

# Australian Academy of Science

## Diversity Strategic Statement 2022–2025

### Introduction

Recognising diversity in all its forms is a core pillar of the Australian Academy of Science’s vision for a scientifically informed Australian community that embraces excellence in science and is guided by and enjoys the benefits of scientific endeavour.

The Academy recognises that diversity is critical to excellence in science. A diverse and inclusive science community that brings together the widest range of talents, backgrounds, perspectives and experiences, maximises scientific innovation and creativity, as well as the competitiveness of Australia and its scientific industries.

The strategy for 2022-25 sets out how the Academy will use its leadership and convening power, in partnership with others, to increase diversity, support, create and develop a more inclusive science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) sector.

It builds on the aims and achievements of the previous diversity strategy 2018–2021 that sought to achieve a steady shift in diversity and inclusion in STEM. Implementation includes changing language for key Academy processes including Awards and nominations for Fellowship, reforming underlying processes to mitigate potential bias and providing strategies for mentoring relevant committees and panels in best-practice decision-making.

The Academy steadily gained recognition as a trusted leader in diversity and equity through the significant change in gender balance of elected Fellows, establishing Champions of Diversity for mentoring potential diversity candidates for nomination, delivery of the Women in STEM Decadal Plan, establishing Science in Gender Equity (SAGE) initiative, introducing awards for underrepresented groups and enhancing the tradition of providing a forum for strong support of early- and mid-career researchers.

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## Strategic objectives

### Strategic objective 1

Continue to nurture a culture within the Academy that encourages and promotes diversity and inclusion

*Continue to ensure that the Academy promotes and encourages diversity among the Fellowship and Committees, its awards and grants schemes, and all other aspects of the Academy’s work, through:*

- reporting regularly to the Academy’s leadership on the diversity of the Fellowship and staff to inform deliberations at the highest levels
- ensuring robust diversity and equity processes apply across all Academy activities in order to consider all dimensions of diversity and to enable an intersectional approach

- developing tools to measure its diversity and inclusion activities benchmarked against best available evidence and regularly analysing data to identify areas of success and improvement and affirm the commitment of leaders
- analysing these data regularly to identify areas of success and improvement and to inform continual improvement of processes
- implementing systems and practices that support the collection and management of data and insights to measure progress, with provision of appropriate privacy protection
- developing a culture of regular communication and continual improvement that reviews and makes recommendations to Council on the diversity strategy, and the policies and operational practices of the Academy, that are best practice and in line with leading-edge community expectations.

## Strategic objective 2

### Address barriers to participation in STEM

*The Academy recognises that many people from a range of backgrounds are currently under-represented in STEM education, training and employment. The Academy will continue to identify and combat barriers to participation and progression for these groups, through:*

- continuing to support national policy initiatives and frameworks, including maintaining momentum and support for the Women in STEM Decadal Plan across the full STEM ecosystem
- actively supporting policy and research initiatives, as resources allow, that identify barriers to participation in STEM for under-represented groups, and monitor trends and identify contemporary solutions through our active participation in diversity networks such as Diversity Council Australia
- supporting the development of the evidence base that seeks to understand the barriers to participation in STEM, including the intersectionality of multiple barriers or identities, and unique issues facing specific groups
- communicating knowledge and learnings to the science community
- maintaining leading educational programs in STEM to inform and enthuse school students as resources allow
- continuing our strong history of supporting Australia's early- and mid-career researchers (EMCRs) through the EMCR Forum, the Theo Murphy Initiative and other activities.

## Strategic objective 3

### Work in partnership to assess and maximise the effectiveness of diversity initiatives across the science community

*The Academy will use its convening power to strengthen diversity efforts across the science sector, including:*

- working closely with other learned academies, Science in Australia Gender Equity (SAGE), Indigenous science networks, and other STEM stakeholders across the science community on a range of diversity initiatives, not limited to gender equity. We will share knowledge and identify opportunities for collaboration to strengthen diversity in all its forms in STEM
- supporting other organisations that are proactively addressing diversity and inclusion in STEM by profiling their activities to Academy networks and the public
- convening communities of interest, such as the Women in STEM Decadal Plan Champions network, to identify priorities to advance gender equity and greater diversity in STEM.

## Strategic objective 4

### Recognise and champion the achievements of a wide range of scientists from under-represented groups

*The Academy will continue to recognise and champion the achievements of a wide range of scientists from under-represented groups to provide visibility of STEM pathways to all Australians, through:*

- advancing reconciliation, creating opportunities to work respectfully with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, supporting their contribution to scientific activities, and increasing understandings of Indigenous knowledge, through our Reconciliation Action Plan
- increasing diversity of nominees for Academy awards and grants
- increasing diversity of nominations for Fellowship
- seeking to secure continued support for STEM Women – a dynamic, curated online directory of Australian women working in STEM across industry and academia showcasing the breadth of scientific talent in Australia, enabling a diverse range of women to be offered exciting opportunities to showcase and progress their careers and personal capabilities.

## Governance

Our Equity and Diversity Reference Group is an advisory body to the Academy's Council, providing recommendations to improve diversity and to uphold the principles of inclusion, equal opportunity, fairness and transparency in Academy policies and procedures.

## Authorisation and review

The Diversity Strategic Statement was endorsed by the Academy Council in February 2022. The statement will be reviewed by Council annually or more often if required.