



News of the week

#EmbraceEquity: International Women's Day 2023

3/03/2023

This year's International Women's Day highlights the importance of equity and how it can help us achieve equality and a truly inclusive workplace. Find out why we should #EmbraceEquity.

Wednesday 8 March is [International Women's Day](#), a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women.

2023 theme: #EmbraceEquity

International Women's Day this year marks a call to action for accelerating women's equality. The theme [#EmbraceEquity](#) says that through the process of creating equity, we can reach equality.

What's the difference between 'equity' and 'equality'?

The words equity and equality are often used interchangeably. But despite their similarities, equity and equality are inherently different concepts.

- **Equality** means each individual or group of people are provided exactly the same resources and opportunities.
- **Equity** recognises each person has different circumstances and allocates the correct resources and opportunities needed for them to reach the same outcome. Equity is about everyone having the opportunity and the right tools to be successful.

Here's a visual definition of equality versus equity:



Image source: [Robert Wood Johnson Foundation](#)

It acknowledges that everyone isn't the same and may require different things in order to achieve their goal. Adapting services, policies and processes to take into account these differences is a way of creating equity.

What does equity and equality look like in the Australian Public Service (APS)?

The [2021-22 State of the Service Report](#) showed the APS continues to lead the way in some aspects of gender equality, with female representation at 60.4%, a gender balance at most senior leadership levels, and the gender pay gap continuing to decline. Despite this

progress, there is still room for improvement.

We asked some of our senior leaders what IWD means to them and how they seek to [#EmbraceEquity](#) and contribute to increasing gender equality within the ACMA and the broader APS.

[REDACTED]

‘To me this theme is talking about moving beyond equality to equity, which as we know is a very different concept. The ‘embrace’ word is interesting, it doesn’t just mean appreciating and understanding that women come from a different starting point, a different background or different circumstances. It’s actually a shift to appreciate that different needs need to be addressed by either applying different resources to assist women or different opportunities being found. What is interesting about it is that the root of equity is diversity and inclusion. I think as a society we have a long way to go to understand the difference between equity and equality and where that leads. Diversity and inclusion is important in policy making and in our workplaces.’

[REDACTED]

‘International Women’s Day is an opportunity to reflect on and learn about the amazing contribution that women both in Australia and around the world make to the people and communities around them, while also continuing the conversation about what can be done to achieve a state where gender is no longer a contributor to inequity.’

[REDACTED]

‘International Women’s Day is an important opportunity to celebrate how far we have come on gender equality, while also recognising how much there is still left to go. IWD has particular significance to me this year as my wife returns to work following the birth of our second child. I want my children to grow up seeing both of their parents leading full and happy lives, as full and equal participants in all aspects of society.’

[REDACTED]

‘We can all support gender equality and diversity through day-to-day practices, including:

- explicitly valuing diverse experiences
- recognising that authentic leadership can take a range of different forms, and

- being as inclusive as possible in the way we do our work. For example, scheduling and chairing meetings in an inclusive way, supporting honest conversations about how to make flexible work a win-win for employees and managers, and being creative in our recruitment activities.'

MS Teams background

You can show your support and celebrate at every meeting by using one of the International Women's Day MS Teams backgrounds. These will be available from Monday 6 March.

To set it up as your background, go to MS Teams, hover your mouse on the screen of a video call, select the three dots (...) and then 'Apply background effects' and choose the background you wish to add from the default options. If you can't see them, you may need to go to your system tray at the bottom right-hand corner of your screen, right-click on the MS Teams app icon and select 'Quit', then reopen the app.

Main image, clockwise from top left:

