



1. Purpose

This Gender Equality Policy was written by Vital Anaesthesia Simulation Training (VAST) in Australia and is intended for application across all of VAST's activities. The purpose of this Policy is to provide direction to VAST and its partners to strategically advance gender equality goals within the organisation's activities, procedures, systems, roles and accountabilities.

2. Objective

To ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment are to be central in design, implementation, operation and evaluation of VAST's projects and activities.

3. Guiding principles

VAST's Gender Equality Policy is in line with the United Nation's Fifth Sustainable Development Goal – to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls – and is aligned with the Australian Government's gender equality and women's empowerment strategy. VAST acknowledges the critical role women play in accelerating progress and development. By adopting this policy, VAST articulates its commitment to the principles of gender equality and women's empowerment, namely to:

- establish high-level corporate leadership for gender equality
- treat all women and men fairly at work - respect and support human rights and non-discrimination
- ensure the health, safety and well-being of all women and men workers
- promote education, training and professional development for women
- promote equality through VAST's initiatives and advocacy
- measure and publicly report on progress to achieve gender equality.

4. Scope

This document applies to all VAST office bearers, staff and volunteers associated with VAST. The VAST Gender Equality Policy is overseen by VAST's Board of Directors.

5. Dictionary

Term	Meaning
Gender	The social differences between females and males throughout the life cycle that are learned, and though deeply rooted in every culture, are changeable over time, and have wide variations both within and between cultures. "Gender," along with class and race, determines the roles, power and resources for females and males in any culture.

Gender equality	The equal enjoyment by women, girls, boys and men of rights, opportunities, resources and rewards. Equality does not mean that women and men are the same but that their enjoyment of rights, opportunities and life opportunities are not governed or limited by whether they were born female or male.
Gender equity	Justice in the distribution of resources, benefits and responsibilities between women and men, boys and girls. The concept recognises that power relations between girls and boys, men and women are unequal, and that such inequalities should be addressed.
Women's empowerment	Awareness-raising, building of self-confidence, expansion of choices, increased access to and control over resources and actions to transform the structures and institutions which reinforce and perpetuate gender discrimination and inequality. Women's empowerment is achieved when women and girls acquire the power to exercise their rights, act freely and fulfil their potential as full and equal members of their society.

6. Guiding strategies to achieve gender equality

VAST will seek to advance the cause of gender equality in its organisation and through its activities by:

- obtaining a thorough understanding of the different experiences, capacities, concerns and needs of women and men, and use these to shape the way VAST analyses, plans, implements and evaluates its work
- seeking to ensure the full participation and empowerment of women in all areas of its work, and promoting women's and girls' rights as human rights
- ensuring all recruitment and staffing decisions, including remuneration setting and adjustments, and access to advancement opportunities, are done on a merit-based system that does not distinguish or differentiate based on gender
- providing opportunities across all levels in the organisation for both men and women to advance their careers, incorporating family-friendly work practices that enable both men and women to participate fully in work and family life
- working with men and women, together and separately, to have a more lasting impact on beliefs and behaviours. VAST will ensure that any work it does with men supports the promotion of gender equality
- promoting gender equality within its development programmes, consistent with its key values of respect, collaboration and empowerment
- seeking to have an equal representation of both males and females across its workforce and when planning activities
- supporting women in achieving leadership positions in their communities and societies, and encourage gender balance in all working groups and initiatives

7. Related and supporting documents

- VAST Code of Conduct

GENDER EQUALITY POLICY

Approved by the Board: October 2020

Scheduled for review: October 2023

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8. Document revisions

Version	Date approved	Summary of changes
v1.0	24 October 2020	