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Title: Gender Equity Policy Statement	

Gender Equity Policy Statement

Background

The Burnet is committed to tackling difficult health issues that affect key priority communities, particularly women, children, and young people. The Burnet values social justice, evidence-based research and development, gender equity and inclusion, and recognising that a diverse, innovative, and high-performing workforce is crucial to achieving its goals. Values such as Respect, Equality, Inclusiveness, and Diversity which shape its culture, research and program work, and advocacy and communication are prioritised.

The Gender Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (GEDI) Committee at Burnet is responsible for promoting and improving gender equity, diversity and inclusion across the Institute by developing and implementing strategies informed by national and international best practices and staff input. By creating a culture based on the values identified above, Burnet aims to foster a positive work environment, encourage innovation, achieve excellence in research, and accelerate the translation of research into sustainable health solutions.

Purpose

Burnet is dedicated to gender equity in all of its activities, including international offices, through values such as Respect, Equality, Inclusiveness, and Diversity. This Gender Equity policy focuses on three areas:

- Gender Equity in Burnet's Workplace Culture
- Gender Equity in Burnet's Research and Development Work
- Gender Equity in Burnet's Advocacy and Communication

Scope

The Burnet Institute is committed to gender equity in all its activities. This policy presents a clear vision and consistent approach to promoting gender equity. It establishes standards for accountability and applies to all areas of Burnet's operations, including:

- Members of the Burnet Board;
- All Burnet employees, including: managers and supervisors; full-time, part-time or casual, temporary or permanent staff; job candidates; student placements
- Contractors, sub-contractors, suppliers and volunteers;
- Burnet honorary staff and associates;

- Supporters, donors and other participants on field visits organised by Burnet;
- Overseas partner organisations hosting Burnet personnel
- Partner organisations (engaged in overseas activities within Burnet programs); and
- Any person representing the organisation at Burnet's request.

This policy also applies to:

- On-site, off-site or after-hours work; work-related social functions and conferences and
- Employee treatment of beneficiaries and other members of the community encountered during their Burnet-related duties.

Definitions

Gender: Gender is a social and cultural construct that assigns norms, behaviors, and responsibilities based on an individual's sex assigned at birth. Additionally, gender can also be considered an identity. Some individuals may have an innate sense of their gender that does not correspond to their assigned sex at birth. This is true for individuals who identify as gender non-conforming, non-binary, transgender or genderqueer, which may be expressed differently in the various cultural and contextual settings in which we work.

Sex: The different labels, of male, female or intersex, given at birth based on biological and physiological characteristics, including hormones, chromosomes, reproductive organs, and genitals.

Gender analysis in health: The systematic gathering and examination of information on how biological and sociocultural factors interact to influence health behavior, outcomes and services. It also uncovers how gender inequality affects health.

Gender roles: Refers to socially and culturally constructed expectations related to what roles particular genders are expected to play (e.g., in the household, community and workplace) in society.

Gender equality: Refers to equal chances or opportunities for groups regardless of gender to access and control social, economic and political resources, including protection under the law. It is also known as equality of opportunity – or formal equality.

Gender equality in health means everyone is treated equally to realise their full rights and potential to be healthy, contribute to health development and benefit from the results regardless of their gender identity.

Gender equity: More than formal equality of opportunity, gender equity refers to the different needs, preferences and interests of all people across the gender spectrum. This may mean that different treatment is needed to ensure equality of opportunity. Gender equity in health refers to a process of being fair to all people, irrespective of their gender identity, with the objective of reducing unjust and avoidable inequality between genders in health status, access to health services and their contributions to the health workforce.

Policy statement/overview

Gender Equity in Burnet's Workplace Culture

a. Governance:

Burnet is committed to embedding gender equity into its governance structure. This means developing policies and procedures that promote gender equity and ensuring that gender considerations are integrated into decision-making processes at all levels.

b. Recruitment and Selection:

Burnet is fully committed to identifying and reducing any unconscious biases that may exist in its recruitment and selection processes. The ultimate goal is to improve workforce diversity by fostering an inclusive environment that offers equal opportunities to all candidates.

c. Onboarding:

Burnet's commitment is to ensure a successful onboarding experience for all personnel, through initiatives that review, monitor, and foster a safe, diverse, and inclusive culture and environment that enables all to achieve their potential.

d. Learning and Career Development:

Burnet promotes gender equity in learning and career development by addressing barriers, providing equal opportunities, and creating an inclusive and supportive environment.

e. Remuneration:

Burnet is committed to closing its organisation-wide gender pay gap. Burnet's remuneration practices will provide pay equity between all staff with the same responsibilities. As part of this, Burnet is committed to regularly analysing and monitoring pay equity across the institute and addressing gender pay equity gaps where they exist.

f. Promotion:

Burnet's commitment is to ensure fairness and reduce bias when making promotion decisions which should be based on professional skills

g. Parental Leave:

Burnet is committed to supporting an employee or an employee's partner giving birth (including stillbirth, surrogacy, and adoption) and families by introducing strategies that assess, monitor, and ensure a smooth transition between pre-parental, during, and post-parental leave.

h. Flexibility:

Burnet's commitment is to support employees in achieving a better work-life balance by providing flexible working arrangements where possible having regard to their role and work types and implementing measures to improve performance consistency, efficiency, and productivity for all personnel.

i. Violence, bullying and harassment including sexual harassment and assault:

Burnet is committed to eliminating all types of violence, discrimination, bullying, and harassment, including sexual harassment and assault. We will achieve this through improved monitoring and reporting procedures, risk assessments, and both internal and external reporting mechanisms for misconduct.

j. Wellbeing:

Burnet is committed to promoting the well-being of staff, volunteers, and the communities it serves by prioritising the provision of a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment that promotes physical, emotional and psychological health, recognising that wellbeing is essential for individuals to thrive and contribute to the mission of improving health outcomes globally.

Gender Equity in Burnet's Research and Development Work

This section encompasses Burnet's research and translation of research, which includes domestic and international work.

Burnet is committed to promoting gender equity and ensuring that its research, programs and interventions are inclusive of all genders. By prioritising gender equity in this work, Burnet aims to enhance health outcomes and decrease gender-based health disparities. To guarantee that its work benefits everyone in society, Burnet's work will incorporate sex and gender perspectives, accounting for the physiological and cultural differences as required:

a. Language in Research Initiatives:

- To ensure inclusivity and prevent gender stereotypes, it is necessary for all research, programs, and interventions to use gender-inclusive language.

b. Sex and Gender perspective in the design concept:

- Sex and gender as a perspective may be manifested in the research questions raised and the theoretical approaches and methods used.
- An explanation must be given for selecting only one sex or gender perspective, such as citing the historically neglected sex and gender factors.

c. Data and inclusive Intersectional Research and programs:

- Data generated as part of research or program implementation should be balanced and representative i.e.,
  - In the groups being studied (where relevant), both sex and gender should be represented where feasible, and consideration must be given to whether the significance of the research results vary for sex and gender.
  - Intersectional data will be collected whenever possible to gain a better understanding of how sex and gender intersect with other social categories, such as race, ethnicity, religion, age, disability, and sexual orientation. However, at a minimum, data on sex and age will be collected.

d. Participation:

- Where possible all of Burnet's work should consider time constraints that may be placed on individuals due to their gender-based roles and responsibilities, including traditional domestic and caring responsibilities that may impact on their ability to participate.
- Efforts will be made in all of Burnet's programs to achieve a gender balance in on-the-ground teams, where applicable.

e. Dialogue with Partners:

- Burnet will engage in dialogue with all partners on gender equity policy and practice in health and research, respecting each partner's capacity, pace, and strategy for change.
- Burnet recognises the importance of gender equity in the organisational development of partners and will assist in enhancing their capacities, as appropriate, to achieve this goal.

f. Capacity Building:

- Burnet aims to build capacity in applying a gender perspective across all levels of its engagement in research and with health systems nationally and internationally.
- Burnet aims to support staff and students to enhance their skills over time to apply a gender perspective and analysis in their work and integrate Burnet's gender-sensitive values throughout the entirety of each program.
- Burnet will ensure a continuous increase in competence and awareness of gender issues. In addition, Burnet will make all efforts to involve everyone in taking increased responsibility for strengthening the gender perspective of Burnet.

g. Learnings:

- Burnet seeks to gain a better understanding of the context, institutions, political dynamics, and gender-related aspects of its work by tapping into the experience, expertise, and ideas of its partners.
- Burnet seeks to draw on the existing knowledge and competence of its partners in the field of gender equity to continuously improve its own efforts.

In Burnet's Advocacy and Communication

Burnet will always strive to enhance its work for gender equity through its advocacy and communication work.

a. Data-Driven Advocacy and Communication:

- Burnet uses sex-disaggregated data to enhance its advocacy and communication efforts.
- Burnet leverages data to highlight gender-specific challenges and to advocate for targeted interventions and policy changes.
- Burnet continuously monitors and evaluates the impact of its data-driven advocacy and communication efforts, adapting strategies as necessary to maximise effectiveness.

b. Supportive Active Participation and Voice:

- Burnet actively supports the participation and voices of women, girls, and people of diverse gender identities in its work, using respectful and gender-sensitive language.
- Burnet advocates for changes in policies and practices that perpetuate gender discrimination and inequality, leveraging examples of progress towards achieving gender equality.
- Burnet fosters a culture of effective communication on gender-related information throughout the organisation, continuously updating and sharing impact data to enhance its initiatives.
- Burnet works to uncover and address harmful gender and power dynamics causing intentional or unintentional harm to individuals based on their sex and gender identity.

c. Participation:

- Burnet's programs strive to address and overcome gender barriers to participation, decision-making, and resource access and control wherever possible.

- Burnet prioritises providing individuals facing sex and gender discrimination with meaningful participation and influence in its work.
- Burnet values the perspectives of all affected individuals and community members and seeks to establish dialogue with them in all decision-making processes.

d. Inclusive Education and Training Levels:

- Burnet is committed to providing inclusive education and training opportunities for all individuals, regardless of gender identity, and will work to remove any barriers to access.
- Burnet will tailor its education and training programs to meet the specific needs and experiences of women, men, and gender-diverse people and where possible collaborate with partners and stakeholders to develop evidence-based strategies for promoting gender equality through education.
- Burnet will continuously monitor and evaluate the impact of its education and training initiatives to ensure they effectively address gender-related challenges and promote gender equality and improve its programs accordingly.

Responsibility for implementation

All personnel and representatives have a responsibility to comply with this policy.

Members of the Board: hold overall accountability for this policy and approving and monitoring the effectiveness of Burnet's risk management, including matters relating to psychosocial health.

The Executive: is responsible for the application of this policy and will ensure that a standing agenda item on Gender Equity is considered at every meeting

The Head of Human Resources (Melbourne Office) has institute-wide responsibility for Gender Equity policy implementation and compliance.

Human Resources Managers (for PNG & Myanmar offices) ensure that all locally based employees are informed of their responsibilities and obligations under the Gender Equity Policy.

The Gender Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (GEDI) Committee Chair promotes and contributes to Institutional compliance in relation to Gender Equity.

The GEDI Committee advises on gender equity-related programs and initiatives across the Institute and provides open consultation and effective management of issues relating to workplace gender equity.

The Diversity and Inclusion Manager manages the implementation of Burnet's Gender Equity, Diversity and Inclusion initiatives.

Country Representatives/Country Program Managers are responsible for in-country Gender Equity compliance.

Related legislation

- International Bill of Human Rights
- The UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women

Related Policies/ Procedures/Guidance

In Burnet's Workplace Culture:

Equal Opportunity, Anti-Discrimination and Harassment Policy (/policies/workplace-conduct-and-responsibility/equal-opportunity-discrimination-and-harassment-policy/)

Complaints and Disputes Procedure (/policies/workplace-conduct-and-responsibility/complaints-and-disputes-procedure/)

Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Harassment (/policies/risk-management-and-governance/safeguarding-preventing-sexual-exploitation-abuse-and-harassment-pseah-policy/) Policy

Transgender and Gender Diverse Inclusion Policy (under development)

Career and Professional Development (/policies/workplace-conduct-and-responsibility/career-and-professional-development-policy/) Policy

Recruitment & Selection (/policies/workplace-conduct-and-responsibility/recruitment-selection-policy-and-procedure/) Policy and Procedure

Flexible Working Arrangement (/policies/workplace-conduct-and-responsibility/flexible-working-arrangement-policy-and-procedure/) Policy and Procedure

Research Staff Promotions Policy (/policies/workplace-conduct-and-responsibility/research-staff-promotions-policy-and-procedure/) and Procedure

Remuneration Policy (/policies/workplace-conduct-and-responsibility/remuneration-policy/)

Safeguarding Code of Conduct (/policies/risk-management-and-governance/safeguarding-code-of-conduct/)

Safeguarding Procedures (/policies/risk-management-and-governance/safeguarding-code-of-conduct/)

Personal Relationships Policy (/policies/workplace-conduct-and-responsibility/personal-relationships-policy/)

Child Protection Policy (/policies/workplace-conduct-and-responsibility/personal-relationships-policy/)

Whistle-blower Policy (/policies/risk-management-and-governance/whistleblower-policy/)

External Complaints Handling Policy (/policies/risk-management-and-governance/external-stakeholders-complaints-handling-policy/)

Social Media Policy (/policies/workplace-conduct-and-responsibility/social-media-policy/)

Respect at Work Bill

Workplace Gender Equality Reports

Gender representation on decision making bodies (/policies/workplace-conduct-and-responsibility/gender-representation-on-decision-making-bodies/)

Creating Everyday Equity Workshop (https://youtu.be/kUHOJIhNK9s) - May 2022

Gender, diversity and inclusion in COVID-19 responses at Burnet (/media/2904/gender-and-covid-19-brief-12-june-2020.pdf)

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Guidance Note: How to speak up if you see bias at work (/media/3157/guidance-note-how-to-speak-up-if-you-see-bias-at-work_oct2020.pdf)

Guidance Note: Pregnancy and Parenting Conversations – the do's and don'ts (/media/3680/guidance-note_pregnancy-and-parenting_final.pdf)

Disability Inclusiveness in Development Activities Policy (/policies/international-operations/disability-inclusiveness-in-development-policy/)

Disability Inclusive Research Workshop (https://youtu.be/TerfARzkBfE) - May 2022

Flexible Working Arrangements Policy (/policies/workplace-conduct-and-responsibility/flexible-working-arrangement-policy-and-procedure/)

Guidelines for Inclusive Meetings (/media/3019/guidelines-for-inclusive-meetings-august-2020.pdf)

Supporting Transgender People in the Workplace (/media/1950/supporting-transgender-people-in-the-workplace.pdf)

Supporting LGBTIQ Employees (/media/1951/supporting-lgbtiq-employees.pdf)

Panel Pledge (/media/2070/burnet-institute-panel-pledge.pdf)

In Burnet's Research:

NHMRC gender equity Strategy 2022-2025 (https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/research-policy/gender-equity/nhmrc-gender-equity-strategy-2022-2025)

Standard for Sex, Gender, Variations of Sex Characteristics and Sexual Orientation Variables (https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/standards/standard-sex-gender-variations-sex-characteristics-and-sexual-orientation-variables/latest-release)

ACFID Code of Conduct (ACFID Code of Conduct 2016, Quality Principle 2.3: We promote gender equality and equity)) Making Performance Count: enhancing the accountability and effectiveness of Australian aid, November 2014

DFAT, Gender equality and women's empowerment strategy, Feb 2016

WHO, Roadmap for action, 2014-2019: Integrating equity, gender, human rights and social determinants into the work of WHO

WHO, Department of Gender, Women and Health, Gender mainstreaming for health managers: a practical approach, April 2011

Kilby P & Crawford J, ACFID Gender Equity Working Group, Closing the Gap:Gender and Australian NGOs, 2011