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## **Empowering women in Horticulture through leadership scholarships**

Women who are current and emerging leaders in the Australian horticulture industry can now apply for a [leadership development scholarship](#) valued up to \$10,941.

Funded by Hort Innovation and Women & Leadership Australia (WLA), the scholarship grants cover up to 60 per cent of the cost of the training programs.

Hort Innovation chief executive officer, Matt Brand said the gender disparity within the agriculture industry was well recognised, and Hort Innovation was proudly supporting a new era of gender equality and integration across industry through strategic levy investment.

“In recent years we have invested heavily in leadership projects, that encourage women to take the lead by working with partnering organisations to offer tailored programs designed to build skills and provide leadership training and opportunities,” he said.

“Through the Hort Frontiers Leadership Fund, we have already seen 12 women undertake the Masterclass in Horticultural Business training, with five (5) graduations in the last round.

“Our partnership program with WLA has already seen 11 successful graduates from the Women in Leadership Project, with another three (3) scholarship recipients currently enrolled.”

Mr Brand said he could already see a shift in the attitudes towards women in horticulture, and he was proud that Hort Innovation was at the forefront.

Program Director at WLA Suzi Finkelstein said she was delighted to be carrying this grant program on into its second year.

“Women working in the horticulture sector, or any sector for that matter, deserve to be given every opportunity to excel and take on leadership roles, particularly in industries that are traditionally male dominated and that have significant gender pay gaps,” she said.

“Studies show that the more women you have in leadership roles in workplaces and industries, the lower the gender pay gap is for that workplace. Even though this developmental program is only in its second year, I know that we are making a positive and tangible difference to the sector.”

Scholarship recipient in the last round, Mardee Cassin, said her participation in the Accelerated Leadership Performance Program helped her to gain practical tools to develop and further progress her professional career.

“I am now more confident in communicating and working with a broad range of people, both within my current workplace and beyond,” she said.

**ENDS**

**Course Information:**

Scholarship applicants can choose from three courses: The Accelerated Leadership Performance Program, the Executive Ready Program and the Advanced Leadership Program. The blended courses are delivered on a part-time basis over four, seven or 12 months respectively.

Participants will learn skills such as heightened presence and influence, managing team dynamics, driving performance and leading innovation and change.

The funding is available to individuals and groups of employees who own or work within businesses that pay a levy to Hort Innovation.

For more information and to apply, go to [the WLA website](#). Expressions of interest close on Friday, December 7th at 5pm AEDT.

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