

# Women's Network

## Terms of Reference



The CICES Women's Network offers a multitude of benefits that extend beyond the boundaries of a professional network. Through robust mentoring programmes, members have the opportunity to receive guidance and support from experienced colleagues, fostering career advancement and personal growth. It prioritises personal and professional development, ensuring that members are equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to excel in their roles. Beyond development, the network cultivates a strong sense of community, where members find both a safe space to discuss their experiences and a supportive environment for personal and collective growth. It also serves as a hub for networking, allowing members to connect, collaborate and expand their horizons within the construction and engineering industry. These are just a few of the numerous benefits associated with the Women's Network, which empower, support, and inspire women in their professional journeys.

### Mission

- Empowering, connecting and advancing women in the construction and engineering profession. The CICES Women's Network fosters mentoring, personal development, and a strong sense of community to drive career growth and equity in our field.

### Specific goals

- **Mentoring and guidance:** The network within CICES provides a valuable resource for mentoring, guidance, and coaching, helping women in the construction and engineering field to advance in their careers and navigate professional challenges effectively.
- **Personal development:** The network offers comprehensive personal development opportunities tailored to the unique needs of women in the industry. This includes not only professional skills but also personal growth, ensuring that women have the tools to excel in their careers.
- **Safe and inclusive space:** The network creates a safe and inclusive space where women can openly discuss their experiences, address concerns, and share ideas without fear of judgment. This promotes a culture of trust and support.
- **Promoting women in construction:** The network plays a pivotal role in raising awareness of the significant contributions made by women in construction and engineering. By doing so, it actively challenges stereotypes and encourages more women to pursue careers in this field.
- **Networking and allyship:** Within CICES, the network fosters opportunities among women in construction and engineering, allowing them to forge meaningful professional relationships. Moreover, it promotes the concept of allyship, urging both women and men in the industry to support and advocate for gender diversity and equity.
- **Supporting women in progressing to leadership positions:** The network prioritises providing support and guidance to women as they progress into leadership positions within the construction and engineering sectors. This commitment ensures that women have the resources and mentorship necessary to excel in leadership roles and contribute to greater diversity and innovation in these positions within CICES and the broader industry.
- **Promotion of CICES:** The network actively promotes CICES, thereby contributing to increased membership and engagement within the industry.
- **Advocacy for gender-inclusive policies:** The network plays a pivotal role in advocating for a balanced approach to policies that affect female colleagues, influencing employers to create more inclusive and equitable workplaces.

### How the network works

- **WhatsApp for networking, allyship and inclusive space:** The network will leverage WhatsApp as a platform for members to connect, network and provide support and allyship to one another.

This instant communication channel fosters an inclusive space where members can openly discuss their experiences and concerns.

- **Monthly online networking meetings:** The network will host monthly online meetings, where members can gather to discuss specific topics. These meetings will provide a forum for knowledge sharing, idea exchange and collaboration, enhancing professional growth and awareness within the group.
- **Personal development book of the month:** Each month, a book will be recommended by a member of the network. This initiative encourages members to explore a wide range of personal and professional development literature, fostering knowledge sharing and discussion within the group.
- **Space in CES:** The network will have its own dedicated space within the journal to highlight and promote the exceptional work and achievements of women in the construction and engineering fields. This showcases the network's commitment to recognising and celebrating the contributions of its members.
- **Get-togethers:** To complement the online interactions, the network will also organise in-person get-togethers, providing opportunities for members to meet face-to-face, strengthen relationships, and create a sense of community. These gatherings will promote a deeper level of connection and support among network members. Where possible the network will look to 'piggyback' other events.
- **Mentoring:** The network will facilitate mentoring opportunities where experienced members can provide guidance and support to those looking to advance in their careers. This mentoring programme will promote skill development, career growth and a sense of community within the network.

## Activities

- The Women's Network will encourage a safe working environment where everyone can flourish.
- The Women's Network will educate the civil engineering surveying industry and encourage the widening of access to employment opportunities amongst women, who are currently under-represented within the workforce and improve social value.
- The Women's Network will work with and support the EDI Council in its education engagement activities.
- The Women's Network will keep up-to-date with, share and promote best practice in equality, diversity and inclusion initiatives.
- The Women's Network will build partnerships with other industry and professional body EDI committees and organisations.
- The Women's Network will provide content for *Civil Engineering Surveyor*.
- The Women's Network may be asked to undertake specific workstreams as required by the institution.
- The Women's Network is responsible to Council of Management and will provide an update on its activities.
- The Women's Network will review these terms of reference annually.

## Membership

- Meetings will be held monthly using an online platform.
- Meeting minutes will be taken by the meeting chair and issued to Women's Network members within seven days.
- Administrative support will be provided by the CICES Development Officer.
- External speakers and guests will be invited to attend Women's Network meetings as required.