

MEMO

SUBJECT **Crawford events gender commitment**

Crawford School has a thriving events program, putting on more than 100 events every year which attract audiences ranging from 10 to 15,000 people. These events are organised by centres and staff from throughout the school, showcasing the strength in disciplinary diversity. However, the gender balance of those events has fallen short of 50/50.

In 2016 Crawford held 120 public events with 512 participants. Of those, 157 were female (30 per cent), although 28 of these were in a moderator or chair role.

In 2017, the School has put on 130 public events featuring 519 speakers. Of those, 187 were female (36 per cent), although that number includes 23 females who were chairs or moderators. It should be noted that these figures are largely in line with other parts of the ANU.

In December, Professor Helen Sullivan committed the School to a gender balance in its public events program from 2018 across two measures: firstly, balance on panels; and secondly, balance as measured across all public events in 2018.

Professor Sullivan detailed the announcement via an op-ed on *Policy Forum*, and followed it up with an all-staff email and a story on the Crawford website (see attachments).

This report documents that announcement, as well as giving some insights into how it was received by external stakeholders and supported by ANU staff and institutionally by parts of ANU.



Making room for women in policy

It's a man's world doesn't cut it, we need to sing a more inclusive song

HELEN SULLIVAN

PHOTO: Uslukajme on Pixabay

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GOVERNMENT AND GOVERNANCE, EDUCATION, ARTS, CULTURE & SOCIETY | AUSTRALIA, THE WORLD

6 DECEMBER 2017

From global politics to university panels, we need to find a way to get more equal representation in the formulation of public policy, Helen Sullivan writes.

Let me show you a quick selective snapshot of the world right now. Kim Jong-un has just conducted another missile test, sounding alarm bells around the region. Photographs from North Korea show the country's leader [chortling with pride](#) surrounded by his high-ranking male generals. Over on the other side of the world, Donald Trump – a man who believes that power gives him the [right to grab women's genitals](#) – responds to North Korea's provocations in typically macho and bombastic language.

Meanwhile, [Southeast Asia's emboldened 'strongmen' leaders](#) position themselves to take advantage of a changing world order where power and influence are rapidly shifting towards a man so influential that he's just had his [very thought](#) processes characterised as part of his country's political culture.

Perhaps James Brown was right when he sang "It's a man's man's man's world"?

Thankfully, to quote another song of a similar era, the times are changing. In my time as an academic, I've seen the university sector of the UK and Australia wake up to the fact that it [has a gender balance problem](#) and that it needs to do something about the reality (and perception) that its dusty corridors are full of bearded pontificating old white men. That's not to say the sector has successfully addressed this, wholly or even partially, but there is a growing awareness of the problem and a building resolve to do something about it.

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About the Author



Helen Sullivan

Professor Helen Sullivan is Director of the ANU Crawford School of Public Policy.

Also by this Author



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{Quick Edit} problems aren't just the preserve of the university sector either. Only **32 per cent** of Australia's Federal Parliamentarians are female (perhaps little surprise when women make up only 22 per cent of Liberals in Federal Parliament), leaving Australia **50th in the world** for percentage of women in Parliament. Even the business world struggles. A recent study found that fewer large Australian companies are **run by women than are run by men named 'John'** and that the number of women in key leadership positions actually fell in 2017.



Are we making headway in women's participation in Asia-Pacific politics?

At Crawford School, where *Policy Forum* is based, we pride ourselves on our links with the public service. Our researchers undertake work that aims to inform better policy, and they build strong and enduring links with public servants. Many of our students go on to senior public service roles, both in Australia and around the world, where they craft and write the public policy that we hope will create a better (and more equal) world.

One notable attempt to address gender imbalance began in the public service and is achieving results – the **Male Champions of Change** program. Founded in 2010 by Sex Discrimination Commissioner Elizabeth Broderick AO, the program aims to encourage and support men in the corporate and government world to take an active role in addressing gender inequality.

As a school that puts on a lot of public events featuring both academics and senior public servants, we see this program playing out first hand. Frequently, senior public servants we invite to be part of public panels, for example, will insist that the panel is made up of men and women equally, both playing significant roles.

And a good thing they do this, too. The Male Champions of Change project **estimates** that just 15 per cent of panellists at events like these are women, and less than 12 per cent of experts cited in business newspapers are female.

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What Trump's win says about gender politics

Those kinds of ratios contribute to a broader corrosive effect on public policy discussion and formulation. They help position the men on those panels as the leading authorities on their topic, which in turn can contribute to reinforcing gender imbalances and stifling opportunities for career advancement for women. On top of that, an overwhelming chorus of male voices in public debate can mean that important policy areas run the risk of being neglected, for example, domestic violence or maternal health.

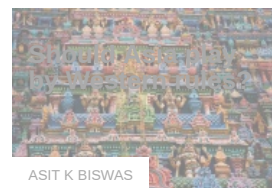
It's an issue that is – pleasingly – attracting more attention. The excellent and amusing Tumblr **All Male Panels** may give all-male events a comical thumbs-up from David Hasselhoff, but it draws attention to how widespread the problem is.

In 2017 at Crawford School we put on more than 130 public events with a range of formats – seminars, talks, panels – on a wide range of policy issues. We did better than a 15 per cent ratio, reaching a little over 35 per cent female participation (although that figure drops by 3-4 per cent when you take out those women who were either moderators or chairs – many of whom may not have played an active role in sharing their own expertise).

However, 35 per cent isn't good enough.



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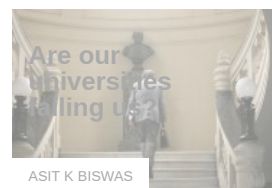
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{Quick Edit} blic policy school which seeks to inform, lead, and educate the next generation of policymakers, we have a responsibility to do everything we can to ensure that we are addressing gender imbalance.

To that end, in 2018 Crawford School will commit to a goal of gender balance in our public events with two specific targets: firstly, ensuring that we have a balance on panel events; and secondly, ensuring that over the course of the year our events program has featured as many women sharing their insights, expertise and views as it does men. At the end of 2018 we'll publicly report back on this on both measures.

Of course, this commitment will only go a small way towards addressing a much larger societal issue. But everyone – individuals, companies, political parties, universities – needs to do their part.


The benefits of more equal representation in policymaking could be significant. I say could, because the world has so few examples to draw upon. But you shouldn't need to believe studies suggesting that the [best predictor of a country's stability](#) is the way its women are treated, or that more female leaders could mean [a more peaceful world](#), to recognise that providing equal opportunities to half of humanity is a moral imperative in its own right.

We don't need a man's man's man's world, any more than we need public debate dominated by female voices. What we need is a more representative policy-making process that hears from men, women – and those who wish to be identified as neither – and public policy schools have a responsibility to play an active role in that.

We are training the leaders of tomorrow, so the work we do now might contribute to a much better gender snapshot in the future.

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One Response



Quentin Grafton
DECEMBER 6, 2017

[REPLY](#)

Well done Helen! Great to see a piece that goes from words to actions on this important issue. I'm proud to be part of a school that is taking a public stance on gender balance.

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50/50: Crawford commits to events gender balance

06 December 2017

Crawford School has publicly committed to a 50/50 gender balance across its public events program from 2018.

Writing on *Policy Forum*, Crawford Director Professor Helen Sullivan highlighted the importance of getting a greater diversity of voices in the discussion, debate, and formulation of public policy, and the role that public policy schools can play in facilitating this goal.

In the piece, Professor Sullivan highlights that over the last year, the school achieved a gender split on public events of roughly 65 per cent men, and 35 per cent women, and says we can and should do better.

"As a public policy school which seeks to inform, lead, and educate the next generation of policymakers, we have a responsibility to do everything we can to ensure that we are addressing gender imbalance," she writes.

"To that end, starting in 2018 Crawford School will commit to a goal of gender balance in our public events with two specific targets; firstly, ensuring that we have a balance on panel events organised by the school, and secondly ensuring that across the course of the year our events program has featured as many women sharing their insights, expertise and views as it does men. At the end of 2018 we'll publicly report back on this on both measures."

Professor Sullivan has asked the School's Gender and Diversity Committee to work with the Engagement Team to develop guidelines and advice for events organisers at the School to help them achieve the goal.

"Once finalised those guidelines will be on the website," she said.

"In the meantime, events organisers might want to check out the Male Champions of Change program that has plenty of good advice and guidance on achieving gender balance on public events.

"Of course, this commitment will only go a small way towards addressing a much larger societal issue. But everyone – individuals, companies, political parties, universities – needs to do their part.

"I appreciate that reaching this target will require commitment from staff, but I'm sure we can all agree that public policy debate, deliberation, and formulation works best when you hear from a diversity of voices. We need a more representative policy-making process that hears from men, women – and those who wish to be identified as neither – and public policy schools have a responsibility to play an active role in achieving this goal."

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Tags:

Crawford School of Public Policy, gender equality, Policy Forum, Helen Sullivan, policy impact

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Crawford School of Public Policy

6 December 2017

Dear colleagues

Today I've published a [new opinion piece](#) on *Policy Forum* that I want to draw your attention to, as it specifically addresses an issue that is important to Crawford School.

The piece looks at the challenges of getting a greater diversity of voices into public policy debates at all levels, and in particular at the role public policy schools should play in achieving this goal.

One way a public policy school can help to ensure a diversity of voices in policy discussions is through its public events program. Last year, our events program presented an amazing array of views, expertise, research and insights. However, its gender balance, at roughly 65 per cent male participants, and 35 per cent female participants, fell short of what an institution like Crawford School should be aiming for.

As such, in 2018, the School is committing publicly to two targets to address this imbalance. Firstly, on panel events organised by the School we will ensure an equal balance of male and female participants. Secondly, we will achieve a gender balance between men and women measured across all of our public events over the course of a year. At the end of the year, we will be asking event organisers to report back on how they have done on these two measures. Our outcomes, as a school, against these two targets will be publically released on our website.

I have asked Crawford's Gender and Diversity Committee to work with the Engagement Team to draw up guidelines and advice for staff about these two goals and how to achieve them. Once finalised, that information will be on the website. In the meantime, you might want to check out the [Male Champions of Change](#) program that has plenty of good advice and guidance on achieving gender balance on public events.

I appreciate that reaching this target will require commitment from staff, but I'm sure we can all agree that public policy debate, deliberation, and formulation works best when you hear from a diversity of voices. Crawford School, as a leader in training the next generation of policymakers, has a responsibility to ensure that we are doing what we can to facilitate a more representative public debate.

Best wishes

Helen

Professor Helen Sullivan
Director, Crawford School of Public Policy
JG Crawford Building 132, Lennox Crossing
The Australian National University
Canberra ACT 2601
AUSTRALIA

t: 61 2 6125 3067 | m: 61 478406901 (m)
helen.sullivan@anu.edu.au
twitter: [@helenCsullivan](https://twitter.com/helenCsullivan)

helencsullivan.wordpress.com

The Australian National University, Canberra | CRICOS Provider : 00120C | ABN : 52 234 063 906

Response to Helen's piece and the School's commitment

Among the community

Helen's piece was very well received by the wider community. On Twitter, it was retweeted at least 50 times and received over 80 likes – and that's just the ones we can see. It also received many positive comments. Here are some of them:

"Yes. This is how change happens. Thank you Helen #amazingladyprof"

"Fantastic news. I hope to see @ANUBellSchool & other parts of @our_ANU follow suit"

"Good work @HelenCSullivan. Overdue. Justified. Appreciated."

"Helen You are a game changer and a refreshing addition to Canberra."

One negative response:

"Sorry that's ridiculous. I don't mind if women are 70% but I'd never mandate it"

Among ANU staff

Helen's commitment received a moderately strong show of support from ANU staff, according to evidence from Twitter. Those who either retweeted, liked, or commented positively include: Warwick McKibbin, Ashlee Betteridge, Liz Allen, Deanne Drummond, Sachini Muller, Carolyn Hendricks, Emily Millane, Quentin Grafton, Danielle Cave, Martyn Pearce, and Kim Rubenstein.

Institutionally at ANU

The piece received a mixed response from ANU institutions on social media. To our knowledge, it was retweeted by six different bodies within ANU: College of Asia & the Pacific, ANU College of Law, Gender Institute, Centre for Applied Macroeconomic Analysis, Austaxpolicy, and Australian National Internship Program. It was also 'liked' by the National Security College.

However, no social media accounts of central ANU publicised the commitment. This includes the Australian National University Facebook page (with 240,000 followers), and @ANUMedia and @Our_ANU (together with 20,000 followers).

The College of Asia & the Pacific shared the piece on their Facebook page, however their post failed to mention: that Helen is Director of Crawford School; that it is Crawford as a whole making the commitment, and not just Helen; and what the commitment was.



Asia & the Pacific at ANU

6 December at 19:00 · 🌐

We've got a long way to go to achieving a gender balance in the formulation of public policy, according to Professor Helen Sullivan. So what can we do? Learn more about Helen's commitment to equality for 2018.
[Asia and the Pacific Policy Society](#)



Making room for women in policy - Policy Forum

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