

### 2021 Awards for Excellence – People First

*The OneConsult 2021 Awards for Excellence People First Award winner has been announced as DesignInc Sydney for Organisational Policies and Initiatives.*

DesignInc Sydney has been recognised as this year's Consult Australia 2021 People First Award Winners for Organisational Policies and Initiatives. This Award recognises firms that have implemented and delivered outstanding initiatives that benefit their people.

#### **Winner** **DesignInc Sydney**

At DesignInc Sydney, we are driven not only by the desire to create beautiful places that are equitable and accessible for users, we also want the people who design them to be happy and healthy—we want each member of our team to reach their personal and professional potential.

The architecture and design sector has a reputation for having male-dominated, stressful work environments with long hours. At DesignInc we believe in fairness, equity, and opportunity for all, and actively take steps to understand how stressors and barriers operate within our organisation and the broader industry, and to challenge them.

We recognise a range of hidden forces at play in the design and construction sector that make it easier for some people and ideas to succeed, and harder for others. We pride ourselves on an organisational ecology where the managers listen, learn, and respond to the needs of the broader team, allowing them to understand the needs and sentiments of our team and to implement policies that address them.

Our many myriad initiatives work together to create a culture of openness and inclusion and support our people across key areas of mental health and wellbeing, diversity, disability, gender equity and cultural equity. Our initiatives are having a positive impact within the organisation and leading the way in our industry.

Consult Australia has also recognised Cardno for People First as Highly Commended 2021 Awards for Excellence in the category of People First.

### **Highly Commended Cardno**

Engineering and environmental consultancy Cardno was recognised as Highly Commended for implementing and delivering outstanding initiatives that benefit their people. “We’re incredibly proud of the work we’ve done in the past year, making deliberate decisions to create a more inclusive and family friendly work environment which has now paid off and lead to our recent certification as a Family Inclusive Workplace through Family Friendly Workplaces,” Robbie Marshall, General Manager – North West Australia said. “We believe we are now first in our industry to achieve this certification. It’s an honour to receive such a prestigious award.

“Whether you’re a parent, a child, a sibling or a parent of a fur-baby, we know that creating an environment at Cardno where family members can thrive is key to enabling all employees to combine work and family responsibilities – however, those responsibilities might look different for each person,” said Robbie.

Cardno’s Asia Pacific Division offers industry-leading parental and shared care leave options to allow their people to manage parental responsibilities, help equalise the impacts felt by parents and spend quality time with their little ones in the knowledge that their career will be there for them to pick it up right where they left off. “We are receiving fabulous feedback from our working dads and secondary carers who are embracing the chance to be the primary carer. In particular, they are commenting that they can play a greater role in parenting their babies and supporting their partners to return to work,” Robbie said.

From the 2019 to the 2020 financial year, Cardno reported an increase of 15% (from 19% to 34%) in the proportion of men accessing shared parental leave. That is, in the 2020 financial year, 34% of parents accessing full paid primary carer leave were men. Since enhancing our parental leave policies, Cardno has witnessed firsthand the many positive outcomes, most notably for fathers. Aussie Dads (currently) take less than 20% of the parental leave dads take globally. Outdated parental leave schemes perpetuate the entrenched male breadwinner model, impeding women’s career opportunities and placing undue financial pressure on dads. Since Cardno has created our Shared Care Policy they’ve had heart-warming images and testimonials from their dads while out on extended parental leave.

# MEDIA STATEMENT

FOR RELEASE 31/3/22 - 11:00PM



Congratulations to our Award Winner DesignInc, and Highly Commended winner Cardno.

Consult Australia is the industry association representing consulting businesses in design, advisory and engineering, an industry comprised of over 58,600 businesses across Australia. This includes some of Australia's top 500 companies and many small businesses (97%). Our members provide solutions for individual consumers through to major companies in the private sector and across all tiers of government. Our industry directly employs over 285,000 people in architectural, engineering, and technical services, and many more in advisory and business support. It is also a job creator for the Australian economy, the services we provide unlock many more jobs across the construction industry and the broader community.

**ENDS**

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## NOTES TO EDITOR

### 1. About Consult Australia

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### 2. About Nicola Grayson

Nicola Grayson is the Chief Executive of Consult Australia. Nicola is responsible for implementing the organisation's strategy, building ongoing external relationships, and for leading Consult Australia's advocacy and government relations agenda on behalf of members.

Nicola is a member of and former chair of the International Federation of Consulting Engineers (FIDIC) Risk, Liability, and Quality Committee. In Australia she chairs the Australian Sustainable Built Environment Council's Urban Resilience Task Group and sits on numerous government forums representing the Consult Australia membership. Nicola is the Convenor for Consult Australia's Champions of Change leadership group for gender diversity and inclusion, a member of the Champions of Change Coalition.

Nicola is a government relations specialist, and has represented industry associations in the United Kingdom, the European Union, and Australia. Nicola has worked across a range of sectors including general insurance, consumer finance, alcohol, and education, in addition to consulting engineering. She has an Honours Degree in Law from the United Kingdom and is a member of the Australia Institute of Company Directors.

### 3. For interview

For more information and to arrange an interview, please contact Nicola Grayson directly on +61499 878 839 or email [nicola@consultaaustralia.com.au](mailto:nicola@consultaaustralia.com.au).