

### **Evidence-Based Solutions for Improving Equity, Diversity and Accessibility: Informing Policy and Governance in Economic Geology**

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With increasing global scrutiny of the mineral sector, meeting societal expectations for equitable and inclusive workplaces has become integral to policy and governance within economic geology. Extensive research states that organisations fostering diversity are more innovative, resilient, profitable and adept at managing complex societal and environmental challenges, aligning closely with contemporary governance expectations.

Despite balanced gender representation in tertiary geoscience education and early-career roles globally, a significant gender gap emerges at advanced career stages in both academia and industry, a trend described as the "leaky pipeline." This attrition severely limits sector performance, notably in senior roles, where representation of women remains disproportionately low. For example, women only account for 21.9% of CEO positions nationally and in Australia's mining industry, women only occupy just 8% of CEO positions.

Barriers identified include unconscious bias, inadequate parental and family support policies, limited visible role models, unequal opportunities for professional advancement, and persistent workplace harassment and exclusionary practices. These systemic issues not only deter women from progressing but also negatively impact the sector's reputation, sustainability, and compliance with societal expectations.

This presentation will highlight evidence-based strategies and practical recommendations for addressing these challenges through targeted policy reforms and enhanced governance practices. By implementing inclusive workplace policies, transparent governance structures, and robust anti-harassment frameworks, the economic geology sector can significantly improve diversity and equity, aligning itself more effectively with societal standards and expectations.