



MONASH
University

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) 2024 Annual Report

Championing a more fair, equal
and inclusive world

Faculty of Information Technology

EDI Portfolio





PROFESSOR ANN NICHOLSON
 DEAN, FACULTY OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Dean's endorsement

The Faculty's sustained commitment to supporting academic carers has earned Monash an Athena SWAN Science in Australia Gender Equity (SAGE) Cygnets Award, an international benchmark for excellence in equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI). As the first university in the Group of Eight with five Cygnets, this accomplishment reinforces the Faculty's leadership in advancing gender equity and inclusive practices across the higher education sector.

Congratulations to inaugural Associate Dean (EDI) Professor Yolande Strengers, current Associate Dean (EDI) Professor Rashina Hoda, and our EDI committee for their instrumental contributions to this achievement.

As technology shapes society, our Faculty's dual role in both developing these technologies and educating the next generation of creators drives us to champion inclusivity into our research, education and workplace culture. This commitment empowers us to create work that is both relevant and reflective of diverse perspectives, addressing the ever-evolving needs of society.

I'm proud to lead a Faculty dedicated to fairness, inclusion and meaningful impact, and look forward to continuing this vital work together.



Welcome from our Associate Dean (Equity, Diversity and Inclusion)

This year, we refined our approach to fostering an equitable, diverse and inclusive Faculty culture by embedding an intersectional framework at the heart of our initiatives. This strategic focus enables us to address systemic challenges at their core, paving the way for sustainable and transformative change.

Grounded in Professor Kimberlé Crenshaw's [seminal 1989 paper](#), intersectionality examines how overlapping social identities – especially within marginalised groups – interact with systemic oppression and create unique, compounded challenges. The diagram on the next page offers a snapshot of the many intersecting identities people may navigate daily. I encourage you to reflect on how these intersections shape lived experiences, often amplifying barriers and obstacles.

This framework now guides the Faculty's revised [three-year EDI Strategic Plan](#). It drives us beyond surface-level gestures, challenging us to confront and untangle the complex roots of inequality. By doing so, we can inform meaningful changes in our education and workplace culture.

The achievements showcased in this report embody this approach. You'll see the ripple effects of purposeful and strategic work in EDI exemplified in our Cygnet Award for our [Carer Travel Support scheme](#) and the short film produced on our Superbots program, both initiatives founded by my predecessor, Professor Yolande Strengers, and continue to resonate today.



PROFESSOR RASHINA HODA
ASSOCIATE DEAN (EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION)

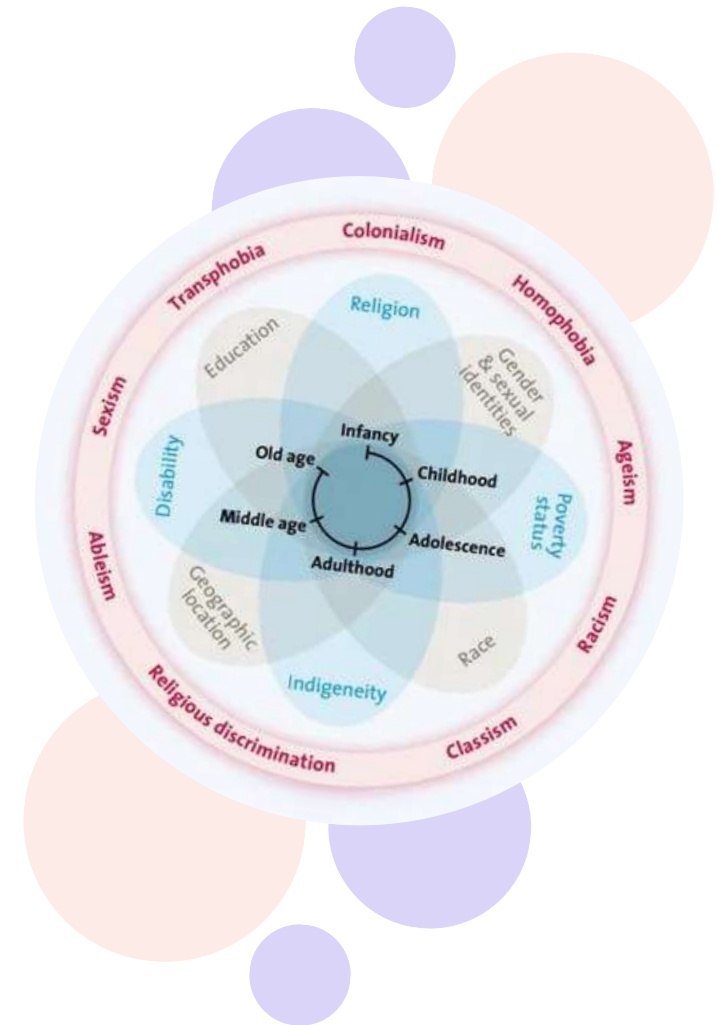
While we continue our commitment to improving gender equality, you'll also uncover new beginnings and the early momentum of initiatives we are driving in other areas. For instance, the Monash Assistive Technology Team is harnessing their IT expertise to tackle challenges faced by individuals living with disabilities and neurodivergence, demonstrating the transformative power of inclusive innovation. Similarly, our **#SafeWorkplaces** initiatives are gaining traction, laying the foundation for meaningful change in fostering a more inclusive and supportive environment.

Of course, none of this would be possible without the invaluable contributions of our EDI Committee. I extend my deepest gratitude to all the Committee members, specially to Matt Butler and Cally Martin for being excellent sounding boards in my first year leading this portfolio, to Georgia Kyranis for her excellent support of our initiatives, and to Courtney Johnson as she steps down.

However, as highlighted in [The Conversation](#), challenges persists. Racial bias in how university staff respond to student queries continues despite sector-wide EDI initiatives. This serves as a crucial reminder to remain focused on addressing the root causes of inequities.

This report demonstrates the power of a shared vision in driving action. I encourage you to engage with the insights featured here and reflect on how your own lived experiences can further contribute to this collective effort.

Together, we can shape a future where every voice is empowered and celebrated.



"Intersectionality Wheel" adapted from [The Equality Institute's version](#).

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Student Experience

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

*Develop and continue enabling initiatives to support **accessible, inclusive education** while **attracting, recruiting** and **retaining** students from **marginalised** backgrounds, promoting **belonging**, and empowering **underrepresented** learners at different levels.*



Monash Assistive Technology Team (MATT)

MATT is a student-led team committed to creating innovative technologies that address the needs of underserved communities. With over ten impactful projects to date, their work includes 3D campus models for blind and low-vision students and tools to help neurodivergent children manage daily routines.

A standout initiative, Visual Clutter Simplification, leverages AI and XR technologies to reduce visual overwhelm for neurodivergent individuals and those with anxiety disorders, already making a tangible impact in the community.

This year, MATT partnered closely with the Faculty's recruitment team to enhance outreach efforts. They participated in key events, such as visits from Monash Partnered VCE schools in China and Monash's Agents Awareness Week, where they showcased their projects' real-world applications and societal impact, often engaging attendees with interactive demonstrations.

The team's inaugural Open Day in October attracted 150 Monash staff, students and industry guests, reflecting the growing interest in technology's potential to drive meaningful change.

MATT is supported by the Faculty through the Monash Student Teams initiative, which connects students across all faculties to work together on real-world challenges. MATT is supported by the Faculty through the Monash Student Teams initiative, which connects students across all faculties to work together on real-world challenges.



We are seeing fantastic community involvement and support. It really feels like we're making a tangible difference and starting important conversations about accessibility within Monash and beyond.

Diana Kovaleva
Student leader of MATT





The [international agents were] so thankful for the session and got so much value from it.



Jenny McHendrie
Director, International Marketing and Recruitment



Disability Support Services (DSS) Mentoring

Since its inception in 2021, approximately 50 students have participated in DSS mentoring, with participation growing significantly each year. This year alone saw 31 students – nearly double last year’s number. Semester two also marked a new milestone with an intake of 21 students, the largest to date.

Managed by Dr Rebecca Robinson, the Faculty’s dedicated Equitable Learning and Disability Liaison, the DSS mentoring pairs registered students with teaching associates skilled in mental health and inclusive education for weekly one-on-one study support sessions.

Access Monash Faculty Experience

The Faculty is now part of the Access Monash Faculty Experience program, which gives high school students from underrepresented schools the opportunity to explore offerings from participating faculties. As part of this initiative, we offer a workshop in collaboration with our student club, DiversIT, where students can learn HTML and coding.

Raising Expectations

The Faculty has joined forces with Raising Expectations to empower young people from out-of-home care backgrounds to pursue higher education. Through this initiative, participants gain access to a comprehensive suite of support, including scholarships, Special Entry Access Schemes, peer mentoring and accommodation assistance, enabling them to confidently pursue IT studies at Monash.



Technology is a field where people from all backgrounds can grow and succeed, no matter their circumstances. For care leavers, it provides them with skills they can couple with their unique experiences to make a difference that’s meaningful to them,’ said Emeritus Professor Sue McKemmish, a champion of the initiative within the Faculty of IT.

Emeritus Professor Sue McKemmish



What students are saying

“I was able to discuss the areas I either completely did not understand or was a bit unsure of. Unlike the applied classes, these DSS sessions took out the stress of time and I was not worried about how simple my questions were since they were one on one.

“I had a major confidence boost with my mentor and am highly satisfied with this program.

“I tend to get overstimulated during classes with the presence of other students hence having this one to one session with a mentor was highly beneficial for me.

“[My mentor] helped me to take a step back and look at the big picture of things when I was stressed. This was quite helpful during my last semester.

“...the support I received was undoubtedly a way that made a unit that was scary into something relatively enjoyable.



Regional Education Support Network (RESN)

The Faculty has partnered with RESN to help rural and regional students access higher education. This year, we organised several initiatives to give them firsthand experience of life at Monash, which included hosting them for Open Day and touring Monash Residential Services.

A total of 24 students participated, and without the Faculty's support, they would not have had the opportunity to engage with these events.



I can't thank you enough for the amazing opportunities that RESN is providing! The tutoring has been amazing and the opportunity to attend the Open Day at Monash was huge! Not only did he learn about uni courses but he learned to navigate public transport by himself. We only have a school bus where we live so for him to have to navigate his way around a city was such an adventure. He relished this independence. We just can't thank everyone at RESN enough!

A parent of a RESN student



Superbots Industry Immersion program

This year 15 girls from Glen Waverley Secondary College participated in Monash Tech School's [Superbots Industry Immersion program](#). All expressed interest in joining again in the future, with 75 per cent eager to explore more new ideas following the program.

Launched in 2021, Superbots is a school outreach program for Year 7 to 9 high school girls, exploring the gendered history and ethics of voice-assisted software like Apple's Siri and Amazon's Alexa. Guided by industry mentors, students also get hands-on experience designing their own voicebots.

The program draws inspiration from Professor Yolande Strengers' research, particularly her co-authored book 'The Smart Wife'.

The Superbots short film

Jeni Lee, a research fellow from our [Emerging Technologies Research Lab](#) and the [ARC Centre of Excellence for Automated Decision Making and Society's \(ADM+S\)](#), directed a short film on the Superbots Industry Immersion program, featuring the 2023 Brentwood Secondary College cohort.

The short film was developed as part of the [AI ReWired](#) project which showcases the various ways AI can be used to drive social and environmental justice.

The Monash Tech School held an advanced screening of the short film at its campus, where guests were then invited to tour the spaces used in the program and engage in a Q&A with the directors.

You can [watch the short film now](#).

What students are saying

I really enjoyed participating in the program, and it really helped me think outside the box. I got to explore different artificial intelligence! Thank you so much :)

I loved the superbots program because it was very engaging and it showed how empathy can be used in relation to tech industries.

It was really fun designing our own voice bots!

Teaching and learning resources for Faculty educators

In collaboration with Dr Rebecca Robinson, the Faculty's Equitable Learning and Disability Liaison, the EDI Committee developed the [FIT Inclusivity Resources for Teaching Staff](#). This resource consolidates Faculty and University materials, providing practical recommendations on accessible teaching spaces, class delivery, assessment design and more.

The Committee also promoted the [Universal Design for Learning \(UDL\) Guidelines](#) to Faculty educators. Developed by CAST, a global leader in removing educational barriers, the UDL Guidelines offer research-based strategies to help educators create more inclusive teaching and learning environments.

As part of Monash's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Week, the Committee supported the development and delivery of the 'Designing Learning with Neurodivergence and Mental Health in Mind' workshop. Led by Faculty Educational Designers Aster Cosmos (IT) and Brooke Tahir (Education), the session explored how neurodivergence and mental health influence learning, and provided strategies for integrating universal design principles to foster more equitable educational experiences.



Universal Design for Learning Guidelines, [The UDL Guidelines](#).



Women in Technology (WIT) Mentoring Program

The WIT Mentoring Program celebrated its fifth year in 2024 as Monash's first woman-to-woman mentoring initiative. Since its launch in 2019, applications have doubled, connecting over 500 participants. Many former mentees now return as mentors, continuing the program's legacy.

This year, mentors extended their impact by sharing their wisdom in the Faculty's Postgraduate Industry Experience Studio Project unit.

The program pairs women IT students with industry professionals, offering networking, career guidance and practical insights to help them succeed in their studies and careers. It also enables mentors to empower the next generation of IT talent.



I'm incredibly grateful for the past four months as a mentee in the Women in Technology mentoring program. It's been an amazing journey, filled with learning, growth, and so many inspiring connections.

2024 mentee



I'd definitely recommend joining this program when it runs next year, it's a wonderful opportunity to give back and create the change you want to see.

2024 mentor

diversIT

diversIT is a Faculty student collective that fosters an inclusive space for underrepresented groups in IT and promotes opportunities within Monash and the industry.

In 2024, diversIT prioritised collaboration, partnering with other Faculty student clubs to strengthen connections among underrepresented students. These joint events were among the most well-attended, including:

- **diversIT x WIRED: Accessible Technology 101** – An interactive workshop on website and tech accessibility, featuring best practices, tools and a hands-on Meta Quest demo.
- **diversIT x uniTY: Trivia Night** – A mid-semester social event designed to build connections and sharpen skills.
- **diversIT x WIRED x uniTY: Zoom Your Best – Master Virtual Interview Skills** – A practical session on excelling in virtual interviews.

diversIT also continued its end-of-semester study sessions and presence at Open Day, O-Week and Faculty student events.





Staff Empowerment

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

Raise **awareness** amongst and **empower** staff to promote **safe workplaces**, provide targeted **training** and programs for staff from **underrepresented** and **marginalised** groups to progress their careers and apply **Achievement Relative to Opportunity** in **professional development, career progression, funding support**



Science in Australia Gender Equity (SAGE) Athena Scientific Women’s Academic Network (SWAN) Cygnet award

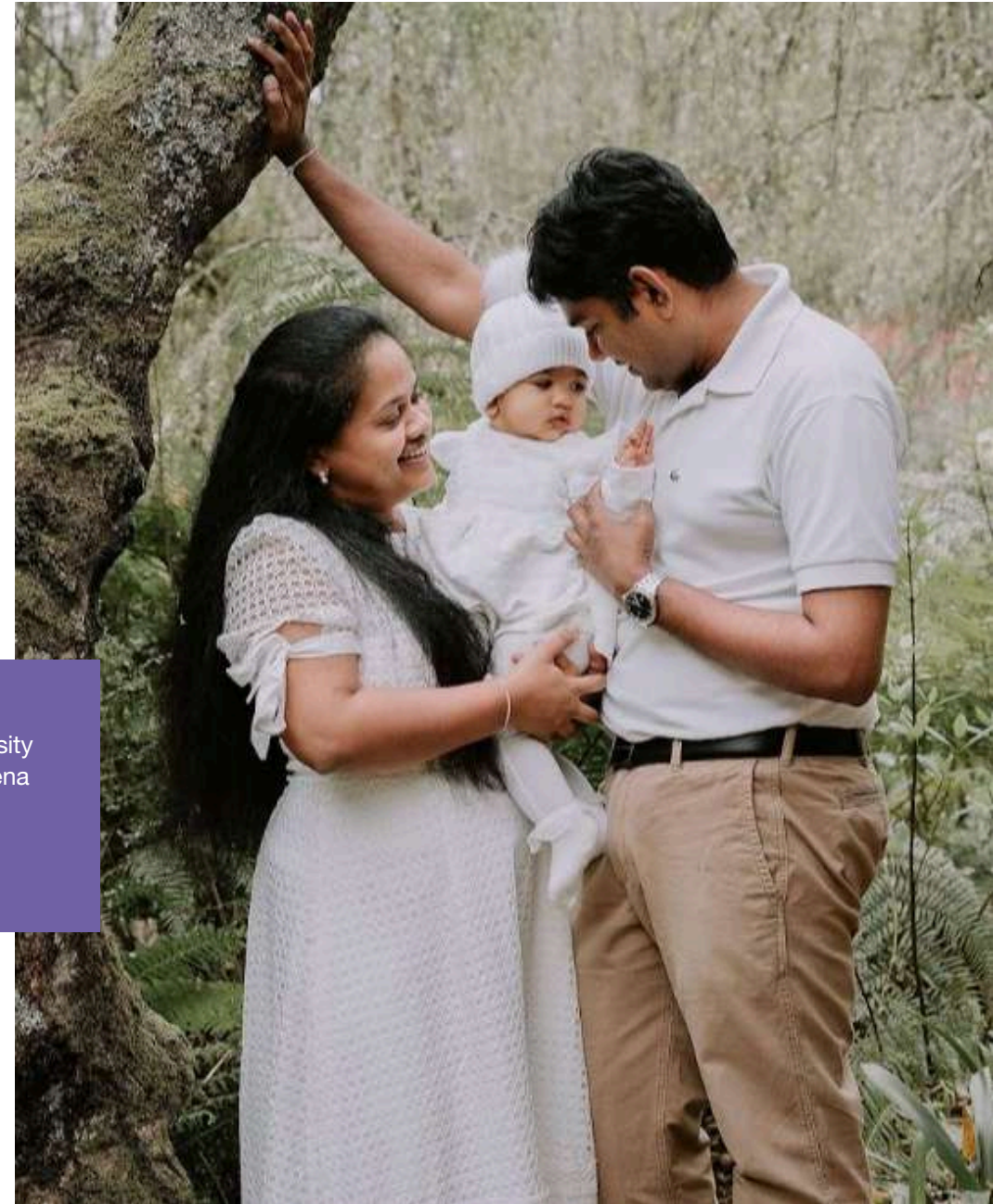
In 2024, Monash University was awarded a [SAGE Athena SWAN Cygnet award](#) largely driven by the Faculty’s sustained commitment to supporting staff with caring responsibilities, with initiatives such as:

- The Carers Travel Support Scheme, which provides funding for work- and travel-related caring responsibilities.
- Workload adjustments and additional tutor support, helping staff returning from extended breaks regain career momentum.
- Equitable and inclusive meeting guidelines, designed to ensure caregivers can participate fully in key discussions.

The globally-recognised Cygnet Awards celebrate impactful, long-term organisational initiatives that promote gender equality and diversity.



This milestone positions Monash as the first Group of Eight university to secure five Cygnet Awards, bringing us closer to achieving Athena SWAN Silver accreditation – a significant acknowledgment of our ongoing dedication to equity and inclusion.



Carers Travel Support Scheme

Now in its second year, the Carers Travel Support Scheme supported 11 staff and PhD students in 2024, providing financial assistance for care-related expenses incurred during work or study travel, such as conferences, events and fieldwork.

The Scheme has been highly valued by participants, and the Faculty is committed to continuing this initiative in 2025.

As a mother of a young toddler and an early career researcher, attending international conferences is essential for expanding my academic networks and advancing my career.

Without the Carers Travel Support Scheme allowing me to bring my daughter with me, I simply wouldn't be able to attend these events.

Thanks to this support, I have been able to participate in international conferences for the second consecutive year, presenting my research, taking on a leadership role in an international research network and extending the impact of my work while forming new relationships for future collaborations – all of which helped me in my successful DECRA application this year.



Dr Kari Dahlgren

I have two boys and because of caring responsibilities, I haven't been able to travel for my research in the past 5 to 6 years. The scheme let me take my eldest to a conference with me, so my husband who works full-time was able to care for my younger one during the trip.

This really helped me get back to research travels and I've learned a lot from attending the conference and networking with other researchers. This would not have happened without the scheme's support.



Dr Teresa Wang

The Carer Travel Support has been an extremely helpful and valuable scheme for me. Since having my children, I hadn't been able to attend an international conference until this fund made it possible. It enabled me to participate in a highly prestigious conference that I otherwise would not have been able to attend.

This opportunity had a profound impact on my professional growth. It allowed me to stay informed about cutting-edge research trends and significantly enhanced my international visibility. Since attending the conference, I have been invited to co-author a workshop proposal for another prestigious conference, deliver a keynote talk, and initiate three new research collaborations.

I feel privileged to be working in such a supportive environment that acknowledges the challenges faced by researchers with caring responsibilities and actively provides resources to help us thrive in our careers.



Dr Mahsa Salehi

The FTI Carers Travel Support Scheme is awesome. It was able to pay for the care of my 10 year old son so I could attend two overseas conferences. I wouldn't have been able to do this otherwise.



Associate Professor Levin Kuhlmann

Dean's Award for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

This year the Faculty celebrated 17 awardees across four categories in the annual Dean's Awards for EDI which recognise staff who actively champion EDI, fostering a culture of belonging within Monash and their spheres of influence.

All awardees were nominated for the Vice-Chancellor's Awards for EDI, with the Community category awardee Ruchi Sembey receiving a Special Commendation from the Vice Chancellor.



Dr Roisin McNaney

Action Lab, Department of Human-Centred Computing

Dr McNaney is recognised for her contributions to digital mental health, emphasising co-design with diverse stakeholders to ensure community adoption. Her leadership in inclusive innovations and responsible AI has advanced digital health research and practice.



Dr Delvin Varghese, Dr Margherita Angelucci and Associate Professor Tom Bartindale

Action Lab, Department of Human-Centred Computing

Dr Varghese, Dr Angelucci and Associate Professor Bartindale lead the IMPARO project, advocating for tailored training and formal recognition of non-professional translators and interpreters (NPTIs) in regional Victoria.

Working with the Monash Intercultural Lab and interpreting students, the project co-designs training solutions with NPTIs in Goulburn Valley and aims to develop a community-driven online platform for resource sharing and support.



Dean's Award of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion



Dr Sadia Nawaz, Jaime Clark and Andrew Junor

FIT1049 IT professional practice

Dr Nawaz, Jaime and Andrew updated FIT1049 IT Professional Practice, a core first-year unit, to address current social issues, incorporate Indigenous perspectives for enhanced cultural awareness, and add AI ethics to encourage critical thinking.

Boosting engagement while developing students' accessibility skills, they used virtual reality to explore equity and screen reader assessments.



Ross McQueen, Aster Cosmos and Emilie Kilvington

Educational Design, Innovation & Quality (EDiQ) Team

Ross, Aster and Emilie developed a learning module for new teaching staff to promote inclusive teaching practices.

The module helps educators address diversity, challenge biases and practice allyship using real case studies to deepen understanding of neurodiversity and individual differences.



Dean's Award of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion



Special Commendation for the Vice-Chancellor's Excellence Awards for Equity Diversity and Inclusion

Ruchi Sembey

HumaniSE Lab, Department of Human-Centred Computing

Ruchi mentors new teaching associates, supports students registered with Disability Support Services and advocates for inclusive international student recruitment.

She was also facilitator in the 2024 Superbots Industry Immersion program, spoke on a Women Leading Tech interview about driving change for women in higher education, promoted gender-neutral technology development at the South Korea-USA STEM Leadership program and celebrated women in computing on the Ada Lovelace Day panel.



Professor Gillian Oliver, Dr Md Khalid Hossain, Dr Manika Saha, Dr Misita Anwar and Dr Tanjila Kanij

Information Empowered Communities Team, Department of Human-Centred Computing

The Information Empowered Communities Team collaborates with disadvantaged communities in the Global South to address challenges, promote sustainable solutions and design inclusive technologies.

For instance, through PROTIC II in Bangladesh and DFAT All 2024, they partnered with local non-profits and universities to connect resources with fishing communities in Bangladesh and Indonesia.

Dean's Award of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion



Dr Sanaz Nikfalazar

Centre for Learning Analytics at Monash, Department of Human-Centred Computing

Dr Nikfalazar fosters inclusivity by celebrating diversity, accommodating caregiving responsibilities and promoting respect through cultural celebrations.

She builds trust in her teaching, encouraging open discussions and student engagement to create an environment where everyone feels valued and empowered to learn from diverse perspectives.



Women’s Research Accelerator Program (WRAP)

In 2024 WRAP supported a new cohort of 14 women academics in advancing their research careers and securing external funding and awards.

The program featured a well-attended welcome event uniting 2023 and 2024 mentees and mentors, a two-day writing retreat, a time management workshop, and access to professional development funds.

WRAP continues to deliver strong outcomes, with participants securing T&R positions, prestigious fellowships and promotions.

Superstars of STEM

Associate Professor Phoebe Toups Dugas and Dr Roisin McNaney have been recognized as two of Science & Technology Australia's newest Superstars of STEM, joining an elite cohort of 60 women and non-binary STEM experts selected through a highly competitive process.

As part of the two-year program, they’ll receive media and leadership training to become prominent science communicators. They’ll also inspire future STEM leaders through school visits, showcasing diverse expertise and fostering confidence and visibility for women and non-binary professionals in the field.

Professor Rashina Hoda and Associate Professor Kirsten Ellis were recipients of the program in 2021 and 2019 respectively.



I am honoured, floored, and excited to have been selected as a Superstar of STEM by Science & Technology Australia! I hope the opportunity will enable me to make [game] design more inclusive.

Associate Professor Phoebe Toups Dugas
Department of Human-Centred Computing



We thank Roisin for her contributions as an academic representative and wishes her well in her new role as Associate Professor at the University of Melbourne.

EDI Committee
Faculty of Information Technology



Accessibility and Wellbeing

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

Regularly **review** and **update accessibility** and **inclusivity** features in our physical and virtual **workplaces** and **operations** while providing **in-house support for parents, carers and people with disability** and ongoing **mental health** issues.





Accessibility and Inclusivity Report

The Faculty submitted a Building Inclusivity report to Athena SWAN, highlighting critical concerns raised with Monash's Buildings and Property Division. A key focus of the report was on improving the safety, security and accessibility of parenting and expressing rooms to better support parents and caregivers.

Another issue highlighted was the need for water washing facilities in toilets, an essential consideration for people from multicultural backgrounds who observe specific hygiene practices. Further, the report emphasised the importance of creating inclusive spaces that cater to the needs of neurodivergent staff and students, ensuring a supportive and accommodating environment for all.

Embedded Counsellor

In September, Christopher Jenkins joined the Faculty as the new Embedded Counsellor, stepping in for Haylee Danaher during her maternity leave. Chris previously served as Senior Counsellor and Coordinator at the Caulfield Campus and as the Embedded Counsellor for the Faculty of Business and Economics.

Chris is available two days a week (Mondays, 9.30am – 1.00pm) and Thursdays (1.00pm – 4.30pm) from Room 1.03, Building 63, 25 Exhibition Walk, Clayton Campus. Staff seeking confidential support can book an appointment by emailing christopher.jenkin@monash.edu.





Leadership and Culture

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

Champion a **safe and inclusive workplace culture** and the **inclusion** of underrepresented and marginalised perspectives across all Faculty initiatives and **leadership roles**.

Empower **leaders, staff and students** to become **visible EDI champions and allies**.

Grow a **respectful strong culture** for equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) across the Faculty, Monash, and in IT more broadly.



#SafeWorkplaces initiative

In 2023, the Faculty's EDI feedback Survey highlighted significant concerns around workplace culture, particularly instances of bullying and sexism, with early-career researchers and women staff reporting challenges involving senior colleagues. Professor Rashina Hoda addressed these findings in her internal paper, *From Good to Great, for All*.

In response, one of the Faculty's key initiatives for 2024 was the development of the Workplace Culture Action Plan. The first milestone in this plan was the introduction of the 'Trusted Individuals' initiative. This program aims to increase awareness of how to report unacceptable behaviour while establishing a network of Trusted Individuals across the Faculty.

Trusted Individuals confidentially listen to concerns, provide tailored advice and guide staff to appropriate resources. They also share anonymised reports with Faculty leadership to address patterns of unacceptable behaviour systematically.



Active Allies Network

Aster Cosmos and Ruchi Sembey founded the 'FIT Active Allies Network' to advance active allyship, foster a supportive space for sharing diverse experiences, and champion pro-equity practices.

This grassroots initiative currently comprises 14 members, including five current or former EDI Committee members, and is designed to adapt as the group evolves. Members are independently pursuing various initiatives, which the group aims to amplify while also providing guidance and support through the network.

Our Trusted Individuals



Professor Maria Garcia de la Banda
Department of Data Science and AI



Professor Kim Marriott
Department of Human-Centred Computing



Professor John Grundy
Department of Software Systems and Cybersecurity

Faculty events



International Women’s Day

The Faculty launched a **Rising Stars** section on its Women in IT website, celebrating early-career women in technology to inspire the next generation.

Highlighting leadership in STEM, **IT alumna** Carol Chew represented the Faculty at Monash’s International Women’s Day alumni event, where she shared insights on advancing economic inclusion for women and girls.

Further emphasising equity, Professor Rashina Hoda participated in the *Building a World of Equity* panel at **Blacks in Tech Australia**, offering perspectives on inclusive leadership, career development, and fostering environments where everyone feels valued.



Monash Pride Week

The Faculty hosted ‘**Show Your Pride**’ Day, inviting everyone to celebrate inclusivity by wearing vibrant rainbow colors. Staff enjoyed free coffee and cupcakes as part of the festivities.

Adding to the celebrations, the Faculty organised Pride Trivia, where participants tested their knowledge on key Pride topics. Dermott McGrath claimed victory, earning fun prizes for his efforts.



Monash Open Day

The EDI Portfolio featured prominently at Monash University’s Open Day, hosting a **booth** within the Faculty’s ‘Impact of IT’ marquee.

Visitors were invited to participate in cultural activities, such as a **henna** station and an Arabic calligraphy workshop, while **sharing ideas** on how IT workplaces can become more inclusive and welcoming, particularly for individuals from intersectional backgrounds.

Monash Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Week

The Faculty celebrated this year's **Dean's Awards for EDI** with a congratulatory announcement from the Dean, complemented by a news article highlighting the recipients' contributions.

Associate Professor Matt Butler, a member of the EDI Committee, introduced a dynamic new resource titled ***Women in Tech***, a 'living document' showcasing influential women in technology – from pioneers like Ada Lovelace to trailblazers like Emeritus Professor Sue McKemmish.

Shared across Monash, the resource aims to inspire educators and students, encouraging its use in lectures and discussions.

The Faculty also hosted two university-wide events. ***The Culture Add*** featured a keynote address by Tasneem Chopra, an award-winning consultant and TEDx speaker, who shared insights on cross-cultural competencies and the benefits of embracing workplace diversity.

The event also included a Q&A session to foster meaningful discussions, followed by networking opportunities and refreshments.

The second event, ***Designing Learning with Neurodivergence and Mental Health in Mind***, was a workshop for Faculty educators led by Phil Abramson, the Faculty's Educational Designer.

The session provided practical strategies for creating accessible, inclusive and equitable learning environments designed to support neurodivergent students.



Amazing resource – I'm going to share this with my gender studies students who are looking at gender, science, and healthcare this week!



Associate Professor Kirsten McLean
Faculty of Arts

Platforming intersectional inclusion in leadership across academic spaces, promoting cultural safety and advocating for formal data acquisition is where it's at.



Tasneem Chopra OAM
Award-winning consultant TEDx speaker

Faculty events



R U Ok? Day

The Faculty hosted an **R U OK? Day Trivia and Sweet Treats** event, held in-person and online to maximise participation.

Led by the Faculty’s Educational Designer Phil Abramson and Embedded Counsellor Christopher Jenkin, the quiz saw Teju Hari Krishna take first place, with Matt Butler, Mingdeng Luo and Han Yong securing second, third and fourth respectively. All winners received official R U OK? Day merchandise.



SXSW Sydney

Professor Rashina Hoda delivered a talk called **‘Diversifying Diversity: Beyond Buzzwords towards Inclusive Innovation’**, exploring representation, bias and intersectionality in Generative AI.

Highlighting examples such as soap dispensers failing to detect darker skin tones, she emphasized the critical role of diverse teams and inclusive designs in driving equitable and impactful technological advancements.



Ada Lovelace Day

The Faculty celebrated Ada Lovelace Day with a **keynote** by Dr Linda McIver and a panel discussion moderated by Professor Rashina Hoda.

Panelists Associate Professor Judithe Sheard, Mayase Jere and Helen Vorrath shared their insights as STEM leaders, discussing challenges and opportunities for women in the field.



The panel helped us reflect on the messages we provide to girls and young women about their potential. With the right inspiration and by reducing limitations in our thinking about what girls can and should do, they can achieve anything.

Elka Mallon
Group Manager, Operations and Planning, Faculty of IT





Monash Assistive Technology and Society (MATS) Centre

In December, we celebrated the official launch of the [MATS Centre](#), welcoming esteemed guests from industry, academia and the not-for-profit sector, including the Assistant Minister for Social Security, Women and Ageing, the Hon. Kate Thwaites MP, and Monash's Provost and Senior Vice-President, Professor Susan Elliott.

A joint initiative with the Faculty of Arts, the MATS Centre unites the world's largest group of assistive technology researchers to establish Monash's first dedicated hub for advancing the development and adoption of assistive technologies.

Key priorities include improving access to education and employment for individuals with disabilities. The Centre also introduces new PhD pathways tailored for candidates with disabilities.



When developed carefully and co-designed alongside people with disabilities, new technologies like generative AI, object and facial recognition, mixed reality and 3D printing have the potential to provide empowering solutions and new opportunities that were not previously available to these communities.



Professor Kimbal Marriott
MATS Centre Director

STEM Learning for All Abilities Workshops

Associate Professor Kirsten Ellis hosted new workshops to help educators create inclusive learning environments using accessible and affordable tools for teaching circuit-making to diverse learners. Funded by a Google Educator Grant, the workshops were free, with participants receiving a TapeBlocks kit and lesson plans for classroom use.

Attendees learned to construct simple circuits, such as lights, vibrations, fans, and tilt switches, which were integrated into creative projects like dragons. Held in October, the three-day workshops were highly successful, reaching full capacity.

TapeBlocks, invented by Associate Professor Ellis, combine foam blocks with electronic components, offering an affordable, creative and accessible approach to teaching circuit design.



Women of Colour STEM Awards

Professor Ann Nicholson represented the Faculty at the event and presented the awards to the recipients. The Faculty sponsored the 'Rising Stars' category at the STEM Sisters' inaugural Women of Colour in STEM Awards. This category received the highest level of interest among the 11 award categories, with 10 nominees and two eventual winners.

Additionally, Professor Rashina Hoda was honoured as the winner of the 'Guiding Star Mentorship' category for her championing and mentoring of women in STEM.





Research and Thought Leadership

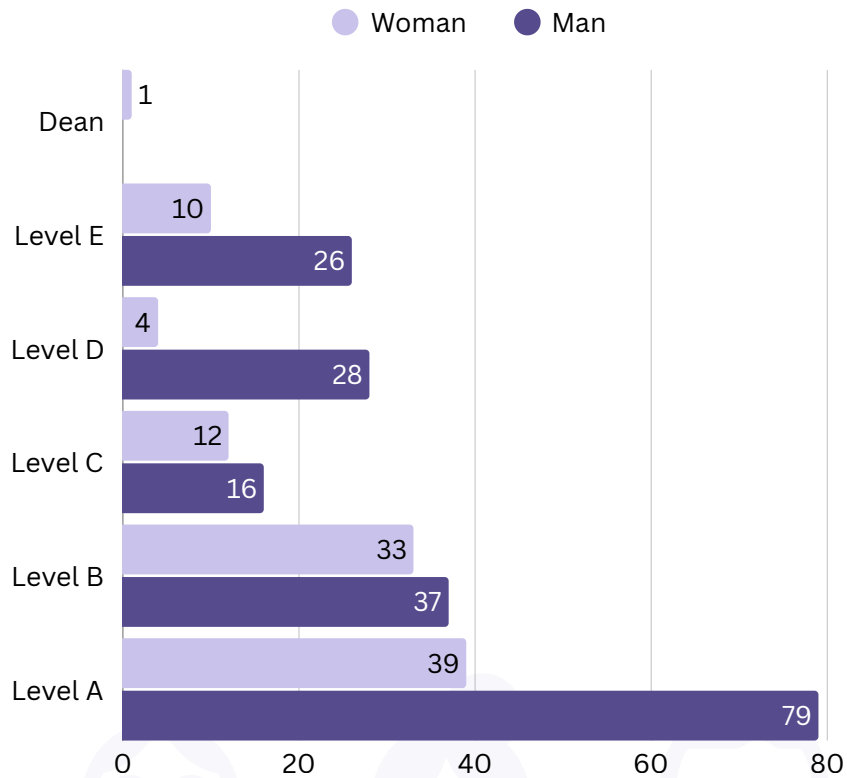
STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

Deliver targeted and timely research insights and data analysis that advance the understanding of equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) internally and externally, inform our initiatives and strategy, and track our progress.

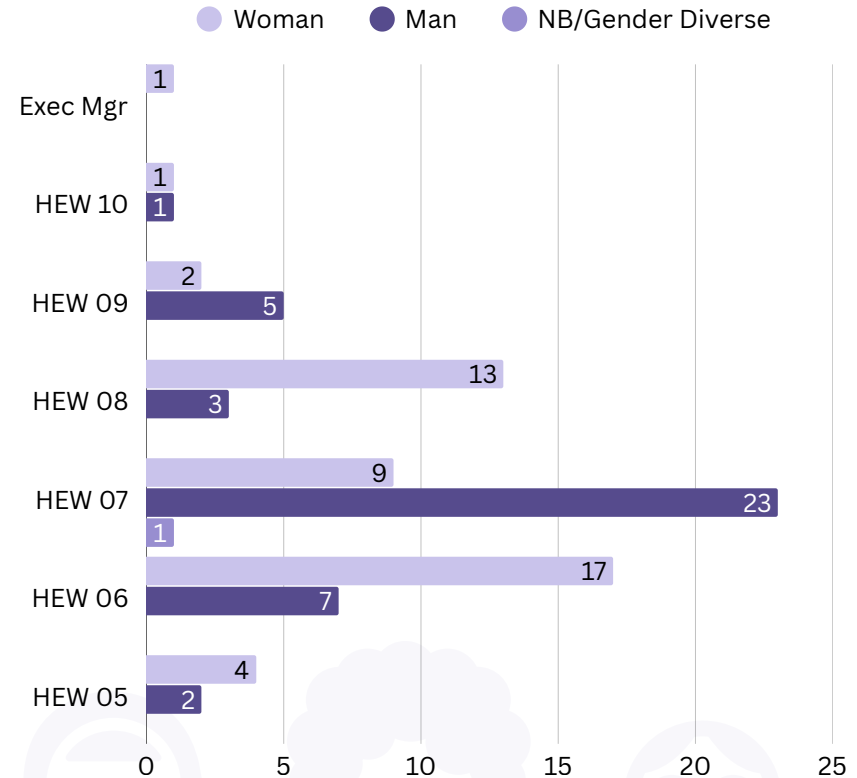


All Staff Gender Data

Headcount Gender Split of Academic Staff Across Academic Levels

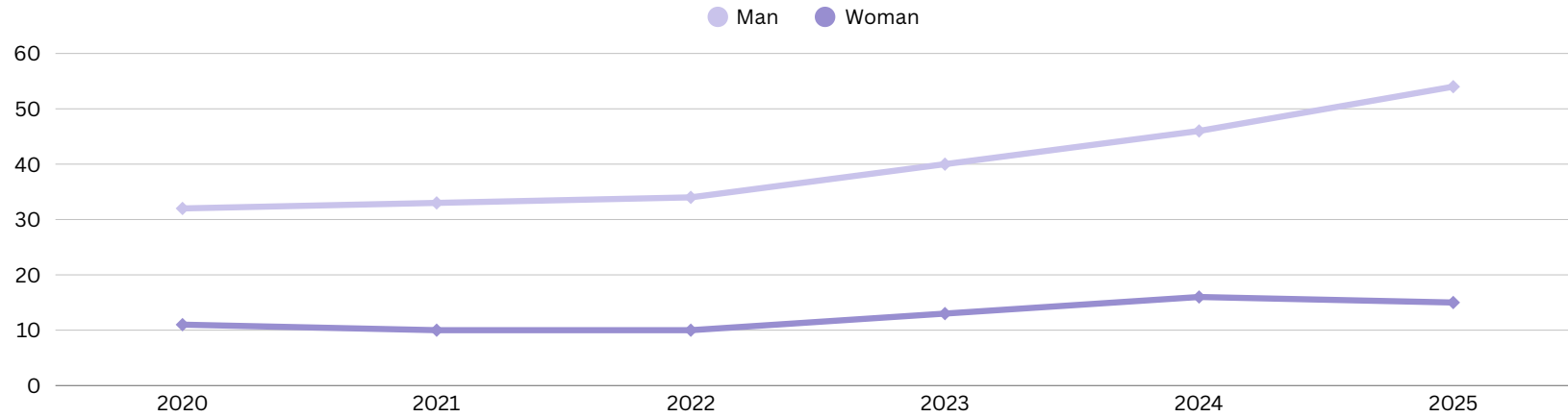


Headcount Gender Split of Professional Staff Across HEW Levels

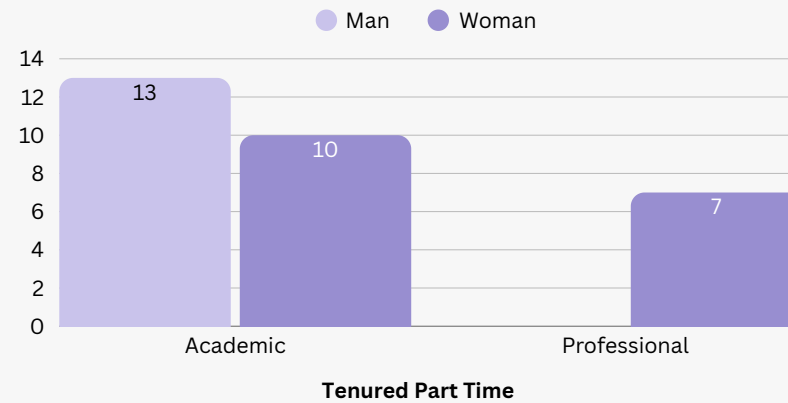
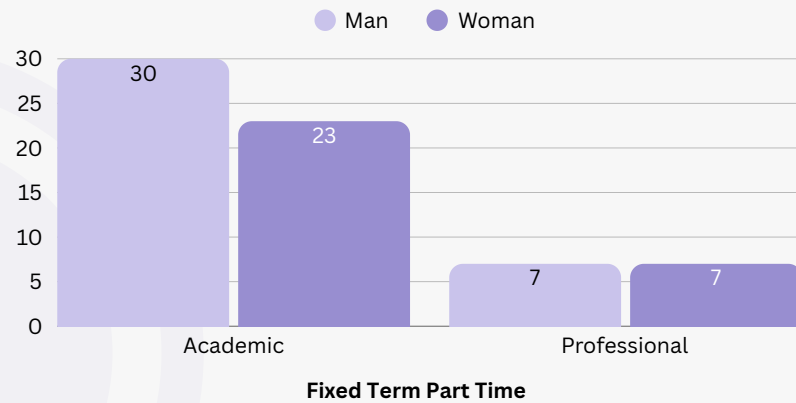


Part Time Staff Data

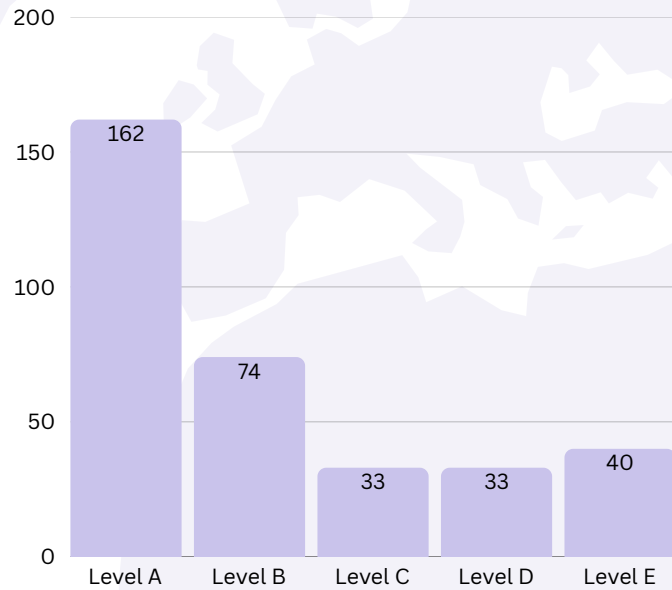
Gender Split Headcount of Staff in Level D and E Positions Over Time



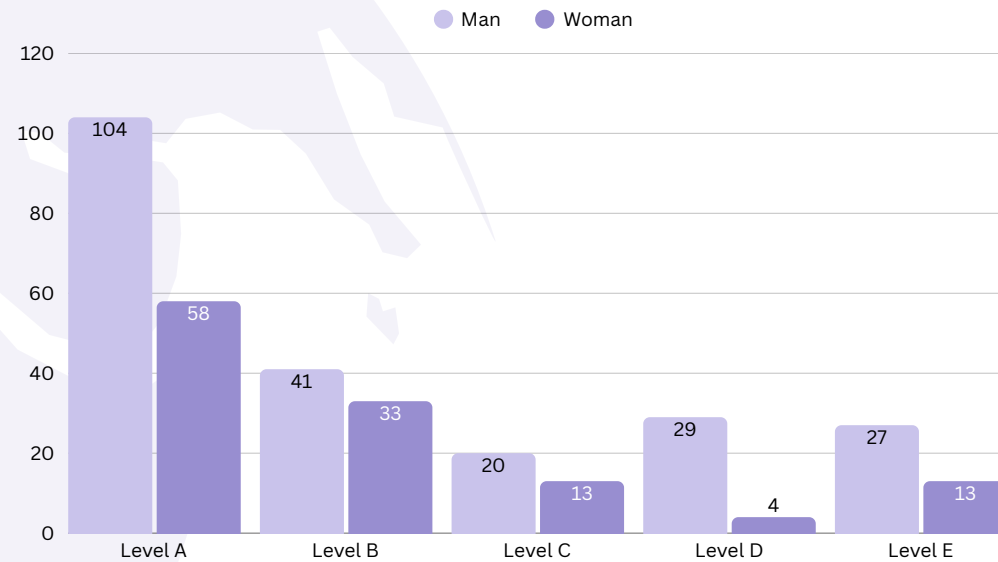
Headcount of Staff Working Part Time



Headcount of Staff Born Outside Australia



Headcount of Staff Born in Countries Where English is Not the Main Language



* Place of birth and English is not the main language as proxies for Cultural and Racially Marginalised (CARM) groups.

Indigenous Staff Representation Data



9
Indigenous Staff = **2.4%**
of Headcount

To learn more about the Faculty's inspiring and impactful Indigenous initiatives, see:

[FIT INDIGENOUS PLAN](#)

‘What Does a Software Engineer Look Like? Exploring Societal Stereotypes in LLMs’

PhD student Hashini Gunatilake and Professor Rashina Hoda, in collaboration with CSIRO’s Dr Muneera Bano, authored the research paper [‘What Does a Software Engineer Look Like? Exploring Societal Stereotypes in LLMs’](#). The paper investigates how large language models (LLMs), including OpenAI’s GPT-4 and Microsoft Copilot, perpetuate gender and racial stereotypes in the software engineering profession. Through experiments analysing both textual and visual outputs generated by these models, the study uncovers biases that favor exclusionary stereotypes.

The authors highlight the need to address these biases to prevent discriminatory norms, and advocate for using AI tools to foster a more inclusive and equitable engineering culture.

The paper has been accepted into the Software Engineering in Society track at the IEEE/ACM International Conference on Software Engineering (ICSE 2025).

Understanding the Experiences of Women Supporting Teaching in Technical Higher Education

The EDI Committee initiated a research study this year titled ‘Understanding the Experiences of Women Supporting Teaching in Technical Higher Education’, a topic proposed by Professor Ann Nicholson, Dean of the Faculty.

The study examines the lived experiences of women teaching assistants in tech-intensive higher education, aiming to identify challenges, successes and actionable recommendations to foster more inclusive teaching environments.

Following ethics approval, all women teaching assistants in the Faculty were invited to participate via email. Phase One was completed with 11 interviews conducted, and Phase Two began in January 2025.

The study is led by Chief Investigator Professor Rashina Hoda, supported by Assistant Investigators Dr Vasudha Malhotra, Rhea D’Silva (EDI Committee postgraduate representative) and Sharen Yadev (EDI Committee undergraduate representative).



Expanding thought leadership beyond the Faculty

For Monash's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Week, the Faculty contributed two key events open to all staff and students:

- **'The Culture Add'** – TEDx speaker Tasneem Chopra explored equity through an intersectional lens, illustrating how diversity and inclusion foster belonging and boost workplace productivity.
- **'Designing Learning with Neurodivergence and Mental Health in Mind'** – Led by Aster Cosmos (IT) and Brooke Tahir (Education), this session examined equity in education and workplace settings, offering strategies for more inclusive learning environments.

The Faculty also promoted the **Women in Tech** Google slides, a living document created by Associate Professor Matt Butler, showcasing notable women in STEM across the Faculty, globally and throughout history. Shared University-wide, it encouraged staff to contribute and sparked conversations on women's representation in STEM.

On a global stage, the Faculty's thought leadership reached SXSW Sydney, where Professor Rashina Hoda delivered the session **'Diversifying Diversity: Beyond Buzzwords Towards Inclusive Innovation'**. Her talk unpacked the complexities of intersectionality and the ripple effects of compounding inequalities in Generative AI.

Other key initiatives included **Ada Lovelace Day**, **International Women's Day**, **Pride Week** and more. See pages 30–32 for further details.





Committee and Contributions

Our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee comprises diverse people from across our faculty who represent different genders, ethnicities and backgrounds.

Our members bring lived experiences in mental health, disability, LGBTIQ+ communities, underrepresentation in IT, parenting, cultural diversity and growing up in low socioeconomic backgrounds, including being first-generation university students.

Beyond our passion, our members possess research and teaching expertise in gender equity, inclusive technologies, LGBTIQ+ training and inclusion, mental health and wellbeing, cultural diversity and disability inclusion.

This year, the key contributions from our members include:

- **Shaping strategy** – Provided feedback on the Associate Dean (EDI)'s proposal for establishing 'Friends of EDI' and defining the roles of EDI Committee members.
- **Advocacy** – Presented to the Dean's Advisory Committee on equity issues affecting the Periodic Academic Employment (PAE) cohort, now renamed as Continuing (Defined Periods) Academic Employment (CD-PAE).
- **Embedding intersectionality** – Contributed to integrating intersectionality across the EDI portfolio.
- **Community engagement** – Supported the EDI booth and activities on Open Day.



THE WOODSIDE
BUILDING FOR
TECHNOLOGY
AND DESIGN



Prof. Rashina Hoda
(She/her)
Chair and Associate Dean EDI



A/Prof. Matthew Butler
(He/him)
Deputy Chair



Cally Martin
(She/her)
Strategy and Planning Specialist



Prof. Christopher Lawrence
(He/him)
Associate Dean (Indigenous)



Dr Roisin McNaney
(She/her)
Academic Staff Representative



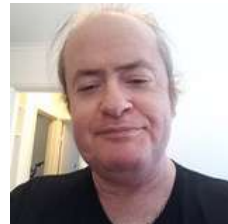
Dr Pierre Le Bodic
(He/him)
Academic Staff Representative



Dr Sadia Nawaz
(She/her)
Academic Staff Representative



Josh Olsen
(They, them)
Academic Staff Representative



Paul Miller
(He/him)
Sessional Representative



Courtney Johnson
(She/her)
Manager, Marketing and Communications



Peter Barton
(He/him)
Educational Services Manager



Dermott McGrath
(He/him/his)
Professional Staff Representative



Rhea DSilva
(She/her)
Postgraduate Student Representative



Sharen Yadav
(She/her)
Undergraduate Student Representative



Renay Wallis
(She/her)
Senior HR Business Partner (Ex-officio)



Members

2025 Statement of priorities

Equity, diversity and inclusion is a commitment that evolves with the world around us. As societal conversations shift, so must our strategies.

The EDI Committee remains agile and responsive. In 2025, we will build on the [EDI Strategic Plan 2023–2025](#), ensuring alignment with the Faculty’s 2024–2026 Plan through four key priorities:

1. Expanding thought leadership and engagement

We will foster impactful discussions at the university, national and global levels, shaping the narrative through evidence based research and advocacy.

Aligned with the EDI’s ‘Leadership and Culture’ and ‘Research and Thought Leadership’ Pillars and the Faculty’s ‘Education’, ‘Research’ and ‘Foundations’ Pillars.

2. Creating safer workplaces

We will raise awareness of the #SafeWorkplaces initiative, empowering staff and HDR students to report inappropriate behavior and become more effective allies to colleagues who may feel unsafe.

Aligned with the EDI’s ‘Leadership and Culture’ Pillar and the Faculty’s ‘Foundations’ Pillar.

3. Advancing ‘IT by everyone, for everyone’ in education

We will expand outreach to schools from underrepresented backgrounds. We will also work to make curricula and teaching practices more inclusive across the Faculty.

Aligned with the EDI’s ‘Student Experience’ Pillar and the Faculty’s ‘Education’ Pillar.

4. Driving EDI in research and inclusive practices

We will conduct and support research on EDI, particularly in AI technologies, as well as work on making research practices more inclusive across the Faculty. We will also collect and share insights from underrepresented staff to inform and strengthen EDI initiatives within the Faculty and the broader sector.

Aligned with the EDI’s ‘Research and Thought Leadership’ Pillar and the Faculty’s ‘Research’ Pillar.

By focusing on these key areas, we will continue shaping our Faculty and the broader sector to better reflect the diverse communities we serve.





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in Monash Information Technology

monash.edu/it/edi

The information contained in this report was correct at the time of publication (June 2025).
Monash University reserves the right to alter this information should the need arise.
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