

ANROWS

AUSTRALIA'S NATIONAL RESEARCH
ORGANISATION FOR WOMEN'S SAFETY
to Reduce Violence against Women & their Children

MEDIA RELEASE

EMBARGOED not to be released before Tuesday 8 March 2022

Workplace sexual harassment on the national research agenda

Sexual harassment in the workplace is the focus of a new national research program to be delivered by ANROWS over three years. The [2021–2024 Sexual Harassment Research Program](#) is supported by funding from the Australian Government Department of Social Services.

“We know there is an urgent need to better understand workplace sexual harassment,” said ANROWS CEO Padma Raman PSM. “This program of research will build the evidence base that governments, employers and industry groups need to develop more effective strategies to prevent and respond to it, especially for those groups who we know are at greatest risk.”

Findings from the Australian Human Rights Commission’s 2018 survey, [Everyone’s business: Fourth national survey on sexual harassment in Australian workplaces](#), show that one in three people in Australia had experienced sexual harassment in their workplace in the preceding five years.

The new ANROWS Sexual Harassment Research Program is the result of the Australian Government’s response to Recommendation 4, made in 2020 by the AHRC National Inquiry into Sexual Harassment in Australian Workplaces, [Respect@Work](#), led by Sex Discrimination Commissioner Kate Jenkins.

“This is an important step to address the evidence gaps identified through the Respect@Work Inquiry,” said Ms Jenkins.

“We want to maintain the momentum we have and press this opportunity for change. Addressing workplace sexual harassment is key to improving women’s safety and economic security. Everyone should be able to work safely,” said Ms Jenkins.

Minister for Women’s Safety Anne Ruston welcomed the launch of the Sexual Harassment Research Program, which was part of the Australian Government’s response to the [Respect@Work](#) report.

“We know that workplace sexual harassment has a profound impact on individuals and undermines workplace productivity, imposing a significant economic cost to Australian society,” Minister Ruston said.

“We have set out our long-term commitment to building safe and respectful workplaces in a *Roadmap for Respect* which is an ongoing effort that will help build a culture of respectful behaviour and safety for women in workplaces,” said Minister Ruston.

“I am happy to report that 42 of the 55 recommendations in the *Respect@Work* report have been either fully implemented or fully funded and work is underway on all remaining recommendations with no recommendations rejected. In the 2020–21 Budget the Government made a long-term funding commitment to 1800RESPECT and subsequently provided an additional \$500,000 in the 2021–22 Budget in response to Recommendation 54 of the *Respect@Work* report to promote the service for people affected by workplace sexual harassment.”

Sexual harassment exists on a continuum with sexual violence, and together they comprise a key priority identified in [Australia’s National Research Agenda to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children: ANRA 2020–2022](#).

Collectively, the projects in the research program will examine the nature, impacts and appropriateness of existing responses to sexual harassment; the risk and protective factors associated with workplace sexual harassment; and the effectiveness of existing strategies for prevention and response. “Building on what we already know, projects will focus on groups with a higher likelihood of experiencing workplace sexual harassment including migrant and refugee women, young LGBTQ workers and workers in the retail sector. Newer forms of technology-facilitated sexual harassment will also be explored,” said Ms Raman.

The five projects funded under the program are:

- “Migrant and refugee women’s attitudes, experiences and responses to sexual harassment in the workplace”, led by Associate Professor Marie Segrave, Monash University
- “Understanding and addressing sexual harassment in the Australian retail sector”, led by Professor Rae Cooper AO, University of Sydney
- “Sexual harassment of LGBTQ young people in the workplace and at workplace training sites”, led by Professor Kerry Robinson, Western Sydney University
- “Technology-facilitated sexual harassment: Perpetration, responses and prevention”, led by Associate Professor Asher Flynn, Monash University
- “Process and impact evaluation of the [Respect@Work Council](#)”, led by ANROWS

The 2021–2024 Sexual Harassment Research Program was commissioned through a national competitive grants process. Further details of the five funded projects will be published on our [website on Tuesday 8 March](#).

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About ANROWS

Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety Limited (ANROWS) is a not-for-profit independent national research organisation.

ANROWS is an initiative of Australia's *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010–2022*. ANROWS was established by the Commonwealth and all state and territory governments of Australia to produce, disseminate and assist in applying evidence for policy and practice addressing violence against women and their children.

ANROWS is the only such research organisation in Australia.

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