

Cygnet 4: Understanding and Addressing the Low Proportion of Women in Senior Positions

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Acknowledgement of Country

The Baker Institute acknowledges and pays respect to the Traditional Custodians and Elders of this nation, past and present, and the continuation of cultural, spiritual, and educational practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

1: Key Barrier

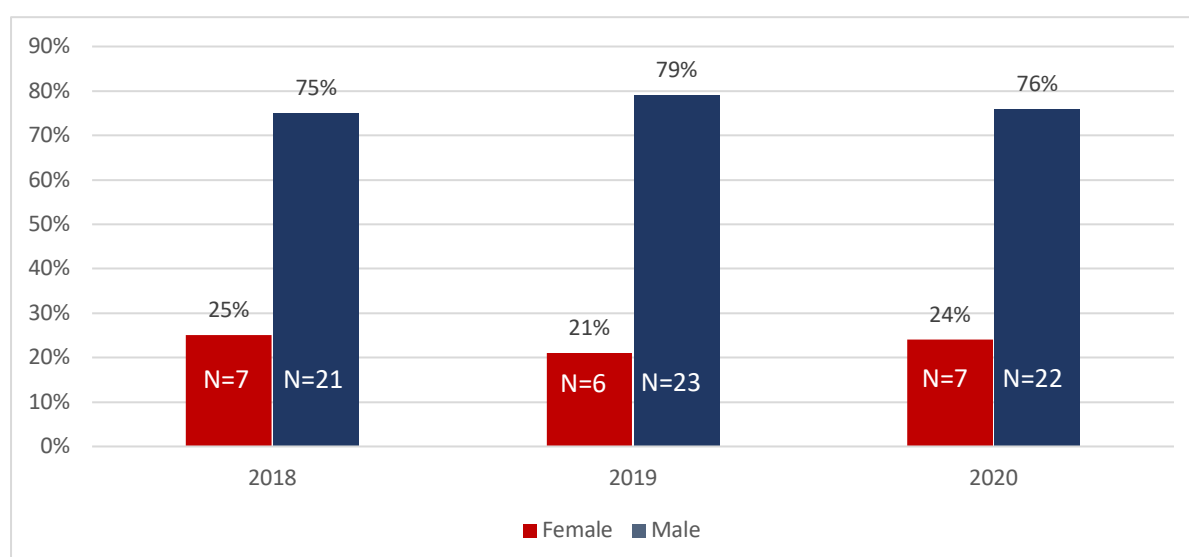
In 2018, the year in which the Baker Heart and Diabetes Institute (Baker) was awarded its Athena SWAN Bronze Award, the proportion of women laboratory heads at Baker was 25% (7 female from 28 total lab heads). Laboratory head positions are the most senior scientific roles at Baker. Increasing the proportion of women in laboratory head positions and in other senior leadership roles within the Institute were identified as an important goal for Baker on its pathway to achieving gender equity. While we understand that there are larger systemic and societal barriers contributing to this effect, it is also likely that there are local or institution-specific factors that contribute. In this Cygnet, we describe our efforts to identify the specific barriers at Baker that contribute to the underrepresentation of women in senior positions. We examine recruitment, retention and promotion data as well as pay equity and caring responsibilities which may contribute to the low representation of women in senior positions.

2: Evidence of barrier

2.1 Laboratory Heads

Data from 2018-2020 indicates that the proportion of women in laboratory head roles has remained static. Figure 1 below shows that in 2018, women represented 25% of all laboratory heads. This dropped to 21% in 2019 but rose slightly again to 24% in 2020. We note that with the small number of women laboratory heads (6-7), the departure or recruitment of even one person from this group has a major effect on the overall percentages.

Figure 1: Proportion of female and male laboratory heads (2018-2020)



2.2 Research Program Heads

In addition to the position of laboratory head, another significant senior research role within the Institute is research program head. In 2017, Baker created 5 thematic research programs focused on the core research areas of the Institute. In 2018, this was expanded to 6 research programs. Five of these research programs were headed by men, with the 6th being co-headed by a man and a woman. Being promoted to the position of research program head is seen as an important achievement for staff and the under-representation of women in these roles provides further evidence of a barrier to increasing the proportion of women in senior roles.

2.3 Recruitment and Exits

We examined recruitment data for laboratory heads between 2018-2020. During this time, the Institute recruited 2 female laboratory heads and 3 male laboratory heads. While these are very small numbers, 40% of all recruitment to laboratory head roles during this time were women which is higher than their existing proportion (e.g. 25% in 2018).

We also examined exit data for the Institute for 2018-2020. We found that 1 woman and 2 men laboratory heads exited the Institute between 2018 and 2020 – that is, women laboratory heads represented 33% of all exits during this time. This proportion is higher than their representation within the existing proportion of women laboratory heads (e.g. 25% in 2018).

We note that in 2020, there were no recruitment or departures of laboratory heads, for women or men. There were also no departures by women or men laboratory heads during 2021. It is possible that COVID may have played some role here in the lack of movement in the recruitment and exit of staff.

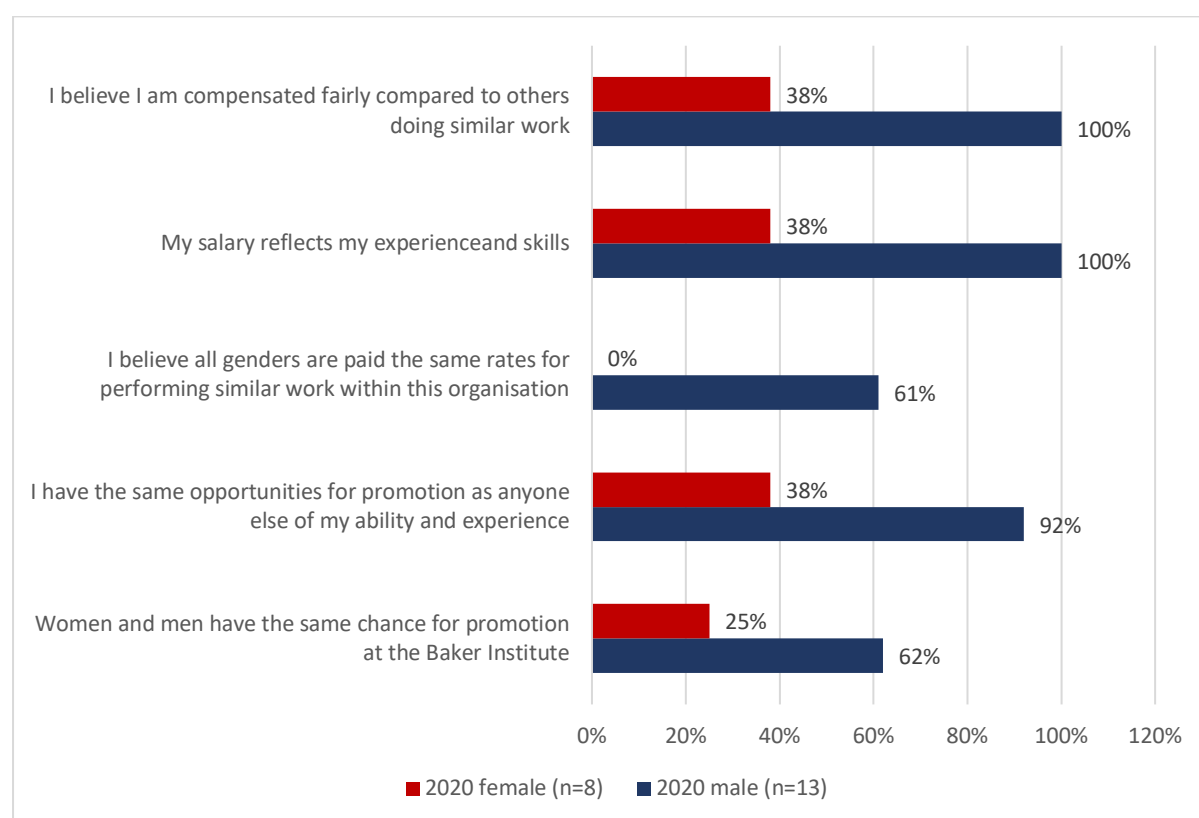
2.4 2020 Survey Questions Regarding Compensation, Salary and Promotion

To further understand the barriers to increasing the proportion of women in senior roles at the Institute, we analysed responses from our 2020 Gender Equity and Diversity survey. This biennial survey was begun in 2020 as part of our Athena SWAN Bronze Award application and surveys staff and students across the Institute. The survey is comprised of approximately 90 questions and covers a range of topics, including parenting, flexible work arrangements, mentoring, experiences of harassment, salary equity, recruitment and promotion, gender equity and diversity, Indigenous cultural knowledge, LGBTQI inclusion and disability. In 2020, a total of 198 staff and students completed the survey from the total Institute body of 444 (44% response rate).¹

¹ The survey is conducted through REDCap, a secure web application designed for building and maintaining online surveys and databases. Access to the survey is provided to all staff and students via email. Participation is completely voluntary.

For the purposes of this Cygnet, we examined questions about compensation, salaries and promotion opportunities by gender. We looked specifically at the responses of laboratory heads to gain insight into their perspectives. The data provided in Figure 2 below indicates that in 2020, male laboratory heads believed that they were fairly compensated (100%), that their salary reflected their experience and skills (100%) and that they have the same opportunities for promotion as anyone else of their ability and experience (92%). They were also likely to believe, although in a less pronounced way, that all genders are paid the same rates for performing similar work (61%), and that women and men have the same chance for promotion (62%). In contrast, only 38% of female laboratory heads believed they were fairly compensated compared to others doing similar work, only 38% believed that their salary reflects their experience and skills, and 0% believed that all genders are paid the same rates for performing similar work. A total of 38% believed that they have the same opportunities for promotion as anyone else of their ability and experience, and only 25% believed that women and men have the same chance for promotion at the Institute.

Figure 2: Proportion of female and male laboratory heads who agree or strongly agree with statements regarding compensation, salary and promotion (2020)

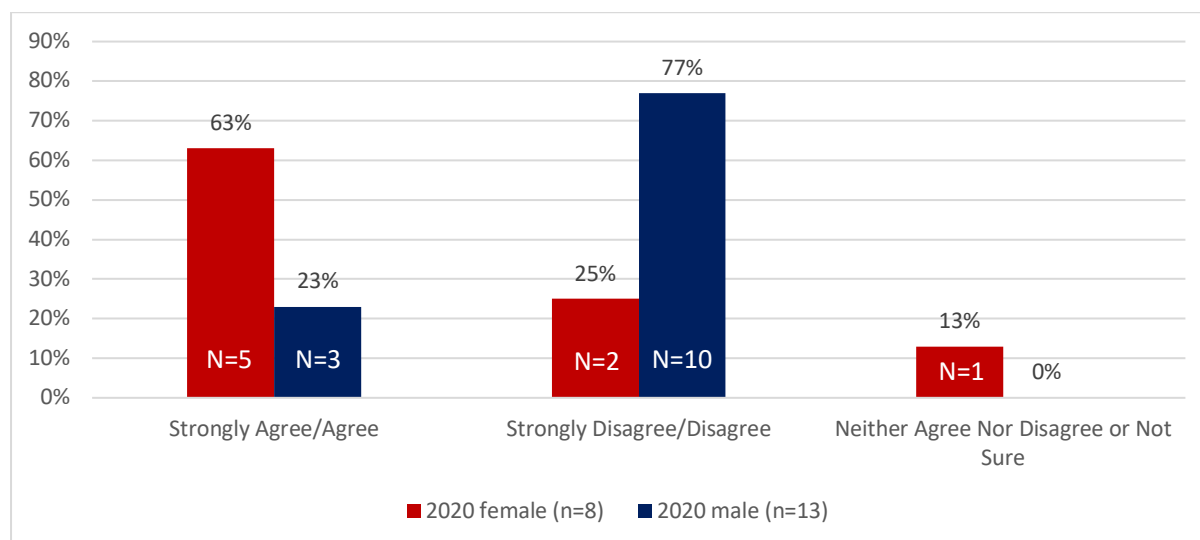


2.5 Impact of Responsibilities Outside of Work

Baker also looked at responses to a question regarding the impact of responsibilities outside of work on promotion in the 2020 Gender Equity Survey. Figure 3 below shows that that 77% of male laboratory heads either strongly disagreed or disagreed with the statement that responsibilities outside of work restricted their opportunities for promotion. In contrast, 63%

of female laboratory heads strongly agreed or agreed that responsibilities outside of work restricted their opportunities for promotion. While we were not surprised at this result, we were surprised at the stark differences between senior women and men in terms of outside responsibilities restricting opportunities for promotion.

Figure 3: 2020 survey responses regarding impact of outside responsibilities on promotion

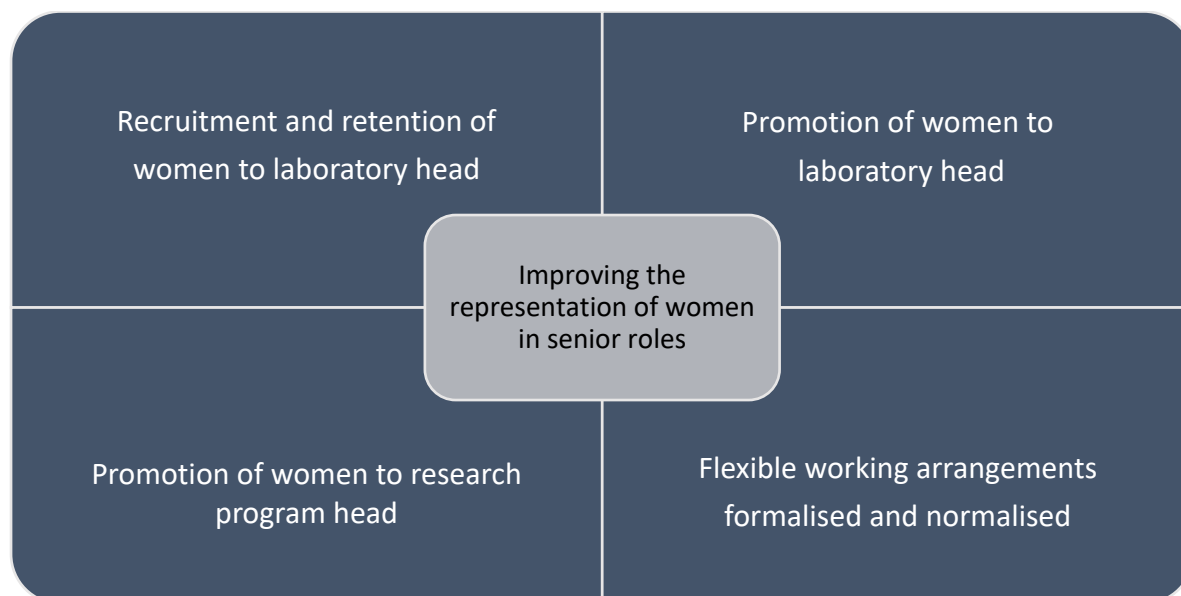


In summary, the data presented in this section of the application provides evidence of the under-representation of women in senior roles at the Institute. Women researchers are much less likely to occupy senior roles such as laboratory head and research program head. During the time frame examined, we can see that while women researchers were slightly more likely to be recruited to laboratory head position in comparison to the existing proportion of women laboratory heads, they were also more likely to leave the organisation at a higher rate than would be expected (again, the low numbers make definitive conclusions difficult). Survey data from 2020 reveals that women are much less likely than men to believe that there is gender equity in relation to compensation, salaries and promotion. In addition, senior women staff are much more likely to have responsibilities outside of work that impact on their ability to achieve seniority.

3: Actions

In this section of the application, we describe the actions taken by the Baker Institute to address the barriers faced by women in attaining senior roles. The Institute undertook a four-part strategy which included recruitment and retention of women to laboratory head positions, the promotion of women to laboratory head positions, the promotion of women to research program head positions and the formalisation and normalisation of flexible working arrangements. See Figure 4 below.

Figure 4: Four-part strategy to Increase the representation of women in senior roles



3.1 Recruitment of New Laboratory Heads and Retention of Existing Laboratory Heads

A key action item identified in our 2018 Athena Swan Bronze Award was to increase the proportion of women in laboratory head positions to 40%. To support this goal, the Institute introduced and ran a fellowship scheme (the Alice Baker and Eleanor Shaw Gender Equity Fellowships [AB&ES GEF] – named after the two female founders of the Institute) that provided salary support for **3 early-career female scientists**, each for a period of 2 years (2016-2018). However, and in response to the low proportion of women laboratory heads at the Institute, in 2019 the Institute leadership team decided to alter the purpose of the AB&ES GEF. Henceforth, the fellowships were expanded to **5 years of salary** and research support, with the specific purpose of recruiting **new female laboratory heads** to the Institute. These new AB&ES GEF were funded by the Institute itself as well as from the Baker Foundation, a philanthropic body independent from the Institute. Between 2020 to 2023, the AB&ES GEF were used to recruit two laboratory heads to the Institute and retain a high performing professor who had worked at the Institute but had been unsuccessful in obtaining funding in the preceding years.

3.2 Promotion of Group Leaders to Laboratory Heads

In addition to the above and to further address the under-representation of female laboratory heads at the Institute, in both 2018 and 2021, the Institute promoted two female group leaders to laboratory head positions. Group leaders are senior post-doctoral scientists who typically have their own independent funding and supervise honours and PhD students but still work under a laboratory head. Over the same period (2018-2024), one male group leader was promoted to laboratory head.

3.3 Appointment of Research Program Heads

To address the significant gender imbalance in the heads of the research programs, men and women program co-heads were appointed where possible. From a low of 14% (1 female from a total of 7) in 2018, the proportion of women research program heads increased to 38% (5 female from a total of 13) in 2020. However, it then slightly decreased to 33% (4 female from a total of 12) with the departure of 1 woman program head to another organisation. In 2024, after a scientific review, the research program scheme was restructured and consolidated under four central themes: Heart Attack Program, Heart Failure Program, Diabetes Program, and the Obesity and Cardiometabolic Disease Program. Each program is headed by a triumvirate and 50% (6 female from a total of 12) of these program heads are women.

3.4 Flexible Work Arrangements (FWA)

While the global COVID19 pandemic was extremely disruptive, it also created opportunities for the normalisation of FWAs at Baker. Prior to COVID, there had been a lack of formalised FWAs with arrangements typically negotiated in an informal or ad hoc way between individual employees and their supervisors. Towards the tail end of COVID in late 2021, the Institute undertook a round of enterprise bargaining, with flexible work arrangements being one of the key items to be negotiated successfully. These included part-time employment on a temporary or ongoing basis; flexible start and finish times; job sharing; purchased leave; working from home; periods of unpaid leave; and part-year employment on a temporary or ongoing basis. The Agreement also outlines the process for applying for flexible working arrangements.²

During COVID, medical research was classified as essential work but those who could work from home were encouraged to do so by the Institute. To support those who were working from home, Baker provided ergonomic workstations, extra computer monitors and access to the Institute's servers when offsite. Zoom software was purchased enabling remote and hybrid meetings and seminars. These have all remained in place for staff to use to facilitate working from home arrangements.

With the return to essentially normal working hours in early 2022, the Institute recognised the importance of remote working arrangements for staff and formalised these arrangements. A *Remote Work Request Policy* and an online *Remote Work Agreement Form* were developed to assist workers with balancing the demands of work with their personal responsibilities. In accordance with this Policy, approval may be given for a worker to undertake a variety of remote working arrangements including all work being done remotely, a hybrid model where work is done on-site and at home, and an arrangement where the worker may apply to work remotely as required on an ad-hoc basis. The availability of flexible working arrangements have been heavily promoted across the Institute.

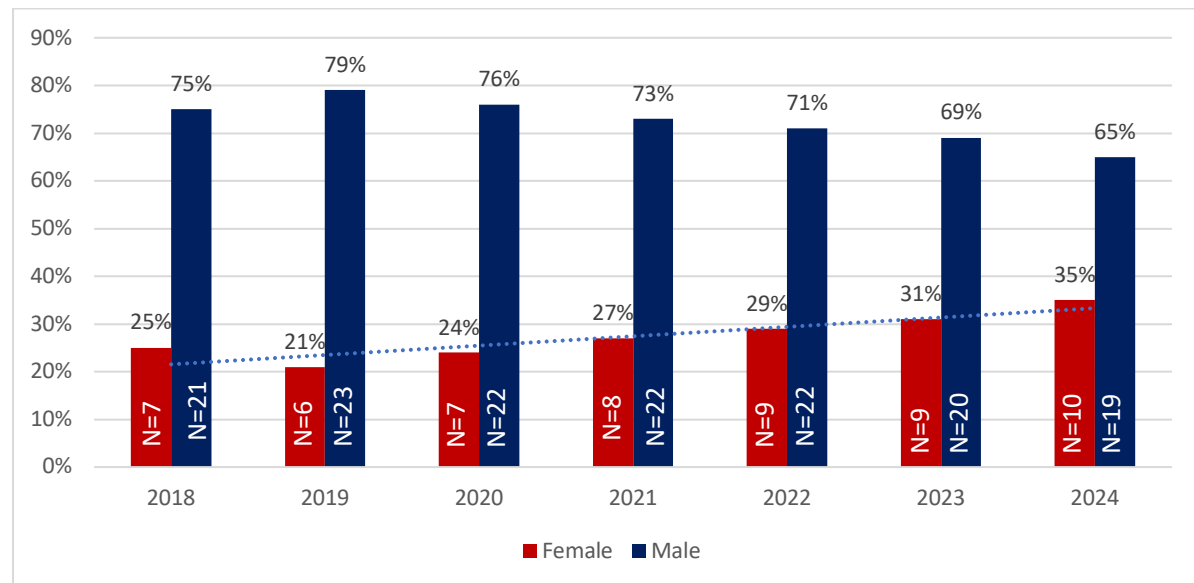
² The Baker's successful Cygnet 2 describes in more detail the changes the Institute undertook in formalising and normalising flexible working arrangements.

4: Outcomes

4.1 Laboratory Heads

Figure 5 below shows that there has been an increase in the proportion of women laboratory heads from 25% in 2018 to 34% in 2024. While not reaching our goal of 40% women laboratory heads, this is nonetheless a major step in the right direction. In real terms, we have gone from 7 women laboratory heads in 2018 to 10 in 2024.

Figure 5: Proportion of female and male laboratory heads (2018-2024)



4.2 Research Program Heads

Figure 6 below shows the outcomes of efforts to increase the number of women holding the senior position of research program head. In 2018, only 1 woman researcher was a research program head. In 2024, there were 6 women and 6 men research program heads.

Figure 6: Number of female and male research program heads (2018-2025)

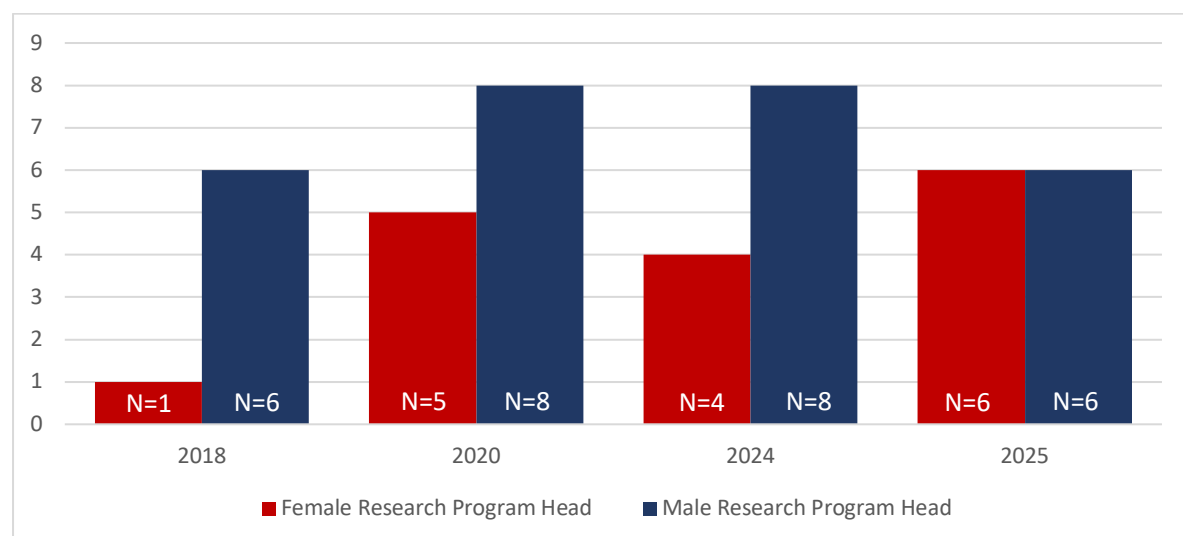


Figure 7 below presents the four research group themes and the three people heading each of these groups. This pictorial (which is published on Baker’s website and is therefore publicly available) highlights the strong involvement of women in the senior leadership positions.

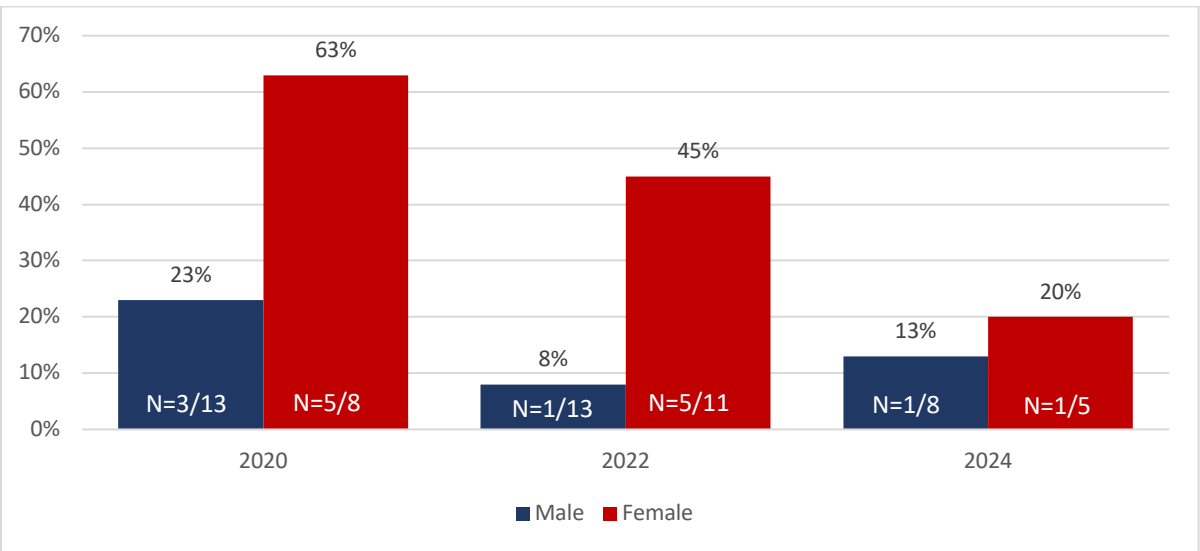
Figure 7: Research program heads by theme (2025)



4.3 Impact of Responsibilities Outside of Work

Figure 8 below shows that over time, the proportion of laboratory heads who agreed with the statement, “responsibilities outside of work have an impact on promotion opportunities”, has decreased. In 2020, 63% of women laboratory heads and 23% of men laboratory heads strongly agreed or agreed with this statement. We attribute the high percentage of women laboratory heads agreeing with this statement in 2020 (and in 2022) in part to COVID where many women were involved in home schooling during the lockdowns. By 2024, only 20% of women laboratory heads and 13% of men laboratory heads agreed with this statement. While there is still some disparity between women and men laboratory head responses, it is likely that the necessary introduction of more flexible working options during COVID, which have in many ways been retained, has led to a lower proportion of laboratory heads agreeing that responsibilities outside of work have an impact on promotion opportunities.

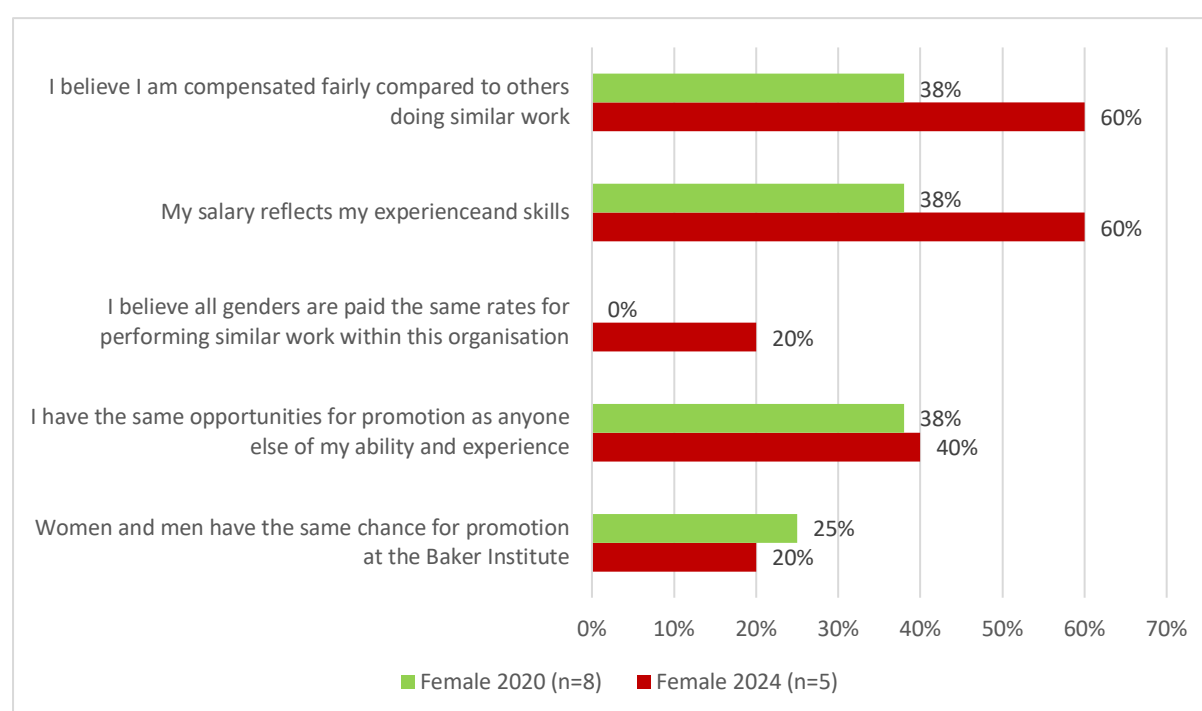
Figure 8: Proportion of male and female laboratory heads who agreed that outside responsibilities affected promotion opportunities



4.4 Survey Questions About Compensation, Salary and Promotion

Figure 9 below shows that there has been some improvement regarding perceptions of compensation, salary and opportunities for promotion. In 2020, only 38% of women laboratory heads strongly agreed or agreed that they were compensated fairly compared to others doing similar work. This had risen to 60% in 2024. Similar results are seen for the survey question regarding salary reflecting experience and skills, with 38% of women laboratory heads in 2020 agreeing with this, rising to 60% in 2024. When asked whether they believed all genders are paid the same rates for performing similar work, 0% of women laboratory heads agreed with this in 2020. This had risen to 20% in 2024 but is still a concerning result that warrants further investigation (see Further Actions 2). There was a small improvement regarding the statement about opportunities for promotion in comparison to someone with similar abilities and experiencing, rising from 38% in 2020 to 40% in 2024 of women laboratory heads agreeing with this statement.

Figure 9: Proportion of female laboratory heads who agree with statements regarding salary, compensation and promotion (2020 and 2024)



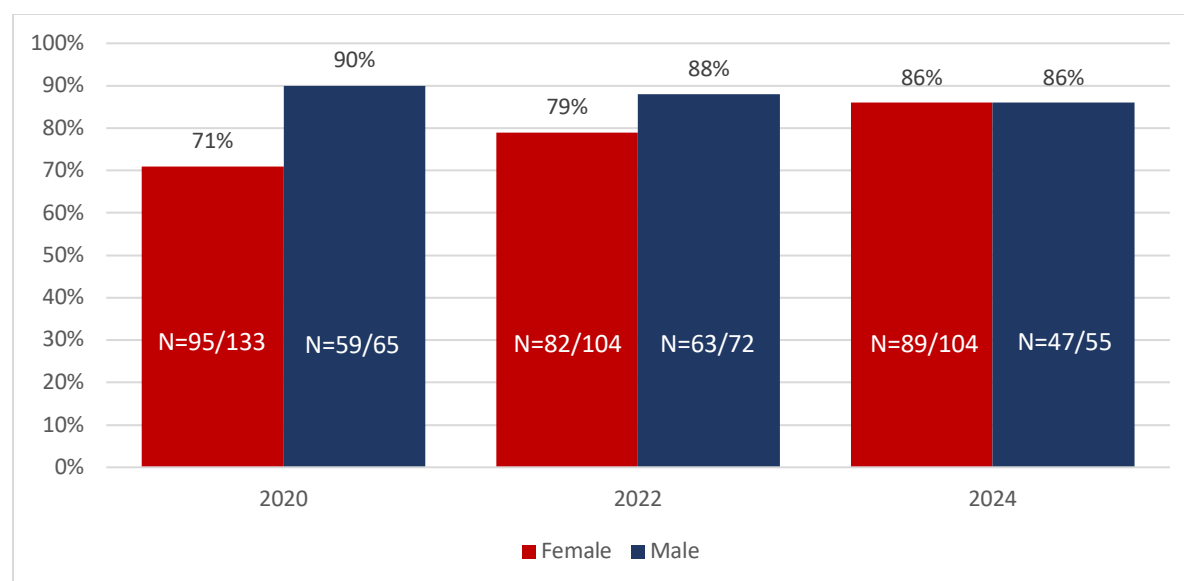
When asked whether women and men had the same chance for promotion at the Institute, there was a decrease in the proportion of women laboratory heads agreeing with this, with 25% agreeing in 2020 and only 20% agreeing in 2024. We note that this data is based on very small numbers (11 women laboratory heads in 2020 and 5 in 2024) and suggest that the decrease may just reflect variability in the data rather than a true decrease. However, the data from both 2020 and 2024 consistently shows that only a low proportion of women laboratory heads believe that women and men have the same chance for promotion at Baker. This outcome is perhaps not surprising in the context of the broader STEM environment in which these women have spent their careers. This is an environment where women's representation

in senior roles has always been and continues to be lower than the representation of men in senior STEMM roles. Thus, it may take time for perceptions and beliefs around these issues to change. Importantly, the real increase in the numbers of women in laboratory head and research program head positions at the Baker give us hope that in future surveys (the next GEDI survey at the Institute is in 2026) we will see an improvement in these areas. Nonetheless, further investigation into salary, compensation and promotion is warranted (see Further Actions 3).

4.5 Visible Role Models

Has the increase of women in senior roles had an impact, particularly on less senior women, in the organisation? Are the changes that have been made at senior levels being noticed by other staff? Are women being seen as viable senior leaders at the Institute? Figure 10 below shows that the proportion of women staff (at all levels) who believe that the Institute promotes all genders as visible role models has grown from 71% in 2020 to 86% in 2024. This is a significant improvement, and we believe, coincides with the growth in the proportion of senior roles held by women. As a small Institute, changes are visible and noted by the Baker community.³

Figure 10: Proportion of female and male staff (all levels combined) who agree that the Institute promotes all genders as visible role models (2020 and 2024)



4.6 Intersectionality

The Institute is proud of its ability to attract international staff and students and to count them as colleagues. In Cygnet 1, we discussed several strategies designed to create a more welcoming environment, inclusive of those from diverse cultural backgrounds. These included unconscious bias training for senior leaders, diversity training for all staff, more diversity in

³ Please note that the denominator for this survey question varies as not all respondents in the survey 2020, 2022 and 2024 answered this question. The total number of respondents for 2020 was 198, for 2022 was 176 and for 2024 was 163.

marketing content and including female speakers from diverse cultural backgrounds in our Friday seminars. We also increased the proportion of members of the Gender Equity and Diversity Committee who come from diverse cultural backgrounds. When examining our senior staff data, we are pleased to note significant cultural diversity, with laboratory head and research program head positions being occupied by those from diverse cultural backgrounds. Of the 26 laboratory heads, 5 are of Asian Heritage and we have lab heads from Germany, Russia, South Africa, the Middle East, as well as UK backgrounds. Unfortunately, the rather low numbers we are dealing with (i.e. 8 male and 5 females lab heads completed the survey in 2024) means that further de-aggregating the data to examine it through an intersectionality lens results in even lower numbers within groups (e.g. female lab heads from UK background vs female lab heads from Asian backgrounds) such that formal data analysis becomes rather meaningless (i.e. comparing responses of between groups containing an n of 1-3).

5: Impact

The actions undertaken by Baker to address the under-representation of women in senior roles, which included the recruitment, retention and promotion of women to senior positions and the formalisation and normalisation of flexible working options have led to a real increase in the proportion of women in senior positions within the Institute. Presented below are a series of case studies from the 5 women laboratory heads who were either recruited, retained, or promoted since 2020. Each woman was approached by the Co-Chair of the Gender Equity and Diversity Committee and asked to write a paragraph or two about the impact of being recruited, retained or promoted at Baker. Participants were informed that the information would be included in a SAGE Cygnet application which would be publicly available. These studies describe the personal impact of the support provided to them by the Institute.

Case Study 1 (Recruitment) Professor Morag Young

Professor Morag Young is a leading expert on hormones in cardiovascular disease and heads the Cardiovascular Endocrinology laboratory at the Institute. Since her move to the Institute under the AB&ES GEF, Associate Professor Young has been successful in obtaining prestigious and highly competitive funding from the National Health and Medical Research Council and the Australian Research Council totalling more than \$1M.

"I was honoured and extremely grateful to be the first recipient of the AB&ES GEF. Prior to having my children, my career was on an upward trajectory, I had published some important high impact papers and had received my first independent grants to establish my career. However, like many female scientists, my productivity was hugely impacted due to raising two young children and I was nearly another statistic in the loss of women from medical research at this critical point in my career. Being awarded the AB&ES GEF fellowship has thus had a profound impact on my entire laboratory and research program and the future of my team and my work has been revived and reinvigorated by my

	<i>move to the Baker Institute. The AB&ES GEF program is a fantastic, proactive move by the Baker to support senior female research scientists and has been a game changer for me."</i>
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The case study above highlights the critical timing and transformative effect of the AB&ES GEF in retaining female talent during a vulnerable career stage. Professor Young's trajectory had been strong prior to family commitments, but caregiving responsibilities significantly hindered her productivity, reflecting a common challenge for women in STEM. The fellowship enabled her to join Baker, re-establish her research momentum, secure over \$1M in competitive funding, and reinvigorate her laboratory. This example underscores the importance of targeted interventions at specific career points and illustrates how institutional support can reverse the attrition trend among mid-senior career female researchers.

Case Study 2 (Recruitment) Associate Professor Sara Baratchi

Associate Professor Baratchi is head of the Mechanobiology and Microfluidics laboratory based at the Baker Heart and Diabetes Institute. The goal of her work is to develop artificial models of human blood vessels and heart valves and to use these models to discover novel therapeutics for cardiovascular and metabolic disorders. She received the AB&ES GEF in 2023.

"The AB&ES GEF has been instrumental in allowing me to expand my research program and to work with leading scientists in cardiovascular medicine within a world class research institute. The AB&ES GEF has allowed me to build a strong research team, to advance my research, and to mentor the next generation of scientists. The fellowship importantly contributed toward reinforcing my commitment toward enhancing gender equality in STEM field by allowing me to contribute toward institution-wide programs for supporting women in research."

Associate Professor Baratchi's case study illustrates how the AB&ES GEF not only facilitates the expansion of cutting-edge research (in mechanobiology and microfluidics) but also fosters collaborative networks and mentorship capacity. The fellowship enabled her to join a high-performing research environment, build a strong team, and invest in gender equity in leadership in research at the Institute. This case emphasises the dual scientific and cultural value of the fellowship.

Case Study 3 (Retention) Professor Dianna Magliano OAM

Professor Magliano is a world leader in identifying global diabetes trends and heads the Diabetes and Population Health unit at the Institute. She played a pivotal role in recognising

"The AB&ES GEF has had an enormous impact on my productivity and development as a scientific leader and an independent researcher. The AB&ES GEF not only allowed me time to

and predicting the current global pandemic of diabetes. She has led advocacy for greater efforts in diabetes prevention and coordinates the Master of Public Health degree at Monash University. Having been unsuccessful in 2 previous funding rounds for a highly prestigious (and competitive) National Health and Medical Research Council (NH&MRC) Fellowship, Professor Magliano's career was at a critical juncture. She had been building a strong career trajectory and had assembled a good team, but without funding, all her energy had to be focused on getting funds to support her and her staff, rather than driving her research forward. The award of the AB&ES GEF provided her funding security and gave her space to devote her energy into her research and invest the time needed to develop her research projects. Consequently, in late 2022, Prof Magliano received a NH&MRC Fellowship (\$2.3 million Investigator Grant) for projects that will track diabetes complications in Australia, and incidence, mortality and complications internationally.	<i>conduct my research but also provided me with the opportunity to grow personally, which I will always be thankful for. The AE&ES GEF was a lifeboat for me and my team, it allowed me time to breathe, step back and stop worrying about how I was going to support my team. It changed my mindset, sharpened my focus, and I excelled."</i>
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Professor Magliano's experience reflects the precarious nature of many senior research careers who work without stable funding. This is the case even for internationally recognised leaders. The AB&ES GEF served as a strategic lifeline at a point when her work, and her team, were at risk due to repeated grant rejections. The breathing space provided by the AB&ES GEF allowed her to focus on research rather than survival, culminating in a successfully receiving a major NHMRC Investigator Grant. This case study underscores the high return on investment when institutions support established female leaders during funding gaps.

Case Study 4 (Promotion) Associate Professor Erin Howden

Associate Professor Howden is head of the Cardiometabolic Health and Exercise Physiology laboratory. Professor Howden has shown the importance of exercise in maintaining cardiovascular health in vulnerable populations, e.g. patients with cancer, sedentary aging populations.	<i>"My promotion to laboratory head and the continued support I have received from the Baker following my promotion has allowed me to establish my independence, create my research vision, and build a fantastic research team. The importance of my work has been recognised through major funding from the Medical</i>
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	<i>Research Future Fund. The work we are conducting is unable to be performed at any other sites in the world and will improve our understanding of the consequences of long COVID on heart health."</i>
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Associate Professor Howden's promotion at the Baker highlights the long-term institutional payoff of investing in emerging leaders. Her work is not only unique globally but is also highly relevant, addressing long COVID and other chronic disease intersections with cardiovascular health. The promotion to laboratory head allowed her to establish scientific independence and secure competitive funding. This case underscores how enabling leadership roles can catalyse novel, high-impact research programs and position women at the forefront of global science.

Case Study 5 (Promotion) Professor Xiaowei Wang

Professor Xiaowei Wang is head of the Molecular Imaging and Theranostics laboratory. Her work uses various imaging technologies for diagnostic and therapeutic purposes in cardiovascular disease. Since being promoted to laboratory head, Professor Wang has been successful in obtaining prestigious and highly competitive funding from the National Health and Medical Research Council, National Heart Foundation, Medical Research Future Fund, totalling more than \$3M. Her promotion to laboratory head was also the catalyst to be promoted initially to Associate Professor and then in 2024 to Professor at the university of Melbourne.	<i>"When I was promoted to laboratory head, it wasn't just about leading research, it was about stepping into a role where I could make a broader impact. The institute's trust in me has enabled me to build a team and secure significant additional funding to fully realise my research ambitions. Being promoted to laboratory head changed my career trajectory, opening doors to new opportunities and allowing me to grow as both a scientist and a mentor."</i>
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Professor Wang's case illustrates how promotion to laboratory head can empower female researchers to scale their scientific ambitions. Her transition into leadership has resulted in over \$3M in funding and strategic expansion of theranostic imaging research. Her case demonstrates the multiplier effect of leadership opportunities: beyond individual success, promotion fosters team building, mentorship, and institutional influence. It also highlights the importance of organisational support to enable researchers to thrive in rapidly developing areas of research.

The five case studies presented here collectively demonstrate the significant and multifaceted impact of specific institutional support in transforming the careers of senior women researchers at Baker. The AB&ES GEF fellowships and promotions have clearly filled a critical

structural gap, intervening at pivotal moments when many women are at risk of exiting the research pipeline due to caregiving responsibilities, funding instability, or limited leadership opportunities. Through targeted support, the Institute has enabled recipients to secure over \$6M in competitive funding, build high-performing research teams, generate globally impactful research, and take on mentorship and institutional leadership roles. The case studies, however, also expose persistent systemic challenges to achieving a truly equitable and high-performing research ecosystem. Despite the 5 women profiled here being extremely high-performing researchers, traditional funding mechanisms, such as the National Health and Medical Research Council, do not adequately accommodate non-linear career trajectories which are more typically experienced by women than men. In the highly competitive and short-term funding environment of medical research, which is unlikely to change soon, reliance on institutional interventions are necessary to address these issues (see Future Actions 1).

6: Future Actions

The results of this Cygnet indicate that while improvements have been achieved in increasing the proportion of women in senior roles at the Baker Institute, further work needs to be done to continue this trajectory.

Ref	Rationale	Action and Outputs	Timeframe	Responsibility	Accountability	Success indicators
1	A key mechanism used to improve the representation of women in senior roles has been the Alice Baker and Eleanor Shaw Gender Equity Fellowships [AB&ES GEF]. These were utilised to recruit 2 women laboratory heads and retain 1 women laboratory head in 2019-2020. Initial funding provided support for 3 AB&ES GEF. Going forward, it will be important that this scheme is maintained so as to continue to increase the proportion of female laboratory heads at the Institute.	Develop a position paper for senior management on the importance and ongoing need for a specific program/scheme to recruit and retain women in senior roles at the Baker Institute, using the success of current AB&ES GEF recipients as evidence of the benefits of such programs for the Institute.	2025-26	Gender Equity and Diversity Committee (GEDC)	GEDC Co-Chairs	Senior management commits to providing funding to recruit and retain high performing senior women researchers.
2	Our Gender Equity and Diversity Survey results indicate that senior women researchers do not believe	Employ a specialist external consultant to conduct an analysis of	2025-26	GEDC, HR Manager	GEDC Co-chairs, HR Manager	Salary analysis completed and results presented to senior

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	that all genders are paid the same rates for performing similar work.	salaries across all levels of the Institute. This analysis will focus on gender and include professional support staff.				management for action.
3	The Gender Equity and Diversity Survey results also reveal that senior women researchers do not believe that women and men have the same chance for promotion at the Baker Institute.	Include an examination of promotion rates by gender across all levels in the salary analysis.	2025-26	GEDC, HR Manager	GEDC Co-Chairs, HR Manager	Promotion analysis conducted and results presented to senior management for action.
4	Group leaders are senior post-doctoral scientists who typically have their own independent funding and supervise honours and PhD students but still work under a laboratory head. The process by which one can be promoted from group leader to laboratory head remains unclear.	Create a more robust pipeline for women group leaders to move into laboratory head positions by developing a clear and transparent promotion policy with appropriate benchmarks.	2026-2027	GEDC, HR Manager	GEDC Co-Chairs, HR Manager	Promotion policy is developed, ratified and implemented by the Baker Institute.

Ref	Rationale	Action and Outputs	Timeframe	Responsibility	Accountability	Success indicators
5	In addition to a clear promotion policy, a program which supports women group leaders to aspire to and achieve promotion to laboratory head may enhance their promotion rates.	Develop and implement a “Getting Ready for Promotion” program for women group leaders to support the likelihood of them being promoted to more senior positions within the Institute.	2026-2027	GEDC and HR Manager	GECD Co-chairs and HR Manager	Promotion rates of women and men group leaders to laboratory head positions are equal.