(1) Name, Position, and Contact Details for each applicant

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(2) Project Title
The Whiteboard: Examining Diversity in Corporate Australia

(3) Updated Project Summary (500 words), including any variations between the project undertaken and the original application

Diversity of company leadership is an important governance issue for corporations globally, yet the uneven treatment of diversity priorities remains a major challenge. We explore the extent and change over time of both gender and ethnic diversity in leadership and disclosure for Australia's largest firms from 2005 to 2021.

Using institutional theory, we compare the isomorphisms driving change, and examine the extent to which there is rhetorical decoupling between diversity disclosure and practice. Our analysis reveals a significant improvement in gender diversity over time but very little progress in the ethnic diversity of corporate leaders.

We find a connection between diversity reporting and the appointment of female corporate leaders. However, there is a disconnection between public commitment to diversity and the appointment of non-white corporate leaders. A lack of regulation for diversity reporting contributes to this imbalance with different outcomes for gender and ethnic diversity as the result of different institutional isomorphisms.

Our findings can inform policymakers and corporations, highlighting the importance of a range of institutional pressures that encourage the disclosure and practice of ethnic diversity in corporate leadership.

(4) Funds Granted

$5,931

(5) Detailed Report on Expenditure of Funds against Budget Items, with variations explained

We recruited one research assistant, Amanda Stevin, who helped us throughout this research project by manually extracting the board diversity data from annual reports, company websites, and LinkedIn from 2005-2020. Our initial budget request was $8,878 for collecting board diversity data. To make up the shortfall, we applied for, and were granted, additional funding from the Faculty of Business and Law at UOW to collect the complete data set required for this project.

(6) Outcomes, for example, working papers, presentations, and publications (give full details, including abstracts)
We have multiple outcomes to report under this project. We submitted a paper to the Academy of Management Annual Meeting for consideration. Our paper was accepted to this prestigious conference and also received the best paper award, which led us to publish abridged version of the paper under the Academy of Management Proceedings, akin to A-ranked publication in the management discipline. We have also generated an opinion piece, which was published in an Emerald Publishing series on Responsible Management. Our key outcome

from this project has now been conditionally accepted by the *Australian Journal of Management* under a special issue titled "Anti-racism as an organising principle: Racial inequality in and around organisations". Details of these outcomes are provided below:

Conference presentation
Cortese, C., Wright, C., Al Mamun, A., & Ali, S. (2022). The Whiteboard: Decoupling of Diversity Reporting and Practice in Corporate Australia. *Academy of Management*, Seattle. [Best accepted conference paper award]

Abridged publication
Wright, C., Cortese, C., Al Mamun, A. & Ali, S. (2022). The Whiteboard: Decoupling of Diversity Reporting and Practice in Corporate Australia. *In Academy of Management Proceedings* 2022(1), 13492. https://doi.org/10.5465/AMBPP.2022.247

Opinion piece
Wright, C., Cortese C., Al-Mamun A., & Ali S. (2022). The whiteboard: ethnic diversity in corporate Australia. *Emerald Publishing*, https://www.emeraldgrouppublishing.com/opinion-and-blog/whiteboard-ethnic-diversity-corporate-australia

Journal Publication
Cortese, C.L., Wright, C., Al Mamun, A., Ali, S. (2023). The Whiteboard: Decoupling of Ethnic and Gender Diversity Reporting and Practice in Corporate Australia. *Australian Journal of Management* [ABDC A, Conditionally Accepted].

The table below shows the timeline, tasks and milestones achieved for the project.

Tasks/Outcomes	2021	2022	2023
Literature Review and Theoretical Framework	▓		
Research Methodology	▓		
Sample selection	▓		
Data collection & analysis	▓		
Working paper	▓		
Journal submission (*AJM*)	▓		
Conference presentation (*AOM*)		▓	
Best paper award (*AOM*)		▓	
Abridged publication (*AOM*)		▓	
Opinion piece (*Emerald Publishing*)		▓	
R&R (*AJM*)		▓	
Conditional acceptance (*AJM*)			▓

(7) Future Intentions for this Project (give full details)

Building on the successful completion of this project and the solid track record of the team, we will apply for a research grant (e.g., AFAANZ or ARCDP) to work on a project to be considered in a follow-up special issue by the *Australian Journal of Management,* as indicated below.

"*To encourage continuity in research topic and tracking impact, AJM will host a follow-up special issue opportunity tentatively scheduled for 2025. Authors accepted for the initial special issue will be invited to*

provide an updated piece on the impact and subsequent developments on the back of the initial work." (See https://journals.sagepub.com/pb-assets/cmscontent/AUM/SI%20Racism%20Call%20for%20papers.pdf)

(8) Summary of Outcomes and Benefits

Our research contributes knowledge to the standard-setting process by providing evidence on ethnic and gender diversity and reporting of publicly listed Australian firms compared with their counterparts from the US, the UK and Canada. Our research highlights strategies that have been effective and meaningful for aligning corporate disclosure and practices for women in corporate leadership, i.e., public, industry and regulatory pressures as well as shareholder activism, public sector inquests, advocacy by professional bodies and influential male directors. Our study, however, shows that there is still a lot of work to be done on Australian corporate boards with regard to cultural and ethnic diversity. Looking to the future, we recommend that more stringent public, industry and governmental pressures are placed on Australian companies to compel them to adopt a broader view of diversity beyond gender in their corporate leadership and governance. Such a view of diversity would include culture, race, ethnicity, age, experience, sexuality and disability. Hopefully, this can be achieved within the current decade to demonstrate Australia's strong commitment and progress in reducing inequalities as required under UN SDG 10.2.