



Leadership for Gender Balance

Framework for Action to Promote Gender Balance in Senior Management in Local Government



LGMA WA

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1. Purpose

The LGMA's 'Leadership for Gender Balance: Framework for Action to Promote Gender Balance in Senior Management in Local Government' provides guidelines to LGMA to support and promote women's representation in senior levels of local government and to ensure strong leadership within the industry.

2. Scope and Application

The Framework is an internal guidance document outlining a vision, strategic priorities and mechanisms to assist the LGMA Board and Administration in integrating gender awareness throughout local government organisational cultures and management, and within the LGMA.

The Framework gives broad strategic orientations for implementation and advancing gender balance in all areas of LGMA's mandate. It is complemented by an Action Plan that will focus on supporting current and future women leaders to advance their careers in senior positions within the Local Government sector.

The LGMA is to lead by example in developing and implementing strategies that encourage and support gender balance within the LGMA and across the local government sector in Western Australia.

The key groups to which this Framework applies are:

- LGMA Board
- LGMA Administration
- LGMA Membership.

3. Framework for Action

3.1 Vision

To improve the quality of leadership in local government by achieving gender balance in executive positions.

To ensure that women and men have the equal power, opportunity and access to shape their communities, organisations and their own lives by increasing women's representation in senior management and executive positions within local governments in WA generally, and specifically within LGMA.

3.2 Principles

LGMA recognises that:

- Leadership in promoting gender balance is key to effective local government.
- Gender balance in local government is important for good governance.
- Strategies to improve gender balance and or equality requires an integrated 3 pronged approach:
 - Equal treatment which aims to give women the same rights and the same opportunities as men in the public sphere (e.g. legislative and policy frameworks around anti-discrimination).
 - Women's focus which recognises differences between women and men and seeks to address women's exclusion or under-representation (e.g. capacity development in leadership; mentoring).
 - Gender focus directs attention to gender relations and the distribution of power between men and women, acknowledging the relevance of men's lives and masculinities to the equality debate, and aims for a fairer distribution of human responsibilities with the intention to alter men's roles as well as those of women (e.g. addressing informal organisational cultures and structural barriers to gender balance).

It is important to emphasise that the three approaches are not mutually exclusive but complementary—one approach alone will not support local government in realising the vision of gender balance.

- Gender balance does not mean treating men and women the same. It means treating men and women the same when their needs and aspirations are the same, and differently when their needs and aspirations are different.

- The LGMA should provide leadership to the industry in supporting and promoting gender balance and improving the quality of leadership in local government in Western Australia.
- Gender balance is for everyone in local government management: it is part of how we work because it reflects the communities within which we work.

3.3 Framework objectives

The objectives of the Framework are to:

- Guide LGMA in planning for promoting and supporting gender balance within the local government management sector.
- Leverage the value of gender balance for all LGMA stakeholders.
- Ensure LGMA continues to take a leadership position on gender balance and equity practice, setting the agenda in the local government management industry.

3.4 Strategic priorities

Leadership

Establish high level leadership within local government management spheres for gender balance that ensures women and men are treated fairly, with respect and without discrimination.

- To promote and circulate evidence-based research on leadership in local government.
- To work in partnership with local governments, other agencies and key stakeholders in improving the quality of gender responsive leadership in local government in Western Australia and Australia.
- To actively work to achieve gender balance on the Board of the LGMA.
- To adopt the Women's Empowerment Principles as a guiding document for the Board.
- To monitor, measure and publicly report on progress to achieve gender balance.
- To share best practice and learning with the local government management sector.

Professional development

Promote education, training and professional development for women.

- To identify and support male and female emerging leaders.
- To build the skills and confidence of male and female emerging leaders.
- To mainstream development opportunities for male and female emerging leaders.
- To provide opportunities that develop professional industry networks for emerging male and female leaders.

Industry cultural change

Work towards transforming the culture within local governments and positioning local government as an employer of choice.

- To support and encourage local government Chief Executive Officers to adopt leadership strategies that achieve gender balance and flexible workplace practices that empower women.
- To promote the adoption of the Women's Empowerment Principles in local government throughout Western Australia.
- To take responsibility for monitoring gender data in the industry.
- To actively promote Local Government as an equal opportunity employer.

3.5 Implementation

To achieve the objectives of the Framework, the LGMA will:

- Develop and implement a Gender Balance Action Plan that will translate the Framework's vision and strategic priorities into practice, which includes measurable objectives.
- Review and update the Framework in conjunction with the LGMA Strategic Plan.
- Maintain a Working Party of Board representatives to support and oversee the development and implementation of the Gender Balance Action Plan.

3.6 Monitoring, reporting and review

LGMA Management will report to the Board and membership on initiatives undertaken by Management in relation to the Gender Balance Action Plan.

LGMA Management will conduct an annual review of the Framework and the Action Plan (which will include a review of the effectiveness of the Framework and the Action Plan).

LGMA Working Party

Yvonne Loveland, Board Director

Vicki Lummer, Board Director

Jonathan Throssell, President and Board Director

Ian Cowie, Board Director

Warren Pearce, Chief Executive Officer

Viola Jacobs, Manager – Events and Operations

November 2015

Gender Balance—LGMA Action Plan 2015/16

Leadership

Action

- Ensure that the LGMA position on Gender Balance is promoted through our own events and externally where possible and appropriate.
- Actively Participate in State or other Agency Forums and Initiatives that seek to address Gender Balance in Senior Management Positions.

Professional development

Action

- Conduct a Women's Forum that focuses on career development, motivation and inspiration.
- Create opportunities that encourage women to develop strong industry networks.
- Create individual professional development events that have a focus on leadership development.

Industry cultural change

Action

- Identify methods for data collection to gauge trends in gender balance of senior management positions in local government.
- Initiate research, where appropriate, in partnership with appropriate agencies that provides reports on progress of gender balance issues.
- Assist in promoting Organisational processes that promote gender balance at LGMA events, forums and conferences.



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