

Women's  
**AGENDA**

**LEADERSHIP**  
*wards*

2016

**THE 2016 FINALISTS**

# About the *Awards*

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*The future of leadership in Australia is looking very, very bright.*

The following pages reveal some of the very talented women to watch, showcasing our 2016 Women's Agenda Leadership Awards finalists.

Now in their 4th year, these Awards celebrate emerging female leadership across a range of industry sectors.

We received hundreds of nominations for these awards – all sharing stories of excellence, persistence, and determination. The finalists selected are leaders who are rethinking existing paradigms regarding how we live and work. Their leadership is disruptive, inclusive and inspires growth.

We've also named a record eight finalists in our 'Agenda Setter' category, an award celebrating the inspirational and successful women who are making a serious difference to the world today.

Congratulations to all our finalists.

We hope to see you on the 5th October at our luncheon in Sydney where we'll announce the winners, and celebrate female leadership with a number of special guests.

## **THE WOMEN'S AGENDA TEAM**

# Event *Partners*

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OUR AWARDS ARE MADE POSSIBLE WITH THE SUPPORT OF



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AUSTRALIAN PEARLS



# Charity *Partner*

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# **EMERGING FEMALE ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR**

*Awarded to a woman with at least  
a 40% share in a business started or  
acquired since July 1 2015*

## Finalists *Emerging Female* Entrepreneur of the Year

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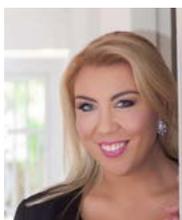
**Taryn Williams, FOUNDER, THERIGHT.FIT**

She only founded THERIGHT.FIT in September 2015, but already Taryn's grown the digital marketplace connecting models and talent to clients, into a large community of more than 3500 users looking to bypass the traditional agency model. THERIGHT.FIT gives talent the ability to control where and when they work, and how much they're paid, with a technology platform underpinning the entire process. Having raised \$750,000 with Airtree VC and secured 800 clients, Taryn's set to next take it to LA and New York.



**Renece Brewster CO-FOUNDER, DATA CREATIVE**

Founded in July 2015, Renece's Data Creative creates data driven personalised videos in seconds. Having previously owned and operated her own video production company delivering over 200 videos a week, she saw an opportunity to harness technology to transform customer data into videos, animations and other assets. Brewster's also the co-founder and CEO of video production company Visual Domain.



**Kate Middleton, FOUNDER, CENSEO**

Appointed GM of a struggling ASX-listed company in January 2016, Kate identified one of its subsidiaries, Censeo, was profitable and worth salvaging. After securing VP capital, she re-privatised Censeo from the parent company, and became the first female CEO in Australia to not only lead, but own a well-established structural engineering firm providing Insurance Assessments and Reports to major clients.



**Saffron Howden, FOUNDER, CRINKLINGNEWS.COM.AU**

Saffron is the founder of Crinkling News, Australia's only national newspaper for children offering all the news adults consume - without the boring or scary bits. With a small team including a child psychologist, Crinkling produces a 16-page weekly magazine every week for readers. Launched in April, the group's formed numerous partnerships and a readership of more than 3000, and was recently invited to become a member of the Australian Press Council.

# **EMERGING FEMALE LEADER IN THE TECHNOLOGY SECTOR**

*Awarded to the emerging leader in the technology sector who can best demonstrate growth, disruption and inclusivity in her field during the 12 months from July 1 2015*

## Finalists *Emerging Female Leader* in the Technology sector

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**Kathleen Mackay, GENERAL MANAGER – IT PROJECT DELIVERY, BORAL**

Kathleen's team has delivered \$21 million in projects in the past year, up 50% from the previous year. Promoted to the GM position in March 2015, she's also delivered significant new enterprise IT systems, upgraded all staff desktops and other IT infrastructure to 400+ sites, and created secondment opportunities for team members. Most importantly, she's overhauled culture from being one of "artificial harmony" to one where "we respectfully challenge each other and ourselves to do better."



**Karen Skinner, COUNTRY DIRECTOR, CHANGE.ORG AUSTRALIA**

Karen's heading up a tech platform that's empowering Australians to collaboratively achieve real change through online petitions. Under Karen's leadership, Change.org has grown from 40,000 users to 4 million users in 4 years, while the business side has grown from \$0 to \$2.5 million, by raising money through sponsored petitions. Working flexible hours while managing a young son at home, she's also demonstrating how leadership positions can be pursued while working part time.



**Emma Lo Russo, CEO, DIGIVIZER**

Emma is the co-founder and CEO of Digivizer, a social web analytics company that owns its own proprietary technology and has seen significant growth in the past 12 months, taking on a number of major corporate clients. Under Emma's leadership the team has almost doubled since July 2015, with the technology platform that underpins the business continually evolving and improving to meet the real-time demands of social media.

## Finalists *Emerging Female Leader* in the Technology sector *(continued ...)*



**Amy Foo, VP OF FINANCE & OPERATIONS ASIA PACIFIC, ZENDESK**

Amy manages all workforce and financial planning for Zendesk APAC, leading the local arm of a rapidly growing tech firm. This year she oversaw Zendesk's introduction of a new and improved paid parental leave policy, managed the launch of the Melbourne arm of Zendesk's Global Neighbour Foundation, and also pioneered a partnership with the Victorian State Government to launch Zendesk's APAC Software Engineering Centre in Melbourne, creating up to 175 new high-skill jobs in Victoria.



**Helen Longland,  
HEAD OF TECHNOLOGY – CORPORATE PARTNERS & DIRECT, QBE**

Helen manages a number of teams to deliver IT projects that improve the user experience for QBE customers, including overseeing the implementation of a major new end-to-end claims platform. Promoted to the Head of Technology position in the past year, and with a focus on driving change and leading project execution, strategy, strategic relationships and customer service, she's helping to change how people see women in IT and program delivery.



**Colette Grgic, GENERAL MANAGER, INNOVATION, BLUECHILLI**

When Colette celebrates her one year anniversary as BlueChilli's GM of Innovation in October 2016, the division will have trained 45 tech startup teams and 26 corporate 'startup teams', rapid growth, made possible through frameworks, programs and playbooks she created to enable deployment at scale. With a small team of five, Colette uses her experience as a former professional athlete to enable each member to excel, thrive and work quickly and efficiently.

# EMERGING FEMALE LEADER IN THE LEGAL SECTOR

*Awarded to the emerging leader in the legal sector (including private practice and within an in-house legal team) who can best demonstrate growth, disruption and inclusivity in her field during the 12 months from July 1 2015*

## Finalists *Emerging Female Leader* in the Legal sector

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**Laura Keily**, BARRISTER, VICTORIAN BAR

Laura is leading a major push on gender equity for barristers. Having transitioned from solicitor to barrister, she's experienced first hand the challenges women face in building a sustainable practice in commercial law, but has still increased revenue every year since starting three years ago. A member of the Women's Bar Association executive, she's campaigning for more research on the barriers facing female barristers, pushing for affirmative action on applications for Senior Counsel, and mentoring women lawyers.



**Claire Bibby**, SENIOR VP & GENERAL COUNSEL, BROOKFIELD PROPERTIES

Claire has been instrumental in a number of high profile and complex transactions with real estate company Brookfield. Internally, she's working to innovate on new ways to provide legal services to clients, helped develop a charity giving program, and has helped develop programs to provide a more inclusive workplace. She's also giving back to the legal profession by working on a wide range of initiatives to create a smarter, innovative and supportive profession.



**Sally Torgoman**, GENERAL COUNSEL, ECO ENERGY WORLD

Sally is leading on legal initiatives to help develop large scale solar projects that will change Australia's energy environment and help ensure farmers and the community get sustainable yet economical deals. Appointed to the GC role in the past 12 months, her team manages a range of global transactions including major infrastructure work. Internally, she's also helped introduce a range of inclusive workplace practices.

Finalists *Emerging Female Leader*  
in the Legal sector *(continued ...)*

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**Paula Robinson,**  
**PARTNER, MINTER ELLISON LAWYERS**

Over the past 12 months, Paula and her team have provided the entire legal and brand protection functions for the 2018 Commonwealth Games. Promoted to Partner on 1 July 2016, she spent the 2015/16 Financial year seconded full-time to the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games Corporation (GOLDOC) as its Head of Legal and Brand Protection.



**Cassandra Heilbronn,**  
**PRESIDENT, WOMEN LAWYERS ASSOCIATION OF QUEENSLAND**

A Senior Associate with Minter Ellison, Cassandra's also leading a major push for equitable briefing and the adoption of flexible work practices in her role with Queensland Women Lawyers. She's working to shift the legal profession's view on gender diversity by creating more awareness on the issue, looking at best practices from interstate, and working on a series of initiatives to push for change.

# **EMERGING FEMALE LEADER IN THE GOVERNMENT/PUBLIC SECTOR**

*Awarded to the emerging leader in the public sector who can best demonstrate growth, disruption and inclusivity in her field during the 12 months from July 1 2015*

## Finalists *Emerging Female Leader* in the Government/Public sector



**Meghan Hopper**, COUNCILLOR AND FORMER MAYOR; AND FOUNDER, MORELAND CITY COUNCIL; AND RUN LIKE A GIRL AUSTRALIA

Moreland's youngest-ever female Mayor, Meghan, introduced policies to promote women's inclusivity and safety, and is now founding a non-partisan organisation to encourage young women into political careers, called Run Like A Girl. Serving as Mayor following the tragic death of Jill Meagher in her municipality in 2012, she worked to push for practical measures to improve women's safety, such as replacing 8,500 street lights to brighter LED bulbs. She also initiated a successful state-wide campaign to introduce family violence as a consideration in the Infringements Act as part of the Royal Commission into Family Violence.



**Giulia Jones**, SHADOW MINISTER FOR WOMEN, MENTAL HEALTH, EMERGENCY SERVICES AND MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS, CANBERRA LIBERALS

Giulia promotes flexible work amongst her small team, but says her bigger achievements come in the form of providing more inclusive facilities for mothers and fathers in Canberra's parliamentary building. This means MPs, staff and visitors can comfortably care for babies or continue to breast pump in privacy after returning to work. A mother of five and advocate for parents, she's pushing for workplaces to end the obsession with 'clock watching' and enable their workers to get the job done from wherever they can.

## Finalists *Emerging Female Leader* in the Government/Public sector *(continued ...)*

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**Marcia Devlin**, DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR (LEARNING AND QUALITY),  
FEDERATION UNIVERSITY AUSTRALIA

Marcia is enabling greater access to university education for regionally-based Australians, and positioning her university to become a national leader in student success. She's introduced a number of new innovations across campus to improve student retention and success, and led on the adoption of an 'open access' policy which sees the university admit students based on aspiration and determination, rather than performance at secondary school.



**Alex Bannigan**, COMMUNICATION AND DEVELOPMENT MANAGER,  
WOMEN IN ENGINEERING UNSW AUSTRALIA

Working with 100 volunteer 'ambassadors', Alex is leading a push to increase the representation of women in engineering, particularly by changing the image of the profession. Leading a Women in Engineering Development Program to offer current students more access to professional development opportunities, she is also using this to run outreach activities reaching over 2000 school girls a year, ranging from on-campus engineering days for girls, to school visits to chatting one-on-one with girls and their parents at open days.

# **EMERGING FEMALE LEADER IN THE NFP SECTOR**

*Awarded to the emerging leader in the not-for-profit sector who can best demonstrate growth, disruption and inclusivity in her field during the 12 months from July 1 2015*

## Finalists *Emerging Female Leader* in the Not-for-Profit sector



**Kellie Sloane, CEO, LIFE EDUCATION NSW**

Kellie has been leading a renewal of the iconic charity known for its 'Healthy Harold' character. In her first gig as CEO, she made the transition from television to the not-for-profit sector in late 2015, following many years of dedicated volunteer work. Just three months in, she kick-started a major operational restructure, and will soon launch a major new digital trial of "virtual excursion" to help deliver more programs to remote communities.



**Raji Ambikairajah, SYDNEY CHAPTER LEADER, ROOM TO READ**

Leading a team of volunteers, Raji has led on significant growth in the Sydney chapter of Room to Read, seeing an increase in fundraising and volunteer engagement to help the charity reach 10.7 million children. Introducing a number of new programs and initiatives to reinvigorate passion in the program, she also empowered her team to implement the Independent Events model, to increase grassroots fundraising activities across Sydney.



**Erin Watson-Lynn, CHAMPION, DICE KIDS**

Erin leads DICE Kids, a NFP aiming to help develop and prepare children for a life of creating, building and sustaining businesses in their adult lives. Since winning Policy Hack in 2015, her leadership's seen the organisation launch a pilot program, receive endorsements from Lucy and Malcolm Turnbull and deliver 600 'entrepreneur in a box' kits to school kids across Australia.



**Annabelle Daniel, CEO, WOMEN'S COMMUNITY SHELTERS**

Annabelle's leadership of Women's Community Shelters has seen the charity establish three shelters for women and children leaving domestic violence in NSW by working with local communities – and NO state government assistance. She's helped the charity move from 'start up' to a much-recognised and respected model for offering support in the women's homelessness and domestic violence sector in NSW.

# **EMERGING FEMALE LEADER IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR**

*Awarded to the emerging leader in the private sector who can best demonstrate growth, disruption and inclusivity in her field during the 12 months from July 1 2015*

## Finalists *Emerging Female Leader* in the Private sector

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**Natasha O'Halloran,**  
**DIVERSITY LEADER - SPECIAL PROJECTS, LION CO**

Natasha has spent the past 12 months at Lion deconstructing and re-imagining key workplace policies to better promote flexibility, families and inclusion. She has taken a key leadership role in a major transformational cultural push to see flexible work move from being an 'inconvenience' to the 'future of work' and an option available to everyone for any reason.



**Gemma Hudson,** **NATIONAL GM & DIRECTOR, WE BUCHAN**

Gemma has led a major transformation of the communication agency, WE Buchan, after joining as GM in 2013 and becoming one of the youngest women to lead such an agency in Australia. With a focus on championing individuals and creating a collaborative culture that supports, empowers and rewards staff, Gemma's leadership has seen an increase in revenue, client work and staff satisfaction.



**Angela Ferguson,** **MANAGING DIRECTOR, FUTURESPLACE**

Angela leads the workplace design provider Futurespace, which has delivered a number of groundbreaking and disruptive projects. An advocate for applying future principals to workplace design, she's sharing her knowledge all over the world and in the past 12 months alone has developed major projects for clients including PwC, EA Games, KPMG, and REA Group.

## Finalists *Emerging Female Leader* in the Private sector *(continued ...)*

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**Jane Moran, SENIOR HIGHWAYS ENGINEER, AURECON**

Jane is leading a major push with Aurecon to promote gender inclusivity, and using her experience in sport (as an Olympic Bronze medalist) to inspire and promote the potential of women in engineering. A co-chair of Aurecon's diversity committee, she's worked to implement female talent targets, start a 'reverse mentoring' program (which has now been adopted globally), and reshape Aurecon's training programs to better reward 'high potential' women.



**Jill Hannaford, TECHNICAL SERVICES LEADER, AUSTRALIA, GHD**

Earlier this year, Jill was appointed to the influential national role of Technical Services Leader at the engineering, architecture and environmental services company, GHD. This role sees her leading the technical development of all disciplines in GHD, all the while still advocating for cultural and gender diversity within the organisation. She's also led GHD to sign a 10-year agreement with CareerTrackers, which places Indigenous university students into corporate Australia.



**Emma Cleary,  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/COO, DEVICE TECHNOLOGIES AUSTRALIA**

Working with Australasia's largest privately owned independent medical device distributor, Emma has led on a number of major projects in the past 12 months aiming to empower staff, offer stronger feedback programs, improve efficiencies and create a happier workforce. She's also developed flexible work practices, a women's leadership and support program, along with succession planning initiatives.

# AGENDA SETTER OF THE YEAR

*Awarded to the most inspirational and successful woman who makes a difference, provides real solutions in the world today and is instrumental in building a smarter planet. The Agenda Setter of the year can be an emerging or established female leader*

## Finalists *Agenda Setter* of the Year



**Susan Harris Rimmer**, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY

Susan has been instrumental in the formation of the W20 -- a new advisory group to G20 leaders promoting gender-inclusive economic growth -- and often represents Australia overseas on setting a new agenda for women. Named Australia's first representative to the W20, along with journalist Anne Fulwood, she was part of a core drafting group for the communique, calling on the G20 leaders to consider 22 recommendations. Susan also helped design the Chatham House UK Forum, and is meeting the German W20 leadership in Bellagio to design the process for Chancellor Merkel to chair the W20 in Berlin, May 2017.



**Romilly Madew**, CEO, GREEN BUILDING COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA

Romilly has almost single-handedly driven Australia's green building movement for more than a decade-- with Australia now leading the world on green star ratings for buildings. Since being appointed to lead the then 10-staff strong Green Building Council of Australia a decade ago, she's seen more than 1,300 projects around Australia achieve Green Star ratings, grown the team to more than 40, and seen 30% of Australia's office space move to Green Star certification.



**Samantha Gash**, SOCIAL ENTREPRENEUR

After years of planning and developing a partnership with World Vision, Samantha commenced her 3800km run across India in August 2016, all in a bid to raise funds and awareness for children's education. Her 'running for change' movement is encouraging others to get involved from home, while documenting the plight of some of those she's meeting on her journey. The campaign is an excellent example of peer-to-peer fundraising, opening opportunities for people to engage with the issue they're supporting, rather than simply donating money.



**Lucy Perry**, CEO, SUNRISE CAMBODIA

Lucy is setting a new agenda by encouraging small charities to think big, and implementing digital infrastructure that can enable fast growth. She moved from the advertising industry to the NFP sector in 2012, developing the team and fundraising strategy necessary to raise \$7 million in two and half years to treat childbirth injuries in Ethiopia. More recently, she's used her profile to make very public statements in support of women, and been appointed CEO of Sunrise Cambodia, where she has already raised \$1 million in just eight months.

## Finalists *Agenda Setter* of the Year *(continued ...)*



**Saba Vasefi, AMBASSADOR, ASYLUM SEEKERS CENTRE**

Saba is an academic, writer, poet, filmmaker, and well respected campaigner against capital punishment in Iran. In 2010 Vasefi fled Iran, arriving in Australia with only a suitcase and her 10-year-old daughter. Since then, she's used her leadership and artistic skills to set a new agenda on raising awareness on refugees and asylum seekers, as well as the plight of women and children around the world. Her documentary films have been aired internationally, telling real stories on the discrimination and abuse women face.



**Wesa Chau, founder, POLIVERSITY**

Similar to Emily's List, Wesa's Poliversity is a new Australian Labor Party affiliated organisation, working with all multicultural communities to increase diversity in the party. Supported by senior ALP members including Bill Shorten, Tanya Plibersek, and Penny Wong, Poliversity is driving a new push to promote multiculturalism and cultural diversity across Australia.



**Kristy McKellar, FAMILY VIOLENCE AND SOCIAL CHANGE CONSULTANT**

Kristy is influencing Australia's powerful leaders to create a national response to family/domestic violence, respect and equality. A survivor of family violence, and with a background in social work, she advocates on the issue by highlighting system failures and offering advice and ideas for reform. In an unprecedented event, she addressed both houses of the Victorian Parliament in a unique joint sitting on family violence, and has significantly contributed to the Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence.



**Kate Palmer, CEO, NETBALL AUSTRALIA**

Kate is promoting women's sport across Australia, playing an instrumental role in growing netball at all levels, including through the development of the ANZ Championship and the new National Netball League (starting in 2017). She's also led on negotiating a landmark broadcasting partnership for netball, increased corporate sponsorship, secured rights to major netball competitions and is promoting netball as a vehicle for change through community-based projects.

# Join *us* ...



Join us for lunch to celebrate our finalists and announce the winners:

**5 October 2016**

**12.00- 3.00PM • DOLTONE HOUSE HYDE PARK • SYDNEY**

WITH SPECIAL GUESTS:

**MARINA GO • LAYNE BEACHLEY • LINDA BURNEY**



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