



Building capacity. Building Tasmania.



Keystone
TASMANIA

**Keystone Tasmania Diversity
and Inclusion Strategy**

2022-2025



Acknowledgement of Country

Keystone Tasmania acknowledges Tasmanian Aboriginal (palawa) people as the traditional and original owners of Tasmania (lutruwita), and pays respect to Elders, past, present and emerging.

Keystone Tasmania recognises and supports the continuation of the cultural, spiritual and educational practices of palawa people, and increased participation of palawa people in the building and construction sector workforce.

Key Terms

Diversity means 'recognising, respecting and valuing differences based on ethnicity, gender, age, race, religion, disability and sexual orientation' (DPC Victoria 2018).

Inclusion is when people are valued and enabled to work in ways that are coherent with their personal characteristic or circumstance (DPC Victoria 2018).

Multicultural means people from many different countries and cultural backgrounds, including indigenous Tasmanians.

palawa means Aboriginal people who are the traditional and original owners of Tasmania, and their continuing cultural, spiritual and educational practices.

Cultural safety recognizes, respects and allows for the cultural identities of others. In safe workplaces, people are comfortable with a range of cultural beliefs and practices.

Keystone Tasmania Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2022–2025

Keystone Tasmania is 'the go-to organisation for facilitating building and construction industry workforce development in Tasmania'. Our sector needs greater access to labour, skills and talent. One of Keystone's main strategic responses to this need is to 'champion industry-wide initiatives that promote diversity, innovation and advancement'.

The *Keystone Tasmania Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2022–2025* explains the business drivers for greater diversity and inclusion in the sector, and provides practical options to achieve that goal. The Strategy will underpin the Keystone Board's funding and resourcing of projects, and help direct allocation of training subsidy, between 2022 and 2025. Where required, Keystone will initiate activity to advance diversity in our sector.



Keystone will promote and support activity to:

1. Attract

- Normalise the participation of women, palawa people and other underrepresented groups in building and construction work
- Inspire and support new entrants through engagement in the 'real world' of building and construction work

2. Recruit

- Engage with a wider range of informal networks for recruitment
- Develop and share business HR practices that enable more diverse applicants to be hired
- Support administration staff in the sector to upskill to move into technical roles
- Share information and examples from Tasmanian businesses successful at employing diverse people

3. Retain

- Offer and normalise more flexible roles and working hours
- Improve inclusion and cultural safety in workplaces for women, palawa people and multicultural people
- Support greater recognition and inclusion of palawa knowledge, culture and perspectives in workplaces
- Recognise and reward diverse people's achievement, and strengthen their networking options

4. Advance

- Develop diverse staff for leadership and technical specialist roles
- Proactively recruit diverse people for leadership and technical specialist roles
- Review and report on workforce gender, palawa and multicultural demographics, including at Board level and in leadership roles
- Establish and report on goals or targets for preferred diversity profile in technical specialist and leadership roles

Business Case for Greater Diversity in the B&C Sector

There are strong business drivers to commit time, resourcing and energy to increase diversity in the Tasmanian B&C sector:

- 1. More skills and labour** – the sector needs to attract and develop more workers. Actively recruiting and integrating women, palawa people and other under-represented groups provides access to a larger and wider pool of talent.
- 2. More innovation and stronger safety culture** – A more diverse and inclusive workforce is more open to 'different ways of thinking' which enables innovation, and inclusion has been linked to stronger 'safety culture' in the construction industry.
- 3. Positive impact on mental health** – in Australia, 'the suicide rate is 24.2 per 100,000 male construction workers compared to 13.9 per 100,000 males in all other occupations'. More inclusive workplaces deliver better mental health for all, with: less absenteeism, less employee turnover, less drug and alcohol abuse, and a potentially lower incidence of suicide.
- 4. Greater profitability and productivity** – businesses with diverse leadership teams consistently generate higher returns, up to 25% above industry average. In Australia, promoting gender equality has recently become a statutory priority, which will extend to procurement and tendering. Internationally, 'limited workforce diversity' was identified in the top 20 risks to 2027 for the sector globally, due to 'the war for talent' and the need for workforce optimisation.



There is a strong business case for workforce diversity in the Tasmanian B&C sector.

Current Workforce Demographics

WOMEN

Across the wide range of roles in B&C, women account for only 10.2% of the workforce. In trades roles, less than 3% of workers are female. Nationally, there is also evidence of poor retention and career progression for women who are recruited to the B&C sector.

PALAWA PEOPLE

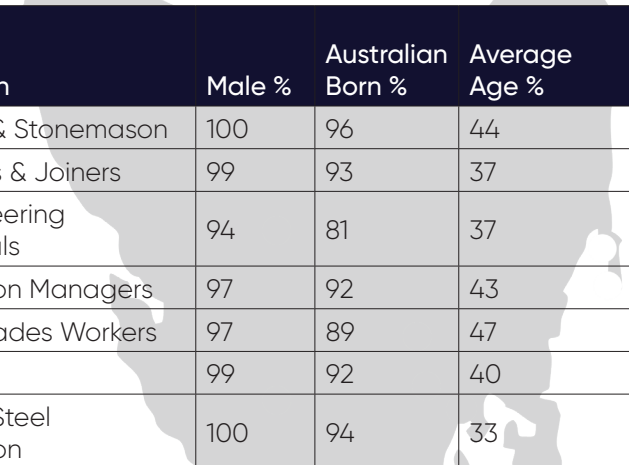
In the 2016 census, 4.6% of the Tasmanian population identified as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin, totaling 23,572 people. Sixty percent of that population was of working age (15-64 years) which represented approximately 14,000 potential Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander employees for the B&C sector. There are regions where a higher proportion of people identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander: Huon Valley (9.2%), West Coast (8.5%) and North West (6.6%). Keystone does not have current reliable data on the representation of palawa people in our workforce.

MULTICULTURAL TASMANIANS

The Tasmanian B&C workforce lacks cultural diversity (Table 1). Nationally, the B&C sector employs a high percentage of multicultural workers, with 52% of the workforce born overseas (compared with 25% of the wider population; ABS). Migrant and refugee Tasmanians represent potential workers for our sector, however there is evidence of a need for support of workers and their workplaces to reduce the risk of exploitation and workplace accidents, and to support career progression (FWBC 2012).

RETIREMENT & DEMAND

Tasmania has an aging B&C workforce (Table 1) and many of our mature, experienced workers will retire in the coming decade. Master Builders Tasmania (MBT) have estimated the construction workforce will need to grow by 25% by 2025. Role-specific modelling by Keystone Tasmania on demand to 2030, and shows there are some roles where the sector needs to expand the pool of available workers by greater than 25%.



Occupation	Male %	Australian Born %	Average Age %	Demand 2030 (number of new workers needed)
Bricklayer & Stonemason	100	96	44	+26% (88)
Carpenters & Joiners	99	93	37	+10% (304)
Civil Engineering Professionals	94	81	37	+8% (60)
Construction Managers	97	92	43	+17% (497)
Painting Trades Workers	97	89	47	+27% (321)
Plumber	99	92	40	+9% (141)
Structural Steel Construction	100	94	33	+18% (71)

Table 1. Workforce demographics for roles in the Tasmanian B&C sector (Keystone SOFIA 2021).

Workforce demographics for several key roles in the Tasmanian building and construction workforce, and projected demand for new workers in those roles as at 2030 (Keystone Tasmania's SOFIA 2021).

The Tasmanian building and construction sector workforce currently lacks diversity.

Tasmanian Diversity Initiatives

Greater diversity in the sector is a priority. For example, the Tasmanian Building and Construction Industry Workforce Action Plan 2021 was developed by the Tasmanian Department of State Growth and Keystone Tasmania, following industry consultation and identified 'growing and sustaining diversity' as one of five key priorities. Keystone supports and acknowledges the commitment, initiative and impact of key partners who are driving Tasmanian diversity initiatives, and is working with those partners to measure impact and support systemic change. Several Tasmanian initiatives are undeniably impacting at the individual level and some businesses are leading by example. Sector-wide change, however, is needed. Several initiatives are showcased on the following pages. We are not aware of any current initiatives that focus on palawa participation.



Current workforce demographics of Tasmania's B&C sector suggest opportunity exists for impactful diversity initiatives.





Build Up Tassie

St Joseph's Affordable Homes (ABC 2021)

St Joseph Affordable Homes is a social enterprise that builds social and affordable housing. Build Up Tassie recruits and supports young people from diverse backgrounds to work on-site with St Joseph Affordable Homes, to develop skills and potentially gain employment through its follow on apprenticeship program.

Build Up Tassie is supported by the Housing Industry Association, Centacare Evolve Housing, Catholic Care Tasmania and Keystone Tasmania. The first cohort included young men and women from disadvantaged and migrant backgrounds. Of the first cohort, six young people have started building apprenticeships, including one female apprentice and an apprentice from a migrant background.



Stepping Stones Project

The Stepping Stones Project supports recently arrived Tasmanian migrants to develop skills, a professional network, learn industry terms in English and gain tickets for entry-level work in the construction industry.

The Migrant Resource Centre Tasmania (MRCT) originally developed the Stepping Stones TAFE program with state training authority, Skills Tasmania.

An aim of the Stepping Stones Project is to capitalise on the Tasmanian State Government's \$3 billion construction blitz and get more multicultural workers into the building sector. Keystone Tasmania has provided support for the Stepping Stones course to continue, with a second group of students due to complete by 2022.

MRCT's Catherine Doran said the course was taking students through the key requirements for working in the Tasmanian industry "when people finish this program they'll be ready to go and be really useful to be employed in the building and construction industry."



HIA Building Women

This program supports women in the residential building industry by:

- creating opportunities to enter the industry,
- recognising the needs of existing female workers in the sector, and
- with acknowledging the contribution of women to industry through awards.

Having heard about mainland successes of the Building Women program, Communities Tasmania provided funding to HIA to support Tasmanian women joining the prestigious Tasmanian Leaders program, and other associated upskilling opportunities.

Communities Tasmania's support is supplemented by additional funding from Keystone Tasmania, including subsidies for training and block funding for additional Tasmanian Leaders program places.



CCF

The Civil Contractor's Federation (Tasmania) co-ordinates and hosts the annual Women in Infrastructure celebration. This event brings in excess of 100 men and women together to acknowledge and celebrate the contribution women make in the civil construction sector.

In recent years, the celebration has included keynote addresses from prominent and inspiring women from the sector, and an address by the relevant State Government Minister.

Major employers in the civil construction sector, senior public servants, practitioners and member associations are all regular participants, and the event attracts funding support from a range of industry stakeholders.



NAWIC

The National Association of Women in Construction was established in 1995, NAWIC is an Australian not-for-profit organisation established with the vision of an equitable construction industry where women fully participate.

NAWIC facilitates a number of activities that contribute to attracting new women into the construction industry and supporting existing female workers, including a regular newsletter, networking events, webinars, awards and mentoring.

NAWIC also lobbies State Government, and released a comprehensive State election statement in April 2021 supporting initiatives to increase Tasmania's female participation in the building and infrastructure sector.



MBA

'Women Building Australia' is a national initiative of the Master Builder's Association. The initiative features a suite of resources and opportunities designed to address the main problems employers encounter attracting and retaining women in construction work.

For example, the Advancing Women in Building and Construction: Employer Handbook 2017 lists problems in attracting and retaining women in the sector, and directs employers to MBA resources to address problems.

Along with resources for employers, the initiative offers a comprehensive mentoring guide and program where applicants are matched with women mentors for structured early career support.

Tasmania is well positioned within this program as two of the MBA Women Building Australia Ambassadors are Tasmanian; Ms Vonnette Mead (Meadcon) and Mr Craig Edmunds (Fairbrother).

What can we learn from national and international initiatives?

There are numerous examples from within Australia and overseas of projects and organisational 'mindsets' that appear to increase the diversity and inclusion of workforce in the building and construction sector.

The problem of low diversity is systemic, cultural and multi-faceted, however, and so there is no 'silver bullet'. Further, gains made from successful projects are easily lost if funding ceases, project champions move on, or organisational leadership becomes distracted from diversity as a priority (eg. economic or business downturn, change of leadership priorities, change of company ownership).



TPM Builders reviewed the options for increasing their female workforce and identified the following

1. Attract more women to construction courses
2. Fairer recruitment processes
3. Soft skills training to empower female workers
4. Official mentorship programs
5. More flexibility and support in the workplace
6. Promote networking events

International Review of Construction Companies Successfully Harnessing Diversity (Loosemore 2015)

Organisational change starts from the top, and there needs to be systemic, long-term commitment:

1. Appointing senior management to champion and oversee diversity strategies, reporting directly to CEO or board.
2. Allocating dedicated and resourced functions to develop, implement, monitor and report on diversity strategy effectiveness.
3. Implementing cultural diversity programs internally, and throughout the supply chain, to build diversity awareness, tolerance and skills.
4. Language training/helpline/information for NESB [non-English speaking background] employees and subcontractors, for better interpretation of instructions, signage and safety inductions.
5. Identifying and promoting role models, and mentoring programs around diversity, to inspire minority workers and to help identify pathways for progression.
6. Creating and supporting networking groups to reduce isolation and marginalisation of minority groups, and to give input on company policies and strategy.
7. Promoting supplier and subcontractor diversity through codes of practice, strategic partnerships, certification schemes, sponsorship and scholarships, and business support.

The following article covers some of the key ideas and initiatives suggested by NAWIC to address barriers to women's participation.



Building up women in construction

Kristine Scheul, Chair of the Board of the National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC), says there is plenty of opportunity but change is required

FLEXIBLE WORK

"Flexibility is the key to making working in construction easy for women. We don't (always) need to be on-site or at an office to be productive or to get the work done."

Flexibility doesn't mean it has to be part time, or you can only work between certain hours, it's having the conversation about what will work for the individual."

WORK HOURS

A NAWIC member company in NSW recently changed their construction work model from a six-day work week to five days to enable families to be together on the weekend. This will make a huge difference for the mental health of all workers.

CHILDCARE

One solution for women in more time intensive careers is subsidised childcare. In Australia, seven out of 10 primary carers are women, meaning there are often more extensive childcare demands on women. Childcare is key to allowing those women to work outside the home.

DIVERSE ROLES

Being on the tools is not the only pathway for a construction career. "There are so many different roles in a construction project and those roles do not require extensive re-training. If you have been working in industries like hospitality many of the skills, like managing stock and time, are skills that could translate into the construction industry."

WORKPLACE SAFETY

"We are still hearing about worksites that don't have lockable doors on toilets or showers. What woman would want to use a toilet that you can't lock? It's as simple as creating workplaces that will attract and retain women, where women feel safe, valued and comfortable."

What is Keystone Tasmania's Strategy?

The Keystone Strategy targets resources to support genuine, long-term, systemic impact. Keystone Tasmania's Diversity and Inclusion Strategy is based on a 'whole lifecycle' view of a construction career and an understanding that change for greater workforce diversity requires individual, employer, business and sector-level change.

The Strategy also recognises that Keystone can facilitate capacity building in a range of different ways, including through mentoring, by provision of information resources, from peers, by 'having a go', with support from consultants, and via Keystone's financial subsidies for training.

Keystone's Strategy offers options to directly tackle the things that impact on diversity at four career stages – attract, recruit, retain, advance. Options described have been selected as sufficiently specific to support measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound project activity. That is, project activity which aligns with the SMART goals framework.



Between 2022 and 2025, this Strategy will inform the Keystone Board's allocation of project funds, and help direct allocation of training subsidy. Where required, Keystone will also initiate activity to advance diversity in our sector.



1 Attract

2 Recruit

3 Retain

4 Advance



1 Attract

Stage 1 – Attract

Keystone will support and promote activity that attracts new students, school leavers, migrants or job changers to join the sector. Options include:

- **Normalise the participation of women, palawa people and other underrepresented groups in building and construction work** – using diverse images in marketing; publicizing diverse success stories; increased visibility of diverse leaders in the sector; identify and celebrate palawa success stories in the sector.
- **Inspire and support new entrants into the ‘real world’ of building and construction work** – market to non-traditional groups through careers fairs and in schools; offer structured and supported work experiences like ‘try-a-trade’ ‘HIA’s Build Up Tassie’ and ‘build like a girl’ programs; develop pre-employment skills; support non-traditional candidates to gain basic licensing and tickets like MRC and MBT projects; and engage diverse participants in Certificate II, offering diverse modes of participation.

2 Recruit

Stage 2 – Recruit

Keystone will support and promote activity that recruits new entrants in ways that better enable diverse people to win jobs:

- Actively **engage with a wider range of ‘informal networks’** for recruitment of new, capable applicants through: sport clubs (women’s AFL, horse riding, soccer); Agfest (female farmworkers, rural youth); Multicultural Council of Tasmania; schools with high proportion of people identifying as palawa; volunteer firefighters; surf lifesavers; Migration Tasmania DSG.
- **Develop and share business HR practices that enable more diverse applicants to be hired.** For example, wording and placement of job adverts; change the structure and descriptions of roles; develop unconscious and conscious bias awareness; develop more equitable selection criteria; use more diverse recruitment teams and selection panels; move away from assessing candidate based on measures like ‘the right fit’.
- Actively **support administration staff to upskill to move into technical roles** like on-the-tools/trade, estimating, scheduling, heavy vehicle tickets, project management.



3 Retain

Stage 3 - Retain

Keystone will support and promote activity that retains diverse workers by enabling better work/life balance, stronger networks and more diverse 'ways of being' in the workplace:

- Offer and normalise more **flexible roles and working hours** to enable participation of those with other responsibilities like, childcare, community volunteering or sporting commitments, eldercare, religious observances or cultural needs.
- Actively seek feedback from diverse members of staff on their experiences of working, and ideas for improving conditions for diverse people (ask, listen, act).
- Identify and provide **physical and psychological safety for women, palawa people and multicultural people** by providing lockable, clean toilets and changing facilities; develop culture of intolerance to homophobia, sexism, racism and bullying; business-wide increase in awareness and practices that respect Tasmania's palawa heritage and people; recruit diverse role models into leadership positions; establish clear, safe and fair processes for reporting workplace harassment and bullying; offer mentoring and mental health support.
- Recognise and reward diverse people's achievement, and strengthen **networking options** through award ceremonies, online and social media recognition, networking functions, inviting diverse speakers to events, listening to diverse people's experiences of working in the sector. Incorporate palawa recognition into all events, meetings and documentation.

4 Advance

Stage 4 - Advance

Keystone will support and promote activity that advances more diverse workers into leadership roles and technical specialisation:

- Establish annual review and **reporting on gender and multicultural representation** on Boards, in leadership roles and all staff demographics (for medium to large enterprises).
- Actively develop diverse staff into leadership and technical specialist roles through career development planning, professional development and mentoring.
- Proactively recruit diverse people for leadership and technical specialist roles through targeted leadership search processes, HR advertising and recruitment practices.
- Review and report on workforce gender, palawa and multicultural demographics, including at Board and in leadership roles
- Establish and report on goals or targets for preferred diversity profile in leadership and technical specialist roles. Report annually on progress toward targets.

How do people and groups develop capacity?

Keystone Tasmania's Diversity Strategy recognises there are a range of different ways to develop workforce capacity. This range of different approaches to capacity development suggest lots of different 'methods' to develop building and construction work cultures and practices, and enable more diverse people to participate.

Ways to develop workforce include:

- **Training** (certificates, short courses, diplomas etc.)
- **Consultancy** (pay others to investigate problems, design solutions)
- **Mentoring** (an elder, one-to-one, ongoing, 'apprenticing' the learner)
- **Information resources** (guides, YouTube, manuals, technical sheets for self-learning)
- **Peer-to-peer** (professional network, 'puzzle it out together', 'phone a friend')
- **Have a go** (on your own by trial and error, and repeat... until it breaks or you work it out..)

**Keystone's Diversity Strategy
will inform how the Board funds
capacity building activity between
2022 and 2025**



What is Keystone Tasmania's Diversity Commitment?

It is important for Keystone to 'walk the talk' by embedding action on diversity into our own practices and programs. The Keystone Strategic Plan commits us to champion 'industry-wide initiatives that promote diversity'.

As such, Keystone Tasmania will:

1. **Promote diverse role models** in all Keystone promotional materials and activity;
2. **Support member associations to reward and recognise** women, palawa people and multicultural workers in the sector;
3. **Require funded projects to support diverse people** to participate in the sector;
4. **Resource targeted activity** (project funds and training subsidy) to increase opportunities for diverse people to enter and advance in the sector;
5. **Recruit, review and report** on gender and cultural diversity for the Keystone Board, Executive and Staff.



References and resources

This document draws on a range of resources, particularly the Victorian State Government's research and strategy about diversity:

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