



Government
of South Australia

Office for Women

Gender Pay Gap TASKFORCE

Final Report
2024

“We cannot be complacent about the impacts of the gender pay gap on women's lives.

Closing the gender pay gap requires systemic and cultural change to remove the barriers to the full and equal participation of women in the workforce and broader society.

Undervaluing the work of women must stop and, while government has a role, we need to acknowledge as a community that we all have a responsibility to value women.”

Sarah Andrews MP, Chair, South Australian Gender Pay Gap Taskforce

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Acknowledgement of Country

The South Australian Gender Pay Gap Taskforce proudly acknowledges and pays respect to Aboriginal peoples as South Australia's First Peoples and the Traditional Owners and occupants of the lands and waters of South Australia.

The Taskforce acknowledges the role that many Aboriginal women play in advancing the interests of girls and women, generously sharing wisdom and culture and through often tireless advocacy over years, decades and lifetimes.

Further, we acknowledge that the spiritual, social, cultural and economic practices of Aboriginal peoples come from their traditional lands and waters, that they maintain their cultural and heritage beliefs, languages and laws which are of ongoing importance, and that they have made and continue to make a unique and irreplaceable contribution to the state.

1. About the Gender Pay Gap Taskforce

The State Government established the South Australian Gender Pay Gap Taskforce (the Taskforce) in September 2022 to provide high level advice to the Minister for Women and the Prevention of Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence (the Minister) and South Australian Government on issues related to the gender pay gap. The Taskforce is a state-wide, multi-stakeholder panel of experts in the fields of gender equality and industrial relations.

Between October 2022 and November 2024, the Taskforce met 14 times including two planning days, both days attended by the Minister, the Hon Katrine Hildyard.

About the Taskforce's research

Between August and November 2023, the Taskforce conducted 15 interviews with a diverse range of South Australian peak bodies and organisations that had undertaken or were implementing initiatives to address the drivers of gender inequality in their organisation, profession, or industry.

South Australian industries, including Agriculture, Construction, and Energy, were asked how gender equality can be best achieved in the workplace and the challenges they faced in addressing the gender pay gap, which provided valuable insights for the Taskforce.

In April 2024, the Taskforce released its [Interim Report](#) that identified focus areas including the lack of South Australian data, the needs of small to medium employers, and opportunities to reduce the gender pay gap in the public sector. The Taskforce subsequently established small working groups to formulate recommendations for State Government in these focus areas identified in the report. Taskforce members also filmed a video that was published on social media on Equal Pay Day on 19 August 2024 to raise awareness of the gender pay gap and to break common myths.

Thank You to Taskforce Members



Taskforce members with the Hon Katrine Hildyard at the final meeting of the Taskforce. From left to right:

Standing: Commissioner Erma Ranieri, Andrew Kay, Natasha Brown, Professor Carol Kulik, Jane Pickering, Sandy Pitcher (Interim Chair, Oct 2023 - Nov 2023), Dr Sanjugta Vas Dev, Commissioner Jodeen Carney.

Virtual: Matthew O'Callaghan.

Sitting: Sarah Andrews MP (Chair, Nov 2023 - current), the Hon Katrine Hildyard (non-Taskforce member).

Not pictured: Abbey Kendall, Ross Womersley, The Hon Irene Pnevmatikos (Chair, Oct 2022 - Sep 2023), Olive Bennell (Oct 2022 - June 2024), Dr Jennifer Purdie (Oct 2022 - May 2024).

- Sarah Andrews MP, Member for Gibson – Chair (Nov 2023 – Current)
- Sandy Pitcher, Chief Executive, Department for Human Services – Interim Chair (Oct 2023 – Nov 2023)
- The Honourable Irene Pnevmatikos, Member of Legislative Council – Chair (Oct 2022 – Sept 2023)
- Abbey Kendall, Director and Principal Solicitor of the Working Women's Centre
- Andrew Kay, Chief Executive Officer of the South Australian Business Chamber
- Professor Carol Kulik, Bradley Distinguished Professor at the University of South Australia
- Erma Ranieri, Commissioner for Public Sector Employment
- Jane Pickering, Chief Executive of Eldercare Australia Ltd
- Jodeen Carney, Commissioner for Equal Opportunity
- Matthew O'Callaghan, former Senior Deputy President of the Fair Work Commission
- Natasha Brown, General Secretary of the Public Service Association
- Ross Womersley, Chief Executive Officer of the South Australian Council of Social Service
- Dr Sanjugta Vas Dev, Director of the Office for Women
- Olive Bennell, Chief Executive Officer of Nunga Mi:Minar (Oct 2022 – June 2024)
- Dr Jenny Purdie, former Asset President of BHP's Olympic Dam (Oct 2022 – May 2024)

1.1 Chair's Message



In South Australia, as it is everywhere, gender inequality is the key driver of disadvantage for women. It affects women's economic equality and participation, women's safety and their ability to determine their own future.

Ending violence against women and achieving gender equality requires the collective effort of us all—governments, community, business and the not-for-profit sector—to dismantle systemic inequalities and foster

environments where every individual, regardless of gender, can thrive.

We cannot be complacent about the impacts of the gender pay gap on women's lives.

Closing the gender pay gap goes beyond just ensuring equal pay, it requires systemic and cultural change to remove the barriers to the full and equal participation of women in the workforce and broader society.

Our state is experiencing strong economic growth, and we know that we must continue to build and develop our workforce to meet the state's economic ambitions.

Growing and sustaining the supply of skilled workers is essential to addressing our key labour market challenges.

This includes increasing women's participation in the workforce by unlocking barriers and pursuing opportunities that enable this to happen. When working to end gender inequality we recognise this is not a women's issue, it is everyone's issue.

Sarah Andrews MP, Member for Gibson, Chair (Nov 2023 – Current)

2. Introduction

2.1. About This Report

This final report sets out a call for action to the South Australian Government; business and education sectors; and other key partners in the South Australian community to eliminate the gender pay gap in South Australia. The report outlines three recommendations for the South Australian Government to progress this objective:

RECOMMENDATION 1



Partner with a relevant organisation to work collaboratively with industry peaks to support small to medium employers to effectively address their gender pay gaps

RECOMMENDATION 2



Partner with academia and industry to establish an independent South Australian research centre, that undertakes applied research into gender inequality and economic outcomes for South Australia

RECOMMENDATION 3



Take targeted action to reduce the gender pay gap in the public sector

2.2. The Economic Opportunity for All South Australians

South Australia is experiencing strong economic growth and record high levels of employment coupled with skills shortages across more than 350 occupations.¹ These skill shortages are in key industries critical to South Australia's future economic growth and are primarily in higher paying, male dominated industries. The Taskforce recognises the South Australian Government's vision for a thriving and successful economy can only be achieved

by engaging more South Australians, including women, in meaningful and skilled work and being paid fairly for their contribution.² This means increasing women’s economic participation and security by unlocking barriers and pursuing opportunities that enable this to happen.

Women in South Australia continue to face significant economic inequalities including earning less money than men, accumulating less superannuation, being less likely to be in a leadership position and spending more time in unpaid work. Women experience higher rates of domestic, family and sexual violence and disproportionately experience housing insecurity. Economic inequality is both a cause and consequence of the gender pay gap.³ There is a critical and urgent opportunity to address the gender pay gap to remove some of the key barriers faced by women so that all South Australians have the opportunity to thrive.

2.3. About the Gender Pay Gap

What is the Gender Pay Gap?

The gender pay gap is a measure of the difference in how we value the contribution of men and women in the workforce. The gap serves as a measure of equality in a workforce by identifying the difference between the earnings of women and men, often expressed as a percent or a dollar figure.⁴



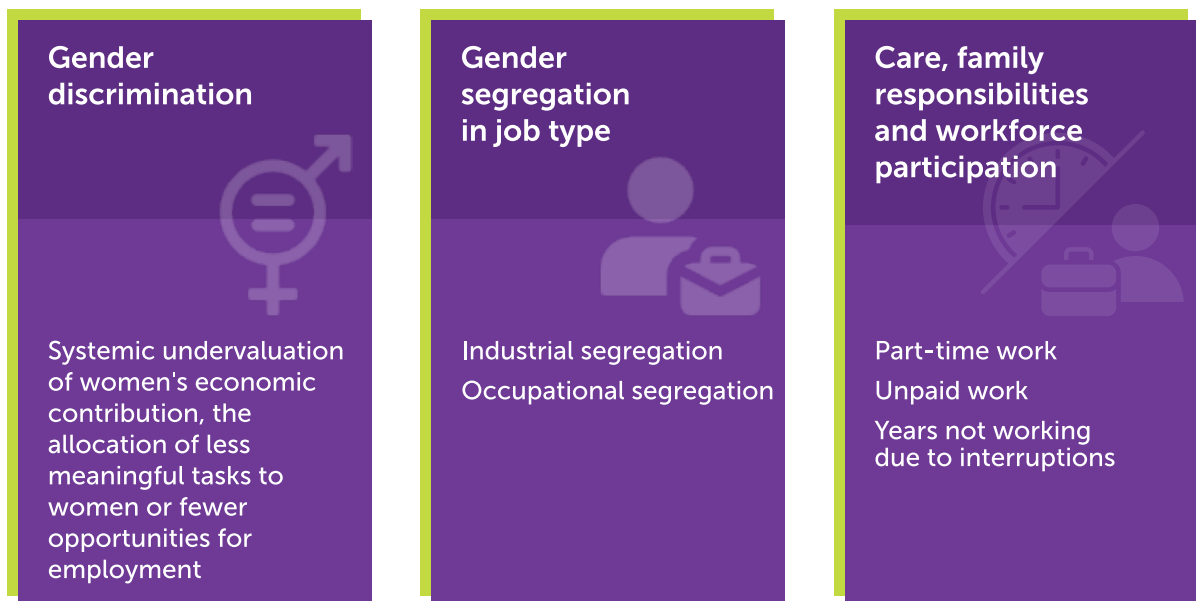
The gap does not compare like roles, but instead shows the difference in earnings of women and men across an individual workplace, industry or the whole workforce of a state, territory, or country.⁵ Research has shown that gender pay gaps remain apparent, regardless of the data source or approach used. In every role and industry in Australia, there is a gap in earnings in the favour of men.

Fig. 1. ABS, Average Weekly Earnings, May 2024 (Released 15 August 2024).

What causes the gender pay gap?

The KPMG *She's Price(d)less* report is the only analysis in Australia that assesses the contributing drivers of the gender pay gap to explain why the gender pay gap exists.⁶ The report provides critical evidence and analysis of the barriers to equality in Australia and identifies three key drivers of the gender pay gap.

The Taskforce recognises the key drivers of the gender pay gap across Australia identified in the KPMG *She's Price(d)less* report, and the percentages that they contribute to the gap, including gender discrimination and a systemic undervaluation of women's economic contribution (36%); women's limited participation in the workforce and women spending 81% more time in unpaid work than men (33%); and gender segregation which means more men in high paying roles and industries such as defence and manufacturing, and more women in lower paid sectors such as early childhood education, aged care and hospitality (24%).⁷



What are the impacts and consequences of the gender pay gap?

The gender pay gap results in women on average earning less than men and being less likely to progress as far in their careers resulting in less immediate income, making it harder to meet expenses or save money, and ultimately a less comfortable lifestyle than men.⁸ These impacts are compounded for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, women with disability, women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and LGBTIQ+ women. In the long term, the gender pay gap has a compounding effect that results in a woman's reduced earning capacity over her lifetime and women having significantly less superannuation than men. The financial burden is amplified as women tend to retire earlier than men and live longer, contributing to the increasing numbers of older women becoming homeless in Australia. Unpaid care contributes to labour market inequalities, is associated with employment quality, and increases the likelihood of part-time or insecure casual and contract work. The gender pay gap not only affects women on an individual level, it reinforces gender inequality through ongoing discrimination faced by women and the unequal distribution of power, resources and opportunity between men and women. Research also shows that reducing the gender pay gap would result in an increase in workforce participation and productivity and add \$128 billion to Australia's economy.⁹

How is the gender pay gap measured?

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) measures the gender pay gap nationally using data from a sample of employers selected from the Australian Business Register, with a slightly different sample taken each time. This data faces limitations as it estimates the full-time weekly base salary of employees in the public and private sector, excludes overtime, pay that is salary sacrificed and superannuation, and excludes junior and part-time employees.

Meanwhile, the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) measures the gender pay gaps of employers with 100 or more employees with data from their annual Employer Census of more than 4 million employees. It also includes total remuneration, part time and casual employees.

On 27 February 2024, WGEA published for the first time the gender pay gaps for private sector employers. It revealed the gender pay gaps for nearly 5,000 Australian employers, including 327 South Australian organisations.

What is WGEA?

WGEA is a Commonwealth Government agency established by the *Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 (Cth)*. The Act requires employers with 100 or more employees to report annually against six gender equality indicators. In 2022, the application of the Act was extended to the Commonwealth public sector.

WGEA's statutory functions include collecting and publishing information relating to gender inequality indicators, assisting employers to take action, monitoring compliance, delivering programs and undertaking research.

3. Addressing the Gender Pay Gap in South Australia

For every dollar on average earned by men in our State, women earned just over 90 cents. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), the South Australian gender pay gap is 9.8% as of May 2024.¹⁰ While South Australia is ahead of the national average as seen in Figure 2, immediate action is needed to address the widening gap which has increased by 1.8 percentage points since the establishment of the Taskforce in September 2022.¹¹

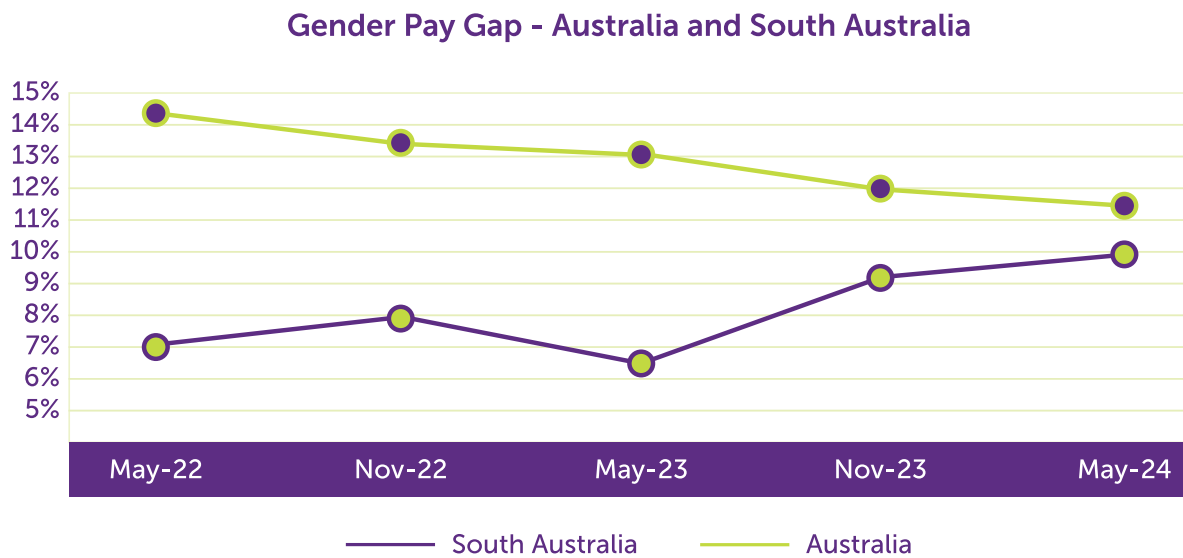


Fig. 2. ABS, Average Weekly Earnings, May 2024 (Released 15 August 2024).

Figure 3 demonstrates the impact of gender segregation – as a driver of the gender pay gap – in South Australia with the higher paying industries being male dominated industries versus the lower paid female dominated industries.¹²

Gender Employment Gap by Industry - South Australia



Fig. 3. ABS, Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, September 2024 (Released 24 October 2024)

About the WGEA Data

As part of its research on the gender pay gap in South Australia, the Taskforce invested their efforts into analysing the 2022-23 mandatory reporting data published by WGEA on the gender pay gaps of each private sector employer with 100 or more employees.

This analysis involved identifying the 327 out of nearly 5000 employers published that are registered in South Australia and comparing their median gender pay gaps to the reported national gap and the gaps of their industry. This allowed the Taskforce to identify employers who have smaller gaps than usually observed in their industries.

These ‘Positive Outlier’ employers provide an opportunity to observe and learn practices that contribute to narrowing gender pay gaps in industries with the greatest need for improvement.

The Taskforce notes that South Australia is in a uniquely advantageous position to advance gender-based economic equality and identify innovative strategies that could be disseminated nation-wide including:

- South Australia’s rapid growth in several industry sectors (e.g., defence, space, renewable energy) spawning new businesses with the opportunity to embed gender equality into their management practices as they transition from startup to scaleup. Further, digital transformation is assisting to remove physical barriers that make high-paying jobs in these sectors more accessible to women, such as cloud project management software in the construction industry enabling working from anywhere and connecting with teams remotely.
- The Taskforce’s analysis of WGEA’s publicly available gender pay gap data demonstrates that there are South Australian employers in 14 industry sectors who exhibit smaller gender pay gaps than either national or state-level pay gap averages. These “positive outliers” represent state-specific examples of best practice that could transform entire sectors.

Figure 4 below indicates that South Australian employers have on average, smaller pay gaps than the national average, leading the nation on gaps below 5% and within the target range of -5% to 5%, however we still have a long way to go to close the state’s gender pay gap.

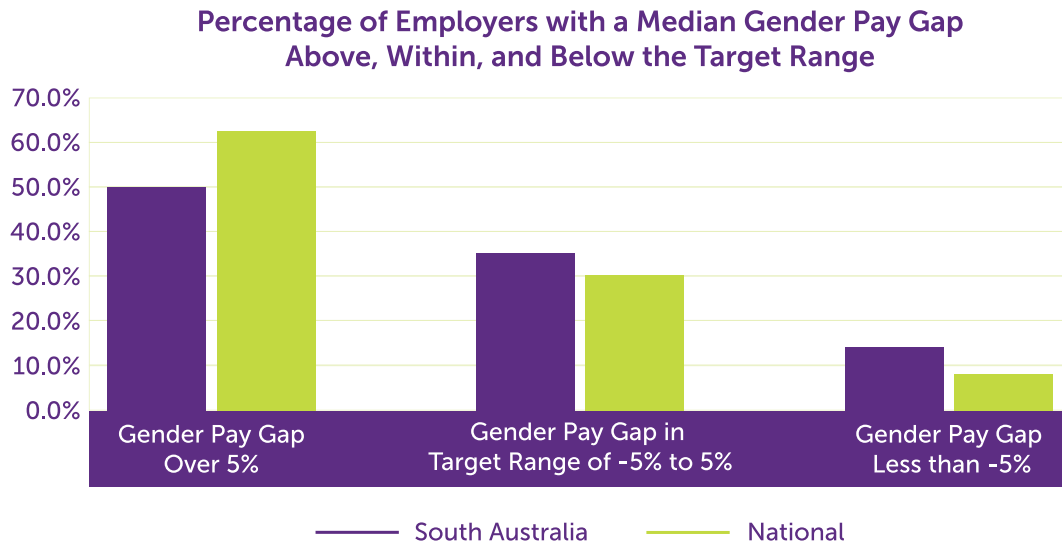


Fig. 4. WGEA, Data Release 2022–23 (South Australia).

The Taskforce has identified three key priority areas in order to address the gender pay gap in South Australia using data from KPMG, ABS, WGEA and their consultation findings including:

The infographic consists of three sections, each with an icon and a title:

- The Needs of South Australian Employers**: Represented by a lightbulb icon.
- A Need for South Australian Data and Research on Gender Inequality**: Represented by an icon of three people and an upward-pointing arrow.
- The Role of the Public Sector**: Represented by an icon of a laptop displaying two figures and stacks of coins.

3.1. The Needs of South Australian Employers

More than 517,000 people, almost two-thirds of the total workforce in South Australia, are employed by small and medium businesses representing a significant opportunity to address the gender pay gap in South Australia.¹³ There are approximately 150,000 small businesses in South Australia, representing 98% of all business registrations. More than 300,000 individuals are employed by small business which represents almost 40% of the total South Australian workforce.¹⁴ Through a series of interviews with South Australian employers, the Taskforce found that understanding of the drivers of the gender pay gap and how to influence them to enact positive change was limited, but there was a strong interest in the topic.

South Australian employers told the Taskforce they do not know how to accurately measure the gender pay gap nor do they have the resources to fix it. Experiences varied from not understanding what the gender pay gap is, to complex discussion around how roles should be valued and classified. Additionally, interview participants consistently raised the issue of small employers lacking the resources to effectively create and implement policies to support gender equality.

The Taskforce identified a range of areas where action by South Australian employers could reduce the gender pay gap across the State including:

Gender Discrimination and Bias

Despite the research from the KPMG *She's Price(d)less* report showing gender discrimination is the largest contributor to the gender pay gap¹⁵, the interviews and other research also indicated that a lack of awareness about the issue and highlighted the need for greater awareness of gender discrimination, particularly the covert and unconscious ways it manifests in the workplace. In a *Chief Executive Women* report, organisations recognised they need to remove gender bias in recruitment practices¹⁶ and other policies with 70% of survey respondents agreeing it would help if men were encouraged to request flexible working arrangements.¹⁷

Quotes from industry interviews

“Decisions which may not themselves be overtly discriminatory, may be having a negative impact on the attraction of women.”

“In 2023, there's not resistance really in any industry to gender equality.”

“To be competitive and to apply at the national level you just need to spend so many hours... writing publications – and that's really hard when you've got kids at home, and your days are limited by that.”

Gender Segregation

Gender segregation accounts for 24% of the gender pay gap in Australia and can relate to the unequal distribution of women and men in high paying roles or to the unequal distribution of women and men in high paying industries, both of which are heavily influenced by recruitment practices.¹⁸

Strong industry and occupational gender segregation persists in Australia with women largely working in the same jobs they did 35 years ago.¹⁹

Similarly, the defence industry in South Australia experiences high levels of gender segregation. An analysis of the top 20 defence industry companies found that less than one in five employees were women, less than one in seven managers were women, and one in 14 new apprentices were women.²⁰

Analysis of the top 20 defence industry companies in South Australia



Less than **one in five employees** were women



Less than **one in seven managers** were women



One in 14 new apprentices were women

Quote from industry interviews

"I was forever in senior leadership positions where I was often the only woman at the table. The only woman at consultant meetings, the only woman at construction. And advocating for that all the time was tiring."

HR Practices and Policies

Another key driver contributing to the gender pay gap is years not working due to parental leave, part-time employment, and unpaid care work – the vast amount of which falls to women. Reasons for career interruptions are varied, however research suggests that career breaks taken to care for family tend to reduce future wages. Women returning to work after a break often do so in lower status or lower paid roles. Across the first five years of parenting their first child, women's earnings are reduced by 55% on average. During the same time, men's earnings remain unaffected.²¹

Quotes from industry interviews

"There's inability to even recruit females to that team. Why? Is there a reason? Is it a process or a practice? Is it who is available in the market or is it who has been the best person for the job in those recruitment processes?"

"The need for policies is being driven by those who need it. So parental leave policy, for example, I constantly have people emailing me going, have you got some examples? Our practice doesn't have one. We need one."

The Taskforce's consultation interviews revealed that attitudes towards parental leave are changing but still have a long way to go to achieve gender equality in the workplace. A key theme that arose was the need for parenting to be viewed as gender-neutral and parental leave be taken up by more men.

Quote from industry interviews

"In a country town, are you likely to see a lot of men taking parental leave to be home with their kids? No."

Advice provided by WGEA is related to the current data set which is for employers with over 100 employees, making it difficult for South Australian employers, primarily with less than 100 employees to action. However, the Taskforce acknowledges that an expansion of WGEA reporting to organisations with less than 100 employees would not be suitable as limited HR resourcing in small to medium businesses may impact the accuracy of data collected.

Quote from industry interviews

“In terms of gender pay gap analysis, how do you actually conduct it if you want to do it ...like, what do you do? ...What data would be advisable to collect?”

Recommendation One

That the South Australian Government partner with a relevant organisation to work collaboratively with industry peaks to support small to medium employers to effectively address their gender pay gaps by:

- Developing online, accessible resources for small and medium employers on how to understand their own gap and how to effectively create and implement policies to eliminate the gender pay gap, including removing gender bias from recruitment practices.
- Establishing a targeted campaign directed at small and medium employers to raise awareness about the gender pay gap.

Anticipated Benefits and Outcomes

Through the delivery of the campaign, the Taskforce anticipates that leaders of small and medium employers gain an increased awareness of the gender pay gap and the benefits of reducing their gaps and are motivated to take action to address their gender pay gaps. It is anticipated that this outcome will lead to reduced gender segregation within small to medium employers and organisations emerging as champions for change and exemplars, which can be promoted to organisations with limited uptake.

It is also anticipated that this campaign will support the establishment of the research centre proposed in recommendation two, which could then in-turn support the campaign through the centre's findings.

Anticipated Timeframes

Short term. It is estimated that the development of resources can be achieved within 12 months of acceptance of this recommendation, on the assumption that implementation can commence immediately (and funding is allocated).

Medium term. The Taskforce anticipates the establishment and delivery of the recommended campaign to have a longer timeframe due to the required resourcing and coordination, likely requiring at least 12 to 24 months.

3.2. A Need for South Australian Data and Research on Gender Inequality

Throughout its lifecycle, the Taskforce has noted research and findings from reports at the national level, as data on the South Australian gender pay gap is scarce.

As mentioned previously in section 3.1, it is difficult for researchers to extract South Australia-specific data from the current **WGEA data reporting**.

Quote from industry interviews

“WGEA pay gap reporting...
It's kind of helpful, but also kind of not”

There is also limited South Australian research documenting the intersectional impact of gender pay gaps and identifying employer actions for addressing multiple and intersecting forms of disadvantage (e.g., disadvantage experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, women with disability, women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and LGBTIQ+ women).

Across South Australia’s tertiary education sector, there is a critical mass of researchers with interest and skills in gender-based economic equality. However, these researchers work in separate universities (see groups in Appendix 2 – Case Studies and Examples) on independent research programs without dedicated funding.

Integrating respective networks and research activities would dramatically accelerate gender equality progress in the state. The South Australian Government has made significant investment in bringing the University of South Australia and the University of Adelaide into a single entity (Adelaide University). There is an ideal opportunity to now establish the structure and support to enable an ongoing stream of research on gender-based economic equality that engages researchers with government and industry.

What do we Know About Intersectionality?

From national level data, we know that:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women are less likely to be employed and earn less on average than Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men and non-Indigenous men and women.
- Women with a disability experience a lower level of personal income than either men with a disability or the general population.
- Trans women, non-binary people, trans men, and those who identify as bisexual, pansexual, queer and asexual report an average weekly income less than \$800 substantially more often than the population average.

Recommendation Two

That the South Australian Government partner with academia and industry to establish an independent South Australian research centre, that undertakes applied research into gender inequality and economic outcomes for South Australia, that will:

- Bring academic and practical expertise together to address gender-based economic inequality.
- Partner with employers to identify emerging business needs (e.g., labour shortages and diversity challenges in the defence sector) that contribute to gender-based economic inequality and could be addressed through changes in education content and delivery.
- Partner with the South Australian Government and the business sector to develop targeted campaigns that raise awareness of gender pay gaps among employers and disseminate purpose-built tools and resources.
- Conduct research into the causes of, and solutions to, gender-based economic inequality with a particular focus on gender pay and leadership gaps operating across sectors in the South Australian economy.
- Conduct research to identify effective strategies to drive culture change within business and education to reduce gender-based economic inequality in South Australia.
- Partner with the South Australian Government to access state-relevant data from WGEA and other national databases and collect additional data reflecting state-level needs and priorities.
- Identify best practice and recommend evidence-based initiatives to reduce workplace gender discrimination and increase women's representation in leadership roles, particularly with respect to intersectional and disadvantaged demographic groups within the South Australian community.
- Conduct evaluation studies that assess the impact of innovative pilot programs designed to address gender-based economic inequality.
- Be established as a virtual entity, that allows for flexibility and efficiency while allowing for a dedicated focus on the topic.

Anticipated Benefits and Outcomes

The Taskforce anticipates that the research undertaken by the proposed research centre will result in a deeper understanding and analysis of the unique factors contributing to gender-based economic inequality in South Australia, with a strong and applied focus on how reducing the gender pay gap can lead to better outcomes for industry, employers and the South Australian economy. Related to this, a new research centre would engage in practical research with industry partners that meets the unique needs of South Australian employers to reduce workplace gender discrimination, increase women's representation in leadership roles and close gender pay gaps.

Anticipated Timeframes

Short term: The Taskforce anticipates that a timeframe less than 12 months would be required to establish the proposed research centre.

3.3. The Role of the Public Sector

Gender inequality continues to exist across all areas of community in South Australia, including across systems, processes and culture in the public sector. The taskforce recognises that the public sector holds important policy and decision-making levers to address gender inequality in South Australia and, with a workforce of over 115,000 people, is the largest employer in South Australia.

The Taskforce acknowledges the South Australian public sector is in a uniquely advantageous position to advance gender-based economic equality, as they have achieved and maintained gender equality in executive roles since 2019.²²

It is important that the public sector has equal and inclusive workplaces to attract and retain employees and inspire employee engagement and productivity that addresses the drivers of the gender pay gap, including the 33% attributable to care, family responsibilities and workforce participation.²³

Quote from industry interviews

“To achieve truly profound change, we need more initiatives that are focused on the root of the problem, rather than merely addressing symptoms. Re-distribution of domestic work, and childcare responsibility. Policies aimed at increasing the number of men taking parental leave and increasing the number of men using flexible work”

The Taskforce also notes the opportunity for the public sector to take a leadership role in the community on gender equality.

Quote from industry interviews

“I think if you can get your top leaders and some really influential people in your organisation on board and make it a key priority and continue that conversation, that's how you'll make real change.”

The government's purchasing power is a powerful lever that can be used to incentivise businesses to address the gender pay gap. Gender responsive procurement policies can be utilised to promote investment in women-owned businesses and businesses demonstrating progress in reducing the gender pay gap. The interviews revealed that gender-responsive procurement policies could potentially create a perverse effect of organisations creating policies merely to meet procurement requirements, rather than integrated and transparent strategies. It is therefore important that gender-responsive procurement policies are aligned with supports for organisations to implement change effectively and meaningfully.

Quote from industry interviews

"Some procurement practices really work against equity at the same time as they're requiring it."

Recommendation Three

That the South Australian Government take targeted action to reduce the gender pay gap in the public sector by:

- Promoting gender impact assessments when developing or reviewing significant policy, programs and legislation and gender responsive procurement practices.
- Implementing meaningful cultural change programs and initiatives in government agencies.
- Designing and embedding further initiatives to eliminate unconscious gender bias and gender discrimination in the South Australian public sector.
- Implementing further initiatives to reduce gender segregation and disadvantage associated with care and family responsibilities.
- Continuing to implement the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategy 2023-26.
- Continuing to introduce an equality bill to encourage the public sector to achieve equality and to adjust procurement and grants processes to ensure funding supports equity.

- Requiring gender impact assessments to be undertaken when developing or reviewing significant policy, programs and legislation.
- Requiring agencies to assess how they will address workplace gender inequality.

Anticipated Benefits and Outcomes

The Taskforce anticipates that the implementation of the actions outlined in this recommendation will result in a reduction in gender segregation, unconscious bias and gender discrimination within the public sector. Following on from these changes, the Taskforce anticipates a significant reduction in the State's gender pay gap as the public sector is the largest employer in South Australia.

Additionally, the Taskforce anticipates the public sector will develop a more mature capability to measure their own gender pay gap accurately and effectively.

Anticipated Timeframes

Long term. The Taskforce anticipates a timeline of over 12 months for the implementation of these initiatives.

Appendix 1 – Summary of Taskforce Meetings

Since its establishment, the Taskforce has met on 14 occasions. Most recently the Taskforce met on 25 November 2024 for their final meeting. The key activities of the Taskforce are summarised below:

October 2022 and February 2023 – Meetings 1 and 2 – Setup and Terms of Reference: At the first meeting on 26 October 2022 and the planning session on 21 February 2023, the Taskforce finalised its Terms of Reference and discussed potential ways of narrowing the scope of the Taskforce’s work to ensure it can deliver evidence-based recommendations to the South Australian Government within the required timeframe.

March 2023 – Meeting 3 – Identification: Representatives from WGEA presented data on the gender pay gap in South Australia. The presentation provided many insights in relation to how lower wage growth, particularly for men, is likely to be contributing to South Australia’s lower gender pay gap compared to other states and territories.

June 2023 – Meeting 4 – Taskforce Workplan: The Taskforce met and reviewed the draft Taskforce workplan.

August 2023 – Consultation: The Taskforce engaged in consultation with organisations that had demonstrated best practice and progress towards achieving gender equality within their workplaces and industries with large gender pay gaps.

September 2023 – Meeting 5 – Consultation Analysis and Interim Report: The Taskforce met to discuss the initial findings of the consultation and recommendations for the Interim Report.

October and November 2023 – Meetings 6, 7, 8 and 9 – Interim Report Development: The Taskforce worked on and finalised the Interim Report. The report was presented to Minister Hildyard at her office.

February 2024 – Meeting 10 – Strategic Planning Session: The Taskforce met for a planning day to discuss the Taskforce's priorities for its final year of operation.

March 2024 – Recommendation 1 and 2 Working Groups: Working groups for two of the three focus areas were established and met, focussing on how members can most effectively utilise their influence to raise awareness of the gender pay gap, promote the Taskforce's work, and garner support for their recommendations.

April 2024 – Meeting 11 – Final Report Development: The Taskforce discussed the public release of WGEA gender pay gap data, outcomes from the working groups, next steps for the Taskforce, and the final report.

June 2024 – Meeting 12 – Final Report Development: The Taskforce participated in an information session on the draft *Gender Equality Bill* and feedback on the framework of the Final Report.

June 2024 – Social Media Filming: The Taskforce participated in the filming of the social media video to raise awareness on the gender pay gap, its drivers, and actions small to medium organisations can take to reduce theirs.

September and November 2024 – Meetings 13 and 14 – Final Report Development: The Taskforce continued to workshop and refine the Final Report. The final report was endorsed at their last meeting in November 2024.

Appendix 2 – Case Studies and Examples

Research Expertise within South Australia

Centre for Workplace Excellence

The University of South Australia's [Centre for Workplace Excellence](#) (CWeX) has a mission to empower organisations to achieve excellence in organisational effectiveness and employee well-being. CWeX has a history of engaging with gender diversity and inclusion topics and identifying actionable strategies to close gender pay gaps, increase the representation of women in senior leadership roles and in male-dominated occupations, and motivate organisations to become gender equality front-runners.

South Australia Centre for Economic Studies

The University of Adelaide's [South Australia Centre for Economic Studies](#) (SACES) investigates employment trends and provides public policy advice. Their researchers work with large publicly available datasets to investigate population growth, workforce participation rates, and labour shortages to identify current and future pressures on employers and governments.

Fay Gale Centre

The University of Adelaide's [Fay Gale Centre for Research on Gender](#) has a focus on social justice, equality and diversity that encompasses workplaces. Their researchers have experience with the care workforce (aged, disability, community, and health) and Indigenous engagement.

Gender Consortium

The Flinders University [Gender Consortium](#) includes researchers with skills in gender equity policies, gender analysis, gender mainstreaming and gender responsive monitoring and evaluation. Consortium members conduct research to improve gender sensitive policy, planning and project implementation in Australia and the Asia Pacific region.

Small to Medium Business Resources

We're Equal

The [WE'RE EQUAL](#) campaign by Equal Opportunity SA identifies businesses and organisations committed to treating everyone equally, regardless of their age, ability, gender diversity, sexuality, relationship and reproductive status, race, religion, and culture. Equal Opportunity SA directly assists members to create and sustain discrimination-free environments. This includes providing information, access to approved training providers, and downloadable resources for owners and managers, for their workforce, and for their customers. These resources are updated regularly and will be added to over time.

Guidelines for Gender-Neutral Recruitment

The Government of South Australia have produced [Guidelines for Gender-Neutral Recruitment](#). The Guideline provides a number of methods for working towards gender neutral recruitment. The Guideline also provides examples and further resources.

Unconscious Bias Fundamentals for Legal Practitioners

[The Law Society of South Australia](#) provides a customised [unconscious bias training program](#) aimed specifically at the legal profession. The program is offered to lawyers and legal practitioners via face-to-face workshops, train-the-trainer modules, and online courses. The workshops include an interactive exploration of unconscious cognitive biases and how they affect all decisions.

South Australian Leaders for Gender Equity

The [South Australian Leaders for Gender Equity](#) (SALGE) is a group of South Australian business and community leaders working towards a shared goal of achieving gender equity. SALGE provides [resources](#) ready to download, and further information and guidance on how you can support, engage and be part of change. Resources include fact sheets and toolkits.

Equal Pay Matters

[Equal Pay Matters](#) is a 2022 initiative by the Victorian Equal Opportunity & Human Rights Commission. Equal Pay Matters provides interactive educational materials that support small to medium enterprises to understand equal pay and achieve pay equity in their businesses. The materials were co-designed with small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and industry experts and are tailored to the unique characteristics of SMEs and drivers of pay inequality in their workplaces. SMEs from Melbourne and regional Victoria were consulted through workshops and roundtables.

Workplace Gender Equality Agency (Australia)

The [Workplace Gender Equality Agency](#) (WGEA) provides resources on how organisations can address gender inequality and the gender pay gap. WGEA run the '[Equal Pay Day](#)' social media campaign. Equal Pay Day marks the number of days into the new financial year that Australian women must work to earn the same, on average, as men did the previous year. Additionally, WGEA provides educational resources specific to small businesses. Resources include information and guides to help small businesses identify, address and close the gender pay gap.

Equitable Practice Guides (Australia)

[Parlour](#), a research-based advocacy organisation working to improve gender equity in architecture and the built environment professions, have created guides to equitable practice, including a guide on [equitable recruitment](#).

Building a Gender-Balanced and Inclusive Presence (Australia)

[The Champions of Change Coalition](#) have produced the document '[Building a gender-balanced and inclusive presence](#)'.

Inclusive Recruitment Toolkit (Australia)

The federal [Department of Employment and Workplace Relations](#) have created an [Inclusive Recruitment Toolkit](#). This guidance material supports businesses to consider more inclusive approaches to recruitment. It provides high level advice, practical tips and resources.

Gender Pay Equity Best Practice Guide (Australia)

The Fair Work Ombudsman has created a [Gender Pay Equity Best Practice Guide](#). The Guide explains why gender equity is important and how to use best practice to support gender equity in your business. It also has practical tips and case studies to help you move your business towards best practice.

Equal by 30 (International)

[Equal by 30](#) is a campaign encouraging public and private sector organisations to publicly commit to achieving equal pay, equal leadership and equal opportunities in the energy sector by 2030. The campaign asks companies and governments to endorse principles of equal pay, equal leadership and equal opportunities, and to take concrete action to close the gender gap in the clean energy sector. The campaign was established by the international Clean Energy Ministerial forum and the International Energy Agency. The campaign has over 180 signatories around the world, including the Australian Government.

Gender Decoder (International)

The [Gender Decoder](#) is a free online tool to check whether a job advert includes language that might discourage non-male applicants. The Gender Decoder identifies subtle bias in job advertisements by highlighting language that is 'gender-coded.'

Inclusive recruitment: Guide for people professionals (International)

The [Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development](#), an international professional body for HR and people development, provides a guide for employers on [inclusive recruitment](#). The guide includes recommendations and examples for each stage of recruitment.

Public Sector Initiatives

Building respectful and inclusive workplaces in the public sector

The South Australian Government is committed to a public sector that reflects the diverse community it serves and is an inclusive workplace for everyone. Launched in 2023, the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategy sets out the actions that will support this commitment. In addition, new guidance has been released to help the public sector address bullying, harassment and discrimination, and the across government employee survey has been refreshed with new questions to better understand the experiences of employees, including gender.

Pilot collaboration with the Workplace Gender Equality Agency

The Office of the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment has established a partnership with the WGEA to undertake a pilot to evaluate the South Australian public sector's capability to collect gender equality data, including gender pay gaps. The findings of the pilot will be used to improve gender data collection capability across the public sector.

Our Equal State – Victoria's Gender Equality Strategy and Action Plan 2023–2027

The strategy identifies the public sector as a focus area for action and the action plan outlines 17 actions to position the Victorian public sector as a leader for gender equality.

Realising the Benefits for All – Australian Public Service Gender Equality Strategy 2021–26

Under Action Area #2, Respectful Workplaces and Empowered People, key action 2B of the report relates to the elimination of gender bias and discrimination within the Australian Public Sector.

A 10-Year Plan to Unleash the Full Capacity and Contribution of Women to the Australian Economy – Women's Economic Equality Taskforce

Established in 2022, the Women's Economic Equality Taskforce operated for one year and delivered their final report, *A 10-Year Plan to Unleash the Full Capacity and Contribution of Women to the Australian Economy*, in 2023.

Northern Territory Gender Equality Action Plan

Under Focus Area 2: Health and Wellbeing, action 2.2.1 relates to the elimination of gender bias and discrimination within the Northern Territory public Sector.

Championing Gender Equality – NSW Women’s Strategy 2023–2026

Under the Our commitment to economic opportunity and advancement segment, within the roll out new initiatives section, the New South Wales Government plans to address disadvantage associated with care and family responsibilities.

Appendix 3 – Terms of Reference

South Australian Gender Pay Gap Taskforce	
Purpose	<p>The South Australian Gender Pay Gap Taskforce provides high level independent advice to the Minister for Women and Prevention of Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence, and South Australian Government on issues related to the gender pay gap.</p>
Context	<p>The gender pay gap (GPG) is an internationally established measure of women’s position in the economy in comparison to men, which measures the difference between average earnings of women and men in the workforce.</p> <p>The GPG is the result of the social and economic factors that combine to reduce women’s earning capacity over their lifetime.</p> <p>These factors include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conscious and unconscious discrimination and bias in hiring and pay decisions. • women and men working in different industries and different jobs, with female-dominated industries and jobs attracting lower wages. • lack of workplace flexibility to accommodate caring and other responsibilities, especially in senior roles. • high rates of part-time work for women. • women’s greater time out of the workforce for caring responsibilities impacting career progression and opportunities. • women’s disproportionate share of unpaid caring and domestic work. <p>Calculation of the national GPG in Australia is undertaken by the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA), using Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data. Taking steps to address the GPG is a</p>

	<p>key pillar of the strategy to achieve gender equality, which is linked to the State and Australia’s overall economic performance. As at July 2022, the national GPG is 14.1%.</p> <p>Establishment of the South Australian Gender Pay Gap Taskforce is a key commitment of the South Australian Malinauskas Government, forming part of their 2022 election platform.</p>
<p>Scope</p>	<p>The South Australian Gender Pay Gap Taskforce is a state-wide, multi-stakeholder panel of experts in the fields of gender equality and industrial relations. It has been established as a time limited, high level advisory body whose focus will be to:</p> <p>IDENTIFY the specific issues leading to the GPG in the South Australian context.</p> <p>CONSULT with subject matter experts and diverse cohorts to understand their experience of the gender pay gap and to ensure an intersectional response.</p> <p>ADVISE the Government on how the factors that contribute to the GPG apply in South Australian workplaces, including the public, not for profit, and private sectors.</p> <p>MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS where change can have the most impact, including policy and legislative reform, and considering best practice.</p> <p>The Taskforce will operate for two years. It is anticipated that it will make recommendations on future governance and mechanisms that will provide oversight and monitor progress around implementation of the recommendations.</p>
<p>Membership and Chair</p>	<p>To enable systemic change and ensure a strategic cross-sector focus, membership of the Taskforce will include government and non-government representatives with technical and business knowledge in the areas of gender equality and industrial relations.</p>

	<p>Membership will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Office for Women (ex-officio)• South Australian Equal Opportunity Commission• Office of the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment• South Australian Business Chamber• Remuneration Tribunal of South Australia• South Australian Council of Social Services• Centre for Workplace Excellence, University of South Australia• A union representative• Working Women’s Centre SA. <p>A member with expertise and influence from each of the industries below will also be represented on the Taskforce:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community services and healthcare• Mines, energy and resources. <p>The role of Chair of the Taskforce will be fulfilled by an independent representative nominated by the Minister.</p> <p>The South Australian Gender Pay Gap Taskforce will operate with the following guidelines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Members will be appointed to the Taskforce for a term of up to two years and at the discretion of the Minister for Women and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence.• Where members cannot attend a meeting, proxy attendance is not permitted.• A quorum of seven members is required for a meeting to proceed, and to make key decisions.• Membership of the Taskforce will not exceed fourteen members.• The Taskforce will meet at least quarterly each year.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Director of the Office for Women must attend all meetings or provide a suitable proxy. • The Director of the Office for Women and the Chair of the Taskforce will meet regularly. • Public communications by the Taskforce will be through the Chair of the Taskforce in consultation with the Office for Women and the Minister’s Office. • Secretariat and project support will be provided to the Taskforce by the Office for Women. • Non-public sector members will be paid in line with the remuneration guidelines for boards and committees members outlined in <i>Premier and Cabinet Circular 016</i>. Public sector members will not be remunerated.
<p>Accountability and reporting</p>	<p>The South Australian Gender Pay Gap Taskforce will provide quarterly progress reports to the Minister for Women and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence. The Taskforce will provide interim recommendations of short-term measures that can be taken by Government at the end of the first year and will provide a final report of recommendations at the end of the second year.</p>
<p>Meeting preparation and process</p>	<p>Meetings will be held quarterly, at a venue to be determined, and with the option of remote attendance of members via Microsoft Teams.</p> <p>All meetings will be chaired by the independent Chair.</p> <p>Secretariat support will be provided by Office for Women.</p> <p>Meetings will be minuted and distributed to members.</p> <p>Meeting papers will be provided to members no later than 1 week in advance, and minutes will be provided no later than 2 weeks after the meeting.</p>
<p>Term</p>	<p>These Terms of Reference are effective from September 2022 and will be reviewed annually, or at the discretion of the Minister, for the lifespan of the South Australian Gender Pay Gap Taskforce.</p>

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