



S A G E

SCIENCE IN AUSTRALIA
GENDER EQUITY

ANNUAL REPORT

1 JULY 2020 - 30 JUNE 2021

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S A G E
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GENDER EQUITY

SAGE HIGHLIGHTS

2020 - 2021

Welcomed **2** subscribing institutions and **41** renewing subscribers

[SUBSCRIBE](#)



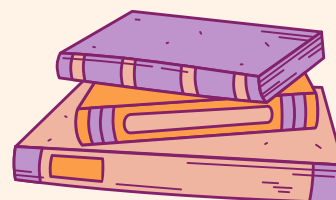
Convened **1** Peer Review Panel for **4** applications

Announced **4** Awardees in the Round 3 Award Outcomes



PUBLISHED:

- 'The Hartley Report': An Evaluation of the SAGE Peer Review Process
- The SAGE Strategic Plan
- SAGE Cygnet Award Application Form and Guidance
- Localised SAGE Athena Swan Bronze Award application forms for higher education institutions and medical research institutes
- Guidance on intersectionality for AS pathway
- Systemic change in AS pathway
- An inclusive approach to parental leave
- **7** Capacity Building Newsletters
- **3** SAGE Update Newsletters



Revamped SAGE Capacity Building Program

Convened National Roundtable (Sexual harassment roundtable)



Produced **6** podcast episodes and web stories

Delivered **12** webinars to **475** attendees



Participated in **4** national and international events on gender equity and diversity

Delivered **13** intersectionality walks



Delivered **26** one-on-one Cygnet support sessions

Convened **18** regional network meetings



Hosted **4** national network meetings

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



LIBBY LYONS

As SAGE Ltd's inaugural Board Chair, it is my great pleasure to present the SAGE Ltd Annual Report for 2020-21.

Whilst in many ways it has been a challenging year the absolute highlight for me has been getting to know and working with my fellow directors, the SAGE CEO and team and, the SAGE subscribers to drive transformative change in gender equity and diversity; a national priority for which I am proud to continue to champion and advocate.

As alluded to, my appointment as Chair coincided with a period of unprecedented global upheaval. The COVID-19 pandemic has taken a tremendous toll on human health, communities, businesses and the economy as a whole. These disruptions were equally challenging for SAGE and our subscribers, threatening the sector's ability to progress gender equity, diversity and inclusion.

I was therefore encouraged but not surprised to see that almost all institutions remained fiercely committed to continuing their SAGE journey. A smart move as we all know that gender equality is good for business. Those from the higher education sector, for example, publicly pledged to preserve gender equity as a sector priority during the crisis and recovery period. Better yet, SAGE welcomed two new subscribers during this time – a hopeful sign that gender equity, diversity and inclusion is being seen as a business essential.

I am equally pleased with SAGE's agility and innovation in managing the disruptions, providing improved services and benefits for SAGE subscribers on their journey beyond the Bronze Award. At the same time, SAGE engagement and collaborations flourished. Experts and practitioners from SAGE institutions (and the sector more broadly) contributed to various working groups, which not only informed our services, but also enriched peer support for the sector.

I am also grateful to the heads of SAGE subscriber institutions and our other stakeholders for the feedback and aspirations they have shared with me. Their insights were invaluable in shaping the SAGE Strategic Plan 2021-24 – our first. We will continue to consult with the sector through the annual SAGE Heads of Institutions Forum to inform our future direction.

I take great pride in all that SAGE and our subscribers have achieved together this year. However, we are at a critical juncture. We must not underestimate the lasting impacts of the pandemic, nor can we ignore the evidence that progress in gender equity has stalled.

SAGE Athena Swan Bronze Awardees have demonstrated that progress can indeed be fast-tracked. Now is the time to intensify investment and redouble our efforts to continue a *Step-Change* trajectory towards achieving sustainable gender equity, diversity and inclusion. Collectively, we must continue to champion SAGE nationally and encourage other institutions to join this change-making initiative.

SAGE success is built on the wise counsel of my fellow directors and the SAGE team's dedication to excellent service. Under the wise and sound leadership of the CEO Dr. Wafa El-Adhami they have excelled under exceptional circumstances and I thank them all for their steadfast contributions to SAGE and its objectives.

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO



DR. Wafa EL-ADHAMI

This past year has challenged all of us: individuals, families, communities and organisations, in many difficult ways. The higher education and research sector was particularly impacted, and a large proportion of COVID-19-imposed setbacks and burden were especially felt by women.

There is evidence that COVID-19 has slowed or reversed important advances in gender equity nationally and internationally; the extent of this across SAGE Athena Swan Bronze Awardees will become clearer as institutions submit their progress and impact reports in 2022 in support of their applications for SAGE Cygnet Awards.

It is therefore critical now to retain focus and intensify organisation-specific and whole-of-sector actions to limit further setbacks and help reverse the damage caused by this pandemic. Looking to 2022, I would like to reflect on some encouraging signs of commitment to and actions in support of gender equity and diversity over during FY 2020-21.

Australia's higher education and research sector continued to show leadership on their journey to advancing gender equity and diversity. This is evident in many ways, including the uniquely Australian Public Statement "Preserving Gender Equity as a Higher Education Priority During and After COVID-19"; the strong majority of SAGE subscribers staying the course on the SAGE journey with 41 institutions renewing their subscriptions to SAGE and two new institutions joining SAGE in 2021 – together, representing 50% of the sector; SAGE institutions' continuing active collaboration and sharing of their respective actions and learnings to support the whole SAGE community's progress in gender equity, diversity and inclusion.

Internationally, SAGE's experience and work continued to attract interest from and inform actions by Australia's partner economies – be it in the Asia Pacific region or in the UK through the transformed UK Athena Swan.

Commitments like these are encouraging and inspire real hope that together we can, and, indeed will, continue to drive change and deliver sustainable transformation across Australia's higher education and research sector.

Nearing the end of 2021, I am proud of SAGE achievements and the great leadership of the Board, their insightful guidance and support and the excellent contributions of the SAGE team.

Looking to the future, I am acutely aware that SAGE's role as an accrediting body should grow to become an active 'ally and enabler' of the SAGE community. We will do this by intensifying collaborative activities and strengthening partnerships with SAGE institutions, government entities and professional bodies as well as experts nationally and from across the global higher education and research sector. This is vital to deliver the best support possible and move closer to realising our shared vision. The SAGE strategic pillars lay out our path forward to achieve this by working closely with the sector.

COVID-19 pandemic may have set us back a few steps, but I am confident that together and through the sector's leadership, commitment and the great intellectual capital across the SAGE community we will recover lost grounds and make greater strides on this collective journey to change.

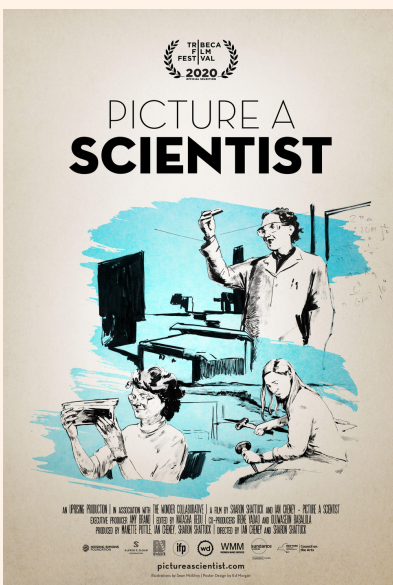
VIGNETTES FROM SAGE SUBSCRIBERS

Over the last year, SAGE subscribers have persevered with actions to improve gender equity, diversity and inclusion in their organisations. Some of their success stories were featured in the revamped [SAGE newsletters](#) as part of the regular “Wins of the Month” segment. In total, we published **11** pieces mentioning **14** subscriber institutions. Here are snippets from some of those stories.



The **Baker Heart and Diabetes Institute** launched an **online mentoring program** to help staff and students maintain regular contact while working remotely during the Melbourne lockdowns. Mentors (Lab Heads) were matched with their mentee (a PhD student or postdoc) through an online survey. Both parties received separate group training on strategies for establishing a successful mentoring relationship. Informal comments from the participants indicated that mentees found these regular Zoom meetings very rewarding.

The Chief Executive Officer of **Geoscience Australia** (GA), Dr James Johnson, invited everyone at GA to attend **CEO Listen and Learn sessions** to speak openly about their lived experiences of sexual harassment and sexism. To create a safe and supportive environment, GA ran women-only sessions and in small groups, facilitated by a psychologist. Based on the feedback from these sessions, GA launched their Sexual Harassment and Sexism Policy and Procedure, which has been recognised among other Australian Public Service agencies as a model for better practice. They planned to launch a new Sexual Harassment and Sexism Hotline and training resources in the second half of 2021.



Inspired by a discussion at a SAGE National Network Meeting, Professor Julianne Reid arranged **free screenings of Picture a Scientist** at **Curtin University**. The documentary highlights the discrimination, bullying and harassment faced by women in STEM. Both screenings were well-attended. Curtin’s interim Vice-Chancellor, Professor John Cordery, personally addressed staff at both screenings and contributed to discussions held at the end. Staff who watched the first screening were asked to start conversations with their colleagues on the topics raised in the film and encourage them to go to the second screening. The value of this screening was eloquently summed up by a Head of School: "Thank you for organising a screening of this powerful film – it was a potent mix of shocking, eye-opening and inspiring."

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt11906032/>

COMMUNICATING OUR IMPACT

SAGE MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

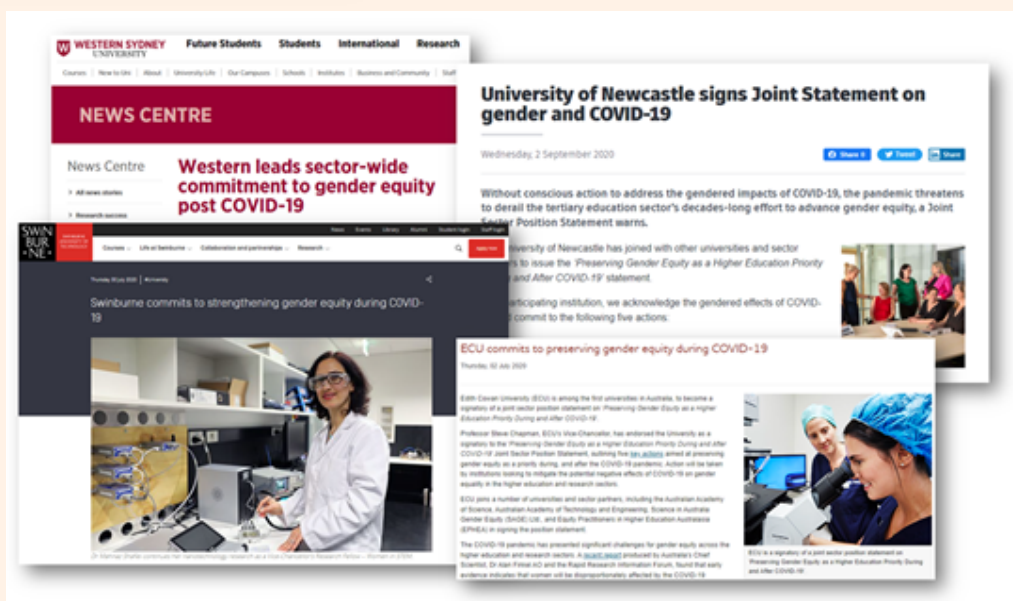
The SAGE Communications Strategy supported the organisation during a time of transition to independence and amid the COVID-19 pandemic, which heavily impacted the Higher Education and Research sector. Throughout this period, the message to stay the course on the path to gender equity was shared strongly.

There has also been much evolution and renewal occurring within the SAGE Communications Plan. The SAGE team began working more closely with the Communications and Outreach team at the Australian Academy of Science to collaborate on producing and maintaining output. Redevelopment of the SAGE website was activated, the SAGE newsletters were redesigned and there has been a streamlining of communication channels.

Media interest in SAGE has generally spiked as each cohort received their Athena Swan Bronze Awards, or when these organisations promote their Award or equity and diversity work in the media. SAGE is sometimes mentioned by thought leaders or leading sector figures writing about gender equity and diversity in media outlets, where SAGE is held up as an example of a transformative and evidence-based gender equity and diversity program that is making an impact.



Several SAGE subscribers issued media releases asserting their gender commitment to the joint sector position statement to preserve gender equity as a higher education priority during and after COVID-19. The sector initiative was also covered in a piece by the Times Higher Education impact.



TOTAL MEDIA COVERAGE

ONLINE: 271



PRINT: 26



BROADCAST: 20



The following are some highlights of SAGE media coverage during this reporting period:

Several media releases from Universities about the joint statement to preserve gender equity as a higher education priority during COVID-19, for example this article from **Swinburne**.

Defence Connect - Dr Melanie Farrier joins DSTG to implement SAGE practices (Oct 6)

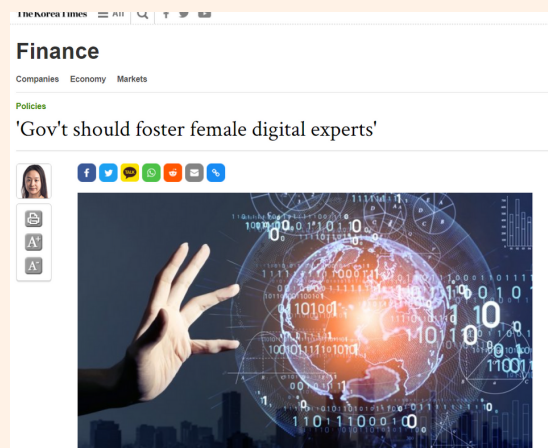
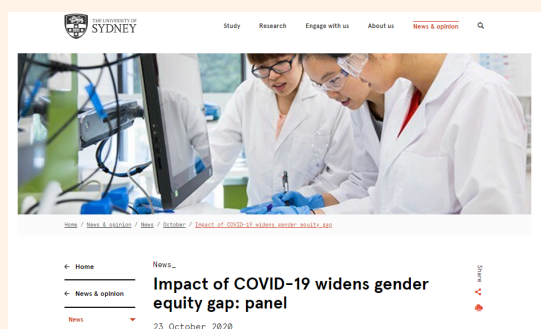


Swinburne commits to strengthening gender equity during COVID-19



Dr Mahnaz Shafiei continues her nanotechnology research as a Vice-Chancellor's Research Fellow - Women in STEM.

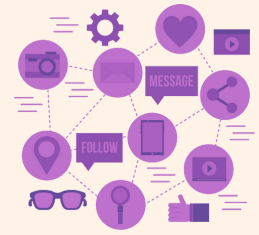
Korea Times - Korean government agency cites SAGE as an example of increasing gender equity in the Korean digital industries (Oct 11)



USyd News - USyd hosts panel on the impact of COVID-19 on the gender equity gap, including Professor Renae Ryan (Oct 23)

Bronze Awardees, which was published both on institutions' own websites but also in the Toowoomba Chronicle. The Chronicle story was also printed, while JCU's media release was picked up by the Cairns Post.

SOCIAL MEDIA



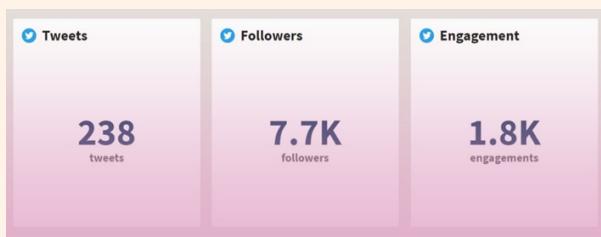
SAGE’s social media presence spans three platforms: **Twitter**, **LinkedIn** and **YouTube**, with Twitter being the most popular engagement platform.

Over the reporting period, the SAGE Twitter platform has continued to raise the profile of SAGE in the wider community, as well as become a communication channel with the general public. Twitter is the key platform for others to raise the profile and advocate for SAGE through mentions and retweets from subscribers and others.

LinkedIn is a new platform for SAGE, which acts as a professional hub for SAGE subscribers to connect and collaborate. There has been growth over the 20-21 reporting period, with the follower count increasing by **104** people.



TWITTER



7,715 followers were counted at the time of reporting, a **368 follower increase** from the previous annual report period.

238 tweets were sent over the reporting period, a 31-count decrease from the previous annual reporting period.

Followers engaged with SAGE’s tweets a total of **1,763** times, a 1.4K decrease from the previous reporting period. The lower engagement is due to a variety of factors including no major events hosted by SAGE during this time. The majority of posts on SAGE’s Twitter account are sharing news rather than designed to generate discussion or engagement.

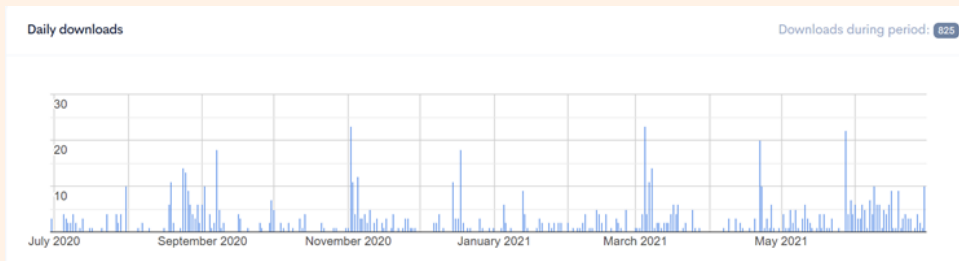
A total of **111.1K** impressions were received during the reporting period.




PODCASTS

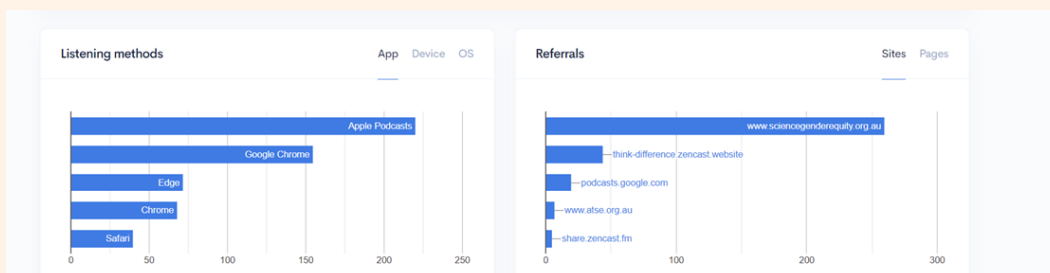


The **Think Difference** podcast audience continues to grow with a diverse range of topics covered in the past year. The most popular podcast episode since the start of the podcast project was one on Dads and parental leave. There was a total of **825** episode downloads during the annual reporting period.



The top 5 most popular episodes (by download) are as follows: 

- 1.) "Gender Equity and Diversity – Innovating during a pandemic." (**135** downloads)
- 2.) "Gender Equity and Diversity at Curtin University" (**107** downloads)
- 3.) "How do you fix gender imbalance from the inside out?" (**105** downloads)
- 4.) "A conversation with CSIRO Chief Scientist Dr Cathy Foley" (**105** downloads)
- 5.) "We are not going to solve this problem independently" (**91** downloads)



The majority of listeners were referred from the SAGE website and listened on Apple Podcasts, and **87%** of the audience listens were from within Australia. **5%** of listeners are from the United States, followed by the United Kingdom (**2%**) and Canada (**1.5%**).



87%



5%



2%



1.5%

SAGE EMPLOYEES AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

EMPLOYEES

6 staff at the end of 2020-2021
4 full-time staff
2 part-time staff



FINANCIAL STATEMENT



	2021	27 Nov 2019 – 30 Jun 2020
Revenue	1,600,803	1,277,769
Expenses		
Administration expenses	(304,793)	(179,254)
Conference & event expenses	-	(10,593)
Depreciation	(4,367)	-
Employee benefits expenses	(686,286)	(189,646)
Travel expenses	(9,154)	(9,975)
Other expenses	-	(52,876)
Surplus before income tax expense	596,203	835,425
Surplus before income tax expense	-	-
Surplus after income tax expense for the period	596,203	835,425
Other comprehensive income for the year, net of tax	-	-
Total comprehensive income for the period	596,203	835,425

The full financial statements for the period can be read on the [ACNC website](#).