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**EMBARGOED: WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2018, 12:01 A.M.**

## **Third year running: MSD recognised as Employer of Choice for Gender Equality**

Australia's Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) has today recognised MSD, a leading biopharmaceutical company, as an Employer of Choice for Gender Equality (EOCGE). This is the third year in a row that MSD has received this prestigious citation, recognising the company's commitment to promoting and practicing gender equality.

MSD has succeeded at maintaining ongoing initiatives for gender equality and achieved further accomplishments which led to the recurrent grant of the citation for 2017 - 2018:

1. MSD's annual diversity survey recently revealed that **93 per cent of MSD staff believe their manager genuinely supports equality between men and women**, and **92 per cent report that they have the flexibility to manage work and caring responsibilities**.
2. An internal MSD initiative, called Champions of Change, continues to remove barriers for those aspiring to sales management roles. Since establishing this employee-led group, there has been gender equality of placements into sales manager roles and on every occasion, the best person for the role has been successful.
3. MSD Managing Director Riad El-Dada, who has been a WGEA Pay Equity Ambassador since 2016, is now also a Flexible Working Ambassador for leading recruitment service Diverse City Careers (DCC): *"We recognise flexible working arrangements benefit all individuals and have a positive impact on productivity and workplace culture. That is why we have created a number of options for our people to work flexibly, in whichever way suits them, their team, their clients, and the business. We have communicated this to all staff and set the expectation among our leaders so that each new and existing employee can feel comfortable in discussing flexible working arrangements with their manager"*.
4. MSD belongs to the Pharma Australia Gender Equality (PAGE) group, a special interest group focused on gender equality across the pharmaceutical industry. This group works to increase the number of women in senior leadership roles, improve opportunities for

professional development, and supports an equitable working environment for our industry.

“We are proud to be once again recognised for our commitment, and proud that we could demonstrate how we continue to improve the work we do on advancing gender equality at MSD,” said Riad.

“Since 2014, we have sustained our efforts to increase greater participation of women in leadership positions – currently more than 50 per cent of our leadership team are female.”

In addition to these new initiatives and changes, MSD has continued their commitment to gender equality, diversity and inclusion. For example, pay equity reviews are conducted annually and at every stage of the career, analysing and correcting pay gaps that are not justified on the basis of gender, peer relativity, experience, performance and role type; ten days of additional paid leave are available for staff experiencing family or domestic violence, or supporting a member of their family experiencing family or domestic violence; and MSD seeks regular input and feedback on progress via an annual diversity survey.

This year, there was an increase in the number of organisations being granted the EOCGE citation by the WGEA, indicating a growing commitment to workplace gender equality in Australia as well as a higher level of competition for the citation.

WGEA Director Libby Lyons said, “I congratulate all the 2017-18 citation holders for their commitment and recognition of benefits improved gender equality can bring to their business. These employers are setting the benchmark for other Australian workplaces to follow.”

Criteria for the WGEA Employer of Choice for Gender Equality citation cover leadership, learning and development, gender remuneration gaps, flexible working and other initiatives to support family responsibilities, employee consultation, preventing sex-based harassment and discrimination and targets for improving gender equality outcomes.

**-ENDS-**

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#### **About MSD**

For more than a century, MSD, a leading global biopharmaceutical company, has been inventing for life, bringing forward medicines and vaccines for the world’s most challenging diseases. MSD is a trade name of Merck & Co., Inc., with headquarters in Kenilworth, N.J., U.S.A. Through our

prescription medicines, vaccines, biologic therapies and animal health products, we work with customers and operate in more than 140 countries to deliver innovative health solutions. We also demonstrate our commitment to increasing access to health care through far-reaching policies, programs and partnerships. Today, MSD continues to be at the forefront of research to advance the prevention and treatment of diseases that threaten people and communities around the world - including cancer, cardio-metabolic diseases, emerging animal diseases, Alzheimer's disease and infectious diseases including HIV and Ebola. For more information, visit [www.msd-australia.com.au](http://www.msd-australia.com.au) and connect with us on [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

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