

How Effective Are Initiatives to Recruit Women into Surveying?

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SUMMARY

The surveying profession is struggling globally to attract and retain female workers. Existing research shows that only 5% of Australian surveyors in 2021 were female (The Surveyor's Trust, 2022). Across STEM courses, and surveying universities worldwide, a number of initiatives have been implemented to recruit women and improve the gender balance of female students and graduates. For example, initiatives like: women-targeted scholarships, mentoring programs, surveying events targeting women and gender-focussed workshops and presentations. Yet, there are relatively few studies that identify the success of these measures. This paper seeks to compile key initiatives implemented globally to entice women into the surveying profession, with a particular focus on Australia and New Zealand. Comparison will be made to neighbouring disciplines, including engineering and STEM fields to identify any further initiatives that should be explored. Addressing success measures, interviews will be conducted with female surveyors in Australia and New Zealand to provide insights into whether identified initiatives played a role in their career decision, and the impact – if any - of these initiatives on their early careers and there suggest an effective path forward. Action to increase the percentage of female surveyors in the workforce is essential not simply for achieving diversity and gender equity goals, but to evolve and change the public perception of surveying and improve the industry's culture.

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