academics and professional staff from all backgrounds and genders to join the worldwide movement to advance gender equity.

If you would like to adopt the pledge at your institution, we encourage you to do so – please follow these guidelines when using the pledge messaging and logo, to retain its original intent at your institution.

For more information about the Merle Pledge, visit bit.ly/merlepledge or email athenaswan@uq.edu.au

PLEDGE WORDING

Please reproduce the pledge wording exactly as it is shown below – any deviations require written consent from The University of Queensland.

The Merle Pledge

An initiative of The University of Queensland, Australia.

I commit to:

- increasing the visibility and contribution of women in public and professional forums
- advocating for gender balance and diversity in all professional events, panels and conferences
- encouraging my colleagues and friends to participate in the Merle Pledge
- questioning and raising the issue of gender balance and diversity when the opportunity arises
- actively encouraging and supporting the voices of women
- honouring the Merle Pledge whenever I am invited to speak
- standing up for what is right
- persevering and not accepting excuses for unequal representation.

When attending or organising panel sessions and conferences, I will:

- Make it known to my colleagues that I stand for gender equality and that I will only support, attend and organise events where a gender diverse panel or line-up of speakers is offered (or all reasonable attempts have been made).
- Request information about other panellists, speakers, and participants in advance, and ask explicitly how gender balance will be achieved.
- Insist, as a condition of acceptance, that women be encouraged to participate and contribute in a meaningful way.
- Offer names of women from within UQ or my network, or direct the organisers to resources that can assist them in finding women to participate.
- Question the composition of panellists and speakers, and reserve my right to withdraw from events, even at the last minute, if gender balance and diversity is not achieved.

PLEDGE LOGO

Always use the logo files supplied. Do not change the colour of the Merle Pledge logo or alter the arrangement of the elements in any way.

The Merle Pledge logo should appear reversed out of a solid colour where possible so that it looks consistent across institutions.

Where the logo must appear on a white or light background always use the mono (black) version.



MERLE PLEDGE LOGO - REVERSED



MERLE PLEDGE LOGO - MONO