

Name of Project: Promotions Resources for Women's Career Advancement at JCU

Investigators: (All investigators are participants of the 2026 Academic Women Career Advancement Program.)	
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Amanda Krause	College of Healthcare Sciences
Karen Knight	College of Medicine and Dentistry
Jenny Panchal	College of Law, Business and Governance
Samantha Teague	College of Healthcare Sciences
Liza van Eijk	College of Healthcare Sciences
Harini Mani	College of Medicine and Dentistry

Funding: \$3,294

Relevance to JCU Gender Equity Priorities

This project aligns directly with JCU's strategic priority of strengthening women's promotion pathways by improving access to clear, practice-based support for career progression. Although promotion frameworks are formally articulated, they can be experienced as implicit in practice, particularly in the shift towards narrative-based applications where expectations are not always consistently interpreted.

Fostering the JCU strategy of transformative education, the proposed project responds to this gap by looking at resource development such as narrative exemplars, reflective prompts, peer feedback guides, especially for early- to mid-career academics (EMCAs) to engage directly with how their performance aligns with promotion expectations, develop shared understandings of standards, and build confidence in preparing stronger applications. In doing so, it directly supports the purpose of the Vice Chancellor's Gender Equity Project Fund by helping to bridge the gap between policy and staff experience, and by translating institutional commitments to gender equity into practical improvements to current promotion support.

It also complements existing initiatives, including the inaugural Women Academic Career Advancement Program (WACAP) run in 2026, by operationalising institutional intent into sustained practice-oriented support. The project will foster collaboration and knowledge sharing between women EMCAs and senior academics and leadership involved in the promotion process. Consideration of resources available for promotion will strengthen the consistency with which diverse contributions are articulated not only in the promotion process but also within a broader academic progression trajectory.

1. Project Outline

While formal promotion frameworks are in place at JCU, disparities in promotion outcomes between women and men persist across the sector, especially at senior levels and in leadership positions (Herbst, 2020). At JCU, though slowly improving, the gender gap in academic promotions has been consistently evident, especially at the senior academic levels (Morgan, 2026).

Outputs will include:

- a set of JCU-specific resources integrated with a Gen AI-enabled writing peer that provides interactive, context-aware feedback to help academics align their

applications with the JCU promotion framework, particularly in the new narrative and impact-focused style (e.g. narrative exemplars, reflective prompts, peer feedback guides)

Timeline (July–November 2026)

The timeline is established in line with the 2026 academic promotion schedule while staying within the funding period.

Timeline	Milestones
August	Resource collation
September – October	Resource development and test
November	Launch and evaluation

Sector Review

Across the higher education sector, promotion processes are formally structured but often experienced as uneven in practice. Women academics often have less consistent access to formal and informal networks, sponsorship and localised guidance that supports this process, which has been long-term gender inequity issue in higher education (Murphy et al., 2022; Van den Brink & Benschop, 2014; Van Helden et al., 2023).

Many universities have introduced women's leadership development programs, often drawing on external consultants. For example, the WATTLE women leader program, the Academic Women in Leadership (AWiL) Program at the University of Melbourne, and the current Women Academic Advancement Program that JCU has adopted from a practice from the University of Queensland. While these programs provide valuable expertise in leadership development and coaching, they may not always fully account for institutional context or discipline-specific promotion expectations. This can result in support that remains generalised and may still require local expertise to be fully effective.

As JCU adopts a narrative-based promotion framework and the broader HE sector shifts towards evidence-based and qualitative-argument promotion framework, the need for structured support in articulating academic impact and leadership trajectories becomes more imminent.

Project Team

The project team brings together investigators with complementary experience in academic development, peer coaching, and leadership within their respective Colleges and units. All (will) have completed a the inaugural WACAP so will have recent, first-hand engagement with the newly established narrative-based application frameworks. This positions them well to provide credible, practice-informed guidance to peers, as mentors.

The investigators have demonstrated capacity in project coordination and grant delivery, including successful implementation of internal and externally funded initiatives. This supports the feasibility and timely delivery of the proposed activities.

Dr. Dongmei Li has extensive expertise in academic development, with a sustained focus on supporting staff career progression and promotion processes across different institutions. Her work is grounded in both practice and research in this field, for working as a teacher developer at Monash College, a teaching specialist at the University of Melbourne for a total

of 10 years, focusing on staff development. This experience allows her to translate institutional criteria into meaningful, accessible guidance for academics across career stages. She is a long-term member, mentor and executive member within the Higher Education Research and Development Society Australasia (HERDSA). This includes active involvement in mentoring programs such as the HERDSA Mentoring and Coaching Support for Career Advancement Program (MACS) as well as the inaugural Women Academic Career Advancement program at JCU. Her contribution also includes the design and facilitation of workshops that assist academics in interpreting promotion criteria and developing coherent, evidence-based promotion narratives. These activities are intentionally cross-disciplinary, ensuring relevance for both research-intensive and education-focused academic roles. Her broader teaching and research portfolio centres on equity and diversity in higher education, with a consistent emphasis on enabling fairer and more transparent systems of academic recognition and advancement.

Dr Lisa Simmons brings expertise in health professional education, curriculum design, assessment, educator capability-building, and the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. As a Senior Lecturer in Health Professional Education within the College of Medicine and Dentistry, she coordinates postgraduate subjects in clinical teaching, innovative teaching, and action research, and co-leads the Teaching Excellence and Collaborative Hub, a College-wide initiative supporting educator development. Lisa brings recent, first-hand experience of developing academic career narratives through her successful Advance HE Fellowship application and participation in the Career Advancement Program for Academic Women. Her work focuses on supporting educators to translate teaching, leadership, and practice-based contributions into clear, evidence-informed narratives aligned with academic expectations. Her contribution to this project will include workshop design and facilitation, structured peer feedback, evaluation, and development of practical, JCU-specific resources to support women academics to articulate impact, evidence leadership, and build coherent promotion narratives. Her broader work centres on authentic learning, reflective practice, and evaluation of educational impact.

Dr Amanda Krause is a Senior Lecturer (Psychology) in the College of Healthcare Sciences at James Cook University (Queensland, Australia). She is the author of 90+ peer-reviewed academic publications and has spoken on her research to academics and industry leaders at conferences around the world. With a mission to share #MusicScience with both students and members of the general public, Dr Krause actively engages in initiatives like STEM Professionals in Schools and Pint of Science and regularly participates in radio interviews. Amanda is a champion of psychological literacy, Work-Integrated Learning, and researcher development. She mentors student-researchers through formal honours and postgraduate supervision duties as well as the JCU College of Healthcare Sciences' Undergraduate Research Internship, an initiative for which she was awarded the 2023 JCU Excellence Award for Innovation, the 2025 JCU Teaching Citation for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning. In 2025, she was also recognised for her mentoring when awarded the Australian Psychological Society's Outstanding Academic Mentor award.

Dr Jenny Panchal is a Senior Lecturer in Tourism and Hospitality Management at James Cook University's College of Business, Law and Governance (CBLG). Her academic work spans tourism, hospitality, visitor behaviour, regenerative tourism, community wellbeing, positive psychology and education-focused scholarship. She has extensive experience in curriculum design, authentic assessment, multi-campus subject coordination, HDR supervision, and teaching innovations that support reflective and transformative learning. Her contributions have been recognised through a 2023 JCU Excellence Award for Community Engagement and a 2025 JCU Citation for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning. Jenny brings a strong practice-informed perspective to women's academic career advancement, shaped by her experience navigating career progression, teaching and

research impact, leadership, engagement, and part-time continuing academic work at JCU. She also brings governance and community leadership experience through roles with the ASEAN Tourism Research Association (ATRA), Townsville Multicultural Support Group (TMSG), and the Filipino-Australian community in North Queensland. Her contribution to this project will focus on reflective practice, narrative development, peer support, qualitative evaluation, and helping women academics articulate diverse and non-linear academic contributions as coherent evidence of impact and leadership.

Karen Knight is a Senior Lecturer in the College of Medicine and Dentistry at James Cook University (Queensland, Australia). Karen has been working to advance medicine student learning across the behavioural sciences, reflective and professional behaviours for over 20 years. Karen has been actively involved with the medicine selections processes, developing evaluative frameworks for written applications, and spearheading the pivot of the medicine selections interview process from face to face to online in response to Covid-19 and institutional change. In 2015 Karen was part of a team to be awarded a James Cook University Citation for outstanding contributions to student learning. In 2021 Karen was awarded an Award for Excellent in the category of Innovation and Change for the transition and development of an online medicine intake system from James Cook University. In 2024 Karen was awarded the AMSA national teaching award. Karen strongly supports James Cook Universities values of excellence, authenticity, integrity and respect. She is a strong advocate for social accountability and supporting staff to progress and develop through their experiences.

Dr Sam Teague is an NHMRC Emerging Leadership Fellow and Senior Research Fellow (Psychology) in the College of Healthcare Sciences at James Cook University. Her research focuses on the mental health of women, children, and families, with a particular emphasis on developing digital interventions to prevent and treat depression, anxiety, and promote wellbeing. She has published extensively relative to opportunity, with more than 70 articles, reviews, and reports, and has led or co-led grants totalling more than \$4.4 million, including funding from the National Health and Medical Research Council Investigator Grant scheme and the Medical Research Future Fund Million Minds Mental Health Research scheme. Her work has received substantial national and international attention, including television interviews on Sunrise, 7 News, and JAMA Medical News, reaching more than 3.8 million people in the past 12 months (iSentia). Her research has also been cited in 31 policy documents, including those from the World Health Organization, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the Office of the Surgeon General, and the Australian Government, as well as four clinical guidelines. Dr Teague is strongly committed to research capacity building and mentorship. She leads the JCU Digital Wellbeing Group, a cross-disciplinary consortium of early- and mid-career researchers spanning IT and Psychology, has supervised 44 research students (22 to completion), and serves on the Workforce Development Committee of the Australian Health Research Alliance's (AHRA) Women's Health Research Translation Network, where she has helped deliver 30 national professional development webinars over the past four years to support the advancement and promotion of women researchers in health and medical science.

Dr Liza van Eijk is a Senior Lecturer in Psychology at James Cook University and founder of the Clinical Neuroscience Laboratory (CNL), leading translational research focused on early detection and monitoring of mental health and neurodevelopmental outcomes using MRI, EEG, and predictive modelling. Dr van Eijk has a strong track record of impact, with 23 peer-reviewed publications, over 1,800 citations, and \$276,000+ in competitive funding. She contributes to capacity building through supervision and mentorship of higher degree research students and early career academics, including women. She has demonstrated leadership in inclusive research practice through establishing JCU's Consumer Involvement in Research Working Group, supporting more transparent and participatory approaches to

research. She also has experience supporting academic career progression and staff development within university contexts. Her participation in the Career Advancement Program for progression from Level C to Level D provides direct insight into promotion processes and expectations. This informs her ability to support early- and mid-career academics, particularly women, in navigating career progression and developing coherent academic profiles.

Dr. Harini Priya Mani is a Senior Lecturer in Clinical Dentistry and Pediatric Dentistry at the James Cook University College of Medicine and Dentistry, Australia. With over 20 years of academic and clinical experience across Australia, the UAE, and India, she has established expertise in pediatric and preventive dentistry, dental trauma management, interceptive orthodontics, and advanced endodontic therapies for children. She currently serves as Subject Lead for Pediatric Dentistry and Preventive Dentistry and as Year 3 Coordinator, contributing extensively to clinical supervision, curriculum development, assessments and undergraduate research mentoring. Dr. Mani is actively contributing to JCU's mission of advancing rural and remote healthcare, particularly by promoting children's oral health through diverse approaches such as community outreach and education programs. An accomplished clinician, academic and researcher, Dr. Mani has published multiple peer-reviewed articles in national and international journals, contributed a book chapter on probiotics and oral health, and presented scientific papers at several prestigious dental conferences. Her clinical interests include dentoalveolar trauma management in children, full mouth rehabilitation under general anesthesia and nitrous oxide sedation, regenerative endodontics, preventive therapies, and care for children with special healthcare needs. She is also an active member of professional dental societies and has received recognition for her contributions to pediatric dental research and education.

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