

WOMEN IN CONSTRUCTION: HOLISTIC INVESTIGATION OF THE PIPELINE LEAKS AND LESSONS FROM WOMEN IN ENGINEERING

Early researchers examined gender representation in the American workforce more than three decades ago and called the construction industry a “non-traditional field” for working women. Despite the plethora of research and practice efforts over the span of decades, globally, the industry is still defined as a “non-traditional field”.

This study compared the data from Australia, the USA, the UK and Brazil on education and career pathways through the gendered lens. Findings shed light on the need for systematic inspection of the whole pipeline to investigate the leaks in education and career segments through root cause analysis and the call for cross-sectorial approaches for systemic social change in the construction industry.

Learning from other sectors can be a powerful way to improve the strategy and culture of the construction sectors. Some best practices from the Engineering field will be shared to discover new ideas, insights, and best practices that can help solve the construction sector’s gender segregation issue and innovate.



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Dr Ruwini Edirisinghe is a senior lecturer at the School of Property, Construction and Project Management (PCPM) at RMIT University in Melbourne, Australia. She is a former Vice-Chancellor’s Research Fellow and an experienced researcher in digital innovation in building and construction. Ruwini has a strong track record of collaborating with research partners and also with industry and the community to make an impact. She has demonstrated research leadership by securing a growing volume of grants and prestigious fellowships. So far, Ruwini has secured \$4.78 million in research funding and has been awarded several research awards. Ruwini is a passionate and effective advocate for diversity and inclusion. As the Co-chair of the Diversity and Inclusions Advocacy Group (DIAG) at the School of PCPM, she leads teams to promote diversity beyond gender. She is an active member of RMIT’s Athena SWAN DIAG. She is the deputy chair of RMIT’s Women Researcher’s Network. Ruwini is the chair of the Institute of Electrical and Engineers (IEEE) Women in Engineering Victorian section. As a local and international committee member, she has been actively advocating for gender diversity in the engineering profession since 2014 through IEEE, the world’s largest technical professional organisation.

NOVEMBER 17, 2023

ZOOM MEETING

11:30 AM – 12:20 PM



Division of Construction
Engineering and Management