

WOMEN IN TECHNOLOGY WA — “20 IN 20” GALA AWARDS

Statement by Minister for Women’s Interests

MS S.F. McGURK (Fremantle — Minister for Women’s Interests) [9.10 am]: I rise to inform the house of the twentieth anniversary and awards of Women in Technology WA. On Saturday, 2 November, I had the great pleasure to join WiTWA, as it is widely known, for its gala evening to celebrate 20 years in WA. As part of this event, outstanding women working in technology fields were recognised through the “20 in 20” awards announced on the night.

WiTWA was established as a networking and mentoring organisation for women in the traditionally male-dominated field of technology. Over its 20 years, it has expanded to advocate for and champion women in the industry and encourage all young people to consider a career in the diverse fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics, or STEM. The goal to get more women and girls into STEM careers is an area of priority for the McGowan government. It will ensure that we harness the full potential of this state’s population, drive long-term economic growth and empower women to challenge persistent stereotypes. With the projected growth in demand for technology-based skills, it is vital that we tap into the whole talent pool in building the capability for the state’s economy.

The state government is proud to have supported a range of WiTWA programs, including Techtrails, a school program that motivates students to pursue science, technology, engineering and maths career paths. We know how important it is to address unconscious bias and gender stereotyping at a young age, to ensure that young girls are not turning their backs on science and technology. I acknowledge and thank all the dedicated volunteers of WiTWA, including their inimitable patron, Professor Lyn Beazley, AO. These women donate their time and expertise to the work of WiTWA in a shared mission to get more girls into technology and encourage all young people in WA to see how exciting a career in technology can be.