



Nursery & Garden Industry
Australia

FEATURE

Date 21.11.2018

Nursery industry empowering women into leadership roles, with Symone Mansfield

To ensure the longevity and success of Australia's nursery industry, it's important to tackle key workforce issues and challenges.

It's a theme strongly reflected in the [nursery industry's Strategic Investment Plan 2017-21](#), which is dedicated to investing in people and developing the right human capital.

As part of this, the nursery industry has placed a greater focus on empowering women to accelerate their careers and take on more responsibility at a business and industry level.

Operations and Sales Manager at Tissue Culture Australia, Symone Mansfield, recently shared her experiences as a young female leader in the industry.

As a participant in the 2018 Green Industry Growing Leaders Program (MT16002), Symone was encouraged to see an even distribution of women and men taking part in the development course.

"It was a fantastic program, which provided a great opportunity to network with people across different areas of the industry," Symone said.

"I found the presenters and course structure had great cut through, particularly with developing communication skills and how to broach those more difficult conversations."

In recent years, Symone has seen positive change for women working in horticulture, citing the current Hort Frontiers Leadership Fund and Women & Leadership Australia (WLA) Scholarships.

The WLA Scholarships aim to address key barriers for women working across different levels in horticulture, and equip participants with the right tools to support personal and professional growth.

Symone, a board member of Nursery & Garden Industry Victoria (NGIV), encouraged her peers to apply for the Scholarships, with expressions of interest now open until December 7, 2018.

"I see confidence as a key barrier to women taking that next step, and putting their hands up for leadership roles. While it can be intimidating at times, I've found the nursery industry to be very welcoming and supportive," Symone said.



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“Whether it’s a leadership role or a career development initiative, I encourage women to get involved. The initiatives are a great way to learn new skills and grow as a manager.”

Symone said participation in career development programs empowered women and provided them with confidence to take on more responsibility in their businesses.

“The courses are a great opportunity to network with industry, to build relationships and to share experiences with people who have, or are going through, similar challenges,” she said.

Discussing long-term retention for women in the nursery industry, Symone said continued investment in career development opportunities will propel more women into leadership roles.

“Our industry needs to be positioned as an employer of choice, which provides ongoing support and development for the current and future women of the industry,” she said.

“Women bring a valuable and diverse set of skills to the business, and we must continue to strive for equal representation across all aspects of the industry.”

****ENDS****

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**Hort
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Strategic levy investment

**NURSERY
FUND**

This project has been funded by Hort Innovation using the nursery research and development levy and funds from the Australian Government. For more information on the fund and strategic levy investment visit horticulture.com.au