

## Media release

Wednesday, 24 February 2021



# Aware Super's five-year streak as WGEA Employer of Choice

Aware Super has been recognised as a Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) Employer of Choice for Gender Equality for the fifth consecutive year.

WGEA's Employer of Choice citation is granted to organisations that demonstrate a genuine commitment to achieving gender equality in Australian workplaces.

Aware Super CEO Deanne Stewart, a proud WGEA Pay Equity Ambassador, said that the award was wonderful recognition of the Fund's commitment to creating a diverse and inclusive workplace that reflected the needs and diversity of its employees, members, and community.

'As investors we know that diverse organisations are more successful,' Ms Stewart said. 'One of the central pillars of our ESG engagement with the companies we invest in, is ensuring greater diversity and inclusion at Board and Executive level, because we know it simply makes sense.'

'As an employer we are committed to creating a workplace where all of our employees can bring their best selves to work no matter their gender, which helps us to deliver better member experiences and outcomes.'

'Over the past 12 months we have supported this goal by ensuring inclusion is a key element of our Leadership Capabilities. We have also recently completed our Gender Strategy, which highlights some of the achievements we have delivered in recent years and provides a roadmap to ensure we continue our focus on improving gender equality in support of our ongoing strategic goal to be the *Best Place to Work*.'

Ms Stewart said the focus for the Fund over the coming 12 months was to undertake further gender pay gap analysis, to expand the organisation's activities in relation to inclusion and continue to encourage and support all of its team to take advantage of the organisation's parental leave entitlements. These include providing the potential for 14 weeks leave for secondary carers and paying superannuation on paid and unpaid parental leave up to 12 months.

'We are so proud to have received the WGEA Employer of Choice citation for the past five years, but we know there is always more that we can do, both as an employer and as importantly, as an advocate for our members; more than two-thirds of whom are women.'

'As the recent COVID-19 recession showed us, Australian women are still over-represented in insecure, part-time work and despite all the efforts of organisations such as ours, continue to be disadvantaged by a stubbornly high gender pay gap that remains a disappointing 14%.'

'But the pandemic has also resulted in a noticeable cultural shift, with men and women now viewing flexibility as the norm.

'Over the past 12 months, many fathers for example have had the opportunity to be more hands on and take a larger role in caring for family, something that has too often been regarded as a woman's domain.

'This is one of the silver linings of the pandemic and something we need to focus on for the future. Both men and women should be encouraged and supported to embrace flexibility and caring responsibilities to help remove some of the structural disadvantages that so many Australian women face.

'This way we can ensure that women not only prosper today but can also achieve a confident and comfortable tomorrow.'

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**Note to Editors:**

Previously known as First State Super we changed our name to **Aware Super** in September 2020.

Aware Super is a name that reflects our members and what we stand for. It echoes the strengths of our past, aligning to our purpose to be a force for good in superannuation, retirement, and advice, driving better outcomes for our members, their families, and communities.

First State Super's been the fund for people who value community since 1992, we're now one of Australia's largest funds and we're continuing to grow. We merged with VicSuper and WA Super last year and now manage \$140 billion in savings for more than 1 million members located across the country.

Our members work in roles that breathe life into their communities and they expect us to do the same. So, we invest in assets that we believe will make a positive difference today - improving our communities, building a more a sustainable economy and supporting employment both locally and globally at the same time as providing strong long-term returns.

Discover how we're helping members do well financially while doing good in the world: Visit [aware.com.au](http://aware.com.au).