



SAGE

SCIENCE IN AUSTRALIA
GENDER EQUITY

SAGE Cygnet Award Application



WESTERN SYDNEY
UNIVERSITY

ACADEMIC PROMOTIONS

Name of Institution	Western Sydney University
Date of Application	30 June 2023
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

With respect for Aboriginal cultural protocol and out of recognition that its campuses occupy their traditional lands, Western Sydney University acknowledges the Darug, Eora, Dharawal and Wiradjuri peoples and thanks them for their support of its work in their lands across Greater Western Sydney and beyond.



Image Details

Those Who Came Before Us, 2021. Western Sydney University collaborative artwork.

Created by staff, students and community, under the cultural guidance of Allan McKenzie of Wiradjuri and Gamilaroi nations. On site for view in Chancellery foyer, Western Sydney University, Parramatta South Campus.

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GLOSSARY

Glossary of Western Sydney University Organisational Terms	
Acronym/Abbrev.	Full Title
ADP	Academic Development Program
AP Coordinator	Academic Promotions Coordinator
APC	Academic Promotions Committee
CALD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
DVC-REI	Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Research, Enterprise & International)
EDWP	Equity and Diversity Working Party
EMCA	Early-Mid Career Academic
GEDI	Gender equity, diversity and inclusion
HASS Cluster	Humanities Arts & Social Sciences Cluster
HDR	Higher Degree Research
HIE	Hawkesbury Institute for the Environment
HM Cluster	Health & Medicine Cluster
ICS	Institute for Culture and Society
JSPS	Joint Sector Position Statement on Preserving GEDI as a Priority During and After COVID-19
LGBTIQ	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex, Queer
MARCS	MARCS Institute for Brain, Behaviour and Development
NICM	National Institute for Complementary Medicine
NSW	New South Wales
OED	Office of Equity, Diversity and Wellbeing
SAGE-AL	SAGE Academic Lead
SAGE-DAL	SAGE Deputy Academic Lead
SAGE-DRL	SAGE Deputy Research Lead
SAGE-PC	SAGE Project Coordinator
SAGE-RL	SAGE Research Lead
SAGE-SAT	SAGE Self-Assessment Team
SoB	School of Business
SCDMS	School of Computer, Data and Mathematical Sciences
SoE	School of Education
SEDBE	School of Engineering, Design and Built Environment
SHCA	School of Humanities and Communication Arts
SHS	School of Health Sciences
SoL	School of Law
SoM	School of Medicine
SNM	School of Nursing and Midwifery
SoP	School of Psychology
SoSc	School of Science
SSS	School of Social Sciences
STEM Cluster	Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics Cluster
SWAG	SAGE Working Aggregate Group (SAT Subgroup)
TGD	Trans and Gender Diverse
THRI	Translational Health Research Institute
VC	Vice-Chancellor and President
VC-GERRAC	Vice-Chancellor's Gender Equity and Respectful Relationships Committee
VC-GEF	Vice-Chancellor's Gender Equity Fund
WSU	Western Sydney University

A NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

Gender

Western Sydney University (WSU) recognises gender diversity. WSU staff, students and community include women, men, non-binary and gender non-conforming individuals, all of whom are valued by the University.

As a standard, WSU SAGE uses the following representations in data:

- Women are represented in figures as W
- Men are represented in figures as M
- Non-binary or gender diverse people are represented in figures as X

Promotions data for non-binary and gender non-conforming staff throughout the period of interest for this application is lower than WSU SAGE's minimum reporting threshold of 5. This data would be especially identifiable at disaggregation by discipline group or year. As such, the predominance of data provided in this document refers to WSU staff who identify as woman (W) or man (M). The only data provided for gender identities other than woman or man are presented at group level, p. 20.

Further gendered data analysis presented throughout this document (that is, any analysis beyond the simple presentation of data by raw numbers) also excludes non-binary and gender non-conforming data so as to protect against identifiability. For clarity, initial references are coupled with the caveat: (W/M Only). For concision, secondary references to these terms use only "gender" as their descriptor. Nevertheless, all references to "gender data" or "gender gap analysis" throughout the document should be read as gender referring to women (W) and men (M) only.

Indigenous / Non-Indigenous

Following WSU protocol, this document uses "Indigenous" as a collective term for people who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. As a correlative, the document uses "non-Indigenous" as a collective term to refer to staff who do not identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD)

Where possible, WSU prefers the full articulation of "culturally and linguistically diverse" to refer to people of diverse ethnicities, language groups and/or racialised minorities. Word count restrictions for this document resists that full articulation. As such, the contraction CALD is applied throughout.

STEMM / HASS

The SAGE Athena Swan Bronze Institutional Award process required that organisational data be presented by discipline groupings of STEMM (Science, Technology, Mathematics and Medicine) and non-STEMM (all other discipline areas). As such, WSU's benchmark data for the Bronze Era (2015–2017) was produced in alignment with this requirement. Since 2017, WSU organisational restructures, including the reorganisation of Schools and the creation and dissolution of 'Clusters'

has impeded data collection and has potential to cloud data comparisons in the current era. For the purposes of simple comparison against WSU's benchmark data, the Bronze Era discipline groupings are sustained in the current document, with the exception that 'non-STEMM' has been retitled 'HASS'. For clarity, the following is a list of Schools and Institutes allocated to each discipline group.

STEMM Schools and Institutes

- Hawkesbury Institute for the Environment
- MARCS Institute for Brain, Behaviour and Development
- NICM Health Research Institute
- Translational Health Research Institute
- School of Computer, Data and Mathematical Sciences
- School of Engineering, Design & Built Environment
- School of Health Sciences
- School of Medicine
- School of Nursery & Midwifery
- School of Science

HASS Schools and Institutes

- Institute for Australian and Chinese Arts and Culture
- Institute for Culture and Society
- School of Business
- School of Education
- School of Humanities and Communication Arts
- School of Law
- School of Psychology
- School of Social Sciences

Academics employed in Divisions are counted in WSU totals but not allocated to STEMM or HASS groupings.

Brief data explainer

To determine the precise barriers to promotion at WSU, two types of gendered analysis (W/M Only) were used:

- **Raw Gendered Data:** disaggregated data by gender, presenting raw numbers only. This analysis offers a straight-forward breakdown of promotions data by gender, but does not take into account the 'background rates' of WSU academic staff by gender across WSU or within any discipline group.
- **Applicant Cohort Gap Analysis:** a simple gender gap analysis accounting for cohort proportions by discipline and the applicant's level (e.g., what proportion of STEMM academics applying for promotion are women, relative to the proportion of STEMM academics who are women at WSU?). This analysis provides some contextualisation for relative application rates by gender and discipline at WSU.



**WESTERN SYDNEY
UNIVERSITY**

WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY: SAGE CYGNET #2

	✓ Current Cygnet	Barrier • List the Barrier addressed in this Cygnet • List the Barrier for Cygnets already submitted
Institution-wide barrier		Flexible Work
Institution-wide barrier	✓	Academic Promotions

KEY BARRIER

Despite overall gender parity in academic employment, women are underrepresented in senior levels at Western Sydney University (WSU). As the primary mechanism for academic staff advancement, ensuring equity in Academic Promotions (hereafter, 'promotions') is critical to progressing the representation of women into WSU's senior ranks. Nonetheless, organisational analysis across the Bronze Era (2015–2017) evidenced:

- More men were promoted than women;
- Few part-time staff applied for promotion;
- STEM women experience 'sticking points' in progression to Levels B and C;
- HASS women experience 'sticking points' in progression to Levels D and E.

EVIDENCE OF BARRIER

WSU promotions evaluate achievement across three Fields of Academic Practice:

- Learning and Teaching;
- Research;
- Engagement, Governance and Service.

Applicants are expected to demonstrate high standards of performance across all three criteria, relative to Position Classifications. Achievements are assessed across five years of performance (or, if shorter, since appointment or last promotion), with allowances for career breaks or other disruptions. Staff are encouraged to include a personal "equity statement" where relevant, detailing impacts of personal circumstances.

In 2017, a policy and process review saw the introduction of several equity-minded changes (Table 1).

Table 1. Equity-Driven Changes to WSU Academic Promotions Policy and Processes, 2017

Equity-driven Changes to WSU Academic Promotions Policy and Process, 2017	
Process	Change Detail
Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ elevated 'Leadership, Service and Engagement' as a vital component of academic work;▪ interviews instated for Level D and E applicants to assess commitment to leadership.
Applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ simplified promotions processes;▪ shortened applications;▪ any-time submissions for applications;
Academic Promotions Committee (APC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ responsibility for promotions review centralised to a single University-wide Academic Promotions Committee (APC) to ensure consistent interpretation of relevant policy and procedure and to minimise bias and/or differential disciplinary influences;▪ Committee impanelled for promotions review 3 times per year;▪ mandated minimum 40% women Committee membership;▪ non-voting Equity Observer to attend all panel sessions to provide equity oversight and guidance.
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ widespread awareness campaign conducted throughout 2017 to socialise policy and process changes.

Bronze Era Staff Data (W/M Only)

In 2017, 49% of WSU academics were women. Women were somewhat overrepresented at junior Levels A and B and significantly underrepresented at E (Figure 1).

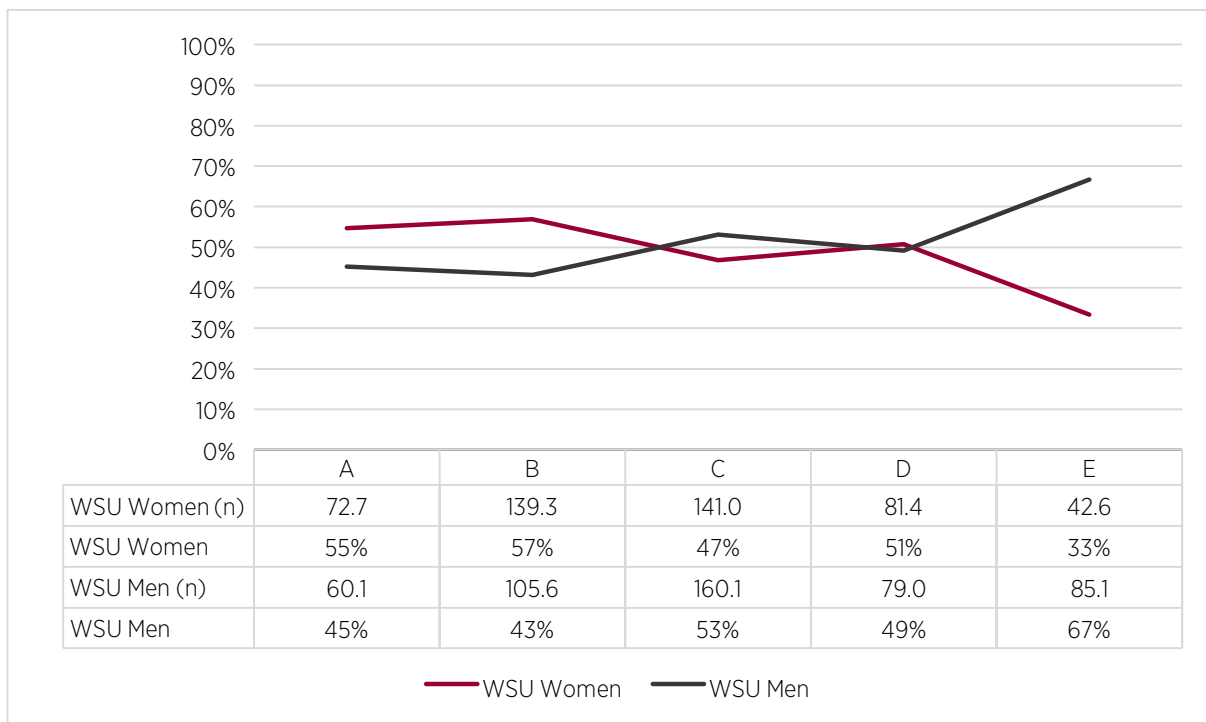


Figure 1. WSU Academics by Level, 2017

In 2017, 43% of STEM academics were women. STEM women’s representation saw a steep decline from Level C (Figure 1).

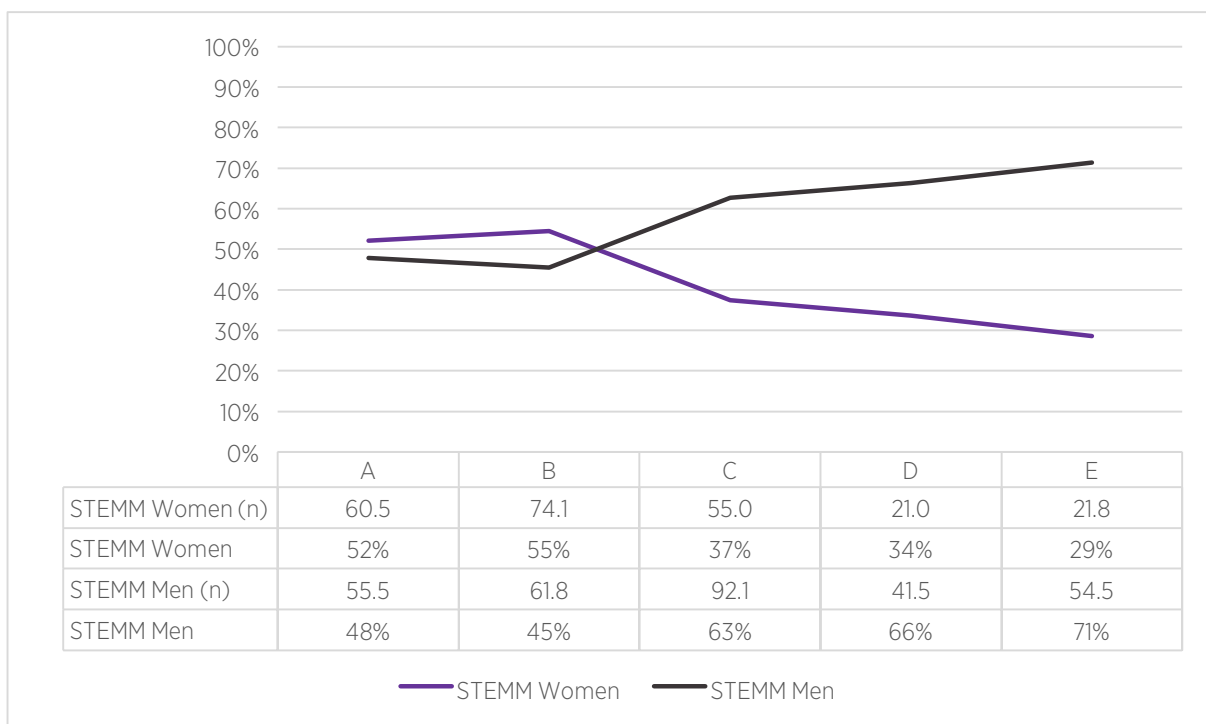


Figure 2. STEM Academics by Level, 2017

In 2017, 57% of HASS academics were women. HASS women saw strong representation at Levels A to D, but significant underrepresentation at E (Figure 3).

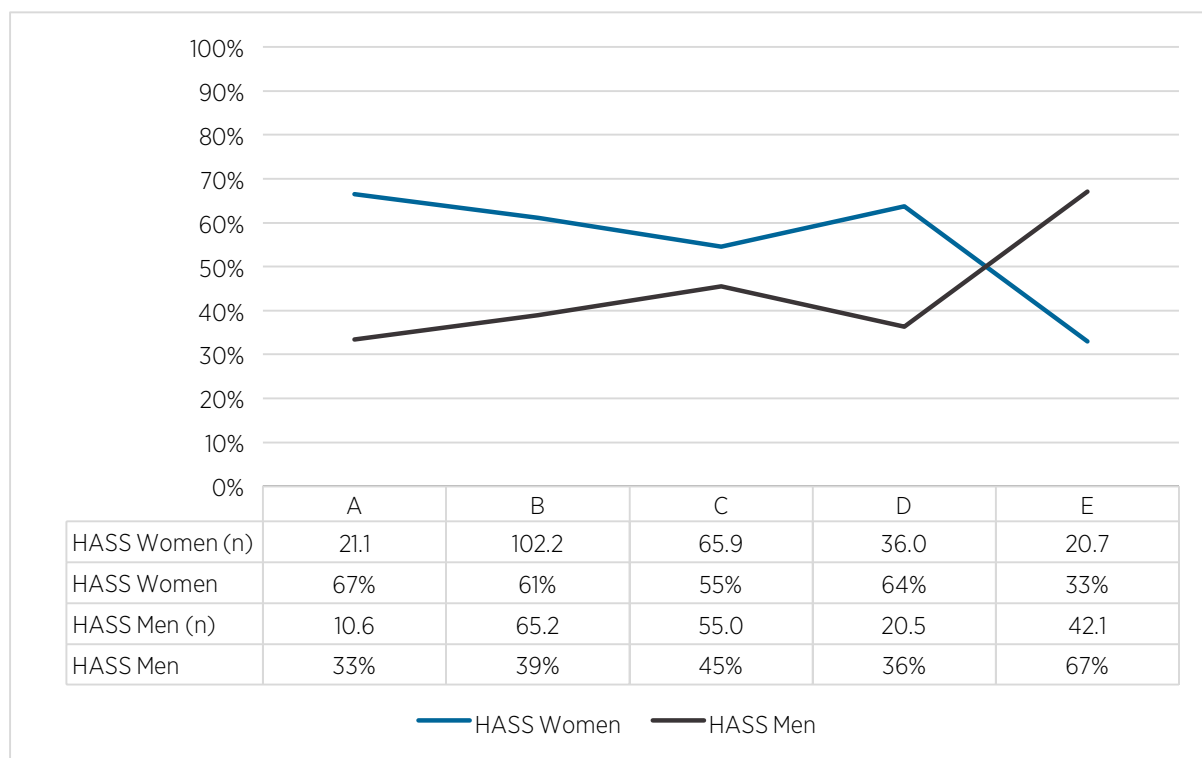


Figure 3. HASS Academics by Level, 2017

Bronze Era Promotions Data (W/M Only)

Across the Bronze Era (2015–2017), gender disparity in promotions was evident for STEMM and HASS women and part-time staff across applications, success rates and outcomes. WSU’s policy review in 2017 demonstrated potential for growing women’s applications, but improvements were isolated to STEMM and yet to be sustained.

Applications (2015–2017)

Men were more likely to apply for promotion than women (Figure 4). By raw numbers, applications were lowest for STEMM women, and higher for HASS women than HASS men. **When adjusted for cohort proportions, a gap analysis confirms significantly (≥5%) lower relative application rates for STEMM women (-9% on cohort representation) and signals overall cohort parity in applications for HASS women (Figure 5). Only one part-time staff member applied for promotion across the period.**

BENCHMARK PROMOTIONS DATA: TOTAL APPLICATIONS BY DISCIPLINE AND PART-TIME STATUS

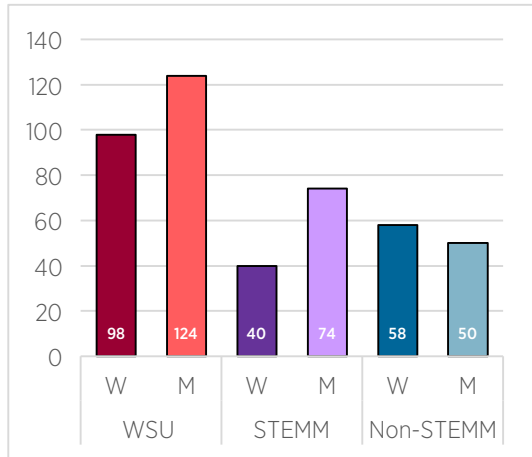


Figure 4. Applications by Gender & Discipline Group, 2015-2017

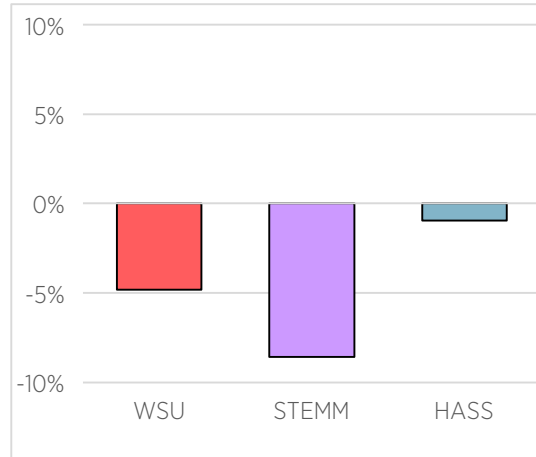


Figure 5. Cohort Gap Analysis: Proportion of Women Applications Relative to Cohort Proportion of Women by Discipline, 2015-2017

For STEM applications, gender disparity was evident in 2015 and 2016 (Figure 6). STEM women saw dramatic improvements in 2017: applications more than doubled on previous years and proportions matched their representation within the STEM academic cohort (Figure 7). By contrast, HASS women applications fell below cohort parity after 2015.

BENCHMARK PROMOTIONS DATA: APPLICATIONS BY DISCIPLINE AND YEAR

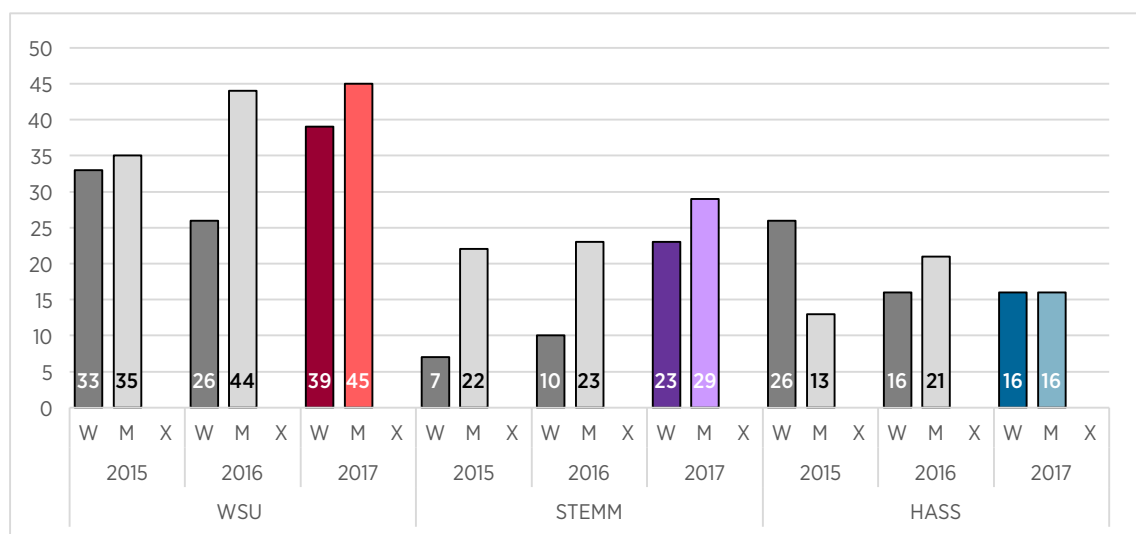


Figure 6. Promotions Applications by Gender, Discipline Group & Year, 2015-2017

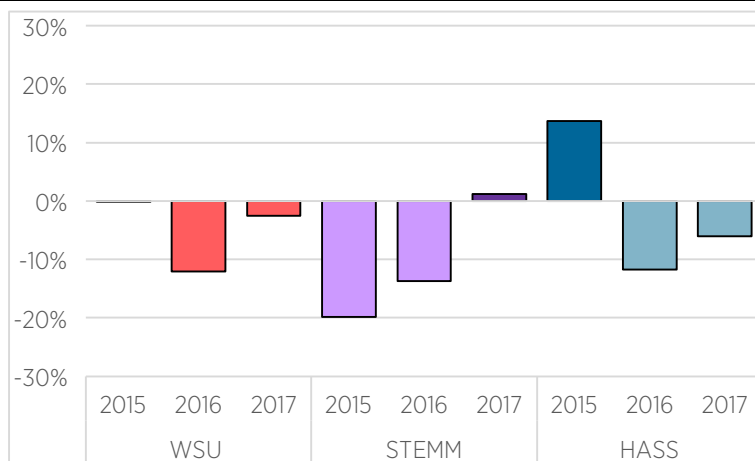


Figure 7. Cohort Gap Analysis: Proportion of Women Applications Relative to Cohort Proportion of Women by Discipline, by Year 2015-2017

2017 saw STEMM women application increases at all levels (Figure 8). Across the period, STEMM women application proportions were significantly above cohort representation at Level E (+9%), but below at Level B (-8%), C (-25%), and D (-7; Figure 9). Application proportions for HASS women dropped as seniority increased, with lowest relative representation at E (-12%).

BENCHMARK PROMOTIONS DATA: APPLICATIONS BY DISCIPLINE AND LEVEL

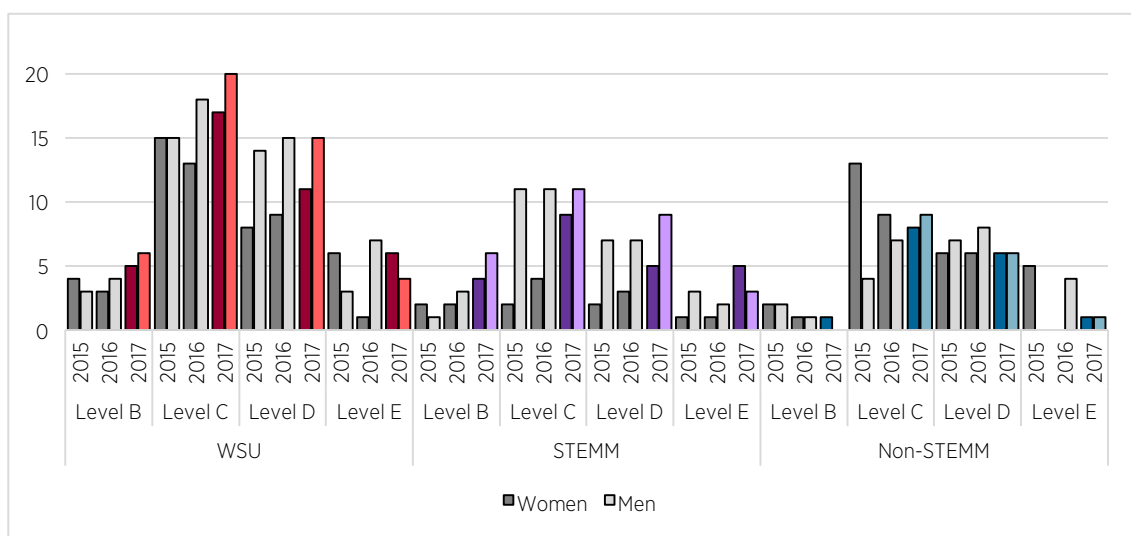


Figure 8. Application Rates by Gender, Level, Discipline Group & Year, 2015-2017

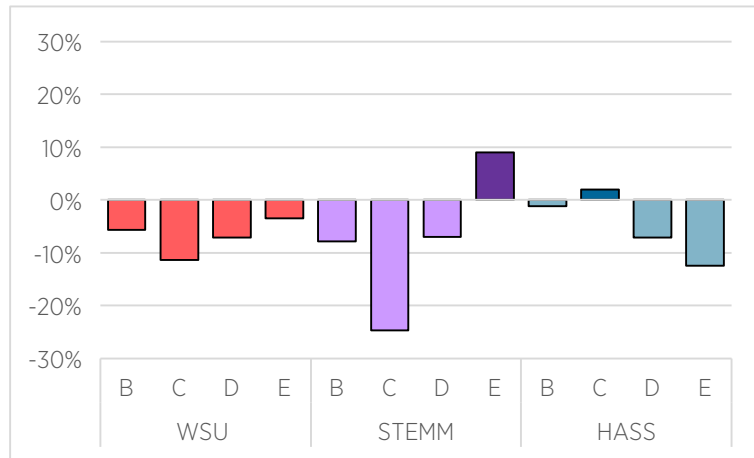


Figure 9. Cohort Gap Analysis: Proportion of Women Applications by Target Level Relative to Cohort Proportion by Applicant Level and Discipline, 2015-2017

Success Rates (2015-2017)

STEMM women achieved near-parity ($\pm 5\%$) or better averaged success rates at all levels and significantly outperformed STEMM men at Level D (+33%; Figure 10). HASS women were less successful in applications to C (-12%) and E (-33%) than their men counterparts. Notably, all HASS men's applications to E were successful.

BENCHMARK PROMOTIONS DATA: SUCCESS RATES BY DISCIPLINE AND LEVEL

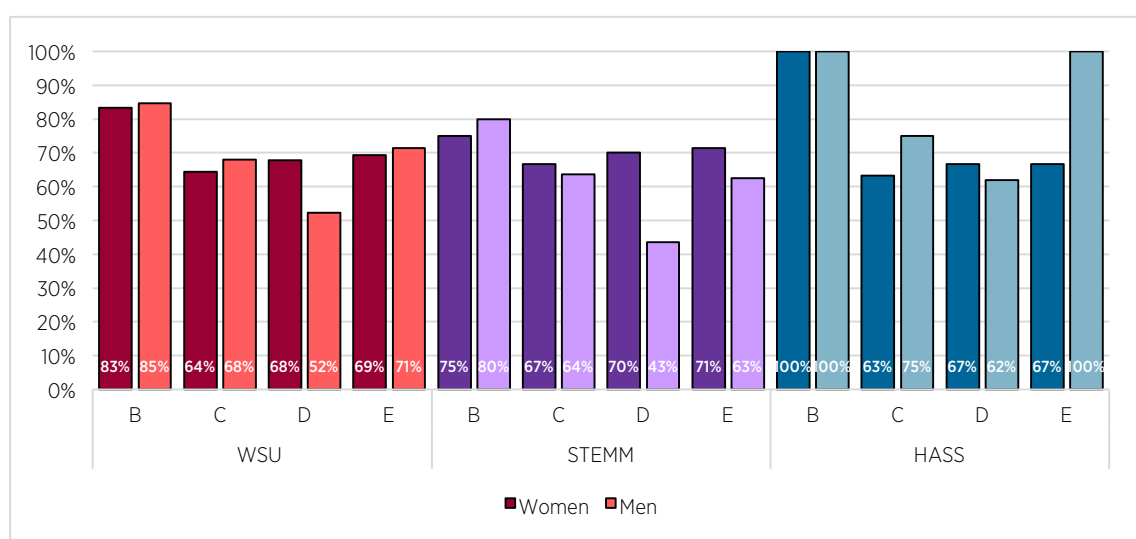


Figure 10. Success Rates by Gender, Level and Discipline, 2015-2017

Promotions Outcomes (2015–2017)

Fewer women were promoted than men, especially in STEMM (Figure 11). However, increased applications and sustained success saw STEMM women’s 2017 promotions outpacing cohort representation for the first time (Figure 12). HASS women outperformed HASS men in 2015, but their cohort-relative promotions rate dropped thereafter.

STEMM women experience progression ‘sticking points’ at junior levels, especially when applying to C (-33%). HASS women faced barriers at senior levels, especially to E (-23%; Figure 13).

BENCHMARK PROMOTIONS DATA: OUTCOMES BY DISCIPLINE, YEAR AND LEVEL

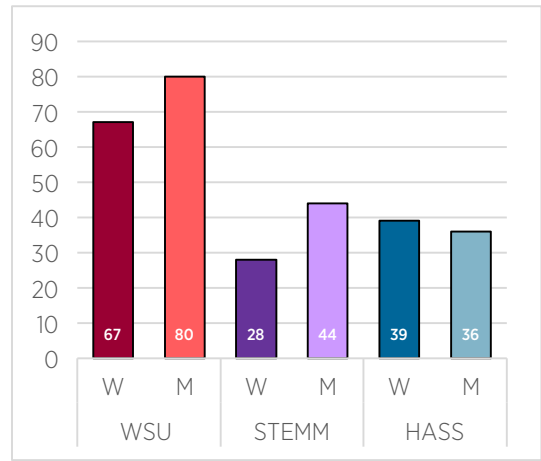


Figure 11. Promotions by Gender and Discipline, 2015–2017

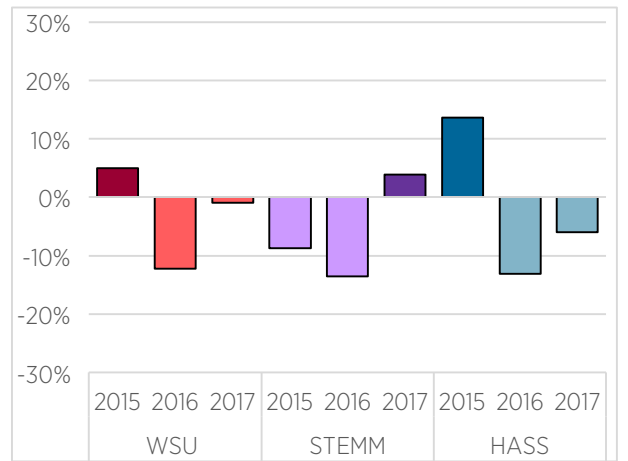


Figure 12. Cohort Gap Analysis: Women Promotions Relative to Cohort Representation by Discipline & Year, 2015–2017

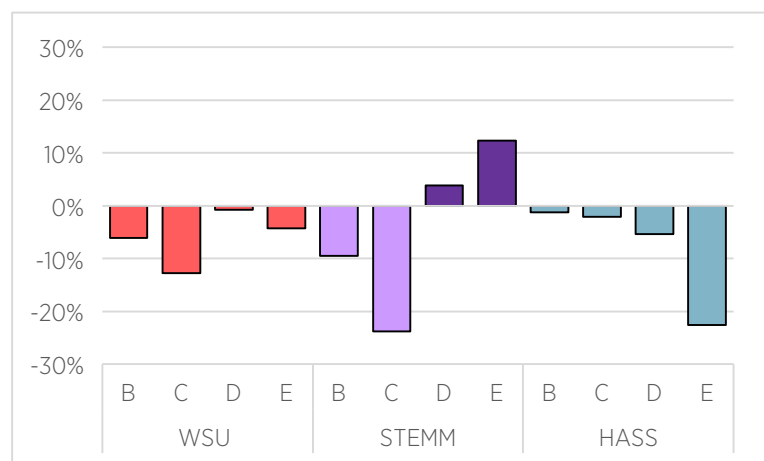


Figure 13. Cohort Gap Analysis: Women Promotions Relative to Cohort Representation by Discipline & Applicant Level, 2015–2017

Promotions Experiences

Commissioned Vice-Chancellor’s Gender Equity Fund (VC-GEF) and Equity and Diversity Working Party (EDWP) projects scoped applicant and Academic Promotions Committee (APC) experiences, with focus on gender equity, diversity and inclusion (GEDI) outcomes (Table 2).

Table 2. Academic Promotions Surveys & Interviews, 2017–2020

Academic Promotions Surveys, Interviews and Focus Groups, 2017 – 2020			
Project Title	Instrument	Focus Cohort	<i>n</i>
<i>Negotiating Academic Motherhood</i> (VC-GEF, Gilbert <i>et al.</i> , 2019)	Focus Groups	Academic mothers (Levels A–D)	27
<i>Redressing the Promotions Gap</i> (VC-GEF, Huppertz <i>et al.</i> , 2019)	Interviews	Level D women	5
		Level E women	5
		APC members	9
Career Advancement (EDWP SNM, 2020)	Survey	School of Nursing & Midwifery academics	59
Total Participants			105

Findings charted policy, procedure, developmental and cultural barriers. Barriers were aligned with structural and systemic process opportunities for culture change (Table 3).

Table 3. Barriers and Process Opportunities for Women’s Promotion at WSU

Policy, Process, Developmental and Cultural Barriers to Promotion at WSU		
Barrier	Barrier Detail	Process
Applicants lack understanding of the promotions process	Many project participants (especially EMCAs) lack a clear understanding of promotions requirements. Misconceptions about processes persist, including misplaced belief in promotions quotas and confusion about gaining promotion versus ‘applying up’ through internal recruitment. Misconceptions vary by discipline and/or local contexts. (EDWP SNM, 2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Policy and procedure; ▪ Communications
Part-time work and caring obligations are perceived to conflict with academic advancement	Parental leave is seen as a ‘dampener’ on careers and Achievement Relative to Opportunity (ARTO) guidelines do not adequately address the ongoing impacts of caring responsibilities. There is concern that career interruptions are perceived as an ‘excuse’ for achievement gaps. Part-time work is perceived to impede career advancement, as reflected in low promotion rates. (Huppertz <i>et al.</i> , 2019; Gilbert <i>et al.</i> , 2019)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Policy and procedure; ▪ Communications; ▪ Process assurance
The gendered labour of academic care is under-recognised in promotions criteria	Women take on more pastoral care and contribute more academic citizenship within their local contexts than men. Senior women contribute significant collaborative leadership. These contributions are perceived to not have a place in governance narratives of success and under-recognised by promotions criteria. (Huppertz <i>et al.</i> , 2019; Gilbert <i>et al.</i> , 2019)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Policy and procedure
APC members and Deans are perceived as susceptible to bias	Some promotions evidence (e.g., student feedback) is known to be gender-biased, women’s research achievements are seen to be undervalued, managers who are men are perceived to preference other men in promotions support. There is concern that APC members are not aware of these process influences. (Huppertz <i>et al.</i> , 2019)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Policy and procedure; ▪ Process assurance; ▪ Communications
WSU’s promotions culture is overly competitive	Many women find the promotions process intimidating and academic culture overly competitive. This contributes to delays in applications by women at all levels of academic advancement. (Huppertz <i>et al.</i> , 2019)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Targeted support; ▪ Communications
Promotions mentoring is insufficient	Lack of self-confidence remains a primary obstacle for women in obtaining promotion and there is an absence of meaningful role models and mentors. Women EMCAs indicate that ongoing mentoring would motivate their application for promotion. (Huppertz <i>et al.</i> , 2019)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Targeted support

ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS

Following WSU’s Bronze Award, an Academic Promotions SWAG was convened to design new innovations and service their implementation, with DVC-REI engaged as Executive Sponsor (Table 4).

Table 4. Academic Promotions SWAG Members, 2020 – 2024

Academic Promotions SWAG Members		
SWAG Role	Name	WSU Title
Executive Sponsor	Prof Deborah Sweeney	Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Research, Enterprise & International)
SWAG Leader	Kim Nemetz	Academic Promotions Coordinator, Office of People
SWAG Leader	Prof Kate Huppertz	Associate Dean Research, School of Social Sciences
SWAG Member	A/Prof Kate McBride	Senior Lecturer, Population Health, School of Medicine
SWAG Member	A/Prof Laretta Luck	Director, Centre for Nursing & Midwifery Research, School of Nursing and Midwifery
SWAG Member	A/Prof Chloe Taylor	Senior Lecturer, Sport & Exercise Science, School of Health Sciences
SWAG Member	Dr Kiernyn McKay	Senior Advisor, Gender Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Research, Enterprise & International)

Targeted activities were designed to advance equity in promotions policy and practice, and themed by process opportunity (Figure 14).

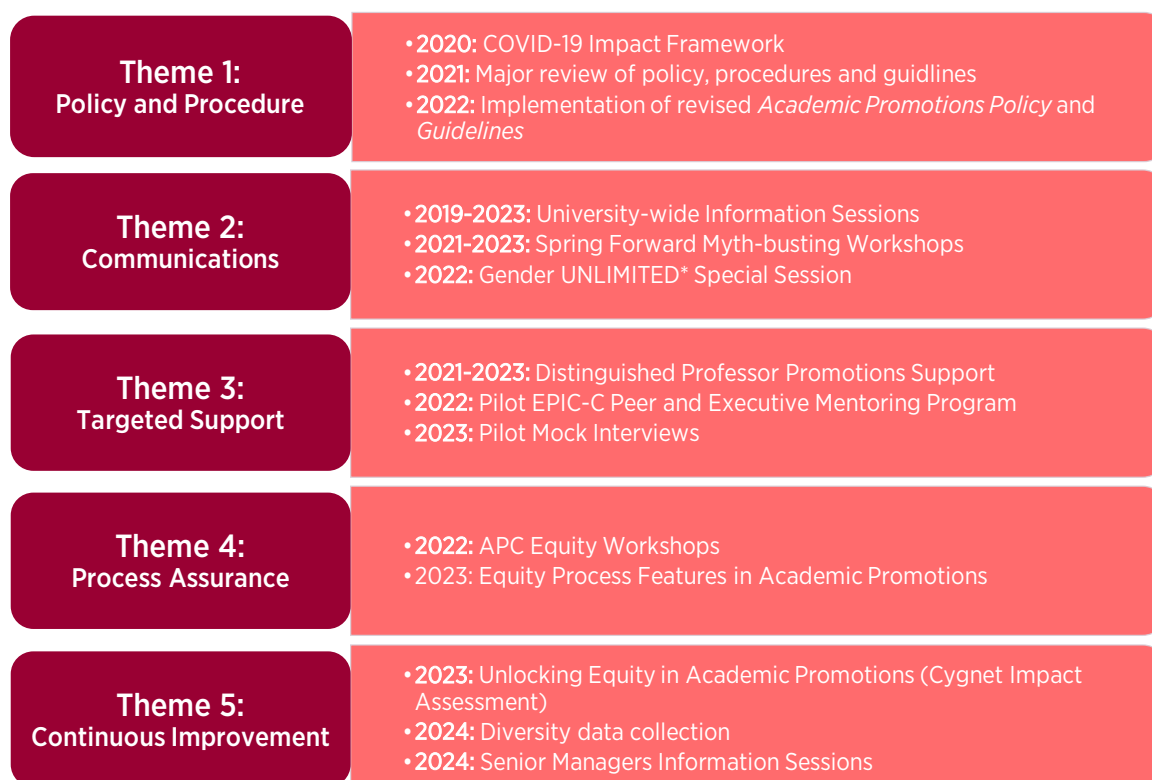


Figure 14. WSU's Themed Approach to Advancing Equity in Academic Promotions, 2020-2024

Theme 1: Policy and Procedure

WSU has progressively improved its promotions policy and practice in direct response to VC-GEF research findings and challenges arising from COVID-19 circumstances.

COVID-19 Impact Framework, 2020–2021

Across 2020–2021, a temporary framework was implemented by APC to recognise the differential impacts of COVID-19 on promotions opportunity (Figure 15).

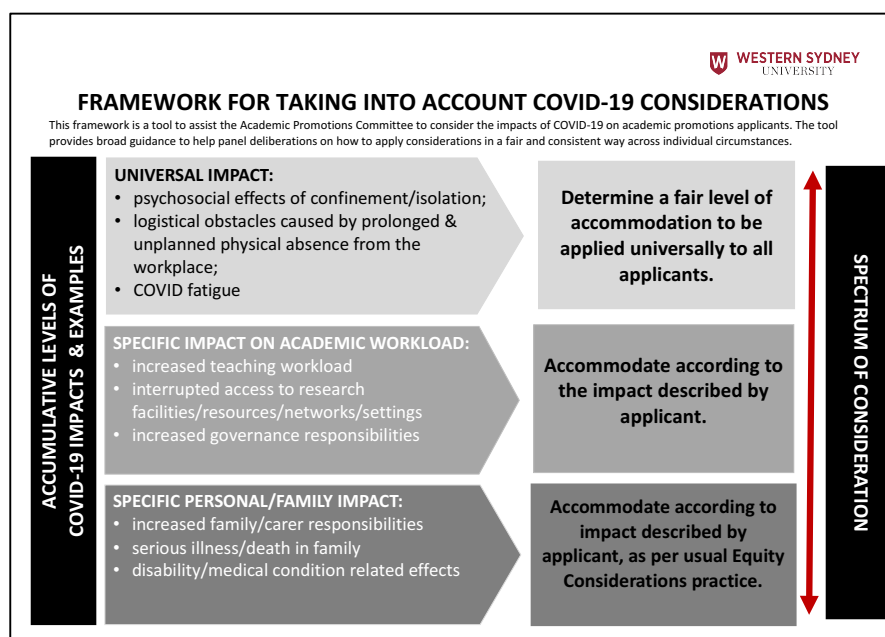


Figure 15. WSU Framework for COVID-19 Considerations in Academic Promotions, 2020 - 2021

Academic Promotions Policy Review, 2021–2022

A major review of Promotions policy, procedures and guidelines was undertaken in 2021. Changes were geared to maximising GEDI outcomes, benchmarked across the sector, and consulted across WSU Executive and GEDI stakeholders. Policy and process changes were implemented in 2022 (Table 5).

Table 5. Key Equity Changes to WSU Academic Promotions Policy and Process, 2022

Key Equity-driven Changes to WSU Academic Promotions Policy and Process, 2022	
Change Type	Change Detail
Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ leadership and achievement aligned with the University's <i>Indigenous Strategy (2020-2025)</i> embedded across all Fields of Academic Practice, with a correlating report on achievement provided by DVC Indigenous Leadership (or nominee); ▪ pastoral care, academic citizenship and collaboration embedded within Engagement, Governance and Service field of practice; ▪ referee reports for Levels B and C referee reports no longer required; ▪ reduction of Level D and E 'significant works' of high impact (reduced from 5 works to 3); ▪ 2-year reapplication waiting period instated.
Guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Academic Promotions Procedures</i> and <i>Academic Promotions Guidelines</i> consolidated for simplicity and ease of use; ▪ expanded articulation of Achievement Relative to Opportunity (ARTO) and Equity Considerations, with emphasis on non-linear career paths, part-time work, career interruption, and non-traditional patterns of achievement; ▪ Natural Disasters or Global Events and Pandemic Circumstances included as an additional (optional) Equity Consideration; ▪ guidance offered on ARTO assessment principles.
Applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 'Intent to Apply' process implemented, to ensure early support for applications; ▪ exemption request process embedded for applicants seeking to have policy timeframes adjusted (e.g., 2-year wait, 5-year performance window).
Academic Promotions Committee (APC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ APC composition reviewed to ensure ex-officio membership for Fields of Practice experts, with disciplinary and cultural diversity actively considered for other positions; ▪ APC impanelled twice annually; ▪ out-of-round promotions instated for exceptional cases; ▪ DVC Indigenous Leadership or Manager Indigenous Employment added as an observer for all Indigenous staff applications and applications indicating achievement aligned with the University's <i>Indigenous Strategy (2020-2025)</i>; ▪ equity workshops embedded in APC training expectations, with workshop participation required at minimum every 3 years.
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ widespread awareness campaign conducted throughout 2022 to socialise policy and process changes; ▪ Gender UNLIMITED* feature session "Unlocking Equity in Academic Promotions" held in October 2022.

Theme 2: Communications

University-Wide Information Sessions, 2019–2023

As part of its standard promotions support offerings, WSU runs twice-annual University-wide workshops and provides resources and support materials on a centralised promotions webpage. These fora were especially important awareness-raising levers for socialising new promotions policy and process in 2022 & 2023 (Table 6).

Table 6. Promotions Support Page Site Visits, 2019–2023

University-Wide Promotions Presentations, 2019 – 2023		
Year	University-Wide Presentations	<i>n</i>
2019	Academic Promotions Workshop (in person) x 1, Interview Information Sessions x 1	243
2020	Academic Promotions Workshop (in person) x 1	123
2021	Promotions Information and Support Session x1, Myth-busting Session x1, Interview Information Session x 1	111
2022	Promotions Information and Support Q&A Session x 1, Interview Information Sessions x 2	169
2023	Promotions Information and Support Q&A Sessions x 2, Interview Information Sessions x 2, Equity in Academic Promotions	347

Gender UNLIMITED*: Unlocking Equity in Academic Promotions, 2022

A special session of Gender UNLIMITED* in 2022 saw presentations by Acting DVC Indigenous Leadership, VC-GEF researchers, EDWP leaders, and EPIC-C coordinators raise awareness of recent reforms and advertise new support initiatives. Presentations discussed:

- Why recent changes to promotions are necessary for improving GEDI at WSU;
- To what extent the new model reduces the structural and cultural barriers to advancement for historically underrepresented staff, and;
- What more WSU can do to foster a supportive academic culture that enhances equity in career success.

Audience members sought an inclusive, intersectional, fair, transparent, and supportive promotions culture at WSU (Figure 16). Break-out discussions collated perspectives on ‘essential components’ for building communities of support, many of which are reflected in pilot initiatives underway (Table 8).

Table 7. Gender UNLIMITED* “Unlocking Equity in Academic Promotions” Workshop Attendance, 2022

Gender UNLIMITED* Promotions Session Attendance	
Workshop	<i>n</i>
Unlocking Equity in Academic Promotions	63

Pilot Spring Forward 'Myth-Busting' Workshops, 2021-2023

Annual *Spring Forward* workshops are designed to dispel misconceptions, reduce intimidation and provide tailored promotions advice for staff in local contexts (Table 9). Spring Forward has a flexible structure and is coordinated by SAGE, with workshops Chaired by EDWPs. Commonly, presentations include key facts, recent experiences, equity structures and supports, gender trends in promotions outcomes, mentoring opportunities, and extended open Q&A. Sessions identify persistent promotions myths, which are redressed in Q&As and embedded in successive workshop presentations (Table 10). STEM School/Institute participation in 2023 was low.

Table 9. Spring Forward Participation, 2021 - 2023

Spring Forward Participation, 2021 – 2023		
Year	School / Institute Engagement	n
2021	1x School (SNM)	34
2022	4x School (SNM, SoB, SoSc, SSS)	97
2023	7x Schools and 1 x Institute (SNM, SSS, SoL, SoP, SHCA, SHS, SoE, MARCS)	150+

Table 10. Top 10 Myths Identified and Busted, Spring Forward 2021 - 2023

Spring Forward Myths Identified and Busted, 2021 – 2023		
#	Myth Proposed	Myth Busting Info Provided
1	Internal recruitment and academic promotion are basically the same, but appointment via recruitment is easier	While some staff can find additional opportunities via internal recruitment, academic promotions is the primary mechanism for advancing one's career at WSU. Moreover, promotion is an individualised assessment of achievement; recruitment is a competitive process of appointment.
2	There is a quota on the number of staff to be promoted in any given year	There is no quota on academic promotions at WSU.
3	The rate of success for promotion is low	The average success rate for WSU promotions is >75%
	Women are less likely to be promoted	On average each year, success rates for women at WSU are higher than for men.
5	Part-time work is incompatible with promotion	All performance is measured against workload and additional considerations for part-time work and career breaks are provided by ARTO guidelines and assessment.
6	It is not possible to be promoted on Governance or Teaching strengths alone	While academic promotions at WSU takes a holistic approach and as such generally expects achievement across all three Fields of Academic Practice, candidates who have evidenced outstanding achievement in one Field have been rewarded with promotion.
7	Equity Considerations are read as 'excuses' for underperformance and can work against you	APC members are experienced and equity-informed. Processes are also in place for confidential disclosure.
8	Only people in my discipline should review my draft application	Applicants across WSU often find the most valuable support in the 'fresh eyes' and disciplinary independence of a mentor external to the applicant's immediate collegial cohort.
9	The University sees promotion as self-serving and expects staff to develop their applications in their own time.	WSU values its staff and sees promotion as a vital part of growing knowledge development, expertise and impact. Academic are encouraged to prioritise their career development and advancement as part of their workload.
10	Fixed-term staff are less likely to have their contracts renewed if they are promoted.	Reassurance about fixed-term staff's equal right to promotion has been communicated. This item has also been referred to the Executive for further response.

Theme 3: Targeted Support

To complement WSU's long-established Academic Mentoring Program and university-wide information sessions, four promotions-specific mentoring initiatives were trialled or instituted.

Academic Promotions Mentors (AP Mentors), 2019–2023

For this support scheme, self-nominated Professoriate members and recently successful applicants endorsed by APC volunteer to guide prospective applicants through the promotions process. AP Mentors report an average of four mentees over 3+ years of service (Table 11).

Table 11. Academic Promotions Mentors, 2019–2023

Academic Promotions Mentors, 2019–2023	
Participants	<i>n</i>
STEMM Mentors	57
HASS Mentors	28
Average years mentoring	3+ years
Average number of mentees	4 per mentor

Distinguished Professor Promotions Support, 2021–2023

In 2021, DVC-REI established a targeted year-long annual program wherein Distinguished Professors mentor recently unsuccessful women applicants to Levels D and E to develop their next promotions application. Nine DPs and ten mentees have participated in the program (Table 12).

Table 12. Distinguished Professors Promotions Support, 2021–2023

Distinguished Professors Promotions Support, 2021 – 2023		
Year	Participants	<i>n</i>
2021	Distinguished Professor Mentors	5
	Women applicant mentees	6
2022	Distinguished Professor Mentors	2
	Women applicant mentees	2
2023	Distinguished Professor Mentors	2
	Women applicant mentees	2

Pilot EPIC Collaboration (EPIC-C) Peer and Executive Mentoring Program, 2022

EPIC-C is an innovative early-career program for A–C women piloted in the Health & Medicine Cluster, EPIC-C takes a three-part, group-mentoring approach: peer alliance (support for colleagues at the same academic level), peer mentoring (support from academics a level above) and executive mentoring. Mentor groups met regularly across a 10-month period (Table 13).

Table 13. EPIC-C Peer and Executive Mentoring Program, 2022

EPIC-C Peer and Executive Mentoring Program, 2022	
Participants	n
EPIC Facilitators	8
Executive Mentors	6
STEMM Mentors	8
STEMM ECR Mentees	25

Pilot Mock Interviews Program, 2022-2023

Piloted within the HASS Cluster in 2022 and extended across WSU in 2023, Mock Interviews were coordinated by PVC HASS and supported by Professors with APC experience (Table 14). Mock interviews are designed to familiarise, prepare, and reduce intimidation for applicants to Level D or E.

Table 14. Pilot HASS Mock Interviews Program, 2022

Pilot HASS Mock Interviews Program, 2022 – 2023		
Year	Participants	n
2022	Mock Interview Facilitators	4
	HASS D and E applicants	10
2023	Mock Interview Facilitators	6
	WSU D and E applicants	27

Theme 4: Process Assurance

Process Design Features to Support Equity in Academic Promotions, 2022-2024

In 2022, Director OEDW developed a presentation resource to promote and raise stakeholder engagement with processes in place to safeguard equity in promotions at WSU (Figure 17). This presentation is a key component of APC equity training and has been delivered in various other contexts to diverse audiences, including sector colleagues (Table 15). Where applicants are the audience, the presentation includes specialised guidance on the writing of Equity Considerations statements.

Process Design Features for Unlocking Equity in Academic Promotions

- Supporting Applicant Disclosure**
 - ✓ Equity Consideration statement (including Achievement Relative to Opportunity) (250 words)
 - ✓ Guidance on 'Equity Considerations' in Academic Promotions Guidelines
 - ✓ Confidential disclosure
- Building Applicant Capacity**
 - ✓ Dedicated Academic Promotions webpage, providing all relevant information and inclusive of diverse applicants and applicants with non-traditional / non-linear pathways
 - ✓ University-wide workshops, including focus on equity considerations and open Q&A
 - ✓ School-based 'Spring Forward' workshops, led by Equity and Diversity Working Parties and including open Q&A (piloted in 2022, expanded 2023, all-School/Institute roll-out 2024)
 - ✓ Mock interviews (D & E) piloted in HASS 2023
- Transparency**
 - ✓ Documented guidance regarding Equity Considerations and Achievement Relative to Opportunity
 - ✓ APC Membership list published each round
 - ✓ External Assessors and APC member
 - ✓ Outcomes tracked and reported to Board of Trustees
 - ✓ Vice-Chancellor's all-staff email announcements of outcomes
 - ✓ SAGE tracking and reporting of gender equity and diversity outcomes
- Committee Leadership and Capacity**
 - ✓ Consistent Academic Promotions Committee Chair
 - ✓ Committee Chair actively models principles and practices of determining relative opportunity and reasonable equity considerations
 - ✓ Committee membership is selected to represent a diverse set of backgrounds, experience and perspectives
 - ✓ Regular APC training on relative opportunity, equity considerations, inclusive practice and decision-making

Process Design Features for Unlocking Equity in Academic Promotions

- Checks & Balances**
 - ✓ Capacity for all Committee members to respond to issues of fairness or equity
 - ✓ Equity Observer
 - ✓ DVC Indigenous Leadership
 - ✓ Capacity for Equity Observer and DVC Indigenous Leadership to be heard as part of Committee proceedings
- Ongoing Improvements**
 - ✓ After each Round of academic promotions the Chair seeks from all APC members suggestions for their reflections on the process, thoughts on improvements to the process and general feedback on experience and outcomes
 - ✓ The process and outcomes are tracked by the Vice-Chancellor's Gender Equity and Respectful Relationships Advisory Committee for observations about gender trends and outcomes for applicants requesting equity considerations to report on and gain advice on improvements
 - ✓ SAGE Cygnet (Unlocking Equity in Academic Promotions research report recommendations in development)

Figure 17. Presentation Resource: Process Design Features to Support Equity in Promotions at WSU

Table 15. Equity Process Features Presentations, 2022–2024

Equity Process Design Features Presentations, 2022 – 2024		
Year(s)	Audience	n
2022	Joint Sector Position Statement Signatories Group (sector)	16
2022	Gender UNLIMITED* Seminar Series participants (internal and external)	63
From 2022	APC members (at Equity Workshops and Panel Sessions)	24
From 2023	School/Institute academic staff (at Spring Forward)	150+
From 2023	Prospective applicants (at university-wide promotions information sessions)	70

APC Equity Workshops, 2022–2024

Since 2022, APC members undertake compulsory equity workshops designed to:

- ensure a shared understanding of ‘equity’ and ARTO;
- identify APC process opportunities to mitigate unconscious bias in initial assessments;
- establish a clear and agreed understanding for how APC can ensure fair and equitable decision-making processes in the evaluation of applications (Figure 18).

Participation in foundational workshops is required once every three years, with ‘top-up’ workshops annually. By end 2023, all but four APC members had completed foundational training (Table 16). Scheduling conflicts impeded further workshops for remaining and new APC members. To ensure ARTO familiarity and equity-consciousness for all members, written guidance was provided alongside equity presentations at the start of APC panel sessions. ODVC-REI aims to tailor this workshop for other important decision-making Committees across WSU.

Table 16. Academic Promotions Committee Equity Workshop Participation, 2022 - 2024

Academic Promotions Committee Participation in Equity Workshops		
Year	Workshop	n
2022	Foundational workshop	14
2024	Written equity guidance on equity in initial assessments	9
2024	Equity presentation at APC panel session	10

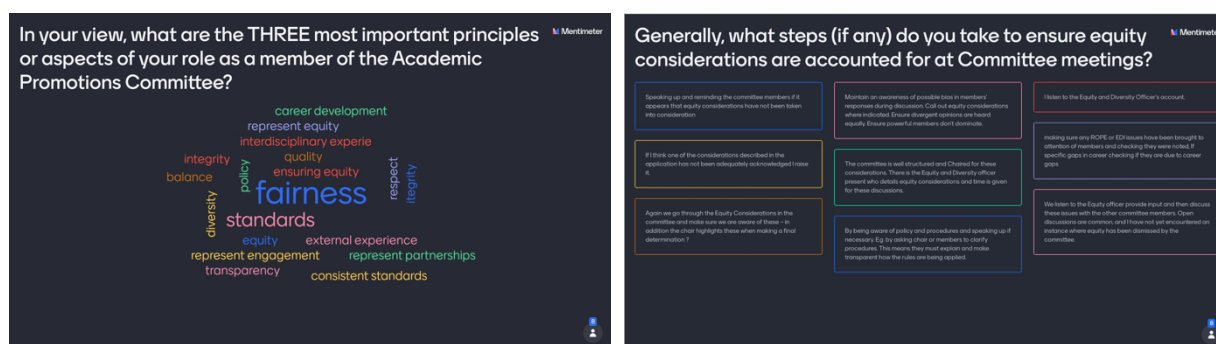


Figure 18. Interactive APC Member Responses at APC Workshops, 2022

Theme 5: Continuous Improvement

Unlocking Equity in Academic Promotions & Cygnet Action Planning Group, 2023

Across 2023, SAGE conducted a comprehensive Cygnet Impact Assessment, *Unlocking Equity in Academic Promotions*. Input was sought from a range of stakeholders (total 140 staff), and an extensive report including a comprehensive suite of recommendations was endorsed by VC-GERRAC. Chaired by DVC-REI, a Cygnet Action Planning Group of key stakeholders (Deans/Directors, APC members, research specialists, equity practitioners, and CALD representatives) refined 'further actions', which are already being implemented by DVC-REI, AP Coordinator, and SAGE (Table 17). Importantly, new processes have been embedded for collecting applicant diversity data to enable more intersectional analysis of GEDI outcomes and an inaugural workshop for 57 Senior Managers was held in 2024 (Figure 19).

Table 17. Sample Recommendations Already Implemented, 2023–2024

Sample Recommendations Already Implemented, 2023 – 2024	
Process	Recommendation Detail
Process Assurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standardise information delivered to Senior Managers across local contexts and encouraging best-practice sharing across Schools/Institutes/Divisions; When publishing APC membership, include a statement regarding how disciplinary, gender, cultural, and other representations are considered in APC composition; Include more fulsome diversity data collection within application processes, supported by a clear explainer about why this data is important, how privacy will be maintained, and how data will be managed and analysed.
Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Run interview info sessions as webinars, to protect applicant confidentiality; To reduce intimidation, seat the Equity Observer next to the applicant during interviews, rather than among the APC panel; To maximise equitable access, offer all D and E applicants the option to undertake their interview via zoom; To reassure applicants, Equity Considerations should be briefly acknowledged (by standardised language) at the commencement of interview.
Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision letters should be written in more empathic language, recognising the emotional investment staff have in their promotion outcome; In cases where Equity Considerations are included, both feedback meetings and decisions letters for unsuccessful applicants should acknowledge that these were taken into consideration by the Committee.



Figure 19. Senior Managers engage with equity in promotions at their inaugural Academic Promotions Information Session, February 2024.

OUTCOMES

The Cygnet Era (2018–2023) saw significant improvements for STEMM and HASS women and part-time staff promotions outcomes, particularly in the period where most equity-driven Cygnet actions and outputs were taking hold (2021–2023).

Applications (2018–2023)

COVID-19 circumstances significantly impacted promotions patterns: 2020 saw the lowest applications on record (especially for women; Figure 20), but higher-than-usual applications in 2021 compensated for this shortfall (especially for men). Nonetheless, total numbers across the period showed **women were now as likely to apply for promotion as men** (Figure 20).

Two non-binary staff applied during the period (both promoted). **Part-time staff applications drastically improved** (Figure 22), now consistently approx. 10% of all applications (Figure 23).

CYGNET ERA PROMOTIONS DATA: APPLICATIONS BY DISCIPLINE AND PART-TIME STATUS

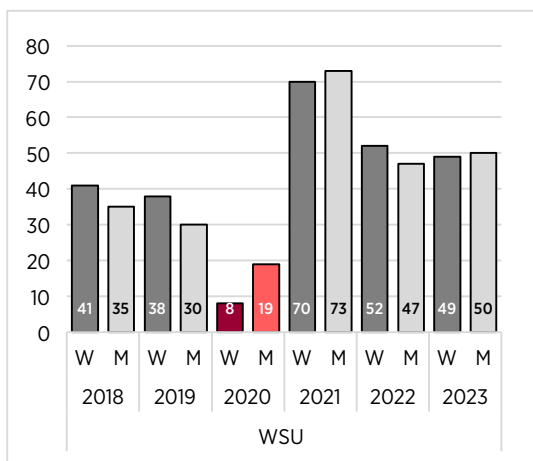


Figure 20. WSU Promotions Applications by Year, 2018–2023

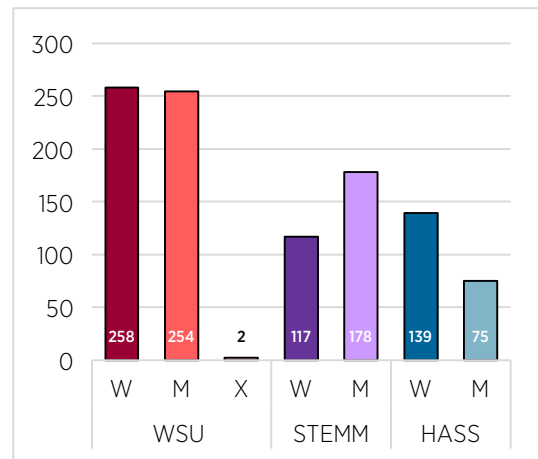


Figure 21. Total Applications by Gender & Discipline Group, 2018–2023

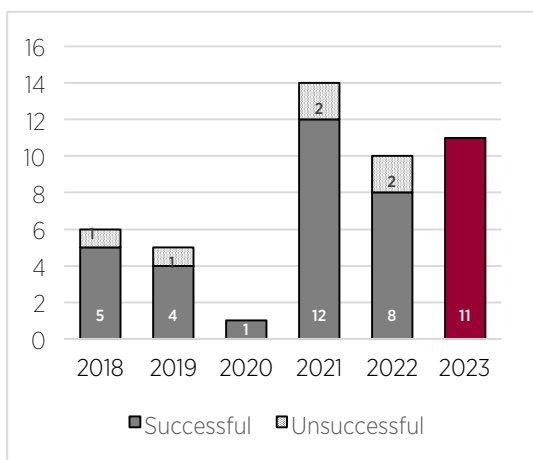


Figure 22. Part-Time Staff Applications & Success, 2018–2023

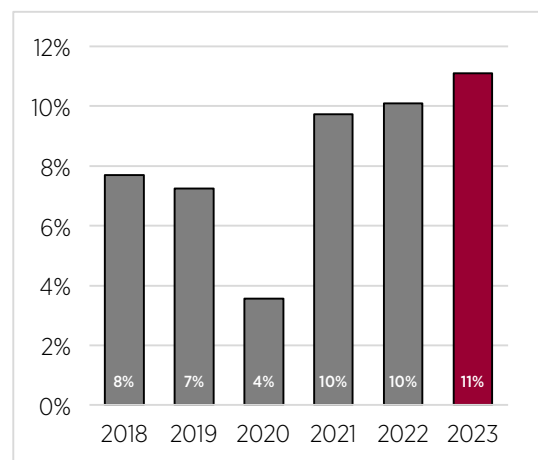
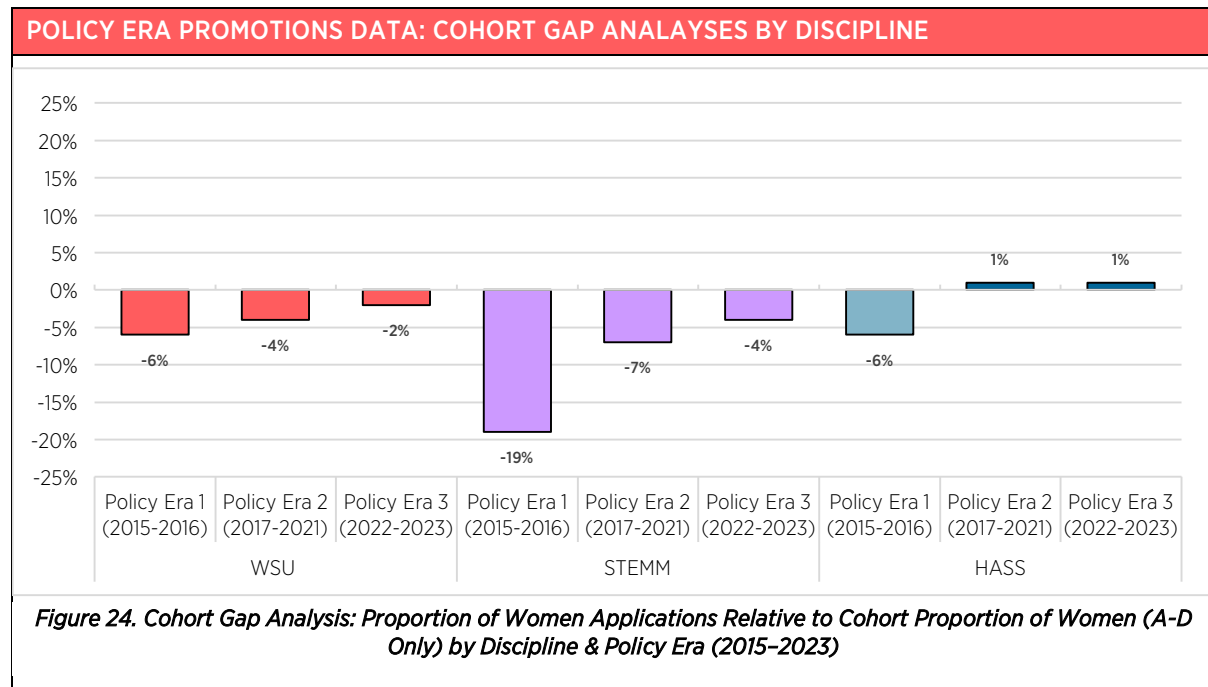


Figure 23. Part-Time Staff Applications as a Proportion of all Applications, 2018–2023

When viewed by policy framework period (or 'Policy Era'¹), cohort analyses for women's applications show consistent improvement from Policy Era 1 to 3 (Figure 24):

- WSU women rose 4% in cohort representation;
- STEMM women rose 15% in cohort representation;
- HASS women rose from -6% under-representation to parity.



STEMM women submitted fewer applications at each level in the Cygnet period (Figure 25), but also saw significant improvements where they were previously under-represented in Bronze Era proportions: with Level C applications are -8% (up from -25%; Figure 26) and D applications are at parity (up from -7%). **However, STEMM women's cohort-relative applications dropped at B (-5%) and E (-22%).** HASS women's cohort-proportional applications remained steady at B and C and improved at D (+8%) and E (+15%), such that **HASS women applications are now at cohort parity across all levels.**

¹ Here, 'Policy Era' refers to periods as defined by their extant policy frameworks. Policy Era 1 refers to WSU *Academic Promotions Policy, Procedures and Guidelines* in place at the start of the Bronze Era and continuing through 2015-2016. Policy Era 2 is defined by policy and procedure introduced in 2017 and in place to 2021. Policy Era 3 begins with the introduction of new *Academic Promotions Policy and Guidelines* in 2022 and still in place at WSU.

POLICY ERA PROMOTIONS DATA: APPLICATIONS BY DISCIPLINE AND LEVEL

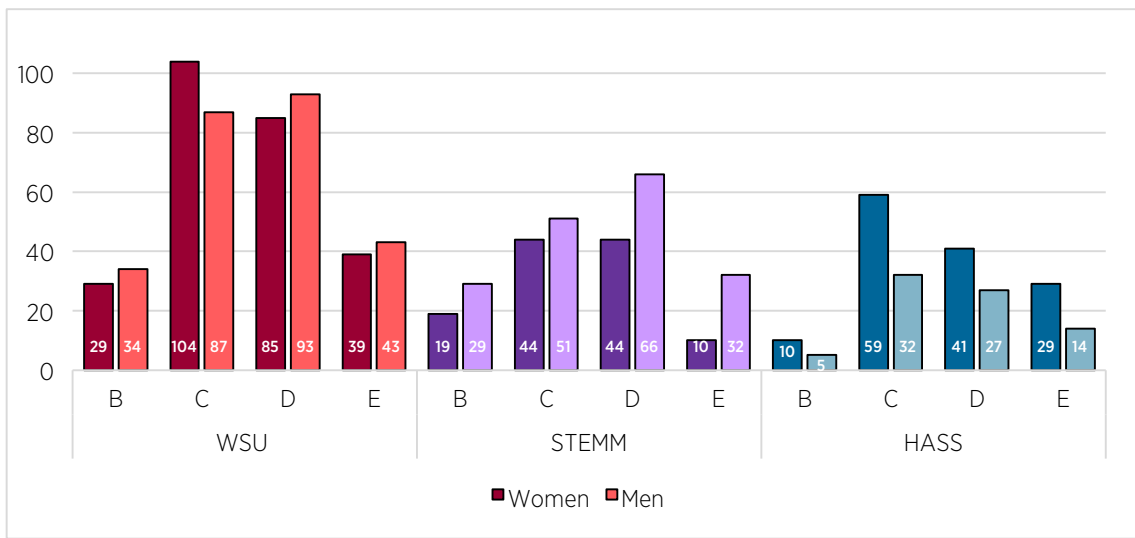


Figure 25. Applications by Gender, Discipline and Level, 2018–2023

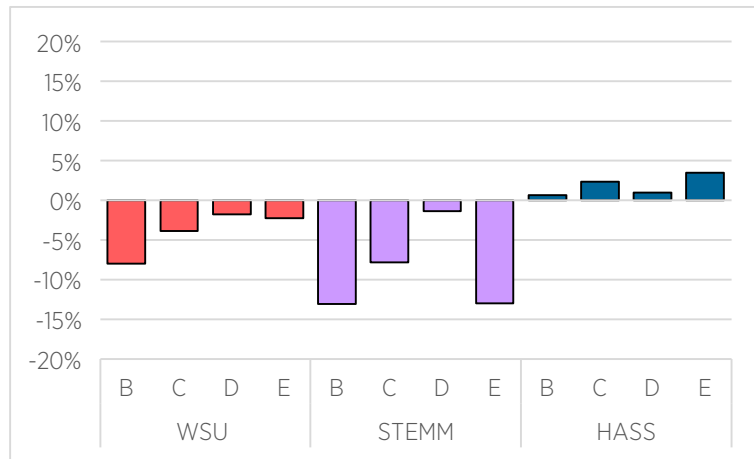


Figure 26. Cohort Gap Analysis: Proportion of Women Applications by Target Level Relative to Cohort Proportion by Applicant Level and Discipline, 2018 - 2023

Success Rates (2018–2023)

When viewed by Policy Era, HASS women’s success rates show consistent improvement (Figure 27). STEMM women’s success rates are relatively stable. Success rates by level differed by year, but when averaged across the period STEMM women achieved near-parity ($\pm 5\%$) or better success at all levels and outperformed STEMM men in success to Level C (+24%) and E (+18%; Figure 28). HASS women were less successful than men at B (-20%) but more so at E (+23%), a significant turn-around from the Bronze Era.

CYGNET ERA PROMOTIONS DATA: SUCCESS RATES BY DISCIPLINE AND LEVEL

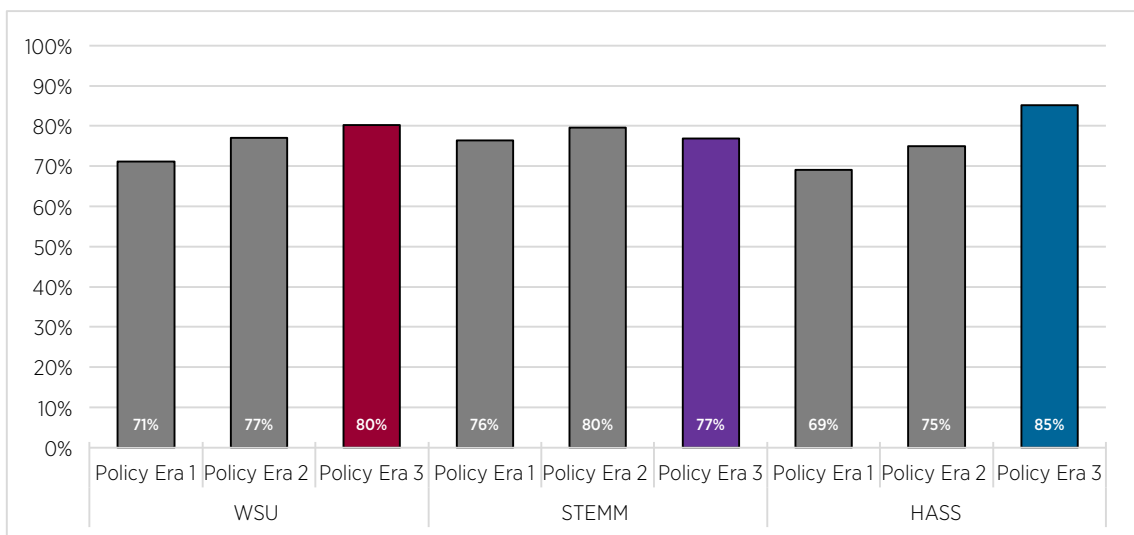


Figure 27. Success Rates by Policy Era, 2015–2023

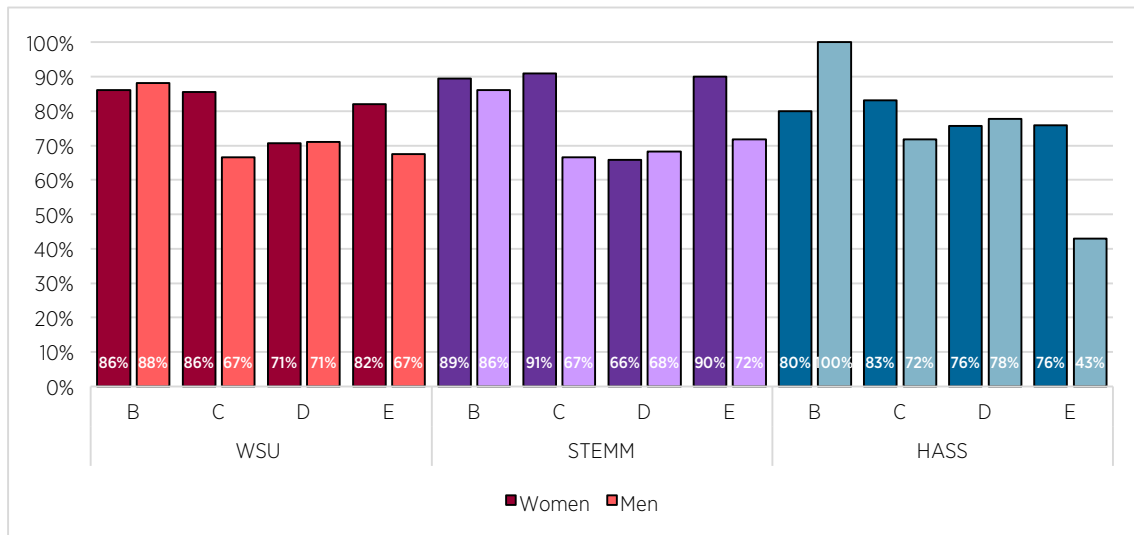


Figure 28. Success Rates by Gender, Level and Discipline, 2018–2023

Promotions Outcomes (2018–2023)

Across the Cygnet Era, more women were promoted than men (Figure 29) and women increased their share of promotions across successive policy eras (Figure 31), such that **STEMM** women achieved relative cohort-parity (-1%, Figure 30) and **HASS** women outperformed cohort representation (+8%) overall.

For **HASS** women, promotions now appears to be an effective mechanism for progression to middle and senior levels (Figure 32). However, application rates remain a significant driver of inequity in promotions outcomes for **STEMM** women: cohorts with improved applications proportions (C and D) are at promotions parity; cohorts with decreasing application proportions (B and E) are well below.

PROMOTIONS DATA: TOTAL PROMOTIONS BY DISCIPLINE

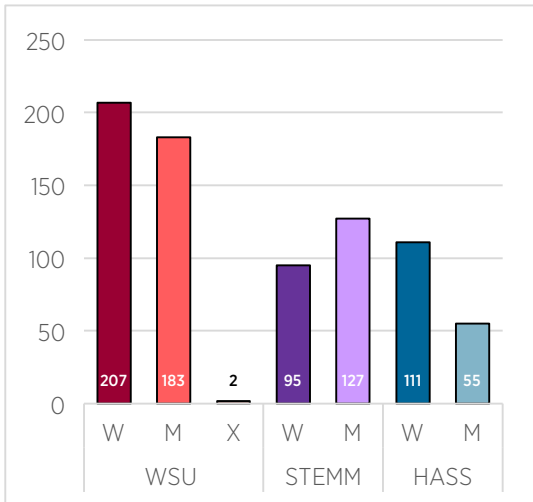


Figure 29. Promotions by Gender & Discipline Group, 2018-2023

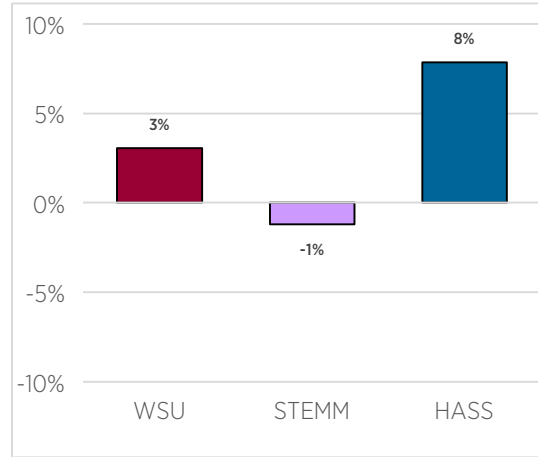


Figure 30. Cohort Gap Analysis: Proportion of Women Promotions Relative to Cohort Proportion of Women by Discipline, 2018-2023

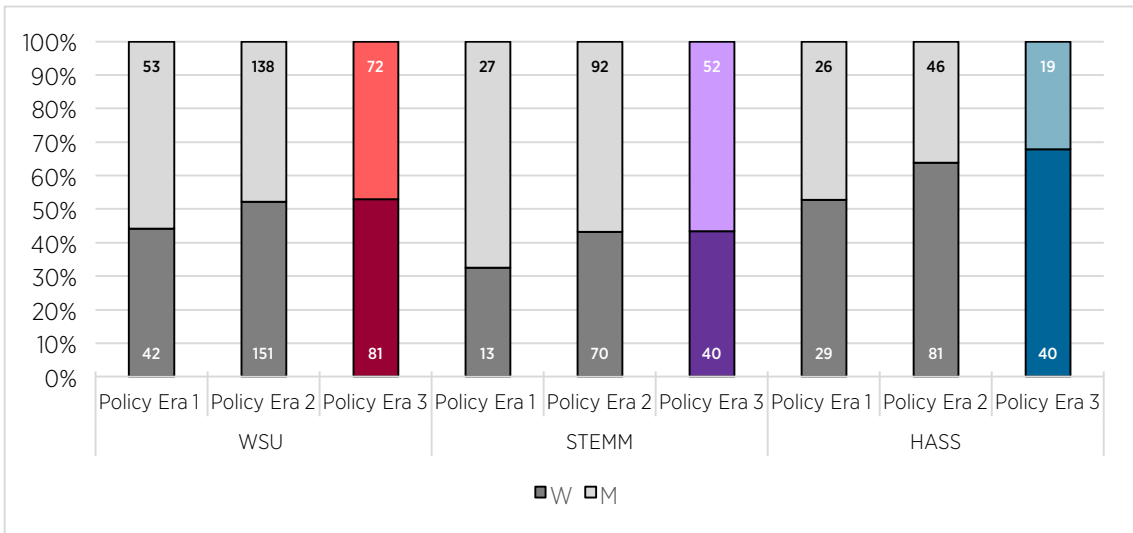


Figure 31. Promotions by Gender, Discipline & Policy Era, 2015-2023

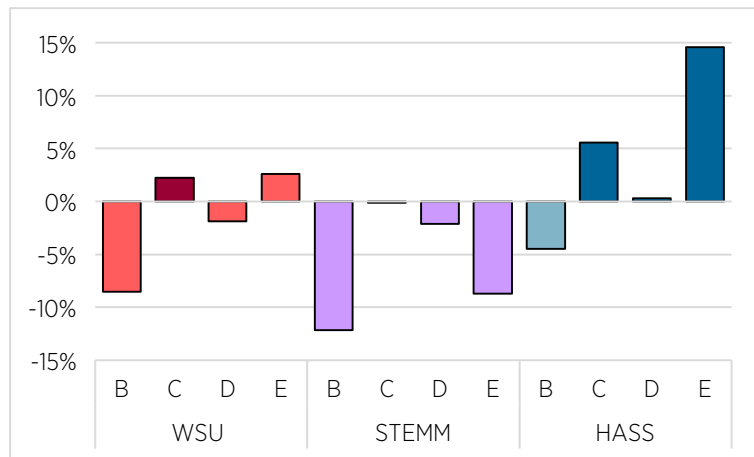


Figure 32. Cohort Gap Analysis: Women Promotions Relative to Cohort Representation by Discipline & Applicant Level, 2018-2023

IMPACT

Impact data draws from session feedback, pilot evaluations, and Cygnet Impact Assessments. Input was sought across promotions stakeholders (Table 18), with applicant responses disaggregated by employment type and personal demographics (Table 19). A thematic analysis was undertaken of open text survey responses, interviews and focus groups.

Table 18. Staff Participation in Impact Assessments, 2022 - 2023

Academic Promotions Impact Assessments, 2022 – 2023			
Instrument	Focus Cohort	RR	n
Session Feedback			
Spring Forward	Prospective Applicants	50%	75+
APC Workshops	Academic Promotions Committee (APC) Members	65%	9
Total Session Feedback			85+
Surveys			
Mock Interviews Survey	Recent Applicants	47%	27
<i>Unlocking Equity in Academic Promotions Surveys x 6</i>	Recent Applicants	65%	64
	APC Members	32%	8
	Deans/Directors	32%	6
	AP Mentors and Distinguished Professors	37%	33
	Equity and Diversity Working Party (EDWP) Members	26%	29
Indigenous Staff Cygnet Impact Assessment	Indigenous academic staff	39%	7
Total Survey Responses			174
Interviews & Focus Groups			
EPIC-C Focus Groups x 6	Peer Allies (Mentee Participants)	44%	11
	Peer Mentors	50%	3
<i>Unlocking Equity in Academic Promotions Focus Groups x 3</i>	Academic Promotions Mentors & Distinguished Professors (hereafter, "Mentors")	-	8
	Academic Promotions Committee (APC) Members	-	3
<i>Unlocking Equity in Academic Promotions Interviews x 11</i>	Recent Applicants (2022)	-	11
Total Interviews & Focus Groups Responses			36

Table 19. Applicant Demographics, Unlocking Equity in Academic Promotions, 2023

Applicant Demographics, Unlocking Equity in Academic Promotions, 2023														
	Number of Responses (n) by Cohort													
	B	C	D	E	STEM	H&M	HASS	Div	W	M	X	Parent/Carer	CALD	FIF
n	14	19	24	6	21	20	21	2	38	25	2	49	23	27
%	22%	30%	38%	9%	33%	31%	33%	3%	59%	39%	3%	77%	36%	42%

Impact Summary

Meaningful impacts are recognised across all identified policy, procedure, developmental and cultural barriers (Table 20).

Table 20. Summary of Impacts Aligned to Identified Policy, Procedure, Developmental and Cultural Barriers

Summary of Impacts Aligned to Identified Barriers		
Barrier	Actions Undertaken	Impacts Indicated
Applicants lack understanding of the promotions process	<p>Process Opportunities Engaged: Policy and Procedure; Communications.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy, Procedures and Guidelines consolidated, with key equity innovations introduced; Awareness campaign & feature Gender UNLIMITED*; Promotions policy and process myths progressively 'busted' at Spring Forward sessions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 95% of applicants and stakeholder groups report that new promotions policy is 'easy to understand'; Spring Forward is providing reassurance and tailored advice.
Part-time work and caring obligations are perceived to conflict with academic advancement	<p>Process Opportunities Engaged: Policy and Procedure; Communications; Process Assurance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ARTO guidelines expanded, including renewed focus on part-time work, non-linear career paths and caring obligations; Changes to ARTO guidelines highlighted at Gender UNLIMITED*; ARTO principles and processes a key feature of Equity Workshops for APC members; Equity Process Features Presentation socialised across WSU. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 82% applicants and stakeholders view expanded ARTO guidelines as a policy improvement; Expanded ARTO guidelines are seen as more inclusive, capable of addressing inequity, and having immediate impacts for staff; Equity Considerations are considered crucial to applications and applicants report capacity to articulate impacts on career progress. As such, Equity Considerations are facilitating positive promotions experiences; Academic Promotions Mentors are effective at supporting the writing of statements and valuable for modelling alternate patterns of achievement.
The gendered labour of academic care is under-recognised in promotions criteria	<p>Process Opportunities Engaged: Policy and Procedure; Communications.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pastoral care / Academic Citizenship / Collegial Practice embedded within Engagement, Governance and Service Field of Practice; New policy inclusion highlighted in university-wide information sessions and at Gender UNLIMITED*. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 83% applicants and stakeholders view the explicit recognition of Pastoral Care / Academic Citizenship / Collegial Practice as promotional attributes as a policy improvement; These new policy inclusions are recognised as essential for "the frequently unrecognised work of women academics", with immediate impacts for applicants.
APC members and Deans are perceived as susceptible to bias	<p>Process Opportunities Engaged: Policy and Procedure; Process Assurance; Communications.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equity Workshops for APC members embedded in policy and piloted; APC members engaged at Spring Forward; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> APC workshops are having effect in reinforcing ARTO principles, providing safe spaces for complex discussion and fortifying equity in collective decision-making processes; Inaugural Senior Managers Info Session valuable; Consultations with Deans/Directors, senior managers and supervisors were highly valued, rated 85% - 88% helpful.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equity Process Features Presentation socialised across WSU; Inaugural Senior Managers Information Session trialled. 	
WSU's promotions culture is overly competitive	<p>Process Opportunities Engaged: Targeted Supports; Communications.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pilot EPIC-Collaboration (EPIC-C) Peer and Executive Mentoring; Gender UNLIMITED* break-out groups focused on 'Shaping a Supportive Culture'. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applicants accessed key support initiatives, which they found to be valuable (rating these initiatives 77%-92% helpful); Consultation with key support figures were highly valued (rated 91%-98% helpful); Essential components for building communities of support identified at Gender UNLIMITED* aligns with Pilot initiatives underway; Some local contexts have hands-on Deans/Directors and proactive, generous collegial support.
Promotions mentoring is insufficient	<p>Process Opportunities Engaged: Targeted Supports; Communications.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic Promotions Mentors; Distinguished Professors Promotions Support; Pilot EPIC-Collaboration (EPIC-C) Peer and Executive Mentoring; Pilot Mock Interviews; New support initiatives highlighted at Gender UNLIMITED*. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff report quality, practical guidance, with comprehensive and diverse resources and materials provided; Academic Promotions Mentors are highly valued, especially for clarifying vision and providing encouragement; EPIC-C engenders the championing of peers and building connection across School/Institute contexts; Mock Interviews offer effective preparation and reduced intimidation.

Equity Innovations | A Significant Step Forward

Detailed findings demonstrate that significant equity advances are evident in promotions processes at WSU. Some additional socialisation of new policy elements and more active transparency around equity in assessments required.

Academic Promotions Policy Review

Most stakeholders and applicants (95%) signalled clear understanding of new policy, and voiced strong support for key equity innovations (Table 21).

Table 21. Impact: Perspectives on Equity-Driven Policy Inclusions

Equity-Driven Policy Inclusions						
	Supportive		Unsupportive		Uncategorised	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Prompt: "What is your perception of the following new equity and diversity inclusions?"						
Recognition of achievement for contributions to Indigenous priorities across all Fields of Academic Practice	70	88%	4	5%	6	8%
Pastoral care / academic citizenship / collaboration included within Engagement, Governance and Service	73	83%	10	11%	5	6%
Expanded articulation of Achievement Relative to Opportunity in <i>Academic Promotions Guidelines</i>	64	82%	4	5%	10	14%

100% of surveyed Indigenous academic staff rated the embedding of Indigenous priorities in *Academic Promotions Policy* and *Guidelines* “Extremely Important”. Non-Indigenous-specific cohorts also indicated overwhelming support, regarding this an “incredibly important step forward” that “ground[s] a social justice priority and culture across the University” (Table 22). Stakeholders see potential for this inclusion to prevent excessive cultural load for Indigenous academics and “promote others to prioritise or consider Indigenous engagement”. Applicants testified that increased awareness and engagement is already taking place.

Table 22. Impact: Policy Inclusions, Indigenous Priorities

Policy Inclusions: Indigenous Priorities	
Theme	Sample Feedback
Embedding of Indigenous Priorities: An Important Step Forward	Promotions Stakeholders
	<i>I feel this is an incredibly important step forward for the University and the communities that we serve. (Survey: APC Member)</i>
	<i>It was valuable to have the feedback and assessments from [DVC Indigenous Leadership] for these applications and to have her available to ask the candidates a question in relation to the Indigenous priorities. (Survey: APC Member)</i>
	<i>It is very positive to have Indigenous priorities foregrounded in this way. (Survey: Dean/Director)</i>
	<i>It is important to highlight contributions specifically in this area. (Survey: Dean/Director)</i>
	<i>Important to recognise for those for whom it is relevant to their work, particularly as it may impact on the achieving of more traditional academic metrics. (Survey: Distinguished Professor)</i>
	<i>Good to see emphasis of this important recognition and contribution. A lot of pressure can be placed on First Nations academics and we need to support our colleagues so they do not get overloaded with activities and people seeking their input. (Survey: Mentor)</i>
	<i>I think this is extremely important to grounding a social justice priority and culture across the University. (Survey: Mentor)</i>
	<i>Good change to see, it will help capture those working in the future and promote others to prioritise or consider indigenous engagement. (Survey: Mentor)</i>
	<i>The instruction for anyone indicating that they are contribution to the Indigenous priorities in Academic practice to consult with Indigenous scholars or community members is important. This inclusion demonstrates the interweaving of the University and Indigenous strategy into the procedures for promotion. (Survey: Mentor)</i>
	<i>Giving Indigenous academics priority can contribute to the University's knowledge development and research. (Survey: Mentor)</i>
	Promotions Applicants
	<i>Good addition. [...] Having this in the application made me rethink my T&L and how I can better embed First Nations across units. (Survey: Level C Applicant, Woman)</i>
	<i>Cultural awareness shows respect for the culture with whom one is working, which can aid people working with these communities to build better relationships and be more effective in their work. (Survey: Level E Applicant, Woman, CALD)</i>
	<i>As a researcher invested in cultural issues, this is a much needed and welcome addition. (Survey: Level C Applicant, Woman, CALD, Parent)</i>
	<i>Yes, this is an important consideration as we slowly seek to integrate Indigenous content within curriculum. (Survey: Level D Applicant, Parent, Carer)</i>
	<i>Difficult for some areas (e.g., basic sciences) to achieve, but a nice inclusion. (Survey: Level B Applicant, Man, First in Family, Parent)</i>

Stakeholders see pastoral care and academic citizenship as “unsung area[s] of academia” that are “essential to building and maintaining the community of scholars and academic collegiality” and “very important to include, particularly for the frequently unrecognised work of women academics” (Table 23). Applicants believe it “vital” and “crucial” that such contributions to academic life be captured as promotional attributes, predicting this may encourage others to “pitch in with some of this work, too”.

Table 23. Impact: Policy Inclusions, Pastoral Care and Academic Citizenship

Policy Inclusions: Pastoral Care and Academic Citizenship	
Theme	Sample Feedback
Pastoral Care / Academic Citizenship: A Vital, Unsung Area of Academia	Promotions Stakeholders
	<i>This is an unsung area of academia and a very important area for student development and success that is not captured or recognised in more traditional metrics. We see a high proportion of female and LGBTQIA+ academics in this space, in spite of there being fewer of us overall in the academic population. It is very good to see this work recognised and celebrated, not just research grants and papers. (Survey: Mentor)</i>
	<i>This is a welcome addition and applicants should be rewarded for good work in this space. (Survey: APC Member)</i>
	<i>Very important to include, particularly for the frequently unrecognised work of women academics. (Survey: Dean/Director)</i>
	<i>Useful to have service foregrounded in this way. (Survey: Dean/Director)</i>
	<i>I agree with recognising this critical but very much under-recognised work - it is essential to building and maintaining the community of scholars and academic collegiality. (Survey: Mentor)</i>
	<i>This is a good one as some colleagues might have played an important role in key leadership and governance, but others who equally contribute to the University's Engagement and Service such as pastoral care were often neglected without this being included. (Survey: Mentor)</i>
	<i>This sort of invisible emotion work needs to be given proper credibility -- it is intangible and hard to quantify. (Survey: Mentor)</i>
	<i>This is an important inclusion and captures a lot of "informal" leadership undertaken by our colleagues. (Survey: Mentor)</i>
	<i>I think this is about leadership and understanding that there are different and important ways that people contribute to the University and opens up promotional opportunities to more people. (Survey: Mentor)</i>
	<i>Important for those for whom it is relevant to their work. Again, it is about recognising the time that this takes and its impact on traditional metrics. (Survey: Distinguished Professor)</i>
	Promotions Applicants
	<i>I do believe this will be a vital aspect in many promotions applications. (Survey: Level C Applicant, Woman, CALD, Parent)</i>
	<i>This was applicable to me, and helpful in articulating what much of my governance portfolio includes. (Level D Applicant, Woman, First in Family, Carer)</i>
	<i>This was great. It really enabled me to articulate and include so much of the work I do in the governance space that often goes unrecognised, or that doesn't fit into the usual institutional channels, especially around informal mentoring and support of colleagues and students. That work takes a huge amount of time and can have huge collective gains across a School or discipline, so it's good to have that recognised in promotion applications now. It might also have the knock-on effect of encouraging other staff to pitch in with some of this work, too, as it often falls to a silent minority of mostly women staff. (Survey: Level D Applicant, Woman, CALD, First in Family, Parent)</i>
	<i>LOVED THIS! I think research can be incredibly isolating and academics work in silos. I thought recognition for those colleagues who make an effort to build staff up was an important and needed addition. (Survey: Level C Applicant, Woman)</i>
	<i>This is very crucial and great that this is being captured. (Level D Applicant, Woman, CALD, First in Family, Parent)</i>
	<i>This is a vitally important recognition that focuses on representatives from all groups in society showing that a shared positive culture of inclusivity is essential. (Survey: Level E Applicant, Woman, CALD)</i>
	<i>Very relevant to those in leadership positions and supervision of staff and HDR students as well as recognition of individual's professional standing in the community. (Survey: Level D Applicant, Woman, CALD, First in Family)</i>
	<i>This is important as it covers many of the day to day type governance roles held by many university academics so allows for these to be discussed as relevant. (Survey: Level B Applicant, Man, CALD)</i>

ARTO guidelines are felt to be “more inclusive”, providing “much fairer assessment of contributions” and “very important for addressing equity imbalances in academia” (Table 24). Applicants saw immediate impacts, finding improved ARTO “crucial for my application” and “helpful in guiding my line of thought”.

Table 24. Impact: Policy Inclusions, Expanded ARTO Guidelines

Policy Inclusions: Expanded ARTO Guidelines	
Theme	Sample Feedback
Expanded ARTO: More Inclusive, Addressing Inequity	Promotions Stakeholders
	<i>This is very important for addressing equity imbalance in academia, including age, gender, cultural, support systems, neurodiversity and a whole array of variables that can affect a person's academic progression and ability to participate in all the roles an academic has to undertake. (Survey: Mentor)</i>
	<i>Useful for candidates, insofar as it has generated more explanation and justification. (Survey: APC member)</i>
	<i>Much better than before. (Survey: Distinguished Professor)</i>
	<i>This is positive and should benefit mothers, parents, carers... (Survey: Mentor)</i>
	Promotions Applicants
	<i>This framework helps to ensure that the overall quality and impact of achievements is given more weight than the quantity of particular achievements relative to their applicants personal, professional and other circumstances. (Survey: Level E Applicant, Woman, CALD, First in Family)</i>
	<i>This is very helpful in terms of thinking through what has been and can be achieved through difficult circumstances. (Survey: Level D Applicant, Woman, First in Family, Carer)</i>
	<i>This was crucial for my application, so this is the area I feel most strongly about. (Survey: Level C Applicant, Woman, CALD, Parent)</i>
	<i>I found this helpful in guiding my line of thought for crafting my application. (Survey: Level D Applicant, Woman, CALD, First in Family, Parent)</i>
	<i>This was useful to me as an early career academic who was studying PhD while working as a level A academic as it helped in justifying career trajectory and current achievements. (Survey: Level B Applicant, Man)</i>
	<i>This is definitely helpful considering the changed environment due to COVID-19 pandemic. (Survey: Level C Applicant, Man, CALD, First in Family, Parent)</i>
	<i>The addition of Natural Disasters or global events and COVID-19 is an essential aspect of promotion application given the impact of these on an academic's research and scholarship. (Survey: Level D Applicant, Man, CALD, First in Family)</i>
	<i>Provides much fairer assessment of contributions. However does not articulate anything related to workload opportunity. E.g. if an academic is provided very small research allocation but policy still requires significant contribution in that area. Or impact of former 'teaching focused roles' and the impact that had on a career trajectory when research was not provided at all. (Survey: Level C Applicant, Man, First in Family, Parent)</i>
	<i>Note sure how the Committee would consider this in the area of engagement/service, but it's a good addition. (Survey: Level C Applicant, Man, First in Family, Parent)</i>

Few dissenting voices were raised around these equity inclusions. Most sought clarity around implementation or made suggestions to further enhance the transfer of policy in practice, with calls for more guidance tailored for stakeholders (Table 25). Applicants and Mentors were particularly keen to understand how APC assesses the new elements.

Table 25. Area for Improvement: More Guidance on New Policy Inclusions

Policy Inclusions	
Theme	Sample Feedback
Area for Improvement: More Guidance and Awareness-Raising Around New Policy Inclusions	Promotions Stakeholders
	<i>Like all new awards and developments, it will take time to bed down [the Indigenous priorities in promotions], perhaps with exemplars for the University community. Perhaps staff - at ALL levels - more than students need help to understand what achievement in Indigenous priorities actually means. To not just know, but what it means to do and demonstrate reciprocity, partnership, respect and self-determination. (Survey: APC member)</i>
	<i>[The Indigenous priorities are] still bedding in - I am not sure the candidates yet understand this fully, and have not supplied evidence of sustained and impactful achievement for contributions to Indigenous priorities across all Fields of Academic Practice. Would benefit from some Professional Learning and examples. (Survey: APC member)</i>
	<i>While I have been on panels where applicants show [pastoral care and academic citizenship] have been considered, this particular criterion has not been pointed out. [...] I'd suggest more awareness raising of this criterion, perhaps with exemplars. (Survey: APC member)</i>

	Promotions Applicants
	<i>[Pastoral Care / Academic Citizenship is] good to include within this section, but didn't seem to be seen by mentors/readers as offering much value to the application as more traditional aspects of EG&S. (Survey: Level C Applicant, Woman, First in Family)</i>
	<i>The concept [of including Pastoral Care / Academic Citizenship] is nice, but given the focus on impact and outcomes, this is very difficult to evidence. (Survey: Level D Applicant, Woman, First in Family)</i>
	<i>[Pastoral Care / Academic Citizenship] is an area that remains unclear - colleagues who are significantly engaged in governance roles are still looking for support on how those roles can be promoted as impactful - the guidelines could be enhanced by addressing substantive School-based governance roles more specifically. (Survey: Level E Applicant, Woman, First in Family, Carer)</i>
	<i>I'm not certain how carefully all staff read the [ARTO] guidelines. As with some of my earlier comments, I still think some staff struggle with understanding these contexts and how to craft equity statements. (Survey: Level D Applicant, Woman, CALD, First in Family, Parent)</i>

Equity Considerations (Achievement Relative to Opportunity)

Equity Considerations (ARTOs) are considered crucial within the promotions process. Most who submitted ARTOs felt able to articulate the impacts of their equity considerations effectively and reflected a positive experience of this application component (Table 26).

Table 26. Impact: Equity Considerations Experiences

Equity Considerations Experiences						
	Yes		No		Prefer Not to Say	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Equity Considerations Prompts						
Able to demonstrate ARTO impacts effectively	24	77%	2	8%	5	16%
Positive experiences regarding Equity Consideration submissions	17	63%	6	22%	4*	15%*
<i>*Note: Rather than 'Prefer not to Say', these experiences were classified as 'questioning' of policy or process.</i>						

For many, the inclusion of an ARTO statement facilitated greater confidence and a positive promotion experience overall (Table 27).

Table 27. Impact: Equity Considerations

Equity Considerations	
Theme	Sample Feedback
Equity Considerations as Facilitative of Positive Promotions Experiences	Promotions Applicants
	<i>Honestly, I really appreciated that component of the application, and the ability to make it personal. [...] I was honest, [about] the impact of parenting on my progression. And it was good that it was open-ended, so we could write a paragraph for that. That was really helpful. (Interview: Level D Applicant, Parent)</i>
	<i>I think the equity statement is a really useful addition and I think it gives a focus for the Promotions Committee to really think about what that individual is experiencing, what they're juggling, because it's not a level playing field. What people have to manage in the other half of their life, I think it's really important. (Interview: Level D Applicant)</i>
	<i>I think the statement is very, very helpful. I think, having it in the application is great. I think the addition of the COVID one - natural disasters, and such - I think, is good. But the gender one is very, very useful. (Interview: Level D Applicant, First in Family)</i>
	<i>This was the first time in my career where I felt disclosing my equity considerations was safe, confidential and there wouldn't be any consequences for my career. It was also the only occasion colleagues have offered support and asked if I was okay. (Survey: Level E Applicant, Woman, Parent, Carer)</i>
	<i>I gained significant encouragement from the appointment of the Equity officer and the full confidentiality this has afforded. (Survey: Level C Applicant, Woman, CALD, Parent)</i>

	<i>Without equity considerations, I would have felt less confident to apply. (Survey: Level C Applicant, Woman, Parent, CALD)</i>
	<i>Glad it permitted me to opportunity to explain these circumstances for the assessor and committee. It's an important consideration in assessing applications! (Survey: Level C Applicant, Man, First in Family, Parent)</i>
	<i>It's not easy to write about personal life challenges, but they are relevant. (Survey: Level E Applicant, Man, First in Family, Parent)</i>
	<i>The provisions were clear and felt I could articulate this clearly. (Survey: Level D Applicant, Man, First in Family)</i>
	<i>I was hesitant and initially didn't [include an ARTO statement], but when my mentor reviewed my application I was strongly encouraged to fill it in. I guess I felt a little embarrassed as I thought I had been succeeding well even with the equity considerations, but I'm glad I did as it would have given the Committee more information and context about my application. (Survey: Level C Applicant, Woman, Parent, Carer)</i>
	<i>I believe that the process is well thought-out. With an equity officer, confidentiality is maintained, and yet equity issues can be openly addressed and taken into consideration. (Survey: Level C Applicant, Woman, CALD, Parent)</i>
	<i>It gave me the opportunity to articulate the impact of COVID on my academic journey. (Survey: Level D Applicant, Woman, First in Family, CALD, Parent)</i>

However, some are concerned about sharing sensitive details, stigma (especially for mental health), and inequities in disclosure patterns (Table 28).

Table 28. Areas for Improvement: Concerns Around Disclosure, Transparency and Guidance

Equity Considerations	
Theme	Sample Feedback
Concerns Around Disclosure	Promotions Stakeholders
	<i>There is a tension between providing the information required and respecting the applicant's privacy. (Survey: Dean/Director)</i>
	<i>It is such an individual experience as to how different people are impacted by different factors, and whether [those factors] will even be named in an application. Some still don't include them because of stigma attached, e.g., mental illness. (Survey: Dean/Director)</i>
	<i>Some people go through deeply personal experiences - domestic violence in particular - that are not addressed in this inclusions as people are too embarrassed to opening up about these types of issues, and certainly less willing to put things into permanent writing. (Survey: APC member)</i>
	<i>Some are more open in terms of what they want to disclose, and then this can be an advantage. The more you disclose, the more can be taken into consideration. (Focus Group: APC member)</i>
	Promotions Applicants
	<i>It made me feel vulnerable, made worse by the fact that it was not considered in the decision process. (Survey: Level D Applicant, Woman, First in Family, Parent)</i>
	<i>This forces the applicant to reveal very private information about their life to senior colleagues and anonymous external reviewers. (Survey: Level C Applicant, Woman, First in Family, CALD)</i>
	<i>University needs to provide assurance to applicants who may provide personal information in their applications (related to identity, gender, disability etc) on how they ensure that external reviewers do not discriminate against applicant based on these characteristics. (Survey: Level C Applicant, Woman, CALD, First in Family)</i>
	<i>Now I was quite delighted to see in the promotion application there was stuff where you could put that, but I was also very hesitant about what to write, because some of those things can come back to bite you. They just do. You're not seen as competent. (Interview: Level D Applicant, Carer)</i>
<i>Am I comfortable with [disclosing my chronic health condition]? What will be the implications of that, you know? Would they start thinking... would you potentially be overlooked or diminished because people think you're a little bit more fragile? And so, it's interesting. But I actually enjoyed the experience of writing it because it made me reflect on what [my circumstance] actually does to me. (Interview: Level D Applicant)</i>	

Some seek acknowledgement and clarification around when and how ARTOs are assessed (Table 29).

Table 29. Area for Improvement: More Transparency Around When and How Equity Considerations Are Assessed

Equity Considerations	
Theme	Sample Feedback
Area for Improvement: More Transparency Around ARTO Assessment	Promotions Stakeholders
	<i>We have little information on how this information is taken into consideration. (Survey: Dean/Director)</i>
	<i>I think it is important that we know how they're measured. Otherwise it's just yeah, what are you doing it for? And is it of any benefit or not? Because it's not just career interruption, is it? Other hardships and things like that are taken into account... or not, who knows. But how do we know? How do we advise [applicants]? Yes, put it in. No, don't. Or, you know, the best way to phrase things as well. (Focus Group: Mentor)</i>
	Promotions Applicants
	<i>The University needs to provide clarity on how these guidelines are actually operationalised in the promotion application review and how they are taken into consideration. (Survey: Level C Applicant, Woman, First in Family, CALD)</i>
	<i>This section is highly subjective and not transparent in how [it] is actually used to better understand an applicant's situation and impact on their outputs. (Survey: Level C Applicant, Woman, Parent)</i>
Area for Improvement: More Acknowledgement of Considerations Across Promotions Processes	Promotions Applicants
	<i>I've continued to output all of that, despite caring duties, and reducing my load to 0.8 because of my caring responsibilities. But there was absolutely not one ounce of acknowledgment or consideration of that in the feedback that [I was given]. So, I still don't understand or know if that was even read, I don't know. [...] There's no transparency. There's no indicator, there's no ... yeah, I don't know ... I have no idea about what that actually played in the decision making. (Interview: Level D Applicant, Parent)</i>
	<i>In retrospect, I'm not sure they looked at it anyway, and I'll tell you why: because when I went and got feedback, which I eventually was able to get [...] there was a comment about, you know, 'So why haven't you done more research things? You haven't done a lot of research because you haven't'. I'm not sure they read it. And when I said, 'You know, I've been through these difficult times, and I'd written it in there'... (Interview: Level D Applicant, Carer)</i>
	<i>It was fine - I put in part time work and caregiving issues. But I'm not sure how this was considered by the committee. I had a lot of other achievements so it may not have been a factor - don't know as no feedback given other than being successful. (Survey: Level D Applicant, Woman, Parent, Carer)</i>
	<i>Even a report like, 'We read your statement, we can see that you basically have cared for two young school children during this period, had a [governance] appointment. Oh, but you have still continued to publish. We think that's pretty bloody amazing, but you didn't quite have... blah blah blah... you know'. (Interview: Level D Applicant)</i>
	<i>Maybe share some examples, I was really lost on how to fill in this section. (Survey: Level C Applicant, Woman, Parent, Carer)</i>
	<i>[The Equity Considerations statement] is something that staff sometimes need help with (I have been approached several times for this help). [...] Some staff don't know how to approach that section of the form, or whether they should fill it in at all even where they have obvious equity considerations. (Survey: Level D Applicant, Woman, CALD, Parent)</i>

Others caution ARTOs are not yet fully socialised across WSU, including for applicants (Table 30).

Table 30. Area for Improvement: More Equity Considerations Guidance for Stakeholders and Applicants

Equity Considerations	
Theme	Sample Feedback
Area for Improvement: More Applicant and Stakeholder Guidance	Promotions Stakeholders
	<i>Great clarification. However, the execution/explanation of {ARTO} across the executives, directors and mentors needs to be carefully conducted. Many of our senior staff still do not appreciate equity issues (given they have not experienced them, lack empathy and/or do not value its importance), which makes it difficult to advocate for their recognition and/or assessment in promotions applications. (Survey: EDWP member)</i>

	Promotions Applicants
	<i>It was hard to know what to say and how to say it. I accidentally chatted with my school equity rep and she offered to help; she looked over and advised on this section several times. This was very helpful. (Survey: Level D Applicant, Woman, First in Family, Carer)</i>
	<i>I think that further institutional support may be useful in the effective formulation/presentation of an equity statement, as this may be a new process for some. (Survey: Level C Applicant, Woman, CALD, Parent)</i>
	<i>Maybe share some examples, I was really lost on how to fill in this section. (Survey: Level C Applicant, Woman, Parent, Carer)</i>
	<i>[The Equity Considerations statement] is something that staff sometimes need help with (I have been approached several times for this help). [...] Some staff don't know how to approach that section of the form, or whether they should fill it in at all even where they have obvious equity considerations. (Survey: Level D Applicant, Woman, CALD, Parent)</i>

APC Equity Workshops

All (100%) APC member respondents who attended tailored Equity Workshops found them helpful (Table 31), reporting they cemented their understanding of ARTO and opened up safe, fruitful discussion about ethical approaches to collective decision-making (Table 32). APC members sought more focus on cultural diversity in future workshops.

Table 31. Impact: Helpfulness of APC Equity Workshops

APC Equity Workshops						
	Helpful		Unhelpful		Not accessed	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Key Support Initiatives						
Academic Promotions Committee (APC) Equity Workshops	7	100%	0	0%	2	17%

Table 32. Impact: Academic Promotions Committee (APC) Equity Workshops

Pilot Programs: Academic Promotions Committee (APC) Equity Workshops	
Theme	Sample Feedback
Pilot APC Equity Workshops: Reinforcing ARTO and Fortifying Equity in Collective Decision-Making	<i>[The workshop] did make me more aware of the need to give careful consideration to the equity issues for each candidate. (Survey: APC member)</i>
	<i>[The workshop] affirmed my position to build in reasonable expectations [for applicants]. (Survey: APC member)</i>
	<i>[Most valuable was] the opportunity for all panel members to be on the same page in relation to equity considerations and to discuss our concerns about how to make equitable decisions. (Survey: APC member)</i>
	<i>[Most valuable was] the opportunity to share freely [was valuable]. (Survey: APC member)</i>
	<i>Many thanks for a thought provoking session. It's great to hear of all that WSU is doing to lead in this sector. Thank you also for creating the conditions for a safe space to air discomforts. Discomfort is a good thing - without discomfort, deep reflection, learning and change is not possible. (Session feedback: APC member)</i>
	<i>There is more to do in terms of bias. I was thinking about accent, cultural background as well. I think it was good to have more of a focus on gender in this iteration. But the issues around culture [diversity] are pertinent, especially where we have Interviews. (Session feedback: APC member)</i>

University Culture | Shaping a Culture of Support

WSU is progressing well in building a supportive promotions culture, wherein clear guidance and new pilot initiatives are taking hold. Applicants actively accessed key support initiatives, which they found overwhelmingly helpful (Table 33). Consultations with central promotions figures were highly valued (>90% helpful). Both women applicants to senior levels and AP Mentors expressed the (unprompted) view that WSU has developed a supportive promotions culture (Table 34).

Table 33. Impact: Helpfulness of Centralised Promotions Supports (Applicants Only)

Helpfulness of Centralised Promotions Supports (Applicants Only)						
	Helpful		Unhelpful		Not accessed	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Central Support Initiatives						
Academic Promotions Web Resources	51	89%	6	11%	1	2%
University-wide promotions information sessions	46	92%	4	8%	9	15%
University-wide interview information sessions	37	92%	3	8%	18	31%
Spring Forward Sessions	17	85%	3	15%	N/A	N/A
Mock Interviews	17	77%	5	23%	N/A	N/A
Central Support Figures						
Academic Promotions Coordinator	46	98%	1	2%	8	2%
Academic Promotions Mentors	31	91%	3	9%	23	40%
Distinguished Professors	21	91%	2	9%	N/A	N/A
Other Internal Colleagues	37	95%	2	5%	14	26%
External Colleagues / Mentors	26	96%	1	4%	27	50%

Table 34. Impact: Supportive Promotions Culture at WSU

Supportive Promotions Culture at WSU	
Theme	Sample Feedback
Supportive Promotions Culture at WSU	Promotions Applicants
	<i>Thank you for the supportive process of applying for academic promotion. (Survey: Level D Applicant, Woman, Parent, First in Family, CALD)</i>
	<i>I felt very supported in this process. (Survey: Level E Applicant, Woman)</i>
	<i>I found the process very supportive all round. (Survey: Level D Applicant, Woman, Carer)</i>
	<i>I think the institution is very supportive and clear they want people to be promoted wherever possible. (Survey: Level D Applicant, Woman)</i>
	<i>The University currently goes over and above to offer support (Survey: Level E Applicant, First in Family, Parent)</i>
	<i>I acknowledge the significant work that has been undertaken in this [area]. (Survey: Level E Applicant, Woman, First in Family, Carer)</i>
	<i>I found the process very supportive all round. (Survey: Level D Applicant, Woman, Carer)</i>
	Mentors
	<i>The University has done great job in this aspect. I felt that I got all the support needed when I applied for D and E. (Survey: Mentor)</i>
<i>I think that the uni does a very good job in this area, with lots of information sessions, with reminders of deadlines etc. (Survey: Mentor)</i>	

Spring Forward

Spring Forward participants found workshops informative, reassuring and productively tailored to local contexts (Table 35).

Table 35. Impact: Pilot Programs, Spring Forward

Pilot Program: Spring Forward	
Theme	Sample Feedback
Pilot Spring Forward Workshops: Reassurance and Tailored Advice	<i>[These presenters were] so clear and friendly, made me feel positive about a sometimes-uncertain process. (Session Feedback: Spring Forward Participant)</i>
	<i>This session has been really helpful for when I consider future promotion and, more importantly, for me to support my staff members to apply. (Session Feedback: Spring Forward Participant)</i>
	<i>[These presenters are] always a wealth of knowledge and very helpful. (Participant, Session feedback)</i>
	<i>This has been reassuring overall. (Session Feedback: Spring Forward Participant)</i>
	<i>I learned a lot and appreciate these experiences. (Session Feedback: Spring Forward Participant)</i>
	<i>I especially appreciated the School-specific focus of the Q&A. (Session Feedback: Spring Forward Participant)</i>
	<i>This was well curated and managed. (Session Feedback: Spring Forward Participant)</i>
	<i>I appreciate the time and wisdom today. This workshop was a great success. (Session Feedback: Spring Forward Participant)</i>

Academic Promotions Mentoring

Promotions-specific mentoring was instrumental for providing access to a broad range of academic experiences, perspectives and career trajectories (Table 36). Mentors and Distinguished Professors helped applicants overcome imposter syndrome, articulate strengths and clarify career visions. Mentors are equity-fluent and recognise they make a collegial contribution.

Table 36. Impact: Academic Promotions Mentors and Distinguished Professors

Pilot Program: Academic Promotions Mentors & Distinguished Professors	
Theme	Sample Feedback
Academic Promotions Mentors: Combating Imposter Syndrome, Modelling Alternate Patterns of Achievement, and Clarifying Vision	Promotions Applicants
	<i>Colleagues from outside my school [...] We are a hype crew. [They] have been really supportive and kind of telling me to [...] basically pull my finger out and stop with the impostor syndrome. And [one mentor] was so wonderful. She shared resources with me, like her promotions application. She talked me through some of the guidance she got from [her Deputy Dean] and that was just incredible. So, I would say colleagues outside [my School] have been my main supports in the process. (Interview: Level C Applicant, Carer)</i>
	<i>I was originally [in one School] and then transitioned into [another School] and [there were] very different ways of working: a very different focus, different architecture, different expectations. And I didn't know what I didn't know, and I didn't have anyone to talk to. [...] So, having a mentor helped me through a fairly difficult period, but also helped me focus on the idea of having a career plan or a progression plan, and as an aspect of that, working towards promotion. [...] I think young academics - certainly early-mid-career academics really benefit from that - really, really need that." (Interview: Level D Applicant, First in Family)</i>
	<i>[Equity Considerations] was a sensitive area for me, it was not easy to formulate my experiences of intersectional disadvantage without a sense of discomfort. This was therefore an area where I sought mentoring support explicitly. (Survey: Level C Applicant, Woman, CALD, Parent)</i>
	<i>I think we have the best possible mentoring for promotion applications. (Survey: Level D Applicant, Woman, Parent, Carer)</i>
	<i>If I hadn't had supportive mentors and senior members of the team supporting me I may have taken [my Academic Supervisor's] advice and not applied, yet I was successful. (Survey: Level C Applicant)</i>
	<i>I think some of this messaging is better off coming from [other] applicants themselves, applicants who aren't always the biggest research-hitters in terms of grant income and publications but were still able</i>

	<i>to demonstrate the requisite levels of achievement across all three areas, including research. (Survey: Level D Applicant)</i>
	<i>A lot of the workshops I've attended also emphasised the need for a story or narrative of who you are as an academic, and this seemed to be very forward-thinking for Level D. Most of the revisions I made to my narrative in response to feedback from mentors was about better articulating this. (Survey: Level D Applicant, Woman, CALD, First in Family, Parent)</i>
	Mentors
	<i>I think [my skills are] really about helping them capture things that are sort of outside the more traditional metrics. [...] It's about putting that into the application and making sure that's captured, but also showing how that's influencing the research and the teaching. [...] Because a lot of people who are applying for promotion (especially for Level As) they think it's all about how many ARC/NHMRC grants they're involved with, or how many publications they get, and oftentimes it's zero. So, they're sort of really demotivated, and say, 'Well, I don't have any huge grants', and you say, 'Well, on Level A, there's not many people who do.' So, even if you're not working on those directly, there's a lot of other stuff that you're working on that you should be putting into that application. (Focus Group: DP)</i>
	<i>My strategy is to make a conversation regarding what is your main strengths - finding the "jewel", that's what I use. 'Where do you shine, and why?' And then, 'Where do you think you less shine, and what do you do about it? So, how do you approach it?' (Focus Group: Mentor)</i>
	<i>In terms of what I try to give people that are younger than me in terms of their career trajectory [...] it's understanding from an institutional point of view where you fit within the organisation and what your role is and how your individual plan [...] for the next year or five years fits into your Division [...] and how that feeds into the University [...] A lot of people don't think like that. They think about 'well, I've got a deadline for a conference coming up at the end of the month, and I've got a paper that I need to revise, and I've got a class that I need to teach'. And that's all true, but you kind of lose the forest for the trees. (Focus Group: Mentor)</i>
	<i>Promotion is not reward for effort. Promotion is employing for a new position. And so then of course, that's when the mentoring really kicks in, I get a lot of people saying 'I actually haven't figured out what my research, teaching, or whatever, vision is'. So, 'OK, well, we better find the narrative in your track record that comes up with [something] feasible, exciting...'. (Focus Group: DP)</i>
	<i>I don't think that the role of a promotions mentor is just limited to promotions. It should really be an academic mentor. [...] It's the kind of informal conversation, which is not just then limited to just the promotion application and just going through it [...] but to chart a course and to navigate through the politics of it all. (Focus Group: Mentor)</i>

EPIC-C

EPIC-C's early-career participants and Peer Mentors found the program enriching and supportive, with lasting benefits of confidence, support and career aspiration. Reciprocity in the peer alliance/mentorship model was particularly beneficial for clarifying personal and collective career values and for extending camaraderie across School/Institute contexts (Table 37).

Table 37. Impact: Pilot Programs, EPIC Mentoring Program

Pilot Programs: EPIC-C Mentoring Program	
Theme	Sample Feedback
Pilot EPIC-C Mentoring Program: Championing Peers and Building Connection Across School/Institute Contexts	EPIC-C Participants
	<i>I was part of the EPIC peer mentoring group for women and this was very helpful and showed the support that WSU has for promotion. This really helped me have the confidence to go for promotion. (Survey: Level C Applicant, Woman, Parent, Carer)</i>
	<i>I've never felt so championed by the women. Like, the women who were in that group just championed, me and my view of myself and my place at the university. And that's something that was only able to happen because we had formed this group and a place of sharing. (EPIC evaluation: ECR Participant)</i>
	<i>Rather than being so black and white and rigid about...the building blocks to academic career, we were really kind of trying to ...open our eyes up to different possibilities. And really, we kept coming back to values and what we want, what's going to be enriching and satisfying career for us, and it doesn't have to look like the cookie cutter academic career. (EPIC evaluation: Mentor)</i>
	<i>[Peer alliance] was something that was unique to this opportunity. [I signed up because] I thought there would be benefits in finding other people who had managed challenges that were popping up the similar level or that could understand. (EPIC evaluation: ECR Participant)</i>
	<i>Peer support is really important because it's more reciprocal. (EPIC evaluation: Mentor)</i>
	<i>I've actually really struck up a bit of our friendship and collaborative space with [my peer mentor]. And that was really awesome and that that person has been really supportive very helpful to kind of learn</i>

	<i>from her experience to, you know, and just to have is that advocate for you to give it advice here advice from. (EPIC evaluation: ECR Participant)</i>
	<i>[I felt] able to expand network and perspectives with mix of academics: I definitely think that that is a huge benefit of being part of this program because not everyone is from within my school we have people from different schools and it was really great to linking with people from different campuses and different parts of the uni, who I wouldn't have ever come across, really before. (EPIC evaluation: ECR Participant)</i>
	<i>[EPIC] made me feel a lot more connected, it gave me some colleagues [...] and also reminded me of my internal and external resources. (EPIC evaluation: ECR Participant)</i>

Mock Interviews

Mock Interviews offered effective, targeted preparation and reduced intimidation (Table 38).

Table 38. Impact: Pilot Programs, Mock Interviews

Pilot Program: Mock Interviews	
Theme	Sample Feedback
Pilot Mock Interviews: Effective Preparation, Reduced Intimidation	Promotions Applicants
	<i>I had a series of mock interviews with individual senior colleagues in my school. Their feedback assisted me in organising my line of thought in a coherent manner. It also helped me in building my confidence to boldly talk about my achievements. [...] I also approached academics from other schools to read my scripts. This assisted me in preparing for the interview for a multidisciplinary audience. (Survey: Level D Applicant, Woman)</i>
	<i>It was super helpful. My colleague gave me great feedback and I spent a lot of time afterwards preparing for the interview based on her advice. (Survey: Level D Applicant, Woman)</i>
	<i>The more mock interviews I completed, the more confident I became. (Survey: Level E Applicant, Woman)</i>
	<i>[A staff member] did a mock interview with me and it made a huge difference. (Session Feedback: Spring Forward Participant)</i>
	<i>[Two staff members] coached me – and it was brilliant! That’s what made the difference. (Session Feedback: Spring Forward Participant)</i>
	<i>I went to an information session after [a difficult personal circumstance]. And they stressed at that session how important it is to mock interview. And I wouldn't have, I wasn't in a mind-set to set up that myself. I needed that something external to push me to do it at that point because I was upset. And if I hadn't have done the mock interviews, I think I would have had a terrible experience when it came to the interview itself. (Interview: Level D Applicant)</i>
	<i>Within the School, some colleagues shared their interview questions and the interview process, and their interview experience. I think the mock interview really helped in this. That was the thing that really, I think, played a key role. [...] It, it helped me to identify where I might get stuck or, you know, what the kind of questions are that may be asked, the weaknesses in the application or not the weaknesses, but the things that maybe need to be highlighted out here. [...] So, they kind of explained how you should try to answer a question so that it's understandable across disciplines. (Interview: Level D Applicant, Parent)</i>
	<i>Hearing from people who have sat on promotion panels and also about interviews for promotion were of greatest assistance as they were directly relevant. (Survey: Level D Applicant, Woman, CALD, First in Family)</i>
	<i>It was really helpful. The interview itself was useful practice, but it was the conversations beforehand and feedback afterwards that really helped me to understand what I needed to do. I think I gave a pretty terrible mock interview, to be honest, but it was good to know what I needed to do to turn it around. (Survey: Level D Applicant, Woman)</i>

Other Supports

A variety of other supports were considered practical and comprehensive. As a collective, these were seen as additional indicators of progress in developing a supportive promotions culture at WSU (Table 39).

Table 39. Impact: Other Structural Supports

Other Structural Supports	
Theme	Sample Feedback
Other Structural Supports: Practical and Comprehensive	Promotions Applicants
	<i>The best website with excellent information plus recordings, opportunities for mock interviews which were excellent ([PVC HASS] organised these for HAAS and [the interviewer] was brilliant), the DVC's office provided ample opportunities with senior members of the academy and [APC Coordinator] is indispensable to the process. (Survey: Level D Applicant, Woman, Parent, Carer)</i>
	<i>I think there was at least 2 or 3 webinars that were held about the promotions process. I went to at least 2 [...] and they were really helpful, and they helped me think about the application and perspective. But they also, I guess, reassured me that everyone is an individual so it gave me, I guess, the permission to kind of highlight my strength, and not necessarily always be comparing to other researchers who had a different trajectory or whatever. (Interview: Level D Applicant, CALD, Parent)</i>
	<i>Some of the support processes were really useful. I went to a number of the webinars and I found them really useful. So, the support, the advice, the information, even down to what the interview would be like, what sort of questions you might be asked, how to craft your narrative, how to make your pitch, what to do, what not to do. Having academics with recent experience come in and talk to you about what to do and not to do, that was invaluable. The Level D interview is quite daunting, but I went into that well-prepared, because it was discussed at length in some of the webinars, [and] in some of the conversations I had with colleagues who had been through it. (Interview: Level D Applicant, First in Family)</i>
	<i>I felt very supported by [the AP Coordinator] and also the library helped update my researcher profile. My Director was very supportive and the panel very kind and encouraging. (Survey: Level D Applicant, Woman, CALD, Parent)</i>
	<i>I think the guidance [the Coordinator] provides is excellent. She brings together the materials you need, the resources you need. She gives you a clear plan and template, and she gives you timely feedback. And she's encouraging. (Interview: Level D Applicant)</i>
	<i>Thank you to [the Coordinator] for all that she does in supporting colleagues navigate the promotions process. Professional, fair, clearly articulates the process and application process. (Interview: Level E Applicant, Parent and Carer)</i>
	<i>One colleague, who just got her Associate Professor, said 'Have I been to the library and asked them for my, to do the research track record, publications comparison?'; which I had never known about. [...] And that made my research actually look quite good, whereas I had been thinking [...] that it was just appalling, you know. But when I got the information back, the librarian went through it with me, they were a fantastic help. They demonstrated that I was actually doing bloody well in the field in comparison to others, and there are certain metrics that we were very positive. (Interview: Level D Applicant)</i>
	<i>The resources were great. Everything was great. [...] I commend the university for their resourcing of promotions. (Interview: Level C Applicant, Carer)</i>
<i>I think all of the resources, the opportunities to ask questions, I think all of that's really good. (Interview: Level D Applicant, First in Family, Parent)</i>	

Feedback and Ongoing Support for Unsuccessful Applicants

Quality of feedback and ongoing support for unsuccessful applicants were identified as important process areas for improvement (Table 40).

Table 40. Area for Improvement: Quality of Feedback and Ongoing Support for Unsuccessful Applicants

Areas for Improvement: Process Improvements	
Theme	Sample Feedback
Area for Improvement: Quality of Feedback	Promotions Stakeholders
	<i>I think there has been a lot of support, but [...] for applicants who submitted strong applications that require a bit more work [...] perhaps it would be possible to provide an opportunity for individual mentorship. (Survey: Mentor)</i>
	<i>Ensure those that do not get promoted successfully are provided with feedback as to why. The letter they receive is really not very nice. It needs to include a few dot points on why the application was not successful so they have something they can work with right away instead of trying to get an appointment with the [APC Chair], that might take a long time. (Survey: Mentor)</i>
<i>I think transparency would also help, and good feedback. Many, many, many people that I know haven't got good feedback, either successful or non-successful. So, if they don't understand why they made it</i>	

	<i>or what they could do now to get to the next stage... because that's the question, [...] 'What do I have to do next?' [...] [This] would be really, really important. I don't think we do a very good job in that area. (Focus Group: APC Member)</i>
	<i>It would be helpful to have much more direct and specific feedback on what unsuccessful applicants need to do for future success. (Survey: Dean/Director)</i>
Area for Improvement: Ongoing Support for Unsuccessful Applicants	Promotions Stakeholders
	<i>Applications take so much work and commitment, so ensuring unsuccessful applicants receive adequate support is important. For applicants who submitted strong applications that require a bit more work (i.e., those who are close but maybe should have waited for an additional 6-12 months) perhaps it would be possible to provide an opportunity for individual feedback and mentorship. (Survey: Mentor)</i>
	<i>I think the University does a great job in supporting applicants. It is probably incumbent upon the University to provide specific resources for those who aren't successful. This generally comes from a helping hand from the School but is therefore contingent upon the School leadership and setup. Perhaps there needs to be a specific approach to helping those who aren't successful. This could involve the mentors providing advice as they it is natural for someone to get defensive. The mentors or a new mentor is out of the firing line for this defensiveness and may be able to help the applicant's next application. (Survey: Mentor)</i>
	Promotions Applicants
	<i>A lot more work needs to be done with those who are not successful. [...] Support should be around how to be successful next time, but also about how to recognise the worth and value in what you are doing following an unsuccessful application. This is currently not happening. (Survey: Level D Applicant, Woman, First in Family)</i>
	<i>Yeah, what happens if you don't receive a promotion? How are those [staff] supported at that point in time, and then what is provided for them to still further their career if they're stagnated for 2 years? Because there is nothing except one letter and one interview, and that's it. You're dropped like a hot rock, so there is no support. There's nothing there to then continue to further career progression in that 2-year period. (Interview: Level D Applicant)</i>

Local Cultures | Mixed Experiences

In local contexts, consultations with senior managers and supervisors were highly valued ($\geq 85\%$ helpful, Table 41). Applicants were least likely to engage Deputy Deans/Directors and Discipline Leads in consultation around applications.

Table 41. Impact: Helpfulness of Senior Managers

Helpfulness of Key Promotions Supports (Applicants Only)						
	Helpful		Unhelpful		Not accessed	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Senior Managers						
Deans/Directors	42	86%	7	14%	8	15%
Deputy Deans/Directors	23	85%	4	15%	27	50%
Discipline Leads	18	86%	3	14%	33	61%
Academic Supervisors	44	88%	6	12%	6	15%

Applicants, Mentors and APC members recognised some encouraging and proactively supportive local School/Division cultures across all Clusters, where hands-on equity-minded Deans/Directors and collegial support was foundational to applicant confidence and motivation to apply (Table 42).

Table 42. Impact: Supportive Local Promotions Cultures at WSU

Supportive Local Promotions Cultures at WSU	
Theme	Sample Feedback
Proactive, Hands-On Dean/Director Support	Promotions Applicants
	<i>I felt very supported again by the Dean. I really felt that he was very clever at sort of crafting responses together, and really sort of listened to what I was doing, and really sort of helped me to write. Something I've always found challenging is to write accounts of what I'm doing in ways one that are clear and that are appealing. (Interview: Level D Applicant, Parent)</i>
	<i>[My] Dean was very supportive. Very, very supportive, actually. They [gave] extensive feedback, working on the application through several one-on-one meetings. Within the school, it's all been very, very positive, I think. So just to give you an example: the Associate Dean HDR went on ADP, asked me to be Acting Associate Dean HDR, gave extra responsibility, gave me leadership opportunities, and also helped with the HDR supervision aspects so that students could complete on time. And of course, if students can complete on time that helps in the application – it shows up positively. My Associate Dean Research organised the mock interviews and also gave feedback on the application. In terms of the vision, strategic aspects, the layout and high-level changes, [they and the Dean] really helped with the application. So, within the School, it's been very, very positive. (Interview: Level D Applicant, Parent)</i>
	<i>The Dean was also very supportive. [They] provided very good advice on the actual application itself. I also reached out to a couple of fellow Deputy Deans and talked about the interview with them. They provided some input around what sort of questions are likely to be asked. I also approached two other colleagues in the School. (Interview: Level D Applicant)</i>
	<i>My Dean offered to match me with an application mentor, as well as arrange a mock interview. My supervisor was great, too, and kept encouraging me to apply and supported my application every step of the way. I'm fairly well connected across the School and was able to reach out to senior colleagues myself for a lot of this support and mentoring, but it's good that the School assists here, as not everyone is in that position or knows who to ask. (Survey: Level D Applicant, Woman, CALD, Parent)</i>
	Promotions Stakeholders
	<i>I've had our Dean reach out to me to say, 'Are you speaking to those two individuals about their promotion?' The process is that you reach out to the Dean and ask if [they think you are ready], but this was sort of almost in reverse. He was saying, 'These people seem ready, are you having those conversations with them?' With one, I was. The other, I wasn't. But that prompted me to make sure that I was having a conversation with both of them, and both will apply this year. [...] They're just such outstanding young and mid-career academics [and] it's appropriate that they should be applying and they both happened to be women. So, I can't say that the Dean's prompting had a gender awareness about it, but I thought it was impressive. (Focus Group: Mentor)</i>
<i>Knowing our Dean, he is very mindful of access and equity issues, and I see him making conspicuous efforts to... whether it's gender, whether it's cultural background... making strong efforts to ensure that people who should be focusing on this, have the confidence of the Dean. [...] It's partly based on an awareness that some people are disadvantaged in terms of promotion and need more active support and encouragement. (Focus Group: Mentor)</i>	
Proactive, Generous Collegial Support	Promotions Stakeholders
	<i>[A staff member in an Institute], he's like their promotion mentor. He goes around and he identifies and he mentors people who are coming through the Institute, and he taps them on the shoulder, and he says, 'You know, you should be considering applying for promotion' [...] Some Schools and institutes do it really well, like Nursing has got people that are actually Directors of Workforce or something, and they go around and coach people and identify people and run workshops. (Focus Group: APC member)</i>
	Promotions Applicants
	<i>For me, this was a very positive experience. It was challenging to carve out the time for the application, but I found the collegial support at my School exceptional. (Survey: Level C Applicant, Woman, CALD, Parent)</i>
<i>It was great obtaining the support I received from my colleagues, my School and the University – all of which added to the successful outcome of my application. (Survey: Level D Applicant, Woman, Parent, First in Family, CALD)</i>	
<i>The support of my colleagues in other Schools was brilliant. The sharing of interview strategies and potential questions / reviewing applications for possible interview questions was critical in my success, I believe. (Survey: Level D Applicant, Woman, First in Family, CALD)</i>	

However, others recognised differences across local contexts, including with senior manager attitudes or approaches and clarity of information (Table 43). Deans/Directors also sought more feedback and guidance on the promotions process to bolster staff support.

Table 43. Area for Improvement: Differential Local Cultures

Differential School/Institute Cultures Around Academic Promotions	
Theme	Sample Feedback
Area for Improvement: Differential School/Institute Cultures	Promotions Stakeholders
	<i>It is very dependent, I feel, on each School because we have such a School- and Institute-based structure. [...] Our School is too small and thin on the ground to do anything. We keep talking about doing things but it doesn't happen. (Focus Group: APC member)</i>
	Promotions Applicants
	<i>I think, to be honest, the main reason people don't go for promotion or they do go for promotion is based on the culture of their School or Institute. And if you're in a situation where there's a bit of... I'm not going to say to tall poppy, but you feel like you want to celebrate your work and your students... But if you're in a situation where there's eye rolling or there are comments made to you, it can be really difficult to find the motivation to go through with that process. So, I think at the heart of promotions is the culture of the School or Institute that will ultimately determine how people feel about promotions. (Interview: Level C Applicant)</i>
	<i>I [feel supported], but I'm not always sure that this support is fully implemented by everyone, or is uniformly applied across the University. [...] Support and experiences can differ drastically. (Survey: Level D Applicant, Woman, Level D, CALD, First in Family, Parent)</i>
	<i>My Dean only wanted to read a one-page of dot-points of my application. He then said no. Within a very short time span from the new documents, he delayed giving me an appointment when I asked to further discuss this, knowing that a page of dot points wasn't enough when he didn't know me well. We finally had an appointment the Friday before the whole application was due on the Wednesday. he finally, grudgingly agreed that I could apply, but said in these exact words, "but I think you will fail". This was not said in a kind or friendly manner, and it was from a powerful male to a vulnerable woman. How is that equity and support? (Survey: Level D Applicant, Woman, First in Family, Carer)</i>
	<i>I wonder what it would be like to work in an environment where you're actually encouraged and supported. I don't think that's what it's like at Western. That's not my experience. What I experience is you're never doing enough like this person who's the super star who is the protégé of the Dean [who] everyone loves and they don't have children. And I can't compete with that. (Interview: Level D Applicant, Parent)</i>
<i>My best supporters and advisors were from outside my school. No school based sessions or mock interviews were available, even when requested. (Survey: Level D Applicant, Woman, First in Family, Carer)</i>	
Area for Improvement: More Consistent Guidance and Training for Senior Managers	Promotions Stakeholders
	<i>I would find it helpful to see examples of other Deans' reports and some samples of applications which succeeded and applications which didn't. I still find it very hard to advise whether someone will be successful or not. (Survey: Dean/Director)</i>
	<i>it is not clear to what degree Dean/Director's report/s are considered by the Committee - with sometimes the outcomes being inconsistent with their recommendations. It would be helpful if Dean/Directors were provided with feedback on their staff applications so to inform the support and reports that Dean/Directors provide to their staff in the future. (Survey: Dean/Director)</i>
	<i>It would be useful to have feedback on discussions and decisions, at the moment, we only get feedback on those unsuccessful applicants who choose to have us present. (Survey: Dean/Director)</i>
	<i>I think there needs to be some education for academic managers [...] across the university. For some of these people, it could have been years since they have updated themselves on how the promotions process works and so they may not be giving the best advice to applicants. (Survey: APC member)</i>
	<i>There is no "one size fits all" for all Schools and Institutes, but formalising and resourcing School/Institute-based supports could lead to better quality applications and better prepared applicants. (Survey: APC member)</i>
	Promotions Applicants
	<i>Better communication and training of senior school members that provide mentorship is required or better communication to senior staff in the school around what is needed in an application for success at the current time. (Survey: Level C Applicant, Woman, Level C, Parent)</i>
	<i>The Dean having a better understanding of the promotion guidelines/regulations. (Survey: Level C Applicant, Woman, First in Family)</i>
	<i>People having the correct information as to the process, especially some of the constraints as to what can be included over what period. (Survey: Level C Applicant, Woman, First in Family)</i>
<i>Schools, Deans and Clusters could share some of their support practices and the University could encourage all Schools to implement these practices. (Interview: Level D Applicant)</i>	
<i>Having Deans and Deputy Deans who are more impartial and equitable, more diverse representation in leadership in Schools. Equitable support from within the school rather than have to seek support from outside of one's school. (Survey: Level D Applicant, Woman, First in Family, Parent)</i>	

Continuous Improvement | Unlocking Equity in Academic Promotions at WSU

The majority of staff agreed that “Overall, WSU supports equity in Academic Promotions” (Table 44). APC Members and Mentors were most convinced, while EDWPs showed mixed response. Importantly, most Deans/Directors were unsure. Women and first in family applicants were less likely to agree. No applicants who were unsuccessful in their application ($n=6$) agreed that the process was equitable. Applicants to Level C were least likely to agree (-16%). ARTO submissions had no differential impact. However, applicants who attended Spring Forward sessions at which equity features were profiled were more likely to agree (+17%).

Table 44. Impact: Stakeholder Perspectives on Equity in Promotions at WSU

Overall Perspectives on Equity in Academic Promotions at WSU (All Stakeholders)						
	Yes		No		Unsure	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Stakeholders						
All Stakeholders	67	63%	16	15%	24	22%
Applicants	34	63%	10	19%	10	19%
APC Members	7	88%	0	0%	1	13%
Deans/Directors	1	20%	0	0%	4	80%
Mentors	18	86%	0	0%	3	14%
EDWP Members	7	36%	5	26%	7	36%
Applicants by Sub-Group						
Women	17	52%	9	27%	7	21%
Men	17	81%	1	5%	3	14%
Parents	18	69%	5	19%	3	12%
Carers	9	69%	2	15%	2	15%
No caring responsibilities	10	63%	1	6%	5	31%
Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD)	12	63%	4	21%	3	14%
Not Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (non-CALD)	21	66%	5	16%	6	19%
First in Family	12	48%	6	24%	7	28%
Not First in Family	22	79%	4	14%	2	7%

Staff valued the equity progress WSU has made, citing more Executive and manager awareness around equity issues, the centrality of Equity Considerations statements, and the role of the Equity Observer as indicators of progress (Table 45).

Table 45. Impact: Progress Advancing Equity in Promotions at WSU

Progress Advancing Equity in Promotions at WSU	
Theme	Sample Feedback
Progress in advancing equity in Academic Promotions at WSU:	Promotions Stakeholders
	<i>I commend and am very pleased to be part of a University which is doing, and seen to be doing, innovative work in D, E&I. (Survey: APC member)</i>
	<i>On the whole, the promotion process at Western is equitable, fair and strongly based on merit, even if minor changes could be made. (Survey: APC member)</i>
	<i>Absolutely. The Committee spends a lot of time evaluating equity considerations and gives them full due. (Survey: Distinguished Professor)</i>

Significant Steps Forward	<i>I have sat on a number of panels for promotion outside of Western and I do think the work that WSU does to ensure equity is a best-practice example for the sector. (Survey: Mentor)</i>
	Promotions Applicants
	<i>I believe that equity issues have received more prominence at WSU in recent years, and this is to be applauded. (Survey: Level C Applicant, Woman, Parent, CALD)</i>
	<i>I do [think WSU supports equity in promotion] now. I acknowledge the changes implemented by senior women in advocating for caring and other equity considerations to be included [among other aspects]. (Survey: Level E Applicant, Woman, Parent, Carer)</i>
	<i>My own promotion success is a testament to this, whilst managing intersecting levels of disadvantage. (Survey: Level C Applicant, Woman, CALD, Parent)</i>
	<i>It was of comfort to know that the equity officer would be present on the panel, and it was clearly not a tick-box exercise. I commend WSU on its approach to equity.” (Survey: Level D Applicant, Woman, Parent, Carer)</i>
	<i>On the whole, my second experience of promotion was much better supported and I think this is testament not just to a change in Dean but also to the equity conversations and amendments that have emerged in this space and some of the education happening around those changes at the School managerial level about how gender equity manifests, how we need to be aware of it, and how we can mitigate against it. (Survey: Level D Applicant, Woman, CALD, First in Family)</i>
	<i>My recent experience was actually quite positive [...] The amount of support materials that were there was excellent.” (Interview: Level D Applicant, First in Family)</i>
	<i>There have been significant steps forward, but still a lot of work to do. (Survey: Level D Applicant, Woman, First in Family)</i>
<i>I acknowledge the significant work that has been undertaken in this area. (Survey: Level E Applicant)</i>	

EDWP members, APC members and Deans/Directors were particularly attuned to the need for WSU to actively extend its equity focus beyond gender (Table 46). Considerations for CALD applicants was identified as an equity gap requiring priority attention.

Table 46. Area for Improvement: Gaps in Advancing Equity in Promotions at WSU

Current Gaps in Advancing Equity and a Supportive Promotions Culture at WSU	
Theme	Sample Feedback
Equity Gap: Need to Extend Focus	Promotions Stakeholders
	<i>The university supports equity in relation to gender and gender identity, it does not seem to target or collect data on any other issues of equity. (Survey: Dean/Director)</i>
	<i>Gender (white women, and Aboriginal and [Torres] Strait Islander)? Yes. Intersectionality? No. (Survey: Distinguished Professor)</i>
	<i>I understand why [embedding Indigenous priorities] is important generally but why more so than any other equity area? (e.g., disability, poverty reduction, etc). Would like to see this as a more general category. (Survey: Level C Applicant)</i>
	<i>One cannot say that the WSU Academic Promotion policy and guidelines completely ignore equity, but at the same time, there are still many neglected (or deliberately excluded) aspects of equity. In general, the University has not shifted their position which prefers only a small section of diversity and equity, mainly those aspects which are considered easier to 'fix' (e.g., binary gender instead of the full gender spectrum) [...]. Clear, specific provisions are put in place for these limited range of equity matters, whereas everything else must resort to generic provisions which provide little equity assurance for individuals with these particular traits. (Survey: EDWP member)</i>
	<i>It is painful to see that the University still focuses on a very narrow inclusion of E&D matters and clearly ignoring intersectionalities. Gender composition of the Promotions Panel is a clear example, where it still targets only the low-hanging fruits of disciplinary and binary gender balances, with special provisions for Indigenous applicants, completely neglecting all other aspects of E&D and their intersectionalities. (Survey: EDWP member)</i>
Equity Gap: Cultural and Linguistic Diversity	Promotions Stakeholders
	<i>Equity is critically important commitment that the university has but the promotion process is not transparent and it appears to be inconsistent in its decisions which creates a perception of inequity and can be deeply distressing to staff, particularly to those from diverse cultural backgrounds. (Survey: Dean/Director)</i>
	<i>Conversations with staff from CALD communities suggests that their promotions are denied more number of times. I know of staff who even after a few attempts have not gone over the fence [...] Each time a promotion is denied, the person goes through a lot of stress affecting their wellbeing. (Survey: EDWP member)</i>

	<p><i>Opportunity and access to promotion is limited [for] persons from CALD backgrounds. [I] have been in touch with some who have not been successful in the applications, the goal posts for them have been different to achieve as compared to those from non-CALD backgrounds. This can only be overcome if there is greater transparency. (Survey: EDWP member)</i></p>
	<p><i>Applicants who are not from English speaking backgrounds, who are not as articulate, with accents, and perhaps different notions of duty and obligation to the institution and hierarchy may be disadvantaged or misunderstood. (Survey: APC member)</i></p>
	<p><i>Ultimately [when] people get promoted, I assume, the writing of the report matters, and the kind of confidence that you display in that matters. So, there's different cultural attributes that sometimes mitigate against those things. But there's also language, you know, if it's second, or sometimes third language as well that can affect the writing. (Focus Group: Mentor)</i></p>
	<p><i>I think we really have to think about the second language background here, because a lot of what we do is language driven, and I just know... I mean, I'm a second language speaker, and it's hard even if you have talent and you know how language works, and all the rest of it. It's hard enough. But if you don't... It's quite challenging in that short, confined amount of space that you have in your application, for example, to write in a way that is persuasive, clear, succinct, all the rest of it, and then to do it in an interview. [...] They're going to have an uphill struggle in their interviews, and then they might not be able to understand some of the questions, some of the terms... (Focus Group: APC member)</i></p>
	<p><i>While I am very happy to see gender balance on the Academic Promotions Committee being enshrined in the policy, I am saddened by the fact that ethnic/cultural diversity is not guaranteed. [...] I understand it is impossible to cater for all aspects of diversity. However, considering how much WSU prides itself for being everything multicultural - from our community to student body to staff members - it is very sad to see ethnic diversity goes out of the window when it really counts, i.e., when crucial decisions are made. (Survey: EDWP member)</i></p>
	<p><i>Promotions data should be closely looked at to determine the number of times CALD applicants have applied before they are promoted if they at all. (Survey: EDWP member)</i></p>



FURTHER ACTION: WSU ACADEMIC PROMOTIONS

REF.	RATIONALE	ACTIONS & OUTPUTS	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBILITY	ACCOUNTABILITY	SUCCESS INDICATORS
1.	Continued monitoring of promotions outcomes, with improved capacity to enable intersectional analysis, is essential for ensuring equity in academic promotions at WSU. Actions to improve diversity data collection across promotions outcomes were implemented by DVC-REI and OPC in 2024.	Actively monitor diversity cohort patterns across promotions outcomes, and initiate biannual Academic Promotions Pulse Surveys , with capacity for intersectional analysis.	2025, biannually thereafter	DVC-REI and OPC	Academic Promotions Coordinator	Promotions outcomes and experiences are tracked and monitored, with access or satisfaction imbalances by cohort ($\pm >5\%$) monitored and mitigated.
2.	Recent innovations in WSU's <i>Academic Promotions Policy</i> and <i>Guidelines</i> are recognised as equity improvements, with strong support from stakeholders across the promotions process. However, women and first-in-family applicants report lower agreement that "WSU supports equity in academic promotions", some metrics commonly used as promotions evidence (e.g., student feedback) are known to be gender- and CALD-biased, and some aspects of academic achievement remain under-recognised or under-articulated in promotions criteria.	Continue to refine evidence-informed equity improvements within promotions policy, guidelines and supporting practices , including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ within Learning and Teaching Field of Academic Practice, model frameworks of achievement that remove/reduce reliance on SFT and SFU metrics; ▪ within Research Field of Academic Practice, enhance focus on research translation and commercialisation; ▪ within Engagement, Governance and Service Field of Practice, refine guidance around 'pastoral care and academic citizenship', including by making explicit reference to mentoring and contributions to WSU's GEDI work (e.g., via SAGE SAT, EDWPs, and VC's Gender Equity Fund); ▪ across all Fields of Academic Practice, provide more detailed 	2025 - 2027	DVC-REI, DVC-Education, PVC Engagement	DVC-REI	Women and first-in-family academic staff confidence that "WSU supports equity in academic promotions" increases (+20%). Overall staff confidence that "WSU supports equity in academic promotions" increases (+10%).



REF.	RATIONALE	ACTIONS & OUTPUTS	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBILITY	ACCOUNTABILITY	SUCCESS INDICATORS
		guidance and/or illustrative examples for achievement against <i>Indigenous Strategy</i> priorities.				
3.	Comprehension of promotions policy and processes has improved, primarily due to the streamlining of governing documents and the success of process-assurance and awareness-raising initiatives (e.g., Spring Forward myth-busting, APC workshops, and the Process Design Features presentation). However, more can be done to ensure clarity and consistency of values-based promotions messaging by Executive leaders (identified at Gender UNLIMITED* as an essential component of supportive promotions culture). Stakeholders also warn that Equity Considerations are not yet fully socialised and some concerns around disclosure remain. Applicants, mentors and Deans/Directors also seek more transparency about the promotions process, including how Equity Considerations statements are considered by APC.	Develop mechanisms to improve communications and transparency around academic promotions, with focus on clear and consistent messaging around WSU's approach to promotions, increased transparency around decision-making processes, and improved visibility of equity features across promotions policy and practice. Mechanisms may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ annual workshops for Academic Promotions Mentors and Distinguished Professors, with APC member Q&A; ▪ annual Senior Manager Academic Promotions Information Sessions (Action 5), with APC member Q&A; ▪ continued socialising of policy changes and equity process features at Spring Forward and university-wide events, with emphasis on confidentiality in Equity Considerations disclosure and how ARTO is assessed by APC. 	2025 and ongoing	DVCREI and OPC	DVCREI	Stakeholder comprehension of promotions policy is sustained at 95% (± <5%) Overall staff confidence that "WSU supports equity in academic promotions" increases (+10%). Applicant concerns around stigma and/or repercussions for disclosing Equity Considerations decrease.
4.	Cultures of promotions support are inconsistent across local contexts, where senior manager attitudes, approaches and understandings about promotions can differentially influence applicant experiences. Some applicants are concerned about stigma	Hold annual Senior Manager Academic Promotions Information Sessions , to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ensure senior managers are up-to-date with promotions policy and processes, current expectations for 	2024, annually thereafter	DVC-REI	DVC-REI	More consistency in promotions support is visible and reported across local contexts.



REF.	RATIONALE	ACTIONS & OUTPUTS	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBILITY	ACCOUNTABILITY	SUCCESS INDICATORS
	and repercussions in the disclosure of Equity Considerations. Deans/Directors also express uncertainty that “WSU supports equity in academic promotions” and seek more feedback and guidance on the promotions process so that they might better support their staff. An inaugural Senior Managers Academic Promotions Information Session was trialed in February 2024.	<p>achievement, and equitable approaches to promotions support;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide senior managers with more fulsome and consistent guidance about the promotions process (including about the purpose, function, and protections embedded for Equity Considerations, and APC’s approach to ensuring equity in decision-making); encourage knowledge and practice sharing across School and Institute contexts. 				<p>Applicant concerns around stigma and/or repercussions for disclosing Equity Considerations decrease.</p> <p>Dean/Director confidence that “WSU supports equity in academic promotions” increases (+40%).</p>
5.	Recent applicants for promotion report strong and effective support from supervisors, but WSU processes require staff to self-identify as promotions-ready and the encouraging of promotions aspirations appear inconsistent across local contexts. STEM women seeking promotion to Level E demonstrate higher success but lower application rates than STEM men, suggesting gender-disproportionate delays in STEM women’s Level E applications; yet Cygnet era improvements in STEM women applications to Levels C and D suggest a responsiveness to proactive, targeted support and encouragement (e.g., via Distinguished Professors Support Program and EPIC-C). More attentive focus to career development and planning alongside more active and regular discussions with supervisors about promotion aspirations will bolster	<p>Shift existing performance review processes toward a renewed focus on career development, including by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> developing a Leadership Capability Framework; embedding career development within academic workload models; adding an automated prompt about promotions aspirations within existing performance review/WPCD processes; embedding objectives for School/Institute career planning and promotions supports within WSU’s next <i>People Strategy</i>. 	2025	OPC	Chief People Officer	STEMM women application proportions meet cohort parity (±5%) at all academic levels.



REF.	RATIONALE	ACTIONS & OUTPUTS	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBILITY	ACCOUNTABILITY	SUCCESS INDICATORS
	advancement for all staff and may alleviate delays for STEMM women self-identifying as promotions-ready.					
6.	The preparation of a promotion application requires substantial work and time. Access to a range of supports early in this preparation influences likeliness to apply and facilitates promotions success. Clear guidance and encouragement from University-level supports are impactful on applicants' promotions experiences and promotions-specific mentoring is especially effective for shaping narratives and for modelling differential patterns of achievement. Applicants also request additional guidance in the writing of Equity Considerations statements.	Implement a university-wide early-intervention Academic Promotions Application Preparations Program that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> offers regular engagement for prospective applicants in the months ahead of submission; comprises regular 'shut up and write' sessions, alongside skills workshops (e.g., benchmarking research profiles, crafting equity statements); signposts procedural expectations (e.g., Intent to apply, Dean/Director consultations); structures in peer support and mentorship. 	Pilot in 2024, embed twice-annually thereafter	SAGE Academic Promotions SWAG	DVC-REI	Applicants continue to report effective university-level support in the preparation of promotions applications ($\pm 5\%$ across all prompts).
7.	Lower application rates remain a significant driver of promotions inequity for STEMM women. Feedback suggests both Spring Forward and EPC-C pilots have been successful, with EPIC-C's peer alliance/mentorship model building confidence for EMCA women and Spring Forward's tailored guidance for Schools/Institutes providing reassurance and reducing intimidation to apply. However, the EPIC-C pilot was confined to the Health & Medicine Cluster; STEM School/Institute uptake of Spring Forward is low.	Secure STEM School/Institute uptake of Spring Forward and extend EPIC-C pilot to STEM disciplines .	Spring Forward: 2024 and annually thereafter; EPIC-C: 2025 and biannually thereafter	EDWPs SAGE SAT	STEM EDWP Chairs and STEM Deans/Directors SAGE STEM School Representatives	STEMM women application proportions meet cohort parity ($\pm 5\%$) at all academic levels.



REF.	RATIONALE	ACTIONS & OUTPUTS	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBILITY	ACCOUNTABILITY	SUCCESS INDICATORS
8.	Ongoing support for unsuccessful applicants is identified as an area of concern by all promotions stakeholders. Feedback improvements have already been actioned by DVC-REI.	Continue and develop the Distinguished Professors Support Program for women applicants to Levels D and E and allocate area-specialist mentors for other unsuccessful applicants.	2024 and ongoing	DVC-REI	DVC-REI	Reapplication success rates for previously unsuccessful applicants are tracked and at parity ($\pm 5\%$) with new applicants for promotion.
9.	APC Equity Workshops are effective for reinforcing ARTO principles in collective decision-making. APC workshops were not implemented as planned in 2023 due to scheduling conflicts. APC members request additional focus on cultural and linguistic diversity (CALD). Senior Executive staff and other high-level committees at WSU also have responsibility to ensure equity in decision-making as it relates to career opportunity for academic staff.	Refine APC Equity Workshops with intent to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ formalise annual workshop schedules; ▪ expand CALD content; ▪ extend this workshop to School/Institute Executives and to other decision-making committees at WSU. 	2025	DVC-REI, OED, OPC	Academic Promotions Coordinator (schedules) Director OED & SAGE-PC (content expansion)	All APC members complete foundational Equity Workshops every three years, with top-up workshops annually.
10.	Cultural and linguistic diversity (CALD) is recognised as an ongoing gap in WSU's attentions to advancing equity in academic promotions.	Perform a targeted, in-house and sector-benchmarked review of innovative and best-practice CALD supports , including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ review ARTO guidelines to ensure CALD inclusivity; ▪ formalise cultural diversity as an active consideration in APC membership; ▪ ensure cultural diversity in mock interview panels; ▪ consider how applicants from CALD backgrounds might be better supported in interviews; ▪ conduct further research on specific and additional barriers to promotion 	2025 – 2027	DVC-REI	DVC-REI	CALD staff promotions outcomes are monitored, with gaps ($\pm 5\%$) identified, strategised and mitigated. Overall staff confidence that "WSU supports equity in academic promotions" increases (+10%).



REF.	RATIONALE	ACTIONS & OUTPUTS	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBILITY	ACCOUNTABILITY	SUCCESS INDICATORS
		for academic staff of CALD backgrounds, and implement recommendations as relevant.				
11.	To complement ongoing data monitoring, a mid-point evaluation of progress against ongoing objectives is required.	Intersectional mid-point study into staff experiences of and perceptions around equity in academic promotions at WSU, including focus on: uptake and success of embedded pilot initiatives, workshop/training efficacy, equity in promotions outcomes, and consistency of local cultures of support.	2027, in conjunction with Promotions Pulse Survey	SAGE Academic Promotions SWAG	SAGE Academic Lead	Ongoing barriers to equity in academic promotions are identified and addressed.