



5 YEARS OF FRANKLIN WOMEN

Impact Report

Franklin Women



We believe supporting women in health science careers is something worth investing in – and I am so proud that in 5 years, Franklin Women has done just that to such great effect.

Thanks to the many individuals and organisations who feel the same way, already we are reaping the benefits from the collective investments that we made together.

There are no words to describe how that feels.

**Dr Melina Georgousakis,
Founding Director of Franklin Women**

Franklin Women is a grassroots social enterprise on a mission to create a health and medical research sector where women can thrive.

Since our inception in 2014, our core purpose has been to provide practical support to women in their career journey, whether it be inside or outside academia, through opportunities for networking and professional development.

As we have grown, our purpose has expanded to organisations in the sector, listening to and supporting their leadership and professional staff who are well positioned to enact change to improve research culture and practice.

In turn, Franklin Women has emerged as a vibrant, engaged and supportive community of individuals working at all levels of the health and medical research sector; as well as research organisations who are also motivated to achieve workplaces that are diverse and inclusive.

In our 2020 Impact Report, we go beyond numbers to capture and celebrate the real impact of the many activities we have delivered in the past 5 years.



The impact has truly been a collective effort, only possible with our passionate members, supportive followers, dedicated academic partners and event sponsors.

We are excited to build on this foundation in the next 5 years to reach more women working across Australia in the health and medical research sector so they, along with their colleagues, can truly thrive. After all, a positive research environment benefits everyone involved.

OUR FIRST 5 YEARS IN NUMBERS

AN INCREDIBLE COMMUNITY SPIRIT



15,000+
STRONG



1,190
MEMBERS



2,300 +
NEWSLETTER
SUBSCRIBERS



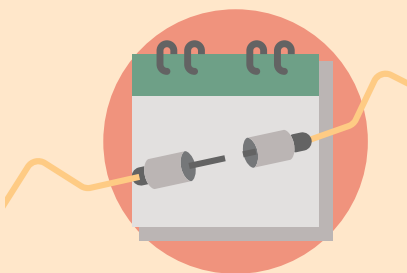
12,000+
SOCIAL
FOLLOWERS



10
ACADEMIC
PARTNERS

+ many friends, supporters and champions

CONNECTING + INVESTING IN OUR FEMALE WORKFORCE



CONNECTING AT
32
EVENTS



27,800
TWEETS



WE'VE SENT
69
NEWSLETTERS



43
CAREER BLOGS

How?

Franklin Women delivers a range of activities to support women to pursue rewarding careers in the health and medical research sector, no matter their career path.

Our activities encompass three areas: our supportive **community**, practical **events** and evidence-based **initiatives**.

Adopting a unique entrepreneurial spirit, our activities provide support and training that people in our sector would otherwise not have access to; while actively complementing other valuable gender equality initiatives that have emerged in the sector.

Community

Members and supporters Like-minded individuals working across the health and medical research sector who collectively invest in our mission for positive change.

Academic Partners Organisations who are committed to creating a sector that celebrates diversity and promotes inclusion.

Events

Professional development training Curated events that combine external topic experts and sector-based experience on forward-thinking topics.

Networking opportunities Connecting women in diverse roles, careers and organisations from research institutes to government, not-for-profits and industry.

Initiatives

Mentoring Program A professionally facilitated cross-organisational program connecting emerging female talent with male and female leaders.

Carer's Travel Scholarship An innovative scheme funded by members to support those with caring responsibilities to attend conferences.

Wikipedia Edit-a-thon Part of a global movement to raise the profile of notable female scientists on Wikipedia to increase visibility of their vast contributions.



Community

Five years ago, Franklin Women founder Melina Georgousakis asked women in the health and medical research sector to come together to create a community that would support each other to thrive.

It's a vision now supported by our biggest supporters: 1,190 members and counting, and our Academic Partners.

Franklin Women welcomes women from increasingly varied careers in the health and medical research sector - from academia and beyond - to redefine what success looks like. This creates a unique environment for women working in academia, government and industry at different career levels to connect with each other. But it also affirms that many careers are needed to make valued contributions to improving health.

Our Franklin Women community is committed to supporting each other in practical ways. We are creating a positive culture of success built on the principle of collective investment.

Franklin Women members fund our Carer's Travel scholarship, share prized advice, offer sincere support and create networks and opportunities for one another.

Our Academic Partners and Event Sponsors share and enable our vision of a sector where women thrive. Our academic partners have supported the development of their staff and students while collectively investing in Franklin Women, and our sponsors have enriched 32 events with quality speakers and training specialists.

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Thank you to our inaugural Academic Partners for their support:

- Cancer Council NSW
 - Centenary Institute
 - Garvan Institute of Medical Research
 - The George Institute of Global Health
 - Macquarie University
 - Kolling Institute of Medical Research
 - University of New South Wales
 - University of Sydney
 - University of Technology Sydney
 - Sydney Local Health District
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Cultivating culture change

HOSSAI GUL | CASE STUDY

The Franklin Women community inspires a positive and energetic culture that encourages others to build momentum for cultural change.

Empowered by Franklin Women, Hossai Gul has implemented a number of diversity initiatives at Macquarie University where she is currently completing her PhD.

“I’ve been amazed by the tangible, practical things that the network does for each other,” Hossai says. “Franklin Women have a commitment to turn up for one another.”

Reflecting on her own recent career transition, Hossai says the support and advice she received from the Franklin Women community was the top reason she felt empowered to move from basic lab research into health systems research.

She embarked on a PhD at the Australian Institute of Health Innovation – and at the same time, founded the Future STEMM Leaders training program at Macquarie University for postgraduate students from diverse backgrounds across the faculties of science, medicine, health and engineering.

Creating connection

CLARE STIRZAKER & SACHA STELZER-BRAID | CASE STUDY

The Franklin Women community is committed to supporting women to succeed in diverse careers stemming from health and medical research. For some researchers, like Associate Professor Clare Stirzaker and Dr Sacha Stelzer-Braid, those connections can make all the difference.

“You immediately feel part of the community,” says Sacha, a postdoctoral scientist at UNSW Sydney, based at Prince of Wales Hospital and Franklin Women member since 2016. “Everyone is really committed to the cause and to supporting each other through their career journey.”

Sacha credits the Franklin Women community and its Mentoring Program for her successful promotion in 2019.

Similarly, Clare joined Franklin Women in 2015 as a founding member and says that the support, networking and training opportunities she’s found through Franklin Women have been vital in her research career. “I wouldn’t have had those opportunities otherwise, if it wasn’t for Franklin Women,” says Clare, a group leader at the Garvan Institute of Medical Research.





Events

In 5 years, Franklin Women has delivered 32 events, attended by thousands of women seeking personal and professional development, while also providing priceless networking opportunities.

Our events always excite and inspire. We combine a unique mix of external expert speakers with examples from our sector to deliver practical and thought-provoking events on innovative topics. From mentoring and entrepreneurship to perfecting your personal pitch and self-promotion, attendees are exposed to new ways of thinking to enhance their careers.

Our events create the perfect environment for career-defining moments. An unmatched and welcoming diversity of professionals in one room promises career-changing opportunities. Meeting mentors, forming unlikely mixed-discipline research collaborations, sharing resources and new job opportunities are all examples of outcomes from

networking at Franklin Women events that have transformed careers.

Our events empower women to lead positive change within their teams and organisations. We curate our events understanding the unique challenges faced by women in the sector as well as the value that comes with promoting the principles of diversity and inclusion. Equipped with practical training and bolstered by a growing positive culture, Franklin Women are motivated to create positive change in their own workplaces.

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Thank you to our Event Sponsors for bringing our events to life:

- WE Communications
 - Abbvie
 - HMRI Ignite
 - From Science to Pharma
 - Museum of Applied Arts & Sciences
 - Bupa Health Foundation
 - Australian Museum
 - Wrays
-

Career-making moments

ERICA CROME | CASE STUDY

Franklin Women brings together women across diverse health disciplines who might never otherwise meet.

The connections that Dr Erica Crome made at a Franklin Women event were instrumental in shaping her career moves from academia to healthcare innovation.

When she met her mentor at a Franklin Women event, Erica, a clinical psychologist and researcher, found the support and advice she needed to make her next career move – but she didn't expect where those conversations would lead.

“There was a whole career outside research that just unfolded, that I never could have predicted,” Erica says, who now leads the National Mental Health Commission's National Workplace Initiative to improve mental health in Australian workplaces.

Five years later, Erica continues to benefit from the support of the Franklin Women community and their frank and fearless conversations. She says, “You're part of a bigger group that advocates for you, not only as a woman in health medical research, but as an individual.”



Thinking outside the box

RACHEL SERVICE | CASE STUDY

Franklin Women seeks out external topic experts for their events, taking an entrepreneurial approach to bring new ways of thinking from different industries to improve research culture and practice across the sector.

“It's critical to be curious about other ways of thinking,” says entrepreneur Rachel Service, who founded Happiness Concierge, a professional services training and coaching company. “But the real art form is knowing how to translate those styles for your own industry.”

Franklin Women has twice invited Happiness Concierge to speak about perfecting your personal pitch and leading constructive conversations in the workplace.

Attendees have been inspired to take what they've learnt back to their workplace, extending the benefits to even more researchers in the sector. The impact grows when research centres, such as the Kolling Institute of Medical Research and NSW Health's Centre for Epidemiology and Evidence, adopt these training programs as well.

Of her experience working with Franklin Women, Rachel says, “Ultimately, what I observed with Franklin Women is that people in this group are really invested in your success.”



Initiatives

Franklin Women invests in initiatives to address barriers that impact women in their careers, and drive cultural change towards a sector that values diversity and inclusion.

Together, our initiatives are creating meaningful change for individuals, our community and the sector at large.

Our Carer's Travel Scholarship addresses financial and logistical challenges associated with conference attendance for researchers who are also primary carers. Funds raised through Franklin Women memberships assist recipients by covering the cost of any additional care required for their children or dependents while they attend an academic conference. Introduced in 2015, the innovative scheme has motivated many others to introduce similar scholarships nationally.

Our Mentoring Program elevates women into positions of leadership and engages current male and female leaders in their role to shift organisation culture.

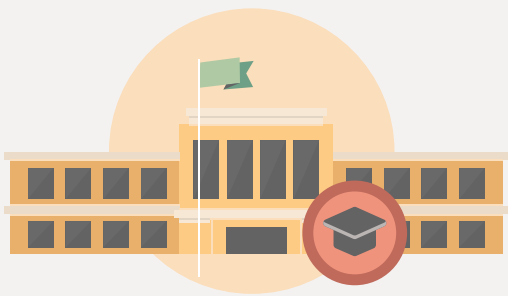
The program targets women at the point in their careers where female representation usually drops, and pairs them with senior leaders from different organisations. The structured 6-month program combines informal mentoring sessions and skills-based workshops facilitated experts in inclusive leadership, and has delivered tangible career benefits to both mentees and mentors.

A leading voice in the sector, Franklin Women represents a more inclusive future for health and medical research. We respond to the needs of women in our sector with ad-hoc initiatives and as early adopters, we inspire collective advocacy and action. Our Wikipedia Edit-a-thon, held in 2019, raised the visibility of notable Australian female scientists and reached millions of people through national and international media. We also lead constructive conversations with top research institutes, hosting Equity Think Tanks and Leader's Lunches, and support national awards honouring excellence in research, innovation, leadership and science engagement.

INNOVATIVE INITIATIVES



202
MENTORING PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS



10 ACADEMIC PARTNER ORGANISATIONS



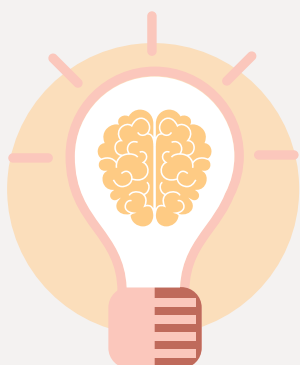
SUPPORTING

9 CARER'S TRAVEL SCHOLARSHIPS
+
16 COVID CARER'S SCHOLARSHIPS

CROWD-FUNDED BY FW MEMBERS



FROM **17** ORGANISATIONS



INSPIRING

4 EQUITY THINK-TANKS



2 LEADERS LUNCHES

DRIVING CHANGE IN THE SECTOR

Member-funded scholarships

BELINDA DI BARTOLO | CASE STUDY

The Franklin Women Carer's Travel Scholarship has supported nine exceptional female researchers to travel to conferences where they have delivered plenary lectures, led workshops for early-career researchers, and presented their research findings – all of which might never have happened because of barriers associated with their caring roles.

For Dr Belinda Di Bartolo, a research fellow at the Kolling Institute of Medical Research, the scholarship she received in 2018 provided her with the essential support she needed to attend a conference after she had relocated interstate.

“I'd just relocated my family to Adelaide to begin my independent research career and that meant leaving my extended family behind,” Belinda says. “They were my great support network, especially when I needed to travel for work. Immensely grateful for the scholarship.”

“Being able to attend conferences is an essential part of our careers as researchers for both the exposure and for the opportunity to meet new researchers and form successful collaborations.”



Next-gen leaders

KELLY THOMPSON | CASE STUDY

Participating in the Franklin Women Mentoring Program gave Kelly Thompson access to a mentor who challenged her perceptions of leadership, and skills for an exponential research career.

Kelly now leads the George Institute's Global Health Women's program, a promotion she received soon after completing the Franklin Women Mentoring Program as a PhD candidate.

“It puts you a much better position to navigate the challenging parts of your career as you transition from being a student to an early-career researcher and onwards and upwards,” she says of the program.

Kelly also credits her assigned mentor, Professor Leanne Togher, a speech pathologist from the University of Sydney, with completely changing what she thought a successful academic could look like: “Having Leanne as a mentor really reframed my whole thinking about leadership and success.”

Investing in senior leaders to drive cultural change

PETER CROUCHER & NANETTE HERLIHEN | CASE STUDY

The Franklin Women Mentoring Program gives senior leaders expert training in inclusive leadership to transform leadership practices in the health and medical research sector.

Already, the culture is beginning to shift at two participating research institutes.

Professor Peter Croucher is the Deputy Director of the Garvan Institute of Medical Research and says men in executive leadership positions need to step up. “We’ve got a responsibility to change the dynamics and the balance at the senior levels of all organisations, so we can get the best skilled individuals into those leadership positions,” he says.

Peter, who participated in the inaugural Franklin Women Mentoring Program in 2017, has encouraged other members of his senior leadership team to do the same. As a result of their participation in the program, he

says that diversity and inclusion are now at the forefront of all their conversations, and considered in every aspect of what Garvan does.

At the Centenary Institute, another participating organisation, human resources manager Nanette Herlihen is likewise using the opportunity to nominate their leaders to progress positive change in her organisation.

“In an industry where leadership programs and formal mentoring programs are not the norm, the Franklin Women program has been pretty revolutionary,” she says.

Already Nanette has seen results in her workplace but believes the ripple effect will continue to grow for years to come.

“Senior leaders and lab heads can enact change right away and as emerging leaders move up in their careers, they will continue to push for positive social change, leading by example,” she says.





Boosting visibility of Australia's best scientists

WIKIPEDIA EDIT-A-THON | CASE STUDY

Joining a global movement, Franklin Women's 2019 Wikipedia Edit-a-thon put notable Australian scientists like microbiologist Professor Cynthia Whitchurch and biotech entrepreneur Dharmica Mistry on the front page of the internet.

Wikipedia gets over 18 million views each month, but only 18 percent of its biographies are about women. Not only does this mean that many talented women – and their work – are not getting the recognition they deserve, but it also skews perceptions about the contributions that women make to society.

“The more we can expose budding female scientists to the many amazing role models around Australia, the more likely they will consider pursuing and maintaining a scientific career themselves,” says Dr Amy Vassallo, research fellow at the George Institute for Global Health and Franklin Women Research Lead.

The event united over 40 women working in the health and medical research sector who, now trained with the skills to edit Wikipedia and code, have increased the visibility of notable female scientists across Australia and the world.

Their efforts featured in national news, including ABC News, SBS Online, The Sydney Morning Herald; it was broadcast in every state via ABC Radio National and reached millions more on BBC World News.

“I’m going to share the skills that I’ve learned with other women in STEM so we can keep continuing to make Wikipedia pages,” said Cancer Council NSW’s Gabrielle Tiernan after participating in the event. “The more contributions from people from different backgrounds, interest groups and sectors, the more diverse, comprehensive and valuable its content will be.”



We don't want people to survive in the health and medical research sector – we want them to thrive.

Because when people thrive in their work, they benefit, their organisations benefit and so does the wider health sector.

**Dr Melina Georgousakis,
Founding Director of Franklin Women**



Franklin Women is a powerful voice that should be heard.

- Professor Peter Croucher, Deputy Director,
Garvan Institute of Medical Research



Australia's only community for
women working in health and medical
research related careers

www.franklinwomen.com.au



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