

Friday October 27, 2017

AIST's Karen Volpato wins 2017 Woman of the Year Award

The Australian Institute of Superannuation Trustees (AIST) congratulates our senior policy advisor, Karen Volpato, for winning the 2017 Woman of the Year Award announced last night in Sydney at the 5th annual Money Management & Super Review Women in Financial Services Awards.

AIST CEO Eva Scheerlinck said the Award – which celebrates women’s achievements across the financial services sector - was a fitting tribute to Karen’s tireless and passionate work in superannuation policy and research and a long career in championing better retirement outcomes for members.

Ms Scheerlinck said Karen’s recent work on the AIST-Mercer Super Tracker and her very active involvement in the long and complex industry negotiations regarding Regulatory Guide 97 fee and cost disclosure were just two highlights in an outstanding 37-year career in superannuation. During RG97 negotiations, Karen emphasized an objectives and principles-based approach, which is gaining consensus across the industry.

“Anyone who knows Karen well knows that her passion for her work is driven by an unwavering commitment to protecting members’ best interests across every aspect of superannuation,” Ms Scheerlinck said.

Throughout her career Karen has championed gender equality, particularly through her work with Women in Super, where she was chair of policy for four years, and also as marketing manager of First State Super where she developed Australia’s first women and super website. As part of her work with the AIST-Mercer Super Tracker, Karen introduced a gender lens to the Tracker to provide an evidenced-based assessment on how policy changes might impact on women’s retirement outcomes.

Another career highlight was Karen’s role in overseeing the marketing rollout of First State Super becoming a public offer fund as well as the merger with Health Super.

Karen did her legal articles as the first woman lawyer in a Tasmanian law firm established in the 1880s. Karen began her career working at the Trust Bank, also as the bank’s first woman lawyer. At the Retirement Benefits Fund, she spent a year and a half reviewing all invalidity claim processes with all stakeholders, halving both the claims and reviews. Karen also personally managed the Port Arthur massacre invalidity claims.

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AIST is the peak industry body for the \$700 billion profit-to-member super sector which includes industry, corporate and public sector funds.