

# The women who show politicians how it should be done

The inaugural awards of an ongoing program acknowledge the vital contribution of women in important spheres of Australian life, write **Narelle Hooper** and **Catherine Fox**.

In the midst of a national debate on the status and treatment of women, *The Australian Financial Review* and Westpac have recognised outstanding women who are using their influence to improve business and society.

More than 350 women were nominated for the initial 100 Women of Influence awards. The finalists were selected from across the economy by a panel of leading Australians. Those chosen have been successful in their careers and influential in shaping a bold and diverse future for Australia, the panel says.

Among the list – the first in an ongoing annual awards program – are Business Council of Australia chief executive Jennifer Westacott, Origin Energy chief operating officer Karen Moses, Kraft Foods chief Rebecca Dee-Bradbury, philanthropists Layne Beachley, Carol Schwartz and Debbie Dadon, and Reconciliation Australia chief executive Leah Armstrong.

“Influence often seems so wishy-washy when compared with the assumptions that power is absolute,” judge and director Wendy McCarthy says. “Influence is what women can have when they do not have power. If we want to change the world we need both . . . influence can be powerful and change culture.”

Jillian Segal, ASX director and one of those recognised, says the awards process is an important step in legitimising women’s contribution at all levels.

“Women to date haven’t spoken out with an open voice in the community and the awards are part of the pathway of

encouraging women to be active,” she says.

“It’s part of having a dynamic and mature society to have women, who represent half the population and the majority of decision-makers as consumers, to have a voice and play a leading role in different fields and seek to shift society for the benefit of all.

“Women are often criticised for not putting their hands up for recognition and are often too busy keeping their heads down doing their job. There are more and more models out there to show women can and need to play a significant role in society.”

Wendy Simpson, chairman of Wengeo group, yesterday launched Springboard Australia, a venture investment fund to support women entrepreneurs.

She says the politicians are missing the point that women have not been heard for a long time and social media is giving them a voice.

“In all this what no one’s talking about is women’s achievements. Until we can talk about women’s achievements, we’re not going to progress as a strong economy.”

Entries for the awards were invited in June across 10 categories: board/management, innovation, public policy, business entrepreneur, diversity, young leader, global, social enterprise, philanthropy and local/regional.

The judging panel included Wendy McCarthy, former joint chief executive of Goldman Sachs Australia Stephen Fitzgerald, Future Fund chairman David Gonski, CEO of UN Women Australia Julie McKay, Fairfax Media director Sandra McPhee, Reserve Bank board member Heather Ridout, Allens law firm chief Michael Rose and Red Cross board member Sue Vardon.

Winners from the 10 categories and the overall 2012 Woman of Influence will be announced at a ceremony at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Sydney tonight.

Awards co-ordination by **Beverley Uther**

## The Financial Review’s 100 Women of Influence

The 100 women of influence of 2012 came from 10 categories:

Board and management, public policy, business entrepreneur, innovation, social enterprise, youth, diversity, local/regional, philanthropy and global. More at [afr.com](http://afr.com)



### Board & Management

Becky Lumlock, QLD  
Brenda Shanahan, VIC  
Cassandra Kelly, NSW  
Eva Skira, WA  
Helen Gillies, NSW  
Jane Wilson, QLD  
Janet Matton, VIC  
Janet Whiting, VIC  
Jennifer Westacott, VIC  
Jillian Segal, NSW  
Karen Moses, NSW  
Kerrie Mather, NSW  
Lyn Copley, NSW  
Lyn McGrath, NSW  
Marianne Foley, NSW  
Nicola Wakefield-Evans, NSW  
Rachel Argaman, NSW  
Rebecca Dee-Bradbury, VIC  
Romilly Madew, NSW  
Sam Mostyn, NSW  
Sharon Cook, NSW  
Vikki McFadden, NSW

### Business Entrepreneur

Anna Whitlam, VIC  
Catherine (Kate) Gunn, NSW  
Christine Cameron, QLD  
Gai Waterhouse, NSW  
Leanne Preston, WA  
Liz Davenport, WA  
Tammy May, SA

### Diversity

Felicity Harley, NSW  
Fran Raymond, ACT  
Margaret Beazley, NSW  
Miriam Silva, SA  
Nadine Flood, NSW  
Nareen Young, NSW  
Rachelle Lewitan, VIC

### Global

Audette Exel, NSW  
Barbara Jinks, QLD  
Gemma Sisia, Tanzania  
Moya Dodd, NSW  
Serafina Maiorano, US  
Shirley Kaye Randall, NSW  
Suzanne Dvorak, VIC  
Vanessa Torres, VIC

### Innovation

Elizabeth Elliott, NSW  
Jane Burns, VIC  
Jane Visvader, VIC  
Megan Clark, NSW  
Suzanne Cory, VIC

### Local/Regional

Alana Johnson, VIC  
Clare Thompson, WA  
Deb Wilkes, WA  
Deborah Conway, QLD  
Elizabeth Eastland, NSW  
Fiona Shewring, NSW  
Janelle Whitehead, NSW  
Justine Hansen, WA  
Lesley Fitzpatrick, ACT  
Maggie Burns, TAS  
Melanie Raymond, VIC

### Philanthropy

Annabelle Chauncy, NSW  
Annie Crawford, NSW  
Carol Schwartz, VIC  
Debbie Dadon, VIC  
Jeanne Pratt, VIC  
Layne Beachley, NSW  
Tanya Hosch, SA

### Public Policy

Carmel McGregor, ACT  
Cassandra Goldie, NSW  
Dawn Casey, NSW  
Fiona Reynolds, VIC  
Helen Silver, VIC  
Jacky Hodges, WA  
Judy Raper, NSW  
Kim Rubenstein, ACT  
Leah Armstrong, NSW  
Margaret Sheil, VIC  
Margaret Staib, ACT  
Megan Houghton, QLD  
Melanie Stutsel, ACT  
Michele Bruniges, NSW

### Social Enterprise

Carey Badcoe, NSW  
Elizabeth Honor Lloyd, ACT  
Jan Owen, VIC  
Jodie Sizer, VIC  
Karen Mahlab, NSW  
Kirstie Parker, NSW  
Merinda Donnelly, NSW  
Natalie Walker, NSW  
Rebecca Scott, VIC  
Ronni Kahn, NSW  
Sharon Callister, NSW

### Young Leader

April Long, NSW  
Bianca Orsini, NSW  
Felicity Briody, QLD  
Holly Ransom, WA  
Marita Cheng, VIC  
Samantha Cran, NSW  
Yassmin Abdel-Magied, QLD



**Janet Matton**  
Chief operating officer IBM Aust & NZ



**Jennifer Westacott**  
BCA chief executive



**Suzanne Corey**  
President Aust Academy of Sciences



**Leah Armstrong**  
CEO Reconciliation Australia