

# STATEMENT

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**21<sup>st</sup> November 2014**

economic Security4Women supports the members of the Astronomical Society of Australia who speak up for a gender inclusive science community.

At a recent European Space Agency media conference, a scientist wore a shirt with sexualised imagery of women, and used an analogy with sexual references. Scientists and science journalists (both women and men) made the fair and reasonable criticism that this was inappropriate for an official media conference and scientific workplace. The relevant scientist has since apologised.

It is a good thing that this shirt provoked a debate on how women are unrepresented in science.

Recent research for eS4W found that employment options for young women are limited by factors that range from persistent stereotyping to negative experiences and/or perceptions of the adverse nature of male-dominated workplace cultures discourage young women from participating in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) based and other male dominated occupations and industries.

However, subsequent to the original occurrence, a number of media articles about this incident have been critical of feminism, and the scientists (particularly women) who criticised the sexual imagery have been abused through social media.

The media criticism is unwarranted and the abuse is reprehensible.

eS4W applauds the Astronomical Society of Australia's strong commitment to make all of its members feel accepted within the scientific community, and to remove the historical legacy of sexism within science.

We fully support the members of ASA who made fair and reasonable criticisms of inappropriate images and comments.

eS4W joins with the Astronomical Society of Australia to strive for an equitable and diverse scientific community.

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