

MEDIA RELEASE

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TRADEUP AUSTRALIA DIRECTOR ENCOURAGES WOMEN TO TAKE UP A TRADE

TradeUP Australia is a new not-for-profit organisation working with industry and the wider community to introduce skilled trades as a viable career option to women.

Of the 1.43 million tradespeople working in the construction, automotive and electrical industries, less than two percent are women.

“The main thing stopping women from considering becoming a tradie is a lack of exposure to what the work actually involves and under-confidence with performing practical tasks,” says Founder and Director of TradeUP Australia, Sarah Jayne Flatters.

Opening the 2014 E-Oz Energy Skills Australia Women in the Industry Conference, Sarah Jayne spoke about how a better gender balance could be achieved in the skilled labour industries.

“There is a lot we could do quickly and easily to increase the level of participation by women in non-traditional roles,” says Sarah Jayne. “We can talk to women about what it is like working in a trade, provide them with opportunities to develop some basic practical skills using hand and power tools and introduce them to women already established in the industry.”

Based in Western Australia, TradeUP Australia has four initiatives aimed at helping it achieve its mission: speaking engagements; DIY workshops for women; an online mentoring forum; and a website that provides easy access to information about working in a trade.

“If more women understand the opportunities that being a tradesperson brings, like flexibility, financial security and the variety of jobs in the industry, we could allow industry access to an untapped, under utilised workforce,” says Sarah Jayne. “In turn, increased participation will help close the 17.5 per cent gender pay gap and enable more women to gain practical independence.”

In March this year, with the support of Men’s Shed Association, TradeUP Australia hosted its first DIY Workshop for Women on International Women’s Day. TradeUP Australia has since hosted another two workshops, run by trade-qualified facilitators. The last scheduled workshop received over 130 booking requests. It is already seeing results – the workshops have helped two participants to secure apprenticeships.

TradeUP Australia is actively looking for industry and community support to continue implementing its initiatives. If you or your organisation is interested in knowing more, please contact sarah@tradeupaustralia.com.au.

Get involved at tradeupastralia.com.au, facebook.com/tradeupastralia or via Twitter at [@TradeUPAust](https://twitter.com/TradeUPAust)

Sarah Jayne Flatters is a 25 year old licensed electrician and EnergySafety 2013 Apprentice of the Year.

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