

Media Release July 15, 2020

Combined submission calls for gender equity in vocational education and training

A submission from three leading organisations for gender equity calls upon the Victorian Government to create prosperity for all Victorians by ensuring gender equity through the States vocational education and training system.

Gender Equity Victoria, Women and Vocational Education and Training (WAVE) and the Gender Equity Accreditation Training Project (WHV) have put in a joint submission to *Skills for Victoria: Growing Victoria's Economy (the Review)* which states that transformational change in our economy and society is not possible until inequity is addressed – specifically gender equity – and Victoria's VET system is perfectly placed to do this.

Quotes attributed to the authors:

"We know that Australia and Victoria has a highly gender segregated workforce – something that has been entrenched for many years. This is also reflected in our vocational education and training system where the same inequity exists. This translates through to inequity in our economy and society" said Kit McMahon, Chair of Gender Equity Victoria

"Our submission argues that gender inequality exists in current VET education and teaching practices that is enabled by a VET policy environment that does not consider the impact of gender inequality. Our research shows that women have different levels of participation in different learning settings and programs which we believe provides a clear opportunity for VET to learn and understand more about how it can create more equitable learning environments" said Deb Parker, Manager Workforce Development at Women's Health Victoria (WHV) and lead of the Gender Equity Accredited Training Project.

"Victoria is perfectly placed now to create sustainable change in its VET system by addressing the drivers of inequity. We know that the new Gender Equality Act will make major changes through the public sector of Victoria. A reformed skills system that uses this opportunity to address gender inequality will significantly address the current barriers that many Victorian's face to achieve prosperity" said Linda Simon, Convenor of WAVE.

"Gender inequity has been further exacerbated through COVID-19 pandemic with higher unemployment rates and greater responsibility for caring and unpaid work to name but a few, right now, getting women back into sustainable work will require deliberate and targeted investment and skills policy and funding has a crucial role" said McMahon

"The submission represents over 90 years of combined expertise in gender equity and workforce development" said Parker, highlighting that "we put forward recommendations for students, the community and the VET sector, importantly recommending ways to build capacity and support change within the VET workforce itself, a workforce which also reflects gender segregated characteristics."



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“Our strong view is that the reform required to achieve prosperity and deliver future workforces will mean VET policy and system needs to work through transformational change to achieve this – we know that VET has the capacity to do so “said Simon

“The good news is that our experience tells us that change is possible, and that Victorian VET has many supporters and partners across Victoria who are willing and able to support the journey of the review and of Victoria’s VET sector” concluded McMahon.

Resource/Link:

The full submission can be found on the Gender Equity Victoria Website here -

<https://www.genvic.org.au/resources/gen-vic-submissions/>

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