TRUNG TÂM VIỆT – ÚC
VIETNAM AUSTRALIA CENTRE

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP JOURNEY

DRIVING CHANGES IN VIETNAM, EMPOWERING WOMEN LEADERS

ABOUT THE ACTIVITY

The Women in Leadership Journey (WILJ) – an Australia Awards Short Course under Aus4Skills – is a flagship initiative designed to equip Vietnamese women professionals with the skills, confidence, and networks to lead and advance gender equality. Delivered over nine months, the program includes workshops in Vietnam, a knowledge exchange visit to Australia, a final symposium, and mentoring program.

Since 2017, 141 women from across Vietnam have participated, implementing over 100 workplace and community projects that promote inclusive leadership and gender equity.

IMPACT REVIEW (2017–2024)

In 2025, Aus4Skills conducted a comprehensive review of six completed WILJ cohorts using alumni surveys, interviews, focus groups, and program records. The findings confirm WILJ's transformative impact at individual, organisational, and community levels.

KEY FINDINGS OF SURVEYED ALUMNAE

98%
enhanced gender equality knowledge, skills, and confidence

89%
experienced personal transformation

76%
advanced gender equality in their workplace, community, or family

41%
contributed to update policy or regulations

74%
engaged in alumni networks; 65% joined peer support groups

78%
confident gender-equitable practices will last

83%
established positive connections with Australian institutions

HOW WILJ CREATES CHANGE

1. Advancing Confident and Inclusive Women Leaders

Alumni have progressed to senior roles, supported other women to advance, and introduced gender-responsive policies.

"Through the program, I gained a comprehensive understanding of gender issues and related skills. The outbound learning activities in Australia not only expanded my practical experience but also helped me reaffirm my leadership capacity, thereby strengthening my confidence and sense of self-worth."

Ms Luu Thi Anh Loan, Project Leader of Inclusive Education for Children with Disability, Norwegian Mission Alliance in Vietnam, WILJ2

"We revised the recruitment policy to support vulnerable groups and created specific support for women leaders through the union's activities. After the course, I was able to push for the appointment of two female leaders in my organisation. I am so pleased with this achievement although it is small but significant to women leaders in our organisation."

Ms Duong Thi Thu Huong, Director of National Convention Centre, Office of the Government, WILJ4

2. Fostering Peer Networks

Alumni collaborated across sectors to advance inclusive policies and workplace safety.

- Developed sexual harassment prevention guidelines

"We developed a set of inclusive policies, including a code of conduct for the company. After two years, we established sexual harassment prevention guidelines, in collaboration with a WILJ alumna (Ms Buoi from CSAGA), who has expertise in the law."

Ms Vu Thi Quyen, Director of We-Edit, WILJ2

- Integrated autism screening and services into the university curriculum

"Previously, autism was only part of the university's reference program, but now it has been included in the official curriculum. Students are guided to recognise 'red flag' signs and assess levels of abnormality and intellectual disability."

Ms Le Thi Kim Dung, Deputy Head, University of Medicine and Pharmacy, Thai Nguyen University, WILJ2

- Several alumni co-created gender-sensitive training modules for inclusive leadership development. The materials were subsequently adapted by their respective institutions for internal staff training.

3. Championing Women-Led Change Across Vietnam

Alumni initiatives promote disability inclusion, economic empowerment, and community development:

- Advocacy campaigns for disability inclusion in provincial action plans
- Micro-credit and livelihood programs for women with disabilities
- Vocational training centers in disadvantaged rural regions

"Through the WILJ network, I had the opportunity to implement practical support activities for women with disabilities at the community level, while working closely with local officials and associations."

Ms. Huynh Ngoc Hong Nhung, President of Can Tho Association of People with Disabilities, WILJ6

SUCCESS STORIES

From Learning to Impact

After WILJ, Ms. Phan Thi Hong Phuc, Vice Director of Thai Nguyen University, founded the Women for Development Club, secured VND 2 billion annually in scholarships for ethnic minority women, and contributed to policy development related to inclusive leadership. Her work extends to rural cooperatives, engaging men as allies and dismantling gender stereotypes.

Breaking Barriers in Vietnam's Government

Ms. Do Thi Thanh Binh, a leader from Lai Chau, joined WILJ in 2019 and turned learning into action. As Head of Training at the Office of the Government, she launched a new initiative to strengthen leadership capacity for women across Vietnam's top agencies. Her efforts have already reached **300+ women officials**, paving the way for inclusive leadership and gender equality at the highest levels of government.

Creating Inclusive Change in Can Tho

After WILJ, Ms. Huynh Ngoc Hong Nhung – President of Can Tho Association of People with Disabilities – confidently initiated a range of inclusive initiatives. She led training sessions for 91 village heads and deputy heads on the rights of people with disabilities. Beyond this, she also contributed to a reproductive health project for the deaf. Her journey is a vivid testament to the value that WILJ delivers: empowering leaders with disabilities to drive sustainable change within their communities.

CONCLUSION

The Women in Leadership Journey is building a group of confident, connected women leaders who are driving systemic change across Vietnam. Through skills development, peer networks, and inclusive initiatives, WILJ alumni are transforming workplaces, contributing to policy updates, and creating more equitable communities.