

WOMEN DIGITAL

SHAPING THE FUTURE OF THE DIGITAL AND TECH INDUSTRY

THE WOMEN IN DIGITAL
DISCOURSE 2024



CONNECT EDUCATE EMPOWER



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FOREWORD

BELLE LAJOIE

**Co-CEO Soda Infrastructure |
COO of Soda Group**

The inaugural Women in Digital Discourse gives us a powerful snapshot of the current state of play for the growing number of women choosing to carve out a career in Australia’s digital and tech sector. More importantly, it delivers a platform for women to share their experiences so we can all learn from the progress to date and identify how we can do better in the future.

With this data, and with focus from our industry, my wish is that more women choose to join the sector. There has been an enormous effort to shift and enable STEM subjects to appeal to young girls. From there, we must nurture and embrace all phases of life and, importantly, celebrate and honour our differences when it comes to organisational policy, flexibility and support for us, to succeed in the sector.

The Women in Digital Discourse highlights how meaningful our sector’s flexibility and willingness to embrace remote work is to women, which is often seen as one of the major benefits of working in the industry. We are seeing more women in senior and board roles than ever before (40% on ASX100 boards)¹. But without access to affordable childcare, which has long-term consequences for their career progression

and pay equity, many women feel they have to choose between their career and their caring responsibilities.

I am optimistic about the role this Discourse can play in improving the future of work for women, not only in tech

but across the economy. It is critically important for all of us to continue to build an environment where we have genuine equality, attracting and retaining the best talent to build diverse teams that service and represent the diverse society we live in.

Women in Digital should be commended for investing in this Discourse, which showcases the data and stories needed to shine a light on the industry, providing us with an opportunity to improve the experience for all of us now, and future generations. In my professional experience, the best way

to start driving change is for organisations to share data, knowledge and ideas.

Be sure to share this data with people who can influence your organisation and the industry for the better.

“ The Women in Digital Discourse highlights how meaningful the tech sector’s flexibility and willingness to embrace remote work is to women, which is often seen as one of the major benefits of working in the industry ”

¹ Australia’s top boards reaching 40 per cent women - AICD. (n.d.).



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

HOLLY HUNT
CEO AND FOUNDER |
WOMEN IN DIGITAL

The Women in Digital Discourse is poised to lead meaningful conversations within Australia’s digital and technology sector, where women currently represent less than a third of the nearly million-strong workforce.

Women in Digital is a national member-led organisation focusing on improving gender diversity in the sector, and we engaged with those working within the industry to gain a first-hand understanding of their experiences and challenges in what has traditionally been, and still is, a male-dominated arena.

Our goal was to connect real-life experiences with data to provide an accurate snapshot of the sector’s workforce and workplace dynamics. To achieve this, we surveyed our community and our extended network, primarily women based in Australia, on various workplace issues. This included topics such as salary, flexibility, parental leave, career progression, and male allyship.

The Discourse revealed that our sector generally offers strong workplace flexibility, allowing women to balance work and life demands. However, the results show there is still more work to be done with women continuing to face numerous barriers in the workplace, from unequal pay to a lack of encouragement to pursue senior roles.

Despite these challenges, I believe our 2024 Discourse, coinciding with Women in Digital’s 10th anniversary, demonstrates significant progress. More importantly it highlights areas that need improvement and provides a clear roadmap for employers, organisations, leaders, academics, and industry professionals. It shows how far we’ve come and where we need to be, and offers insights on how to get there.

I hope the data and perspectives presented in this Discourse spark meaningful conversations on a wide range of workplace issues in our fast-growing sector.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the Women in Digital Discourse. This landmark publication is a source of immense pride for us at Women in Digital. It wouldn’t have been possible without the time, effort, and honest feedback of respondents who

want to see women in this industry receive the support, recognition, and working conditions they deserve.

I sincerely hope the Discourse continues to grow and becomes a trusted, credible reference point for our industry.

“At a time when we are seeing meaningful discussions about improving gender equality in the workplace, from closing the pay gap to improving parental leave provisions, I’m proud to share with you an insightful and real analysis of the digital workforce”



THE WORKPLACE

What is the current lay of the land in the typical modern digital and technology workplace?

Views are quite divided, even down to whether men significantly outnumber women in workplaces. But on the question of whether an entrenched 'boys' club' exists in the workplace, more than a third agreed.

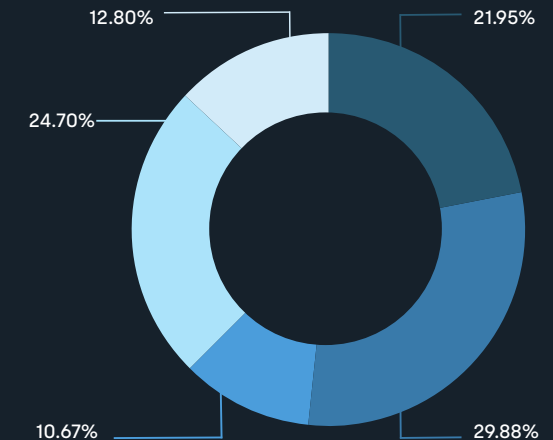
However, nearly half said women and men at all levels have an equal opportunity when it comes to career progression in their current workplace.

KEY FINDINGS

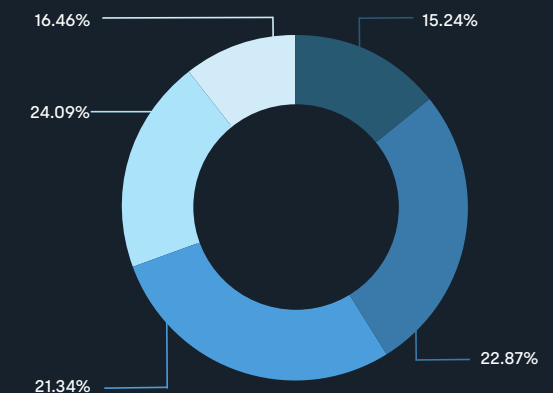
- 1 More than half of respondents said women were represented at all levels of the workplace (52%), the digital team was listened to and appreciated by the leadership team (53%) and their workplace was genuinely inclusive and not tokenistic (55%).
- 2 15% strongly agreed that an entrenched 'boys' club' exists in their workplace, while a further 23% agreed.
- 3 49% of respondents said they had experienced some type of gender bias in an interview process.
- 4 Nearly half (49%) agreed that they had experienced gender bias and/or discrimination in job interviews.

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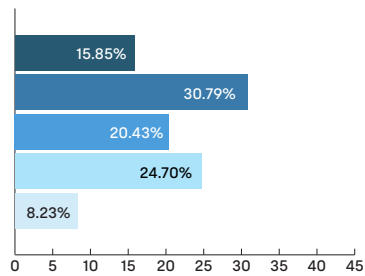
Women are represented at all levels and teams within my company



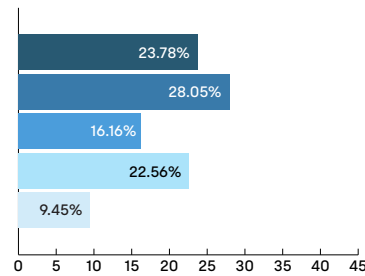
There is an entrenched boys' club in my workplace



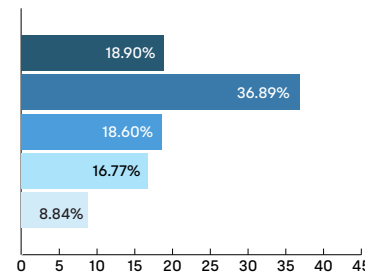
Women and men at all levels have an equal opportunity to progress their career within my current workplace



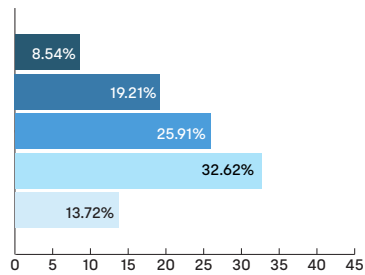
Women are significantly outnumbered by men in my workplace



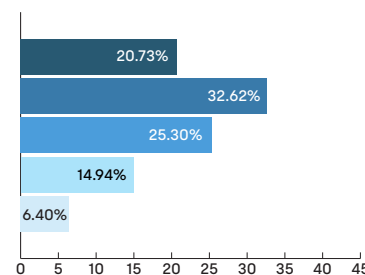
When it comes to authentic diversity and inclusion policies, my organisation is genuine and not tokenistic



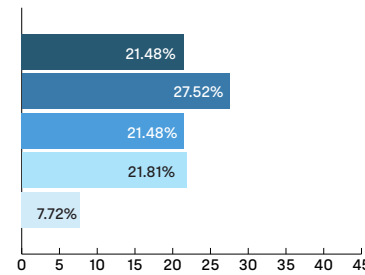
I decided to work at my current job because I could see strong and equal representation in the leadership team



The digital team are actively heard and appreciated by my organisation's leadership team and have a seat at the executive table



I've experienced gender bias and/or discrimination in job interviews



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COMMENTS FROM
OUR COMMUNITY



My previous company in tech was a walking red flag with an entrenched boys' club.

ANONYMOUS

I have definitely faced discrimination during interviews, even being asked if I intend to have more children and when that might be.

ANONYMOUS





SCARLETT MCDERMOTT
HEAD OF ECOSYSTEM CAPABILITY |
TECH COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA

I've been the only woman in the room – many times. It comes with the job. But it shouldn't have to.

The gender divide in the digital and technology industries starts early. Girls are typically less interested in studying STEM subjects at school than boys, and are less confident about getting good results when they do. At university, women make up just over a third of enrolments in STEM courses.

Unfortunately, it doesn't come as a surprise when women in digital and tech roles enter a workplace and don't see the gender diversity we need.

Fostering greater diversity demands action on several fronts. Girls need to know there's a place for them in the industry. We need meaningful opportunities for girls and women to gain work experience, access training and advance their careers.

It's not enough to hire more women in the workplace; we need to create inclusive workplace cultures where everyone feels valued and respected. While programs including

mentoring and role modelling, and the celebration of diverse talent are important pieces of the puzzle, we need to make systemic changes, too.

Workplaces structured to include women through transparent pay structures, fair leave policies, adequate representation and decisive action on bullying and harassment are required to retain women in our industry.

“Unfortunately, it doesn't come as a surprise when women in digital and tech roles enter a workplace and don't see the gender diversity we need”

There are workplaces doing this well, but there is room to shift the needle for better outcomes. Digital and tech jobs are critical to our economic future, and we will all benefit from diverse contributions to that work. When systems and solutions are created by diverse teams, they are more likely to address a wider range of user needs and scenarios.

Achieving greater representation of women in digital and tech, and building more inclusive workplaces, will present huge opportunities – not just for women, but for our whole industry and everyone who uses the tools we create.

FLEXIBILITY

It's no secret that in the modern workplace, flexibility is important to employees.

However, helping employees achieve the right work-life balance, while maintaining productivity, can prove challenging.

Encouragingly, the results indicate the digital and technology industry is viewed as extremely flexible in meeting the needs of employees. In fact, the results suggested that the digital and technology sector was leading the charge of providing flexibility, long before the COVID-19 pandemic placed the term 'remote working' at the top of the contemporary workplace dictionary.

An overwhelming majority of respondents (78%) said their workplace offered flexibility that met their work-life needs.

KEY FINDINGS

- 1 Half of those surveyed strongly agreed they could work from home when they needed to.
- 2 Of those who work part-time, respondents were split as to whether they genuinely worked within their assigned hours.
- 3 Employers in the sector were generally viewed as being very flexible. Of those surveyed, 40% strongly agreed their workplace offered flexibility that met their work-life needs, and a further 38% agreed.





COMMENTS FROM
OUR COMMUNITY

I am lucky within my role as I am full-time remote, which offers flexibility to pick up school children, which makes this role very attractive to me.

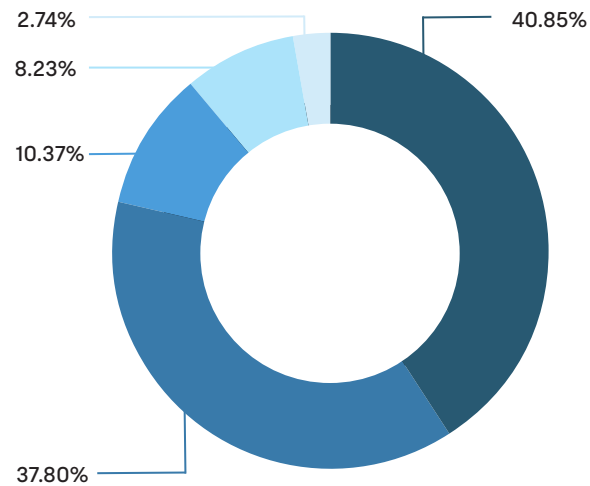
ANONYMOUS

I have largely chosen my current role as it is flexible hours to manage my children's schooling and extra-curricular activities.

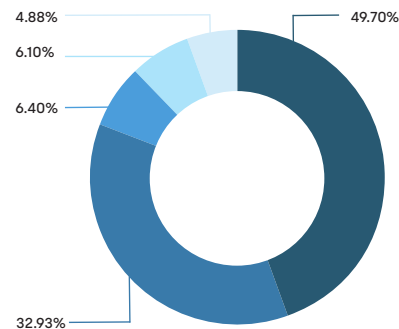
ANONYMOUS



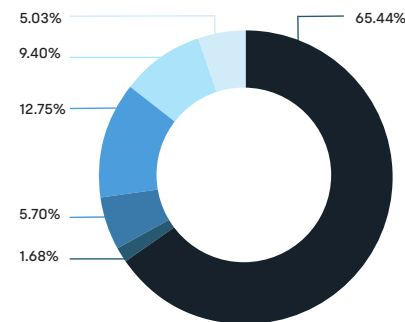
My workplace offers flexibility that meets my work-life needs



I can work from home when I need to



If you currently work part-time, do you genuinely work part-time hours? i.e. you don't work on your scheduled time off





FLEXIBILITY

SAMMY HERBERT

Head of Developer Experience |
SixPivot

Finland has been named the world’s happiest country seven years in a row. That could potentially be partly explained by the fact they lead the world in flexible work.

In Australia, flexibility is one of the top perks people consider in job opportunities. And for women, it has particular significance – statistically, we still shoulder the majority of primary caregiving roles.

When flexibility in the workplace is for everyone, at all levels, it helps narrow the Gender Pay Gap through a number of avenues; men can be more present caregivers, and women are more able to progress and earn higher salaries.

I see this at SixPivot with our flexibility – more present fathers. About half of our team are parents (and of those parents, the majority are men). We culturally avoid meetings around school pick-up times, because we know dads are getting their kids.

In another vein of health, in the women’s chat on our private Slack channel we discuss how beneficial and discrete our period pain or symptoms of menopause are with flexibility. We can take time without having to justify it to our male-dominated industry – because culturally we work flexibly and asynchronously. It’s these little (but big) things that flexibility impacts.

“Productivity wise, I’ve been working from home for six years now. Flexibility is what’s allowed me to hone my craft”

Productivity wise, I’ve been working from home for six years now. Flexibility is what’s allowed me to hone my craft. I have a lot less sick days, fewer distractions and more time to focus on deep work. When I’m in that flow state, I’m more creative and deliver better solutions. Having the free space to think through problems has undoubtedly made me better at my job.

In technology, we’re fortunate that flexibility is somewhat of a cultural norm. Perhaps, one day, Australia will mirror Finland, where 92% of companies offer flexible working arrangements.

SALARY

Lack of equal pay and the motherhood penalty both continue to be problematic for women in the sector.

Nearly one in three said women are not receiving similar pay rises as men, and nearly half had chosen to leave an employer due to pay issues.

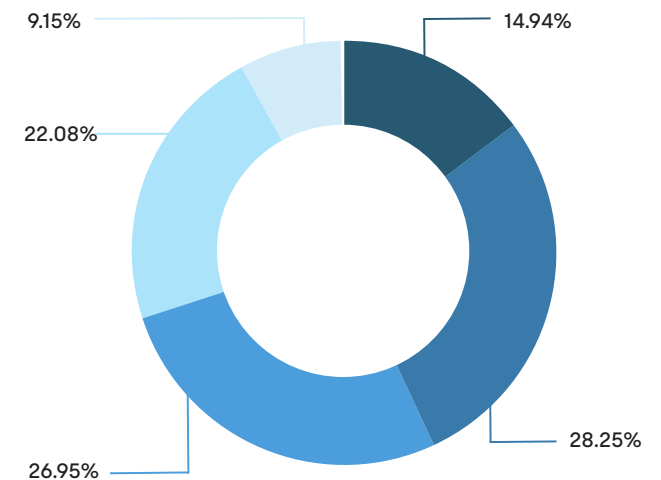
Having children was also perceived to have a negative impact on their salary.

KEY FINDINGS

- 1 46% agreed they were paid the same as their colleagues with the same skills, and a similar number said they were offered the same bonuses as their colleagues.
- 2 Of those surveyed, 30% either disagreed or strongly disagreed that women in their workplace receive similar pay rises and financial opportunities as men.
- 3 Over 52% felt confident enough to ask for a pay rise.
- 4 45% said they had left a job due to struggles around pay or because they found out they were being paid less than their colleagues.
- 5 About two in five (42%) said having children has, or will, adversely impact their salary.

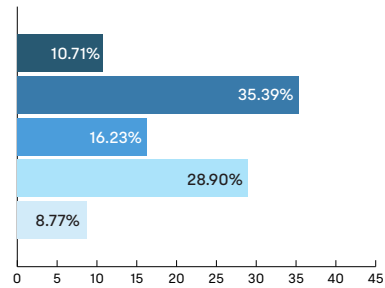


Women in my workplace receive similar pay rises and financial opportunities as my male colleagues

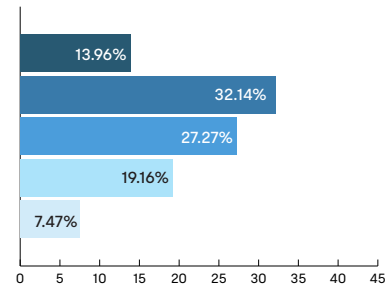


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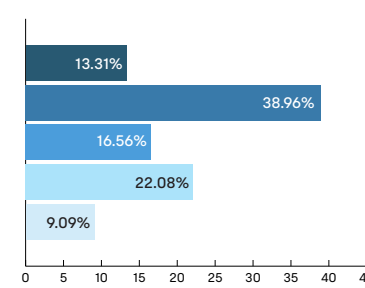
I believe I'm paid the same as my colleagues with the same skills



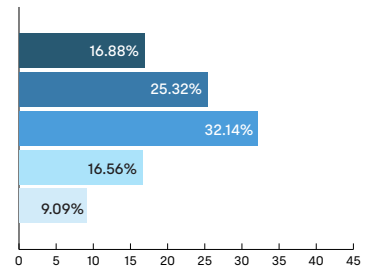
I'm offered the same bonuses as my colleagues



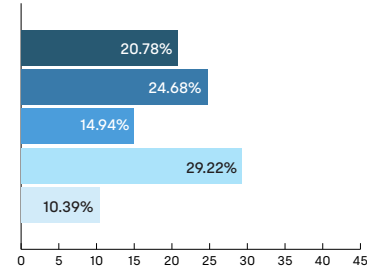
I feel confident enough to ask for a pay rise



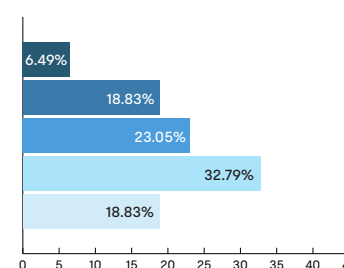
Having children has, or will, adversely impact my salary



I have left former employment due to struggles around pay or because I have found out I was being paid less than my colleagues



My leaders and organisation encourage open conversations around pay and benefits that suit my personal situation



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COMMENTS FROM
OUR COMMUNITY



Pay increases are linked to promotions and it gets increasingly male at the top. At junior levels yes it seems to be more equal, but equality dwindles the higher up you go.

ANONYMOUS

My company provides 1-2% pay rises. When females are already underpaid, it means the gap widens quicker and they are unwilling to fix pay parity.

ANONYMOUS



SALARY



NATALIE FLYNN

CEO AND FOUNDER | EQUIDI

The fact that organisations' gender pay gaps are now publicly disclosed is not by chance; it's a deliberate move by the government to accelerate progress in Australia – because change was not happening quickly enough. The fact that women feel equal pay is still an issue, particularly when it comes to motherhood, is not only a serious concern, but one the national data backs up.

According to recent research from the federal government's 10-year plan to unleash the full capacity and capability of women, motherhood attracts a significant earnings penalty. Across the first five years of parenting their first child, women's earnings are reduced by 55% on average. During the same time, men's earnings remain unaffected. And, across her career, on average, an Australian woman earns \$1 million less than an Australian man. It's no surprise the Women in Digital Discourse has uncovered findings that echo this sentiment.

“I personally experienced the impact of the gender pay gap, and it can be a lonely place to find yourself”

When I was an Executive in the corporate world, I personally experienced the impact of the gender pay gap, and it can be a lonely place to find yourself. Understanding your own value, coupled with having the confidence and courage to initiate conversations on pay, is critical. I believe that the new level of transparency from the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) when it comes to gender pay gaps and pay quartiles will not only create awareness for individuals, but also drive accountability for businesses.

I like to think the future holds the next level of transparency, too, with organisations being more transparent with pay practices, such as advertising roles with clear salary bands, and being more open with their people on pay philosophy.

The status quo is not an option - the time for change is now.



Promotion pathways

More women in leadership

Equal pay for equal work

19

DIGITAL

Wendy Cole
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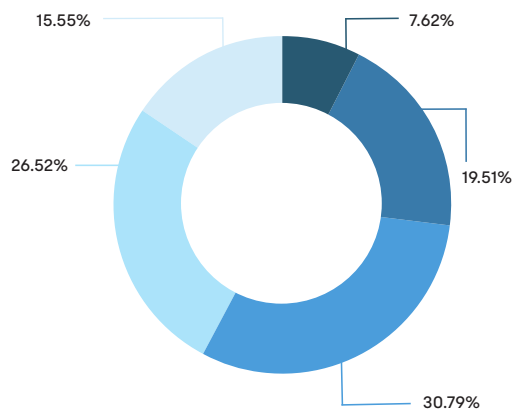
CAREER PROGRESSION

For women, progressing their careers in a traditionally male-dominated field can be empowering and full of opportunities.

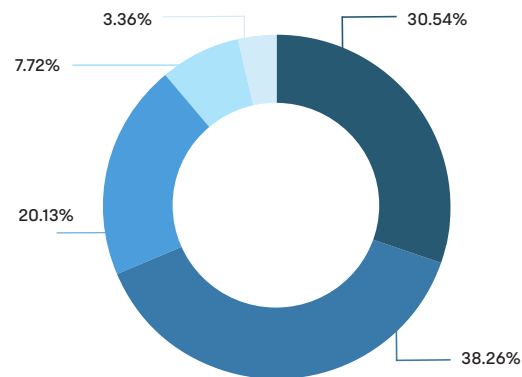
While we are now seeing more women in leadership roles within the sector, the Discourse showed less than a third of respondents felt encouraged to apply for senior leadership roles within their organisation.

Women are also more likely to work part-time than men, and two thirds of respondents indicated that working part-time hours hindered opportunities to progress their careers.

I am encouraged to apply for senior or executive positions from within the company



Working part-time has, or would hinder my ability to progress my career

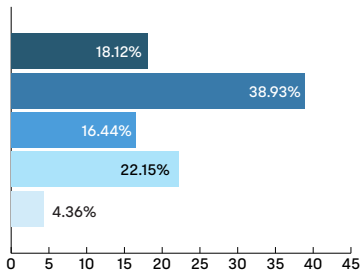


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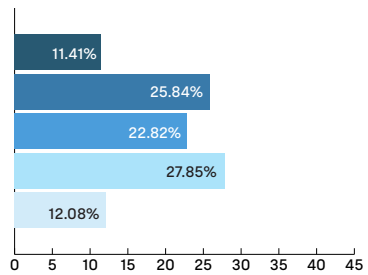
KEY FINDINGS

- 1 Part-time work is seen as a major roadblock to career progression.
- 2 28% said they found working from home hindered their consideration for promotions.
- 3 27% indicated they were encouraged to apply for senior or executive positions from within their company, while 61% said their organisation encouraged promotion and upskilling for all genders to take up internal promotions.
- 4 Only 35% said their organisation had a strong and supportive graduate program to foster diverse digital talent.
- 5 Encouragingly, nearly half said they were provided with opportunities such as mentoring, ongoing professional development and leadership guidance in their current role.

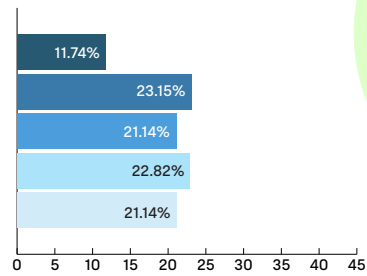
I feel confident in putting myself forward in the workplace, whether it's for an award or a more senior role



I feel confident to apply for senior digital positions, even if I don't meet 100% of the position description



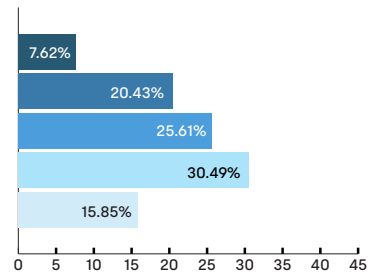
My organisation has a strong and supportive graduate program which fosters diverse talent in digital



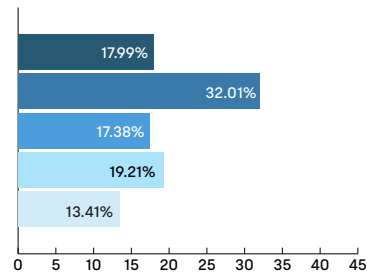
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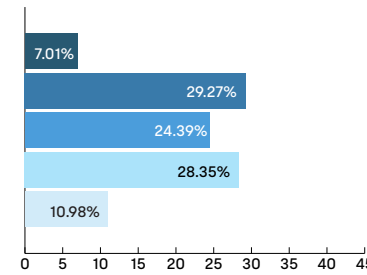
Do you find working from home hinders your consideration for promotions?



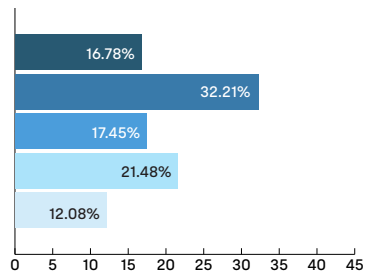
I have strong female role models and mentors that I can look up to in my current workplace



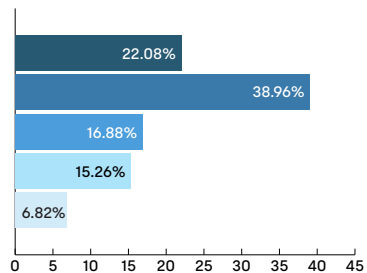
I can see a strong path of growth and promotion in my current position



I am provided opportunities such as mentoring, ongoing professional development and leadership guidance in my current role



My organisation encourages promotion and upskilling for all genders to take up internal promotions



- STRONGLY AGREE
- AGREE
- NEUTRAL
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- STRONGLY DISAGREE

COMMENTS FROM
OUR COMMUNITY



I'm fortunate enough to work in a place that is progressive. Past workplaces have not been the same! This is why I made the switch.

ANONYMOUS

We have an incredible environment that promotes, encourages and supports women, but very aware this is a unicorn!

ANONYMOUS





CAREER PROGRESSION

STEVIE-ANN DOVICO
CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER |
BEYOND BANK AUSTRALIA

A great way to encourage women into more senior roles is for senior women to mentor them into these roles. I've personally sponsored many 'women in leadership' type mentoring programs, and I have found these to be successful and rewarding for both the mentor and mentee. The most important thing for women aspiring to get into senior leadership is to see females in those positions, with a seat at the table. You can't be what you can't see!

Additionally, I've seen some great examples of recruitment techniques where success criteria is double checked to ensure there isn't gendered language, and CVs are anonymised for name and any personally identifiable information. These are incredibly important ways to reduce the barriers for women to apply for these roles right at the front of the funnel.

For my personal career progression journey, my biggest mindset shift was believing that the only race I couldn't win was the one I didn't enter. Now that I have been successful a few times, it has boosted my confidence in advocating for myself. Whether that was putting myself forward for an opportunity

or asking for a pay rise, the more you 'train these muscles' the better you get at it. It also helps to have a 'trainer/coach' or a mentor in a work situation, find your cheer squad and throw your hat in the ring. You have nothing to lose and you will definitely gain experience!

“ Your career is a marathon, not a sprint. When you're running for distance, you will have periods of peaks and troughs. It's critical to manage your energy system for long-term performance ”

I recently saw a statement that said part-time work is seen as a major roadblock to career progression. Your career is a marathon, not a sprint. When you're running for distance, you will have periods of peaks and troughs. It's critical to manage your energy system for long-term performance and know when to sprint and when to jog at pace.

I don't think working part-time for periods hinders your ability to grow your career. I certainly haven't experienced this. In fact, I made one of the most important pivots of my working life when I returned to the workforce after having my daughter.

The juggle is real, but there's no shame in getting help and doing what you need to achieve balance and smash out your work goals without compromising your physical and emotional health. My advice on those days is outsource, outsource, outsource!

PARENTAL LEAVE AND CHILDREN

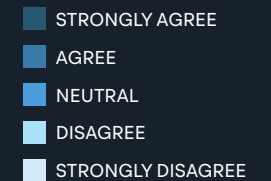
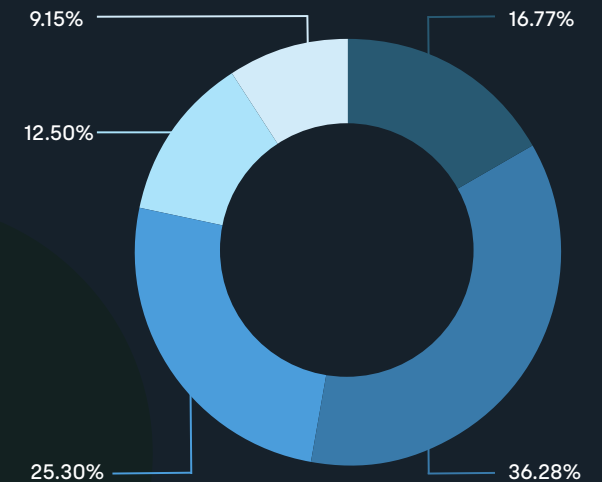
Across the board, it seems workplaces are being more accommodating for women who choose to have children, particularly when it comes to parental leave provisions.

However, it appears having a family can still be seen as a 'career killer', with having a family hindering promotional opportunities, in addition to wage impacts outlined in the salary section.

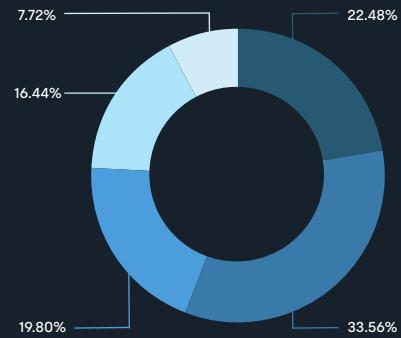
KEY FINDINGS

- 1 56% said having children had hindered their ability to progress their career. And 41% indicated becoming a parent had an adverse impact on opportunities for leadership roles and other promotions.
- 2 In terms of paid parental leave, 53% of respondents said their workplace offered equal paid parental leave and a similar number indicated men were encouraged to take paid parental leave.
- 3 Of those who need childcare, similar numbers reported either having access or lacking access to quality affordable childcare.

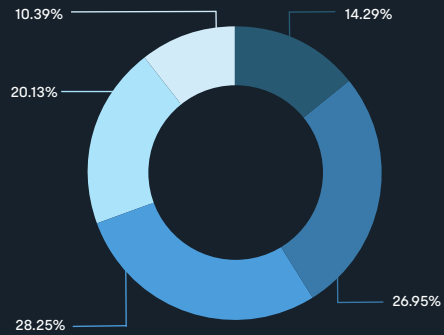
My workplace offers equal paid parental leave



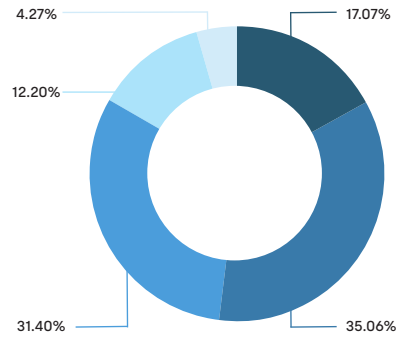
Having children has, or would hinder my ability to progress my career



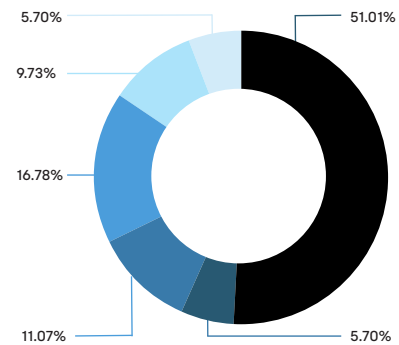
Having children has, or will, adversely impact my opportunities for leadership, a promotion or new responsibilities with my company



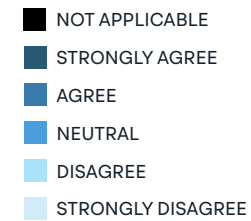
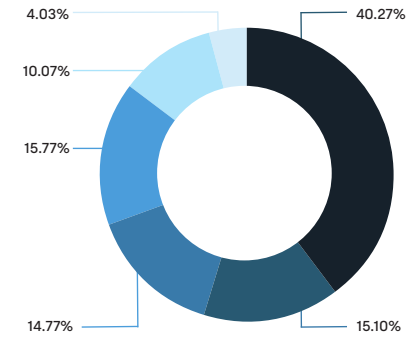
Men are encouraged to take parental leave in my workplace



I have access to quality affordable childcare



If you have children, does or did school hours adversely impact your ability to progress within your field



COMMENTS FROM
OUR COMMUNITY



It's great to see employers supporting women and generally a diverse workforce. However, we need to do more to educate the younger generations on how to work as a team in a family and how raising kids is teamwork.

ANONYMOUS

Having babies and working part-time has made it harder to get to where I want to be. I feel I have to work harder to make up the time I missed while at home on maternity leave and work harder in my part time hours to get the work done.

ANONYMOUS



PARENTAL LEAVE



EMMA JONES

CEO and Founder | Project F

To state the glaringly obvious, women are not a minority group (51% of the working population), so the fact that women continue to be sorely underrepresented in the digital technology sector (28%) is, in my opinion, a shameful problem to have.

And it's a problem that needs to be fixed. Why is it shameful?

Because women are clearly not lacking in numbers and the data (oh how we love data!) tells us exactly why women aren't showing up for tech, or at least not staying in it. The data says digital tech is largely inhospitable for women. While we may have advanced (somewhat) from the Silicon Valley-esq 'bro culture' of Nerf guns, PlayStations and ping pong tables, we've not advanced enough yet to accept that having families disrupts women's careers more than men's. Taking time out of work to raise children still falls largely (88%)² at women's feet in Australia and frankly, that's not OK.

Look, it's great to see more companies coming to the table to offer equal parental leave, really it is great. But it's not enough. When a company states it cares about gender equity but then firmly upholds outdated policies that feed family care inequity and penalise women, one has to question the validity of such statements. My company, Project F, works with many companies taking systemic actions to remove barriers for women working in digital tech. Take Canva as an example. In 2021 they removed primary and secondary carer labels and introduced equal parental leave. That's a bold move from an engineering-led company and, make no mistake, wouldn't have been easy.

“When a company states it cares about gender equity but then firmly upholds outdated policies that feed family care inequity and penalise women, one has to question the validity of such statements”

But the imperative was supported by leadership and they were happy to do the required math and push it through. In a recent webinar I recorded on the topic, Canva's Head of Engineering, Brendan Humphreys, told me the impact has been incredibly positive and, while the very real challenges of quantifying the long-term costs and capacity planning were daunting at the start, the benefits reaped in experience and retention have been fantastic.

In a conversation with a high-profile DEI (diversity, equity and inclusion) leader a few years ago, we lamented the impacts of men's presence in their new children's early lives being restricted by carer policies. “When my husband had to go back to work after four weeks, I was left to learn and deal with everything.” The result was her partner's parental confidence never equalled hers and the imbalance never recovered. She remains the 'default parent'. It's a tragic reality that keeps women firmly behind men in the tech sector.

But there are positives in this because it's fixable. As we've seen in this report, the number of companies prepared to remove restrictive carer labels and offer equal leave to all parents is growing. And if we continue to push for this change, we can accelerate the mobilisation of women in the tech industry and see the exit numbers start to drop. When men and women share the sacrifices that come with family care, there's no doubt the tech sector will thrive as a result.

² Parental leave | WGEA - Australian Government. (2020-21).

MALE ALLYSHIP

While women receive great backing from their fellow female employees, results showed that male counterparts are also a source of positive reinforcement.

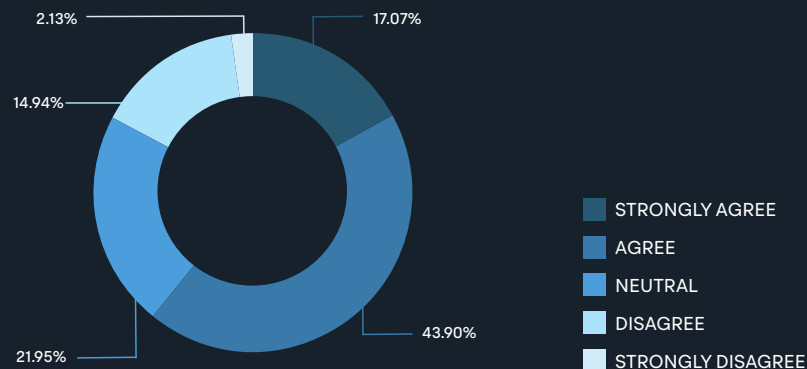
Nearly two-thirds of respondents indicated men within their workplace were supportive of women and their careers. Only 17% disagreed with this notion, while 22% took a neutral position.

The results are encouraging given we know men have a key role to play in improving gender equality in the workforce.

KEY FINDINGS

- 1 44% of respondents agreed that men are supportive of women and their career paths within the workplace. A further 17% strongly agreed with the proposition.
- 2 Only 17% either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the notion that women are supported by males in their workplace.

Men in my workplace are supportive of women and their career paths



MALE ALLYSHIP



DEEPAK SINGH

**(Former) Senior People and Culture
Manager Uber Carshare |
Founding member at Strivin | Coach at
Startmate | Podcaster at The Growth
Cartel**

Positive allyship has the potential to transform societal and workplace dynamics and significantly advance inclusion and equity. I have seen this firsthand with a lot of our work at Uber Carshare, and before that at GBG, where promoting parental leave for both partners creates a more inclusive and supportive environment.

At Uber Carshare, we implemented a comprehensive parental leave policy that grants up to 18 weeks of fully paid leave for either carer. By enabling either carer to take equal leave and dropping the notion of the secondary carer, we've observed a positive shift in workplace dynamics and normalised caregiving as a shared responsibility, not a stereotype of a woman's role. This support not only helps women resume their careers sooner but promotes a healthier balance for everyone. We have observed all eligible carers take their full allocation of parental leave since launching this program.

Similarly, at GBG, we launched a policy that also focused on the lead-up and return from parental leave, strongly encouraging both partners to be involved throughout, by allowing leave for appointments and fully paid returns at reduced hours. This policy increased engagement and loyalty among team members, particularly those returning from leave. Men who took leave reported feeling more connected to their families and more appreciative of the company's support, particularly as this was not the norm at the time.

Encouraging both carers to take parental leave is a powerful strategy for promoting a more inclusive workplace. It supports women in their careers and creates a more inclusive and supportive work culture.

While supportive strategies are important, it's crucial to acknowledge that much more needs to be done.

“ A significant challenge is that many men remain unaware of what it means to be an active ally, and the impact of actions are not recognised or acknowledged ”

A significant challenge is that many men remain unaware of what it means to be an active ally, and the impact of actions are not recognised or acknowledged. Taking 18 weeks away from work to raise a family and actively support the domestic load is great, but returning to the workplace and talking about improving their golf swing doesn't paint a picture of equal parenting, setting a poor example for others about what parenting may be.

Positive allyship can drive significant progress toward greater equality but there is still a pressing need for greater awareness and active involvement from men. By understanding the real-world consequences of our behaviours and decisions, we can make meaningful, lasting changes that benefit everyone, especially those generations who look up to, and learn from, us.

WOMEN IN DIGITAL RECOMMENDATIONS

If you are looking to build a more gender-diverse company we recommend focusing on the following key areas:

THE WORKPLACE

Cultivate an inclusive and equitable work environment by systematically identifying and addressing gender biases, including the presence of a 'boys' club' culture. Regularly engage with female employees to gather insights and implement policies that ensure the organisational culture does not hinder diverse talent attraction, retention, or career growth.

FLEXIBILITY

Integrate flexibility as a fundamental organisational value focusing on output. Ensure that flexibility is not just a benefit but a core element of your company culture, with regular benchmarking against competitors and training for managers on how to effectively implement flexible work arrangements to ensure your workplace can compete for the best talent.

SALARY

Close the gender pay gap by implementing transparent and equitable salary practices across the organisation. This includes advocating for Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) reporting and benchmarking regardless of company size, conducting regular salary audits, and offering tailored compensation solutions that support employees' personal circumstances, such as bonuses and flexible pay options.

CAREER PROGRESSION

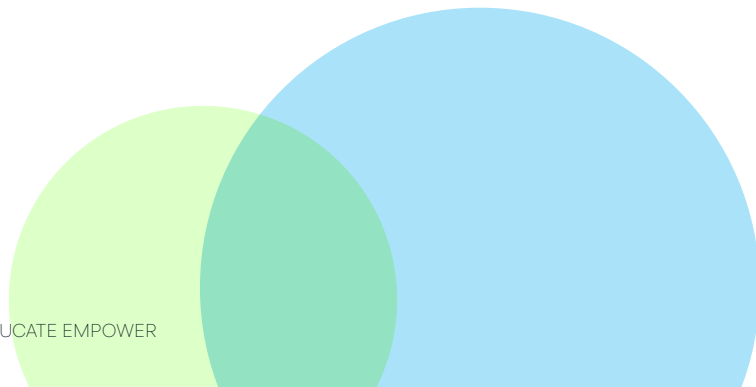
Enhance women's career progression by providing clear and transparent pathways to advancement, supported by skills development and mentoring programs. Regularly review the talent life cycle to identify and eliminate barriers, encourage cross-departmental collaboration, and promote both internal and external networking opportunities to foster skill and leadership growth. For some corporate members, reskilling gender-diverse talent into technical roles pays off, with team members grateful for new career paths, and able to bring in knowledge of multiple business areas.

PARENTAL LEAVE

Modern families no longer look the same, so develop and promote parental leave policies that are inclusive of all caregivers, encouraging both parents to take leave and ensuring policies benefit entire families. Critically, support must be provided for parents transitioning back to work, with flexible return options to ensure workplace participation doesn't diminish because of caregiving commitments.

MALE ALLYSHIP

Gender diversity is something everyone should care about, so invest time in bringing all stakeholders on the journey through education on why it is important. We regularly speak to 'manbassadors' who would love to support gender equality but don't know where to start or what to say for fear of doing or saying something wrong, so share practical tips and guidance on how to advocate for gender equality. Equal parental leave policies (with active encouragement of actually taking this leave!) are the perfect place to start.



CONCLUSION

As seen within this Discourse, it's fair to say that the dial is certainly shifting for women in the digital and technology sector.

But is it shifting enough in the areas that matter?

Women have certainly come a long way compared to when Women in Digital was formed a decade ago.

We are seeing more women break the LED glass ceiling with increasing numbers of females in leadership roles. However, one of the most concerning figures in this Discourse is that less than third of women feel encouraged to apply for these positions.

The motherhood penalty is also still being experienced by many women in our sector. Concerningly, 42% of respondents said having children has, or will, adversely impact their salary, and the same amount indicated that having kids has or will hinder promotion and leadership opportunities.

Lack of equal pay for equal work remains a major issue. This Discourse shows many women feel they are not being paid the same as their male colleagues. That finding backs up the landmark data released earlier this year by the Workplace Gender Equality Agency, which revealed 62% of median employer gender pay gaps are over 5% and are in favour of men.

Note: The data presented in this Discourse was collected from our community in Australia through comprehensive surveys. These surveys included a mix of qualitative and quantitative questions, enabling us to gather both measurable data and detailed feedback, providing a well-rounded understanding of the insights and experiences of the tech industry.

This needs to change. But it is not all bad news.

It is encouraging to see digital and technology companies recognising the need to provide flexibility for their employees.

Another shift in the right direction comes in the form of equal parental leave. The results support a wider workforce trend towards more equal parental leave.

As always, there is room for improvement.

Women in Digital is committed to tackling the issues raised in this Discourse by working with industry to deliver positive changes for women in the workplace.

We are serious about improving gender diversity in the digital and technology sector and look forward to our next Discourse reflecting further positive changes.

*- Holly Hunt and the
Women in Digital Team*

WOMEN DIGITAL

Women in Digital's mission is to make the digital and technology industry a place where women can thrive, thereby ensuring that the technology of the future is built by all people, for all people.

[Become a member](#)

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