

# Australia Awards Women's Leadership Initiative Information Sheet for Host Organisations



The Women's Leadership Initiative (WLI) is a five-year \$5.4 million initiative of the Australian Government promoting women's leadership and building a future generation of women leaders in the Pacific.

WLI provides a range of learning, networking and development opportunities to Australia Awards scholars from the Pacific who are studying at Australian universities and other tertiary institutions.

WLI is delivered in three tiers:

- **Tier 1 Learning and Networking events:** half-day seminars on topical issues held across Australia and open to all current Australia Awards scholars (women and men).
- **Tier 2 Leadership and Mentoring program:** up to thirty-five Pacific women scholars undertake an 18-month program, which includes leadership intensives and being matched with an Australian woman mentor.
- **Tier 3 Workplace Internships:** opportunities to work within Australian and Pacific organisations are available to approximately ten Tier 2 participants each year.

*“My placement has provided quite an exposure and learning for me. I have been able to observe the workflow and culture within the perioperative environment ... [I've been] exposed to a variety of ... specialty areas, all which were lifelong learning experiences. I will proudly take this learning back to Samoa and share it with my colleagues”.*

Falelua Maua (Samoa), Masters of Nursing (QUT), 2018

## Tier 3 Workplace Internships

Workplace internships (Tier 3) are the pinnacle of WLI.

Star performers from the Leadership and Mentoring program (Tier 2) are provided with the opportunity to work within Australian or Pacific organisations. Through targeted internships, they forge lasting leadership and professional skills, and develop networks to support them into the future.

Host organisations likewise gain practical knowledge and professional inputs from future Pacific leaders, with their networks broadened into Pacific environments.

Internships are intended to be mutually beneficial and are tailored to meet the needs of the host organisation and the individual participant.

Recent workplace internships hosted on WLI include:

- A one-month cost-share placement with a national scientific research organisation - the intern worked at the organisation's headquarters and travelled to project sites in Australia and Papua New Guinea to gain in-depth understanding of the daily operations and the context(s) within which the organisation works.
- A semester-long placement with a private secondary school - the intern spent one day a week for a semester working across different sections within the school to develop a broad view of the school's overall operations.
- A three-week full-time placement in a major public hospital - the intern observed day-to-day clinical and operational functions of the hospital's perioperative services department.
- A fixed-term output-based placement with a non-government organisation - the intern completed a discrete research project for the organisation, drawing on her own and the NGO's expertise and resources to complete the task.

## Identifying internship opportunities

Many internships are identified through the existing relationship between a participant and her Australian mentor. Mentors either host the intern at their own workplace or assist in identifying a suitable placement that is in line with the participant's interests and needs.

Prospective host organisations are welcome to identify a specific project or opportunity that will benefit both the organisation and a Pacific woman scholar. WLI helps the organisation to match suitable Tier 2 participants to these opportunities.

Placements can take a range of forms, depending on the specific location, interests, and resources of the participant and host organisation. They should have a clear benefit to the participant, the participating organisation and the Pacific region, whilst not taking the place of, or resembling, formal employment.

## What sort of hosts are needed?

Host organisations may be government departments, non-government organisations, research or educational institutions, private sector businesses, peak bodies, or regional agencies, based either in Australia or the Pacific.

In 2019, seventy women based at over 25 Australian universities will be participating in the Tier 2 program. These women represent 10 Pacific Island countries and are experienced and interested in a highly diverse range of sectors. Most participants come to the program with significant work experience, having already worked in their countries' public and/or private sectors.

Their current sectors include politics and diplomacy, agriculture and agri-business, governance, public policy, finance, public and clinical health, law, engineering, disability inclusion, education, and community development.

Participants may either be based in Australian universities throughout the program or complete their studies and return to their home countries during the 18 months. This wide range of participants' locations increases placement opportunities; allowing placements to take place across Australia or within organisations (or branch offices) based in Pacific Island countries.

Placements may be identified and commenced at any time of year, depending on the nature of the placement, the needs / requirements of the host organisation, and the availability of a suitable participant.

Responsibilities and expectations are confirmed during drafting of the placement proposal and Letter of Agreement. These are finalised and agreed before the placement commences.

It is anticipated that networking and shadowing opportunities will be central to most placements.

*“My placement will be of significant benefit to my professional career. The knowledge that I have gained ... will [assist in] developing agribusiness in PNG and the Pacific.”*

Lavinia ToVue (PNG), Masters of Agribusiness (UQ), 2018

## How WLI supports the internship

Based on individual circumstances, WLI provides a range of advice and logistical support to internships. This includes:

- supporting host organisations to scope placements and identify suitable interns;
- supporting the intern and host organisation to confirm the objectives, activities, timings and cost / resource implications of the placement (Placement Proposal);
- financial contributions towards internship costs, including travel and living expenses, visa costs and insurances (as applicable); and
- logistical and other support as required; for example, booking flights and accommodation.

## What is expected of host organisations?

Host organisations are expected to provide a stimulating and comprehensive internship for the intern. Where possible, we ask that host organisations cost share internships – negotiated during the scoping process.

At a minimum, host organisations are expected to:

- work with the intern and WLI to confirm the specific objectives, activities, timings and cost / resource implications of the placement;
- provide the necessary equipment and space (computer, phone, desk etc.) to support the intern for the duration of the placement;
- provide an orientation program and ongoing guidance and supervision for the duration of the placement; and
- provide formal feedback on the internship and the intern's performance on completion of the placement.

As workplace internships vary widely in scope, cost, location and duration, factors are discussed and negotiated between WLI and potential host organisations before an offer is made to a suitable participant.

## What is expected of participants / interns?

WLI interns are expected to:

- Work with the host organisation and WLI to confirm the placement's specific objectives, activities, timings and cost / resource implications (Placement Proposal);
- Undertake the internship as agreed in the proposal.
- Adhere to the host organisation's normal working hours, Code of Conduct and other regulations, as specified in the Letter of Agreement.
- On completion of the internship, prepare a placement report for the host organisation and WLI. The report outlines the placement experience, examines how the placement supported the intern's long-term career goals, and considers how the placement may impact and benefit the intern's country and the Pacific region.

## Interested or want to know more?

Should your organisation be interested to learn more about WLI, and internship opportunities, please contact **Nicolette Solomon**, WLI Program Manager:

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