



Institutional context

Geoscience Australia (GA) is Australia's pre-eminent public sector geoscience organisation. As the nation's trusted advisor on the geology and geography of Australia, we apply science and technology to describe and understand the Earth for the benefit of Australia, and to address challenges that face the nation. We bring together expertise in geology, geophysics, geodesy, satellite imagery, and topographic mapping for activities covering the Australian continent, its marine jurisdiction, and its territories in Antarctica.

We are the custodians for Australia's offshore data and petroleum samples, seismic, positioning, geology, natural resources, and water resources data. We also provide scientific research and advice to assist government and public policy development across six strategic impact areas:

- Building Australia's resource wealth to maximise benefits from our mineral and energy resources, now and into the future.
- Supporting Australia's community safety to strengthen our resilience to the impact of hazards.
- Securing Australia's water resources to optimise and sustain the use of our water resources.
- Managing Australia's marine Jurisdictions to support sustainable use of our marine environment.
- Creating a location-enabled Australia to use detailed and fundamental geographic location information to develop the nation.
- Enabling an informed Australia to equip government, industry and community with geoscience data and information to make informed decisions for our nation.

We have a highly educated and skilled workforce of approximately 630 people, spanning broad and diverse occupations, including:

- Geoscientists such as geologists, geodesists, geophysicists, geochronologists and geochemists
- Spatial professionals such as cartographers, surveyors and remote sensing experts
- Data management professionals
- Educators and science communicators
- Information communications and technology (ICT) specialists including experts in high performance data and computing, mathematics, engineers, graphic designers
- Corporate and management professionals including human resources, finance and communication specialists.

As an Australian Public Service (APS) organisation, we must operate within Commonwealth employment legislation, frameworks and policies when implementing any workforce initiatives. These include the:

- *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth)



- *Public Service Act 1999* (PS Act) and subordinate legislation
- *Maternity Leave (Commonwealth Employees) Act 1973*
- *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*
- Commonwealth Procurement Rules
- APS Bargaining Framework.

Our decadal strategic plan, [Strategy 2028](#), articulates that our objective to achieve science excellence is best achieved by fostering a positive culture that is inclusive and supportive of everyone. Actions under the strategy target the attraction, engagement and progression of diverse talent. We will do this through focusing on science excellence, making the most of our data, ensuring we have supportive stakeholders and by enhancing our inclusive and positive organisational culture

Our workplace [Diversity and Inclusion Strategy](#) (the Strategy) also expresses our ongoing commitment to the APS Employment Principles and ensuring we have a workplace that is diverse and free from discrimination pursuant to section 18 of the PS Act. Our leadership team is committed to fostering an inclusive culture, acting as role models and champions to drive positive change. We have implemented a top-down and bottom-up approach to developing a more inclusive culture to ensure all employees are engaged in our diversity journey. We have employee networks that drive grassroots change, such as the Gender Equity Network at GA (GENGA), and our Senior Executive Champions that take leadership in progressing each theme in the Strategy, including:

- Inclusive Culture
- Gender Equity
- Career Development
- Cultural and Linguistic Diversity
- Talent Attraction

The Strategy embodies our Inclusive Culture Program, which emerged in 2013 following a Culture Audit to increase awareness and understanding of how cultural norms and unconscious bias create inequity and potentially disadvantage our key diversity groups.

We are a proud member of the Science in Australia Gender Equity (SAGE) Ltd Program. As an organisation dominated by a scientific workforce, a data-driven, evidence-based accreditation program like SAGE was deemed fit-for-purpose to assist us on our cultural improvement. Our SAGE journey began through advocacy from members of GENGA, and we joined SAGE in 2017 to build on our efforts to improve gender equity, make our workplace more inclusive, and to become a workplace of choice for outstanding STEM professionals to our organisation.

We then commenced a two-year project to apply for Athena Swan Bronze Accreditation. We were awarded Athena SWAN Bronze Accreditation in 2020. Attaining this accreditation was an important step for us in creating a more equitable and inclusive workplace underpinned by gender equity. This achievement recognises our commitment to enhance positive organisational culture by cultivating a workforce that continues to embrace diversity, is inclusive and supportive of all individuals. Throughout



our SAGE Bronze process, we identified a series of key challenges within our organisation which were; a lack of female STEM workers, particularly in leadership and decision-making positions; a gendered disparity in experiences of workplace culture (cultural variability); a lack of awareness around diversity and inclusion; and lack of accountability of leadership and management.

These key challenges are articulated in Strategy 2028 as areas of focus for our SAGE Silver accreditation.

As part of our commitment to creating a diverse, equitable and inclusive workplace and culture where our people thrive and able to fully participate at work, we have actively sought and attained accreditations and affiliations to assist in supporting employees to feel included, valued and respected. These include:

- **Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace:** In June 2021, we were accredited as a Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace, a program facilitated by the Australian Breastfeeding Association (ABA). ABA enables workplaces to offer employment conditions that support women to combine breastfeeding and work, including lactation breaks, flexible work options and access to private facilities to express breastmilk.
- **Champions of Change Coalition:** In 2019, Dr James Johnson, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Geoscience Australia, joined the Champions of Change STEM group. The Champions of Change Institute was established in 2010 to work with leaders to redefine men's role in taking action on gender inequality. Dr Johnson joins other influential male leaders stepping up beside women to drive the adoption of actions across private sector and government.
- **Australian Network on Disability:** We became a Silver member of the Australian Network on Disability (AND) in May 2021. AND is a national, membership-based, for-purpose organisation that equips organisations to welcome people with disability in all aspects of business. Being a member of AND enables us to make practices inclusive and accessible, enabling us to support people with disability as employees and stakeholders.
- **Pride in Diversity:** We joined Pride in Diversity in May 2021. Pride in Diversity is Australia's national not-for-profit employer support program for all aspects of LGBTIQ+ workplace inclusion.
- **Reconciliation Australia:** We joined the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) Program in May 2021. Reconciliation Australia promotes and facilitates respect, trust and positive relationships between the wider Australian community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Our latest RAP includes practical actions that will drive Geoscience Australia's contribution to reconciliation both internally and in the communities in which we operate.
- **Australian HR Institute Award:** As a committed advocate for inclusive culture, in 2021 Dr James Johnson in his appointment as Chief Executive Officer, was recognised with an award issued by the Australian Human Resource Institute through his leadership. This award recognised the accelerated organisational culture change that was driven by the Senior Leadership Team.