

# Gender Equality in the Workplace TOOLKIT

## STAGE 2. BEGINNING THE CHANGE JOURNEY: GETTING STARTED

This guide aims to help you develop a strong business case by providing:

- An overview of developing a business case to gain support of leaders
- Why workplace equality and respect is good for business (Benefits, key messages and facts and figures to highlight the importance of this work)
- How to align the business case with organisational values and existing goals and priorities

## WHY DEVELOP A BUSINESS CASE

The first step to conducting a Workplace Gender Audit (also known as a Gender Equity/Equality Audit) is to gain the support of senior leaders. Generating enthusiasm and political impetus among senior management is crucial, especially given the resources, planning and coordination efforts an audit will require.

Senior management is the first group within the organisation who will need to be made aware of the benefits an audit will confer to a workplace (WHISE 2016). Commitment from senior management and leaders are critical in the changing of workplace attitudes, behaviours and structures that drive violence against women and are instrumental in ensuring resources, policies and processes are in place to successfully prevent gender inequality; preventing violence against women (PVAW) (WHISE 2016).

# RESOURCE

## Quick Guide: Developing a Business Case to become a more gender equitable workplace

Typically, a well written and robust business case aims to answer a question or a series of questions relating to the relevance and importance of conducting an audit. This helps to strengthen your case for an audit and assist in the resources needed to answer the particular question.

## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- "What is the specific business case for gender equality here?" (WGEA n.d)
- "Why is a Workplace Gender Audit important?" (Our Watch 2018)
- "What do stakeholders (executives, leaders, managers, employees) want in terms of what should be a focus area of the generic business case for your organisation and why?" (Our Watch 2018)

## RECOMMENDED APPROACH

Identifying an approach that aligns with the specific needs of your organisation will strengthen your case for an audit. Tailoring your case to your organisation highlights the importance and relevance, specific to your workplace. Consider the approaches below as a leverage point in your business case.

- Align the business case with your organisational values and existing goals and priorities. Highlight these alignments and how workplace embodies equality and respect
- Remind leaders of their legal responsibilities to promote equality and respect.
- Consider the cost of inaction (absenteeism, staff turn- over, lost productivity, decrease job stratification and staff morale etc)
- Remind leaders that their staff and stakeholders want your organisation to take action
- Show your leaders examples of other organisations and individuals who are committed to equality and respect (WGEA n.d)

# Developing a Business Case

## WHAT A BUSINESS CASE SHOULD INCLUDE

Internal stakeholders (executive leaders and managers) want to understand the specific benefits to them, their team/department and the whole organisation (Our Watch 2018). A robust business case needs to include:

- Why a workplace gender audit is necessary
- Why your organisation should undertake a workplace gender audit (responsibility), include relevant data and statistics on gender equality in the workplace and wider societal data on gender equality and violence against women
- How you propose to undertake the workplace gender audit (methodology), include indicative resources that may be required, staff level of commitment and realistic timeframes e.g., minimum 12 weeks

## WHY A WORKPLACE GENDER AUDIT IS NECESSARY

Australia has domestic laws relating to gender discrimination (WGEA n.d). These include the requirement that for all non-public sector employers with 100 or more employees provide a public report in writing to the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) relating to gender equality indicators. In Victoria, the Gender Equality Act requires all public entities, including local councils, to develop a Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) every four years and report publicly, every two years, on their progress. An audit will assist in meeting these reporting requirements.

## WHY YOUR ORGANISATION SHOULD UNDERTAKE AN AUDIT

Workplaces play a critical role in transforming greater society. The perpetuation of gender stereotypes and norms inside a workplace is likely to contribute to the same norms and inequalities playing out in wider socioeconomic and cultural structures.

## AUDIT METHODOLOGY

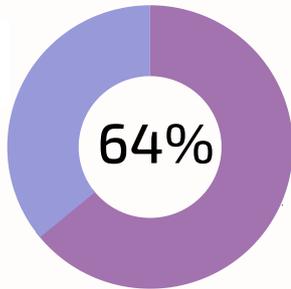
Audit processes are unique to each organisation and are tailored to organisational needs. Participatory gender audits are led by senior management or leadership and involves multiple departments and relevant staff. This provides the clearest assessment of gender equity within an organisation and are internationally recognised as best practice. A comprehensive audit can include:

- **All staff engagement** – keeping staff informed can be done through the creation an internal communication plan
- **Readiness assessment** – organisations can self-assess the extent to which gender equity is effectively institutionalised in its policies, programmes, organisational structures and decision making processes.
- **Staff survey** – aim to provide a snapshot of staff knowledge and attitudes towards relevant systems, policies and procedures, typically organised into themes around leadership and commitment, culture, practices and support
- **Gender Equality training** – training can build the capacity of individuals to apply a gendered lens to organisations policies and procedures and implement as gender impact assessment and explore the link between gender inequality and being a gender transformative workplace
- **Workplace Policy Assessment** – applying a gendered lens to organisational policies and procedures

## ADDITIONAL SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

Consider undertaking internal consultation with both female and male staff to explore their workplace experiences, the way gender impacts their working life, and to provide feedback. Workplaces can also use a small sample size to collect general GE knowledge through a facilitated progress using tools such as the **Checklist for Gender Responsive Organisations**.

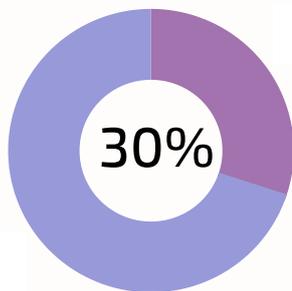
## KEY STATISTICS



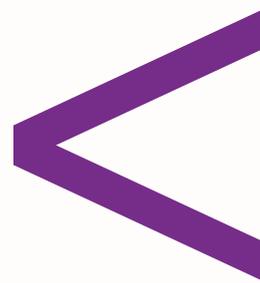
of Victorian women experience **bullying, harassment or violence** in their workplace



Women are nearly **3 TIMES** more likely to have experienced violence from a current or former partner than men



of workers in a national survey reported having experienced domestic violence during their lifetime



Women full-time average weekly earnings are **14% LESS** than for men

## REFERENCES

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