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Introduction

The Women in STEM Ambassador is an initiative funded by the federal government as part of its efforts to increase the participation of girls and women in STEM study and careers. Professor Lisa Harvey-Smith was appointed as Australia's inaugural Women in STEM Ambassador in October 2018. The Ambassador works on a national scale to raise awareness of issues affecting women in STEM and collaborates with the community to reduce barriers to girls and women's participation in STEM study and careers. The Ambassador engages with government, industry, research and education and training to drive social and cultural change for gender equity.

The Ambassador works to achieve these objectives by being a visible role model to inspire aspiring scientists, influencing leaders and policy makers, informing national discussion on gender equity in STEM, driving change in institutions and workplaces, communicating the value and opportunities of STEM careers to the community and working with educators to encourage girls' prolonged engagement with STEM.

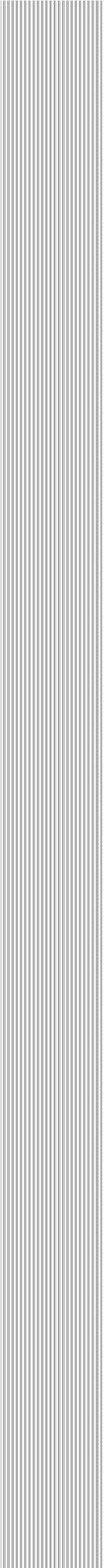
The work of the Ambassador and her Office is informed by and supports the implementation of the Government's [National STEM Education Strategy](#) and the [National Innovation and Science Education Research Strategy](#), developed by the Academy of Science and Academy of Technology and Engineering in consultation with Australia's STEM community.

This evaluation report aims to identify and assess the outcomes and short-term impacts of the Ambassador and her Office's activities in her first two-year term. It evaluates the success of the initiative against its objectives and key evaluation questions and provides recommendations for improvement.



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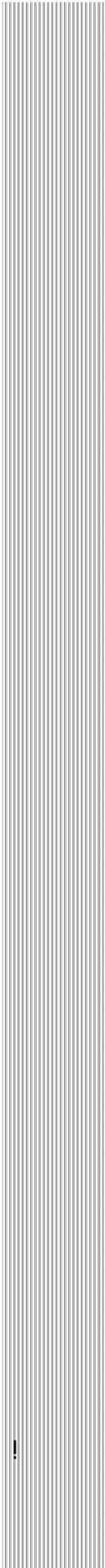
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Wood in STEM

Wood is a natural material that has been used for centuries in construction, art, and industry. It is a renewable resource that can be used in a variety of ways. Wood is a natural material that has been used for centuries in construction, art, and industry. It is a renewable resource that can be used in a variety of ways.



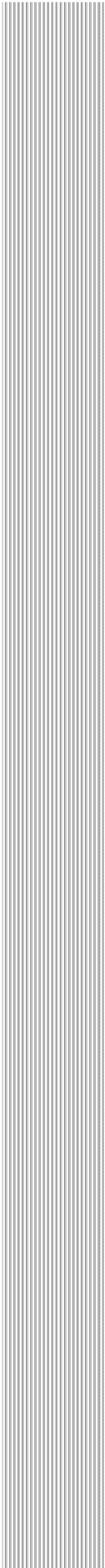


Leading media themes included Professor Harvey-Smith's National Press Club address, which reached an estimated 213,000 Australians, the STEM Holiday Activity Guide and the Astrophysics Live Workshops, COVID-19 impact on women in STEM and the 2020 Women's Economic Security Statement. The Ambassador's prominence in media coverage (being the primary focus of 29-52 per cent of media items) since the announcement of her role in October 2018 highlights her high profile and media interest in her role and activities. Media coverage of the Women in STEM Ambassador was predominantly on radio, online and TV, with mainstream media in mensiiAdArAdniniLn iAdnThiAdneniLdnniLdnriAdneiAdndiAdnaiAdniiArgntiAdnhniLdnniineiAdnciAdnrun



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evidence of the public awareness of her role. The significance of the WISA

70% of participants agreed that the workshop increased their knowledge of strategies to improve gender equity in the classroom

59% participants agreed that the workshop increased their understanding of gender equity in STEM education

Participant feedback indicated that the workshop gave educators helpful resources to engage girls in STEM and improve gender equity in the classroom (e.g. the Girls in STEM Toolkit). On the day of the workshop, the Girls in STEM Toolkit had 178 page views and 45 new users.

Selected insights educators gained from the workshop included:

Girls are interested in STEM they just need to be given the opportunities to explore the possibilities

Breaking stereotypes should not just focus on the students themselves but also their families (wider community)

To show how STEM skills are required in careers even those we wouldn't normally consider to be STEM-related.

There are strong female role models available in Australia.

This event and the Ambassador's speaking engagements improved teachers' understanding of barriers to girls' participation in STEM and provided strategies to engage girls in STEM at

YouTube with a live interactive audience Q&A. The Office partnered with the NSW Department of Education's DART Connections platform to promote the event to educators and parents and carers. The Ambassador also promoted the events via radio interviews. The series received 677 registrations on DART Connections, 466 live views and 2,495 total views at the end of the



The Ambassador has garnered support from the STEM community and grown her involvement in policy advisor work as recognition of her role as a leader in gender equity has expanded. Thirty-one percent of all activities (including radio, TV and online media) aligned with the priority Advocate for gender equity in STEM. The Ambassador's increased involvement in



equity as a tool for Australia's economic and social recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Conclusions

The Women in STEM Ambassador is a unique and valuable initiative to coordinate efforts to address gender equity in STEM, encourage and empower girls to pursue STEM study and careers and advocate for systemic and cultural change across the sector to retain women in STEM.

In her first term, the Ambassador has built an effective team to support her advocacy and deliver key projects addressing gaps in the women in STEM pipeline and aiming to create systemic change for the STEM sector. The Ambassador has developed relationships with a range of relevant stakeholders including government departments and agencies, science teachers associations, STEM education programs and providers, STEM gender equity initiatives as well as STEM industry and research organisations.

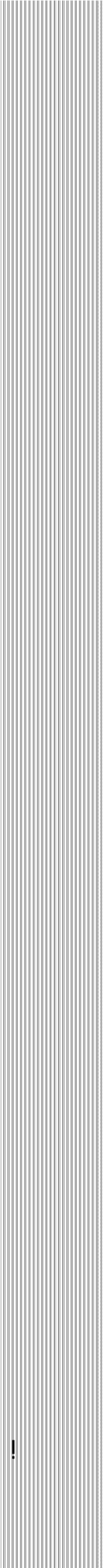
The four priority areas and target audiences were utilised in a matrix structure to underpin engagement. The Ambassador has delivered four effective events targeting children, parents





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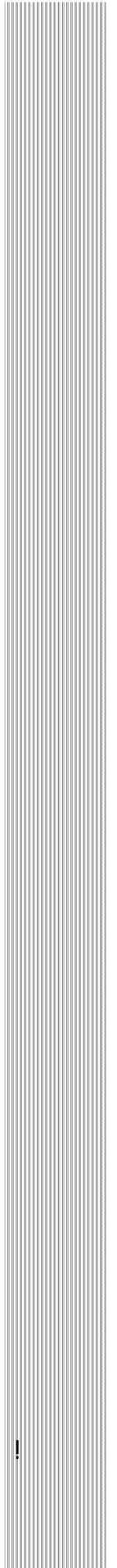
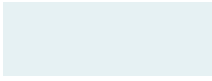
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Appendix 1 Program logic

Appendix 2 Indicators and targets matrix





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