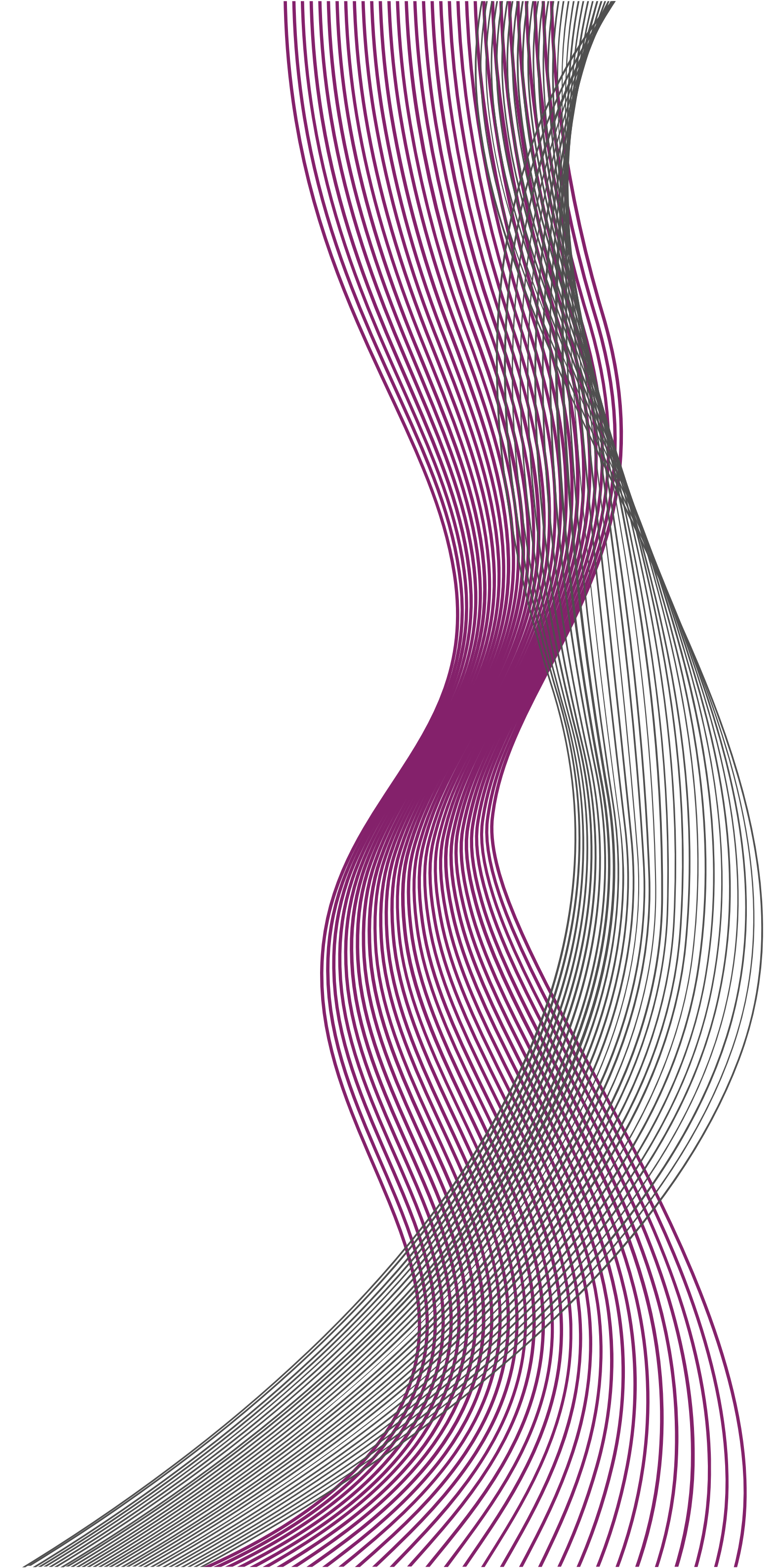




SAGE ATHENA SWAN
EXPECTATIONS
FRAMEWORK

Bronze to Gold Award Pathway
SEPTEMBER 2024





Background

SAGE Athena Swan Awards Criteria

The SAGE Athena Swan pathway focuses on the unique journey of each participating institution towards achieving a safe, equitable and inclusive organisation where all people can thrive and contribute to their fullest. Considering this, the awards assessment approach recognises differences in institutional type, size, strategy, resourcing and context.

Award applications are assessed against four criteria:

1. Leadership and accountability
2. Honesty and self-reflection
3. Communication and engagement
4. Data analysis and discussion

The applying institution must demonstrate that it meets requirements against the four criteria, to enable it to:

- understand the current state of gender equity, diversity and inclusion (GEDI) across the institution
- understand the structural, systemic, and cultural barriers that impede attraction, retention, and progression, contributing to inequity and a lack of diversity and inclusion
- act to remove or reduce five Key Barriers, thereby advancing GEDI across the Institution.

About the Expectations Framework

This Expectations Framework expands on the four criteria, providing progressive descriptors of expectations against each criterion for Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards, demonstrating increased maturity. The assessment criteria for achieving Bronze, Silver and Gold SAGE Athena Swan Awards remain unchanged.

The aim of this framework is two-fold:

- To provide institutions with a clear overview of expectations at each key milestone on their SAGE Athena Swan pathway.
- To strengthen the award assessment process.

Criterion 1. Leadership and Accountability

	Preliminary	Foundational (minimum for Bronze)	Developing (minimum for Silver)	Embedded (minimum for Gold)
Leadership and Accountability Enabling Understanding of GEDI and Barriers	<p>The institution's GEDI leadership and accountability mechanisms are lacking, resulting in a poor or patchy understanding of barriers to and enablers of GEDI in the organisation. Efforts to incorporate the ten Athena Swan principles are limited or absent.</p> <p>Leadership Engagement and Governance. Leadership and accountability mechanisms focus narrowly on the top levels without engaging mid-level leaders in GEDI efforts. Policies and practices are developed and imposed from the top without structured approaches to meaningfully incorporate diverse perspectives, particularly from people from underrepresented and/or marginalised groups. There may be signs of a lack of trust in leadership and a reluctance to share experiences, limiting the institution's insights into barriers. A recognition of the need for structured GEDI governance is unclear.</p> <p>Resource Allocation and Access. Resourcing for GEDI work is limited, and the work is rarely recognised or rewarded. Systems and processes restrict data collection and analysis through a gender-intersectional lens, and there are no apparent plans to improve these capabilities.</p> <p>Vision and Strategic Alignment. The vision for GEDI is undefined or top-down, lacking organisational clarity and commitment.</p>	<p>The institution's GEDI leadership and accountability mechanisms are focused on establishing a baseline understanding of barriers to and enablers of GEDI in the organisation to inform action planning, with efforts to incorporate the ten Athena Swan principles.</p> <p>Leadership Engagement and Governance. Leaders at all levels are involved in GEDI efforts. The need to incorporate diverse perspectives, particularly from people from underrepresented and/or marginalised groups, is recognised in shaping inclusive policies and practices. However, structured mechanisms to do so may still be developing. The institution is working to build staff engagement and trust in leadership. A clear GEDI governance structure is in place but may not function effectively.</p> <p>Resource Allocation and Access. Resources are allocated to GEDI work, though these may be informal or time-limited. Staff contributions to GEDI work are recognised and/or rewarded, though this may be inconsistent. The groundwork for structured governance and readiness for future actions is underway, including adequate resources and system access for data collection and analysis.</p> <p>Vision and Strategic Alignment. A vision for GEDI is articulated by senior leaders but may still require broader organisational buy-in.</p>	<p>The institution's GEDI leadership and accountability mechanisms are effective, enabling a mature understanding of the barriers to and enablers of GEDI in the organisation (including capacity for intersectional analysis and action). Efforts to incorporate the ten Athena Swan principles are evident.</p> <p>Leadership Engagement and Governance. There is evidence of meaningful efforts to engage leaders at all levels and hold them accountable for GEDI efforts. Structured mechanisms are in place to effectively incorporate diverse perspectives, particularly from people from underrepresented and/or marginalised groups, in developing inclusive policies and practices and informing decision-making and prioritisation. Trust in leadership is developing, though gaps remain. A functional GEDI governance structure exists but may still need refinement.</p> <p>Resource Allocation and Access. Clear and ongoing resourcing is in place, ensuring the sustainability of GEDI efforts. Staff contributions to the work are recognised and rewarded. There is a strong or rapidly increasing commitment to ongoing resourcing for data collection and analysis, including the capacity for intersectional analysis.</p> <p>Vision and Strategic Alignment. There is an increasingly mature vision for GEDI that aligns with organisational context and strategic goals, although broader buy-in is still developing.</p>	<p>The institution's GEDI leadership and accountability mechanisms are robust and fully integrated across all levels of management, resulting in a thorough and intersectional understanding of the barriers to and enablers of GEDI in the organisation. The ten Athena Swan principles are embedded across all efforts.</p> <p>Leadership Engagement and Governance. Leaders at all levels are accountable for meeting GEDI targets. Diverse perspectives are routinely incorporated into decision-making, particularly from people from underrepresented and/or marginalised groups. Trust in leadership is evident, encouraging open and honest sharing of experiences. There is a well-defined GEDI governance system with clear reporting lines and the capacity to respond dynamically to emerging challenges, issues, and priorities.</p> <p>Resource Allocation and Access. GEDI is part of business-as-usual and routinely incorporated into staff roles. Systems and resources for comprehensive, intersectional data collection and analysis are available and regularly reviewed for efficacy.</p> <p>Vision and Strategic Alignment. A fully integrated and shared GEDI vision exists across all levels, evidenced by cohesive and strategic efforts to advance GEDI throughout the organisation. The institution acts as a sector leader, sharing learnings and mentoring others to promote an inclusive HER culture.</p>
Leadership and Accountability Facilitating Action to Remove or Reduce Key Barriers	<p>Actions Taken. Actions taken to date are mentioned, but there is little discussion of leadership involvement and accountability for implementation. As a result, it is not clear that past approaches have informed future strategies.</p> <p>SMART Action Plan. Actions do not meet SMART criteria. They lack specificity in assigning leadership roles or measurable indicators of accountability for their implementation. Actions fail to establish a clear timeline or mechanism for leaders to monitor and report progress, demonstrating insufficient oversight and responsibility in advancing GEDI goals. The SMART Action Plan demonstrates a fragmented or siloed approach to understanding and addressing GEDI barriers.</p>	<p>Actions Taken. Actions taken to date have been ad-hoc or standalone initiatives, with little coordinated governance or accountability, but this is recognised as a limitation. Actions have focused on compliance or supporting individuals rather than on systemic change. Action implementation may not have been monitored or evaluated, but the need to do so is recognised.</p> <p>SMART Action Plan. All proposed actions meet SMART criteria. The actions are well-designed and strategically aligned with institutional goals. Future actions are specifically assigned to leadership roles or measurable accountability indicators for their implementation and establish a clear timeline or mechanism for leaders to monitor and report progress. Actions are designed to establish a clear governance structure, build accountability for leaders at all levels, and foster a shared vision for GEDI.</p>	<p>Actions Taken. Actions taken to date have been coordinated, but efforts may have been siloed. Actions have mainly focused on structural, systemic and/or cultural change. Action implementation has been monitored, and outcomes/impacts evaluated and reported. The institution and its senior leaders share implemented actions and outcomes/impact within the network.</p> <p>SMART Action Plan. Future actions meet SMART criteria. The action plan builds on prior efforts and addresses remaining barriers by fully integrating accountability mechanisms across all leadership levels, ensuring that governance structures are cohesive and resources are allocated strategically.</p>	<p>Actions Taken. Actions taken to date have been strategic and coordinated. Actions have focused on structural, systemic and/or cultural change and embedding GEDI into business-as-usual. An iterative approach has been taken to improve outcomes and impact. The institution and its leaders serve as a beacon, exemplifying best practices through transparent reporting of progress and outcomes/impacts.</p> <p>SMART Action Plan. All future actions continue to meet SMART criteria, with strategic alignment to the institutional goals, ensuring that leadership and accountability strengthen and exemplify best practices in GEDI advancement.</p>

Criterion 2. Honesty and Self-Reflection

	Preliminary	Foundational (minimum for Bronze)	Developing (minimum for Silver)	Embedded (minimum for Gold)
Honesty and Self-Reflection Enabling Understanding of GEDI and Barriers	<p>The institution's honesty and self-reflection efforts are limited and largely undeveloped, resulting in a rudimentary or superficial understanding of barriers to and enablers of GEDI in the organisation.</p> <p>Critical Assessment and Transparency. There is minimal or reluctant critical assessment of policies or practices, with a lack of transparency in reporting findings and openness in discussing challenges/barriers.</p> <p>Contextual Awareness and Reflection. Reflective practices on (past) approaches and the influence of organisational context are not evident, and context-specific challenges are not adequately addressed.</p>	<p>The institution demonstrates honesty and self-reflection, enabling a foundational understanding of the current state of barriers to and enablers of GEDI in the organisation.</p> <p>Critical Assessment and Transparency. There is some critical assessment of existing policies and practices. Areas of weakness are recognised, GEDI challenges are discussed, and findings are reported transparently, though this may be in a limited fashion.</p> <p>Contextual Awareness and Reflection. The institution acknowledges how the organisational context impacts GEDI efforts, setting the groundwork for more structured and comprehensive approaches in the future.</p>	<p>The institution demonstrates a high degree of honesty and self-reflection, enabling a mature understanding of the current state of barriers to and enablers of GEDI in the organisation.</p> <p>Critical Assessment and Transparency. Policies and practices are generally critically and regularly assessed. There is transparency in reporting findings and openness in discussing challenges and barriers.</p> <p>Contextual Awareness and Reflection. The institution reflects on how organisational context affects GEDI initiatives and considers learnings from past approaches to inform future strategies.</p>	<p>The institution demonstrates a fully embedded culture of honesty and self-reflection, resulting in a comprehensive understanding of the organisation's barriers to and enablers of GEDI.</p> <p>Critical Assessment and Transparency. Policies and practices are continuously and systematically critically assessed, with the requirement to do so supported/mandatory. There is a high degree of transparency in reporting findings and open discussions of challenges.</p> <p>Contextual Awareness and Reflection. Reflections on the organisational context and reviews of past strategies are integral, guiding well-considered actions to address key barriers.</p>
Honesty and Self-Reflection Facilitating Action to Remove or Reduce Key Barriers	<p>Actions Taken. The institution demonstrates limited honesty and self-reflection when discussing actions taken to date. There is little critical assessment of the effectiveness of existing initiatives and actions and little consideration of how organisational context may have influenced actions to date.</p> <p>SMART Action Plan. The institution's actions lack the specificity and relevance needed to honestly and reflexively address institutional barriers, challenges, and areas for improvement. The actions are superficial, lacking genuine transparency or deep introspection and/or failing to meaningfully engage with the problems uncovered to address root causes effectively.</p>	<p>Actions Taken. The institution demonstrates some reflection on the effectiveness of action taken to date and uses this to inform future action. Institutional context is considered when reflecting on the effectiveness of actions taken.</p> <p>SMART Action Plan. The institution's actions are specific and relevant and demonstrate transparency or introspection, though they may lack depth. Actions engage with the uncovered barriers to address root causes.</p>	<p>Actions Taken. The institution critically and openly assesses the effectiveness of actions taken, though this may not be consistent. Actions taken show alignment with organisational context and demonstrate reflective and reflexive practice and continuous learning.</p> <p>SMART Action Plan. Future planned actions are designed to deepen the critical assessment process, ensuring more comprehensive self-reflection and alignment with organisational context, challenges and strategic goals. The institution's actions demonstrate genuine transparency or deep introspection, meaningfully engaging with the uncovered barriers to address root causes effectively.</p>	<p>Actions Taken. The institution demonstrates high levels of honesty and self-reflection, embedding these qualities in its culture and values. There is thorough, ongoing critical assessment of the effectiveness of actions within the organisational context. A high level of reflective and reflexive practice is evident, allowing agile responses to emerging challenges.</p> <p>SMART Action Plan. Future actions are planned as strategic, comprehensive efforts to address GEDI barriers, informed by past successes and challenges. Ongoing, honest critical self-assessment is embedded into the actions, allowing reflective and reflexive practice and agile responses to emerging challenges.</p>

Criterion 3. Communication and Engagement

	Preliminary	Foundational (minimum for Bronze)	Developing (minimum for Silver)	Embedded (minimum for Gold)
Communication and Engagement Enabling Understanding of GEDI and Barriers	<p>Communication and Engagement Dynamics. The institution's communication and engagement efforts around GEDI are predominantly one-way, focusing on disseminating information without genuine interaction. Engagement is mainly superficial or tokenistic, lacking active dialogue or in-depth engagement, which is essential for a robust understanding of barriers to and enablers of GEDI.</p> <p>Inclusivity and Representation. Staff input is minimal. Efforts to understand the perspectives of people from underrepresented and/or marginalised groups are undeveloped, with no formal structures to ensure their representation in decision-making, and the importance of this engagement is unrecognised.</p>	<p>Communication and Engagement Dynamics. The institution implements basic two-way communication channels to foster a foundational understanding of barriers to and enablers of GEDI. Efforts to engage staff include opportunities for feedback/consultation on policies and practices, but these may lack active dialogue or in-depth engagement necessary for a robust understanding.</p> <p>Inclusivity and Representation. While basic mechanisms for feedback are evident, they may not be fully inclusive or structured. There is clear recognition of the need to engage with diverse perspectives, particularly from people from underrepresented and/or marginalised groups, in all aspects of decision-making and the value of co-design.</p>	<p>Communication and Engagement Dynamics. The institution's communication and engagement strategies are two-way, allowing staff to contribute their views on barriers to and enablers of GEDI. While co-design practices may not yet be fully embedded, and the closing of the feedback loop may be inconsistent and/or developing, there is a clear commitment to improvement.</p> <p>Inclusivity and Representation. Co-design practices are increasingly implemented, engaging with diverse perspectives, particularly from people from underrepresented and/or marginalised groups, in all aspects of decision-making. Efforts to celebrate successes and recognise contributions are demonstrated.</p>	<p>Communication and Engagement Dynamics. The institution's communication and engagement are fully embedded in co-design practices and have evolved into co-production. There is a continuous, multi-directional flow of information, ensuring all staff can actively shape an equitable, diverse and inclusive organisation.</p> <p>Inclusivity and Representation. Structured mechanisms for representation in decision-making are well-established. The institution excels in closing the feedback loop, regularly updating staff on how their contributions have led to changes, and celebrating successes openly to foster a culture of recognition and continuous improvement.</p>
Communication and Engagement Facilitating Action to Remove or Reduce Key Barriers	<p>Actions Taken. The institution's actions to date are mentioned, but there is little discussion of how staff input was incorporated in the design of the actions or how staff feedback has been sought on the effectiveness of past actions. As a result, it is not clear that past approaches have informed future strategies.</p> <p>SMART Action Plan. The institution's action plan lacks a strategic approach to communicating with staff about change, fostering inclusive engagement or enhancing two-way dialogue. Actions related to communications and engagement may be poorly defined and/or lack mechanisms to measure effectiveness.</p>	<p>Actions Taken. The institution's actions taken to date have been informed by the perspectives of a limited range of people, possibly from the top down, meaning they may not have effectively addressed structural, systemic and cultural barriers. However, staff feedback has been sought on the effectiveness of past actions, allowing past approaches to inform future strategies.</p> <p>SMART Action Plan. The institution's action plan shows steps towards building two-way communication channels, enhancing active dialogue, in-depth inclusive engagement, and co-design; however, the depth and consistency of these practices may be underdeveloped. There is a clear intent to communicate change and improve engagement practices to include the perspectives of people from underrepresented and/or marginalised groups, though these practices may not be fully specified or strategic. The plan aligns communication and engagement efforts with broader institutional goals.</p>	<p>Actions Taken. The institution's actions taken to date have been informed by staff input and some level of co-design. However, co-design practices may not yet be fully embedded, and engagement may be inconsistent or lack depth, leaving room for deeper collaboration and more strategic efforts to address structural, systemic and cultural barriers. Nevertheless, there is a clear commitment to improve.</p> <p>SMART Action Plan. Future actions strengthen communication and engagement, focusing on embedding co-design practices more deeply and allowing staff to partner in designing an inclusive organisation.</p>	<p>Actions Taken. The institution's actions to date embed co-design practices to ensure that diverse perspectives and insights shape decision-making. Engagement, collaboration and co-design strategies have been evaluated and refined to ensure continuous improvement.</p> <p>SMART Action Plan. Actions focus on embedding co-design and co-production practices as a default approach, ensuring that staff are valued partners in designing an inclusive organisation. Communication and engagement strategies are regularly evaluated and refined, promoting sustained improvement in inclusivity and responsiveness to emerging issues.</p>

Criterion 4. Data Analysis and Discussion

	Preliminary	Foundational (minimum for Bronze)	Developing (minimum for Silver)	Embedded (minimum for Gold)
Data Analysis and Discussion Enabling Understanding of GEDI and Barriers	<p>The institution's data collection, analysis, discussion and usage efforts are limited.</p> <p>Data collection. Focuses primarily on gender equity with minimal attention to other diversity characteristics. Data collection is rudimentary, often limited to biological sex rather than gender identity, with little to no clear understanding of the importance of an intersectional approach or commitment to improvement.</p> <p>Data analysis. Data are largely described rather than meaningfully analysed and interpreted. There is little exploration of barriers to and enablers of GEDI and few attempts to probe into the sub-issues and/or underlying reasons behind observed trends. Efforts to take an intersectional approach are very limited or absent, resulting in a limited understanding of the GEDI landscape in the organisation.</p> <p>Data presentation. There is a lack of clear presentation of data because of a lack of selectivity, inappropriate or misleading format, or inconsistency. The accompanying narrative does not highlight key points, explain the significance of the data, or draw relevant conclusions about the findings.</p> <p>Data governance and transparency. Data governance is undefined or inconsistently managed, suggesting shortcomings in ethical data collection, management and usage processes. The institution shows minimal effort in integrating data usage into decision-making, and data may be inaccessible or restricted without clear rationale. Data related to the changing state of GEDI in the organisation is not made available to staff.</p>	<p>The institution's data collection, analysis, discussion and usage efforts are basic and primarily focused on gender without integrating broader diversity metrics.</p> <p>Data collection. Focuses primarily on gender equity, and data may be limited to biological sex rather than gender identity; however, the institution recognises the need to develop data practices that capture gender and diversity characteristics to inform GEDI initiatives.</p> <p>Data analysis. Clear attempts are made to substantively analyse, integrate and interpret qualitative and quantitative data to explore barriers to and enablers of GEDI and probe into the sub-issues and/or underlying reasons behind observed trends. Efforts to take an intersectional approach are evident, though not yet comprehensive, resulting in a base level of understanding of the GEDI landscape in the organisation.</p> <p>Data presentation. Data are generally presented clearly and selectively in an appropriate format and with appropriate points of comparison to highlight data points underpinning the key message, though there may be some irrelevance and/or opportunities for greater clarity. The accompanying narrative explains the significance of the data and draws meaningful conclusions, though this narrative may need further development and consistency.</p> <p>Data governance and transparency. The institution has data governance processes in place to ensure that it captures, stores, and responds to potentially sensitive data in an ethical manner, though these processes may be in a nascent stage. The institution recognises that access to robust data is integral to inclusive decision-making, and initial steps have been taken to ensure that people in decision-making positions have access to timely and accurate data. Data related to the changing state of GEDI in the organisation is transparent and made available to staff.</p>	<p>The institution demonstrates growing data capacity.</p> <p>Data collection. The institution collects data on diversity characteristics beyond gender, but the ability to fully integrate data sets may be lacking. The institution clearly understands the importance of an intersectional approach and the data needed to apply it and provides clear evidence of how this is being achieved. Where workforce systems do not support diversity data collection beyond gender, and/or existing sources do not contain these data, the institution explains this limitation and employs alternative methods to collect diversity data, like focus groups or opt-in surveys.</p> <p>Data analysis. Qualitative and quantitative data are substantively analysed, integrated, interpreted and used effectively to explore barriers to and enablers of GEDI. An intersectional approach to data analysis is taken, allowing a deep understanding of the GEDI landscape in the organisation, though full integration of intersectional analyses may be incomplete.</p> <p>Data presentation. Data are clearly and selectively presented, including comparisons to the workforce, cohort or other relevant groups, and both numbers and proportions are shown to allow meaningful conclusions to be drawn. The accompanying narrative transparently presents, explains and discusses the significance of the findings in relation to the barriers to and enablers of GEDI and their related sub-issues, though consistency and depth are still developing.</p> <p>Data governance and transparency. The institution has ethical data governance processes in place to ensure that data is being collected, stored and used in a way that is honest, accountable, fair, and respectful of people. The institution ensures robust data is accessible to staff in a timely manner to facilitate informed and inclusive decision-making. Data related to the changing state of GEDI in the organisation is transparent, readily available to staff, and becoming more publicly accessible whilst ensuring data privacy requirements.</p>	<p>The institution exhibits comprehensive data practices.</p> <p>Data collection. Data collection practices encompass a broad range of diverse characteristics and systems that facilitate the integration of data sets. Gaps or limitations in available data sets are clearly and comprehensively explained.</p> <p>Data analysis. Analyses rigorously integrate and interpret the quantitative and qualitative data to systematically explore barriers to and enablers of GEDI. An intersectional approach is fully embedded, allowing a nuanced understanding of the institution's complex and dynamic GEDI landscape.</p> <p>Data presentation. Carefully selected data are presented with clarity and precision, and key findings are effectively drawn out and highlighted with critical reflections leading to actionable insights.</p> <p>Data governance and transparency. The institution's approach to data ethics promotes staff trust and assures that data are collected, managed and used appropriately, respectfully and with integrity. Data are deeply, transparently and consistently utilised to ensure informed and inclusive decision-making as standard. Data related to the changing state of GEDI in the organisation is publicly available whilst ensuring data privacy requirements, demonstrating the institution's commitment to full transparency and fostering a culture of open accessibility, thereby setting a standard in data governance and transparency at the sectoral level.</p>
Data Analysis and Discussion Facilitating Action to Remove or Reduce Key Barriers	<p>Actions Taken. The institution's actions taken to date are mentioned, but there is little reflection on how or if they were informed by data or on the need for future actions to be evidence-informed.</p> <p>SMART Action Plan. The institution's planned actions are poorly informed by data, perhaps due to limitations on data collection and/or lack of</p>	<p>Actions Taken. The institution's actions to date may not have been data-informed or were based on limited quantity and/or quality data and/or analysis. However, there is a recognition of the need to use quantitative and qualitative data when developing future actions.</p> <p>SMART Action Plan. The institution's action plan is</p>	<p>Actions Taken. The institution's actions to date have been substantially informed by data but may have been limited by data quality or analysis not allowing for a detailed picture of the organisation's GEDI landscape. Efforts have been made to improve data governance, collection and analysis, as well as to better utilise evidence to inform SMART actions in the future.</p>	<p>Actions Taken. The institution's actions to date have been informed by comprehensive and ongoing data collection and analysis, reflecting the institution's diversity and its people's experiences. Robust and timely data informs decision-making, allowing the implementation of strategic and targeted actions to flexibly and dynamically respond to emerging issues.</p>

Continued on the next page ...

	Preliminary	Foundational (minimum for Bronze)	Developing (minimum for Silver)	Embedded (minimum for Gold)
Data Analysis and Discussion Facilitating Action to Remove or Reduce Key Barriers	depth in the analysis, leading to a superficial understanding of the barriers to and enablers of GEDI in the organisation. As a result, actions lack specificity. The listed desired outcomes and impact are weak, perhaps with outputs positioned as outcomes, making it difficult to assess whether barriers have been removed/reduced. Plans to evaluate outcomes and impact are limited or missing. There is no clear plan to enhance data practices or governance or to increase data transparency.	informed by the analysis and interpretation of qualitative and quantitative data and the resulting understanding of the organisation's barriers to and enablers of GEDI. Actions are relevant to the barriers and issues identified by the data. The listed desired outcomes and impact are measurable and achievable, based on the baseline data presented, but may be under- or over-ambitious. There are plans to evaluate outcomes and impact, but these may not be fully specified or developed. The plan indicates commitment, preliminary steps, and goals to improve data practices (e.g., collection and analysis of diversity characteristics beyond gender), strengthen data-driven decision-making, enhance ethical data governance, and increase transparency, but detailed execution strategies may remain nascent.	SMART Action Plan. Future actions are evidence-based, data-driven and well-integrated with the institution's strategic direction, driving progress toward a safe, equitable and inclusive organisation where all people can thrive and contribute to their fullest. The listed desired outcomes and impact are measurable and ambitious yet achievable. There are clear plans for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of outcomes and impact. Plans are in place to improve data governance, capabilities and practices to gather more comprehensive, robust and nuanced data to inform future decision-making.	SMART Action Plan. Future actions are based on detailed, nuanced data and insights, driving progress toward a safe, equitable and inclusive organisation where all people can thrive and contribute to their fullest. Continuous improvement processes are in place to improve the quality of data insights and evaluate and iterate strategies and actions based on the available evidence. The action plan demonstrates the institution's ongoing commitment to maintaining high standards in data ethics, ensuring data are used appropriately, respectfully and with integrity. The institution acts as a beacon, transparently and publicly reporting on its GEDI landscape, setting a standard for and supporting transformative change in the sector, and influencing the broader community.

Notes to applicants and application assessors

Note 1. From 2025, all award applications require the following (as per the revised application forms):

- Summary Table (for Silver/Gold only): A summary table outlining the Key Barriers identified at Bronze, actions taken up to this point, and outcomes/impacts.
- Data Explainer Section: This section should outline data sources (e.g., HR data, survey data, focus group data), available/collected metrics, methodology for qualitative data collection, data limitations, ethical considerations, and how these factors influence the application.
- Terminology Section: This section should outline the use of language around gender, underrepresented and/or marginalised groups, and any other relevant terms.
- Governance Diagram or Overview: A diagram or written overview of the organisation's GEDI accountability and governance structure.

Note 2. From 2025, SMART Action Plans will be assessed as part of the four criteria, as outlined under the 'Facilitating Action to Remove or Reduce Key Barriers' row for each criterion.

Note 3. From 2025, Silver and Gold applications should be comprehensive and stand-alone documents, outlining evidence showing a nuanced understanding of the next five Key Barriers the Institution will tackle, the baseline and targets against which progress, outcomes and impact will be measured, and the actions proposed to remove or reduce the Key Barriers. If applications include reference to any or all Cygnet Award applications, they must provide a high-level overview of the key data and lessons to substantiate claims and should only direct readers to the Cygnets for further supporting information.



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