

Sheleads
CONFERENCE



RISE
UP



2024 SHE LEADS CONFERENCE
EVENT PROGRAM



YWCA
CANNBERRA

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We would like to begin by acknowledging the traditional owners and custodians of the land on which we gather today, the Ngunnawal people and pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and future, as well as acknowledge any Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people here today.

We also extend our respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women who for thousands of years have preserved the culture and practices of their communities on country.

This land was never surrendered, and we acknowledge that it always was and will continue to always be Aboriginal land.



WIFI LOGIN

Network: Rex Conference

Password: rexconf2018

OUR PROGRAM: FRIDAY 2 AUGUST

TIME	ACTIVITY	ROOM
8:00 - 9:00am	Arrivals	Main Foyer
9:00 - 9:05am	MC Welcome Message	Great Room
9:05 - 9:10am	Welcome to Country	Great Room
9:20 - 10:00am	Jess Hill	Great Room
Keynote	Slido Code: #SheLeadsK1	
10:00 - 10:40am	Pauline Nguyen	Great Room
Keynote	Slido Code: #SheLeadsK2	
10:40 - 11:20AM	MORNING TEA	MAIN FOYER & BALLROOM FOYER
11:20 - 12:20pm	Rising Up in Corporate: Women Driving Change and Leading with Authority <i>Caterina Giorgi, Frances Crimmins, Shannon O'Shea, Hala Batainah, Carina Zeccola</i>	Great Room
Panel Sessions	Discover how influential women reshape corporate landscapes with impactful decisions and innovative leadership. Gain insights into their strategies, challenges, and triumphs. Celebrate the inspiring stories of women making a lasting impact and driving positive change in the corporate world.	

TIME	ACTIVITY	ROOM
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Rising Against Gender Barriers in the Workforce

Room 6

Dr. Chloe Lim (panel facilitator), Lorna Deng, Dr. Clara Tuck Meng Soo, Han Worsley

Addressing gender disparities and prioritising well-being is crucial for inclusive, productive work environments. This panel explores strategies, challenges, and successes in breaking down gender barriers, emphasising employee wellbeing. It examines intersectionality, acknowledging how race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation compound gender issues. Learn about gender-inclusive policies, well-being promotion, and the role of leadership in fostering inclusivity and allyship.

Rising Voices: Women Leading Community Activism

Ballroom

April H el ene-Horton (panel facilitator), Sonia Di Mezza, Belinda Kendall, Louise Ellery

This panel discussion explores the pivotal role of women in driving social change. Through inspiring conversations, learn how women lead activism, mobilise communities, and challenge norms across various spheres. Discover stories of resilience, leadership, and solidarity, showcasing the diverse ways women shape a more just and equitable society.

TIME	ACTIVITY	ROOM
12:30 - 1:30PM	LUNCH	MAIN FOYER & BALLROOM FOYER

1:30 - 2:30pm

Mastering Balance and Setting Clear Boundaries for Rising Leadership Success

Great Room

Seminars

Presented by: Tania Willis

Join our seminar on achieving leadership success through balanced boundary-setting. Discover strategies for navigating the delicate balance between flexibility and firmness. Learn how to establish clear boundaries that foster productivity, collaboration, and respect within your team.

Rise Up: Unveiling Ageism - Embrace Your Voice at Any Stage

Room 6

Presented by: Deanne Ranyard

Deanne invites you to shed societal expectations and reclaim your voice. Join us as we confront ageism, empowering individuals to rise above stereotypes and assert their worth regardless of age or appearance. It's time to embrace authenticity and advocate for change.

Empowerment in Action: How to Rise Up when Pushed Down

Ballroom

Presented by: Nadia Pessarossi

As women in leadership roles, we encounter distinct obstacles and setbacks, yet our responses to these moments shape our triumphs.

TIME	ACTIVITY	ROOM
	<p>Join Nadia as she illuminates strategies and insights for transforming adversity into opportunity, empowering attendees to emerge from setbacks with renewed strength and resilience.</p> <p>Gain practical insights into identifying common challenges in boundary-setting and implementing effective communication techniques. Whether you're a seasoned leader or an emerging one, this seminar equips you with the tools to enhance your leadership effectiveness. Don't miss this opportunity to refine your approach and drive organisational success through mastering the art of balance and boundary-setting.</p>	
2:30 - 3:00PM	AFTERNOON TEA	MAIN FOYER & BALLROOM FOYER
3:00 - 3:40pm	Kath Ebbs	Great Room
Keynote	Slido Code: #SheLeadsK3	
3:40 - 4:00pm	HESTA Lucky Draw	Great Room
4:00 - 4:40pm	Teela Reid	Great Room
Keynote	Slido Code: #SheLeadsK4	
4:40 - 4:50pm	Closing Remarks	Great Room
4:50 - 5:00pm	MC to conclude, conference ends	

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DO YOU HAVE QUESTIONS FOR OUR KEYNOTE SPEAKERS?

Throughout the day we'll be taking audience questions using the app, **Slido**.

STEP 1. VISIT SLIDO.COM

STEP 2. INSERT THE KEYNOTE CODE

STEP 3. SUBMIT YOUR QUESTIONS!

MC

JUANITA PHILLIPS

SHE/HER

Juanita Phillips is a journalist, author, MC, and one of Australia's longest-serving ABC TV newsreaders. She presented the 7pm News in Sydney for 21 years and, prior to that, was an anchor for CNN International, the BBC in London, and Network 10 in Australia. She began her career as a newspaper feature writer and columnist.

Juanita is the author of *The Newspaper Kids* children's book series and a memoir about gender issues and working motherhood titled *A Pressure Cooker Saved My Life*. Before leaving the ABC in 2023, she advocated for the national broadcaster's female journalists on issues including equal pay, ageism, bullying, and sex discrimination



KEYNOTE SPEAKER

JESS HILL

SHE/HER



Jess Hill has become one of Australia's most recognised and respected thinkers on gendered violence. In addition to her broadcast work—including two highly acclaimed docuseries on SBS, a Quarterly Essay titled *The Reckoning*, and a podcast series on coercive control titled *The Trap*—she has spoken at over 300 events to diverse audiences across the country.

Her work has received multiple awards, including two Walkley Awards, an Amnesty International Award, and the Stella Prize in 2020. In 2023, she was named Marie Claire's Changemaker of the Year, and in 2024, she was awarded the NSW Premier's Woman of Excellence.

Slido Code: [#SheLeadsK1](#)

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

PAULINE NGUYEN

SHE/HER



Pauline Nguyen's journey from war-torn Vietnam to success epitomises resilience. Escaping to Australia as a toddler, she endured abuse, which she now views as transformative. Rising from trauma, she became a sought-after development coach, entrepreneur, author, and speaker. Dubbed "the most grounded spiritual entrepreneur" by the Huffington Post, she is recognised among Australia's top female entrepreneurs and global influencers.

With a unique self-mastery process, Pauline has healed and empowered thousands. Combining science and spirituality, she co-founded Red Lantern, the world's most-awarded Vietnamese restaurant. Pauline's book, *The Way of the Spiritual Entrepreneur*, will be available for purchase during Morning Tea and Lunch. Her story inspires, showcasing the power of perseverance and the ability to thrive beyond adversity.

Slido Code: [#SheLeadsK2](#)

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

KATH EBBS

THEY/THEM



Kath Ebbs is a queer actor, presenter, writer, and content creator. With over 80,000 followers on Instagram, their work focuses on visibility and advocacy, with storytelling at its heart. Arguably one of the original Instagram influencers, Kath grew their online following through meme culture as part of one of the first content collectives and has continued to foster that community while harnessing the power of new-age advertising.

In addition to being a regular panellist on ABC's *The Drum*, they are also the producer and host of their own online talk show titled *Conversations with Kath*, where they sit down to have hard, soft, and sometimes silly conversations with diverse guests on a variety of topics.

They continue to push for change in spaces both on and offline by fusing their creativity with their love for what it means to be human.

Slido Code: [#SheLeadsK3](#)

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

TEELA REID

SHE/HER



Teela Reid is a bold and rebellious lawyer who proudly embodies her Wiradjuri and Wailwan heritage. Beyond her legal prowess, she's a passionate storyteller and essayist, co-founding @blackfulla_bookclub, which celebrates First Nations' storytelling legacy. As Special Counsel at the Environmental Defenders Office, she safeguards cultural heritage, merging legal expertise with community activism.

With a background in Aboriginal Land Rights litigation, Teela served as the inaugural First Nations Lawyer in Residence at The University of Sydney Law School. Her leadership expertise focuses on systemic change, such as reshaping constitutional discourse, notably on the Uluru Statement from the Heart, as well as the establishment of the Walama Court in NSW. Teela's journey embodies resilience, advocacy, and transformative change.

Slido Code: [#SheLeadsK4](#)

FACILITATOR

APRIL HÉLÈNE-HORTON

SHE/HER



Known as 'The Bodzilla,' **April Hélène-Horton** is a champion of body acceptance and fat positivity with unapologetic authenticity. As a queer, fat, neurodivergent woman of colour, she challenges fatphobia intersecting with racism. Her journey, shared on Instagram, fosters acceptance and empowerment.

Her contagious joy and dedication to self-expression inspire collective empowerment, promoting a world of self-love and acceptance beyond societal standards. Join April on a transformative journey towards embracing our true selves and celebrating diversity.

April broke barriers as the first fat model featured on an Australian billboard campaign and collaborates with brands like Dove and Bumble to challenge norms. Despite facing trolls, she persists, amplifying marginalised voices through media appearances and her podcast, *The Bodcast*.

RISING VOICES: WOMEN LEADING COMMUNITY ACTIVISM

PANELLIST

LOUISE ELLERY

SHE/HER



At 21, **Louise Ellery** faced a life-altering accident and was given the prognosis of remaining in a vegetative state requiring long-term care. Defying these expectations, Louise has fought tirelessly to reclaim her life, overcoming an Acquired Brain Injury. She became a four-time Paralympian, representing Australia in ten international competitions, and even won gold at the Commonwealth Games, setting a world record.

Now retired from sports, she is passionately involved in the arts, having written and produced an award-winning short film titled *With Little Hope*. As an actress, Louise lives by the motto: "Rise up, embrace the moment, and seize the opportunities."

PANELLIST

SONIA DI MEZZA

SHE/HER



Sonia Di Mezza is an Italian-Australian from a culturally and linguistically diverse background. She is the CEO of the Migrant and Refugee Settlement Services (MARSS), a solicitor, and a human rights lawyer.

She has set up and managed a project to support widowed women in Pakistan, worked as a refugee lawyer in Australian detention centres, served as a Resettlement Officer for the UNHCR in Lebanon, established a legal aid project in North Sudan for displaced persons, and worked for a local Indian NGO rescuing child labourers enslaved in factories.

She co-authored the book *Lovesick*, which details her Indian friend's contraction of HIV in an arranged marriage.

PANELLIST

BELINDA KENDALL

SHE/HER



Belinda Kendall is an Aboriginal woman who identifies with the Barkindji, Wailan, Worimi, and Wiradjuri peoples. She has extensive management and therapeutic care experience within the child and family safety and wellbeing, healing, leadership, and community sectors.

Belinda is well known for her leadership and is an experienced businesswoman and manager with a deep understanding of strategic planning, management, and the support of multi-disciplinary teams. She has worked at grassroots levels through to senior executive levels, engaging nationally with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, families, and communities as a lead Aboriginal consultant on various projects.

She provides leadership, mentoring, and support in relation to cultural safety, protocols, therapeutic care, driving change, and leadership.

[Click here to scroll back to program](#)

Rise Up 15

RISING UP IN CORPORATE: WOMEN DRIVING CHANGE AND LEADING WITH AUTHORITY

FACILITATOR

CATERINA GIORGI

SHE/HER



Caterina Giorgi is the CEO of the Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE). She is a founding member of Women in Public Health and the founder of For Purpose.

Caterina serves as an Ambassador for No Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (NOFASD) and has held board positions with YMCA Canberra and Fair Agenda.

She holds an honours degree in public health and is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD).

PANELLIST

FRANCES CRIMMINS

SHE/HER



Frances Crimmins, driven by feminist beliefs and a commitment to social justice joined YWCA Canberra in 2010. As CEO since 2013, she has been instrumental in steering the organisation through transformative changes, achieving financial growth, and expanding services. Under her leadership, YWCA Canberra has solidified its position as a pivotal large community service provider and advocacy organisation within the ACT region.

Frances is the Chair of the Governance Committee for Homelessness Australia and the National Women's Safety Alliance. She also serves on the ACT Work Safety Council. Her dedication and impact have been recognised with prestigious accolades, such as the Edna Ryan Award and the ACT Leader of the Year.

PANELLIST

SHANNON O'SHEA

SHE/HER



Shannon O'Shea is the General Manager of New Business and Growth Enablement for HESTA. With a proud 20 years' experience in the superannuation and finance sector, Shannon's passion is making superannuation a benefit everyday Australian's can easily engage in and value.

Shannon has worked across multiple funds and organisations in Leadership and Growth roles. Completing her MBA in 2017 and her Women on Boards program in 2018. Achieving Partner at a Global consultancy firm in 2020.

Shannon has a breadth of experience working to achieve growth business goals, with a focus on generating new streams of revenue, business transformation, customer experience and maximising team engagement.

PANELLIST

HALA BATAINAH

SHE/HER



Hala Batainah is Chair of the Canberra Innovation Network, an organisation focused on creating impact for Canberra by accelerating start-ups, scale-ups, innovation, and entrepreneurship. Hala has held senior executive roles with IBM and Microsoft and launched her coaching and consulting business in 2018, focusing on leaders who want to drive meaningful impact.

Hala is passionate about information technology (IT), women in IT and the role of IT in solving society's challenges. She was named WICKed woman of the year (twice) by the Women in Information and Communication (WIC) for contributing to the IT industry and mentoring women in IT.

PANELLIST

CARINA ZECCOLA

SHE/HER



Carina Zeccola is a trailblazing commercial lawyer at Griffin Legal, specialising in corporate governance and privacy solutions for government entities. As Managing Director of a nationally operating business, she spearheads strategic growth initiatives across multiple states.

Passionate about advancing governance standards and driving community impact, Carina is steadfast in nurturing growth and excellence in both legal practice and nonprofit leadership, embodying a commitment to feminist principles of equity and empowerment.

RISING AGAINST GENDER BARRIERS IN THE WORKFORCE

FACILITATOR

DR CHLOE LIM

SHE/HER



Dr. Chloe Lim is a distinguished professional who integrates expertise in science, business, and leadership. Holding a PhD in medical science, she dedicated over 14 years to pioneering research in epigenetics before transitioning to a pivotal role as a regulatory scientist in the government sector.

As a migrant who understands the challenges of living abroad, Dr. Lim shares her story in *Undefeated* and hosts the *CALD Voices in STEM* podcast. She champions gender equity by mentoring through non-profits like Gotara and STEM Sisters.

Honoured as the 2023 Canberra Women in Business Micro Businesswoman of the Year, Dr. Lim's company, *Twisty Science* helps entrepreneurs and leaders excel.

PANELLIST

DR CLARA TUCK MENG SOO

SHE/HER



Dr. Clara Tuck Meng Soo is a Canberra general practitioner who has served and supported diverse populations, including the LGBTQIA+ community, people with HIV, and those with drug dependencies. She has provided care to the transgender community for over 20 years and began her own gender transition in 2017. Clara leads the LGBTQIA+ friendly East Canberra General Practice and trains future doctors.

In 2016, she received a Medal of the Order of Australia for her medical services, which she returned in 2021 in protest against Margaret Court's honour upgrade. As the past President of AusPATH, Clara advocates for trans people's health and rights and supports diversity and inclusion in Australia.

PANELLIST

HAN WORSLEY

THEY/THEM



Han Worsley is a passionate educator, gender equality advocate, and proud non-binary individual. Han's commitment to rural and remote communities stems from growing up on the family farm north of Nullamanna, NSW, population 40.

Han works at the Country Universities Centre Snowy Monaro campus in Cooma, on Ngarigo Country. By coordinating outreach and engagement programs, they support locals in accessing tertiary education despite living far from university campuses. Previously, Han was CEO of Country to Canberra, a national not-for-profit that empowers young rural women and non-binary people to achieve leadership roles.

Han won the ACT Canberra Community Champion Under 40 and Out For Australia's 30 Under 30 Awards in 2021. They were also awarded an Australian Institute of Company Directors Women's Rural, Regional, and Remote Diversity Scholarship for 2022.

PANELLIST

LORNA DENG

SHE/HER



Lorna Deng is an HR professional and the co-founder of DivTal, a new social enterprise that aims to break down employment barriers for people from minority backgrounds. She is a human resources leader with professional experience in the health, education, banking, and not-for-profit sectors in Australia and Europe. Recognised by SmartCompany as one of "Australia's 13 most inspiring female entrepreneurs," her purpose is to help create a more inclusive future of work.

Lorna is a keynote speaker, a champion for inclusion, and a mentor to youth from marginalised backgrounds. She holds a Bachelor of Psychological Sciences from Monash University.

[Click here to scroll back to program](#)

**“THERE ARE SO MANY PEOPLE OUT THERE WHO
WILL TELL YOU THAT YOU CAN’T. WHAT YOU’VE GOT
TO DO IS TURN AROUND AND SAY ‘WATCH ME.’”**

- LAYNE BEACHLEY

SEMINAR: MASTERING BALANCE AND SETTING CLEAR BOUNDARIES FOR RISING LEADERSHIP SUCCESS

SEMINAR FACILITATOR

TANIA WILLIS

SHE/HER



Tania Willis, a seasoned senior leader and higher education professional, specialises in empowering leaders to drive real change through clarity and confidence. With extensive leadership and coaching qualifications, she's renowned for fostering high-performing, positive work cultures and supporting career advancement.

Tania's mission is to help leaders maximise their strengths by providing tools for sustained change. Experienced in coaching emerging and executive leaders, she excels in leadership development, personal efficiency, and career coaching.

Having impacted diverse organisations, including government departments and educational institutions, Tania's expertise cultivates confident, influential leaders primed for impactful transformation.

SEMINAR: EMPOWERMENT IN ACTION: HOW TO RISE UP WHEN PUSHED DOWN

SEMINAR FACILITATOR

NADIA PESSAROSSİ

SHE/HER

Nadia Pessarossi epitomises a commitment to leveraging her talents for positive change, adeptly translating potential into tangible results. With over twenty-five years of diverse experience spanning business and project management across private, public, and non-profit sectors, she excels in day-to-day operations, business development, and fostering inclusive cultures.

Renowned for her exceptional leadership, Nadia's track record showcases exemplary people management, strategic acumen, and unwavering dedication. Her ability to cultivate strong relationships, navigate high-pressure environments, and drive transformative outcomes underscores her passion, tenacity, and unwavering work ethic.

Nadia embodies a relentless drive to elevate performance and effect meaningful change in every endeavour.



SEMINAR: RISE UP: UNVEILING AGEISM - EMBRACE YOUR VOICE AT ANY STAGE

SEMINAR FACILITATOR

DEANNE RANYARD

SHE/HER

Deanne Ranyard is a professional with over 30 years of leadership and expertise in Vocational Education and Training (VET).

Her career is defined by a commitment to transformative team building, strategic leadership, and exceptional educational experiences.

Deanne's visionary leadership has shaped strategic programs that embrace learning, inspire performance and value diversity. Her strong ability to foster inclusive cultures, leaves an indelible mark on VET, workforce development, and community engagement.



**“NEVER LIMIT YOURSELF BECAUSE OF OTHERS’
LIMITED IMAGINATION; NEVER LIMIT OTHERS
BECAUSE OF YOUR OWN LIMITED IMAGINATION.”**

- MAE JEMISON



YWCA CANBERRA

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Pulse8 Strategies is proudly female owned and led by Nadia Pessarossi.

Taking a holistic human approach to business, Pulse8 Strategies works with you on your business in Government, Corporate and the not-for-profit sector.

Pulse8 offers expert consultants in business strategy, HR and recruitment, workforce planning, change management, business coaching, business setup, PR, comms and marketing and graphic design...to name a few!

Pulse8 also has a legal branch and finance for your bookkeeping and accountant needs.

Pulse 8 has supported She Leads for 5 years and is super proud to be the Champion sponsor of She Leads for 2024.

Join Nadia in her She Leads Conference seminar on 'Empowerment in Action: How to Rise Up when Pushed Down'.

contact@pulse8strategies.com.au

CANBERRA REX HOTEL - VENUE PARTNER

Finding the right space to host the She Leads Conference is about more than just the room. It's about a space that creates the right energy for a day of inspiration, empowerment, and disrupting the mainstream concept of leadership.

The Canberra Rex Hotel is the perfect fit.

www.canberrarexhotel.com.au



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HESTA - SHE LEADS ALLY

HESTA



An Industry
SuperFund

HESTA has a long history of partnering with YWCA Canberra and as a values-led superannuation fund that advocates for social change through organisation policy and culture, it's a partnership that makes sense for both organisations.

www.hesta.com.au



WOOLWORTHS AT WORK - SHE LEADS ALLY



Woolworths
at Work

"As a leader, I'm committed to creating healthy organisations. Women in leadership roles have the power to unlock smart, creative, strategic perspectives that can enable a business to thrive in ways they never deemed possible. Studies have proven that companies that have appointed a female CEO or increased women in other key leadership positions outperform market value. So why is supporting women in leadership important - because healthy organisations know that it just makes good business sense"

- Brady Dennet, Head of Marketing, Woolworths at Work

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past disrespect**



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**“IF YOUR DREAMS DO NOT SCARE YOU,
THEY ARE NOT BIG ENOUGH”**

- ELLEN JOHNSON SIRLEAF



Sheleads

DIPLOMA

Accelerate your leadership journey with the She Leads Diploma!

YWCA Canberra recognises that there is no one way of leading. People from diverse backgrounds lead differently, and this helps organisations grow and consider a broad spectrum of ideas, experiences and opinions. However, too often diverse voices are left out of the conversation and their leadership potential ignored in the workplace.



Our She Leads Diploma of Leadership and Management (BSB51918) is a leadership program specifically for diverse leaders, considering intersectional issues and a range of leadership styles. Through the course, you will have the opportunity to gain the best-practice skills, theoretical knowledge, and networks to accelerate your leadership journey, in a safe and supportive environment.

The course is delivered over 12 dynamic full-day workshops (one a month) which are designed and delivered by a range of professional facilitators and feature live panel and discussions with women from all sectors, sharing their insights, challenges and strategies for building your leadership and management potential.

To find out more or enrol, contact the She Leads Diploma Coordinator at training@ywca-canberra.org.au

Our next intake starts October 2024.

sheleads.org.au/diploma



Sheleads
DIPLOMA



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ABOUT US: OUR WORK

YWCA Canberra is a feminist, not-for-profit organisation that has been providing community services and representing women's issues in Canberra since 1929. Through our national affiliation with YWCA Australia, we are part of the World YWCA network, which connects over 100 countries across the globe.

We provide essential, quality services for women, girls, and families in the ACT and surrounding regions. Our work spans various areas, including children's services, community development, homelessness and affordable housing, domestic and family violence, youth services, personal and professional training, women's leadership, and advocacy.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

PLEASE FILL OUT OUR SURVEY:



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YWCA CANBERRA

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