



ENGINEERS
AUSTRALIA
Women in Engineering

UNIFEM AND THE UN GLOBAL COMPACT: WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT PRINCIPLES

WOMEN IN ENGINEERING NATIONAL COMMITTEE POSITION STATEMENT

Diversity is essential to ensure Australia makes the most of its human resources, ensuring that the best and brightest have the opportunity to contribute to Australia's technological and economic development.

Representing just over 10% of Engineer's Australia's total membership, the imbalance of female engineers is of great concern. Improving the rates of attraction and retention of women in the engineering profession will address the skills shortage, ensure that the profession remains relevant and representative of the society it serves and will result in improved outcomes for employers of the engineering profession.

Equality means business. Research shows that businesses with a diverse workforce have higher retention levels and greater profitability¹.

The Women in Engineering National Committee is committed to improving gender diversity in the engineering profession. As a result the Committee **supports** the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC), Women's Empowerment Principles and **encourages** organisations in the engineering profession to take a lead and sign up to the Principles.

The Principles provide a gender lens through which businesses can survey and analyse current initiatives, benchmarks and reporting practices around gender equality. The principles are:

1. Establish high-level corporate leadership for gender equality
2. Treat all women and men fairly at work – respect and support human rights and non-discrimination
3. Ensure the health, safety and well-being of all women and men workers
4. Promote education, training and professional development for women
5. Implement enterprise development, supply chain and marketing practices that empower women
6. Promote equality through community initiatives and advocacy
7. Measure and publically report on progress to achieve gender equality.

Michelle Shi-Verdaasdonk
Women in Engineering National Committee Chair
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¹ Women in Engineering Studies in Australia, Statistical report prepared from data by the Department of Education, Science and Training, Engineers Australia (2007)