

7th March 2017

Resource industry research project to identify opportunities for gender diversity

Resource Industry Network is calling for participation by the local business community into a gender diversity research project.

During Queensland Women's Week celebrations, RIN is hoping to raise awareness of its new Equation for Equity project that will identify the predominant barriers preventing women from holding leadership roles in our region's engineering and heavy industrial sector.

Manager Adrienne Rourke said the key to increasing the number of women across the the resources and science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) industries was having a collaborative regional approach.

"With funding from the Australian Government's Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, we will be working with industry and community leaders to identify opportunities to embrace a more diverse workforce through the Equation for Equity project.

"The project will run over the next 18 months, and is aimed at identifying the challenges and opportunities to attracting greater gender diversity in careers and leadership within the resource sector.

"In the Mackay region, only 11.9% of the mining industry workforce is female, despite the exciting career and leadership opportunities. And even fewer women are entering apprenticeship and VET placements in these areas," Mrs Rourke said.

She said a key focus of this project would be on implementing strategies that would lead to the long-term retention of women within the resources and STEM careers, as well as supporting them to move into leadership and mentoring roles.

"It's really about being able to tackle core issues at the local level and help make long-lasting change."

The first step of the project will be conducting research to identify the challenges specific to the region of retaining women in STEM and leadership careers and establish a baseline from which to grow.

RIN will soon be calling for local business owners and women engaged in the mining and STEM areas to nominate to be interviewed as part of the research project.

The research gathered will support local companies and workplaces by developing a toolkit to assist them to understand the opportunities and identify what may be required to attract a more diverse workforce.

Anyone wanting further information about the Equation for Equity (E4E) project, or to register to be involved in the research study, please go to the Women in STEM section on the Resource Industry Network website, under Initiatives, and join the mailing list.

