

Media Release

Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

Friday, 7 October 2016

University adopts program to spearhead gender equity in science and research

The University of Tasmania is adopting a program which aims to address the gender imbalance in the Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Medicine (STEMM) disciplines.

The Science in Australia Gender Equity (SAGE) Pilot of Athena SWAN is a national program designed to help improve gender equity and diversity in higher education and research.

In particular, the program aims to remove the obstacles faced by women at major points of career development and progression.

University of Tasmania Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) Professor Brigid Heywood chairs the institution's Equity Committee.

"The University of Tasmania is committed to creating and supporting gender equity and diversity across the academic disciplines," she said.

"By joining the SAGE Pilot of Athena SWAN, the University is working towards improving the career opportunities and advancement for women, especially in the STEMM disciplines."

The University launched its participation in the program with a staff and student forum also attended by SAGE Head of Strategy and Engagement Dr Saraid Billiards and Greg Johannes, Secretary of the Department of Premier and Cabinet.

"While the pilot will be focused on gender equity in STEMM, the University is keen to address this important issue across the breadth of disciplines, bringing about cultural change and improvement of gender diversity at all levels within the institution," Professor Heywood said.

The University is one of 40 Australian research institutions participating in the initiative, which will include an in-depth gender data collection and the design of a four-year action plan to address gender issues and opportunities for improvement.

The University is aiming to achieve a Bronze Award within the next two and a half years.

Athena SWAN is an external accreditation program initially developed in the UK, where it has been operating for 10 years. The program has demonstrated impact in improving gender equity in higher education and research.

For more information on the pilot visit www.sciencegenderequity.org.au/science-in-australia-gender-equity-sage-pilot-2015/.

MEDIA CALL:

WHEN: TODAY (Friday, 7 October 2016), 11.10am

WHERE: Forecourt outside Lazenby's café, Sandy Bay campus.

WHO: University of Tasmania Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) Professor Brigid Heywood. Also chair of the University's Equity Committee.

SAGE Head of Strategy and Engagement Dr Saraid Billiards.

For more information:

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