

ASTN AND WIST PARTNER TO CHANGE THE RATIO IN AUSTRALIA OF WOMEN IN SPORTSTECH

MELBOURNE – 09 JUNE 2022: Australian Sports Technologies Network (ASTN) and Women in Sports Tech (WiST) have today announced a long-term partnership to work together to increase representation of women in the sportstech industry in Australia.

WiST is a nonprofit organisation aimed at expanding career opportunities and enhancing pathways for women in sportstech, at all stages of their careers, from the classroom to the boardroom. WiST develops and delivers innovative programs, original content and a global community that provides tangible value for women and employers.

WiST has a strong reputation in the United States. In five short years, WiST's unique programs and engaging original content have created a community of nearly 20,000 committed stakeholders and students and the non-profit organisation now has over 32 corporate partners who support their work, in all categories of sports tech.

WiST and ASTN will collaborate to run specialised programs, provide mentorship, and work with ASTN members to improve their culture to encourage a more inclusive and diverse workforce.

“Sportstech businesses in Australia are among the most innovative and forward-thinking companies that I have ever worked with in this global industry. We are absolutely thrilled to share with ASTN our best practices and specific programs that will serve to diversify the exploding business there and enhance culture, all for even better business results,” said Marilou McFarlane, Chief Executive Officer and Founder of WiST.

Research shows that less than five per cent of sports startups are women in Australia¹. As part of its current educational programs, ASTN has demonstrated above industry average outcomes – with more than twelve percent of female founders or co-founders participating in ASTN programs. However, ASTN recognises that a specific and separate approach is required to effectively uplift female participation and long-term impact.

Work conducted by the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) and the Technical University of Munich (TUM) have shown that four types of diversity, namely industry background, country of origin, career path and gender, positively correlate with innovation².

“We are proud to partner with WiST to shift the culture of sportstech in Australia. We have many successful female founders in the ASTN member network, but women are still highly unrepresented across the local sportstech sector. We have a long way to go but by working closely with WiST we hope to bridge this gap to drive real industry change,” said Cam Vale, General Operations Manager, ASTN.

¹ Startup Victoria (2017). Mapping Victoria's Startup Ecosystem, page 20

² Boston Consulting Group (BCG) and Technical University of Munich (TUM) (2017). The Mix That Matters – Innovation Through Diversity, page 2 'At A Glance'



“WIST has driven real tangible change in such a short time – especially with their flagship WiST Fellowship program that provides female students with the meaningful internship experience they need to launch their careers in our industry. We look forward to replicating this success in Australia,” added Vale.

The WiST Fellowship program provides grants and travel reimbursement for highly motivated college, graduate, and PhD students to pursue summer internship projects in sportstech. To-date, the WiST Fellowship Program has placed 75 students in internships with sports tech companies since its inception in 2018.

Sarah Wall is the Founder and CEO of NETFIT, Australia’s leading digital and lifestyle netball brand offering fitness classes, skills, coaching and nutrition. NETFIT now has 10 full time staff, 52 contractors and 7,000 paid subscribers in over 52 countries.

Wall believes this partnership will help many aspiring female sportstech entrepreneurs to break into the sector. “When I started NETFIT a decade ago, support from an organisation like WiST would have proved invaluable to open up many doors, remove a few barriers and provide some much-needed mentorship in such a competitive and male-lead industry,” said Wall.

“The most successful companies are those that have the best diversity of people and thought, and this partnership will also help local sportstech leaders to improve their culture, as well as attract and retain the very best talent.”

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Media Enquiries

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About Australian Sports Technologies Network Ltd

Australian Sports Technologies Network (ASTN) provides leadership in the commercialisation, development, and promotion of Australian-inspired Sports Technologies. Established in 2012, ASTN is today a world-leading pioneer with over 500 organisations in its national network across the landscape of Sports Digital, Sports Research, Stadium/Venues, Media, Entertainment, eSports, Human Performance, Fan Engagement, Sports Data, Artificial Intelligence in Sports, Sports Equipment, Sports Smart Apparel and Sports Universities. For more information, please visit www.astn.com.au.

About WiST

Women in Sports Tech (WiST) is a nonprofit organization that drives transformative growth opportunities for women in sports tech and innovation, at all stages of their career, from the



Australian Sports
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Powering Sports Innovation

classroom to the boardroom. WiST develops and delivers innovative programs, original content and a global community that provide tangible value for women and employers alike.

Its flagship initiative, the [WiST Fellowship](#) program, provides grants for highly motivated college and graduate school students to pursue summer projects in sports technology. Additional WiST programs include the [WiST Next Gen](#) Resource Hub for high school students, the original content series [WiST Presents](#), and the [WiST NETWORK](#) career hub, the single source for diverse hiring in the sports tech industry.

WiST is supported by donations from corporations and organizations, including AEG Worldwide, Catapult Sports, Comcast NBCU, DICK'S Game Changer, FEVO, IBM Sports, NBA, Nike, Oracle, PointsBet, Stats Perform, Shorewind Capital, Strava, Titleist, and more. WiST has provided an array of diverse panelists for learning experiences at Hashtag Sports, CES, SIGA, SXSW, the Stanford GSB Sports Innovation Conference, and more. For more information, please visit womeninsportstech.org.