

Professor Cobie Rudd invited to address the National Foundation for Australian Women on “Women in Science – Strategies to promote diversity in science research”.

Sponsored by Deloitte, the National Foundation for Australian Women (NFWA) held their Perth WA event on 7 June 2016 to promote gender equity in science and technology. Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Strategic Partnerships) and ECU Lead for Athena SWAN, Professor Cobie Rudd spoke on promoting diversity in science research and the Pilot of the Athena SWAN Charter in Australia. She was joined by fellow speaker and Chair of the Women in Technology, Western Australia, Ms Marjolein Towers.

Presenting on women in higher education, Professor Rudd discussed the challenges of getting women into science and then retaining them in their chosen study and research pathways. The ongoing statistics show that the further women go in scientific educations and careers, the less likely they will remain in science-related fields or professions (known as ‘the leaky pipeline’).

ECU is participating in the first Australia Pilot of the Athena SWAN Charter which aims to achieve better attraction and retention of women in science, technology, engineering, maths and medicine (STEMM). Australia is the first nation beyond the UK and Ireland to pilot the program. The importance of STEMM is acknowledged by industry and business. Experts predict that 75 per cent of the fastest growing occupations will require skills in STEM.

“This event tonight is timely in terms of challenges, as more and more, we seem to also be recognising how vital the university sector is to Australia’s prosperity. In fact, we’re trying to recover from having one of the lowest percentages of industry and university collaboration in the world.”

Professor Rudd highlighted the importance of strengthening teaching capacity in primary and secondary schools in STEMM to ensure there is a pipeline to university delivering inter-generations of innovators and inventors.

“The Athena SWAN initiative is catalyst to ensure there’s better information out there about women’s equality and to change the working environment for everyone in a systematic way.”

ECU is proud to have recently become industry partners with Women in Technology, WA (WiTWA) in promoting technology to young women. For more information please visit the [website](#).

@Green_Dot Prof Cobie Rudd from @ECU speaks about gender inequality in Perth universities #STEM



Picture: Cultural change required across all sectors, Professor Cobie Rudd speaks at the NFWA event, 7 June 2016