



# ACADEMIC PROMOTIONS

Information Session  
December 2023



**PROFESSOR DEBORAH SWEENEY**

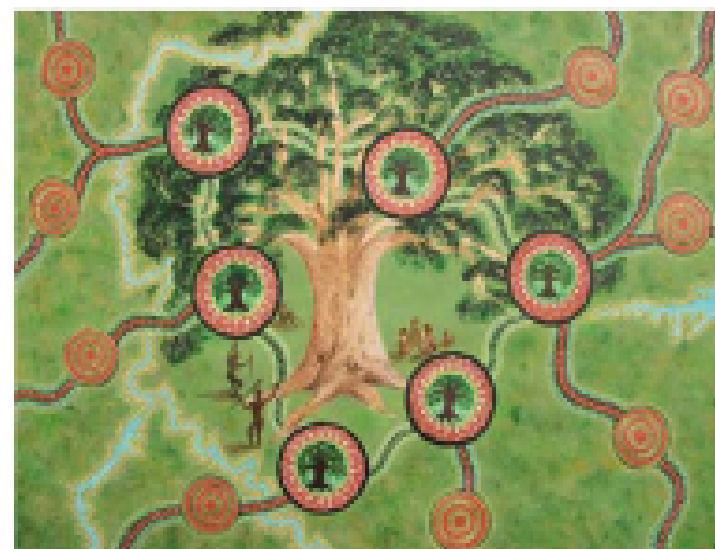
**DVC Research, Enterprise and**

**International**

# Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge and respect the Traditional Owners (and Custodians) of the Lands, the Eora, Darug, D'harawal and Wiradjuri upon which our campuses now stand. We continue to value the generations of knowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples embed within our University.

We pay respects to the Elders both past and present. And we extend that respect to Aboriginal colleagues present today.



## From the Policy - Fields of Academic Practice

(18) Promotion is based on **sustained academic excellence** and the **evidence of the quality and impact of contributions to the University's strategic goals in each of the three academic fields**. Where an academic appointment specifically precludes or constrains contribution to one of these areas, the application will be judged against the relevant areas of contribution.

(19) Applicants are required to make their case to the Academic Promotions Committee, addressing three fields of academic practice:

- a. Achievements in **Teaching and Learning**, including but not limited to, any one or more of: engaged teaching, curriculum development, HDR supervision, educational leadership, Indigenous teaching and learning and student learning development.
- b. Achievements in **Research and Scholarship**, including but not limited to, any one or more of: engaged research, research impact (including knowledge transfer/commercialisation), research leadership, indigenous research and research partnership development.
- c. Achievements in **Engagement, Governance and Service**, including but not limited to any one or more of: institutional leadership at this University, academic citizenship, pastoral care of students and colleagues, contributions to higher education and other sectors, the relevant profession or academic discipline, Indigenous communities and other communities in Australia or overseas.

## **THE APPLICATION - INTEGRATED SUMMARY STATEMENT (400 words):**

Evidence-based narrative about “who you are”, trajectory, interplay between Research and Teaching & Learning, achievements and impact of your career; Alignment with University strategic priorities.

Clearly highlight your overall career achievements, career goals and your career trajectory within the three Academic Fields of Practice.

Don't repeat information in the next sections (1500 words) but build a narrative across the three academic streams of your application with evidence of your influence, **leadership** and impact.

## Achievement Relative to Opportunity *(within the Promotion Guidelines)*

Assessing achievements relative to opportunity involves evaluating the quality and impact of the staff member's achievement **having regard to the applicant's career stage and trajectory and taking into consideration the impact of relevant personal circumstances**. This supports appropriate evaluation of achievements in relation to productivity, the ability to participate in certain types of activities, and the consistency of activities or output over the period of consideration.

Applicants applying for academic promotion are encouraged to articulate their relevant personal circumstances in their promotion application to enable the assessment of their achievements relative to opportunity.

Please note that **information of an overly specific or personal nature is not required within the application**. Supporting documentation sent with the application will only be **shared with the equity observer and Chair**.

***It is important to detail and evidence the impact of the consideration on the period contained within the application.***

# Timeframe

## What timeframe will be assessed within my application:

- Assessments of applications for academic promotion will take into account applicants' overall career trajectories and achievements, but will focus on applicants' achievements over the shortest of:
- the previous five years,
- the period since the applicant's last promotion at the University; or
- the period since the applicant's appointment to the University.

# Application

## What do you need to submit with your application?

- This information can be found in full within the Guidelines document.
  - Application form
  - CV
  - SFT reports
  - Researcher Activity Statement (final version provided by Promotions Coordinator. Applicants must ensure that this is fully updated.)
  - 3 significant works if you are applying to Level D or Level E (Recommended that 2 of the 3 be from the promotion period being assessed. Ensure that you include your % contribution to each publication.)
  - Supporting documentation for equity considerations (shared with Equity observer and Chair only)
- *Any additional supporting documentation for your application should be sent to your Dean or Director for sighting. The Committee will not receive this.*
- ***All reports are sought by the Promotions Coordinator and applicants should not seek these reports. Academic Supervisors provide input into the Dean report.***



## Interview Preparation – Level D & Level E applicants only

- There are no interviews for applications for promotion to Level B and C.
- Applicants for Level D and E will be invited to a short interview (approximately 15 minutes in duration) at which more detail of their application, achievements and future plans may be explored by the Committee.
- There are no set questions, each application and interview are unique.
- It is strongly recommended that applicants work with their colleagues within the Schools and Institutes on mock interviews as part of the preparation for the promotion interview. Mock interviews are also organised centrally with past committee members and applicants will be invited to participate in these.
- An Interview Information session will be held prior to the Committee meeting for each round.

## Resources

- The Academic Promotion website has all the resources required for your promotion application.  
[www.westernsydney.edu.au/academic\\_promotion](http://www.westernsydney.edu.au/academic_promotion)
- Links to Policy, Guidelines and Position Classification Standards and Forms (application and CV)
- Information on obtaining your Researcher Activity Statement, your SFT/SFU reports.
- A page dedicated to a mentoring listing of past successfully promoted staff willing to assist you with your application.
- Past workshop presentations and videos to assist along with a list of resources to aid your application.

**PROFESSOR ANDREW FRANCIS**

**School of Computer, Data and**

**Mathematical Sciences**

**Committee member representative**

## Some promotion thoughts

### **Thinking about applying.**

1. Identify the strengths in your case in each domain.
  - ▶ These are what you are building around.
2. Don't forget your own biases.
  - ▶ These are likely to be a product of your background, including gender and culture.

### **What are people thinking when they read your application?**

1. How do I know whether this is actually any good?
  - ▶ Give context. But be careful with league tables: be genuine!
2. Is there some innovation here? Leadership?
3. *Think about what they are seeing.*

**Assume that they don't know you:** they are seeing you through just this:

- ▶ Your case & CV;
- ▶ Research portal data;
- ▶ Your Dean's report;
- ▶ External reviewers if relevant.

**Ask yourself what raises questions.** Address that front-on:

1. *Does the research portal data underplay your output?*

- ▶ Could your outputs or income appear thin?
  - ▶ We do not have to be wonderful everywhere: but talk through the context.
- ▶ Think strategically! Demonstrate a plan to address anything that could be considered a weakness (especially in interview).

2. *Evidence for leadership?*

- ▶ Be explicit about *your* role; identify leadership wherever it is.
  - ▶ Having a governance position is not, in itself, evidence of leadership! Think beyond.
- ▶ In T & L, what have you *made happen*, that makes things better?
- ▶ In Research, what have you driven? How have you lifted others, created opportunities beyond your own achievements?



# ACCESSING EQUITY IN ACADEMIC PROMOTIONS

MICHELLE FALCONER | Director, Equity, Diversity and Wellbeing

WSU is an exemplar in academic promotions equity.

WSU's academic promotions process has been actively designed to unlock equity opportunities and mitigate unconscious bias.

# Process Design Features for Unlocking Equity in Academic Promotions

## Supporting Applicant Disclosure

- ✓ **Equity Consideration statement** (including Achievement Relative to Opportunity) (250 words)
- ✓ **Guidance** on 'Equity Considerations' in Academic Promotions Guidelines
- ✓ **Confidential disclosure**

## Building Applicant Capacity

- ✓ **Dedicated Academic Promotions webpage**, providing all relevant information and inclusive of diverse applicants and applicants with non-traditional / non-linear pathways
- ✓ **University-wide workshops**, including focus on equity considerations and open Q&A
- ✓ **School-based 'Spring Forward' workshops**, led by Equity and Diversity Working Parties and including open Q&A (piloted in 2022, with intent to expand in 2023)

## Transparency

- ✓ Documented guidance regarding Equity Considerations and Achievement Relative to Opportunity
- ✓ **APC Membership list published** each round
- ✓ **External Assessors** and APC member
- ✓ **Outcomes tracked and reported** to Board of Trustees
- ✓ **Vice-Chancellor's all-staff email** announcements of outcomes

## Committee Leadership and Capacity

- ✓ **Consistent Academic Promotions Committee Chair**
- ✓ **Committee Chair actively models** principles and practices of determining relative opportunity and reasonable equity considerations
- ✓ Committee membership is selected to **represent a diverse set of experience and perspectives**
- ✓ **Regular APC training** on relative opportunity, equity considerations, inclusive practice and decision-making



# Process Design Features for Unlocking Equity in Academic Promotions

## Checks & Balances

- ✓ Capacity for all Committee members to respond to issues of fairness or equity
- ✓ Equity Observer
- ✓ DVC Indigenous Leadership
- ✓ Capacity for Equity Observer and DVC Indigenous Leadership to be heard as part of Committee proceedings

## Ongoing Improvements

- ✓ After each Round of academic promotions the Chair seeks from all APC members suggestions for their reflections on the process, thoughts on improvements to the process and general feedback on experience and outcomes.
- ✓ The process and outcomes are tracked by the Vice-Chancellor's Gender Equity and Respectful Relationships Advisory Committee for observations about gender trends and outcomes for applicants

In your view, what are the **THREE** most important principles or aspects of your role as a member of the Academic Promotions Committee?



## Equity Considerations include:

Examples of factors applicants may wish to highlight include, but are not limited to:

- family or caring responsibilities (for example, primary carer for children, elder-care, illness of a partner or dependant);
- career breaks related to extended parental or carer leave;
- a temporary or permanent disability, or chronic medical condition (for example, a visual impairment or mental illness);
- relevant cultural expectations or circumstances (for example, the extent to which cultural norms and expectations support education and employment opportunities for women);
- periods of part-time work (for example, returning to work after the birth of a child); and/or
- absences due to ill health or injury (for example, recovering from a major operation);
- other relevant life events as relevant including but not limited to incidents of domestic and family violence, significant relationship breakdowns, end of life care or the death of a family member.

# Your Equity Considerations Statement

- ✓ Remember that this process is designed to embed equity.
- ✓ Equal opportunity in the academic promotions process does not require detailed disclosure of personal information.
- ✓ The APC team are already prepared to hear and be open to a diversity of applicants, careers and sets of experiences and to take into account reasonable and fair equity considerations.
- ✓ To access this opportunity, applicants should provide a high-level indication of the type of equity consideration requested to be considered with only a broad general description of circumstances.
- ✓ More specific detail should be provided on the impacts this circumstance has had on your academic performance, outcomes and career trajectory. It is the impact that the APC is most focused on assessing, not personal circumstances.

# Confidential Disclosure

- ✓ All personal information provided as part of academic promotions process is treated privately and confidentially. Feedback to Schools on outcomes do not refer to personal information shared as part of the process.
- ✓ An applicant may disclose additional personal information to only the Chair or the Equity Observer on a strictly confidential basis. In these instances, only the Chair and/or Equity Observer receives the equity information for consideration and advises the panel on the level of equity consideration that should be given in the circumstances.
- ✓ Previously applicants have taken this approach to specific details of disclose disability, mental health issues, sensitive family matters and/or domestic and family violence circumstances.

## In summary....

1. Get familiar with the many equity features within the Academic Promotions process.
2. If making an equity consideration statement, provide more information about the impact of these circumstances and only summary details of your personal circumstances.
3. You may make a confidential disclosure of your equity considerations, where you do not wish to share specific information broadly with the APC.

**DR MICHELLE MAK**

**School of Science**

**Promotion from A - B**

# Approach to application

Attend a promotional workshop

Read the promotions guidelines and policy

Update the research portal – esp. publications

Build a collection of activities & commitments (Excel)

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
	Activity	Value	Funding Body	Submitted	Time Frame	Staff & Time Allocation (20% = 1 day per week)	My Funding Por	Approved	
1	Utilisation of alkaline coal tailings and Australian ferns for rehabilitation of mine sites with acidic soils (ID 3361)	\$300,000.00	Australian Coal Association Research Program	22.04.2021	Jan 2022 - Dec 2024	Zhonghua Chen (10%, Fund 80%), <b>Michelle Mak (5%)</b>	20%	Eileen McLaughlin	
3	Investigating the Feasibility of Greenhouse Lawn Production (ID 3515)	\$22,923.00	Potty Plant Pty Ltd	22.06.2021	Aug 2021 - Jul 2022	<b>Michelle Mak (7%, Fund 80%)</b> , Zhonghua Chen (2.5%, Fund 20%)	80%	Eileen McLaughlin	
4	Using food waste to improve soil water retention and plant available water (ID 3693)	\$120,000.00	Australian Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (EOI) Future Drought Fund	08.09.2021	Jan 2022 - Dec 2022	Sunil Panchal (20% Fund 55%), <b>Michelle Mak (15%)</b> , Jay Bose (10%), Vijay Jayasena (10%), Zhonghua Chen (10%)	25%	Gary Dennis	
5	Enhancing drought escapism as an innovative sustainable irrigation strategy to safeguard Australian canola crop quality and yield (ID 3691)	\$676,252.56	Australian Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (EOI) Future Drought Fund	08.09.2021	Jan 2022 - Jun 2024	Ryan McQuinn (60%, Fund 100%), Zhonghua chen (10%), Jay Bose (10%), Nijat Imin (10%), <b>Michelle Mak (10%)</b>	0	Gary Dennis	
6	Regenerating Just Food Economies: the role of social enterprise in generating food security in marginalized Communities	\$90,000.00	Lyceum Partners + Design (Minneapolis USA) & WSU	11.07.2022	Mar 2022 - Jan 2025	Stephen Healy (5%, Fund 34%), <b>Michelle Mak (5%, Fund 33%)</b> , Katherine Gibson (5%, Fund 33%)	33%	Gary Dennis	
7	Development of a cell line for Australia's most significant horticultural pest, Queensland fruit fly, to study its interactions with fruit fly-specific viruses (ID 4992)	\$89,887.00	Hermon Slade Foundation Grant Application	03.03.2023	Jul 2023-Jun 2026	Markus Riegler (40%), Jennifer Morrow (40%), <b>Michelle Mak (20%, 5%FTE)</b> Xianshu Zhu (20%), Zhonghua Chen (10%), Chun Guang Li			



# Approach to Planning

Diarise promotions “thinking and drafting” time

Revised my CV (long version) as a reference

Spent time on my career development plan (finding gaps)

Brushed up on the latest WSU strategic plans

Expected to redraft many times

Created the draft with images, for navigation, and then removed them

Linked each activity to impact or leadership

Took the A to B process seriously

# Seeking support

Asked newly promoted staff to proof-read and give comments (x2)

Asked mentors to give advice and comments (x3)

Sort my Dean's prospective

Reached out to my industry/community network (x3)

Researched genuine self-promotion with integrity

Asked collaborators from other Schools and Institutions for support

Double-checked with Kim (Promotional Project Officer) if I had everything I needed

**DR ALEX HAWKEY**

**School of Medicine/ THRI**

**Promotion from B - C**



## Five tips.

- 1. Survey Other Applications:** Look at other applications in your discipline to understand the format (ie. intro), expectations and language.
- 2. Secure a Mentor:** Engage a mentor (who knows you well) early in the process for guidance, support and to remember things you can't.
- 3. Systematically Log Achievements:** Keep a running record of all your contributions, big and small, along with any piece of evidence; update research statement.
- 4. Start Early:** Approach the process like writing a grant; beginning early is key to allow time to form your narrative and polish.
- 5. Seek a Buddy:** Find a colleague in your department who is also aiming for promotion to share insights and support each other.

**ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR KATE FAGAN**

**School of Humanities and Communication**

**Arts**

**Promotion from C - D**

## **PROMOTION APPLICATION TIPS:**

### **1. Start early & when ready**

**Read templates so you know what you need; fill in C.V. to help craft story**

### **2. Socialise the process**

**Share application with mentors; supervisor; colleagues also applying; read successful applications; do a mock interview (if D/E)**

### **3. What is your story?**

**What has defined your work since last promotion; contributions to WSU/community; student retention/public engagement; if research driven, impact story; research outputs can benefit more than one audience/community; teaching/research nexus; for interview, think like a powerpoint, not a book!**

### **4. Measuring impact**

**Gather diverse data; ask Library for help; if NTROs define your research,**



**ASSOCIATION PROFESSOR CHRIS CAZZONELLI**

**Hawkesbury Institute for the Environment**

**Promotion from C - D**

# ORGANISE A PLAN TO REACH YOUR GOAL



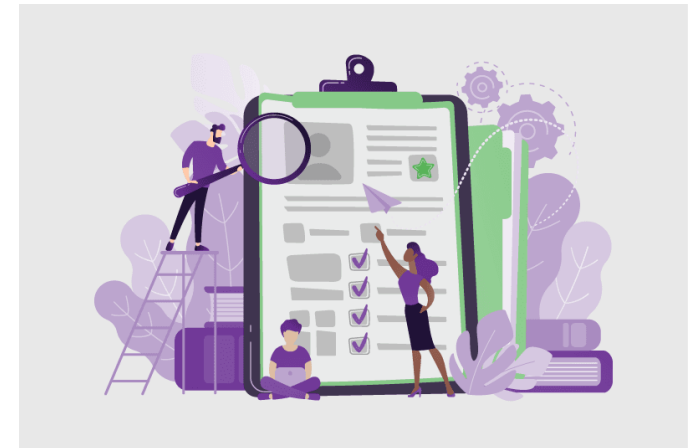
## 1) Planning for Promotion (>24 months)

- ✓ Seek guidance (permission!) from your supervisor, dean, director
- ✓ Identify an appropriate mentor
- ✓ Obtain previous (successful) applications from colleagues
- ✓ Request SFT reports and research activity statements
  - Update google scholar, ORCID, web pages
  - Benchmark using altimetric, SciVal, Scopus, Clarivate
  - Examine past performance/teaching evaluations



## 2) Complete the “**Standardised CV**” first (1 week)

- This was the easy bit – helps to gain momentum
- Utilise your past performance evaluations to identify achievements



## 3) Start writing your “**Academic Promotion Application Form**” (6 months)

- Plan ideas, structure sub-sections, develop future plans
- First write the integrated summary statement (Abstract/Synopsis)
- Next write the three sections (Teaching, research and service)
  - write, take breaks, seek mentorship - repeat these steps
  - don't stress, it's a fun journey for self-reflection
    - Who are you as an academic and why now?
    - What have you achieved and what comes next?





**[www.westernsydney.edu.au/academic\\_promotion](http://www.westernsydney.edu.au/academic_promotion)**

**questions to:**

**[Promotions@westernsydney.edu.au](mailto:Promotions@westernsydney.edu.au)**