WHAT WILL IT TAKE: EQUALITY IN LEADERSHIP BY 2030

Entrepreneurship & Innovation Action Plan

UNSW SYDNEY

KING'S College LONDON

ASU Arizona State University

ENTREPRENEURSHIP & INNOVATION WORKING GROUP ACTION PLAN

Aspiration 2030

By 2030, we aspire to live in a world where :

• society values the kinds of businesses and innovations created by women as deeply as they value those created by men,

• businesses are as diverse in their leadership as the communities they serve,

• funding opportunities flow freely to women, and

• women have a strong network of allies and accomplices.

The current state of entrepreneurship and innovation - key findings and power statistics

Because of the dearth of reliable data, self-employment statistics are used to measure entrepreneurship. These show that there is a significant gender gap among the self-employed, particularly those who are also employers. 'In fact, independently of a country's economic context and the overall cultural attitude toward entrepreneurship, women always appear less prone to take the risk of creating their own business than men.'

Critically, women lack access to financing and sponsorship, but they also lack visible role models, mentors and champions. There is a narrow scope of "acceptable" pathways for women to exist as entrepreneurs and business innovators: they either imitate men, or run a business that focuses on "women's interests" such as lifestyle businesses. Broadly, gendered socialisation, which includes unconscious bias, unrecognised privilege, bullying, and blokey/bro-culture all make the female entrepreneur's path a difficult one.

Barriers and opportunities

BARRIERS

The system that we live and operate in has developed over time to serve the specific needs and points of view of men. Women's unique needs are not accommodated in today's system. People do not see that system does not work for women, especially Black women, Indigenous women and People of Colour (BIPOC). This flaw in the system is not recognised, and women are expected to fit into that status quo.

OPPORTUNITIES

An overarching Theory of Change is recommended as follows:
To examine our own levels of privilege in order to shift the behaviours, mindset and existing systems, as it relates to women entrepreneurs and innovators. In turn, to seek to create a world where every woman, irrespective of age, race, ethnicity, creed can be a leader, an innovator, a voice and entrepreneur in the way that they choose to be.

Recommendations for Government, Industry and Universities

PUBLIC AND ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT TO GENDER EQUITY

Government, Industry and Universities

All leadership and board meetings should begin with an acknowledgement of who is and who is not represented at the table. The principle behind the acknowledgement should be embedded in the decision-making and development of policies and practices.

TRACKING AND PUBLISHING DATA/SETTING SPECIFIC GOALS

Government, Industry and Universities

Women should represent at least 50% of decision makers across all organisations (private and government) that support and fund entrepreneurship and innovation, to ensure that women receive equitable access to entrepreneurial finance and resources.

TRAINING AND MENTORING

Universities

Diversify education and training in secondary and tertiary schools to ensure students embrace risk-taking and failure, and to have entrepreneurial skills. These recommendations pertain to the root cause of skewed storytelling:

- Traditionally, a successful entrepreneur is shown to have masculine traits. Media, advertising, and entertainment industry reinforces this stereotype.
- Case studies and textbooks used in schools and universities disproportionately tell men's stories and recount history through a male lens.

Government, Industry, Universities

People in privileged positions to be identified to actively sponsor women from diverse backgrounds across all levels of leadership in universities, government and industry.

All leadership positions to have at least two potential successors, 50% of which are to be women who are actively trained for future legacy.

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Government, Industry, Universities

Have job-sharing and flexible work across all roles in the white-collar sector, and in the blue-collar sector wherever possible. Track and publish the increase of women and retention across all roles.

- Cultural norms and assumptions propagated by the gatekeepers.

Re-design of degrees, jobs and careers paths in order to make them more equitable and accessible for women.

INCREASING VISIBILITY OF FEMALE LEADERSHIP

Industry

Increase the percentage of media and company coverage around women in entrepreneurship and innovation, including women from underrepresented backgrounds, to 50% of the coverage across all forms of media

Working Group Lead

Dr Raji Ambikairajah
UNSW Sydney

Working Group Participants

Kellie Kreiser	*Arizona State University*
Associate Professor Jo-Ann Suchard	*UNSW Sydney*
Rachel Stockey	*King's College London*
Julie Trell	*SheEO Australia*
Dr Marguerite Evans-Galea AM	*Women in STEMM Australia*

Critical Friend

Jennifer Westacott AO
Chief Executive Officer, Business Council of Australia

Student Ambassador

Alexandra Eagle (ASU) & Sneha (Sana) Pujani (ASU)