



Gender Champions Challenge

Taking IGC and its members to the next level of awareness and action. [#ChampioningNewNorms](#)

Covid-19 is presenting a disruptive challenge but also a major opportunity for us to think about the future of work and gender equality, and to engage in a cross-network dialogue and exchange about the changes that are needed to ensure that we harness the **talent and creativity** of all our colleagues. We are rapidly accelerating to more flexible work environments, but barriers remain.

There is a significant **power gap** or **'glass ceiling'**, preventing women attaining the highest levels of responsibility and political leadership fuelled by unequal pay, an uneven care burden, inequitable family policies, sexism, harassment and sexual and gender-based violence. There is also pushback and resistance in many areas, especially on women's sexual and reproductive health and rights. And as Generation Equality seeks to highlight and address, the **younger generation** need to be better included in creating an equal future.



At this critical time when the winds of change are blowing, we invite you to support us in keeping gender equality at the top of the global agenda and role modelling change in a **Gender Champions Challenge**. Members of the IGC network have a wealth of experience and good practices of **'what works'** and insights into **'what needs to come next?'**

As the famous saying goes **'culture eats strategy for breakfast'**; this is an opportunity to accelerate an inclusive culture in line with IGC's core values and to identify the policies and practices that can move us forward faster in our new environment. Without **a diverse, engaged, inspired and empowered workforce**, it is harder to conceive of more effective programmatic policies.

How to participate

During the next **4 months, (July – October)** the Secretariat invites you to nominate a gender diverse task team to explore these questions about your organisational culture:

- **'What works for you?'** What are the strengths in your organisation in advancing gender equality?
- What are the **glass ceilings** that prevent parity, or **sticky floors** that inhibit an enabling and inclusive environment?
- What needs to come next? What are the **game changing opportunities** you see to truly level the playing field so that the talent and creativity of all our workforce can be harnessed?

To create an enabling environment and safe spaces in the workplace, where every person is treated with respect and fairness, you may wish to explore and highlight:

#Policies – such as flexible working, parental leave, equal pay, zero tolerance against harassment, talent development, quotas, data gathering and analysis, accountability mechanisms.

#Practices – for instance, leading and role-modelling a speak up culture and deep listening, mentoring and sponsorship, training, regular staff surveys or check-ins, prioritising ethics and integrity, inclusion in communications and social activities.

#Behaviours –addressing micro-inequities such as interruption or inequitable speaking time in meetings, allocation of tasks, time, attention, gratitude and appreciation.



How you do it is up to you! A blog piece, a photo, a video, summaries of a peer review, or simply an email to us. We will compile them and share them and in **November, share and celebrate the stories of success**. Members of the network are already hosting a number of events to support you and we welcome suggestions and contributions.

Timeline

→ June

- **Champion level 'launch' of the Gender Champions Challenge** during IGC's Fifth Anniversary Celebrations
- **Focal point 'kick off'**: framing during the Super Focal Points meeting on 11 June with UN Women, the International Labour Organization and the EDGE Foundation & launch during the Fifth Anniversary Focal Points edition on 30 June

→ July

- **#ChampioningNewNorms: Online Edition** on 3 July: a [participatory forum](#) to highlight the difference IGC has made in 5 years and capture ideas for the future
- **Champion-level Salon Style event on Leading Organisational Change** for gender equality, organised by the Permanent Mission of Australia to the United Nations in Geneva

→ September

- **Focal point meeting** focus on **Creating Safe Spaces**.
- **E-Workshop** by the IGC Secretariat: **Courageous and Constructive Conversations**
- **UN Women / IGC event on parental leave**, a major policy gap for many UN organisations, and we invite you to join the campaign #ChampionsforParentalLeave.

→ October

- **E-Workshop** by the IGC Secretariat: **Peer-Peer support and Mentoring**.
- **E-Workshop** by the IGC Secretariat: **Leading tensions, addressing fears and overcoming resistance**.

→ November

- **Celebrating stories of success and achievements** during bi-annual Champions meeting and Focal Points meeting.

We have already begun the journey:

- **UNICEF 'VOICES' train the trainer workshop** – breaking the culture of silence to speak up and manage up - and [opinion piece by Henrietta Fore](#)
- Professor George Kohlrieser's **keynote speech at the Geneva Champions meeting**, [Leading Change from Within](#)
- [Blog by Collaboratio Helvetica](#) following their workshop on deep listening and generative dialogue - Theory U

We invite you to join us!
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