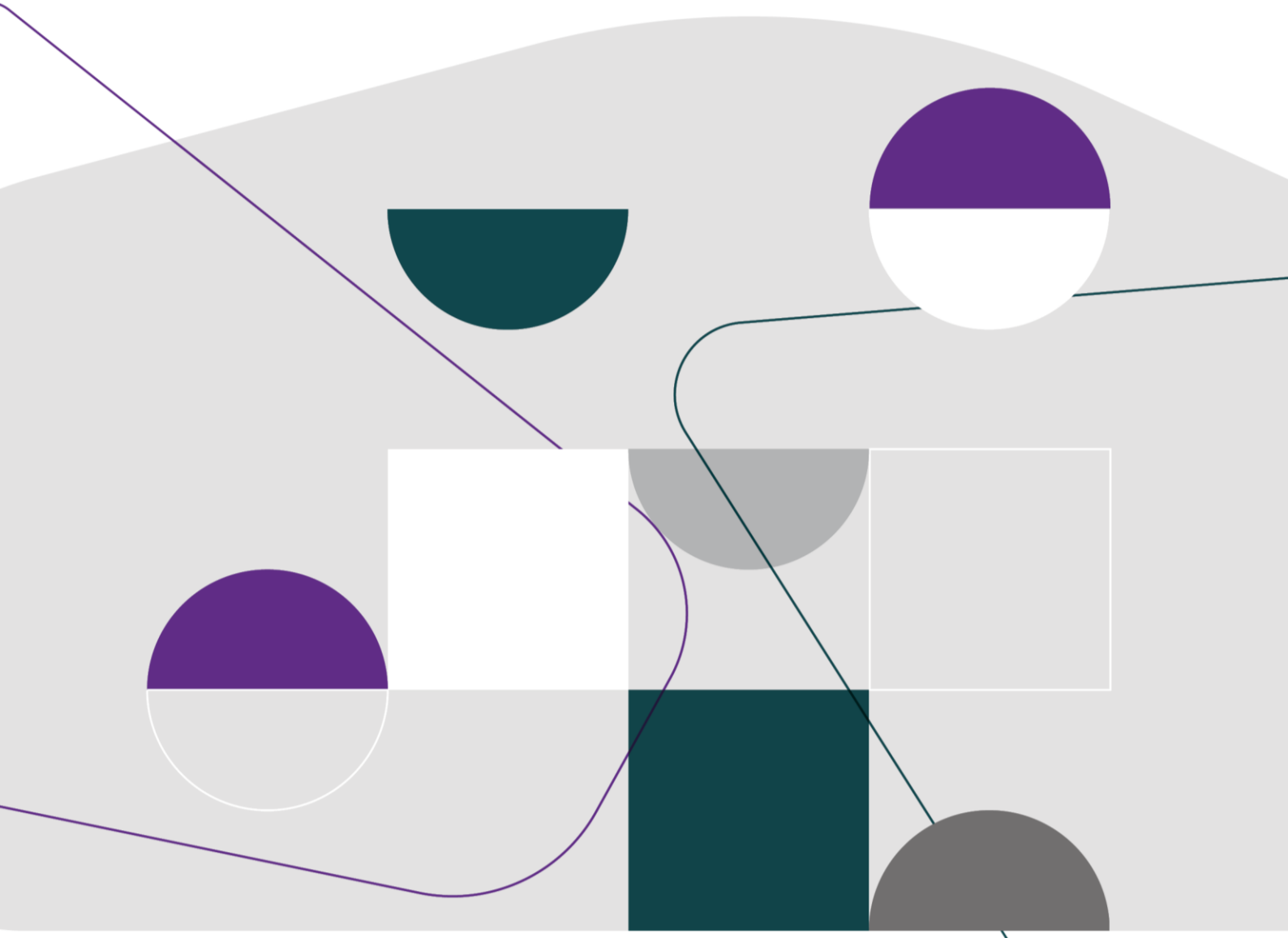
Australian Government
Department of Industry, Science and Resources

# STEM Equity Monitor

## Data report 2026



| **industry**.gov.au/STEMEquityMonitor

# Acknowledgement of Country

Our department recognises the First Peoples of this Nation and their ongoing cultural and spiritual connections to the lands, waters, seas, skies, and communities.

We Acknowledge First Nations Peoples as the Traditional Custodians and Lore Keepers of the oldest living culture and pay respects to their Elders past and present. We extend that respect to all First Nations Peoples.

***Artwork credit:***
***DISR Journey***
***2024***
Chern'ee Sutton

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# Disclaimer

The purpose of this publication is to provide a national data resource on women and other diverse groups in STEM.

The Commonwealth as represented by the Department of Industry, Science and Resources has exercised due care and skill in the preparation and compilation of the information in this publication.

The Commonwealth does not guarantee the accuracy, reliability or completeness of the information contained in this publication. Interested parties should make their own independent inquiries and obtain their own independent professional advice prior to relying on, or making any decisions in relation to, the information provided in this publication.

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- National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC)
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)
- Social Research Centre
- YouthInsight - Student Edge
- Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA).

We would also like to thank:

- the Office of the Chief Scientist (OCS)
- case study participants
- all who contributed support and advice to developing the monitor.

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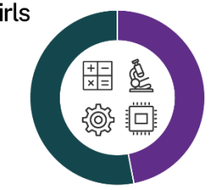
**Proportion of enrolments in STEM subjects, by gender**

♀ **47%** Girls



♂ **53%** Boys

**Proportion of enrolments in mathematics subjects from girls**

Intermediate mathematics **44%** ♀ Higher mathematics **36%**

## STEM women at university

**2024 university enrolments and completions**

% of university STEM enrolments — ♀ **37%**

% of university STEM completions — ♀ **39%**

**2024 undergraduate earnings**

Women earned less than men for all STEM fields following undergraduate study

**2024 postgraduate earnings**

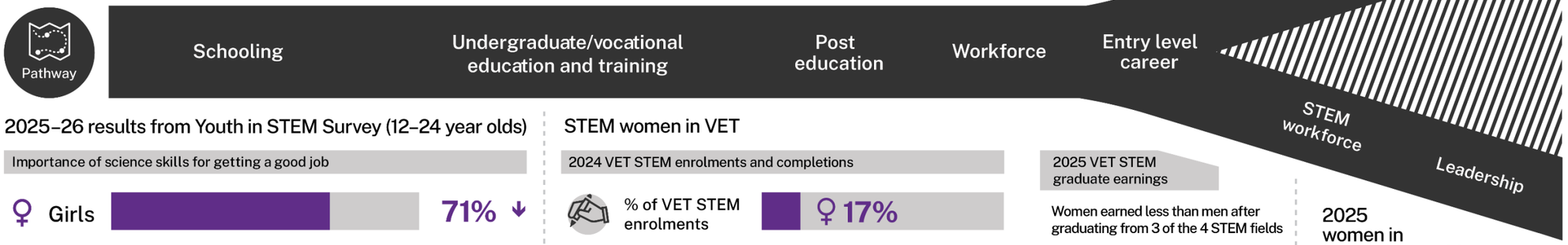
Women earned less than men for all STEM fields

## 2024 women in teaching and research workforce in STEM fields by headcount

**34%** ↑

## 2024 women at level E in STEM fields

**22%** ↑




## 2025–26 results from Youth in STEM Survey (12–24 year olds)

**Importance of science skills for getting a good job**




**Interest in science subjects**


**Confidence in science subjects**


## STEM women in VET

**2024 VET STEM enrolments and completions**

% of VET STEM enrolments — ♀ **17%**

% of VET STEM completions — ♀ **20%**

**2025 VET STEM graduate earnings**

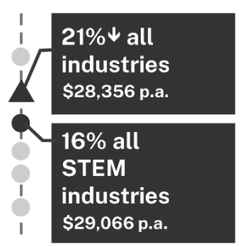
Women earned less than men after graduating from 3 of the 4 STEM fields

## STEM-qualified industries

**2025 STEM-qualified industry employees**

♀ **31%** ↑ Women

**2025 gender pay gap**




**2025 STEM-qualified occupations**


## 2025 women in leadership positions

**Representation of women at senior management level in STEM-qualified industries**

**27%**

**Representation of women at CEO level in STEM-qualified industries**

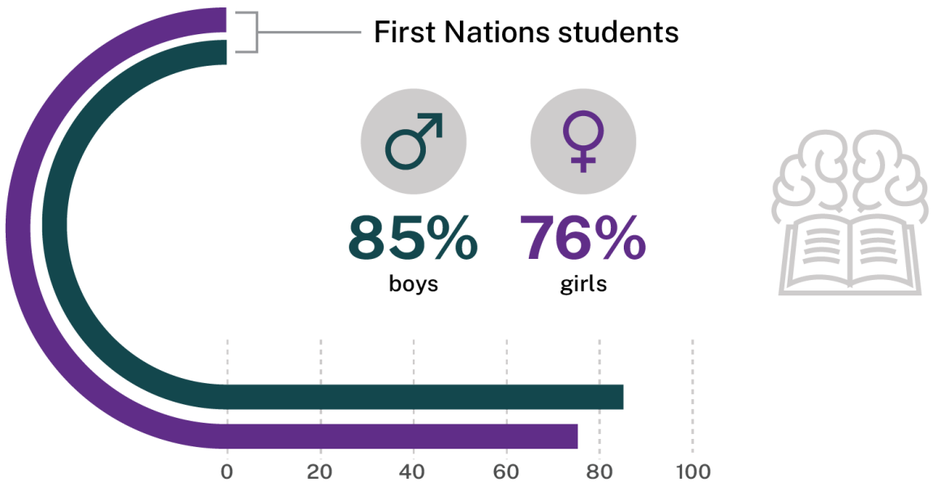
**13%** ↑

↑ ↓ Arrows next to percentages indicate a change since last report. This may not be a statistically significant change and should be treated with caution.

# 2026 Diversity in STEM insights | First Nations people

## Schooling

2025–26 Youth in STEM survey - proportion of people who agreed science skills were important for future careers



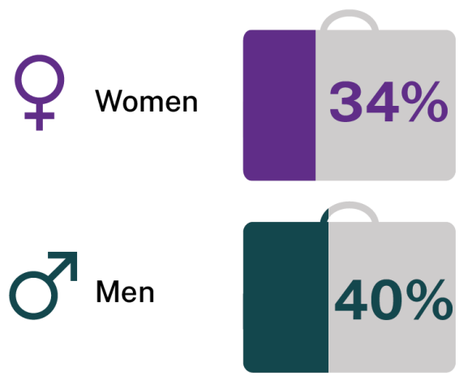

## Graduate outcomes

Median STEM graduate income in the year after graduation

**$78,000**
University undergraduates 2024

**$73,000**
VET 2025

Proportion of 2011 university STEM graduates working in STEM occupations 10 years after graduation (2020–21)




## Higher education

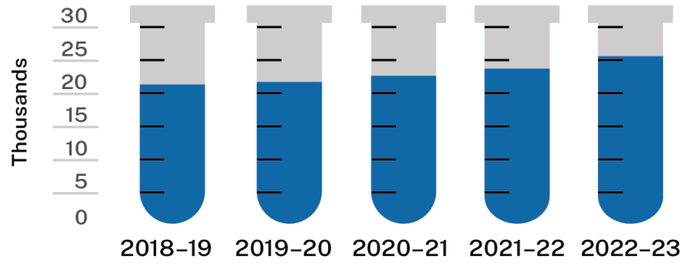

| STEM enrolments, 2024 | University | VET |
|---|---|---|
| Proportion of total STEM enrolments from First Nations people | 1% | 7% |
| Among First Nations people, proportion of STEM enrolments from women | 42% ♀ | 21% ♀ |
| STEM fields with highest proportion of enrolments from First Nations people | 2% | 12% |
| | Agriculture, environmental and related studies | |

## STEM workforce

Proportion of all people working in STEM-qualified occupations who were First Nations people, 2022–23

**2%**
First Nations people

Number of First Nations people in STEM occupations, 2018–19 to 2022–23



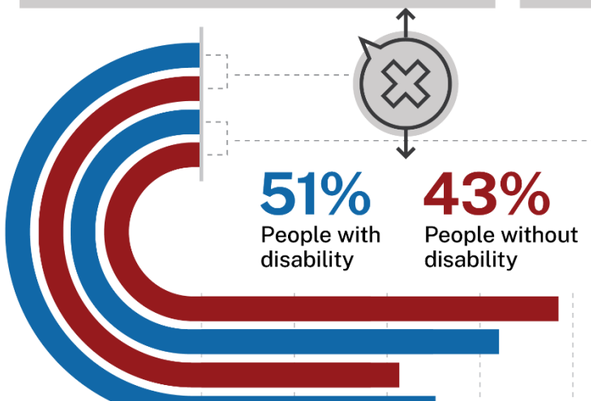
# 2026 Diversity in STEM insights | People with disability

women men
people with disability people without disability

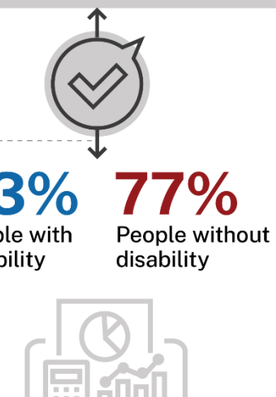
*People with disability were those with a profound or severe limitation who require assistance with everyday activities of self-care, mobility and/or communication.

## Graduate outcomes – Skill use

Proportion of employed university undergraduates who felt their skills were not fully utilised in their job, 2024




Proportion of employed VET graduates who found their skills were relevant to their job, 2025




## Higher education

| STEM enrolments, 2024 | University | VET |
|---|---|---|
| Proportion of total STEM enrolments from people with disability | 12% | 6% |
| Among people with disability, proportion of STEM enrolments from women | 48% ♀ | 23% ♀ |
| STEM fields with highest proportion of enrolments from people with disability | 16% Agriculture, environmental and related studies | 14% Information technology |

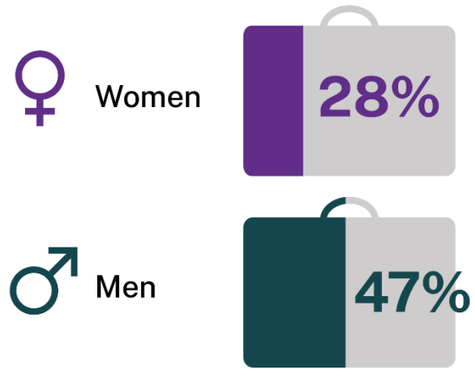
## Graduate outcomes

Median STEM graduate income in the year after graduation

**$75,000**
University undergraduates 2024

**$62,000**
VET 2025

Proportion of 2011 university STEM graduates working in STEM occupations 10 years after graduation (2020–21)

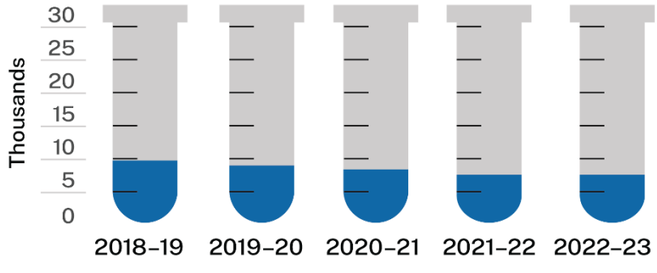



## STEM workforce

Proportion of all people working in STEM-qualified occupations who were people with disability, 2022–23

**1%**
people with disability

Number of people with disability in STEM occupations, 2018–19 to 2022–23

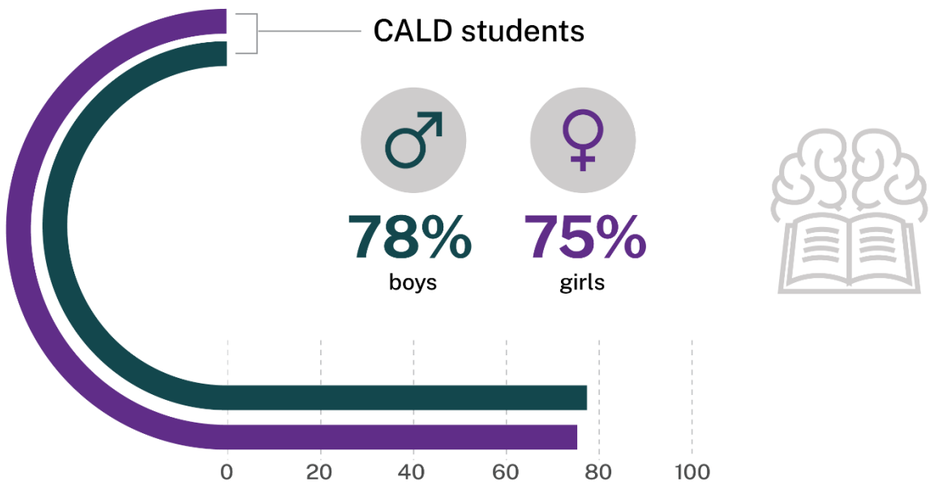


# 2026 Diversity in STEM insights | CALD* people

girls/women boys/men
CALD people
*People who are culturally and linguistically diverse

## Schooling

2025–26 Youth in STEM survey – proportion of people who agreed science skills were important for future careers




## Higher education

| STEM enrolments, 2024 | University | VET |
|---|---|---|
| Proportion of total STEM enrolments from CALD people | 5% | 10% |
| Among CALD people, proportion of STEM enrolments from women | 42% ♀ | 25% ♀ |
| STEM fields with highest proportion of enrolments from CALD people | 6% Engineering, and related technologies; information technology | 28% Natural and physical sciences |

## Graduate outcomes

Median STEM graduate income in the year after graduation

**$75,000**
VET
2025

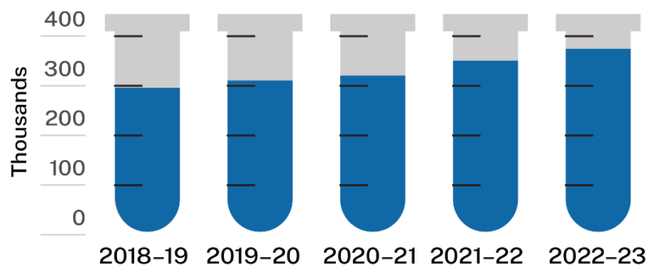
**$72,000**
University undergraduates
2024

Proportion of 2011 university STEM graduates working in STEM occupations 10 years after graduation (2020–21)


## STEM workforce

Proportion of all people working in STEM-qualified occupations who were people from a non-English speaking background, 2022–23


Number of people from a non-English speaking background in STEM occupations, 2018–19 to 2022–23



# STEM Equity Monitor data report

The *STEM Equity Monitor* (the monitor) is an annual national data resource on women and other diverse groups in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

The monitor includes data on people from diverse groups where available, including:

- women and gender diverse people
- First Nations people
- culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) people
- people with disability
- people from regional and remote locations
- people in low socioeconomic areas.

This data report summarises the main points of the 2026 edition of the monitor. The online version has more detailed data insights in written and visually interactive formats.

The monitor shows how fairly STEM in Australia represents people from these groups. It allows users to investigate datasets in several ways. This includes measuring changes and trends over time in key sectors and career phases of girls', women's and other diverse groups' engagement with STEM.

The monitor follows the participation pathway in STEM through:

- schooling
- higher education
- graduate outcomes
- the workforce.

## STEM definitions and diversity group data labels

The monitor defines STEM as science, technology, engineering and mathematics. It uses the education fields defined by the *Australian Standard Classification of Education (ASCED)*. This is consistent with the *Australia's STEM workforce* report (Office of the Chief Scientist 2020).

The monitor also matches education fields to research fields from the *Australian and New Zealand Standard Research Classification (ANZSRC)*. It considers an occupation or industry to be STEM-qualified if the majority of people in the occupation or industry reported a STEM qualification in the 2021 *Census of Population and Housing* (ABS 2022).

However, the monitor recognises that STEM-qualified graduates work in wide range of sectors, including health fields. It does not include health in its definition of STEM but recognises it as a closely related field that STEM-qualified people may enter. The online interactive version of the monitor allows users, where possible, to combine health and STEM data for results on STEMM – science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine.

The terms 'women' and 'men' (and 'girls' and 'boys' for minors) include cisgender (someone whose gender corresponds to their birth sex), transgender, non-binary and intersex people who identify as women/girls or men/boys. Some data may have been collected and recorded by sex. However, consistent with the *Australian Government guidelines on the recognition of sex and gender*, the terms 'gender', 'women' and 'men' are used throughout the monitor.

# Schooling

# Attitudes and perceptions towards STEM

Many factors influence confidence and interest in STEM from a young age. Understanding girls' perceptions and attitudes to STEM can help families, educators and policymakers support girls to engage in STEM and consider STEM careers.

We commissioned YouthInsight to survey about 3,000 young people aged between 12 and 25 years on their attitudes and perceptions toward STEM.

## Key data from YouthInsight's 2025–26 Youth in STEM Survey

### Interest in STEM

Science remained the most interesting STEM subject for girls in 2025–26.

- 61% of girls were interested in science in 2025–26, compared to 63% in 2023–24
- 64% of boys were interested in science in 2025–26, compared to 62% in 2023–24.

Girls continue to be least interested in engineering.

- 30% of girls were interested in engineering in 2025–26, compared to 29% in 2023–24
- 60% of boys were interested in engineering in 2025–26, compared to 56% in 2023–24.

### Confidence in STEM

Of all STEM subjects, girls are most confident in science and least confident in engineering. This has remained the same since the survey program began in 2018–19.

The data shows that, among girls, confidence in STEM subjects generally decreases with age. The following table shows girls' confidence in STEM subjects at different ages.

| Subject | 12–13 years | 14–17 years | 18–21 years | 22–25 years |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Science** | 71% | 65% | 64% | 53% |
| **Technology** | 73% | 46% | 50% | 53% |
| **Engineering** | 41% | 30% | 25% | 25% |
| **Mathematics** | 63% | 63% | 58% | 47% |

Source: YouthInsight (2025)

### Importance of STEM knowledge for jobs

Girls considered technology and mathematics skills to be important to future employment. This is consistent with results across the survey program.

- Technology was the most important subject for girls in 2025–26. Among girls, 82% thought it was important, while among boys, 86% thought it was important. In 2023–24, 80% of girls thought technology was important.
- Engineering remained the least important subject for girls. Just 55% of girls thought it was important to get a good job in future, compared with 71% of boys.

### Intention to study and work in STEM in the future

Consistent with previous surveys, 54% of girls in years 6–8 said they were likely to choose STEM elective subjects overall in future, compared with 82% of boys.

In years 9–10, girls were less likely than boys to choose STEM elective subjects overall in future. The difference was smaller in the older age group, with 90% of girls indicating they would choose STEM subjects in future, compared to 96% of boys.

Year 9–10 girls were significantly more likely to intend to study biology, which was also found in the 2023–24 survey.

Boys were significantly more likely to choose industrial technology, engineering and information and digital technology. While there is a skew towards boys in years 9–10 to choose physics electives in future, it is not statistically significant.

In years 11–12, 27% of girls were likely to choose STEM elective subjects overall in future, compared to 44% of boys. As people in these year levels are considering their higher education study intentions, this finding suggests that girls are more likely than boys to complete their formal STEM education at high school. Girls who continue their studies are less likely to choose STEM fields of education.

### Reasons for not studying STEM in the future

Survey participants who indicated they were not considering further study in STEM were asked for their reason.

Most girls in this group agreed they would not study STEM in the future because it did not relate to the career they wanted and they were not interested in the subjects.

Girls' agreement with the following reasons was significantly higher than boys:

- It's not related to the career I want (78% compared to 67%)
- I'm not really interested in the subjects (73% compared to 55%)
- They are too hard for me (52% compared to 42%)
- Don't think I'm smart enough (46% compared to 37%).

## Key data from YouthInsight's 2024–25 STEM Influencers Survey

Australia's 2024–25 STEM Influencers Survey explored how key influencers, such as parents and educators, view STEM will help inform how to further support girls and women. This was a survey of about 1,500 parents and 700 educators.

### Impact of artificial intelligence (AI) on future careers

In 2024–25 parents were asked, for the first time, about the impact of recent advances in AI on future careers. Almost 9 in 10 (86%) parents agreed that generative AI tools will have a significant impact on work and careers in the future. A third (33%) of parents had already spoken to their children about AI and its impact on future careers. A further 45% planned to speak to them about this, adding to a total of 8 in 10 (78%).

### STEM importance

In 2024–25, most parents (91%) agreed that a STEM-skilled workforce is important for the Australian economy. While this was slightly more than the previous STEM influencer survey (2022–23) with a 90% agreement, the difference was not significant.

In the 2024–25 survey, there were significant increases in the proportion of parents who agreed their child needed the following to get a good job in the future, including:

- technology skills - 90% in 2024–25, up from 87% in 2022–23
- mathematics skills - 87% in 2024–25, up from 83% in 2022–23
- STEM as a general set of skills - 84% in 2024–25, up from 81% in 2022–23.

Parents in metropolitan areas were more likely to view science (77%) and engineering (73%) as important compared to parents in regional or remote areas (science 70%, engineering 67%). Parents with a CALD background were more likely to view all STEM skills as important compared to non-CALD parents.

Across all educators, regardless of whether they teach STEM subjects or not, 97% agreed that STEM skills are important for the Australian economy. Again, across all educators, 90% also thought these skills will help give job security to future workers. These results show no significant differences to the previous educators' survey (2022–23).

Most educators saw STEM as an integrated set of skills, with all 4 STEM areas important for getting a good job. These results are similar to the 2022–23 survey outcomes and included the views that:

- technology skills are very important (53%)
- mathematics skills are very important (43%)
- science skills are very important (31%)
- engineering skills are very important (20%).

### STEM engagement

Of the parents surveyed, 77% said they had a general interest in STEM, with technology (78%) and science (75%) the most popular subjects. These results are slightly lower than in 2022–23, but these changes are not statistically significant.

General interest in STEM was significantly higher among parents from:

- metropolitan locations (79%), compared to parents from regional and remote locations (72%)
- higher socio-economic areas (79%), compared to parents from lower socio-economic areas (73%)
- CALD backgrounds (86%), compared to parents from a non-CALD background (74%).

For educators across all teaching settings, 91% of men felt qualified to teach at least one STEM topic, compared to 83% of women. This difference was not significant. Across all teaching settings and STEM subject areas, educators felt least qualified to teach engineering, with only 31% saying they felt qualified to teach this subject.

A significantly higher proportion of women than men reported no confidence in teaching STEM subjects (16%, compared to 9%). This result may be impacted by a greater proportion of men educators in the population sample having a STEM qualification and teaching STEM compared to women.

In STEM subjects overall, educators and parents perceived a gendered difference in children's confidence in STEM subjects. A large proportion of educators and parents reported that boys were more confident in STEM subjects than girls. Surveys revealed that:

- 75% of educators believed that boys were more confident in STEM subjects, compared to 13% of educators who believed that girls were more confident
- 69% of parents believed that boys were more confident in STEM subjects, compared to 16% of parents who believed that girls were more confident.

# NAPLAN numeracy results

## Key data by gender

In 2025, girls' and boys' average numeracy scores increased for students across all year levels. Average numeracy scores were higher for boys than girls across all year levels. This was also the case in 2024.

Between 14% and 19% of boys at each year level were in the 'exceeding' proficiency level for numeracy in 2025.

Between 8% and 12% of girls at each year level were in the 'exceeding' proficiency level for numeracy in 2025. The proportion of girls in the 'exceeding' proficiency level was consistently lower than boys across all year levels.

## NAPLAN numeracy results for diversity groups

Children in regional and remote locations have consistently lower average numeracy scores compared to children in major cities. The difference in average scores between children in very remote locations and children in major cities ranged between 110 points (for year 3) and 140 points (for year 7).

Nationally, there was no difference in the proportion of First Nations students in years 3 and 7 in the 'needs additional support' proficiency level between 2024 and 2025. There were decreases in the proportions of First Nations students in years 5 and 9 in this category during this period.

- For First Nations children in Year 5, there were decreases from 32% in 2024 to 30% in 2025.
- For First Nations children in Year 9, this was a decrease from 35% in 2024 to 34% in 2025.

Children from CALD backgrounds had higher average numeracy scores than non-CALD children. At the national level in 2025, average numeracy scores were:

- 412 for year 3 CALD students compared to 403 for year 3 non-CALD students
- 507 for year 5 CALD students compared to 486 for year 5 non-CALD students
- 566 for year 7 CALD students compared to 538 for year 7 non-CALD students
- 592 for year 9 CALD students compared to 566 for year 9 non-CALD students.

# Year 12 enrolments

The number of enrolments in year 12 STEM subjects increased from 2023 to 2024 for both girls (up 5,000 enrolments or 2.9%) and boys (up 7,200 enrolments or 3.7%). Enrolments also increased for non-STEM subjects, by 4.2% (13,400 enrolments) for girls and 6.1% (16,100 enrolments) for boys.

The proportion of STEM subject enrolments by girls was 47% in 2024. This proportion has slightly increased over time. From 2013 to 2018, it increased from 45% to 47% and has remained steady since. In contrast, the proportion of non-STEM enrolments by girls slightly decreased from 57% to 54% from 2013 to 2024.

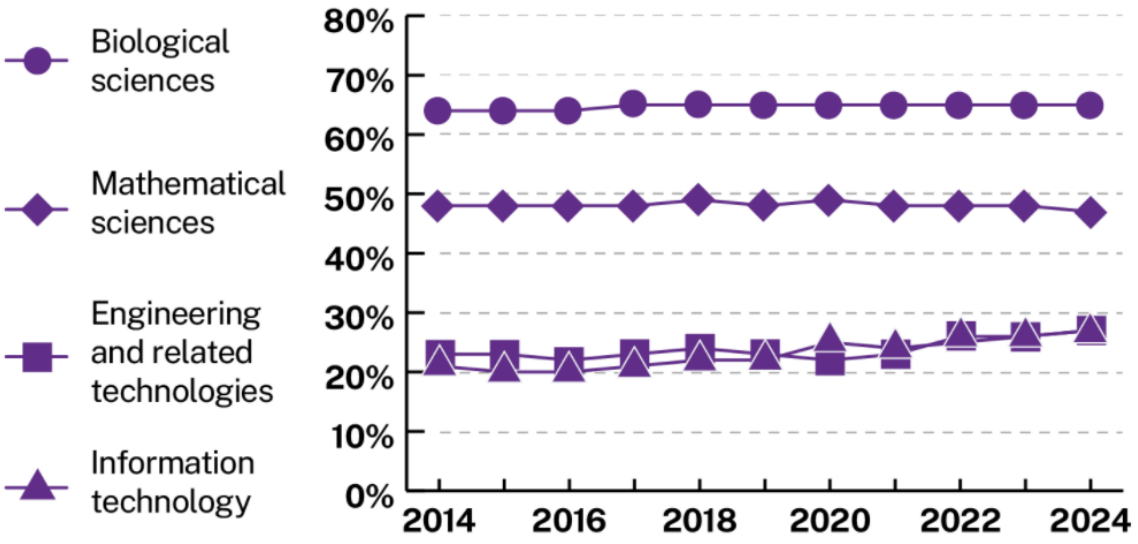
In 2024, girls made up the majority of student enrolments in:

- biological sciences (65%, similar to 64% in 2013)
- other natural and physical sciences, such as general or mixed science (57%, down from 61% in 2013)
- earth sciences (52%, up from 48% in 2013)
- agriculture, environmental and related studies (51%, similar to 49% in 2013).

Girls remained underrepresented in:

- information technology (27% of enrolments, up from 22% in 2013)
- engineering and related technologies (27%, similar to 26% in 2013)
- physics and astronomy (25%, similar to 23% in 2013).

## Year 12 enrolments by girls in selected STEM subjects (proportion of all enrolments)




Sources: Department of Education (2026); Australian Bureau of Statistics (2001); Australian Institute of Family Studies (2016)

Enrolments in year 12 STEM subjects represented 36% of total year 12 enrolments in 2024 (376,000 STEM subject enrolments out of 1,054,000 total subject enrolments). This was the same as 2023, where STEM subject enrolments were also 36% of total year 12 enrolments (363,800 STEM subject enrolments out of 1,010,200 total subject enrolments).

The Australian Mathematical Sciences Institute (AMSI) identified 4 levels of mathematics subjects. From lowest to highest, they are:

- elementary - generally non-ATAR (Australian Tertiary Admission Rank)
- elementary - (ATAR)
- intermediate
- higher.

The total number of enrolments in mathematics subjects at all levels has decreased for both girls and boys compared to 2013.

The proportion of enrolments for girls remained similar for most levels of mathematics subjects since 2013.

Higher mathematics subjects had the lowest proportion of enrolments from girls out of all levels. Since 2013, this proportion has remained between 36% and 38%. In 2024, 36% of enrolments in higher mathematics subjects were from girls.

# Schooling data references

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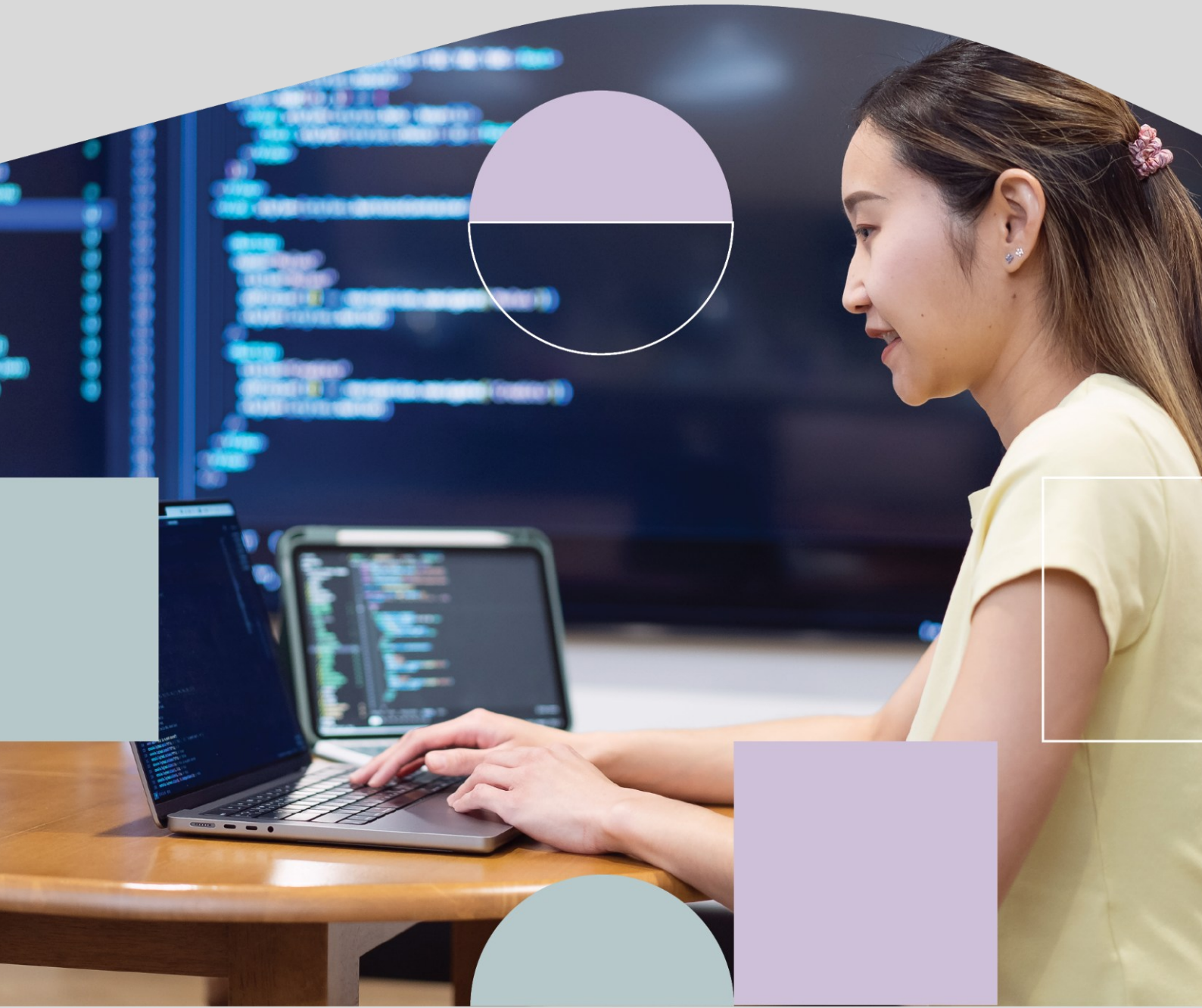
# Higher education



# VET and university enrolments and completions

Students who study STEM at primary and secondary school may choose to continue their STEM studies through university or vocational education and training (VET).

Understanding how women and people from other diverse groups participate in STEM higher education can help the government and other sectors give targeted support as they progress from schooling to the workforce.

It can also help focus support on particular fields and education types. The National Centre for Vocational Education Research and the Department of Education collect data that informs this understanding.

## VET enrolments and completions

### Gender equity

The number of VET STEM enrolments from women decreased by 3,800 or 4% from 2023 to 2024. The number of enrolments from men also decreased, by 21,200 or 5%.

Since 2021, the proportion of STEM enrolments from women has remained stable at 17%. This was higher than 2016, when the proportion of STEM enrolments from women was 14%.

From 2023 to 2024 the number of both men and women who completed VET STEM qualifications increased. The proportion of VET STEM completions from women remained stable at 20%, the same as 2023.

Engineering and related technologies consistently had the most enrolments of all STEM fields. However, women continued to be underrepresented, making up only 12% of all enrolments in engineering and related technologies. Of enrolments for apprentices and trainees in this field, 9% were women, compared to 14% for enrolments who were not apprentices and trainees.

Among the broad fields of education, STEM had the lowest proportion of women enrolled in VET training as part of an apprenticeship or traineeship. Women made up 10% of STEM enrolments for apprentices and trainees, compared to 86% of health and 44% of non-STEM enrolments for apprentices and trainees.

### Equity by diversity groups

First Nations people represented 7% of enrolments in STEM subjects in 2024, compared to 6% for health, and 6% for non-STEM enrolments. This was an increase from 2023, when First Nations people made up 6% of enrolments in STEM qualifications.
First Nations people account for 3.2% of the Australian population, according to the 2021 Census.

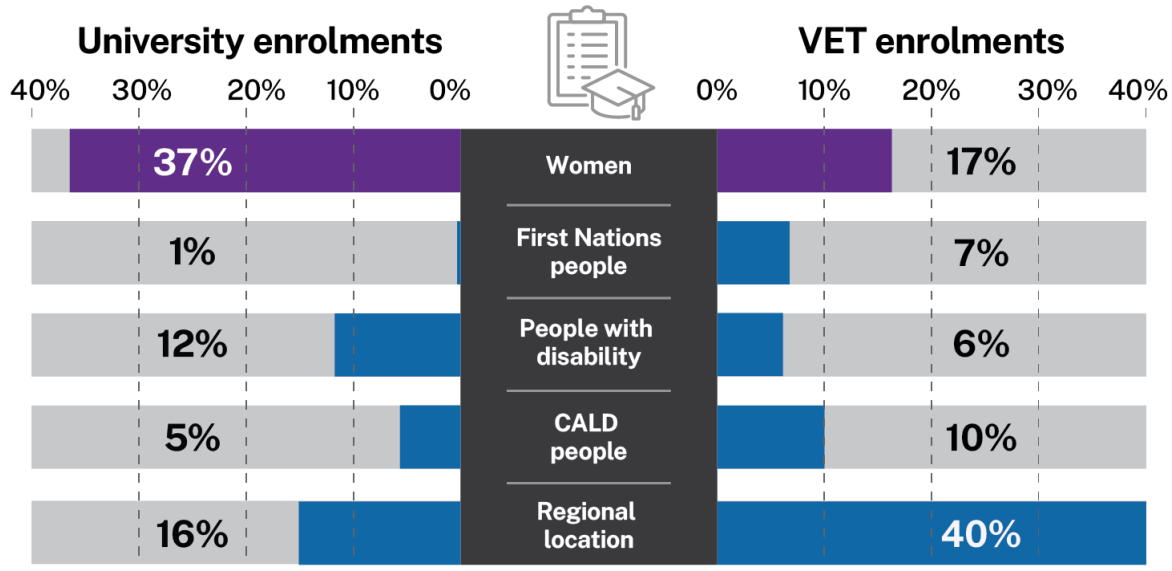
For some groups, there was lower representation in enrolments in STEM subjects compared to the other fields of education.

- People with disability represented 6% of enrolments in STEM subjects in 2024, compared to 8% for health and 8% for non-STEM enrolments.
- People who spoke another language at home represented 10% of enrolments in STEM subjects in 2024, compared to 15% for health and 18% for non-STEM enrolments.

For people in regional and remote locations, there was higher representation in enrolments in STEM subjects compared to the other fields of education. People in regional and remote locations represented 40% of enrolments in STEM subjects in 2024, compared to 31% for health and 29% for non-STEM enrolments. According to the 2021 Census, 28% of the Australian population lived in regional and remote locations.

> In 2024, a larger proportion of:
>
> - women and people with disability enrolled in university qualifications rather than VET
> - First Nations people, CALD people and people from a regional location enrolled in VET qualifications rather than university.

## Proportion of STEM enrolments by diversity group, 2024




Sources: Department of Education (2026); National Centre for Vocational Education Research (2025)

## University enrolments and completions

### Gender equity

Between 2015 and 2024, the number of enrolments from women in university STEM courses increased from around 70,200 to around 89,400. This was an increase of 27% compared to 10% for men.

The number of university STEM enrolments from women increased 2% from around 87,800 STEM enrolments in 2023 to around 89,400 STEM enrolments in 2024. This was different to 2022 and 2023, where the number of STEM enrolments from women decreased each year.

Since 2020, the proportion of STEM enrolments from women has remained stable at 37%. This is higher than in 2015, when the proportion of STEM enrolments from women was 34%.

The number of university STEM course completions by women increased from around 14,500 in 2015 to around 19,500 in 2024. This was an increase of 35% and includes both undergraduate and postgraduate completions. From 2021 to 2024, the proportion of university STEM course completions from women remained the same, at 39%.

### Equity by diversity groups

The proportion of STEM university program enrolments from First Nations people was 1% in 2024, compared to 2% for both health and non-STEM enrolments.

The number of STEM enrolments from First Nations people increased 7% from 2023 to 2024. The number of university STEM completions from First Nations people increased by 27%, from around 390 in 2023 to around 490 in 2024.

For some groups, there was lower representation in enrolments in STEM subjects in 2024 compared to the other fields of education.

- People from regional and remote locations represented 16% of enrolments in STEM subjects in 2024, compared to 17% for non-STEM and 23% for health enrolments.
- People from low socio-economic areas represented 13% of enrolments in STEM subjects in 2024, compared to 15% for non-STEM and 18% for health enrolments.

Among people from a non-English speaking background, there was higher representation in enrolments in STEM subjects compared to the other fields of education. People from a non-English speaking background represented 5% of STEM enrolments in 2024, compared to 4% for health and 3% for non-STEM enrolments.

People with disability had a higher representation in STEM enrolments (12%) than health (10%), but lower representation than non-STEM enrolments (13%).

# Higher education data references

Australian Bureau of Statistics (2022) *Census of Population and Housing*, ABS, Australian Government, accessed 16 November 2022.

Department of Education (unpublished) (2026) *Student enrolments and award completions by field of education, selected characteristics and year,* data set supplied to the Australian Government Department of Industry, Science and Resources, Department of Education, Australian Government, accessed 17 April 2026.

National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) (2025) *Total VET students and courses* [data set], *VOCSTATS*, NCVER website, accessed 22 December 2025.

# Graduate outcomes

# VET and university graduate outcomes

A successful transition into the workforce can be impacted by many factors. This includes job availability, relevance of training to jobs, working conditions and pay. Understanding graduate employment outcomes for STEM-qualified people can give valuable insights into factors that continue to affect diverse peoples' progression and retention in STEM.

NCVER collects data on these indicators for VET students. Data from the annual Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching (QILT) Graduate Outcomes Survey helps build a picture of skills use and university graduate satisfaction.

## VET graduate outcomes

### Outcomes by gender

In 2025, 62% of women VET STEM graduates reported their training was somewhat or highly relevant to their jobs, compared to 78% of men STEM graduates.

In 2025, 67% of women graduates in engineering and related technologies reported their training was highly or somewhat relevant to their job. This was the highest proportion of all STEM fields.

In 2025, the proportion of women whose employment outcomes improved (by gaining employment, being employed at a higher skill level or reporting a job-related benefit) after graduating in a VET STEM field was 54%. In comparison, 67% of men reported improved employment outcomes in 2025 after graduating in a VET STEM field.

Across all VET STEM fields, women's median full-time annual income was $65,000 in 2025, an increase from $62,000 in 2024. Men's median full-time annual income was $78,000, an increase from $76,000 in 2024.

### Outcomes by diversity groups

A lower proportion of VET STEM graduates with disability reported their training was somewhat or highly relevant to their jobs compared to those without disability. In 2025, 63% of STEM graduates with disability reported this compared to 77% of STEM graduates without disability.

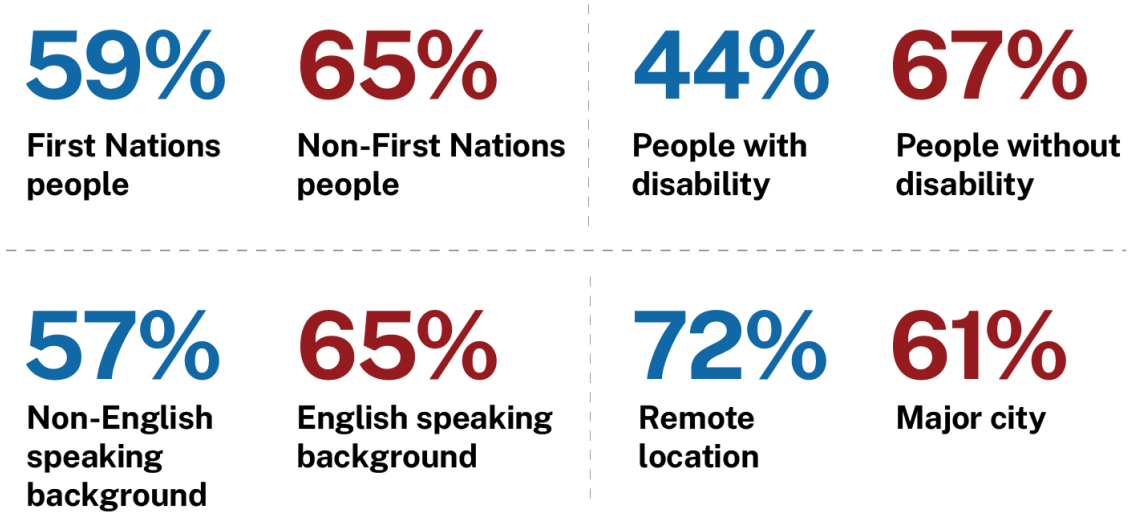
A higher proportion of First Nations graduates and graduates from a remote location found their training was somewhat or highly relevant to their jobs.

- A total of 78% of First Nations STEM graduates reported their training was somewhat or highly relevant to their jobs, compared to 75% of non-First Nations STEM graduates.
- A total of 83% of STEM graduates from a remote location reported their training was somewhat or highly relevant to their jobs, compared to 73% of STEM graduates from a major city.

Lower proportions of VET graduates from most diverse groups report their employment outcomes increased after graduating from STEM fields.

Improved employment outcomes include gaining employment, being employed at a higher skill level or reporting a job-related benefit.

### Proportion of VET STEM graduates whose employment outcomes improved after graduating, 2025




Source: National Centre for Vocational Education Research (2025)

Across all VET STEM fields, the median full-time annual income was lower for graduates from all diversity groups in 2025. This gap was significant for First Nations STEM graduates, graduates from non-English speaking backgrounds and graduates with disability.

- For First Nations STEM graduates, annual income was $73,000 in 2025, compared to non-First Nations STEM graduates, at $78,000.
- For STEM graduates from non-English speaking backgrounds, annual income was $75,000 in 2025, compared to STEM graduates from English speaking backgrounds, at $78,000.
- For STEM graduates with disability, annual income was $62,000 in 2025, compared to STEM graduates without disability at $78,000.

## University graduate outcomes

### Outcomes by gender

In 2024, similar proportions of employed women and men STEM graduates felt they weren't fully using their skills in their jobs. The largest difference between genders was in computing and information systems. In this field, 41% of employed men graduates felt they weren't fully using their skills, compared to 34% of employed women graduates.

Median full-time income for women STEM graduates increased in all undergraduate-level STEM fields from 2023 to 2024. The largest increase was in engineering, which grew from $75,000 in 2023 to $78,000 in 2024.

Median incomes for men graduates in STEM fields increased or stayed the same from 2023 to 2024.

In 2024, the proportion of women graduates employed part-time was higher than men in each of the STEM fields except for computing and information systems.

In every year since 2018, the proportion of women graduates employed part-time was equal to or higher than men in most of the STEM fields. The exceptions were engineering in 2020 and computing and information systems in 2018, 2019 and 2024.

### Outcomes by diversity groups

A higher proportion of employed STEM graduates with disability reported their skills weren't fully used in their job (51%), compared to STEM graduates without disability (43%). Other diversity groups had lower proportions. For STEM graduates in other diversity groups:

- 43% of CALD graduates reported this feeling, compared to 44% of non-CALD graduates
- 41% of graduates from a remote location reported this feeling, compared to 45% of those from a metropolitan location.

From 2023 to 2024, the median full-time average income of STEM graduates at undergraduate level grew across all diversity groups, except for CALD graduates.

The largest growth in median full-time annual income was for graduates from STEM undergraduate qualifications from remote locations. Their income grew from $70,000 in 2023 to approximately $78,000 in 2024.

# Longitudinal outcomes of graduates

Longitudinal data can give insights into the career progression of people after graduation. We commissioned the ABS to perform longitudinal analysis of a cohort of 162,000 people who graduated with a university qualification in 2011, and link their outcomes across multiple datasets. The analysis explored the characteristics and outcomes of graduates in the 10 years since their graduation.

## Key data on longitudinal career outcomes

### Occupation outcomes

In 2011, about 162,000 people graduated with a university qualification. About 26,000 of those people received a STEM qualification. This represents 16% of all 2011 graduates.

While women comprised 61% of all graduates, they made up 38% of STEM graduates.

Following the 2011 cohort over time shows that in 2016, or 5 years after graduating, when not including graduates whose occupation was not stated or not applicable:

- 31% of women STEM graduates were working in STEM occupations
- 57% of men STEM graduates were working in STEM occupations.

Following the same cohort to 2021, or 10 years after graduating, shows:

- 31% of women STEM graduates were working in STEM occupations
- 56% of men STEM graduates were working in STEM occupations.

### Industry outcomes

Looking at industry, 10% of employed women with a STEM qualification worked in a STEM-qualified industry in 2021 (783 out of 7,979 employed women graduates).
By comparison, 22% of men with a STEM qualification were in a STEM-qualified industry in 2021 (2,886 out of 13,360 employed men graduates.

### Employment status

In 2021, employed STEM-qualified women were more than twice as likely to work part-time as STEM-qualified men (23% of women, compared to 10% of men).

For women, this was lower than:

- women with non-STEM qualifications (27% part time)
- women with health qualifications (39% part time).

There were lower rates of part-time employment for men. A total of 10% of men with STEM qualifications worked part time, compared to:

- men with non-STEM qualifications (12% part-time)
- men with health qualifications (17% part-time).

### Income over time

In 2012–13, about 2 years after graduating with their STEM qualification:

- 67% of employed women earned less than $50,000 annually, compared to 45% of employed STEM-qualified men
- 11% earned $75,000 or more, compared to 23% of men.

By 2020–21, the proportion of employed men who earned $75,000 or more was 78%. That was 1.4 times higher than the proportion of women with that income, at 57%. This increased further with men 1.8 times more likely to have earned $100,000 or more than women (55% and 30% respectively).

### STEM participation among diversity groups

Analysis of outcomes for intersectional groups is shown below. It highlights the pervasive impact of gender on STEM occupation outcomes.

For women who graduated with a STEM qualification in 2011 and were born in another country, STEM occupation outcomes in 2021 were similar to women who were born in Australia. Analysis showed:

- of women born overseas who graduated with a STEM qualification in 2011, 31% were working in a STEM occupation in 2021
- this is the same proportion as for women born in Australia or not stated (31%).

For men who graduated with a STEM qualification and were born in another country, 54% were working in STEM occupations in 2021. This compares to 56% of men born in Australia or not stated.

These proportions and relationships are similar for the language and disability diversity groups. However, there is a slightly larger difference between men graduates with disability (47% working in STEM occupations) and men graduates without disability (54% working in STEM occupations).

For First Nations people who graduated with a STEM qualification in 2011, there was:

- a higher proportion of women working in STEM occupations in 2021 (34%) than non-First Nations women (30%)
- a lower proportion of men working in STEM occupations in 2021 (40%) than non-First Nations men (56%). This difference between First Nations men and non-First Nations men is the largest of any group shown in this analysis.

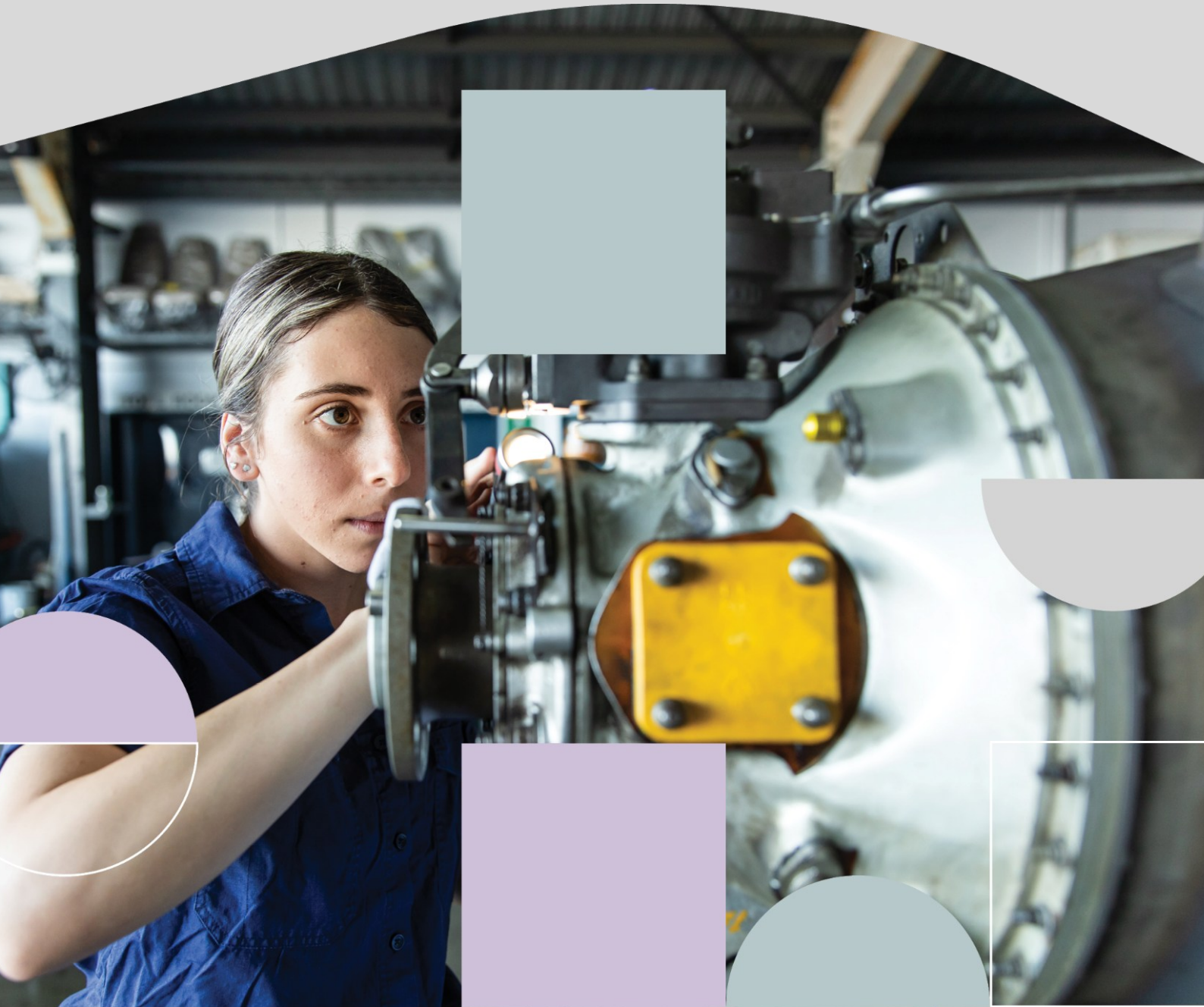
# Graduate outcomes data references

Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (2024) *Women in STEM longitudinal employment analysis of the 2011 higher education cohort, 2021 outcomes*, analysis supplied to the Australian Government Department of Industry, Science and Resources, ABS, Australian Government, accessed 12 January 2024.

National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) (unpublished) (2026) *VET student outcomes by selected characteristics,* data set supplied to the Australian Government Department of Industry, Science and Resources, NCVER, accessed 29 January 2026.

Social Research Centre (unpublished) (2026) *Median salary, skill utilisation, and part time employment, by selected characteristics*, data set supplied to the Australian Government Department of Industry, Science and Resources, Social Research Centre, accessed 27 January 2026.

# Workforce



# Research workforce and funding outcomes

STEM skills are important for people in the research workforce, including academic staff who do research and have teaching responsibilities.

Understanding women's participation in the STEM research workforce can help build inclusive and diverse workplaces.

## Key data on teaching and research workforce

In 2024, Department of Education data showed that 34% of university staff in STEM teaching and research roles, by headcount, were women. This increased from 33% in 2023. The proportion of teaching and research roles held by women in STEM was lower than the proportion of women across all subjects together, including STEM, health and non-STEM, at 51%.

Staff are classified from academic level A (most junior) to academic level E (most senior). These are standardised employment levels across all Australian universities.

Men outnumbered women at all academic staffing levels for STEM teaching and research roles. In other fields, men only outnumbered women at the higher levels, including in:

- non-STEM teaching and research roles, where men only outnumbered women at staffing levels D and E
- health roles, where men only outnumbered women at level E.

The proportion of First Nations university staff working in STEM teaching and research roles was only 0.5% in 2024. This was lower than in both non-STEM (2.5%) and health (2.6%) roles.

The proportion of women in each field of teaching and research was higher among First Nations people than non-First Nations people. In STEM teaching and research roles in 2024, 48% of First Nations people were women while 33% of non-First Nations people were women.

## Key data on research funding outcomes

In 2025, fewer women than men applied for grant funding for research in STEM fields. This is similar to 2024 and previous years.

All research relies on using STEM skills. The breakdowns shown here are by the topic of the research itself. Research in STEM fields is shown separately to research in health and non-STEM fields to understand the similarities and differences in outcomes between these fields.

Across research in all STEM fields in 2025, 27% of applicants for ARC funding were women and 39% of NHMRC applicants were women.

As fewer women than men applied, fewer women than men gained funding.
For example:

- 622 women received ARC funding for research in STEM fields, with 498 as chief investigator. In comparison 1,697 men received ARC funding, including 1,271 as chief investigator.
- 184 women received NHMRC funding for research in STEM fields, with 78 as chief investigator. In comparison, 277 men received NHMRC funding, including 107 as chief investigator.

# Industries and occupations

STEM skills can be used in many different occupations and industries. Understanding women and other diverse people's participation in STEM-qualified occupations can highlight industries that are leading the change and industries where more effort is needed. Understanding how STEM-qualified industries are taking action to support women's participation can provide similar insights.

The monitor uses data from relevant employers that reported to the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA). We source data on detailed occupations by gender from the Australian Labour Force Survey. We source occupations by diversity groups from data in the Person Level Integrated Data Asset (PLIDA), which is formed from multiple linked data sources.

## Workforce gender equality and pay gaps

In 2025, women made up 31% of workers in STEM industries. This was an increase from 29% in 2024. The proportion of senior managers in STEM industries who were women was 27%. This was unchanged from 2024.

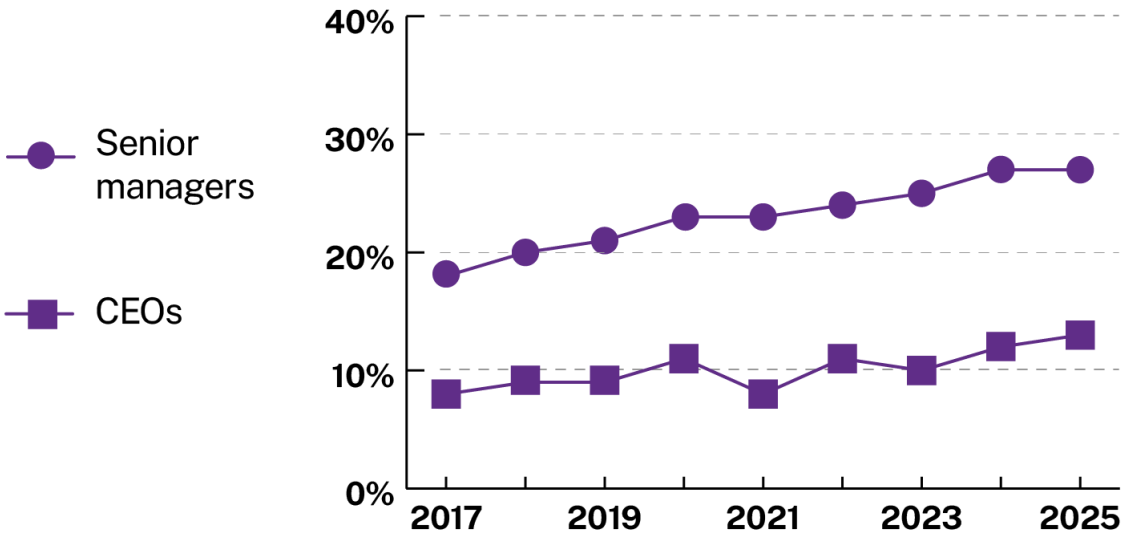
Women made up 78% of workers in health industries and 51% of workers in all industries, which includes STEM, health and non-STEM industries. These results were the same as 2024.

The highest proportion of women in senior STEM management positions was in key management personnel (27%), senior managers (27%), and other executives and general managers (27%) roles. There has been an increase in women in senior manager positions in all STEM industries, from 25% in 2023 to 27% in 2024, and in other executive and general manager positions, from 24% in 2023 to 27% in 2024.

The lowest proportion of women in senior STEM management positions were in CEO roles. Women made up 13% of CEOs across all STEM industries. This proportion was low compared to all health industries and all industries. However, the proportion of women in CEO roles in STEM industries increased from 2024 to 2025, while other industry types decreased.

> The proportion of women in both CEO and senior manager positions in STEM industries has increased from 2017 to 2025.

## Proportion of women in CEO and senior manager positions, STEM industries, 2017–2025




Source: Workplace Gender Equality Agency (2026)

In STEM industries in 2025, the pay gap between women's and men's full-time total remuneration, including discretionary pay, was 16%. In other words, for every $1 a man makes in these industries, a woman earns on average 84 cents. This pay gap was very similar to 2024, when it was also 16%. This gap has decreased since 2016, when it was 22%.

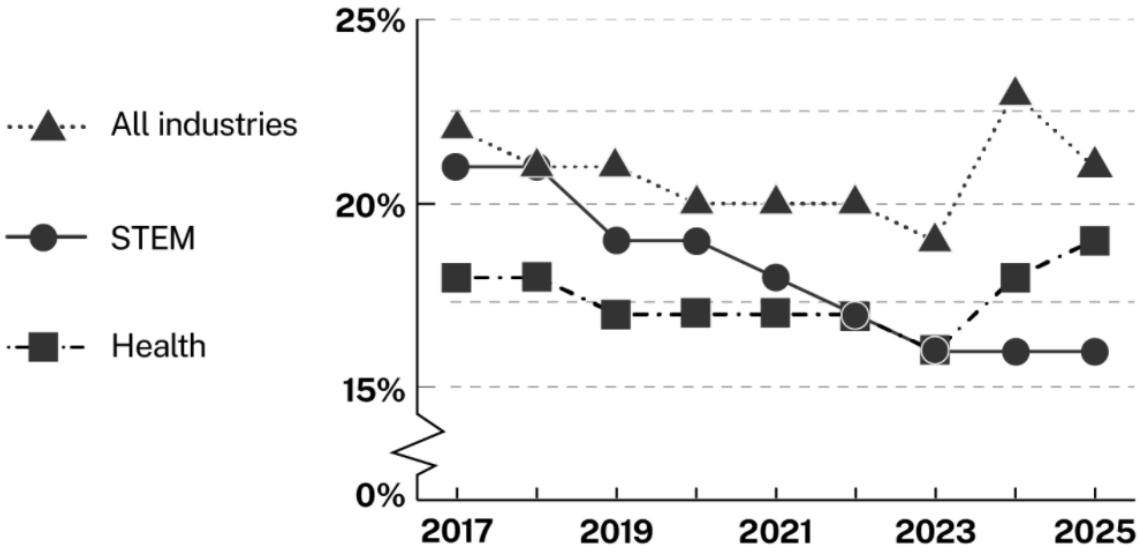
In dollars, the gender pay gap in STEM industries was $29,066 in 2025 and $29,121 in 2024. The gender pay gap for all industries, which includes STEM, health and non-STEM industries, decreased from 23% in 2024 to 21% in 2025. For health industries, the pay gap increased from 18% in 2024 to 19% in 2025.

In 2025, the STEM industries with the largest percentage gender pay gaps were:

- machinery and equipment repair and maintenance, 26%, the same as 2024. This gap has increased since 2016, when it was 25%.
- architectural, engineering and technical services, 22%, the same as 2024. This gap has decreased since 2016, when it was the largest of all STEM industries at 33%.

> The gender pay gap in STEM industries has decreased from 21% in 2017 to 16% in 2025, lower than health and all industries.

## Gender pay gap in STEM, health and all industries 2017–2025




Source: Workplace Gender Equality Agency (2026)

## Occupations by gender

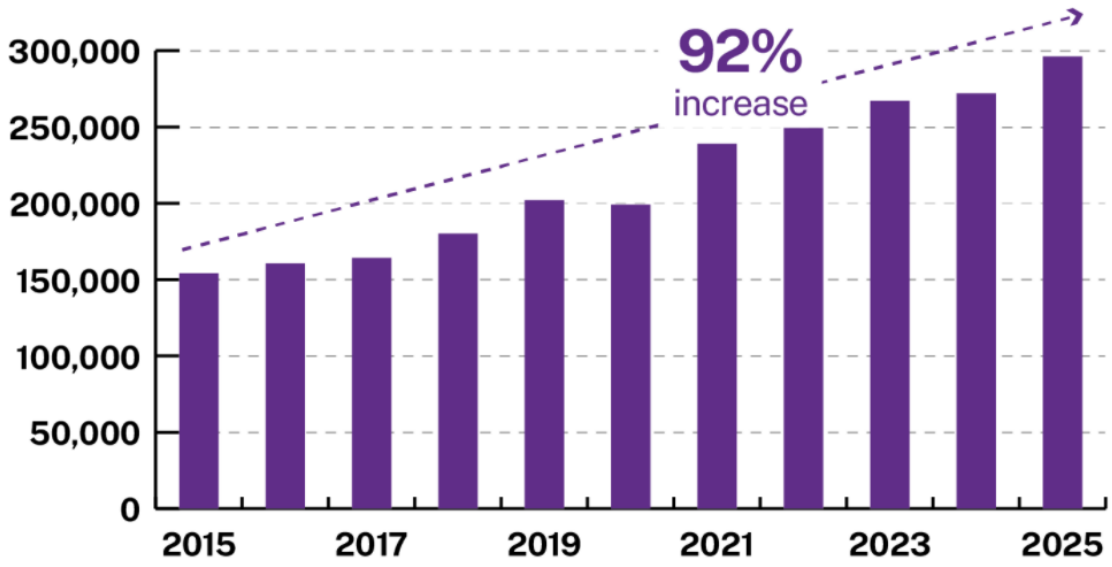
In 2025, women made up around 300,000 employees in a STEM workforce of about 1.8 million people.

The number of women in STEM-qualified occupations increased by around 24,200 (9%) from 2024 to 2025. The number of men grew by around 45,700, a 3% increase.

The proportion of women in STEM-qualified occupations increased to 16% in 2025. Prior to this, in each year from 2021 to 2024, the proportion of women in STEM-qualified occupations remained at 15%. In 2005, it was 11%. In comparison, since 2005, women have consistently made up about 50% of people in non-STEM occupations and 75% of health occupations.

> The number of women in STEM occupations increased by around 92% from 2015 to 2025.

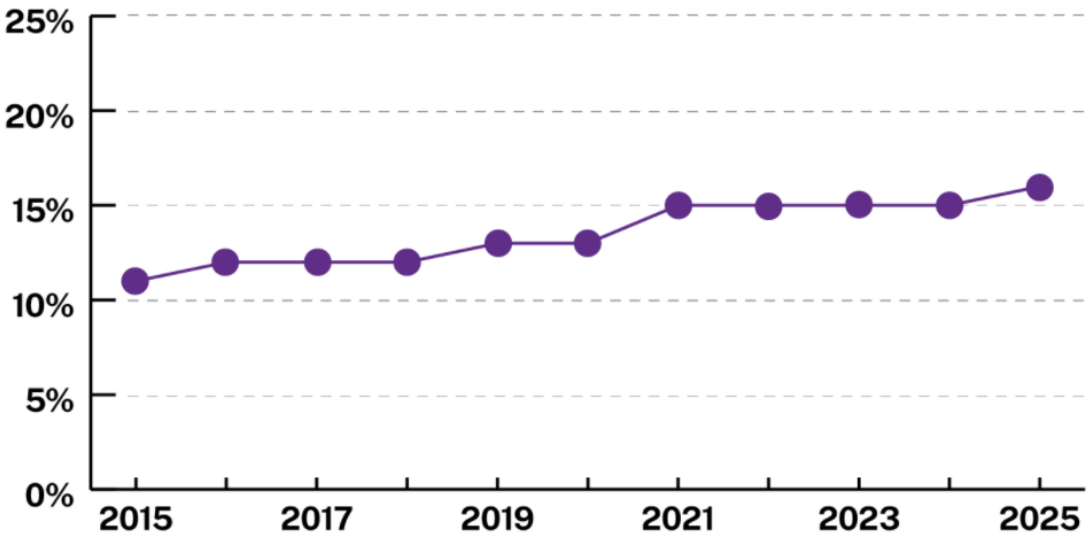
### Number of women in STEM-qualified occupations, 2015–2025




Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (2026)

> The proportion of women in STEM occupations increased from 11% in 2015 to 16% in 2025.

### Proportion of women in STEM-qualified occupations, 2015–2025




Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (2026)

## Occupations by diversity groups

Due to the complex nature of linking data in PLIDA, there are time lags for the data used in this section. Data for the 2022–23 reference period is the most recent data available for the 2026 edition of the STEM Equity Monitor.

From 2021–22 to 2022–23, the proportion of First Nations people in STEM occupations remained at 2%. In comparison, First Nations people made up 3% of people in other occupations, including health and non-STEM occupation types, in 2022–23.

In other diversity groups in 2022–23:

- people with disability made up 1% of people in STEM occupations, similar to the proportion in other occupations (1%)
- people from a non-English speaking background made up 30% of people in STEM occupations, compared to 22% of people in other occupations
- people born in a country other than Australia made up 37% of people in STEM occupations, compared to 28% of people in other occupations
- people from remote and very remote locations made up 2% of people in STEM occupations, similar to the proportion in other occupations (2%).

There was an increase over time in the representation of people from non-English speaking backgrounds and people born in a country other than Australia in STEM-qualified occupations. These increases were larger in university STEM-qualified occupations. These occupations include actuaries, mathematicians and statisticians, civil engineering professionals, computer network professionals, environmental scientists and medical laboratory scientists.

- In 2013–14, 29% of people in university STEM occupations were from non-English speaking backgrounds. In 2022–23, this increased to 40%.
- In 2013–14, 42% of people in university STEM occupations were born in a country other than Australia. In 2022–23, this increased to 47%.

From 2013–14 to 2022–23, the number of First Nations people in STEM occupations increased 44% from 17,600 to 25,400 people. Of the First Nations people in STEM-qualified occupations in 2022–23:

- 6,900, or 27%, were in university STEM-qualified occupations
- 13,900, or 55%, were in VET (vocational education and training) STEM-qualified occupations including aircraft maintenance engineers, cabinetmakers, electricians and motor mechanics
- 4,600, or 18%, were in mixed STEM-qualified occupations, including air transport professionals, ICT managers and science technicians.

There were higher proportions of people from regional and remote locations in VET STEM-qualified occupations than university or mixed STEM-qualified occupations. In 2022–23:

- 36% of people in VET STEM-qualified occupations were from regional and remote locations (including inner regional, outer regional, remote and very remote locations), and 64% were from major cities
- 15% of people in university and mixed STEM-qualified occupations were from regional and remote locations, and 85% were from major cities.

### Equity by diversity groups and gender

This section shows intersectional groups – for example, First Nations women – as a proportion of all people in an occupation type. Differences in calculations in this section are due to rounding, or to people with a gender other than man or woman, who we have not shown separately.

Men from diverse groups had higher representation in STEM occupations than women from diverse groups. While 1.9% of all people in STEM occupations were First Nations people in 2022–23, only 0.3% were First Nations women. First Nations men made up 1.7% of people in STEM occupations.

In other diversity groups in 2022–23:

- women with disability made up 0.1% of all people in STEM occupations, while men with disability made up 0.5% of people in STEM occupations
- women from non-English speaking backgrounds made up 7% of all people in STEM occupations, while men from non-English speaking backgrounds made up 23% of people in STEM occupations
- women born in a country other than Australia made up 8% of all people in STEM occupations, while men born in a country other than Australia made up 29% of people in STEM occupations
- women from remote and very remote areas made up 0.2% of all people in STEM occupations, while men from remote and very remote areas made up 1.3% of people in STEM occupations.

## Australian Public Service (APS) workforce

### Gender equity

In 2025, 39% of APS employees working in STEM and health roles were women. This proportion has remained stable since 2022. In comparison, women made up 64% of employees in non-STEM roles.

Of all employees, 13% were in a STEM and health role. This equated to about 24,900 people out of the total 198,500 in all role types.

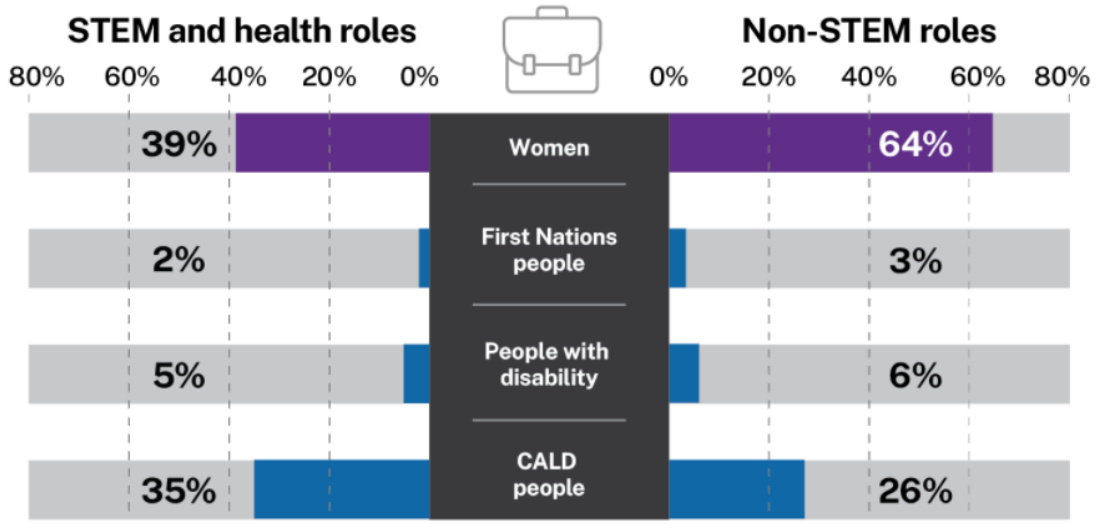
The majority of women working in STEM and health roles were employed at the APS 5 or 6 level. Of all women in STEM and health roles, 54% were working at the APS 5 or 6 level.

Gender equity in STEM and health roles is also highest at the APS 5 or 6 level. Of all people working in STEM and health roles at the APS 5 or 6 level, 43% were women. This compares to:

- 42% women at the APS 1 or 2, trainee and graduate levels
- 35% women at the APS 3 or 4 level
- 34% at the executive level/senior executive service (EL/SES) level.

> In 2025, a larger proportion of the following groups were working in public service non-STEM roles at leadership levels:
>
> - women
> - First Nations people
> - people with disability.
>
> A larger proportion of CALD people were working in public services STEM and health roles at leadership levels.

## Proportion of public service employees by diversity group, 2025




Source: Australian Public Service Commission (2026)

### Equity by diversity groups

In 2025, 3% of employees in all APS roles were First Nations people. Around 600 First Nations people had a STEM and health role, accounting for 2% of all employees working in STEM and health. First Nations people made up 3% of employees working in non-STEM roles.

The largest numbers of First Nations STEM and health employees were working at the APS 1 or 2, trainee and graduate level and the APS 5 or 6 level. The APS 1 or 2, trainee and graduate levels had the highest proportion of First Nations employees. At this level, 22% of all people in STEM and health roles were First Nations people. Around 80 First Nations STEM and health employees were working at the EL/SES level, accounting for 1% of all employees at this level in STEM and health roles.

People with disability made up 6% of employees in all roles in 2025. This proportion was the same for people with disability working in non-STEM roles. In comparison, people with disability made up 5% of those working in STEM and health roles.

Around 700 people with disability in STEM and health roles were working at the APS 5 or 6 level in 2025. This represents 55% of people with disability working in STEM and health roles. Across the levels, the proportion of APS employees with disability was between 4% and 7%.

CALD people made up 27% of employees in all roles and 35% of those working in STEM and health roles. The largest number of CALD employees in STEM and health roles were working at the APS 5 or 6 level (3,300), accounting for 36% of all employees at this level. The next largest is the EL/SES level (2,800), where CALD employees made up 33% of all employees.

# Workforce data references

Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (unpublished) (2026) Women in STEM: Employment in STEM, Health and non-STEM occupations, by gender and selected characteristics, Australia, 2013-14 to 2022-23, analysis supplied to the Australian Government Department of Industry, Science and Resources, ABS, Australian Government, accessed 26 May 2026. Women in STEM (2021 Census), ABS DataLab. Findings based on use of Person Level Integrated Data Asset data.

—— (2026) 'EQ08 – Employed persons by occupation unit group of main job (ANZSCO), sex, state and territory, August 1986 onwards' [data table], *Labour Force, Australia, Detailed,* ABS website, Australian Government, accessed 26 March 2026.

Australian Public Service Commission (APSC) (unpublished) (2026) *APSC employment database diversity information by job family data and classification level, 2019-2025*, data set supplied to the Australian Government Department of Industry, Science and Resources, APSC, Australian Government, accessed 28 January 2026.

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