

Gender Equity Action Plan

2024-2026

CIT Leadership Statement on Gender Equity

The Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT) is dedicated to creating a more inclusive, safe, and equal environment for everyone. As a part of the ACT Government and a public vocational education institution, we know how important our role is in promoting gender equity in the ACT and beyond.

We are committed to taking ongoing action across the institution, including making improvements in our workplace, learning spaces, partnerships with industry and community, and public communications. Our focus is on taking proactive steps to prevent discrimination and as part of this commitment we are:

- Embedding equity into our policies, resources, structures, and processes.
- Empowering our staff and students to be everyday allies and champions for gender equity.
- Improving how we understand and monitor instances of gender-based inequity, harassment, and bullying, including supporting staff and students who have experienced family and/or gender-based violence.
- Listening to staff and students affected by gendered inequity and all gender-based violence and improving together.

CIT Leadership is proud of the progress we have made so far in supporting our staff and students of every background to succeed and are committed to ongoing improvement. Our Gender Equity Action Plan (GEAP) is a strong step towards a long-term commitment to actions and measures to combat gender inequity and make real, lasting changes to ensure all people, regardless of gender, can work and study in a fair, inclusive CIT.

Josephine Andersen

Gender Equity Executive Champion

Introduction to the Gender Equity Action Plan

As an ACT Government agency and the largest public vocational education provider in the Territory, CIT shares the ACT Government's view that the wellbeing, safety, and full participation of people of all genders in all aspects of society is critical to the wellbeing of the whole communityⁱ. Improving gender equity and equality will be a key factor in Canberra being recognised as one of the world's most welcoming cities and CIT is committed to contributing to national and Whole of Government actions and at the local level across the institute to ensure we are actively contributing to the realisation of true gender equality and equity and the prevention of violence against women and all gender-based violence in Australia.

This Gender Equity Action Plan will ensure CIT is contributing to the national, multi-pronged strategy outlined in the Australian Department of Social Services' 'National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children 2022-2032: Ending Gender-Based Violence in One Generation'ⁱⁱ And the Department of Education's 'Action Plan Addressing Gender-based Violence in Higher Education.'ⁱⁱⁱ CIT seeks to show leadership in this important work and actively contribute to advancing gender equality and equity through our sphere of influence in the Territory and vocational education sector. CIT is committed to addressing the complex intersection of gender inequality with other forms of discrimination and disadvantage. The success of the national plan hinges on collaborative efforts across all areas of Australian society to challenge discriminatory practices, promote equitable opportunities, and ensure systemic changes that support lasting progress toward a violence-free future for all.

Gender Equity at CIT

Gender inequality refers to discrimination which causes one sex or gender to be routinely privileged or prioritised over another. It affects every individual in different ways, intersecting with other parts of their identities and presentation such as race, sexuality, or disability.

Equity is about taking action to provide for the unique needs of individuals so everyone can share equally in the same outcomes and opportunities.

Advancing gender equity at CIT strengthens and benefits our staff, students, and community, particularly our female and gender diverse community members and those in fields traditionally dominated by a different gender. At CIT we recognise that our diversity strengthens us as an organisation, and we are committed to ensuring we foster an inclusive and welcoming environment for all.

As a public provider of vocational education, CIT is also positioned to support equity more broadly in the Canberra community across the diverse trades and professions we teach, and through our connections with industry and government. This can only be achieved with a workforce where staff are empowered with the knowledge and capabilities for creating inclusive workplaces and classrooms.

Developing the Gender Equity Action Plan (GEAP)

CIT is proud of the work we have done so far in supporting our staff and students of every background to succeed and are committed to ongoing improvement. Our GEAP is another important step towards a long-term commitment to actions and measures to combat gender inequity and make real, lasting changes to ensure all people, regardless of gender, can work and study in a fair, inclusive CIT.

The GEAP builds on our current organisational commitments and activities that challenge gendered inequality and discrimination and sits in alignment with various strategic documents of CIT shown in Figure 1 below, and with the ACT Women's Plan 2016-2026^{iv} and the ACT Public Service Gender Equity Strategy 2024-2029^v.



Figure 1: Relationship of GEAP to relevant strategic documents

The GEAP was co-developed by the CIT Gender Equity Working Group in partnership with Our Watch, a national leader in the prevention of violence against women and all gender-based violence. The Gender Equity Working Group consists of 17 staff members from across CIT working together between October 2023 and August 2024 to complete a self-assessment and co-develop meaningful and sustainable actions and deliverables for this action plan.

The self-assessment and development of the action plan were also guided by the Respect and Equality Framework developed by Our Watch, which outlines five domains as seen in Figure 2.



Figure 2: Domains as defined by the Respect and Equality Framework

Self-Assessment Outcomes

The CIT Gender Equity Working Group conducted a Gender Equity Self-Assessment using the Our Watch Respect and Equality at TAFE Framework in the first half of 2024.

CIT is building on strong gender equity foundations, with gender-inclusive policies, strong representation of women in leadership, and a gender pay gap of 0.2%. The number of women enrolling in our courses in male-dominated fields has been increasing over the last decade and we are continuously improving our student support programs.

However, there are still gaps in the outcomes and experiences between women, men, and gender diverse people in our community. This is especially true for those who sit at the intersection of multiple systems of disadvantage. For

example, while our gender pay gap is low, on average our First Nations women and women from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds earned less than the average for men of the same background, as well as the CIT average.

We are also influenced by wider societal and industry trends that affect gender inequality. Many of our teaching areas align with industries that have been and remain traditionally dominated by one gender, and this is still reflected overall in our workforce and student cohorts. However, CIT is determined to take a proactive role in addressing inequality within our organisation, knowing that our work will also influence the societal and industry trends that affect us.

Key strengths and areas for improvement are outlined below.

Domain	Key strengths	Areas for improvement
Overall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > CIT has passionate champions for gender equity amongst our people, both staff and students. > There are several initiatives supporting gender equity at CIT across all domains. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Structurally embedding initiatives and inclusion activities, rather than relying on individual champions. > Improving data capture to inform future strategy and planning.
Workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Strong representation of women in leadership, including CIT's Board Chair, Deputy Chair, and CEO, 7 of 11 Board Members, and 6 of 12 of Executive Directors and Executive Branch Managers (at time self-assessment conducted). > Low overall gender pay gap, although there are some specific areas that exhibit larger pay gaps. > A strong set of policies and culture around supporting flexible work and work-life balance, including leave allowances, such as non-gendered birth leave and childcare policies, flexible work arrangements, and a sexual harassment and sexual assault policy. > A recent increase in resourcing for inclusion-related activities, including the creation of a Workplace Inclusion team. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Supporting consistent policy implementation and resourcing across CIT. > Providing training and development opportunities for staff to build their confidence and capability in addressing gender inequality. > Staff confidence in supporting and speaking about gender equity in their day-to-day tasks.
Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Multiple programs and services available through Student Support. > Increasing numbers of women enrolling in male-dominated fields and men enrolling in female-dominated fields over the last eight years. > Several staff- and student-driven initiatives designed to create a more welcoming and inclusive CIT for students, e.g. the Women in Trades campaign, safety at night initiatives, prayer rooms, and conversational English sessions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Supporting proactive, upstream (preventative) work, as well as current initiatives through resourcing and systems. > Improving consistency of provision and accessing of support across different teaching areas. >

Teaching and Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Gender equity initiatives embedded in some teaching areas, e.g. the Hair and Beauty Bar (apprentice haircuts) charge on service not on gender or the Lendlease Women in Trades initiative connected to the development of the Woden campus. > Many courses include a unit on working with diverse groups or similar. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Leverage opportunities to advocate for inclusion in training packages and industry placements. > Supporting gender-inclusive teaching practices through upskilling and empowering teachers. > We acknowledge the influence that training packages have on this domain, which are not entirely within CIT control.
Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Many of our public-facing information, e.g. course guides, challenge traditional industry stereotypes, e.g. featuring people of different genders in images promoting fields traditionally male or female dominated. > We have celebrated the successes of our female staff and students through video and article stories on International Women's Day over the last few years. > Job descriptions and Position Descriptions are consciously created with gender neutral language, and recruitment processes include measures to reduce gendered biases. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Clarify and demonstrate CIT's proactive stance on gender equity to the Canberra community and beyond. > Continue to improve the way we use language and images to promote gender equity across our public facing materials.
Industry and Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > CIT partners with organisations with a strong gender equity focus, e.g. the National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC) ACT Chapter and Soroptimist Canberra. > Offer several scholarships for women as well as free childcare for students of CIT Yurauna. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Strategically seek partnerships that provide mutual support for the inclusive work of CIT and industry. > Using CIT's influence with various industries to promote gender equity.

The Action Plan

The GEAP outlines our steps towards a CIT where all staff and students are supported to be safe, respected, and have equal opportunities at work and in study.

The actions in this plan broadly work towards three key focus areas:

- > Taking small but significant steps to ensure our everyday activities promote gender equity, with actions that embed inclusive language and actions into our resources, processes, and structures.
- > Sharing learning resources and providing staff development to empower our staff and students to be everyday allies and champions for gender equity.
- > Improving data capture, analysis, monitoring, and reporting to increase the efficacy of CIT's future actions in the gender equity space.

The actions for each domain have also been guided by the goals set out in the Our Watch Respect and Equality in TAFE Framework.^{vi} These goals have been listed at the beginning of each section.

CIT Gender Equity Action Plan

Domain: Workplace

Our workplace prioritises gender equality and all staff are supported to be safe, respected and have equal opportunities at work.

1. Our TAFE leadership demonstrates proactive commitment to gender equality and preventing all gender-based violence.
2. Our strategies, policies, and procedures include proactive measures to address gender inequality and all gender-based violence.
3. We have structural support for women's leadership, including the provision of leadership and promotional opportunities for part-time staff.
4. We have dedicated resources and budget to actively promote and monitor GEAP actions and deliverables to prevent violence, address gender inequality, and support those who disclose violence within our educational institute.
5. Staff across our TAFE understand the importance of promoting gender equality and feel confident and supported to challenge sexism and raise concerns related to gender, harassment, bullying, and discrimination.

Action	Responsibility	How it will be achieved	Timeline	Indicators
1. Demonstrate Executive support and commitment.	Gender Equity Executive Champion	1.1 Leadership develops and communicates a statement clearly articulating CIT's commitment to gender equality and expectations of all staff to promote gender equality.	Aug 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership statement has been produced and endorsed by CIT Board. • Leadership statement published on staff intranet, website, and induction materials. • Whole-of-institution Gender Equity Action Plan and Implementation Plan have been produced and endorsed by CIT Board. • Leadership able to articulate CIT's stance on gender equity.
	People and Culture branch	1.2 Develop and deliver an endorsed whole-of-institution Gender Equity Action Plan and Implementation Plan.	Dec 2024	
2. Increase capability of our staff in advancing gender equity.	People and Culture branch	2.1 Review and improve mandatory refresher training and induction modules ensuring CIT's resources use gender-inclusive language, imagery, and examples.	Jul 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training modules and induction materials use inclusive language, imagery, and examples. • Training related to addressing bullying and harassment and supporting gender equity for managers is available on HRIMS. • Gender equity resources are accessible via the staff intranet.
	People and Culture branch	2.2 Provide resources for staff to support the implementation of more inclusive workplace practices, including understanding gender inequity, supporting gender diverse staff, and having conversations about gender equity.	Jul 2025	

	People and Culture branch	2.3 Develop and deliver training for addressing bullying and harassment and supporting gender equity and inclusion for CIT managers.	Dec 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff use and engagement with equity resources reviewed quarterly. Staff are aware of expectations to complete training modules and know how to access training and resources. Staff are aware of expectations around acceptable professional behaviour.
3. Remove barriers and provide leadership and development opportunities for women at CIT.	People and Culture branch	3.1 Promote and support CIT staff to access Whole of Government leadership and development programs for women.	As they arise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whole of Government programs for women and gender diverse staff have been circulated to CIT staff. Policies have been reviewed and adapted, outcomes of policy review reported. A CIT-specific professional development opportunity for women and gender diverse staff has been developed and implemented.
	People and Culture branch	3.2 Review HR policies to ensure use of gender-inclusive language and remove barriers for women and gender diverse staff.	Dec 2024	
	People and Culture branch	3.3 Consult on, develop, and deliver leadership and professional development opportunities for women and gender diverse staff.	Dec 2026	
4. Improved data collection and monitoring.	People and Culture branch	4.1 Improve participation in and leverage relevant Whole of Government staff surveys.	May 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased participation in the 2025 Staff Engagement Survey compared to 2023 Staff Engagement Survey. Improved reporting software and response process implemented. CIT participation in 2025 Psychosocial Climate Survey.
	People and Culture branch	4.2 Improve reporting software and response processes to reduce barriers to reporting issues and build trust in reporting.	Dec 2025	
5. Develop a peer support network for women and gender diverse staff.	People and Culture branch	5.1 Consult on, develop, and deliver a peer support network for women and gender diverse staff.	Dec 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women and gender diverse members of CIT staff have access to peer support.

Domain: Students

All students feel safe and confident to express themselves and participate equally within our TAFE community, and can raise concerns about gender inequality, violence, and discrimination without adverse consequences.

1. Our engagement with students reflects our commitment to promoting gender equality and the prevention of all gender-based violence.
2. Our policies and procedures for students are fair and inclusive and include proactive measures to address gender inequality and gender-based violence.
3. Our programs and services delivered to students aim to address inequality and prevent gender-based violence.

Action	Responsibility	How it will be achieved	Timeframe	Indicators
6. Improve our messaging to our students, ensuring our language does not perpetuate the drivers of gender inequity.	Student Experience and Academic Registrar Lead	6.1 Conduct a word audit of FAQs and Standard Texts used by CIT students, staff, and alumni to identify and rectify instances where they support the drivers of gender inequity.	Dec 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAQs and Standard Texts have been reviewed and adapted. • Communication to enrolling students has been reviewed and adapted. • Student Support resources to promote gender equity, as well as equity and equality more broadly, have been reviewed and adapted. • Student Support resources to address gender inequities, as well as other forms of inequity, discrimination, and racism, have been reviewed and adapted. • Quarterly reports on student use and engagement with Student Support resources.
	Student Experience and Academic Registrar Lead	6.2 Conduct a word and image audit of onboarding information and forms for enrolling CIT students to identify and rectify instances where they support the drivers of gender inequity.	Jul 2025	
	Student Experience and Academic Registrar Lead	6.3 Conduct a word and image audit of forms, website, and resources provided by Counselling and Student Support to identify and rectify instances where they support the drivers of gender inequity.	Dec 2025	
7. Improve measures of gender equity and inequity amongst students.	CIO, Data and Digitalisation	7.1 Conduct a gap analysis on data collected and collated related to gender inequity amongst CIT students and identify opportunities for improving data capture.	Dec 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved understanding of data that is captured and what could be captured. • Improved data capture, including themes and demographic questions that allow an intersectional understanding of gender equity issues amongst students presenting to Student Support. • Improved ability to generate insights from reported data.
	Student Experience and Academic Registrar Lead	7.2 Embed gender equality evaluation into the student survey strategy.	Jul 2025	
	Student Experience	7.3 Improve systems for capturing data around demographics and reasons for presenting to Student Support and Counselling.	Dec 2026	

	and Academic Registrar Lead			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve useability and responsiveness for students reporting equity-related incidents. • Quarterly reports on data captured, including insights and trends identified, and response to any issues identified.
	Student Experience and Academic Registrar Lead	7.4 Improve systems for reporting, addressing, and capturing data on bullying, harassment, discrimination, or similar claims from students.	Dec 2026	

Domain: Teaching and Learning

Our educators are leaders in integrating and promoting gender equality messages and actions into their teaching practice, and in creating equal and respectful learning environments.

1. Gender equality and the prevention of all gender-based violence is embedded into our teaching practices and learning environments.
2. The skills and knowledge required to promote gender equality and prevent gender-based violence in different occupations is embedded into our curriculum.
3. Practical placements and apprenticeships are managed in a way that aims to overcome gender-based inequities and actively challenge stereotypes, contributing to the desegregation of the workforce.
4. All teaching and learning staff feel confident and prepared to integrate evidence-based gender equality messages and actions into their teaching practice.
5. We embrace diversity: Our teaching practice is inclusive and equitable to maximise inclusion for all learners.^{vii}

Action	Responsibility	How it will be achieved	Timeframe	Indicators
8. Empower educators to create inclusive, respectful learning environments.	Head of Department Teacher Capability	8.1 Provide opportunities for educators to learn and share strategies and support each other in promoting positive and safe learning cultures.	Jan 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning Design team engage with Our Watch Respect and Equality in TAFE and Change the Story in TAFE resources and professional development. • Learning Design team supporting educators to embed gender inclusive practices in course design using Our Watch framework and resources. • Initiate informal Community of Practice for educators to engage with gender equity in their teaching and learning design. • Resources about promoting gender equity through teaching created and shared with educators. • Quarterly report on engagement with resources and training and development sessions.
	Head of Department Teacher Capability	8.2 Embed gender inclusion as a design principle and promote gender inclusive practices with educators developing online materials.	Jan 2026	
	Head of Department Teacher Capability	8.3 Provide ongoing development opportunity for educators around facilitating conversations about gender equity and gender-based violence.	Jan 2026	
9. Understand and improve the experience of apprentices and students undertaking workplace training.	Industry and Innovation Lead	9.1 Review and evaluate how structured workplace training is coordinated at CIT and strengthen CIT's processes to ensure students are placed in supportive workplaces.	Sep 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies and processes for structured workplace training have been reviewed and adapted.

Domain: Industry and Community

As a vocational education institute with a strong connection to industry and community, our commitment to gender equality and the prevention of gender-based violence is reflected in all that we do.

1. We use our public profile, influence, and strong connection to community to function as leaders in gender equality and the prevention of all gender-based violence.
2. We partner with industry in a strategic and meaningful way that actively promotes gender equality and the prevention of all gender-based violence.
3. We engage with our broader TAFE community to promote gender equality and prevention of all gender-based violence.
4. Our engagement with students, staff, industry partners and the community reflect our commitment to promoting gender equality and the prevention of gender-based violence.

Action	Responsibility	How it will be achieved	Timeframe	Indicators
10. Leverage industry knowledge from CIT's Industry Advisory Groups to Influence change.	Industry and Innovation Lead	10.1 Develop processes to ensure CIT's Industry Advisory Groups are inclusive with members from diverse backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives.	Jan 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on representation figures for Industry Advisory Groups. • New process and system in place to share Industry Advisory Group perspectives on teaching and learning at CIT in the gender equity space. • Impact assessment report on new system sent to senior leadership at CIT.
	Industry and Innovation Lead	10.2 Leverage off CIT's Cloud Campus Project to develop processes and systems that allow perspectives from the Industry Advisory Groups to inform teaching and learning at CIT.	Jan 2025	
11. Develop procedures for CIT staff to connect with commercial/not for profit community organisations.	Industry and Innovation Lead	11.1 CIT's Industry Engagement Team target partnerships that value respect, equity, and inclusion to support the strategic objectives outlined in CIT's Strategic Plan to 2035.	Mar 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CIT Annual Report to include information on partnerships formed, including case studies of partnership and outcomes. • CIT Annual Report to include information on funding applications made by CIT to deliver inclusive services to students. • Develop and adopt stage one initiative checklist to prioritise diversity and equity groups in Industry Engagement procedures.
	Industry and Innovation Lead	11.2 Identify resource streams through opportunities such as the National Skills Agreement where CIT can capitalise on additional funding to deliver inclusive services to students.	Ongoing	
	Industry and Innovation Lead	11.3 New initiative proposals involving equity and diversity groups to be prioritised wherever possible.	Mar 2025	
12. Leverage our influence with our industry partners.	Industry and Innovation Lead	12.1 Advocate with industry partners on how they can promote gender equity and create and maintain safe environments.	Jan 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry and Innovation unit 2025 business plan to prioritise actions and initiatives to increase number of diverse cohorts participating in training in areas of workforce skills need.

				<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CIT Annual Report to include information on participation of equity cohorts in all training areas, including areas of workforce skills need.
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Domain: Communications

Our internal and external communications play an important role in creating an equal, safe, and respectful community and culture for staff, students, and the community we serve.

1. We strive to be a public champion for gender equality and the prevention of all gender-based violence.
1. Our internal workplace culture and communication promotes gender equality for all staff, students, industry partners and the community.
2. All external communication materials reflect our commitment to gender equality and preventing gender-based violence.

Action	Responsibility	How it will be achieved	Timeframe	Indicators
13. CIT publicly demonstrates its commitment to gender equity.	Senior Manager CIT Marketing	13.1 CIT’s position and action on gender equity is evident on CIT’s external website.	Oct 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CIT’s stance on and commitment to gender equity published on external CIT website, with the Leadership Statement and Action Plan included. • Newsfeed on Leadership statement, with links to the published GEAP and SharePoint content. • A news piece on International Women’s Day 2025 highlighted on CIT external website.
	People and Culture branch	13.2 International Women’s Day is marked in March each year	Mar 2025, 2026	
14. Embed inclusive language in our marketing materials, ensuring our language does not perpetuate the drivers of gender inequity.	Senior Manager CIT Marketing	14.1 In consultation with CIT Strategic Communications and key stakeholders across CIT, review, update, and take measures to increase staff awareness about the Writing Style Guide to embed inclusive language in future content developed by CIT staff.	Feb 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive Writing Style Guide reviewed and updated. • Content audit has been reviewed and adapted.
	Senior Manager CIT Marketing	14.2 Following from the content audit, conduct a comprehensive word and image audit of the website, subject guides, and other student-facing marketing materials to identify and rectify instances where they support the drivers of gender inequity.	Feb 2026	

References

- ⁱ ACT Government. (2023). Advancing Gender Equality: Third Action Plan 2023-2026 – ACT Women’s Plan 2016-2026. Retrieved from: [Third Action Plan](#).
- ⁱⁱ Department of Social Services. (2022). The National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children 2022-2032. Retrieved from: [The National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children 2022-2032](#).
- ⁱⁱⁱ Department of Education. (2024). The Action Plan Addressing Gender-based Violence in Higher Education. Retrieved from: [Action Plan Addressing Gender-based Violence in Higher Education](#).
- ^{iv} ACT Government. (2016). ACT Women’s Action Plan 2016-2026. Retrieved from: [ACT Women's Plan 2016-26](#).
- ^v ACT Government. (2024) ACTPS Gender Equity Strategy 2024-2029. Retrieved from: [ACTPS Gender Equity Strategy 2024-2029](#).
- ^{vi} Our Watch. (2024). Respect and Equality in TAFE. Retrieved from: [Equality and Respect in TAFE - National Guide](#).
- ^{vii} Canberra Institute of Technology. (2024). CIT Learning and Teaching Strategy. Retrieved from: [CIT Learning and Teaching Strategy](#).

Further Resources

- [Our Watch TAFE Resources](#)
- [Our Watch Respectful Relationships Education Resources](#)
- [Challenging Gender Stereotypes](#)
- [Resources to Support Young People](#)