



RISE PROJECT

Information for Phase 1 Organisations

A partnership between:



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About the project

What is RISE?

Realise. Inspire. Support. Energise. (RISE) is a ground breaking project that aims to break down systemic barriers and provide direct pathways for culturally and racially marginalised (CARM) women to reach senior leadership positions within Australian organisations. RISE is a partnership between Diversity Council Australia (DCA), Settlement Services International (SSI) and Chief Executive Women (CEW) and is funded by the Australian Government Office for Women through the Women's Leadership and Development Program (WLDP) 2022-2026.

This project aims to address the systemic barriers that restrict CARM women's movement into senior leadership in 25 Australian organisations. Innovatively working at the individual and systemic levels concurrently, the project will identify, design, deliver and evaluate effective change interventions that address structural barriers in these organisations. This will directly benefit 375 nominated CARM Women in Middle Management (WMM) working in these organisations.

Would your organisation like to participate?

The RISE project is calling for applications from organisations who are interested in participating in this groundbreaking project during Phase 1 (Nov 2023- Feb 2025). Your organisation can be at the very beginning, in the middle or more advanced in your (intersectional) anti-racism and gender equality journeys.

The RISE project will be selecting 11 organisations for participation in Phase 1.

The project provides a key opportunity:

- **to access critical support, advice and training** needed to drive change and increase CARM women's representation in leadership.
- **to be promoted** in case studies of leading practice and educational materials
- **to join a community of practice** of like-minded practitioners and learn from each other through the duration of the project.



Why do we need the RISE project?

We know that CARM women face systemic barriers when it comes to career advancement.

In 2017, **DCA's Capitalising on Culture and Gender in ASX Leadership**¹ research found that only 1.5% of all ASX senior executives are culturally diverse women (defined as women from any cultural origin other than Anglo or North-West-European).

The same year, **DCA's Cracking the Glass Cultural Ceiling**² research showed how women from non-Anglo cultural origins are at a double disadvantage in Australian workplaces as their gender and culture combine to make it more difficult than their male counterparts or than women from Anglo cultural origins to access leadership roles.

Six years on, in 2023, **DCA's Culturally and Racially Marginalised Women in Leadership**³ research found that the state of play for CARM women remains largely unchanged – CARM women in leadership in Australia are few and far between as systemic barriers remain in place.

Together, this research shows that whilst CARM women are ambitious, capable, and resilient, they experience a range of entrenched systemic barriers in Australian workplaces such as:

- being assessed against biased leadership models,
- not having access to influential social networks where promotion decisions are often made, and
- not having their voices centred so their lived experiences at work can be better understood (including when organisations are trying to develop and promote CARM women into senior leadership).

This is why we are working with 25 organisations, and 375 nominated CARM Women Middle Managers (WMM) in these organisations, to implement lasting change interventions that will address these issues.



Collaborate to create change

By partnering with us in Phase 1, participating organisations will gain access to the 6 change elements below

The project partners will provide:

- **An Organisational Self-Assessment Tool**, completed by Human Resources and Diversity and Inclusion practitioners, as well as participating CARM women middle managers, which diagnoses key systemic barriers locking CARM women out of leadership.
- **An Action Plan Template**, which provides a strategic framework for organisations to create their own action plan. DCA will provide support with creating the action plan and organisations will drive the implementation of the plan. Organisations will be invited to take part in a Community of Practice to inform the implementation of the action plan.
- **DCA's Racism at Work training program**, which provides anti-racism training to stimulate nuanced, critical, and reflexive ways of understanding systemic racial barriers.
- **SSI's Cultural Responsiveness training program**, which explores sustainable ways to navigate a diversity of cultures in the workplace.
- **A Support Model for Advancing CARM Women's Leadership Skills**, which provides CARM women with career development activities such as coaching, mentoring, and a career advancement plan, depending on the women's needs, so that they can better leverage their leadership skills and progress in their careers. This model recognises that while CARM women do significant leadership work in their organisations, they are not always provided with the same access to formal leadership positions, training and mentorship as other employees.
- **CEW's Leaders Program**, which is a bespoke development program encouraging women leaders to truly be themselves. It is designed and facilitated by CEW members who share their wisdom and lifelong experiences. It is independent, intimate, challenging, collegiate and reflective in nature. Learning happens through continuous dialogue and experimentation with structured leadership competencies. Upon completion of the Program, alumni are welcomed into the Connect Women Community where they join over 2,500 women leaders in a professional network.



Your organisational journey

AN OVERVIEW

Fill in and submit the RISE application form

Create your project team

Invite CARM Women Middle Managers to volunteer

Kick start the change process!

Your organisational journey

Start by submitting your organisation's application form

After you have submitted your Expression of Interest through the RISE webpage (at www.dca.org.au/eoi-rise), your organisation will be invited to fill in an application form. Only organisations that have submitted applications will be considered for selection in Phase 1 of the RISE project.

The application form will allow the RISE consortium partners to gain an insight into your organisation and understand whether it fits the Eligibility Criteria (please see Eligibility Criteria and the Application Form questions below). Once the application form is reviewed, the RISE consortium will reach out to confirm whether your organisation has been selected for Phase 1.

Next, create your project team

When the project starts, participating organisations will identify an internal project team to drive the project, which centres the voice of CARM women.

This team could be comprised of:

- D&I/HR contacts
- Members of an employee resource group or similar, such as committees and councils.

Organisations will also be encouraged to identify a senior executive sponsor, with the authority and influence in the organisation to drive change.

Then, invite CARM Women Middle Managers to volunteer

The internal project team will also identify and confirm the participation of up to 15 CARM women from middle management.

CARM women in middle management refers to those at a CEO-4 level, but lower levels of management can be included if 15 CARM middle managers are not available.

We encourage organisations to circulate information about the project to staff, and invite women to self-identify and volunteer for the project. DCA will provide organisations with templates and advice to put in place a safety protocol and cultural and racial safety guidelines for engaging staff in this project.



Kick start the change process!

Participating organisations will (with DCA support):

1

Complete the ASSESS to RISE organisational self-assessment tool.

2

Develop an action plan to address systemic barriers

3

Make a commitment to sponsor and support CARM women's career development

4

Implement the action plan, including training and activities, over 12 months

5

Take part in a Community of Practice

CARM women's journey

At the same time, the 15 participating CARM WMM will (with project partner support):

1

Take part in introductory project session(s) with the RISE Consortium project partners

2

Participate in organisational self-assessment and feedback tools

3

Create a career advancement plan

4

Take part in a CARM women-centred career advancement program, which is reflective of goals in the career advancement plan.

Eligibility Criteria

We ask that you meet 6 eligibility criteria, as outlined below.

1. Can you nominate at least 15 eligible culturally and racially marginalised (CARM) women staff to participate in the project?

If you have less than 15 eligible CARM women to nominate, you can nominate women at lower levels of management in discussion with the project team. In some circumstances the project team may consider allowing culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) who are not CARM women to be nominated.

For racial and cultural safety, we recommend an opt-in approach for self-identifying CARM women who choose to participate in the project. The RISE project encourages the participation of CARM women in all their diversity and will work with organisations to ensure that activities are as accessible and safe as possible for all participants.

Criteria for participating staff who are CARM women include:

A. They are employed by a participating organisation.

This is because RISE aims to help CARM women access leadership by providing CARM women aspiring leaders with career development support, while also supporting their employer to address any systemic barriers to CARM women's access to leadership. We encourage organisations to include women who are full time and part time staff, as well as to consider including those who are employed on a contract or casual basis.

B. They self-identify as culturally and racially marginalised women.

CARM women identify as women who are Black, Brown, Asian, Women of Colour or members of any non-white group, who face marginalisation due to their race and/or racialised religion in contemporary Australia. Our category of CARM women is intended to be inclusive of cis women, trans women, as well as non-binary and/or gender diverse people who identify as CARM women.

Eligibility Criteria

C. They are employed in a middle management role.

This means that they are:

- in a position where they contribute to decision making; and
- in CEO-2 to CEO-4 roles, such as Senior Manager or Manager.

In some cases, lower management roles, such as Assistant Manager, will be considered if an organisation cannot reach the quota of 15 CARM women in middle management.

2. Can you provide flexibility and support for these CARM women staff to participate in the program?

This would include providing them with time to participate in an organisational self-assessment and other feedback tools, career planning, mentoring and sponsorship programs, leadership development programs and evaluation.

3. Can you participate in an organisational audit process facilitated by Diversity Council Australia (DCA)?

DCA has created an evidence-based organisational self-assessment tool which would be completed by key Human Resources/Diversity and Inclusion-related staff as well as CARM women staff in your organisation. This tool will help you (a) understand CARM women's workplace experiences and representation, and (b) identify possible systemic barriers to their accessing leadership roles in your organisation.

4. Can you use the audit findings to create and implement an organisational action plan?

The organisational self-assessment tool will generate valuable findings, which you can draw on to create and implement your organisational action plan, with guidance from the project team.

Eligibility Criteria

5. Can you support key internal stakeholders to further develop their capabilities?

This means that organisational leaders and Human Resources/Diversity and Inclusion-related staff will participate in awareness raising workshops as needed (including for example, Anti-Racism and Cultural Responsiveness Training).

6. Can you support the project's guiding principles?

- Project-related activities and decisions should benefit CARM women;
- Project-related activities and decisions should centre CARM women's voices;
- Creating racial safety for CARM women should be a priority; and
- Fostering an effective collaborative working relationship with the project team should be a priority.

Please note the RISE project is funded to focus on organisations working at a national level or at a state level in NSW, Victoria, WA and QLD. The project team aims to represent a range of sectors and locations to have a wide-reaching impact and account for the diversity of CARM women within the Australian workforce. These factors will be considered when choosing eligible organisations.

The consortium partners will work with organisations to provide adjustments and accessible information, settings and design for project activities to support the participation of a diversity of CARM women.



Your investment

Your investment in the project will depend on the activities included in your organisational action plan and on the training options that CARM women in your organisations choose for their career advancement plans.

An indicative spend for organisational training could be approximately \$7000, including:

- \$4,500 - 1 DCA training (3 modules)
- \$2,500 - SSI (1 day training)

An indicative spend for training, mentoring and career support for 15 CARM women will depend on each CARM woman's career advancement plan and the organisation's training allocation/personal development budget.

The tables on the next page provide further estimates of the some of the likely costs, however, please note there may be additional costs involved.

As a participating organisation, your investment is likely to include:

Co-contributions

Activity	Estimated co-contribution	Considerations
DCA's Racism at Work virtual training	\$4500 for 3-5 virtual training sessions over 5-7 hours for 30 staff members. Additional sessions will be at a higher cost and in-person training will incur additional costs.	The 30 staff members involved in the training could include the project team and a combination of, for instance, the immediate supervisors/managers and/or team members of the CARM women participating, organisational champions and mentors and other staff involved directly or indirectly in the project.
SSI's Cultural Responsiveness training	\$2500 for a 1 day training course for 15-25 staff members. Face to face training delivery is preferable.	Timing is flexible and training can be split over two days if needed.
(Opt-in) CEW's Leaders Program	\$3000 per participant for a 7 day program delivered over 7 non-consecutive days in 3 face-to-face blocks (3 days-2 days-2 days) scheduled six to eight weeks apart in all locations aside from Perth, where there will be a two block program (3 days-4 days).	Participants will take part in the larger CEW Leaders Program
(Optional) External subcontractors	TBC - dependent on activities in organisations' action plan	Any costs associated with engaging external subcontractors to assist with implementation of the action plan
(Optional) Communication assets	TBC	Organisations may wish to co-produce communications assets to amplify good news stories from their action plan and from the CARM women involved with the project team (e.g. video case studies, social media products)

Staff-time commitments

Participant	Staff time	Considerations
Project team	1-4 hours per week	Includes internal coordination and Community of Practice meetings.
Mentors	3 hours in the first week (including training) 1 hour mentoring meetings	These time commitments may be updated due to availability. There are likely to be a mix of mentors from within your organisation and external mentors.
CARM Women who participate	Introduction session (1-2 hours); Mentor meetings (1 hour each); Career advancement activities (TBC)	These time commitments may be updated according to individual career advancement plans and availability.
Project team and CARM women (evaluation and case studies/other)	2 hours at the beginning, mid-point and end of action plan	Please note time commitments for evaluation and case studies can be incorporated around work schedules.

Collaborate to create change

The RISE consortium will invite organisations to collaborate on opportunities to showcase their good practice throughout the project. The consortium will collect and summarise learnings over the project about the systemic barriers and enablers for CARM women's access to leadership. This work will inform a final project summary with key case studies on organisational practice to address these barriers and enablers (this may be presented as an online exhibition, infographics, toolkits or in another format). Where possible, final project outputs will be co-designed with participants.

This process may involve:

- Conducting focus groups/online engagement with CARM women (individual informed consent will be sought);
- Drawing on notes from communities of practice;
- Developing a summary of findings on systemic barriers and enablers; and
- Developing case studies with participating organisations and/or voice stories with participants.

The RISE consortium will provide all participating organisations and women with an information statement and an informed consent process to take part in activities informing final project outputs. All data will be collected and stored confidentially on a password protected DCA server for 5 years. Informed consent will be separately sought from organisations and individual participants where data will be reported in a way that identifies participants (e.g. case studies or similar outputs).

Please note, participating organisations will be able to choose to have information relating to their workplace de-identified in any publicly released RISE communications.



Checking change impact

The RISE project will be evaluated. Both organisations and participating women will be asked to take part in evaluation surveys. Organisations and participating women will receive more information on evaluation at the beginning of the project. Any publicly released RISE evaluation data or information will be aggregated and de-identified to protect the anonymity of the participating organisations and CARM women.

Key Dates

Phase 1 Applications open: 4 September - 4 October 2023

(A link to the online application form will be sent to all organisations that have submitted Expressions of Interest)

Information session for interested organisations: 4 September 2023

Successful Phase 1 organisations notified: October - November 2023

ASSESS to RISE tool completed: January-February 2024

Action plans implemented: March 2024 - February 2025

Please note these dates are indicative and are subject to change

Key Contact

For more information on the RISE project, please contact **RISE@dca.org.au**



Application Form

Once you have submitted an Expression of Interest on the RISE webpage (at www.dca.org.au/eoi-rise), the RISE Consortium will invite your organisation to complete an online application form (a link will be emailed to you).

Applications for Phase 1 will be open from 4 September to 4 October 2023. Please note the RISE project is only accepting applications from organisations and not from individuals.

Once you begin the form it is best to complete it in one sitting.

We have provided a copy of the questions in the form below if you would like to consult with colleagues before completing the online form.

The information collected in this form will be stored confidentially and securely on a password protected server for five years. The information collected in questions 3-7 of this form may be combined with information collected from other participating organisations in the RISE project, de-identified and reported in aggregate as part of material published about the results of the RISE project.

Please contact RISE@dca.org.au if you have any questions about this form.

1. What is the name of your organisation?

2. Why is your organisation interested in participating in the RISE project (200 words)?

3. What is the size of your organisation (best estimate is fine)?

- 1-299 employees
- 300-599 employees
- 600-1199 employees
- 1200-2999 employees
- 3000+ employees

4. Which of the following best describes your organisation?

- ASX
- A private for-profit business
- A non-for-profit organisation
- Government/public service
- Other (please specify)_____

5. What is the main industry sector that your organisation works in?

- Agriculture, forestry and fishing
- Mining
- Manufacturing
- Electricity, gas, water and waste services
- Construction
- Wholesale trade
- Retail trade
- Accommodation and food services
- Transport, postal and warehousing
- Information media and telecommunications
- Rental, hiring and real estate services
- Professional, scientific and technical services
- Administrative and support services
- Public administration and safety (private)
- Education and training (private)
- Health care and social assistance (private)
- Arts and recreation services
- Other services (please specify)

6. Does your organisation work in Science, Technology, Engineering and/or Mathematics (STEM) fields?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

7. In which of the following state(s) does your organisation operate? (Select as many as apply)

- Nationally (All states in Australia)
- New South Wales
- Queensland
- Western Australia
- Victoria
- South Australia
- Northern Territory
- Tasmania

The RISE consortium recommends nominating a 3-4 person project team to complete an audit tool and drive an action plan forward in your organisation. This team could for example include:

- A key contact person – who will be the central point of contact with the RISE team
- D&I leads
- Human Resources staff
- Representatives from an employee resource group.

DCA also recommends identifying an executive sponsor to support the project within your organisation, with the authority and influence in the organisation to drive change.

8. If your organisation is selected for Phase 1, who will be your key contact?

Name:

Email:

9. Other than your key contact, who else will be on your project team? (position titles are sufficient)

10. Who will be your executive sponsor? (position title is sufficient)

11. This project requires CARM women in your organisation to opt-in to participate. We would advise that you scope interest in this project from CARM women employees.

In your view, is it likely that you will have 15 eligible CARM women to nominate for this project?

Please see the information package for Phase 1 organisations to refer to the eligibility criteria for the RISE project.

CARM women identify as women who are Black, Brown, Asian, Women of Colour or members of any non-white group, who face marginalisation due to their race and/or racialised religion in contemporary Australia. Our category of CARM women is intended to be inclusive of cis women, trans women, as well as non-binary and/or gender diverse people who identify as CARM women.

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

12. In some circumstances the project team may consider allowing culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) women, who are not CARM women, to be nominated.

If CALD Women are included, is it likely that you have up to 15 eligible CARM and CALD women to nominate?

Please note CALD is a much broader category than CARM, and often includes/ extends to people who can be racialised as white, even if they are not from an Anglo-Celtic Background. CALD people see themselves or are seen by others as

being from a non-English speaking background (themselves or their parents), being born overseas and/or being from a non-Anglo-Celtic cultural background.

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

13. What, if any, resources can your organisation allocate to implementing a 12-month action plan? (please estimate available funding for action plan activities, which may include staff personal development funding allocations, budget for anti-racism or similar training for senior leaders and other activities as needed)

14. Please indicate how far along your organisation would consider itself on the following organisational journeys on a scale of 1-7.

(1= Just starting out; 4= Intermediate; 7= Very advanced)

a) How far along would your organisation consider itself on its Diversity & Inclusion journey?

b) How far along would your organisation consider itself on its anti-racism journey?

(c) How far along would your organisation consider itself on its gender equality journey?

15. Please indicate your agreement with the RISE organisational commitment below (this commitment refers to the eligibility criteria for the RISE project):

On behalf of my organisation, I have read and understand the eligibility criteria for this project. My organisation will be committed to the following, if it is selected to take part in the RISE project:

1. Supporting the RISE project's guiding principles including:

- Centring CARM women's voices in all project-related activities and decisions
- Ensuring all project-related activities and decisions benefit CARM women
- Prioritising racial safety for CARM women participants
- Prioritising fostering an effective collaborative working relationship with RISE Consortium project staff.

2. Providing time and flexibility for CARM women nominees to participate in this project

3. Completing an organisational audit tool and creating an action plan based on its results

4. Resourcing and implementing an action plan to improve CARM women's access to leadership positions

- I agree on behalf of my organisation.
- I do not agree on behalf of my organisation.

16. If your organisation is selected to participate, please indicate whether your organisation consents to having its name disclosed as a participating organisation in the RISE project in media, publications and promotional materials (this is optional).

- Yes
- No

17. If your organisation is not selected to participate in Phase 1 of the RISE project, would you like this application to be retained and considered for selection in Phase 2 of the RISE project (taking place from 2024-2026).

- Yes
- No

About the Project Partners

Diversity Council Australia (DCA) is the project lead, an independent not-for-profit peak body leading diversity and inclusion in the workplace. They provide unique research, inspiring events and programs, curated resources, and expert advice across all diversity dimensions to a community of member organisations, reaching over 20% of the Australian labour market. DCA will be responsible for project management and evaluation and will utilise lived experience regarding intersectionality.

Settlement Services International (SSI) is a community organisation and social business that supports Australians to achieve their full potential. They work with culturally and linguistically diverse communities, to build capacity and enable them to overcome inequality. They have a strong focus on the advancement of women, with a notable female leadership team. SSI will provide cultural responsiveness training to CARM managers, identify barriers for women of CARM backgrounds and recruit program mentors.

Chief Executive Women (CEW) has over 900 members, each holding leading roles in Australia's largest private and public organisations. They oversee more than 1.3 million employees and \$749 billion in revenue, consistently engaging all levels of Australian business and government to advocate for gender equality. With a strong background and history in leadership programs, CEW will provide training, networking opportunities and member connections to support leadership opportunities and career advancement for participating CARM women.

Endnotes

1. Diversity Council Australia (J. Shireenjit, J. O'Leary, A. Legg, and C. Brown), *Capitalising on Culture and Gender in ASX Leadership*, Sydney, Diversity Council Australia, 2017.
2. Diversity Council Australia (J. O'Leary, D. Groutsis, and R. D'Almada-Remedios), *Cracking the Glass-Cultural Ceiling: Future Proofing Your Business in the 21st Century*, Sydney, Diversity Council Australia, 2017.
3. Diversity Council Australia (V. Mapedzahama, F. Laffernis, A. Barhoum, and J. O'Leary), *Culturally and Racially Marginalised Women in Leadership: A Framework for (Intersectional) Organisational Action*, Sydney, Diversity Council Australia, 2023.



