

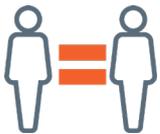
Gender Equality and the Digital Economy

*Men stepping up beside women
on gender equality*

Gender Equality and the Digital Economy

Rapid technological change is a major trend impacting the world of work. Since COVID-19, the digital economy has grown at a speed and scale beyond anticipation. Further acceleration is likely as investments are made in the digital economy powering nations' continued economic recovery following COVID-19.

Leaders from across the Champions of Change Coalition are committed to seizing this opportunity to accelerate gender equality in their organisations.

Opportunity	Challenge
<p>Embed gender equality into the development and use of digital technologies</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technology has expanded from products we buy, into an integral and pervasive element of our everyday lives. Technology developed with women's* needs in mind has the potential to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> be more marketable and profitable, increase clinical safety and patient outcomes, and reduce women's exposure to violence. The use of AI and machine learning is guiding the way we understand who we are, what our role is in society, and the opportunities that exist for our future. AI builds on historical data sets. Intentional disruption of the use of AI and machine learning can: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> reduce the potential for reproduction of harmful gender stereotypes that might otherwise be re-enforced, and create products, services, and treatments that better meet women's needs.
<p>Build a gender equal technology industry</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women are not equitably represented in the technology workforce, nor the technology workforce talent pipeline. The entrenched male-dominated nature of the technology sector is unattractive to women and creates products that do not meet women's needs. Including women in all of their diversity at every stage of product research and development has the potential to disrupt this self-fulfilling cycle. Focus on the development of STEM and technology skills has led to the perception that these skills are for specific jobs. In the very near future all jobs will need technology capabilities. The COVID-19 pandemic has caused a rapid reshaping of many workforces and ways of working. The pandemic has disproportionately impacted women who carry the greatest proportion of caring and household responsibilities.
<p>Invest in women technology entrepreneurs</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women entrepreneurs and fund managers have been considered 'riskier' investments; there is now a growing understanding that the real investment risk is not accounting for gender and other forms of diversity in analysis of opportunities. When women entrepreneurs are funded and supported to get started, their businesses deliver better than average financial outcomes. Asset managers owned by women and Black, Indigenous, and people of colour have to work 10x harder for asset commitment (Institutional Investor, 2019).

*The term 'women' includes all cisgender, transgender, non-binary and intersex people who identify as women.

Our Collective Commitments to Achieve Gender Equality in the Digital Economy

Champions of Change Coalition leaders are making 12 specific commitments to achieve gender equality in the digital economy.

Digital Inclusion and Access to Technology

1. Implement ethics processes, and include diverse perspectives, in tech product research and development cycles to disrupt bias and harmful gender stereotypes and create products and user experiences that suit everyone.
2. Contribute targeted efforts to improving access for all women to education that empowers their participation, economic security and personal safety in the digital economy.

Ubiquity and Necessity of Digital Skills and Ways of Working

3. Promote tech skills development and jobs in a way that ensures everyone can participate in the digital economy.
4. Evolve approaches to flexible working that minimize barriers and prioritise balance.

Diverse Capabilities in Growth Industries

5. Make digital skills training programs open source across the Coalition.
6. Create a cooperative talent pool for women in digital roles across the Coalition.
7. Promote women role models in the digital economy.
8. Work across sectors, including government and education, to boost women's participation in studies, training and career pathways that equip them with skills needed in the digital economy.
9. Apply gender equality expectations on contractors supplying contingent labour.

Work that Works for Women

10. Recommit to respectful workplaces that are free of discrimination, sexual harassment and other excluding behaviours.
11. Apply a gender equality lens through right-sizing and restructuring so women benefit from these change processes.

Gender-Balanced Investment

12. Allocate funding for women entrepreneurs in angel/seed investment schemes.

“ The use of AI and machine learning is guiding the way we understand who we are, what our role is in society and the opportunities that exist for our future. But we need to disrupt the future of AI, before the entrenched inequality of the past becomes the entrenched inequality of the future.

Andrew Penn – CEO, Telstra

“ The much wider uptake of flexible (virtual) working has meant a democratisation of contribution, enabling more women to really succeed in their careers. As a very proud engineer, it’s great to see.

Dr. Bronwyn Evans AM – CEO, Engineers Australia

“ We’re not just about words, we are about action... creating digital pathways for potentially thousands of women into 2022 and beyond.

Rachel Bondi – Chief Partner Officer, Microsoft