

Economics Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Industry, Innovation and Science Portfolio
2016-17 Supplementary Budget Estimates
20 October 2016

DEPARTMENT: DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND SCIENCE

TOPIC: Women in STEM

REFERENCE: Written Question – Senator McKenzie

QUESTION No.: SI-1

I understand that there will was announcement on science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) to help support women into careers into these industries, could you provide an update on those measures?

ANSWER

The National Innovation and Science Agenda committed \$12 in programme funding over four years for measures to encourage more women to embark on, and remain in, STEM related careers, including entrepreneurship.

The Women in STEM and Entrepreneurship initiative has three main elements:

- \$2 million over 2016-17 to 2019-20 to support the expansion of the Science in Australia Gender Equity (SAGE) project, which aims to improve gender equality in research organisations and advance women's careers in academia. Australian Government funding will support expansion of the project to make it accessible to more Australian publicly-funded research organisations.
- \$2 million over 2016-17 to 2019-20 to set up a new group of Male Champions of Change to drive cultural change in industry, research organisations and government.
- \$8 million over 2016-17 to 2019-20 for a new competitive grants program for projects that support women in STEM; eliminate barriers for women's participation in STEM education and careers; provide outreach programmes targeting girls and women to foster interest in STEM and entrepreneurship; develop women's innovation and entrepreneurial skills; build professional networks; or identify and celebrate female STEM role models in science and research, entrepreneurship and corporate leadership.

Together, these elements will help encourage the number of girls and women studying STEM subjects in schools and universities, help build more stable careers for women in STEM-dependent industries, help address persistent barriers to women reaching leadership positions in research organisations and industry, and building mentoring and professional networks for women entrepreneurs.

Each of these elements has been implemented. Funding agreements for both SAGE and Male Champions of Change for STEM were executed in May 2016 and initial funding has been provided to both.

The new 'Male Champions of Change for STEM' group met for the first time on 24 October. The new grants program was launched by the Hon Greg Hunt MP, the Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science, and by Senator Michaelia Cash, Minister for Women, Minister for Employment and Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Public Service, on Friday 12 August. Applications for the first round of funding closed on 6 October 2016.