

# The George Institute's WGEA Gender Pay Gap Employer Statement



The George Institute for Global Health is a not-for-profit medical research organisation with a mission to improve the health of millions of people worldwide. Our workforce in Australia comprises 300 employees working in medical research, project management and professional service occupations. Our strategic areas of focus on equity, impact and resilience are key drivers of our success.

As a priority for our research, we are providing critical evidence to improve women's health and eliminate sex and gender bias in medicine through improved treatments, healthcare systems and policies in Australia and around the world. Achieving pay equity for our team regardless of biological sex or gender identity are important ambitions reflecting these organisational goals and values.

We believe an inclusive environment where our team members share and contribute their diverse views and perspectives will enable innovation and collaboration, which drives organisational success.

We are committed to closing our gender pay gap with a structured, accountable program of measures. Closing our gender pay gap is therefore an ongoing focus and we welcome the requirement for transparent reporting of gender pay gaps across organisations, industries, and the overall workforce, to ensure employers take action.

## ***Our gender pay gap***

The median gender pay gap refers to the difference between the median earnings of men and women\*, expressed as a percentage over men's median earnings.

The George Institute's median base salary gender pay gap in March 2023, when the data for this report was collected, was 14.7%, and our median total remuneration gender pay gap was 14.0%.

Since March 2023, we have introduced our new approach to pay, embedding our commitment to pay equity through the application of our new pay principles which emphasise fairness, competitiveness and transparency and introduced more robust pay benchmarking. We have also implemented a new organisation design for our research teams, which has enabled the acceleration of a number of talented mid-career female researchers into leadership roles (see detail below).

These actions have resulted in a reduction in our median base salary gender pay gap by 4.6%, resulting in a current base salary gender pay gap of 10.1%, as evidenced on the following page.

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## WGEA Submission in March 2023 (14.7%) vs January 2024 - Median Gender Pay Gap (10.1%)

| Career level    | WGEA Submission March 2023<br>Median Base Salary<br>Gender Pay Gap | January 2024<br>Median Base Salary<br>Gender Pay Gap |
|-----------------|--|--|
| Career Step 1   | 9.3%   | -2.3%  |
| Career Step 2   | 2.0%   | 3.3%   |
| Career Step 3   | 4.7%   | 1.7%   |
| Career Step 4   | -1.9%  | 1.9%   |
| Career Step 5   | 20.2%  | 10.8%  |
| Career Step 6–7 | 28.1%  | 22.5%  |
| Overall         | 14.7%  | 10.1%  |

### Understanding our gender pay gap

#### Workforce composition

Our total workforce composition is approximately 75% women and 25% men<sup>1</sup>. Our workforce consists of employees who work in academia (research), clinical trials operations (project) and professional roles for example fundraising, legal and HR. We refer to these groups as research, project, and professional job families. Progression within the organisation is structured according to career steps, starting from Foundation (career step 1) through to Executive (career step 7).

The primary reasons for our gender pay gap are the under-representation of men (19%) at early career steps (1 & 2) and under-representation of women (33%) at senior career steps (6 & 7).

At career steps 6 and 7 we have an over-representation of men in research and professional roles, reflective of our industry, where historically men have dominated senior research leadership and operational executive positions. According to a 2022 Association of Australian Medical Research Institutes report 62.9% of senior academics were men and 37.1% were women. In our organisation 60% of senior academics are men and 40% are women.

#### Our pay approach

Our pay approach is anchored in a principle of 'fair pay for all'. We use pay benchmarking to determine the relevant salary range in the employment market for each role, and place an individual's pay within this range, based on their skills, knowledge, and experience; this supports pay progression over time.

For each of our job families, the benchmarks are based on the industry sectors from which we employ people. That means for our research job family we use pay benchmarks from the university sector, for project and clinical operations roles, we use universities, clinical trial organisations and the public sector, and for our professional roles we use the general market.

<sup>1</sup> Note our workforce also includes non-binary team members, which WGEA has excluded as they work to establish a baseline.

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## Our aims and actions

Over the next five years The George Institute is committed to closing its gender pay gap and strengthening our practices and culture so that we have greater gender balance across all career levels and roles. This year, in implementing our new pay approach, we undertook a comprehensive audit of salaries in line with benchmarking to ensure internal pay equity for like for like roles, skills and experience. So far, this has directly resulted in the reduction of the median gender pay gap to 10.1% from 14.7% since WGEA data collection in March 2023.

*From our analysis, The George Institute needs to prioritise the following strategies:*

1. Accelerate the career progression of women and appointment of women into senior leadership roles
2. Increase the representation of men at early career levels
3. Increase gender diversity within professional roles
4. Ensure our workplace policies attract and retain women at all life and career stages

### 1. Accelerate the career progression of women and appointment of women into senior leadership roles

Part of our five-year people strategy is to develop and implement strategies to improve diversity in our leadership group and to accelerate the advancement of women into leadership roles.

In 2023, we restructured our Australian research organisation to create a Professoriate group for senior academics to continue their research and provide mentorship to others. This also enabled the organisation to appoint the next generation of leaders, primarily women, into the vacated roles.

In the last year, our new pilot Accelerate leadership program launched to support our emerging leaders to develop the skills and capabilities they will need to move into leadership roles. Of the 13 participants, 10 were women. This program will be delivered annually, with the next cohort (running in April) to include 9 women out of 15 participants.

Since 2017, The George Institute has participated in the Franklin Women Program, a mentoring program designed specifically to support women progress their career within the STEMM sector. Three women mentees from our organisation take part in the program each year. We also provide opportunities for three mentors to take part in the program. Through individual mentorship and coaching the program provides clarity on the diversity of career pathways within the sector and support for individual development.

### 2. Increase the representation of men at early career levels

Currently men are under-represented at earlier career levels within the organisation. We will collaborate with our teams to better understand the potential barriers for men joining our organisation and how we better attract men to these positions.

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## 3. Increase gender diversity within professional roles

We recognise the importance of diversity within our job families and are collaborating with our leaders to identify by the end of 2024 how we can improve gender diversity through attraction and retention strategies.

## 4. Ensure our workplace policies attract and retain women at all life and career stages

We recognise that providing a workplace that supports women at all stages of their life and career is more likely to be an attractive choice for potential employees. Beyond supporting career progression, we are focusing on practices and policies which continue to support our ability to attract and retain women at The George Institute. For instance:

- Enhancements to our Parental Leave policy by increasing the provision of paid parental leave from 10 weeks to 18 weeks, paying superannuation on parental leave payments and broadening the eligibility to encompass shared primary care and early access following completion of a probationary period. Our Parental Leave policy aims to encourage shared caring responsibilities among men and women, support the narrowing of financial gaps experienced by women, who still largely take on primary caring responsibilities for children, and remove long waiting periods for paid parental leave, which may prevent women from applying for a position.
- Our current YourFlex guidelines provide flexible options that support an individual and their manager to agree on a work arrangement that supports an individual to balance their work and broader life goals. YourFlex enables flexibility in times of work and location (home/office/school times/other caregiving needs), remote working and reduced hours.
- Development of a Reproductive Leave Policy to recognise the care and time required to support various aspects of reproductive health and wellbeing. The policy provides access for leave, workplace adjustments and flexible work arrangements to support wellbeing. The policy will be launched in March 2024.
- Development of an updated approach to address Discrimination, Bullying and Sexual Harassment, ensuring the organisation is providing a safe working environment for our staff, including women. The approach takes a victim centred approach to reporting and resolution, as well as providing mechanisms to easily report instances. Training will be delivered over the course of 2024.
- Our other actions include ongoing feedback via a diversity survey, where demographic data is collected, to understand the specific experiences of women and other dimensions of diversity such as caregiving status. Understanding experiences of women and other groups will ensure we provide an environment that supports their needs. The survey will provide data to help us understand what is working well and what specific actions we need to take to address any concerns or barriers.

## Disclosure

The information in this statement is accurate at the time of publishing and is approved by Sarah Bench, Chief People Officer, The George Institute for Global Health.