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and participation

Keynote Summary: Women in engineering in academia: Are we there yet?

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ABSTRACT

In her Keynote address, Professor Ana Deletic focused on how the participation of women in engineering practice is one of the lowest of all the professions. She led the development of a number of green nature-based water treatment systems which are now widely adopted in Australia and abroad.

KEYWORDS

Gender & STEM; engineering; stormwater research

WOMEN IN ENGINEERING IN ACADEMIA: ARE WE THERE YET? DELETIC KEYNOTE SUMMARY

Professor Ana Deletic is Executive Dean of the Faculty of Engineering at Queensland University of Technology in Brisbane Queensland. She was Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research) and Professor in the Water Research Centre, School of Civil and Environmental Engineering at the University of New South Wales (UNSW) Sydney from 2017 to 2021. Prior to that, Ana was Associate Dean of Research in the Engineering Faculty and the Founding Director of Monash Infrastructure Research Institute at Monash University. An internationally engaged and respected researcher, Ana has been researching in the field of urban water engineering for almost 30 years and is the most published researcher in the world on the topic of storm water management. Ana has a PhD from the University of Aberdeen and is an Honorary Fellow of Engineers Australia, a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering, and Editor of Water Research. In 2012, the Victorian State Government awarded Professor Deletic the Victoria Prize for Science and Innovation (Physical Sciences) for her lifelong achievements in stormwater research. With a consultative, evidence-based approach, a feature of Ana's leadership roles over the past decade has been her focus on bringing together multiple partners from industries, governments, and the university sector, to set-up and deliver large research programs. Ana also has significant experience in leading change – most recently at UNSW she was involved in a major reorganisation of all faculties as a response to the impact of COVID-19. She also developed and implemented university-wide initiatives that have underpinned the steep rise of UNSW in major international rankings.

In her Keynote address, Professor Deletic focused on how the participation of women in engineering practice is one of the lowest of all the professions. This is mirrored by the low participation of women in undergraduate and postgraduate engineering studies, but it is particularly evident in the teaching and research staff of engineering faculties at universities across Australia.

Through her address, she:

1. outlined the key issues that result in low rates for women lecturers and researchers,
2. provided an overview of why we are still facing this problem, and
3. proposed some actions that can help us to overcome barriers to greater participation.

This Keynote address was presented at the Network Gender & STEM biennial conference, 29-30 July 2021, The University of Sydney, Australia [online]. Both the recorded Keynote and live discussion are accessible here, with permission: <https://youtu.be/AAaynFVwdHA>