

## **AWRI statement on Workplace Gender Equality reporting (1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024)**

### **The importance of gender equality**

AWRI acknowledges that gender equality is a cornerstone of a progressive and successful workplace, fostering innovation, diversity and a culture of inclusivity. We are committed to taking actions to improve gender equality (and other aspects of diversity), so that we continue to transform into a more inclusive and equitable environment for all our employees.

One example of this commitment is the gender quotas for the make-up of the AWRI Board enshrined in the AWRI Board Charter. The Charter provides that the Non-Executive Directors include not less than four person who identify themselves as male and four persons who identify themselves as female. Currently, the Board is made up of four male Non-Executive Directors, five female Non-Executive Directors and one male *ex officio* Director (the Managing Director).

### **What is the gender pay gap? It's not the same as equal pay...**

The gender pay gap is a measure of the contributions of how men and women are valued in the workforce. Expressed as a percentage or a dollar figure it shows the difference between the earnings of women and men (WGEA 2025).

The gender pay gap is not the same as equal pay. Equal pay is where women and men are paid the same for performing the same role or different work of equal or comparable value. In Australia, this has been a legal requirement since 1969. At the AWRI we are committed to equal pay and always pay women and men the same when they are performing the same role. Gender pay gaps are not a comparison of like roles. Instead, they show the difference between the average or median pay of women and men across organisations, industries and the workforce as a whole (WGEA 2025).

### **Understanding our pay gap**

The Workplace Gender Equality Agency calculates both an average gender pay gap and a median gender pay gap for each organisation. Measuring gender pay gaps by median allows an understanding of the remuneration experience of the typical employee at a workplace, as it is not skewed by exceptionally high or low salaries. The average gender pay gap is a good measure of the collective remuneration of a group. As the average is skewed by exceptionally high or low salaries, it will show if earnings are particularly concentrated for one gender, for example, more men in higher earning positions.

The median gender pay gap is calculated as the difference between the median of what men are paid and the median of what women are paid, expressed as a percentage of the median of men's earnings. The average pay gap is calculated as the difference between the average of what men are paid and the average of what women are paid, expressed as a percentage of the average of men's earnings (WGEA 2025). More information on the calculations can be found on the WGEA website.

AWRI's average gender pay gap for 2023-24 is 25.9% and median gender pay gap is 25.1%. These numbers are very similar to those reported in the 2022-23 reporting year. It is acknowledged that little progress has been made on an 'average' basis but some progress has been made on a 'median' basis (a reduction from 30.1% in 2021-22).

These numbers reflect the difference in earnings between women and men in our workforce, with men on average paid 25.9% more than women across the organisation. It's important to reiterate that this does NOT mean that we pay people differently based on their gender for the same role. Rather, this gender pay gap reflects AWRI having a lower proportion of women in high-paid roles and a higher proportion of women in lower-paid roles.

While we understand many of the factors that contribute to these numbers, we want to be very clear that we do not consider this acceptable and we are committed to taking positive action to tackle it.

Breaking down the numbers in a bit more detail:

- Overall our workforce is 62% women and 38% men
- However, our upper pay quartile is 60% men and 40% women and our lowest pay quartile is 19% men and 81% women. It is this imbalance that is driving the overall pay gap. To balance out the pay gap, we need a higher proportion of women in higher-paid roles and a higher proportion of men in lower-paid roles.

Some of the key contributing factors:

- We have low staff turnover, including in the most senior roles, with long-serving male staff in some of the higher paid roles.
- AT ~100 FTEs, we are not a large enough organisation to have a formal banded employment structure, so it is more challenging to support structured career paths/promotions within the organisation.
- We are a STEM-based organisation, which in the past has been a more male-dominated field of employment, although that is definitely changing.
- Our positions in the lowest pay quartile tend to be those that offer the most flexibility, making them a better fit for those with caring responsibilities (which disproportionately fall to women) and such positions have typically been filled by more women than men.

### **Our actions to address the gender pay gap and support gender equity**

In the past year we have taken the following actions:

- Created a Gender Action Plan, which incorporate initiatives such as gender bias training as well as targets to reduce the gender pay gap and to promote equitable practices at the AWRI.
- Established a Gender Action Plan group with both male and female representatives from all groups across the AWRI.
- Reported progress against actions in the Gender Action Plan to the AWRI Board on an annual basis.
- Created a single Diversity and Inclusion Policy (which gathers content together in one place that also sits within a range of other AWRI policies) in order to make the organisation's commitment to equality and diversity more visible.
- Supported the attendance of five employees at the annual Australian Women in Wine Symposium in Hobart.

In the coming year we will progress the initiatives in the Gender Action Plan, which include running the gender bias training mentioned above, mapping out short-term and longer-term improvement targets to reduce our gender pay gap, and identifying additional diversity and inclusion initiatives to be added to the Plan as the current initiatives are completed or implemented.

### **Summary**

We are disappointed that our gender pay data does not live up to the standards we aim to set in equality and diversity. People are our most important asset. AWRI is committed to creating a diverse, safe and inclusive workplace. While acknowledging there are some historical and structural factors contributing to the gap, we are clear that this is not good enough and maintaining the status quo is not acceptable. We are committed to taking actions outlined in this document and in our Gender Action Plan and seeking additional ways to address this gender pay gap. We understand that this will not be a quick fix, but are committed to working towards an equal workplace.

### **Reference**

WGEA (Workplace Gender Equality Agency) website: <https://www.wgea.gov.au/the-gender-pay-gap>