

Gender equity in Jewish community organisations in NSW

A survey commissioned for the Social Justice Summit 2022



Report of key findings

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Independent consultant & researcher, August 2022

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1 Introduction

About the survey

This survey aimed to investigate the experiences and perceptions of gender equity, gender-based discrimination, and gender-based harassment in Jewish communal organisations in NSW. It was commissioned for the Social Justice Summit 2022, the theme of which is “Leading the Change to Gender Equity in Jewish Leadership”, and was spearheaded by the National Council of Jewish Women of Australia (NCJWA) NSW, one of the Summit’s partner organisations.

Methodology

The survey was created on the online survey software Survey Monkey. It was designed to enable the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data, the latter through the inclusion of questions with open-text responses.

The survey was promoted by the Social Justice Summit’s partnering organisations through a variety of channels including electronic direct mail (EDM), social media posts and personal emails. In addition, individual members of the Summit’s Organising Committee shared the survey with their private networks. The survey was also promoted to the 56 Jewish communal organisations that are members of the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies. This promotion included handing out flyers and follow-up emails.

The survey was an abridged version of a survey carried out in Victoria in 2020–21 by a team of researchers at the Australian Centre for Jewish Civilisation, Monash University, led by Associate Professor David Slucki. We thank A/Prof Slucki for his support and assistance in enabling us to replicate their study for NSW, and for providing the data to enable comparisons with Victoria.

The survey was open for a period of five weeks from Tuesday 20 June through to Wednesday 27 July 2022. The creation of the survey, analysis of the data and preparation of this report was undertaken by Rebecca Forgasz, an independent consultant and researcher. In analysing the data, we were seeking primarily to identify differences between males and females, but also, importantly, between employees, volunteers and board members, who have structurally different experiences of their organisations. While we recognise that gender identity is more diverse than the traditional male/female binary, the number of respondents who identified otherwise was too small (1%) to warrant stand-alone analysis.

About the author of the report

Rebecca Forgasz has worked professionally in the Melbourne Jewish community for over 20 years. From 2010–2019 she was Director & CEO of the Jewish Museum of Australia, following which she held a position as Associate Professor (Practice) at Monash University in the Australian Centre for Jewish Civilisation (ACJC) and the Monash Intercultural Lab. She is currently working as an independent researcher and consultant.

While at the ACJC, Rebecca had a lead role in the inception of the “Gender in Jewish community organisations” research project in partnership with National Council of Jewish Women of Australia (Victoria), which produced the survey upon which

the current survey is based. More recently, she was part of the research team that undertook a community consultation in the Melbourne Jewish community to discover the responses of various stakeholders to the discussion paper Re-thinking the future of our schools: Making high quality Jewish education accessible to more children in Victoria.

Rebecca holds Masters degrees in Women’s Studies (Monash) and Jewish Studies (Oxon) and a Diploma of Education (Secondary). She is on the board of NCJWA Vic, where she also chairs the Advocacy Committee, and the Jewish Climate Network, which she co-founded in 2019.

2 Executive summary

This survey revealed a number of important insights into people's perceptions and experiences of gender equality, discrimination and harassment in Jewish community organisations in NSW. Some of the key findings are summarised here, together with a comparison to the corresponding data from the Victorian survey.

Note: the demographics and organisational profile of NSW and Victorian survey respondents were quite similar, except for the following notable differences:

- the Victorian sample included more 18–34 year olds (26% compared to 18%) and fewer 65+ (23% compared to 33%);
 - the NSW sample included more people working in welfare organisations (29% compared with 17% in Victoria) while the Victorian sample included more from cultural and educational institutions;
 - the Victorian sample included more board members and fewer volunteers than the NSW cohort.
1. While the large majority of NSW respondents indicated early in the survey that **gender equality is valued in their organisations** and that **gender discrimination and sexual harassment are not tolerated**, agreement on these points was not emphatic. A **significant minority** (up to 1 in 4 in some cases) were **unsure or disagreed** with these statements. (In the Victorian survey, there was a lower rate of disagreement on these points.) The doubts of this minority were certainly borne out in the findings revealed subsequently throughout the survey, namely:

- **Women were more than twice as likely** as men to have **experienced gender-based harassment** and to have been **impacted by gender-based discrimination**. The same pattern was evident in the Victorian data.
- **1 in 10 people** reported experiencing some form of **sexual harassment** in their organisation. The most common forms of harassment were “intrusive questions about your private life or physical appearance”, “sexually suggestive jokes or comments” and “unwelcome touching, hugging and other physical contact”. These findings were closely mirrored in the Victorian survey.
- Key forms of gender-based discrimination described by respondents included: **lack of flexible working arrangements** being offered, women not being listened to and not being offered the same **opportunities to advance in their career**.
- **Female employees were far less likely** than men to report that they received **regular pay rises**, had access to **professional development opportunities** or were actively supported to advance their careers. Female volunteers were also less likely than men to report that they had adequate training to fulfil their role. While there were similar gender differences in the Victorian data, they were not as pronounced as in NSW. Indeed, in one case, the results were reversed: more women than men in Victoria reported that they receive regular pay rises.

2. Separate from gender-based discrimination or harassment, **bullying was quite widely reported** among survey respondents. Each of the listed bullying behaviours were reported by **at least one-third of respondents**, with the most prevalent being favouritism, undermining, and shouting.

→ The prevalence of bullying behaviours was **slightly lower in Victoria**. However, there was a more pronounced **gender difference** in the data, with higher comparative rates of bullying reported by women in Victoria than in NSW.

3. Throughout the survey, there were **marked differences** in the perceptions and experiences of **employees, board members and volunteers**:

Board members

→ **Were far more positive** in their assessment of whether **people of diverse backgrounds are equally valued** in their organisations (though they were less likely than staff or volunteers to agree that people of all ages were equally valued, with younger board members most negative on this point);

→ **Much more likely to strongly agree** that **gender equality is valued** and that gender **discrimination and harassment are not tolerated**, despite the prevalence of such incidents, particularly among employees;

→ In the Victorian data, the pattern was similar but not as pronounced on the above two points, with board members' perceptions more closely aligned with those of employees.

→ Almost **half as likely as employees** to have **personally seen or experienced** gender-based harassment in their organisations. This was not the case in Victoria, where more board members than employees reported having seen gender-based harassment.

Employees

→ **Were far more likely** than either board members or volunteers to have **seen or experienced gender-based harassment** in their organisations or to have been impacted by gender-based discrimination. In Victoria, this was true in relation to volunteers but not board members;

→ **More likely to have day-to-day experiences** of work and career advancement in their organisations that were **differentiated along gender lines**, with various forms of direct and indirect discrimination against women evident.

Volunteers

→ Were least likely to have seen or experienced gender-based discrimination, harassment or bullying, both in NSW and Victoria.

4. For people who identified their sexuality as **gay/lesbian/bisexual/other**, there was a **negative trend** throughout the NSW survey in relation to perceptions and experiences of equality, discrimination, harassment and bullying.

- They were **less likely to agree that people of diverse backgrounds are treated equally** in their organisations, in particular people of diverse sexualities. (Indeed, respondents across the board were least likely to agree that people of all sexualities were equally valued, compared with people of diverse ages, genders or cultural backgrounds.)
 - They were **2-3 times more likely** than average to have **seen or experienced gender-based harassment** or been impacted by gender-based discrimination;
 - There was a **far higher prevalence of experiences of bullying** among this cohort – up to twice as common in some instances.
 - This trend was **not evident in the Victorian data at all**. There were **no notable differences** between the experiences and perceptions of heterosexual and non-heterosexual respondents.
5. The main **barriers to change** and to the attainment of greater gender equality identified by respondents were:
- general **resistance to change, entrenched attitudes** and an ‘insular’ culture, especially among long-standing employees; and
 - broader **social and systemic factors**, such as bias and fixed ideas about gender roles.
6. **Leadership** was mentioned often as a **key factor** in either driving or blocking change. However:
- **One in four people were either unsure or disagreed** that there were **leaders** in their organisation who **valued and promoted gender equality** (the figure in Victoria was lower – approximately 1 in 8);
 - **Only 3 in 5 board members** believed that there was a **good understanding of gender issues** on the board of their organisation (the same as in Victoria);
 - **Only 16% of respondents** (34% in Victoria) agreed that their organisations had **policies regarding gender equality**, a key tool available to leadership to demonstrate commitment and embed organisational change.

3 About the respondents

Over the five weeks the survey was open, 240 people commenced the survey. 205 continued beyond the initial screening questions and answered demographic questions and questions about their organisation and approximately 170 proceeded beyond that point to complete the bulk of the survey. The number of respondents to each

question varied, with some people choosing to skip some questions and some questions applicable only to certain categories of respondents (eg employees but not volunteers or board members). Throughout this report, the total of number of people who responded to a particular question is denoted by n.

Demographics

Gender (n=205)

67%
female

31%
male

1%
non-binary

Age (n=205)

33%
65+ (68)

20%
55-64 (42)

18%
18-34 (36)

16%
35-44 (33)

13%
45-54 (26)

Sexuality (n=202)

89%
Heterosexual

8%
Gay/lesbian or bisexual

2%
Other/prefer not to say

Cultural background (n=200)

84%
Ashkenazi

11%
other*

6%
Mizrachi/Sephardi

(including several who stated "Convert/ed", mixed Ashkenazi/Sephardi)

Has a disability (n=205)

5%

Denomination of Judaism (n=202)

32%
Modern Orthodox (65)

23%
Progressive/Reform (47)

11%
No denomination/Just Jewish (23)

11%
Secular (23)

9%
Conservative (19)

5%
Other (11)

5%
I am not Jewish (10)

2%
Strictly Orthodox/Haredi (4)

Jewish? (n=205)

93%
Yes

7%
No

Country of birth (n=204)

Australia	47%	97
South Africa	22%	46
United Kingdom	6%	12
Israel	5%	10
Europe (various)	5%	10
Former Soviet Union	3%	6
Hungary	3%	6
Other	9%	18
TOTAL	100%	205

Respondents' organisations and roles

Type of organisation (n=193)

29%

Welfare (56)

16%

Educational (31)

15%

Religious (29)

15%

Cultural (29)

14%

Other (28)

10%

Political (20)

"Other" responses included sport, women's, community, community services, health, aged care, security, housing and fundraising.

Role in the organisation (n=193)

Employee	38%	73
Volunteer	33%	64
Board member	26%	51
Other	3%	5
TOTAL	100%	193

Current or past involvement in community organisations (n=205)

74%

Current

26%

Past

"Other" responses included Deputy, CEO, Board member and volunteer and congregant.

Size of organisation (n=190)

33%

6-15 (62)

28%

More than 15 (54)

25%

1-5 (48)

14%

Not sure (26)

Number of employees (n=193)

66%

More than 15 (127)

16%

6-15 (31)

12%

Not sure (24)

6%

1-5 (11)

4 Experiences and perceptions of gender equality in the workplace

Organisational attitudes & culture

The survey began with a series of questions regarding the composition and culture of the organisations in which respondents work with respect to diversity and inclusion. These questions provided a context in which to consider the more specific issues of gender-based discrimination and sexual harassment.

- **75%** of respondents considered their workplace to be very or **somewhat diverse**, and 21% not diverse (n=175)
- **74%** said their organisation was **extremely or very accepting of diversity** among its employees and volunteers and 25% moderately or slightly accepting. Only 2% said not accepting at all (n=174)
- **76%** said people **behave professionally** towards each other in their organisation and 9% stated that this was not the case. 15% were unsure.

As part of these introductory, scene-setting questions, respondents were asked whether they felt they were valued within their organisations, and **whether people of diverse backgrounds were equally valued**. As seen in the table below, overall, there were high levels of agreement on all of these statements, including with regards to “people of all genders”. However:

- across all statements, women were less likely than men to strongly agree, but when strongly agree and somewhat agree responses were combined, the pattern of response was roughly the same;
- respondents were least confident that people of all sexualities were valued equally;
- respondents who identified as gay/lesbian/bisexual/other had notably lower levels of agreement across all statements.

Question 20: Below is a series of statements about how people are valued in your organisation. Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each statement. (n varied between 169-173)

	Strongly or somewhat agree		All respondents	
	All	Gay/lesbian/bisexual/other	Not sure	Strongly or somewhat disagree
I feel valued by my organisation	84%	76%	6%	11%
My opinion is valued by the leadership of my organisation	81%	64%	8%	11%
My opinion is valued by my teammates	89%	76%	6%	5%
People of all ages are valued equally	79%	59%	8%	13%
People of all genders are valued equally	82%	70%	8%	11%
People of all sexualities are valued equally	70%	53%	17%	13%
People of all cultural backgrounds are valued equally	80%	64%	9%	12%

When comparing the responses of employees, board members and volunteers, it was notable that **board members were more likely to agree** with all statements than both employees and volunteers (who were quite closely aligned on most questions), as shown in the graph below. The largest discrepancy on the statement “People of all sexualities are valued equally”, with which 90% of

board members agreed but only 56% of volunteers and 69% of employees. There was one exception to this pattern – on the statement “**That people of all ages are valued equally**”. On this proposition, board members (and also volunteers) were less likely to agree than employees, with **younger board members** most frequently **disagreeing** that this was the case.

Question 20: strongly or somewhat agree

	Employees	Volunteers	Board member
I feel valued by my organisation	77%	83%	92%
My opinion is valued by the leadership of my organisation	76%	76%	92%
My opinion is valued by my teammates	87%	85%	94%
People of all ages are valued equally	84%	74%	77%
People of all genders are valued equally	81%	77%	87%
People of all sexualities are valued equally	69%	56%	90%
People of all cultural backgrounds are valued equally	77%	76%	86%

Gender & sexuality-based harassment & discrimination

Several questions in the survey asked respondents direct questions about their perceptions of gender equality in their organisations, and about attitudes towards and experiences of gender-based discrimination and sexual harassment.

As shown in the table below there was a reasonably high level of agreement that **gender equality is valued, and that neither gender-**

based discrimination nor sexual harassment are tolerated in the organisations in which respondents worked. However, up to 1 in 5 respondents were neutral/uncertain or disagreed on most points. (On the very specific question of whether gender equality is promoted in recruitment practices, there was a higher degree of uncertainty.) Notably, there was **no overall difference between males and females** on these questions.

Question 27: Below are a number of statements about gender equality in your organisation. Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each statement. (n varied between 155-157)

	Strongly or somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Strongly or somewhat disagree
There are leaders in my organisation who value, support, and promote gender equality	74%	18%	9%
In my organisation, all people are treated with respect and dignity	80%	7%	13%
Gender equality is promoted in recruitment practices	55%	35%	11%
Sexual harassment is not tolerated within my organisation	85%	12%	4%
Gender discrimination is not tolerated within my organisation	78%	15%	8%

As shown in the table below, board members were much more likely than average to “strongly agree” with all of these statement. However, even for this cohort, who make the most positive assessment of

the status of gender issues in their organisations, only 67% strongly agreed that there are leaders in their organisation who specifically value and promote gender equality.

Question 27: Strongly agree

	All respondents (n=157)	Board members (n=43)
Gender discrimination is not tolerated within my organisation	61%	83%
Sexual harassment is not tolerated within my organisation	75%	84%
Gender equality is promoted in recruitment practices	36%	52%
In my organisation, all people are treated with respect and dignity	55%	77%
There are leaders in my organisation who value, support, and promote gender equality	52%	67%

When further asked about their own personal experiences of gender-based discrimination and harassment in their organisations, respondents overall reported quite low levels of these incidents. However, there were considerable variations across cohorts:

→ **Females were more than twice as likely** as males to have experienced gender-based harassment and to have been impacted by **gender-based** discrimination;

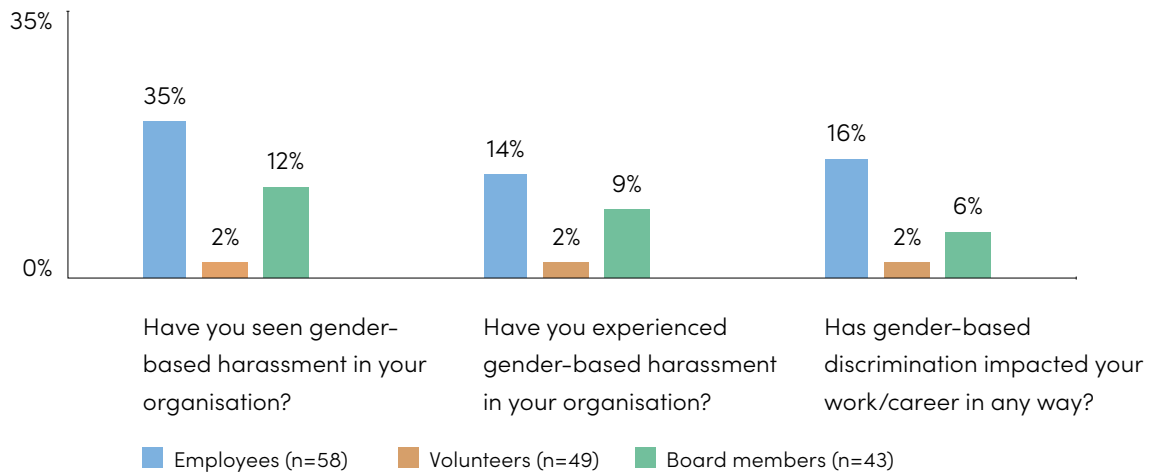
→ **Gay/lesbian/bisexual/other** respondents were two to three times **more likely than the average to have seen and experienced gender-based harassment** and to have been impacted by gender-based discrimination;

→ **Employees were far more likely** than board members or volunteers to have had these experiences, with 1 in 5 reporting having **seen gender-based harassment** in their organisations.

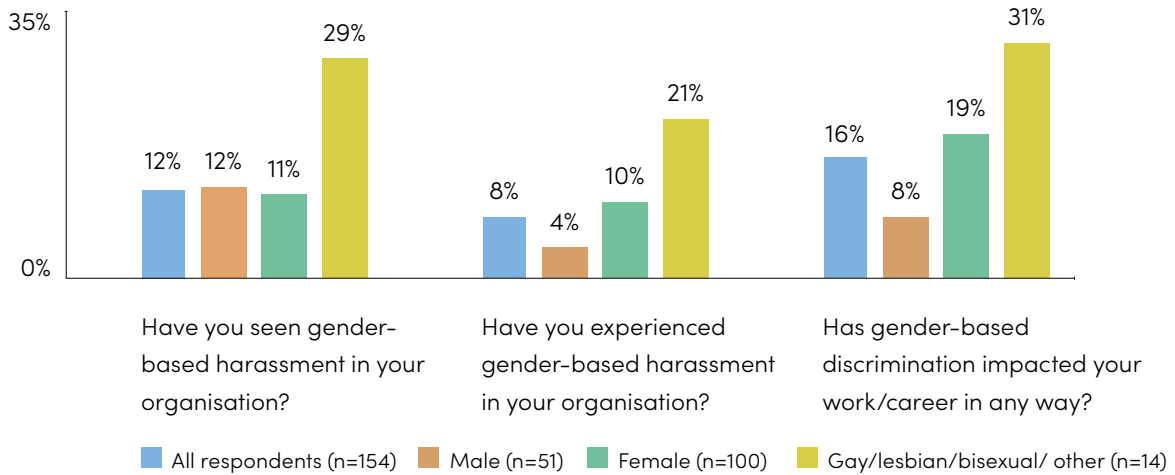
Question 29: The following are questions about gender-based harassment and discrimination in your organisation.

	Yes Responses						
	All (n=154)	Gay/ lesbian/ bisexual/ other (n=14)	Male (n=51)	Female (n=100)	Employees (n=58)	Volunteers (n=49)	Board members (n=43)
Have you seen gender-based harassment in your organisation?	12%	29%	12%	11%	21%	2%	12%
Have you experienced gender-based harassment in your organisation?	8%	21%	4%	10%	14%	2%	9%
Has gender-based discrimination impacted your work/career in any way?	16%	31%	8%	19%	16%	2%	6%

Question 29: Yes responses for employees, volunteers & board members



Question 29: Yes responses for all respondents, male, female and gay/lesbian/bisexual/other



Further to the question about gender-based harassment (more commonly described as sexual harassment), survey respondents were presented with a list of various forms of verbal and physical harassment, and asked whether they had experienced or witnessed any of them.

The three most prevalent responses are shown in the table below. All of these incidents were reported at **slightly higher levels by males** than females, and at **drastically higher rates by gay/lesbian/bisexual/ other respondents** than overall.

Question 30: Have you experienced or witnessed any of the following in your organisation?

	Yes responses			
	All respondents (n=154)	Gay/lesbian/bisexual/ other (n=13)	Male (n=51)	Female (n=100)
Intrusive questions about your private life or physical appearance that made you feel offended	11%	46%	12%	10%
Sexually suggestive comments or jokes that made you feel offended	10%	38%	14%	8%
Unwelcome touching, hugging, cornering or kissing	8%	29%	12%	7%

Notwithstanding the different terminology used (ie 'gender-based harassment' rather than the more commonly used 'sexual harassment'), these findings can be compared with those published in the Australian Human Rights Commission's 2018 report, *Fourth National Survey on Sexual Harassment in Australian Workplaces*¹. That survey found that:

→ In the previous 12 months, almost one in four (23%) women and one in six (16%) men had experienced sexual harassment in their workplaces – roughly comparable to figures for employees in our survey (21% overall). This rose to two in five (39%) women and one in four (26%) men when considering the previous five years.

→ As in our survey, the prevalence of workplace sexual harassment among those who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, queer, asexual, aromantic, undecided, not sure, questioning or other was significantly higher than among people who identify as straight or heterosexual (52% compared with 31% respectively).

→ The most common types of harassment were mostly the same as in our survey – sexually suggestive comments or jokes (19%), intrusive questions about your private life or appearance (14%), inappropriate staring or leering (11%) and unwelcome touching, hugging, cornering or kissing (10%).

Survey respondents were also invited to provide further comments to elaborate on their experiences of gender-based discrimination and harassment.

Some of the comments referred to discriminatory attitudes and behaviours, for example:

I've observed gender discrimination when we partnered with other (Jewish) organisations. Me and my female co-workers not being treated the same by partner employees.

Male employee, 18-34

I think I have worked with people who listened more because I was male.

Male board member, 18-34

A number of respondents described their experience of being denied flexible working arrangements as parents, which can certainly be understood as a form of indirect gender discrimination, as it most often negatively impacts women. However, one male respondent also described such an experience.

Lack of truly flexible opportunities to balance young family and work. Or offer part time but expect full time workload or intense availability after hours for meetings.

Female volunteer, 35-44

Was forced to return to work full time after maternity leave, was only allowed to go to 4 days a week after a miscarriage, was not allowed to work 3 days over 4 to enable me to pick up my oldest child from preschool even though I offered to return to work 6 months early after maternity leave, so I resigned whereupon my employer did not understand why.

Female volunteer, 55-64

1. https://humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/document/publication/AHRC_WORKPLACE_SH_2018.pdf

Several female respondents described their experience of **discrimination in relation to career advancement, opportunity and remuneration**, while one male respondent described his perceived experience of 'reverse discrimination'.

I believe at the time I worked there only men were considered for CEO role.

Female employee, 65+

At some stage the organisation began to promote and advance women over the male staff thus blocking the advancement paths of male staff. Male employee, 65+

I don't believe I am paid the same as my male colleague equivalent time in their career. Career advancement is limited by my gender and has been openly discussed as a problem.

Female employee, 55-64)

I think I have had to work harder to prove myself. Female board member, 65+

Several respondents noted that they worked in an all-female workplace, or a specifically women's organisation, so these experiences did not apply. A number of others commented that they had not experienced harassment or discrimination in the Jewish community organisation they are/have been involved with but have over the course of their career.



Gender differences in workplace experience

In the survey, there was a set of separate questions asked of employees, volunteers and board members about various aspects of their experience in their organisation. These questions did not ask about gender equality or discrimination

directly. However, analysis of the results shows some gender differences (especially for employees), suggesting that there may indeed be gender-based discrimination operating.

Employees

Employees were asked the degree to which they agree or disagree with a number of statements regarding their treatment at work, their career

advancement, development and opportunity. The table below shows the percentage of respondents who replied “**Strongly agree**” or “**Somewhat agree**”.

Question 22: Thinking about your experience as an employee of your organisation, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	% of all respondents (n=63)
I am actively supported to advance my career	55%
I receive regular pay rises	38%
I have access to professional development opportunities	65%
I manage my own work and I am trusted to take on and complete tasks	92%
My job title fairly reflects the work that I do	83%
Career advancement in my organisation is based solely on merit	39%
In my organisation, parents are offered the same opportunities for career advancement as others	54%

As shown in the chart below, there were considerable gender differences in the responses across a number of statements:

- **Only 55% of women** agreed that they had **access to professional development opportunities** compared with **85% of men**;
- **Only one-third (33%) of women** agreed that they receive **regular pay rises** compared with

almost **half (48%) of the men**;

- **Only two in five women (41%)** agreed that they were **actively supported to advance their careers** compared with **four in five men (81%)**;
- **Men were less likely (48%)** than women (60%) to agree that **parents are offered the same opportunities** for career opportunities as others.

Question 22: Male and female comparison

	Male (n=21)	Female (n=40)
I am actively supported to advance my career	81%	41%
I receive regular pay rises	48%	33%
I have access to professional development opportunities	85%	55%
I manage my own work and I am trusted to take on and complete tasks	95%	99%
My job title fairly reflects the work that I do	81%	88%
Career advancement in my organisation is based solely on merit	57%	33%
In my organisation, parents are offered the same opportunities for career advancement as others	48%	60%

Board members

Board members were asked the degree to which they agree or disagree with a number of statements regarding their influence at the board table and the importance of gender equality in their organisations. The only question where there was a notable difference between men

and women was whether gender equality was a priority within the organisation: 87% of women agreed with this statement compared with only 68% of men. The table below shows the percentage of respondents who replied “Strongly agree” or “Somewhat agree” for all statements.

Question 24: Thinking about your experience as an employee of your organisation, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	All respondents (n=57)	Male (n=19)	Female (n=38)
I have a voice in crafting the values and culture of my organisation	86	85	87
My voice is heard equally to other members of the board	86	89	84
I feel that gender equality is a priority within my organisation	81	68	87
I am able to influence the strategic direction of my organisation	79	79	78
There is a good understanding on our board of gender issues in the workplace.	64	68	61

Volunteers

Volunteers were asked the degree to which they agree or disagree with a number of statements regarding their organisation, how they are valued and the training they receive. Women were less likely than men (44% compared with 68%) to agree

that they were provided with adequate training to fulfil their role, but otherwise there were no notable gender differences. The table below shows the percentage of respondents who replied “Strongly agree” or “Somewhat agree” for all statements

Question 26: Thinking about your experience as an employee of your organisation, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	All respondents (n=71)	Male (n=22)	Female (n=48)
I am treated as a valued member of the organisation	90	86	92
I am provided with adequate training to fulfil my role	50	65	44
I feel that my organisation provides a safe and inclusive environment	77	77	77

5 Other forms of discrimination and bullying

Discrimination

The survey asked respondents about their **experience of discrimination and harassment based on sexuality**, of which only very low levels were reported (n=154):

- 6% of respondents reported having seen sexuality-based harassment;
- 3% stated they had experienced sexuality-based discrimination;
- 8% stated their work/career had been impacted by sexuality-based discrimination.

It is important to note that, however, that these experiences were disproportionately reported by gay/lesbian/bisexual/other respondents; they comprised 25% of the “yes” responses in each of the cases above (but only 10% of total survey respondents).

The survey also asked about any other forms of discrimination, which 21% of respondents (n=151) said they had experienced. The discrimination was on the following bases:

Forms of discrimination

(n=151)

28%

Other (11)

19%

Religion (7)

19%

Political beliefs or activities (7)

8%

Physical attributes (3)

5%

Disability (3)

3%

Nationality (11)

“Other” responses included bullying, favouritism and “family responsibilities”.

Bullying

Survey respondents were also asked if they had seen or experienced a range of behaviours in their workplaces which, although not explicitly described as such in the survey, may be characterised as bullying.

All of the listed behaviours were reported by at least one-third of respondents, with the most common being favouritism (52%), undermining (47%) and shouting (39%). In all cases, employees were most likely to report these behaviours and volunteers least likely. The prevalence of these experiences among board members varied; in some cases it was similar to volunteers and in other cases somewhere between volunteers and employees.

The prevalence of these experiences was **much higher than average among gay/lesbian/bisexual/other** respondents, up to twice as common in some cases.

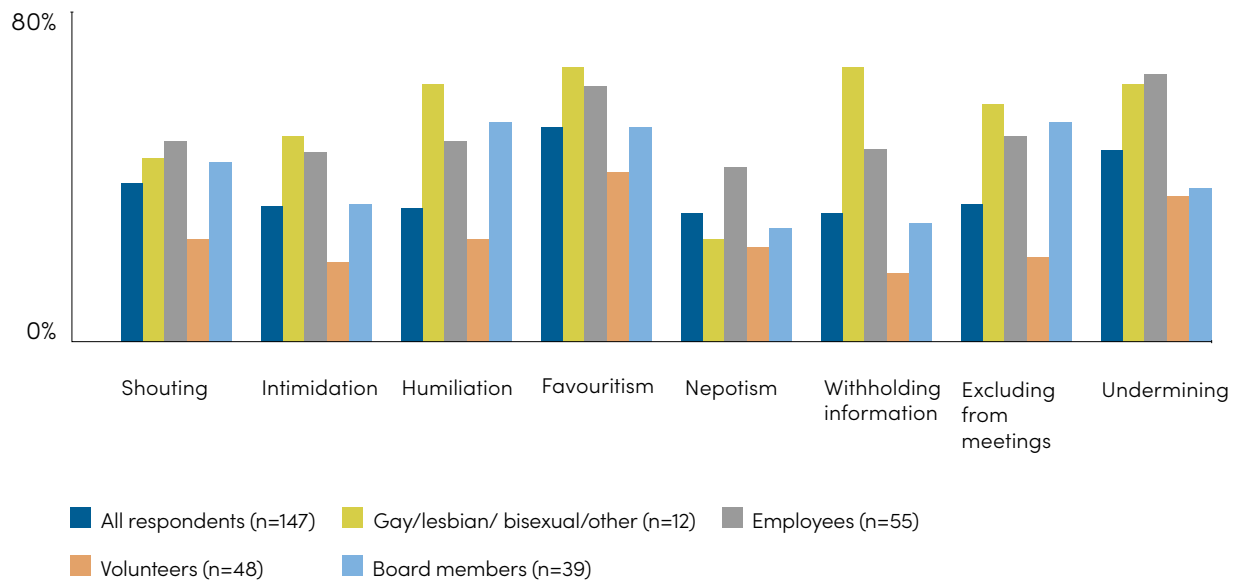
These results are shown in both the table and the graph on the next page.

Question 35: Have you experienced or witnessed any of the following in your organisation?

All yes responses (yes, often and yes, occasionally)

	All respondents (n=147)	Gay/lesbian/bisexual/other (n=12)	Employees (n=55)	Volunteers (n=48)	Board members (n=39)
Shouting	39%	45%	49%	25%	44%
Intimidation	34%	50%	46%	19%	33%
Humiliation	32%	63%	49%	25%	23%
Favouritism	52%	67%	63%	42%	53%
Nepotism	32%	25%	43%	23%	28%
Withholding information from people that they require access to	32%	67%	47%	17%	29%
Excluding people from meetings they should/need to be in	33%	58%	50%	21%	24%
Undermining	47%	63%	65%	35%	38%

Question 35: Yes often or yes occasionally



Generally, there were no notable differences between males and females, except as shown in the table below.

	Female (n=96)	Male (n=50)
Excluding people from meetings they should/need to be in	36%	25%
Undermining	51%	40%

6 Policy, process & training

Formal workplace policies are one of the basic ways that organisations can express their commitment to gender equality and communicate to employees the standards and behaviours that are expected of them. They provide an overall framework for responsibility and accountability and may include measurable gender equality objectives. Accompanying procedures ensure that policy objectives are implemented in practice, and provide mechanisms for redress when things go wrong.

When asked if their organisation had **policies related to gender equality, only 16% of survey respondents** (n=101) answered in the affirmative. Similarly, when asked if there was a clearly defined grievance process in their organisation (which might, among other things, be used to resolve issues related to discrimination or harassment), only 33% of respondents answered in the affirmative (n=146). In both cases, employees were most likely to be aware of these policies and processes, almost twice as likely as board members. Volunteers were least likely to be aware of them.

	All respondents		Yes		
	Yes	Unsure	Employees	Volunteers	Board members
Is there a clearly-defined grievance process in your organisation?	33%	51%	50%	13%	29%
Does your organisation have policies related to gender equality?	16%	67%	32%	2%	15%

Only 12% of respondents stated that they had received training in sexual harassment prevention, gender equity or workplace conduct and only 14% other kinds of diversity training.

7 Barriers to change

One of the final questions in the survey asked respondents: "What are the barriers to change and equality in your organisation?" Of 69 people who responded to this question, 25 (36%) stated that there were no barriers or that there had been in the past but there were no longer. The remaining 74% provided a range of observations, criticisms and suggestions about the obstacles to achieving greater gender equality.

Several respondents pointed to the "closed" or "insular" culture within their organisation, and to older or longstanding members of staff who were resistant to change:

Closed groups that are slow to welcome outsiders. Female board member, 65+

Attitudes of certain long term staff members with power who are frozen in the past and don't want change. Female volunteer, 55-64

Too insular, everyone knows everyone, not kind to outsiders. Female employee, 35-44

An entrenched ideology that 'this is how we do things'. A large number of employees who have been here for decades who are resistant to change. Male employee, 45-54

Most decision makers and influencers are older and do not like change, and/or do not think training in these matters is necessary.

Male board member, 35-44

Long standing staff members may not feel need for change. Female employee, 18-34

A number of respondents identified broader social and systemic factors (eg bias, fixed ideas about gender roles including halachic prescriptions) as being the main obstacles to change:

I work in a low paid, not respected female dominated industry. There needs to be systematic social change to increase wages and respect towards [my industry] in the wider community which hopefully will flow to my organisation. Female employee, 45-54

Set ideas about gender roles, in built bias about what roles women should occupy, not listening to the voices of women and giving them equal rate. Female employee, 55-64

We are caught in the middle at times – religious people insist that halacha not be broken at our events re: women’s roles, but others insist that women be involved no differently to men. Striking a balance is a challenge. Male board member, 35-44

Senior managers (not clergy) with biased attitudes to women who have more experience than they do. Female employee, 65+

Some respondents felt that the absence of an HR / People & Culture function and lack of resources for training were the barriers for progress on gender equality issues:

Lack of resources/funds to run training programs. Male employee, 35-44

A lack of accountability from managers, and lack of People and Culture presence to lead change and manage problems.

Male employee 45-54

Lack of proper management team and hr function. Female employee, 35-44

For numerous respondents, it was clear that the attitudes and behaviour of leadership were essential, and could serve as either barriers to or champions of change:

Invisible leadership and clear drive.

Male employee, 65+

May not be a barrier per se, but whether it happens comes down to leadership.

Male employee, 65+

How gender is viewed by board members.

Female employee, 18-34

Men tend to be more vocal at meetings.

Need a strong chair to ensure all voices are heard and not the same 3 men – who are so confident in their opinion, and happy to share it at the drop of a hat.

Male board member, 35-44

Senior community leaders should be more focussed on championing other women. There should be a specific strategy in place to support women who wish to forge a career in professional community organisations and/or on boards. Female volunteer, 35-44

Finally, some respondents commented on the fear of repercussions that can arise when individuals complain or seek change, especially in small, community organisations:

Fear of political consequence given this is a source of employment. Male employee, 18-34

It is a small workplace and impossible to complain or ask for change without feeling there will be repercussions.

Female employee, 55-64

Gender equity in Jewish community organisations in NSW

A survey commissioned for the Social Justice Summit 2022



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