



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

Cygnets Award Application: Institutional Context

SAGE Athena Swan

2023



Acknowledgment of Country

The University of Melbourne acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the unceded land on which we work, learn and live: the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Bunurong peoples (Burnley, Fishermans Bend, Parkville, Southbank and Werribee campuses), the Yorta Yorta Nation (Dookie and Shepparton campuses), and the Dja Dja Wurrung people (Creswick campus).

The University also acknowledges and is grateful to the Traditional Owners, Elders and Knowledge Holders of all Indigenous nations and clans who have been instrumental in our reconciliation journey.

We recognise the unique place held by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the original owners and custodians of the lands and waterways across the Australian continent, with histories of continuous connection dating back more than 60,000 years. We also acknowledge their enduring cultural practices of caring for Country.

We pay respect to Elders past, present and future, and acknowledge the importance of Indigenous knowledge in the Academy. As a community of researchers, teachers, professional staff and students we are privileged to work and learn every day with Indigenous colleagues and partners.

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Overview of the University of Melbourne

Introduction

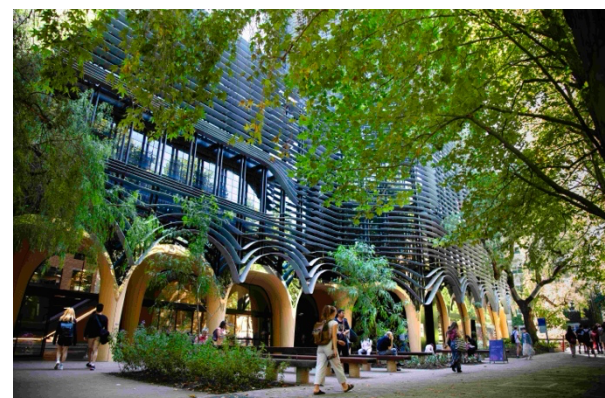
The University of Melbourne (UoM) aspires to be a place where all people are valued and respected, have equal access to opportunities and are encouraged to fulfil their talents and potential. Our commitments to gender equality are vital to realising this aspiration.

The University joined SAGE Athena Swan in 2015 and has incorporated the award and accreditation program as part of the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and broader gender equity program of work.

Background

The University of Melbourne is a comprehensive, research-intensive university. Since establishment in 1853, the University has contributed its research and teaching at significant historic moments to advance knowledge for the benefit of society in ways that enrich and transform lives. The University is proud to have been home to Australia's first female Professor of Science, Georgina Sweet (PhD, UoM 1904) and Australia's first female Nobel Laureate, Professor Elizabeth Blackburn (BSc & MSc 1972).

Whilst Parkville is the largest campus, the University has six other metropolitan and regional campuses. Parkville, Burnley, Fishermans Bend, Southbank and Werribee campus are located on the unceded lands of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Bunurong peoples. Dookie and Shepparton campuses are located on the unceded lands of the Yorta Yorta Nation, and the Creswick campus is located on the unceded lands of the Dja Dja Wurrung people.



Strategic Planning

The University's Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2030 sets out our vision for a 'thriving, fair and diverse University community working together respectfully to make a difference to each other and in the world.' The Diversity and Inclusion Strategy supports the Community Pillar of Advancing Melbourne 2030, the University's 10-year strategic plan.

Advancing Melbourne 2030

Advancing Melbourne outlines the University of Melbourne's strategic direction for the coming decade. *Advancing Melbourne* covers five key focus areas – Place, Community, Education, Discovery and Global. about.unimelb.edu.au/strategy/advancing-melbourne

Murmuk Djerring- Indigenous Strategy 2023-2027

Murmuk Djerring, the University of Melbourne's Indigenous Strategy 2023–2027, sets a proactive, innovative, and ambitious approach to strengthen the University's work for and with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. about.unimelb.edu.au/reconciliation/murmuk-djerring

Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2030

Diversity and inclusion at the University of Melbourne is about opening the intellectual enterprise to people who may be prevented from attending because of broader social inequities, by creating space, opportunities, entry points, pathways, and support for underrepresented students and staff.

Our commitment to diversity and inclusion also includes our approach to building greater diversity in successful partnerships, in our procurement and supply chain practices, and in serving the community through respectful engagement that reflects leading practice.

The Diversity and Inclusion Strategy included targeted action plans to address barriers and disadvantage experienced by specific cohorts within our community. about.unimelb.edu.au/diversity-inclusion/strategy-and-policy

Gender Equality Action Plan

This Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) 2022-2025 supports the advancement and embedding of diversity and inclusion principles at the University to create enduring and widespread cultural change. The GEAP reflects upon our systems, structures, attitudes, and behaviours, and offers strategies and measures (i.e. actions) to strengthen access, inclusion and equity for staff of all genders.

Respect Action Plan

The Respect Action Plan 2023-24 sets out the work the University has committed to undertake in relation to sexual misconduct prevention, early intervention, and response, as endorsed by the Respect Committee. unimelb.edu.au/respect

Governance

The 13-member Council (comprised of 6 women and 7 men) is the University's governing body with the authority to make statutes and regulations. The Academic Board is the chief academic body. The University has nine faculties, led, and managed by the Vice-Chancellor and senior leadership team.

The University Council is the governing body supported by its sub-committees which include Academic Board, which is responsible for academic matters, teaching, and research quality. The University Executive is the University's principal management committee.

Figure 1: Governance organisational chart.



Compliance

The University of Melbourne recognises its obligations to its students, its staff, and the wider community to provide an environment that is safe, a culture that promotes equity, and an administration that adopts the highest standards of probity and accountability in all its operations.

The University is subject to a broad range of legislative obligations. Regarding gender equality and equal opportunity, the University is compliant with the *Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012* (Cth) and the *Gender Equality Act 2020* (Vic). The University is also compliant with the *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021* under the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA).

Size and Structure

The Melbourne Operating Model

The University has nine faculties which includes schools, departments, and institutes. Our faculties and Chancellery work together to deliver our academic mission and all the University’s activities. The Melbourne Operating Model (MOM) aims to harness expertise and align faculties and Chancellery to improve teaching and learning, research outcomes, and engagement. The MOM consists of three interdependent domains of activity – Agenda and Direction Setting, Academic Excellence, and Professional Expertise – that cross the University and are agnostic of organisational structures.

Figure 2: The University of Melbourne faculties, schools, departments, and academic units.

Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Melbourne School of Design
Faculty of Arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asia Institute Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences School of Culture and Communication School of Historical and Philosophical Studies School of Languages and Linguistics School of Social and Political Sciences
Faculty of Business and Economics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Accounting Department of Business Administration Department of Economics Department of Finance Department of Management and Marketing Melbourne Institute: Applied Economic & Social Research Melbourne School of Professional and Continuing Education
Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School of Chemical and Biomedical Engineering School of Computing and Information Systems School of Electrical, Mechanical and Infrastructure Engineering
Faculty of Fine Arts and Music	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Melbourne Conservatorium of Music Victorian College of the Arts Wilin Centre for Indigenous Arts and Cultural Development
Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Melbourne Dental School (graduate school) Melbourne Medical School (graduate school) Melbourne Medical School Clinical Schools Melbourne School of Health Sciences (graduate school) Melbourne School of Population and Global Health (graduate school) Melbourne School of Psychological Sciences (graduate school) School of Biomedical Sciences Faculty-level departments, centres, and institutes
Faculty of Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School of Agriculture, Food and Ecosystem Sciences School of Bio Sciences School of Chemistry School of Geography, Earth, and Atmospheric Sciences School of Mathematics and Statistics School of Physics Melbourne Veterinary School (graduate school) Office for Environmental Programs Australian Mathematical Sciences Institute
Melbourne Graduate School of Education	Melbourne Graduate School of Education is a graduate school established as a faculty.
Melbourne Law School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Melbourne School of Government
Other academic units	
Chancellery	

University of Melbourne Staff

The University employs more than 13,00 staff, evenly split between academic and professional roles. 60% of all staff are women, with 53% of academic roles held by women. Gender distribution profiles vary considerably across and within faculties, and across academic levels.

Figure 3: Gender composition of staff by employment basis 2023.

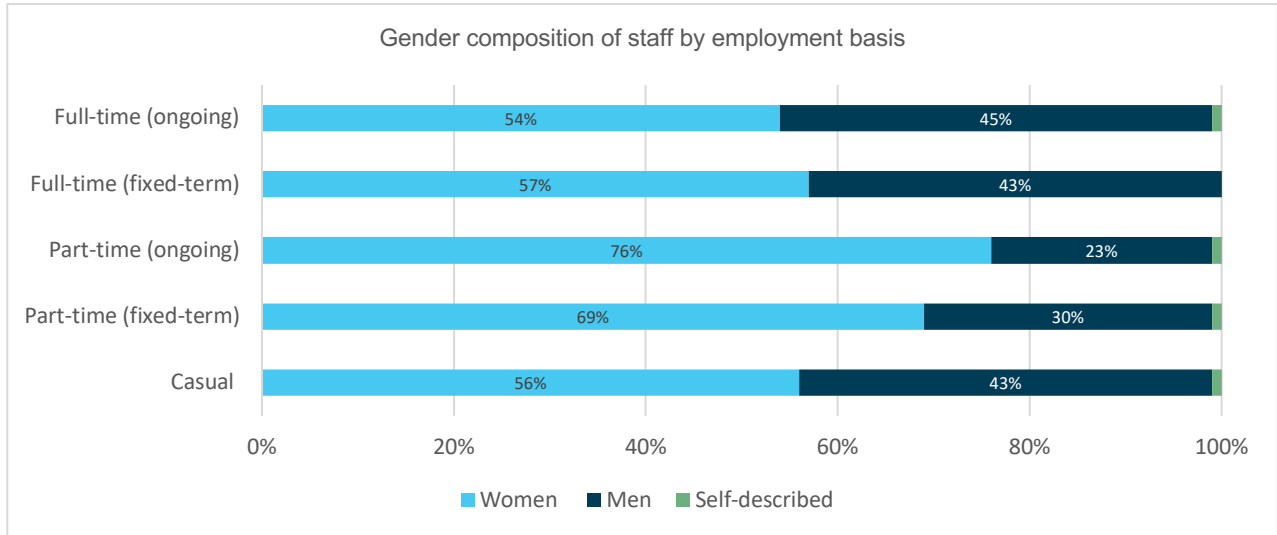


Figure 4: Gender composition of staff by employment type 2023.

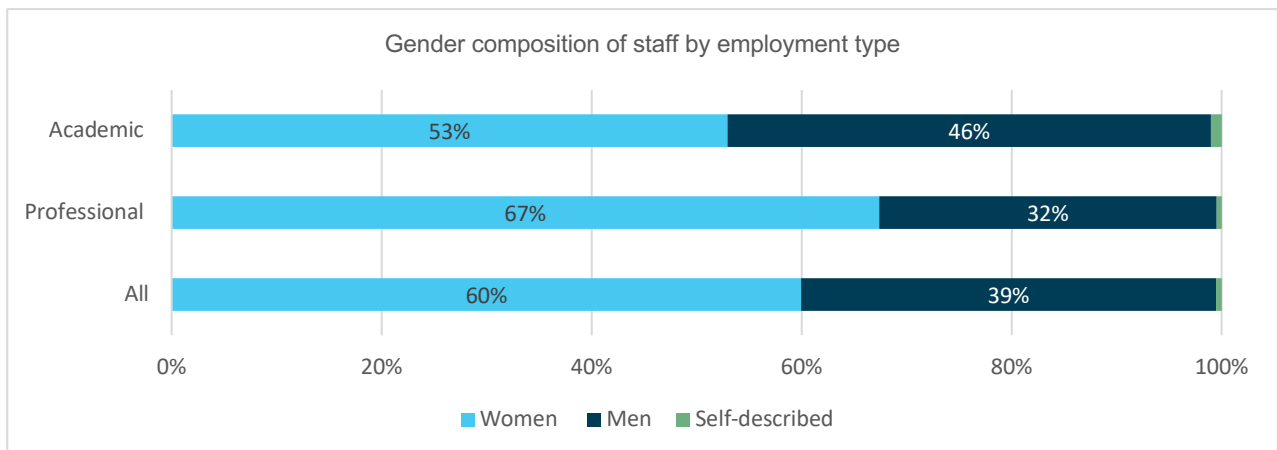
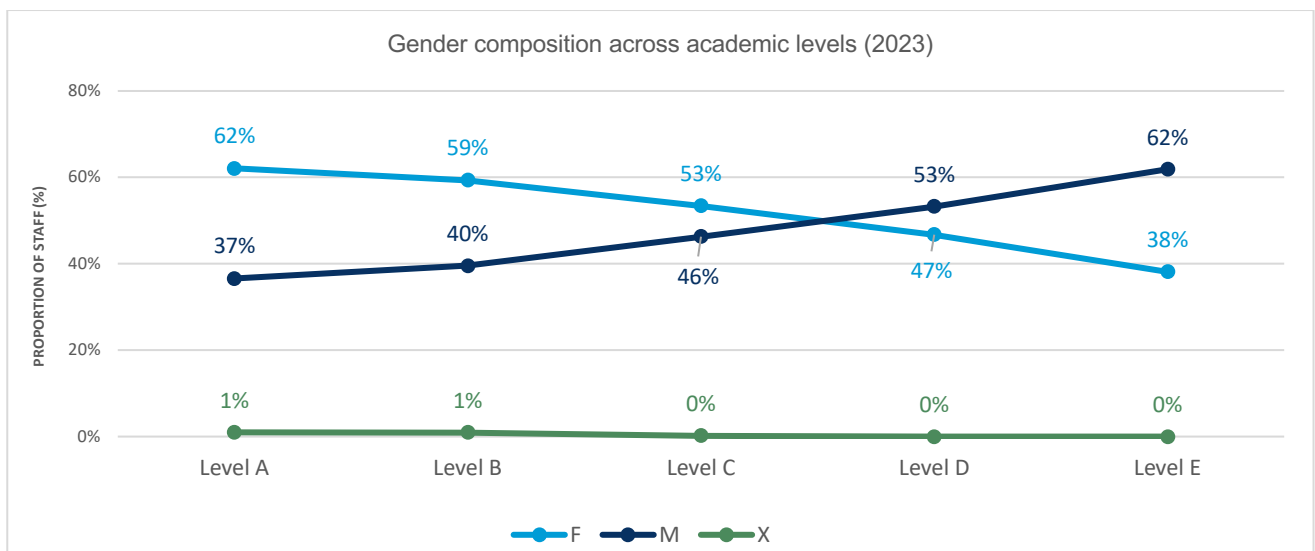


Figure 5: Gender composition by academic level 2023.



University of Melbourne Students

In 2023, there were 73,922 students enrolled at the University (53,963 equivalent full-time study load), comprised of 58% female students, 41% male students and less than 1% gender diverse/non-binary students. The University has a total of 540 Indigenous student enrolments. The student cohort is comprised of 45% international students, with over 150 student nationalities.

The University's curriculum model (introduced in 2008) comprises a small number of broad-based undergraduate degrees coupled with professional education at graduate level. There are seven undergraduate degrees that support depth and breadth of knowledge then many of our students graduate into industry, but we also offer over 400 graduate courses for those who choose to specialise. 50% of students are undergraduate and 50% are graduates.



Athena Swan at the University of Melbourne

Our journey

The University of Melbourne joined SAGE Athena Swan in 2015 and received a Bronze Award in 2020 (Cohort 2). Athena Swan at the University is led by Associate Dean, Diversity and Inclusion – Faculty of Science, Associate Professor Georgina Such.

Athena Swan activities sit within the University's wider strategic focus on equity, diversity, and inclusion, aligning to aspirations set out in the University's Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2030. Athena Swan reporting and data collection overlaps with gender equality compliance reporting under the Workplace Gender Equality Agency and Victorian Gender Equality Commission.

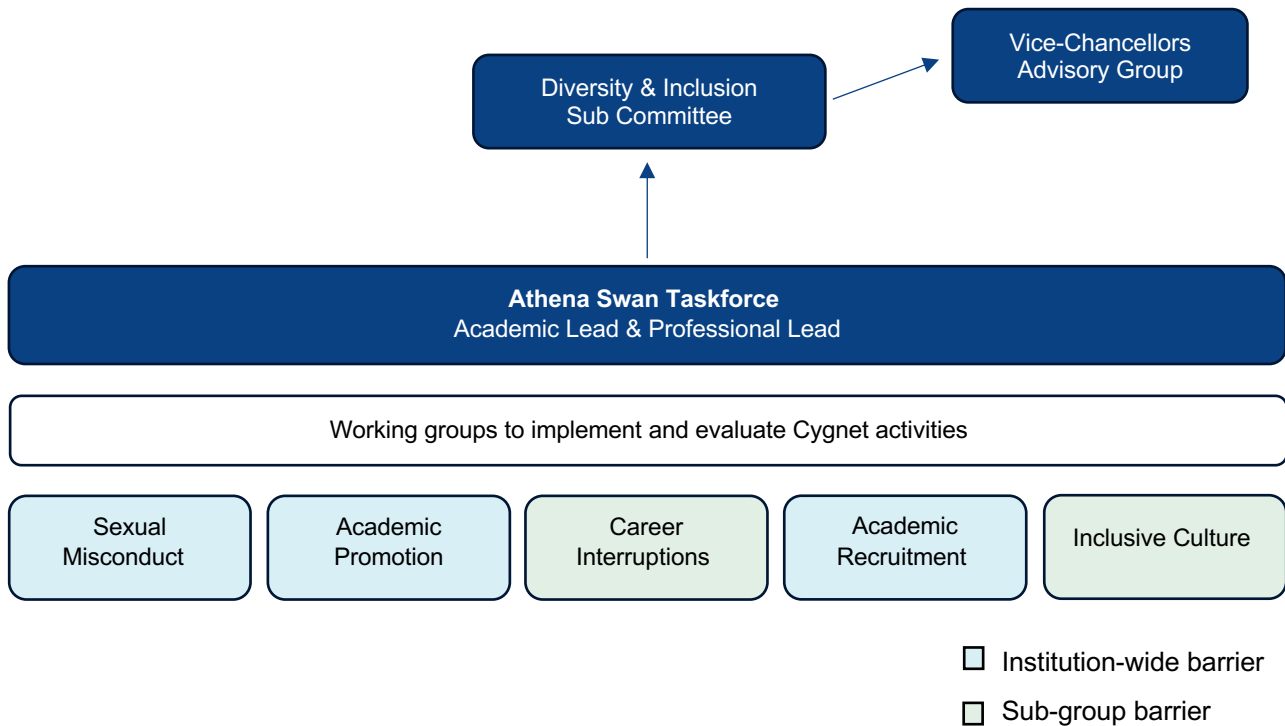
Figure 6: Athena Swan within ecosystem of equity diversity and inclusion work.



Structure and Governance

Athena Swan initiatives are overseen by a Taskforce of academic and professional staff and implemented by working groups for each Cygnet focus area. Reporting structures are in place to support the governance and leadership of Athena Swan and embed its function at an institutional level. Athena Swan is a standing agenda item at the Diversity and Inclusion Sub-Committee which reports to the Vice-Chancellors Advisory Group. The Athena Swan academic lead is a member of the Diversity and Inclusion Sub Committee and an Associate Dean, Diversity and Inclusion.

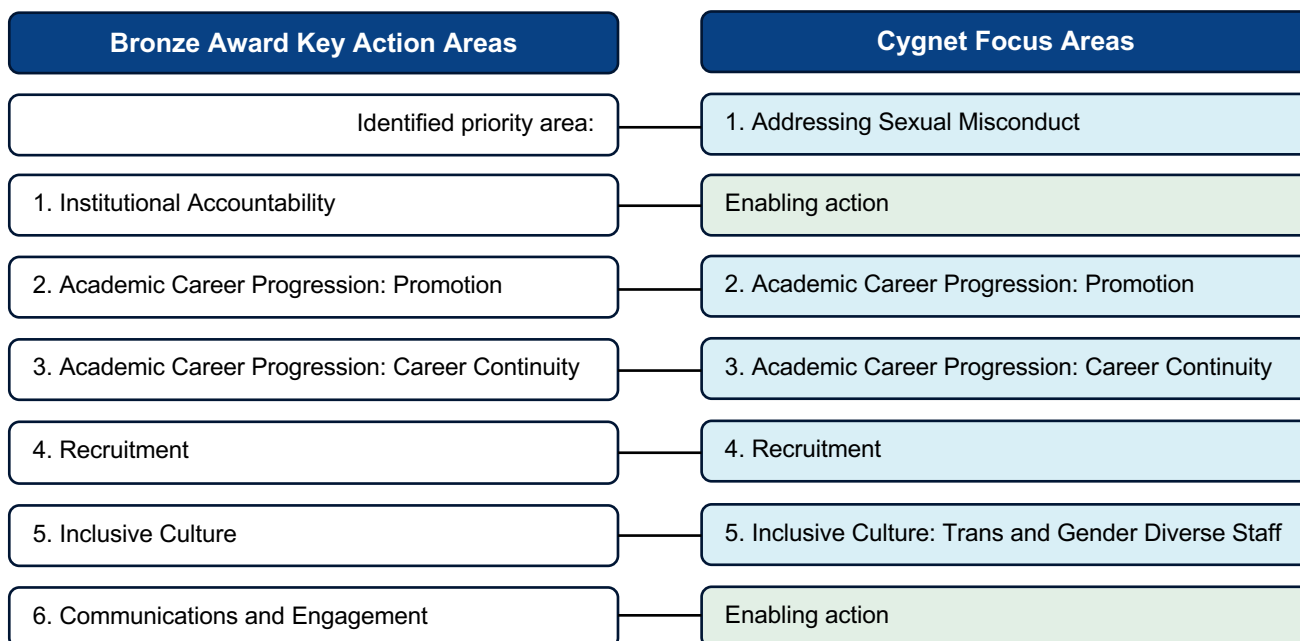
Figure 7: Athena Swan structure and reporting channels.



Bronze Award key findings and barriers being addressed in the Cygnet Awards

The Bronze Award made several key findings and identified six action areas. In the development of the Cygnets these action areas were revisited and adapted to address persisting and emerging issues, while some action areas enable progress more broadly. (Figure 8).

Figure 8: Bronze Award key action areas and corresponding Cygnet focus areas.



The Bronze self-assessment identified areas for improvement through key enabling actions. Action area 1. Institutional accountability has been improved through a Diversity and Inclusion governance structure. The Diversity and Inclusion Sub-Committee, chaired by a rotating Dean, and including senior executive members, which report back to the Vice-Chancellor’s Advisory Group (Figure 6). Action area 6. Communications and engagement have been actioned through a website aligning the Athena Swan activities and progress to the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. Ongoing communication of work and updating progress is required.

The self-assessment process highlighted data gaps across career transition points and where improved data analysis and reporting capabilities would be beneficial to identify and address inequalities. Since the Bronze self-assessment recruitment and onboarding systems have been improved to support the collection and analysis of recruitment data including gender composition of applicants and successful candidates. The collection of demographic data beyond gender has been included in the University’s new enterprise resource management system, however further work is required to collect and analyse intersectional data.

A key priority from the Bronze self-assessment process, increasing the proportion of women in senior academic roles, remains. The proportion of women at Level D has increased by 12% in the last 5 years, (35% in 2018 to 47% in 2023) and the proportion of women at Level E has increased by 8%, (30% in 2018 to 38% in 2023). Despite this progress continued work is required to reach parity. Cygnets focused on recruitment, promotion and career continuity have targeted activities to address barrier across academic career transition points.

Similarly, inclusive culture and the experience of staff of different gender and intersecting identities remains an ongoing focus. Inclusive culture for trans and gender diverse staff has been identified as a focus area and subgroup barrier for a Cygnet application, with several targeted activities including a new gender affirmation policy. In addition, improved data collection and analysis across a range of aspects of identity will support barriers to be identified and addressed, including better understanding areas of compounding disadvantage.

