

WONDER *women*

The 2017 AFR Rich List of 200 includes a mere 22 women, but there are still plenty of incredibly successful females making a whole lot of money in their chosen fields. Here we present some of Australia's wealthiest and most successful self-made businesswomen, all together worth a record \$4.6 billion.

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MICHELLE BRIDGES

\$53 million

Personal trainer, author, TV personality

Michelle Bridges first came to public attention in 2007 as a trainer on Network Ten's weight-loss show, *The Biggest Loser*, and she remained a key presence there until 2015. In addition to her TV appearances, Michelle is a prolific health and nutrition writer, having published more than a dozen books to bolster her substantial earnings. In 2010, she launched the successful online weight-loss program 12 Week Body Transformation in response to the realisation that she couldn't possibly train all of the people who wanted her to train them. The online portal has helped her to help people in remote and rural areas, including one from Antarctica, as well as in cities around the world, plus it has made her millions. Added to this revenue is her partnership with Big W, which sells her branded fitness gear as well as kitchenware. In 2015, she launched a range of calorie-controlled meals sold through Woolworths supermarkets. »

CLAIRE GRAY**\$54 million***Corporate Travel Management executive director***TANIA AUSTIN****\$56 million***Cotton On co-founder, Decjuba CEO***CAROLYN CRESWELL****\$57 million***Carman's founder*

As an 18-year-old university student, Carolyn Creswell made a meagre income at a small muesli factory that supplied a few delis and cafes around Melbourne. When she was made aware that her job was on the line as the business was for sale, she decided to take the plunge and buy it herself. Just \$1,000 dollars later and she was the owner of what would become the hugely successful Carman's business. Today, Carman's products are stocked in major supermarkets in Australia, as well as in retailers in 30 countries across Asia-Pacific and the Middle East.

**CATE BLANCHETT****\$63 million***Actress*

Australia's most awarded actress, Cate Blanchett has been nominated for an Oscar seven times and taken home two: one for 'Best Supporting Actress' for her portrayal of Katharine Hepburn in Martin Scorsese's 2004 film *The Aviator*, and the other in 2013 for 'Best Actress' for her role as Jasmine Francis

in Woody Allen's film *Blue Jasmine*. A lover of theatre, as well as being in more than 50 films, Cate has appeared in 20-plus theatre productions. She also served as co-artistic director of the Sydney Theatre Company alongside husband Andrew Upton from 2008-12.

CARLA ZAMPATTI**\$71 million***Fashion designer*

One of Australia's best-loved fashion designers, Carla Zampatti has been part of the industry since launching her own label in 1965. Her first boutique opened in Sydney's Surry Hills in 1972, followed by stores in the affluent suburbs of Mosman and Double Bay. Carla's signature style of simple, elegant pieces designed for women who are confident and comfortable with their femininity resonates well with the well-heeled women of Australia and has made fans of style icons such as Princess Mary of Denmark, Tina Arena and Dannii Minogue. The popular brand has expanded to 30 boutique and concept stores around the country. As well as running her fashion empire, Carla has held a number of directorships, including chairman of the SBS Corporation, director of the Westfield Group and trustee of the Art Gallery of New South Wales.

**ELLE MACPHERSON****\$71 million***Elle Macpherson Intimates & The Body founder***LESLEY GILLESPIE****\$75 million***Baker's Delight co-founder***KYLIE MINOGUE****\$79 million***Singer-actress*

Kylie Minogue has defied her early critics by sticking around and topping charts 30 years after her debut hit 'The Loco-Motion' parked at the number one spot on the Australian charts for seven weeks back in 1987. Her pop prowess and dance tracks and their global appeal have made her the highest-selling Australian recording artist in history, seeing the dollars pour in from not just record sales but sell-out tours that bring in millions in ticket sales. Her signature track, 'Can't Get You Out of My Head', was named "the catchiest song ever" by Yahoo! Music and sold more than 10 million units. She has also scored some hefty performance fees, reportedly being paid \$7 million for a season of *The Voice Australia*.

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JANET HOLMES A COURT**\$82 million***Heytesbury chairman***JULIA ROSS****\$87 million***Julia Ross Recruitment founder***GAIL KELLY****\$94 million***Former Westpac CEO*

Gail Kelly's 35 years in banking took her from teller all the way to the top. As CEO of Westpac, she was the most powerful woman in finance in Australia and fought hard to share that power with others. Setting a target of 40 per cent women in top managerial positions at the bank, Gail achieved that goal two years earlier than planned and so turned her eye to a 50-50 gender split. Since her departure, Westpac has continued to spruik its gender-equality credentials, with mandates that there be 50 per cent female applicants shortlisted for all leadership roles and also that 50 per cent of its high-potential and graduate programs' participants be women.

SARINA RUSSO**\$103 million***Sarina Russo Group founder***CHRISTINA QUINN****\$191 million***VIP Petfoods co-founder***THERESE REIN****\$192 million***Ingeus founder*

The wife of former Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd established her recruitment business Ingeus in 1989 to help sick and disabled people return to work. By the time she sold it to American firm Providence Service Corporation in 2014, the business operated in more than 10 countries, with 70 per cent of its income coming from its

lucrative contract as part of the UK's welfare-to-work program. The sale was reportedly worth up to \$220 million, with Therese staying on as managing director to ensure certain targets were met over five years. »

IMELDA ROCHE

\$236 million

Property developer

Imelda Roche unwittingly started a bit of a revolution when she brought the Nutrimetics brand of natural skincare to Australian shores back in 1968. The direct-selling model armed thousands of women with the ability to run their own business, making a lot of husbands nervous about their spouse gaining financial independence. Nevertheless, the business took off, and after successfully expanding into New Zealand, Asia and the UK, the Roches bought out the entire international operation in 1991, selling it to Sara Lee in 1997. Imelda has an 'Order of Australia' for services to business and commerce, women's affairs and community; she manages an impressive property portfolio; has been chancellor of Bond University; and worked under both Paul Keating and John Howard in the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation in the 90s. A devoted grandmother, she says one of her greatest achievements is that her children all still like each other.

JAMUNA GURUNG

\$264 million

Melbourne Institute of Technology co-founder



JUDE TURNER

\$316 million

Spicers Retreats founder

Along with husband Graham, Jude Turner made her fortune in travel. The power pair met in London when Graham was running Top Deck, the business that later evolved into Flight

Centre. Jude is also the founder of Spicers Retreats, which is where her artistic eye has come to the fore. The portfolio of luxury properties is known for its fashionable interiors and contemporary style. Scattered throughout Queensland and New South Wales, the retreats are mostly in semi-rural settings in keeping with Jude's love of nature. She and Graham invest generously in conservation projects.



NICOLE KIDMAN

\$347 million

Actress

Aged 50, Nicole Kidman is working harder than ever. After the enormous success of *Lion*, for which Nicole was nominated for the Academy Award for 'Best Supporting Actress', her fourth nomination overall, the Critics Choice for 'Best Supporting Actress', the Screen Actors Guild for 'Outstanding Performance by a Female Actor in a Supporting Role', the BAFTA Award for 'Best Actress in a Supporting Role', a win in the same category at the Hollywood Film Awards, as well as her third Golden Globe nomination for 'Best Supporting Actress', she went back to television and turned producer. The resulting collaboration with Reese Witherspoon was the critically acclaimed HBO series *Big Little Lies*. Kidman also boosts the bank account with endorsement deals with Omega watches, Etihad Airways, vitamins company Swisse, and skincare company Neutrogena.



RHONDA WYLLIE

\$358 million

Wyllie Group board member

Although she inherited a large fortune on the sad passing of her late husband, Bill, Rhonda Wyllie is independently wealthy due to her interests as a property developer and businesswoman. Rhonda gained significant exposure to both commercial and residential property development from a young age, working in her family's successful company McGrath Homes. A philanthropist, Rhonda is a regular fixture on the Perth party and charity scene. Her foundation supports a variety of causes, notably Telethon Speech and Hearing, to which she has donated generously for many years. The school building at its Wembley campus proudly bears the name 'Bill and Rhonda Wyllie Early Learning Centre', where more than 100 children attend specialist lessons every week.

HAZEL ROWE

\$376 million

Super Retail Group co-founder



CHARLOTTE VIDOR

\$385 million

Toga Group co-founder

Charlotte Vidor co-founded Toga Group with her husband, Ervin, in 1963 with the view to provide apartment-style rooms for travellers. It was a huge success, and the pair soon moved into construction and property management, boosting their earnings significantly. They now run the Medina, Adina, Travelodge and Vibe hotel chains, and boosted their wealth even further with a \$450-million partnership with Singapore's Far East Orchard Group in 2013. The Vidors also own one of Australia's biggest prawn producers, Seafarm.

VICKY TEOH

\$938 million

TPG co-founder

Australia's richest self-made woman is also its most reclusive. Despite her business having more than one million mobile and broadband customers, Vicky Teoh and her husband, David, co-founders of TPG, guard their privacy with unrivalled ferocity. After migrating from Malaysia in 1986, the couple established a computer hardware store called Total Peripherals. A move into internet services in the early 2000s and a reverse takeover of SP Telemedia led to a listing on the ASX in 2008. While TPG is making inroads to dominate the NBN market, Vicky's wealth also continues to soar through joint investments with her four sons in start-ups, mostly in the retail space. ■

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