



Achieving gender equality in the workplace is a focus nationally and internationally for political, economic, educational, and employment reasons.

Gender equality is particularly important in the public sector, which has traditionally been considered a model employer for women.

The Australian Government has adopted a strong policy position to advance gender equality in the Australian Public Service (APS). In 2016 the government released the *Australian Public Service Gender Equality Strategy 2016-2019*. Shortly after the release of this Strategy, we examined the progress of gender equality initiatives in three APS agencies. We identified the barriers and enablers to progressing and embedding gender equality in the APS.

## KEY FINDINGS

1. about the nature of equality, how it is achieved, and the opportunities and challenges it represents.
2. The managers we interviewed showed a high level of understanding about the existence and operation of unconscious biases, and were supportive of agency steps to mitigate those biases.
3. We found many positive examples of agencies innovating to provide career development opportunities to staff, but part-time workers still perceived lower opportunities for mobility, development, and career progression.
4. Managers expressed support for flexible work arrangements, and sought to create a culture that embraced flexibility. In practice, however, some forms of flexibility were perceived to be more manageable than others.
5. Employees strongly supported increasing the uptake of flexible work among men. However, many male employees perceived a strong cultural stigma against men working flexibly.
6. with senior leadership showing strong commitment to creating inclusive, flexible organisational cultures that foster gender equality.
7. with the establishment of gender and women's networks that build grassroots support for gender equality within agencies.

---

---

---

---

---