

Our Commitment

The Murdoch Children's Research Institute (MCRI) values diversity and recognises its role in driving innovation. We are committed to an inclusive, equitable and respectful workplace that reflects the many genders, ages, cultures, abilities, religions and sexual orientations across our organisation.

As part of this commitment, we are focused on removing gender-based barriers that affect the attraction, retention and progression of women, including the gender pay gap. While our performance remains stronger than the industry average, we acknowledge there is more work to do to achieve pay parity and ensure equity at all levels of the organisation.

MCRI's Gender Pay Gap

This report covers all MCRI employees for the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026.

MCRI's gender pay gap for this period is 18.2%, up from 17.9% in the previous year. This change is the result of two reasons: regular pay progression within small, predominantly male senior cohorts, and the closure of within-level pay gaps that had previously favoured women, removing a factor that was masking the underlying upper-quartile imbalance. Fluctuations of this nature are not unusual in organisations with small senior cohorts, where a handful of individual pay changes can meaningfully shift the overall result year to year. Our gender pay gap has narrowed substantially since 2021-2022 (21.7%). The small increase we see in the last reporting period reflects the representation dynamics set out below, rather than a reversal of progress on equal pay for equal work. We have set Gender Equity targets to address these drivers directly.

Analysing Our Gender Pay Gap

Approximately 80% of MCRI's workforce is female, a proportion that has remained stable since 2005 and aligns with similar organisations globally. Employees at the same Level and Step are paid equally, so MCRI's gender pay gap is not caused by unequal pay for equal work.

The current gap reflects representation differences, driven by:

- under-representation of women in the upper pay quartile (65.7% compared to ~80% overall);
- under-representation of women at senior academic levels; and
- higher concentrations of men in senior individual contract roles outside standard salary scales.

Reducing the gap requires increasing women's representation in senior academic and highly paid roles. This analysis has directly informed our targets and action plan.

Our Gender Equity Targets 2026-2029

MCRI has set the following Board-endorsed targets for 2026–2029:

- reduce the total gender pay gap from 17.9% to 15% by 2029;
- increase women's representation in the upper pay quartile from 65.7% to 70%; and
- introduce an Equal Remuneration and Gender Pay Equity Policy.

Increasing women's representation in the upper pay quartile is the most impactful target, as it addresses the primary driver of the pay gap. In a workforce that is approximately 80% female, equity progress should be reflected at senior and higher-paid levels.

Due to WGEA reporting rules, which require targets to be set only for the under-represented gender at cohort level, this target cannot be formally entered through the WGEA portal. It is therefore recorded in this Employer Statement, with progress reported through MCRI's annual reporting processes.

Addressing the Gap

MCRI's commitment to gender equity is demonstrated by our Athena Swan Bronze Award from Science in Australia Gender Equity (SAGE), which recognises our commitment to dismantling gender-based barriers and driving meaningful systemic, structural and cultural change. Our SAGE Action Plan, now in Year 3 of a 7-year program, is the primary vehicle through which we will deliver on our gender equity commitments. It is organised around the six priority areas outlined in Figure 1.

Figure 1



Through our SAGE Action Plan and our Gender Pay Gap Commitments 2026-2029, MCRI will deliver seven priority actions to address the structural drivers of our pay gap and achieve the above targets:

1. Individual Contract Governance
2. Step Increments and Remuneration Framework
3. Promotion Process Reform
4. Pay Equity Governance
5. Talent Development and Retention
6. Targeted Career Progression
7. People Leader Accountability

Progress against all targets will be reported annually through our SAGE governance structure and overseen by MCRI's Board.