GENDER EQUITY PROGRAM

GENDER EQUALITY
EVERY LAW. EVERY WORKPLACE.

An evidence-based approach to gender equity training

Organisational culture relies on establishing and demonstrating positive values and behaviours.

The Work Health and Safety (WH&S) model of workplace behaviour change has successfully engaged at all levels in workplaces and achieved positive outcomes for everyone.

The **Unions NSW Gender Equity Program** incorporates the WH&S model of workplace behaviour change, the national primary prevention framework, adult education principles, and peer education to create a collective responsibility for respectful and safe workplaces.

Discovery

The Workplace Gender Equity Committee with representation from management, workers, unions and Unions NSW is established. Workplace consultation and research is undertaken. An implementation plan is prepared.

Delivery

Tailored workforce, mentor and peer to peer training is executed. Mentors and Peer to Peer Inclusion Officers are supported by networks facilitated by Unions NSW.

Best Practice

Program evaluation, review of workplace instruments, and plans to assist ongoing safe and respectful practices are applied.

Unions NSW Gender Equity training:

- Is based on qualitative and quantitative evidence
- Follows adult education principles of experiential learning and reflective practice
- Encourages consideration, exploration, and knowledge and skill-sharing in small groups
- Ensures information is evidence-based
- Reinforces program concepts through activities and scenarios

Peer-to-Peer Influencers and Mentor networks incorporate professional development and knowledge updates.

Mentors resource and support new recruits in their first year in the workplace.

Advancing Gender Equity in Workplaces

Gender equality in the workplace means that every employee has access to the same resources and opportunities regardless of their gender. In such an organisation, employees feel safe, respected, and empowered.

The **Unions NSW Gender Equity Program** is a fundamental step towards achieving organisational gender equality. It will also help organisations to meet their **Respect@Work** obligations.

The program will assist the workplace to advance a respectful and positive organisational culture, where employees can perform, innovate, and grow without enduring sexual harassment and sex-based harassment.

Participants report a positive and profound impact that extends beyond the workplace.

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Why gender equity is a workplace issue

1 in 3 people were sexually harassed at work

41% OF WOMEN AND 26% OF MEN BETWEEN 2017 AND 2022 [1]

MEN WHO STRONGLY ENDORSE SOCIALLY DOMINANT FORMS OF MASCULINITY ARE

5X MORE LIKELY

TO HAVE PERPETRATED PHYSICAL VIOLENCE AGAINST AN INTIMATE PARTNER [2]

Only 18% of workplace sexual harassment incidents are reported [1]

45% of men feel pressure to act 'stereotypically manly'

WITH 24% EXPRESSING THIS PRESSURE IN THE CONTEXT OF THEIR WORKPLACE [3]

95% of perpetrators are male

IN REPORTED CASES OF PHYSICAL VIOLENCE, SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE [4]

4 out of 5 men want to change the rates of violence against women

ALTHOUGH 43% SAY THEY PERSONALLY CAN'T DO ANYTHING TO CHANGE THIS [3]

The **Unions NSW Gender Equity Program** seeks to empower everyone with the tools to act.

1. Time for respect: Fifth national survey on sexual harassment in Australian Workplaces, Australian Human Rights Commission, 2022
2. National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey, 2021
3. Our Watch online survey, November 2024
4. Australian Bureau of Statistics Personal Safety Survey, 2021-2022

The Unions NSW Gender Equity Program

- Includes gender equity training that normalises respectful and safe workplace behaviours
- Encourages employees to value gender equity and empowers them to be active agents in preventing workplace sexual and sex-based harassment
- Creates peer-to-peer influencers who will lead and reinforce positive change
- Meets the organisation's Respect@work and other legal obligations to create a healthy, respectful and safe workplace

Induction for new employees

A two-hour program which includes expected workplace behaviours, the workplace code of conduct, being an ethical bystander, and the complaints process.

Gender Equity Training for all employees

Three 1-day workshops within a three-year period which engages participants in understanding:

- Gender equality and social structures
- Facts, definitions and statistics
- Gender equity and the prevention of gendered violence
- Intersectionality: how gender, race and sexuality overlap
- Microaggressions: casual sexism that reinforces gender discrimination
- The trauma-informed response to disclosures
- Respect@Work and other workplace instruments

Peer to Peer Influencer Training

An intensive four-day program that equips leaders and workplace influencers to strengthen workplace gender equity culture. It develops skills in leading cultural change. Participants gain a deep understanding of gendered violence, respectful relationships, the ethics of gender equality, and promoting and modelling proactive workplace interventions.

This four-day program:

- Explores gender in the world and participant's views on gender
- Links gender equity with the prevention of gendered violence
- Examines skills, motivations, and the training framework
- Investigates gender stereotypes that reinforce gender inequality
- Considers social, media, legal and industrial instrument influences
- Increases understanding of microaggressions, intersectionality, bullying, harassment and sexual harassment, paid family and domestic violence leave, and Respect@Work
- Equips participants to be a trauma informed point of first disclosure
- Delves into the bystander effect

GENDER EQUITY PROGRAM

This project has received grant funding from the Australian Government.

Meeting your legal obligations for gender equality

The Federal Government's Anti-Discrimination and Human Rights Legislation Amendment (Respect at Work) Act 2022 (Respect@Work Act) is now law. The Respect@Work Act introduces a new positive duty for employers, expressly prohibits hostile workplace environments, expands the powers of the Australian Human Rights Commission, and reinforces that sexual harassment and harassment on the ground of sex or discrimination is unlawful in Australia. Further, employers are required to comply with the Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 to meet requirements aimed at driving gender equality in the workplace.

Training on gender equality is a key component of an employer's positive duty. It illustrates a broader workplace commitment to cultural change, gender equality, diversity and inclusion.

The **Unions NSW Gender Equity Program** is facilitated by the Gender Equity Team and led by Karen Willis. Karen has 40 years' experience in working with those impacted by sexual, domestic, and family violence. She has co-facilitated Australian Research Council-funded research and has been awarded an Order of Australia Medal, and a Churchill Fellowship for her work in preventing gendered violence and influencing gender equality.

About Unions NSW

Unions NSW and its affiliates collectively represent **600,000 union members** in NSW.

A foundation principle for Unions NSW is that every worker deserves a fair go at work, decent pay, and a healthy, safe and respectful workplace environment.

Unions NSW gender equity training is delivered to organisations where gender segregation is prevalent, including construction, mining, transport, electricity, gas, water and waste services.

The **Unions NSW Gender Equity Program** is powerful and challenging. It provides the tools to prevent sex discrimination and sexual harassment in the workplace and violence against women more broadly.

This can be achieved when ALL people work together.

UNIONS NSW since 1871

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