***APEC Women in STEM Initiative: Workshop, GIST Startup Training, and Policy Roundtable***

* The APEC Women in STEM Initiative: is a suite of activities designed to:
	+ build capacity to support and lead successful start-ups in APEC economies in areas related to science, technology and innovation, including those from vulnerable or otherwise disadvantaged backgrounds.
	+ provide networking opportunities to foster further STEM innovation and entrepreneurship by women and other vulnerable populations in the APEC region and expand opportunities for public private partnerships.
	+ build and promote the business and economic case for advancing women and girls in STEM across APEC through implementation of the APEC Women in STEM Framework.
* The main actions will be:
	+ A 4-day entrepreneurship training program for women and other participants from vulnerable backgrounds;
	+ A 1.5 day women in STEM workshop that builds on past APEC activities and considers next steps for government, industry and business in supporting gender equality across the region; and
* A half day policy roundtable between participants/practitioners with decision makers (industry, government, academia) exploring ways to together develop policies that support women in STEM fields, in industry already, and how to further support women and those from vulnerable communities as they commercialize their STEM ideas.
* Project is led by the US in partnership with Australia, confirmed co-sponsors include: Canada; Chile; China; Indonesia; Korea; Malaysia; New Zealand; Papua New Guinea.
* Events will be held during the 2018 APEC Chief Science Advisors and Equivalents meeting, 22-26 October 2018, Brisbane Australia.
* Preparations for activities are well underway:
	+ all events will be based at the Marriot Hotel, Brisbane
	+ nominations are open for APEC participants to attend the entrepreneurship training
	+ An economic case study will be developed prior to the workshop on the value of women’s participation STEM within APEC and it will be presented and discussed at the workshop
	+ agendas for each event are in draft
	+ economies are welcome to suggest speakers or participants for the Women in STEM workshop and industry roundtable via US or Australian PPSTI representatives.
* Further enquiries may be directed to AustraliaAPEC.PPSTI@industry.gov.au or your APEC economy PPSTI or PPWE contact point.

**Background**

The 2018 APEC Chief Advisors and Equivalents (CSAE) meeting and side events will be held week commencing 22 October 2018, in Brisbane, Australia. The CSAE is APEC’s primary forum on matters at the interface between science and public policy and science and international engagement in the Asia-Pacific. The CSAE considers the role of science in social, environmental and economic development, including science’s role in responding to regional challenges and in preparing for and responding to emergencies.

Prior to the CSAE meeting, the Department of Industry, Innovation and Science together with US Department of State and counterparts will host a suite of activities to explore how to best provide favourable framework conditions for vulnerable groups (women; indigenous; rural; young) across APEC that enable these groups to make full use of their STEM and entrepreneurship skills. This initiative is supported through the 2018 Session 1 competitive APEC grants process.

The objectives of this initiative is to:

1. Discuss, further identify, and articulate the roles for government, industry, academia, and the broader public in promoting women’s economic advancement through STEM.

2. Provide networking opportunities to foster further STEM innovation and entrepreneurship by women and other vulnerable populations in the APEC region and expand opportunities for public private partnerships.

3. Build and promote the business and economic case for advancing women and girls in STEM across APEC through implementation of the APEC Women in STEM Framework.

Events include:

* A 4-day entrepreneurship training program for APEC entrepreneurs from vulnerable/disadvantaged backgrounds, based on the US’ highly successful Global Innovation through Science and Technology Entrepreneurship Bootcamp. The teams will be trained to support and grow their businesses as well as support other entrepreneurs in their community.
* A 1.5-day workshop will be held exploring targeted actions to promote women in STEM across the region, based on the best case practices from Australia and US in implementing pilot programs supporting the Athena Swann Charter and using an economic case study on the value of women’s participation in STEM within APEC. Discuss and share recommendations for projects or initiatives in further support of the APEC Women in STEM Framework. The group will discuss, further identify, and articulate the roles for government, industry, academia, and the broader public in promoting women’s economic advancement through STEM. This activity builds on the existing APEC Women in STEM initiative undertaken by US-ATAARI.
* Attendees from both events will participate in a high level policy round table with industry, government and Chief Scientists to Participants will discuss and make recommendations to PPSTI and CSAE on ways that government, industry, and academia can together develop policies that support women in STEM fields, in industry already, and how to further support women and those from vulnerable communities as they commercialize their STEM ideas.
* The workshops and roundtable discussion provides capacity building based on the November 2016 APEC Women in STEM Framework and engages all economies – governments, private sector partners, academic, and micro and small enterprises.

This suite of events takes a multi-faceted approach (training, economic case study, workshop on policies and practices, and engaging the private sector) to address a complete and multi-stakeholder problem in the APEC region: how do we engage more women and those from vulnerable communities, or innovation that address the needs of women/vulnerable communities.