

About the Speakers

Marian Baird

Professor Marian Baird is a Presiding Pro-Chancellor of the University of Sydney, Head of the Discipline of Work and Organisational Studies, and Co-Director of the Women and Work Research Group in the University of Sydney Business School. Marian was awarded an AO in 2016 for outstanding services to improving the quality of women's working lives and for contributions to tertiary education.

In 2018 and 2019 she was named in Apolitical's Top 100 Most Influential People in Gender Equality list. She is one of Australia's leading researchers in the fields of women, work and family. Professor Baird has received numerous grants from business and government to study gender equitable organisational change and work and family.

She has contributed to a number of government advisory boards and reference groups relating to parental leave, gender equity and sexual harassment in the workplace. She is a member of international research networks on parental leave and empowering women and is currently a Chief Investigator on the Centre of Excellence on Population Ageing Research, where her focus is on mature workers, particularly with regard to women and the provision of care.

Dr Mihajla Gavin

Dr Mihajla Gavin is a Lecturer at the University of Technology, Sydney (UTS) Business School. Her research program to date has focused on the intersection of employment relations, education and gender, including issues of work intensification, worker status, precarious work, union strategy and women in trade unions.

Her doctoral thesis examined the response of the NSW Teachers' Federation to neoliberal education policies over the last 35 years. She is a recipient of the University Medal from the University of Sydney. Her industry-engaged research has received media attention and won several awards at leading industrial relations conferences.

Prior to her career in academia, she worked as a senior adviser for the Fair Work Ombudsman in various policy, advisory, research and major projects roles.

Mihajla also currently sits on the Executive Committee of the Association of Industrial Relations Academics in Australia and New Zealand (AIRAANZ).

Big Steps

Big Steps is the United Workers Union campaign to value every early childhood educator in Australia.

Big Steps Deputy Director **Sarah Gardner** has been organising workers across the Asia Pacific for almost two decades. Sarah has worked at the ACTU and IUF and will present with a Big Steps leader, activist and educator.

Samira Shire is an experienced early childhood teacher working for a not-for-profit provider in Queensland and a proud Big Steps leader and United Workers' Union delegate.