

**10 May 2021**

**QUEENSLAND WOMEN EAGER TO ‘BE BOARD READY’**

A new virtual event series designed to support Queensland women in their quest to ‘Be Board Ready’ has attracted some of the state’s most accomplished and aspiring business and community leaders.

Moderated by multiple Walkley Award winning author, journalist and broadcaster Tracey Spicer AM, the first-ever ‘Be Board Ready’ session featured a formidable all-female line up of business leaders who discussed the evolving role of boards and the skills required to be an effective board director.

More than 70 aspiring and accomplished board directors from across Queensland came together online to listen to Dr Sally Pitkin AO, a company director with more than 30 years’ corporate and board experience and who holds a Doctorate in governance, Abigail Cheadle, whose international executive career has spanned Australia, Asia, Russia and Jordan; and Liz Crawford, who works with boards and CEOs in Australia, Papua New Guinea and internationally, to develop their strategic leadership.

Led by one of Australia’s most respected and active technology industry associations, Women in Technology (WiT), the event series is being conducted with the support of the Queensland Government’s Office for Women to increase board opportunities for women across government, academic, community and private sectors. It is hoped the series will contribute to supporting the Queensland Government’s gender diversity targets for government bodies.

Manager of the Queensland Office for Women Heidi Mathieson acknowledged that while much had improved for women over the past 100 years, more needed to be done.

“Over the past century the role and status of women has improved substantially, and in Queensland, great progress has been made,” she said.

“Women now represent 54% of people appointed to Queensland Government boards and bodies, up from 31% when we first established targets in 2015.

“More than ever before, we need to increase the visibility and profile of women in technology and in leadership.

“We need to retain talented women in technology, and encourage girls to pursue tech careers,”.

The inaugural ‘Be Board Ready’ event series builds on the well-established WiT Board ReadinessTM Program which, over the past decade, has helped more than 200 women build the confidence, skills and networks needed to compete successfully for board positions.

Outgoing WiT President Dr Claudia Giurgiuman said the organisation encouraged women to pursue board roles and build relationships with those already providing board leadership.

“Our aim for this event series is to inspire women, to provide opportunity to connect and broaden their networks by bringing together experienced board members, with women who are board-ready and looking for a seat at the table,” said Dr Giurgiuman.

“As a not-for-profit, building relationships across our growing community is one way we work to recognise, celebrate and unlock the full potential of women in STEM.

“We are very pleased to partner with the Office for Women who share our commitment to helping Queensland women grow their confidence and capacity to take up senior leadership roles around the State.”

With online forums now the new norm, WiT has embraced digital events as a means of making its career development, networking and mentoring programs more accessible and inclusive for women right around Queensland.

Wings Public Relations and AV1 (Queensland) are proudly supporting the ‘Be Board Ready’ series of online events, through seamless integration of audio visual, event management and communication needs.

The Australian Institute of Company Directors asserts that diversity of representation on boards leads to more robust, enhanced decision-making capability. In 2021, [14 women have been appointed to ASX 200 boards, taking the percentage of female directorships as at February to 32.9%, up from 21.7% in 2015](https://aicd.companydirectors.com.au/advocacy/board-diversity/statistics#:~:text=14%20women%20have%20been%20appointed%20to%20ASX%20200%20boards%20in%202021.&text=Source%3A%20Research%20conducted%20by%20the%20Australian%20Institute%20of%20Company%20Directors). Effective governance requires boards to understand their organisation’s operating environment, inclusive of stakeholder apprehensions and interests. To achieve this, board composition should reflect the diversity of the stakeholders it serves.

For details of the next ‘Be Board Ready’ event on 19 May, visit the Women in Technology website ‘Events’ page [<NEW](https://wit.org.au/event-4210134) LINK TO BE PROVIDED ON THE NEW WEBSITE>

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**ABOUT WiT**

As one of Australia’s most respected and active technology industry associations, Women in Technology (WiT) is dedicated to supporting, developing, recognising and promoting the achievements of women in science and technology through advocacy, networking, professional development, mentoring and our prestigious WiT Awards.

WiT was founded in 1997 by a small group of Queensland women who came together to share their aspirations and find understanding and solutions for the unique challenges they faced as female pioneers in technology. The not-for-profit community organisation has more than **8000 members** and affiliates from all branches of science and technology. To learn more about WiT visit [wit.org.au](http://wit.org.au/)