



Australian Federation of Graduate Women Inc.

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Dr Krystal Evans
CEO BioMelbourne Network
Milton House
Level 2, 25 Flinders Lane
Melbourne 3000

Dear Dr Evans

The Australian Federation of Graduate Women congratulate on your appointment to the Higher Education Standards Panel. We are delighted that another woman should join the panel and believe your standing as a leading science and technology advocate should greatly enhance the panel's capacity to advise on issues relating to STEM subjects. We hope also that your appointment and your example as a role-model will further promote the study and employment of women and girls in these fields.

AFGW is the national voice of graduate women working, since 1922, through initiatives in Education especially for the advancement and wellbeing of women and girls. We view education as essential for empowering people; reducing poverty; improving health; understanding human rights; and, maintaining human security and building peace. We have been especially concerned with the education and employment of women and girls in the less traditional fields of engineering and science. We advocate at state and federal level for improvements in education especially through development of curriculum, provision of resources, and initiatives in training staff. We are proud to have Georgina Sweet, Nancy Millis and many other women of science among our members and fellowship winners.

The promotion of STEM subjects for women and girls is also a central focus for our international arm Graduate Women International (formerly the International Federation of University Women). Enclosed is a copy of the pamphlet which was circulated at the UN Commission for the Status of Women last year. I hope you will find it interesting and the statistics helpful in your further promotion of the importance of STEM education and skills.

In Australia AFGW has endeavoured to promote women's achievements in STEM areas through our national and state scholarships. Each year AFGW, its affiliated state bodies and branches, give over \$0.5 million in scholarships to woman and girls to further their education particularly at tertiary level. Many of these awards go to women studying in the varied fields of science. One of our national fellowships is based on a bequest from Georgina Sweet. Our West Australian group has been involved in providing mentors and sponsorship for girls to attend the Curious Minds programme of the Australian Academy of Technological Science and Engineering. We also support a number of education projects for girls in the developing countries.

We wish you well in developing the new model.

Tricia Blombery
Convener Standing Committee for Education
for Dr Jane Baker, President AFGW

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