

PANEL PLEDGE

I genuinely believe that diversity and inclusion are fundamental values towards which every leader and every organization should be aspiring. Diversity of perspectives and experiences adds value to every conversation. It sparks “outside of the box” thinking. It inspires change. Respect for diversity is also a reflection of organisational integrity and character.

Panels, conferences, and symposiums offer a platform to share information, perspectives, expertise, and insights. Yet traditionally, these venues have lacked gender balance, despite there being more than an ample supply of qualified, skilled, and competent women. I would like to see that change. I would like to see more women thought-leaders represented at these forums as panellists and as key note speakers.

I am dedicated to doing my part and serve as an ambassador of change. As such, I commit to this panel pledge.

My commitments:

1. Ask:

When I am invited to speak at or participate in any forum, engagement, or event, I will:

- Ask who the other speakers and panellists are
- Ask for the criteria used to select the speakers and panellists
- Ask if there is fair/equitable gender representation, considering the availability of women with the necessary competencies

2. Advocate:

If there appears to be an absence of gender balance on panels/forums to which I have been invited, I will:

- Promote the importance of gender balance and highlight benefits of including women with appropriate experience and competencies
- Ask if diversity was considered in planning the event and selecting panellists/speakers
- Offer names of women from within my organization or network who could potentially participate if there appears to be an absence of gender balance

3. Act:

I will act and lead by example within my own organization. To this end, I will:

- Continue to speak about the importance and benefits of gender balance
- Share this pledge with my senior management team and ask them to commit as well
- Encourage women in my organization to make their voices heard and express interest in panel/speaking opportunities
- Strive for gender balance when approaching qualified panel participants and speakers for arrangements within my own tax administration