



# Sydney Women's Leadership Program - Academic Cohort

## Program Details

The University is committed to gender equity, and in particular, accelerating the careers of a pool of talented women to progress into leadership positions.

Under the Sponsorship of Prof. Annamarie Jagose, Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor, this program invites applications from academic women at Level B and offers participants a range of delivery modes to create an enriched and engaging learning experience. Participants will be supported through action-learning workshops specific to the academic career as well as individual coaching and mentoring opportunities to build their career strength and leadership potential. Despite their potential, Level B academic women can be at considerable risk of building roles and profiles that reduce their competitiveness. This can be due to many reasons, including a lack of mentorship, poor guidance from supervisors and insufficient insight into career management principles and University expectations.

Operating as a series of full-day workshops, with career coaching, the program encourages deep engagement with successful academic principles, building mentorship and sponsorship and planning for promotion, visibility and success. It offers a structured learning sequence that encourages participants to build increased understanding of their academic and leadership strengths and capabilities, the University context and the ways in which they can build influence and impact. The program encourages women to be actively engaged in evaluating and shaping their roles to make a difference. Importantly, it extends their networks and peer support span, building a sustainable and extensive pool of contacts that continue to interact and explore collective concerns.

Note that Sydney Women's Leadership Program is being reviewed for 2025 and this may result in some changes to content and structure.

## Key Program Themes

- Tailored career development
- Self-reflection
- Feedback
- Mentorship
- Vision setting
- Acceleration of advancement to leadership programs

### Who is this program intended for?

As a guide, participants are expected to be:

**Academic:** Level B

Identifies as a woman

## Program Objectives

This program will encourage participants to build an increased understanding of their career strengths and leadership potential.

The overall program will offer the participants benefits which include:

- Increased visibility with opportunities to network with senior leaders and other women across the University
- An enhanced insight into their skills and capabilities, including the impact of their career strategies
- Additional skills to increase the effectiveness of their career management strategies, visibility and positioning as a senior leader
- Engagement with a Level C/D mentor who can support their career development needs
- Support to strategically navigate academic career pathways including promotion applications support where relevant
- Skills to impact and influence their immediate workplace communities as senior women.
- A broader understanding of the University as a whole and the diverse experiences of their peers.

## Program Elements

**Career Focused Workshops** - A series of workshops will be presented, focusing on academic career management, research, teaching and governance/leadership and engagement and building a sustainable and successful promotion strategy. These workshops will encourage each participant to build a strong narrative and clear priorities to support their career success. Various themes are carried through the program, emphasising the need to plan, be strategic, set up strong mentorship and support bases, build personal agency and extend reach and visibility.

**Mentoring** - As part of the program, each participant will be matched with a career mentor. The resultant relationship will continue through the remainder of the program, acting as an important source of support and guidance on developmental strategies. The mentors will be drawn from past participants, providing further capacity to work across faculties and build robust networks.

**Coaching** - The program will conclude with an individualized coaching session to allow each individual to explore any strategies, issues or questions that have emerged. Those seeking promotion in the coming year will be guided through the development of their submission.

**Contextualized Learning** - Panels of university leaders and peer models will be integrated in the program to offer further contextualisation.

## Facilitator

Shelda Debowski, PhD, M.Ed, B.Ed, CAHRI, FAIM, GAICD is a higher education consultant, leadership developer and researcher. She works with universities in Australia and overseas, supporting their strategic capacity building of academics and work communities. Shelda provides a range of services relating to organisational renewal, leadership, career management, researcher and academic capacity building and customised solutions. Her support includes the provision of workshops, programs, coaching, facilitation and diagnostic reviews to enable better institutional outcomes.

Shelda has published extensively on academic leadership and capacity building. Her books include: *The New Academic: A Strategic Handbook* (Open University Press, 2012); *Leading Academic Networks* (HERDSA, 2014) and *Developing Academics: The Essential Higher Education Handbook* (Routledge, 2017). She now works across the international sector as a consultant. Her clients include universities and organisations in Japan, New Zealand, the U.S., U.K. and Australia.

## Nomination

Nominations for this program are managed by each faculty, school and professional unit. The nomination process takes place in November/December each year for the following year's program. If you are interested in potentially being nominated for this program please discuss this with your supervisor/manager.

## Contact

For further information contact:



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