



BPW Australia
Affiliated with BPW International
ABN 50 956 174 998
Suite 154, 16 Beenleigh Redland Bay Road
Loganholme QLD Australia 3127
Tel: +61 7 3103-1391 Fax: +61 7 3112-6838
Email: bpwaust@bpw.com.au
Web: bpw.com.au

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Equal Pay Day – Media Statement

To Close Gender Pay Gap in Australia, Every Step Counts, Says BPWA

In the struggle to end the gender pay gap, “every step in the right direction counts,” says Business and Professional Women Australia (BPWA) policy director Elena Rorie. To encourage more such steps, BPWA plans to reward workplace initiatives and strategies that attempt to close the gender pay gap in Australia.

According to the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA), the gender pay gap stands at 15.3 percent in 2017. Last year, the gap stood at 16.2 percent, an improvement from the previous year’s 17.9 percent disparity. That translates to an average difference of \$251.20 per week—more than one thousand dollars per month.

This year, BPWA plans to promote solutions, tools, and rewards initiatives that address the gender pay gap, offer paid parental leave, provide flexible working arrangements, and support women in business. To do so, the organisation encourages businesses to use the Women’s Empowerment Principles (WEP) Gender Gap Analysis Tool, launched this year at the CSW61 in New York. [The WEP’s Gender Gap Analysis Tool](#) is a free, user-friendly, and confidential tool that helps companies from around the world identify strengths, gaps, and opportunities to improve their performance on gender equality. The tool provides results in a concise, clear format so companies can easily identify areas in which they can improve.

BPWA also encourages businesses to sign the [WEP CEO’s statement](#). The organisation asks businesses who have used these tools to notify it so it can promote businesses who take steps to end gender equality.

This year, BPWA will celebrate its 70th anniversary. To commemorate this milestone, the organisation has created a new Award, simply called the “Employer Award,” that rewards every step in the right direction that the business takes. Since BPWA wants to recognise efforts by all businesses, they will open these awards to businesses both big and small. BPWA invites businesses to let them know if they

have any of the following improvements in place: gender pay equity measure, flexible working arrangements, paid parental leave, and other initiatives that assist families—in particular, women—to achieve economic independence and maintain rewarding employment. BPWA will release more details about the award soon, so it welcomes businesses to keep in touch.

Other steps toward equal pay and women economic empowerment have occurred this year. BPWA has forged strategic partnerships with businesses and initiatives that support women in business and help women find rewarding employment opportunities.

One of them, [WeConnect](#), is a not-for-profit organisation that helps women-owned and women-run businesses to connect with big corporations to become one of their preferred suppliers in their respective areas of expertise.

BPWA encourages women to start the conversation within their workplaces and start promoting the change we need to achieve the equal pay in all industry sectors, at all levels.

- Elena Rorie, Director of Policy, BPW Australia E: dirpolicy@bpw.com.au

Media contacts for this statement:

BPW Australia Media Spokesperson - Sandra Cook 0409 608 344