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Disclaimer:
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Women are the most underutilized economic asset in the world’s economy as Angel Gurría, Secretary General, OECD formulated his message on International Women’s Day in Paris in 2016.

Cibervoluntarios, Spain in collaboration with Innovazione Apprendimento di Lavoro, Italy; European Centre for Women and Technology - ECWT, Norway and METODO Romania have in an eighteen months long project run in 2018-2020 with support from the ERASMUS KA2 Programme set the goal to develop for women entrepreneurs a training-programme, a guide-book for national piloting and an e-book of role models and good examples about how digital skills and technology can help women to realize their dreams.

Mission statement of the European Centre for Women and Technology - ECWT

1 Mission statement of the European Centre for Women and Technology - ECWT
The present e-book provides:

- **Introduction**: about the key characteristics of women´s entrepreneurship, an outlook on how to adapt to the ongoing digital transformation and the importance of role models for women´s start-ups

- **Country Reports**: an overview of the present situation when it comes to women´s entrepreneurship and use of digital tools in EITIC partner countries Italy, Norway, Romania and Spain.

- **20 role models**

- **32 good examples of projects and initiatives**

- **Conclusions**

- **Literature & References** for further reading.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Women´s entrepreneurship

The underrepresentation of women in entrepreneurship, economic leadership and the technology sector is recognized as the largest untapped potential for economic growth in Europe and globally.

While an estimated 163 million women around the world are involved in new business ventures, a significant "gender gap" persists in entrepreneurship (GEM 2018/2019\(^2\) WE Report; OECD/ European Commission Policy Brief on WE, David Halibasky et. al (2016).

Women constitute 52% of the European population, but only 29% of entrepreneurs (11.6 million and only 3% increase since 2008). Women also represent the majority of one-person enterprises in Europe (78%).

Only 5-15% of high-tech business is owned by women and only 32% of the economic leaders are women, less then 10% in the technology sector in Europe.

Women tend to operate smaller and less dynamic businesses than men, and are more likely to operate in less-capital intensive sectors including personal services, which often have lower potential for generating a high and sustainable income.

Women entrepreneurs tend to have different motivations and intentions in entrepreneurship than men. "Young girls´ interest and enthusiasm in digital entrepreneurship and leadership is often damaged over time by stereotyping, cultural discouragement, peer pressure, lack of role models, resulting in a lack of confidence to engage with entrepreneurship, leadership and technology"\(^3\).

The challenges that women identify in starting a business include discouraging social and cultural attitudes, lower levels of entrepreneurship skills, greater difficulty in accessing start-up financing, smaller, less effective entrepreneurial networks and policy frameworks that discourage women´s entrepreneurship.

The latest study "´Distinguished´ women entrepreneurs in the digital economy and the multitasking whirlpool"\(^4\) presents the key findings of an analysis of available data end of 2019 on women entrepreneurs in Europe-37 and points out: "The 21st century research examined in this study—as that of the late 20th century—highlights three major gender gaps in entrepreneurship (participation gap, pay gap and leadership gap), in addition to the work–life imbalance, while still arguing that further research is needed of the concepts of empowerment and leadership."

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\(^3\) EIT ´Pilot Female Entrepreneurship and leadership activities´ (2016), Final Report EIT & EY Project.

\(^4\) Irene Kamberidou, Springer Verlag, Journal of Innovation and Entrepreneurship Vol. 9, Article nr: 3 (2020)

\(^5\) For a topic extensively researched since the mid 1980s (Carlsrud & Olm, 1986 et al.)
Future European actions will be strongly influenced by the OECD / European Commission Policy Brief,\(^6\) which argues that policy makers should not aim to eliminate all differences between men and women entrepreneurs, but instead should attempt to understand, recognize and remove institutional influences that affect motivations and intentions and correct market failures which constrain women’s entrepreneurship.

The role of digital

Businesses and researchers unanimously agree, that one key enabler to achieving a higher rate of women entrepreneurs is the access and use of ICT.

In everyday business life, ICT tools are an indispensable instrument that enable and support women to start and maintain their business—whether they are mothers working from home or have a small business in a rural area.

In regard to the role of digital EITIC partners have – when summing up, both research and surveys carried out in more than a dozen of projects (see Literature & References) focused on women’s digital entrepreneurship - drawn primarily the same conclusions as expressed by the DIGA – Digital Innovation for Growth Academy project\(^7\) (2015/2017):

- **The language of Digital** - Women entrepreneurs still have a great need for a better understanding of what digital is about and what it could achieve in an entrepreneurial context.

- **General Level of digital adoption** - Essentially women’s usage and adoption of digital technology emerged at two levels, marketing and promotion and secondly at operational level.

- **Objectives for Digital** – Survey respondents apart from UK respondents most often indicate, that they do not have specific goals for digital media. This is in most cases related to the fact that English is not the native language of the partners.

- **Specific Digital tools applied** – Responses showed that around 70% of the women entrepreneurs had developed a website for their enterprise; the others are using Facebook, LinkedIn and or Twitter as their primary landing page or source of contact and interaction.

- **Measuring the return or benefits of digital** - The vast majority of women entrepreneurs does not measure the benefits or impact of digital tools adopted in their enterprise, very often referring to the lack of time.

- **Challenges adopting digital** – Also in this respect, challenges relate to a lack of people, insufficient digital skills and the scarcity of the entrepreneur’s time to develop digital content and to maintain digital platforms.

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\(^6\) Policy Brief on Women’s Entrepreneurship, OECD / European Commission (2016)

Supporting women’s entrepreneurship through the use of digital technologies has been since year 2009 a high priority for the European Commission. The EC has organized several high-level conferences and financed some large-scale projects to promote women’s tech start-ups, network and community building, knowledges transfer and skills training:


In 2014 during the Hellenic EU Presidency Athens hosted 4th December 2014 the “Women and Girls Go Digital”¹⁰ conference to demonstrate the link between e-Skills, Gender Diversity and ICT as a key factor for economic growth based on the creation of digital jobs.

In 2018 EU Commissioner Mariya Gabriel launched the EU Women in Digital Strategy on Digital Day on 9 April 2019 when twenty-seven EU ministers and Member States’ representatives plus Norway signed the Declaration of Commitment on Women in Digital.¹¹

Role models – Our Changemakers

One way in which policy makers try to inspire and motivate young women to become entrepreneurs is through role models and good examples. Women entrepreneurs can act as symbolic role models and mentors, setting examples and providing valuable lessons for aspiring women entrepreneurs (Kelley et al. 2010)¹².

In the 20th century research the value of credible and attractive role models in encouraging entrepreneurship, combating stereotypes and triggering change has been broadly documented (Boyd and Vozidis 1994¹³; Radu and Redien-Collot 2008¹⁴; Scherer et al. 1989)¹⁵.

Empowering women is not just good for women, it’s good for the entire society, for the wellbeing of both current and future generations as women are more likely to share their incomes with their families and communities at large.

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⁸ More Technologies – More women entrepreneurs -https://youtu.be/N7EuTm9IMrY
Today community building, sharing and leveraging good examples needs to be in the focus and the ICT tools are there – “We have no excuse!” as stressed by the project YouTube video of the LadyBizIT project in 2012 and elaborated more in detail by Madi Sharma, Founder, entrepreneur, envoy, international speaker in her own book “Madi - No Excuses!” 16.

"It is vital for all women to be aware of the fact that being a woman is the UsP of Women in the Digital Age!" - as Eva Fabry, Director of ECWT often points out when talking about the implications of the new technological revolution and the ongoing paradigm shift.

In Norway Innovation Norway, the national innovation agency is since 2009 running an annual Women Entrepreneurs Award competition, to honor the best and the brightest female entrepreneurs. Since 2017 the competition is focused on STEM17 entrepreneurs.

On international Women´s Day 7th March 2017 Innovation Norway and UN Women signed a historic innovation agreement which will connect the needs that UN Women identify in their humanitarian work with innovative Norwegian solutions.

Photo: Innovation Norway

The goal is to encourage the private sector to develop smarter and more efficient solutions that can help empower women and contribute towards the world’s sustainability goals (The so-called SDGs18)

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16 Madi – No Excuses! http://madisharma.org/noexcuses/
17 STEM – Science, Technology, Engineering and Math, the acronym the National Science Foundation (NSF) in 2001
18 The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a collection of 17 global goals designed to be a "blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all". The SDGs, set in 2015 by the United Nations General Assembly and intended to be achieved by the year 2030, are part of UN Resolution 70/1, the 2030 Agenda.
2. COUNTRY REPORTS

In this chapter we analyze the contextual reality for women´s entrepreneurship in the EITIC partnership countries Norway, Italy, Romania and Spain, and the broader European ecosystem for women´s start-ups.

2.1 Norway

How many start – how many succeed?

About 45 percent of all persons who want to start their own business are women. However, women amount to only 30 percent of the entrepreneurs who actually start a company, so along the way towards actually taking the leap, more women drop out than do men. After five years, nearly 70 percent of the companies die; companies with female entrepreneurs die a little more frequently, so only 19 percent of the companies that have survived after five years have female entrepreneurs.

Women's share of companies in which the entrepreneur manages to generate an income that can compete with a regular wage income is only16 percent. In companies showing more than 10 per cent annual revenue growth, the female proportion drops to 10 percent. In Norwegian Venture Capital's database of all companies that have professional seed capital and venture funds on the owners’ side (investors), the female share of only 4 percent.

What did they do before they started their business?

A study of all entrepreneurs in Norway conducted by Berglann et al. (2011) finds that 53 percent of all entrepreneurs in Norway have the status of wage earner before they start their own business. 8 percent come from the ranks of the unemployed, 5 percent from education and 2 percent of entrepreneurs are retirees or on disability when they start their own business. In Norway, men far more often choose to become an entrepreneur irrespective of what they were doing earlier.

Competence and education?

In Norway, a larger proportion of female entrepreneurs have higher education than male entrepreneurs. Norwegian female entrepreneurs have taken education in general subjects (25 percent), economics and administration (21 per cent), as well as health, social and sports sciences (18 per cent). Women are underrepresented in STEM businesses (14 percent).

Women willing to start a business by county / region (2017)

The share of women founder’s is highest in the capital, Oslo (36.9%), Vestfold (32.1%) and the lowest on Svalbard (23.3%). The average in Norway is 30.6%.
Field of entrepreneurship

Female entrepreneurs in Norway prioritize personal services (70%), health and social services (68%), teaching (52%) share of the sector and the three least popular areas being: transport (10%), building and construction (7%) and electrical power supply (5%) of the sector in 2017.

Measures to stimulate more entrepreneurship?

Bell et al. (2018) point out that “there are many so-called lost female Einsteins, who could have become innovators with a great impact on society if they had been exposed to innovation in their childhood”. According to the authors, this is especially true of women, minorities and children of low-income families.

Role models play a key role for showing the way for next generation of entrepreneurs, as confirmed by the evaluation carried out by Innovation Norway in 2019, after ten years with the annual Female Entrepreneurs award started in 2009. In 2017 the award was re-focused on Female Tech Founders as the share of female tech-founders, directors and board leaders was less than 1% (0.99%).

Measures that are now being considered by the Norwegian national innovation and research actors as relevant and effective in increasing the number of female entrepreneurs with a significant growth potential are:

- To establish more comprehensive female mentoring schemes;
- To establish a government-supported women’s investment fund for start-ups with high growth potentials;
- To remove competitive disadvantages in businesses where women often operate as entrepreneurs;
- To establish a scheme for commercialization leave at universities and colleges.

2.2 Italy

What makes Italy´s startup hubs unique is that the country’s largest startup in Rome, Milan and Turin account for 30% of Italy’s startups and provides together with a high proportion of small innovative businesses across Italy, an eclectic and innovative dynamic ecosystem and plenty of opportunities for entrepreneurs throughout the country.

In recent years an inspiring network of local and international women in business in Italy are reinterpreting what it means to be a working mother. Organizations like our EITIC partner IAL reach out and train and support thousands of women who follow their passion, wanting to launch their business. A growing number of innovative mum-owned businesses (mumpreneurs) flourish across the country, disrupt traditional business models and pioneer new styles of working.
Startup Italia! - https://startupitalia.eu – is a useful, comprehensive online magazine sharing up-to-date news on startups and innovation in Italy. Italian Startup Scene is a rapidly growing online Facebook community with at present almost thirty thousand members and for anyone currently or thinking about running a startup in Italy.

Co-Working spaces like Coworker.com are a relatively new concept in Italy with a growing popularity in many cities across the country.

Working Mothers Italy -WMI and its lively platform is a rapidly growing non-profit association created to support and bring sustained change for working mothers and women in business in Italy.

Growing number of young entrepreneurs

In Italy, the number of enterprises run by people under 35 are 534,000 (up by 6% in the last five years). Today almost one third of Italy´s new businesses are run by founders under 35s. Cities with the largest number are: Naples and Rome with 30,000 and Milan with over 25,000 companies led by young people.

Field of entrepreneurship

The sectors where the young people are most active are: business services (+45% in five years), trade and services in general (+11%), mainly accommodation and catering (+19%), and financial assets (+26%).

Women´s businesses more multicultural

9.3 percent of foreign companies are owned by a woman (equal to 121,000 businesses) as compared to 8.5 percent owned by men. Foreign female entrepreneurs are most active is the fashion industry (almost 30 percent of female-owned companies are foreign). China, Romania and Morocco are the most represented business communities for female entrepreneurs.

Social entrepreneurship

In Italy there were 13,000+ legally recognized social enterprises (of which 12,500+ social co-operatives) in 2014 contributing with 3.4 percent of the Italian GDP and in three key sectors: Local development and social cohesion, social care and projection, education and professional services. 90% of the women involved in these type of enterprises, regard social entrepreneurship as a key tool for women´s empowerment.

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19 https://www.facebook.com/groups/italianstartups/
20 http://www.workingmothersitaly.com
21 European Women´s Lobby´s one year pilot study "WESTart Europe: Mapping Women´s Social Entrepreneurship in Europe" carried out in 2015 in 10 countries - http://westart Europe.org
2.3 Romania

In 2015 Romania was placed last in the EU on The World Economic Forum’s Global Gender Gap Index, and 77th worldwide. In 2018, however, Romania is 63rd, before Italy, Greece, Malta, Cyprus, and Hungary.

Furthermore 2018 Romania ranked ninth among the countries with the highest percentage (28.9 %) of businesses owned by women (up 1.4% compared to 2017)!

A separate internal study conducted by the Female Founder Initiative in 2019 named the Romanian capital of Bucharest among the top ten cities with a 50% or higher female-founder ratio.

Financing is often the first obstacle for women entrepreneurs – a study by London Business School and Columbia Business School found that women are 63% less likely to secure funding for their ventures than men. Romania’s decision to invest in female-led businesses is the first step to finding a gender.

Furthermoreing the reach of the Garanti Group program, in January 2019, the European Investment Bank (EIB) announced that it had loaned five million euros to the Garanti Bank Romania towards investing in female, Romanian entrepreneurs. EIB predicts that the loan will help roughly 260 enterprises led by women, as well as support the production of approximately 6,100 jobs.

The funding is the first EIB loan specifically targeted at female business leaders in the EU and will be granted to companies exceeding 50% female ownership, and with fewer than 250 employees.

Since 2011, the International Finance Corporation (a member of the World Bank Group) and Garanti Group Romania have been working together to tackle Romania’s gender gap and promote financial inclusion. In the eight-year span up to 2019, the companies have signed seven loan agreements, four of which have placed emphasis on gender and supporting women entrepreneurs.

As of December 2017, the Women SME Banking Program has loaned over 145 million euros to enterprises founded and run by women. In February 2019, the bank and IFC released the report Taking Women Entrepreneurs to the Bank showing the impact on female entrepreneurs in the country. One of the key findings was that the recipients surveyed increased their average real sales growth per year by 5% – a figure which exceeds Romania’s national average for firms.

Furthering the reach of the Garanti Group program, in January 2019, the European Investment Bank (EIB) announced that it had loaned five million euros to the Garanti Bank Romania towards investing in female, Romanian entrepreneurs. EIB predicts that the loan will help roughly 260 enterprises led by women, as well as support the production of approximately 6,100 jobs.

The funding is the first EIB loan specifically targeted at female business leaders in the EU and will be granted to companies exceeding 50% female ownership, and with fewer than 250 employees.
2.4 SPAIN

- Spain is in the top 10 of the most prosperous countries for female entrepreneurs.

- A record 800,000 businesses have been set up by women between 2009 – 2013. Total early-stage Entrepreneurial Activity (TEA) is low in Spain, and Europe as a region (six percent and 8 percent respectively).

TEA rates among women in Spain are close to the European average, while men are starting businesses at rates lower than men in Europe. As a result, there are over eight women entrepreneurs for every 10 men entrepreneurs in Spain, while in Europe, on average, there are just over six women entrepreneurs for every 10 men entrepreneurs.

- Women aged 25-34 represent the largest group willing to start a business (33.5%). It is closely followed by women between 35-44 years of age (29.3%).

- In 2018 22% of the founders of businesses in Spain were women (an increase of 4% compared to 2017!). In addition, startups led by women have a lower failure rate than men -- 22 percent vs. 51 percent of projects that have men at the front.

Competence and education?

- Almost 13% of potential women entrepreneurs have a graduate degree, while only 2% hold a post-graduate degree.

- The average educational level of women entrepreneurs in 2012 was higher than that of men: 1.96 vs. 1.84, being 1 low, 2 medium and 3 high. Regardless of this, there is still a larger number of men entrepreneurs.

What did they do before they started their business?

Only one in 10 Spanish entrepreneurs were previously unemployed, and six out of 10 admit that they always wanted to create a startup while 23 percent joined a startup project in which they believed in.

Gender pay gap?

- Spain is one of the countries with the largest positive income gap for women entrepreneurs at +20% .

- According to data from 2011, 28.8% of women who had the intention to start a company were willing to do it full-time.

- Part-time women entrepreneurs in 2012 accounted for 15% of the active labour force.
• In 2009 the entrepreneurial intention index declined by 34% for women vs. 22% for men. This was due to both the economic crisis and the obstacles women have to face when trying to start a business.

• 33% of women who strive to become entrepreneurs have an average annual income between 10,000 – 20,000 Euros. 23% have an income of up to 10,000€ and only 1% register an income of over 100,000€.

• Over 91% of women who intend to start a company are interested in the urban sector vs. approximately 8% interested in the rural one.

Women willing to start a business by region (2017)

• The largest group of potential women entrepreneurs is in Andalusia: 18%.
• The second largest group can be found in Catalonia with 17.4%, closely followed by Madrid at 15.2%.
• The remaining groups of potential entrepreneurs per region, in decreasing order: Comunitat Valenciana; Canary Islands, Galicia, Castilla La Mancha, Basque Country, Murcia, Balearic Islands, Castilla y León, Aragón, Extremadura, Cantabria, Asturias, Navarra, Rioja.

Fields of entrepreneurship

• Women entrepreneurship – more than male entrepreneurship - has traditionally been oriented towards the consumption sector.
• Women are not as present as men in fields such as extraction and transformation of raw materials, and their implication in these activities has decreased even more due to the economic crisis, especially from 2009 to 2011.

Social entrepreneurship

The Spanish Country Report of the European Women´s Lobby study identified 8,000+ legally recognized social enterprises in Spain (social co-operatives, Sheltered Employment Centers, Work Integration Social Enterprises, non-profit organizations). The key sectors where these operate are education, health and social services, agriculture, STEM services, industry and construction.

DELL´s Global Women Entrepreneur Cities Index

In 2019 Barcelona ranked as 5th best European city (after London, Paris, Stockholm, Amsterdam) and 18th most attractive global city for women entrepreneurs.
3. ROLE MODELS – OUR CHANGEMAKERS

In this chapter we present twenty entrepreneurial role models (five from each country: Italy, Norway, Romania and Spain) who are entrepreneurs and use ICTs to promote innovation and empower women, among others.

We interviewed these amazing ladies following a similar format addressing the same seven questions:

(i) How did the idea of the business you founded come up?
(ii) When and how were your passion and interest for entrepreneurship born?
(iii) What is the role of ICT / technology in your business?
(iv) How long have you come with your company and plans for the future?
(v) How can ICT and technology empower women?
(vi) Have you ever thought about quitting?
(vii) Your advice to girls and women, who want to realize their dreams
### 3.1 ITALY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Role</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nancy Aharpour</td>
<td>Donna Jobs</td>
<td>Founder, Legal Representative</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chiara Burberi</td>
<td>Redooc.com</td>
<td>Founder &amp; CEO</td>
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<td>Desiree Ciampa &amp; Claudia Scarpari</td>
<td>We do it for you! D4Y</td>
<td>Co-Founders</td>
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<td>Daniela Gomes</td>
<td>ExcluSivix</td>
<td>Founder &amp; CEO</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ilaria Pagliuca</td>
<td>Swing Fever</td>
<td>Content Manager</td>
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**Nancy Aharpour**  
**DonnaJobs**  
Founder & Legal Representative

https://www.donnajobs.com/  
@donnajobsitd

(i) **How did the idea of the business you founded come up?**

I am a mother, so DonnaJobs comes from this. I worked as WEB developer and in a lot of environments: university, private company and as freelance. When I became a mother I got big problems to balance the motherhood with work, most of my contracts disappeared. Nowadays to be a mother and work at the same time it is very difficult. If you follow your child you will have more or less a gap of 10 years in your background and when you will re-enter into the workforce you are cast away. The development of technologies goes so fast and it is very difficult to get up especially after 10 years of idle. On the other hand, if you want to be a successful woman and follow your career, you have to sacrifice the joy of rise your child and let them be raised by someone else. This is the scenario that gave birth to the DonnaJobs’ Project. I built this platform to help people, and women, to work; to free themselves and to work whenever they want. It does not matter where you are, the important is to finish the job and deliver it in time! Let’s say for example that you got a project that needs to be delivered in three days - it does not matter if you are working during the night while your child is sleeping or during the canonical working hour…. the important is to deliver the job in the three days as agreed.
(ii) When and how were your passion and interest for entrepreneurship born?

I fell in love with coding during the university years, I got a degree in astrophysics and we code a lot. I liked it, I liked problem solving, these two things hit together and I really love them. So my knowledge in technologies started as soon as I attended the University. After these years I “chose” not to remain in the academic environment, because it was very difficult for women, and I became an employee and I programmed neural networks. After that I started with the web developer and web designer career.

(iii) How do you experience the role of technology today and in your business?

The Technogenic System is self-consistent and it lives its own life. Today without internet, we are out. When I’m tired from work the only thing that I want is to relax, so I don't want to think about complex mechanisms, I grab my mobile telephone, I click on some social app and I start to scroll and “gobble” the information. I take the information that is transmitted to me with no critical sense. The link between technology and other sectors is there, under our nose, but we can’t see it because we are lazy, we don’t want to think, we don’t want to see it.

(iv) How long have you come with your company and plans for the future?

DonnaJobs is an e-commerce Platform and a Remote-Working Platform that connects Woman Freelancer, the workers or otherwise called DJFREE, with people, the clients or otherwise called DJBUYER, who need a job done in their own specific field of work.

DonnaJobs is a protected and safe environment for women because all the identities are verified; there is no men competition; every quote sent is hidden so there is no downward price competition; the customer pays in advance and the money is withheld by DonnaJobs as a guarantee deposit for both parties.

Consumers (represented by both DJFree and DJBuyer) must first register themselves in order to access the services provided by the Platform. Once enabled to access the services, the Platform allows consumers to negotiate directly with each other, discussing delivery times and requested service costs. Every woman who wants to work can register on the Platform and sell her own services, e.g.: Writing & Translation, Graphic Design, Web Service & Web Developing, Sales & Marketing, Accounting & Admin...

The DJBuyer can buy directly a service by clicking the “Buy This Service” button (e-commerce). Once the DJBuyer has bought the service, the payment goes to the DonnaJobs’ Escrow System and the payment will be released only when the job is delivered by DJFree and DJBuyer is satisfied with it. When the process is over, the parties rate each other. If the DJBuyers can’t find the right service they can post a bespoken project and the system will send an email to all the freelancers who have the requested skills so they can send their own quote. The DJBuyer chooses the better offer for themselves and the process start again.
One important thing to highlight is that the Platform is free, you only pay a small fee to DonnaJobs at the end when you have earned your money not before.

At the present DonnaJobs operates in UK and Italy but we are planned to open very soon in Spain, France, German and all the other countries of Europe. Another part of the project that will be delivered soon is the internal e-learning platform because there are a lot of women that are not yet so “technology skilled”. We will deliver internal course with the goal to teach to the woman how to expand their boundary and how to explore new frontiers of knowledge to become economically independent.

(v) How can ICT and technology empower women?

Technology helps a lot! DonnaJobs is a tool that works via internet and through technology. I am a great fun of technology but you must know how to use it. Because technology is a Technogenic System and you can't beat it, but we can use it! If you are aware of what you are doing you can use the full potential of the instrument otherwise you are used by it.

(vi) Have you ever thought about quitting?

To say never would be a lie. Moments of discouragement are always there. But it is important not to be influenced by other people. Moments of discouragement do not come from endogenous causes, but from external causes, usually we are influenced by what others tell us and by their judgment, once again we are returning to the starting point: lack of self-confidence. We do not love enough ourselves.

(vii) Your advice to girls and women, who want to realize their dreams

First: never give up. Second: believe in yourself. Third: self-development. If you don't know something, study it, learn it, master it. You can do it! Write down a list of your goals and divided them by: long-term goals; medium-term goals; short-term goals.
How did the idea of the business you founded come up?

I was born and raised in Milan. I taught at Bocconi University for a few years, then I was a consultant for more than 10 years and manager at Unicredit Group and finally I decided to found redooc.com. I wanted to give back something of mine to a country that gave me and is still giving me so much, but that doesn't see up to the needs of the young people, particularly in the scientific subjects.

The idea of Redooc was born in 2012 by reading an article in the Italian newspaper "Il Sole 24 ore" which presented the results of the PISA-OCSE tests. The article denounced the fact that the Italians fifteen years old were under the OECD average in mathematical skills but it did not suggest anything to solve the problem. Mathematics is the basic language of all scientific subjects and if it is true that technology is the engine of a country's economic development, including our GDP, this means that when our 15-year-olds enter the labor market it will be a disaster. So, I thought of creating a digital educational platform. We use technology to present our teenagers with a mathematics that is more in their scope and therefore less formal, that tries to explain them the "why" of things, because the mathematical concept was invented, to solve a problem specifically, and so we understand how to use mathematics to solve problems and not only to make calculations.

You are an economist, when and how were your passion and interest for entrepreneurship born?

I have not been an internet pioneer. At the end of the 90s I was a consultant for banks and insurance companies and in the first years of 2000 I was a
manager in a large banking group and I observed the Internet with curiosity, but without a real passion. Around 2010 I started to really intrigue and to activate so much that I thought about doing a job of it. I started to study, to practice, to learn, to be an e-commerce customer, to try to understand its logics, not suffer them but interpret them.

(iii) What is the role of ICT / technology in your business?

Nowadays, technology is a valuable tool applicable and inherent to all types of activities. Technology means complexity and complexity means today, still for many, ‘male’. One or two generations ago it was not a problem not to be good in mathematics because anyway you got a job and it was either in post offices or in the banks or in schools as a teacher. A morning job that allowed you to have a family. The problem is a mix of culture, social stratification and ministerial programs in schools that nobody has the courage to review.

In Italy there is a scuola.redooc.com platform that is dedicated to schools so that teachers can guide, support and monitor students, especially to detect strengths and weaknesses to design a more focused classroom teaching. Then there is redooc.com which has become a great mathematics blog.

(iv) How long have you come with your company and plans for the future?

We have the APP. where 7 million children who come to school every day (from the primary to the university) find their digital mathematics on Redooc.com (we follow the ministerial indications)!

Each teaching unit has 3 levels of exercises of increasing difficulty: there are points, rankings, you can download the certificate of your level of play and participate in online competitions. For example, PiGreco Day online competition we organized for the MIUR (Italian Ministry of Education). The next one is scheduled for October investor's week. On the occasion of the month of financial education we will open the platform and let users play on economics and finance. Over time, in addition to mathematics, from Primary to Secondary education, we combined physics for high schools and the economics and finance section, and then around a year and a half ago we started dealing with Italian because, analyzing the data on the platform, we see that many math errors arise from poor understanding of the texts of problems.

An idea on which we are working a lot is therefore the accessibility on special educational needs for the visually impaired (we have the project to introduce the latex read by the braille keyboards) and the dyslexics (you can choose the reading characters in the platform).

With the collaboration of prof. Giacomo Stella we developed interactive exercises guided with the vocal guide to teach the 4 basic operations to
dyslexics. We are also developing an adaptive e-learning algorithm for each individual student that will allow individualized teaching according to the individual student: for example, if I am a type who misses the calculations and you will not, we’ll have a different path.

(v) How can ICT and technology empower women?

Girls from primary school have to be put in the condition of thinking they can study engineering or physics without problems. Girls need to know that it is not the exception to reach those levels, but that may be the norm. Just have to want it! And then we need to change mentality and culture starting from family!

Women today also have smartphones and everything is there. They can use an app to develop the app; they can be able to open a blog where to put into practice their passion for writing; there are social networks where you can expose your points of view ... some time ago all this was impossible!

(vi) Have you ever thought about quitting?

Every evening! The next morning, I start again with enthusiasm. It is a huge effort but you do it for passion as well as for need and because you think it is the right way to spend your time and your energy to give something back to your country.

Women also need to know that other women with different paths, mistakes, different choices have found their way to succeed, even if they are not the daughters of famous entrepreneurs. Woman, you can do it!

(vii) Your advice to girls and women, who want to realize their dreams

Years ago, I would answer curiosity, passion, resilience. We must believe in it, be curious, never be satisfied, always look for something different, have the ability to overcome obstacles.

After 5 years as entrepreneur I answer: resilience, resilience, resilience! Get help, look for mentors to talk to, ask for advice. Not only one but more mentors because everyone can give you advice from a different point of view. Just do it!
(i) How did the idea of the business you founded come up?

I’m Desiree, I have a degree in economics and management in International Institutions and a two years master in European Affairs at Sciences-Po. I’m freelance, I used to work in a company but due to personal needs, I left my job and moved back to my hometown. I had to reinvent myself and I decided to start from one passion of mine: writing, doing some copy write for the web.

I met Claudia during a work experience and we decided to have our own project to help SME and freelance to use the true potential of the internet to communicate expertise, knowledge and identity. Something that we are not used to do in Italy.

Claudia: I graduated in organization of cultural events, among the various experiences I worked for 14 years in a company that organizes fairs. 2 years ago I woke up and I said to myself “this is not the routine I want”. This awareness was given also by the fact that I am a mother and I lost the first months of my children growth because I came back immediately to work. So I quit my job and after few months I met Desiree, we saw that we were complementary and that by joining together we were a power. Now we are smart workers and happy to live the time as we want.
(ii) When and how were your passion and interest for entrepreneurship born?

Claudia: I always had a technological approach due to work issues. My previous job experience involved a trade fair on innovation and technology so I worked with start-ups, ICT multinational corporations. In the last years I have realized that technology could do so much for me especially for my work. Smart working is a flexible work on several levels: work setting, relationship, communication, and this is why I said to myself I can do it. Flexibility is essential to balance private and working life. Furthermore our customers work in the ICT world.

Desiree: Even if I studied something that is not related to the ICT sector, my studies gave me the ability to approach different things and to be flexible. Internet and digital innovation is something that changes very fast, day by day, and you need to be open and ready to get the changing.

Our vision is to use the internet and social media to spread quality contents to the vast majority of people contrasting the idea of the social world as a corrupted mean.

(iii) What is the role of ICT / technology in your business?

Claudia: Technology is now a normal part of our lives, it is present in every aspect of life, we must not see it as something extraneous. The next step must be to understand its potential not only in our family routine, in work, in sport. When you perceive it as a potential, as an acceleration of your life moments, you can use it in every aspect.

Desiree: It is also a cultural factor. I am part of a generation which considered computer science a subject “for males”. In companies, women tend to be associated with other jobs, not with ICT-related figures.

(iv) How long have you come with your company and plans for the future?

Claudia: From a past experience more as a human being than as a professional (working in marketing means human relations) I perceived the difficulty of freelancers to carry on accessories activities to their business.

We understood that there was this gap between freelancers and micro-enterprises where there is a lower economic and time potential and the big companies, more structured. If you are a financial consultant and you are focused on your work, when do you find the time to dedicate yourself to talking about yourself, to promote yourself, to develop secretarial activities, online research, all those tasks that take time and take you away from your core business? So we said we do it for you, our core business will be what your core business is, we take it on ourselves!
Desiree: The long-term project is to create a network of competent women who come together freely and offer quality services based on an ethical vision and on common work.

(v) How can ICT and technology empower women?

Desiree: Since the beginning of this project we have met several people, we are now in a network. The essential tool to digitize yourself in addition to training is the discussion with realities such as a network of women. There are groups on FB, where you can have access to information on tools, potentials, skills. Discussing with these professionals gives you the access, from a technological point of view, to understand that there are tools that can help you in your work.

Women should be part of the innovation process. The women’s vision, our different approach to things, can help to develop new ideas and technologies. Women are creative but still, the feminine intelligence is down to earth. Women could innovate the digital world in a very different way.

Claudia: Compared to the recent years there has been a step forward in regard to gender issues, because companies have started, partly due to the obligation to respect gender equality, to research workforce regardless of gender and because women have started to “launch themselves”.

Today there is a positive change taking place, even if it should be faster, but in Italy we take our time. Maybe it is needed a change in the field of education of the new generations, probably it is the biggest gap we have here in Italy.

(vi) Have you ever thought about quitting?

Desiree: Every day! The strength of the challenge is that you know you can give up and that's when you build, when you say no, I go on, then you gain awareness and that thing you are doing gets stronger, gains value.

Claudia: when I quit my job, before meeting Desiree, I started sending CVs because the concept of freelance scared me. When the project was being defined, I had thoughts like I'm going to live in agricultural mode! Then it's important to accept the challenge and proceed to understand how far you can go. Now I'm glad I didn't give up.

(vii) Your advice to girls and women, who want to realize their dreams

Desiree: I think it is fundamental to leave but sometimes stop and compare yourself with the outside world to have a more punctual vision of your own project. The comparison helps you to understand that everybody has moments of discouragement, they are normal and physiological.
*Claudia:* asking for help without shame. Be humble and aware that needing help is normal and important to grow. We had an emotional evolution with this project, it has been a very strong life change and it is the main thrust that drives us forward, despite the difficulties. For us it is therefore important to tell and say *girls you can do it!* ... it is not true that it is not possible, especially today with the modern tools... you are not forced to suffer a job just because it is a permanent contract.
(i) How did the idea of the business you founded come up?

I have been an entrepreneur for 7 years, since 2012 when I was 25. I wanted a salary but I did not want to work for a boss. It was not only about the money but about my own satisfaction. I registered the company in Brussels and I started! It was a sort of company that was helping entrepreneurs, scientists, even project managers to race funding from the European Union. I had been invited by the European Commission to become a host entrepreneur under the Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs Programme and we have received people from: Quatar, Mexico, the United States and Canada. I mentored 6 women to stimulate more and more women to start their own business, to gain more power, to be more confident of their talent.

When I was a little bit tired to be at my office, I was running the current company. It is a start-up that I founded this year in March, but it is a company that does practically the same as my previous company: proposals writing, training and coaching professionals who need help and other private investors. At the moment I’m also looking for other business opportunities in many fields. I start with a couple of people to develop some possible joint ventures in different areas. The reason why I decided to start this new company was basically to offer myself more flexibility.

Now I am very happy, because I can work where I want in any country where I am and this is the way I see success. Success in the sense that finally I have the power to choose in the way I work, in the way I want and where I want.
(ii) When and how were your passion and interest for entrepreneurship born?

I have a passion for technology in general. I am depended on technology and especially on wireless connection because if I do not have wireless I cannot do my work. On the other hand, my passion for technology also includes my connection with many of my clients which are CEOs and founders or cofounders of hitech companies. Especially many of them work in the field of artificial intelligence. I am not an expert on it but it’s a tool that I am very passionate about, not just for personal reasons but also because I think we should always adapt to all technological trends on a daily basis.

(iii) What is the role of ICT / technology in your business?

Technology is the key enabler of the services EXCLUSIVIX has to offer.

(iv) How long have you come with your company and plans for the future?

My next goals or my next targets are preserving to work with more women entrepreneurs, scientists and engineers in reading founding from the European Union, from business angels or venture capitalists. At the same time one of my next goals is to create an on-line coaching programme which will be dedicated mostly for women gaining that competences on how to show investors, how to earn the money they need, to make a dream come true, to develop a next generation robot but also for them to gain that competences that they do mean business.

I have been also noticing that many women do not ask for that amounts as they want, maybe because of the fact we were educated like that, because only the men ask for that amount and they get them. Women tend to ask for lower amounts and I will help women on switching their financial psychology on how to gain the competences in acting for a much-higher amount of funding for their investment projects so that they can basically make their dreams and their tech projects come true.

(v) How can ICT and technology empower women?

Today we are connected through technologies and therefore it’s important to promote women to become entrepreneurs in the tech or not tech areas. I don’t need to go too far like being a programmer or being a coder to be eligible to talk about technology. If we have knowledge about this or that tool in the field of high technology I do believe that more people will be interested, especially when we recognize the advantages that ICT in general brings to our daily life and professional life and I don’t think that doors will be shut. They will be quite open, more women, especially young girls, will be so confident about its importance and they see in a long term they will have a chance to succeed in the world of ICT and technology.
(vi) Have you ever thought about quitting?

Many times but not because I am a woman but because entrepreneurship is not easy and especially when right people do not surround you. Since I founded Exclusivix I wanted to be surrounded by the right people! I prefer quality than quantity. I only quit those activities, that do not do good to me. So I let them go and I decided to focus on new activities that made me more happier and fulfilled (not successful). I will be an entrepreneur still the day I die because I can’t see myself working for a boss again.

(vii) Your advice to girls and women, who want to realize their dreams

You have to be authentic and follow your heart, because this is a starting point to be successful. Believe in yourself, because at the end nobody will help you, except yourself. You should be strong enough to believe in yourself, so that in the end, once you have finally put your project and dreams into reality, those people who didn’t believe in you, will finally respect you! You should never forget to make breaks and some occasions of holidays, to put punctually yourself off being away from your duties.
I work in the team that develops and manages the Swing Fever project. Thanks to my father’s passion for swing and my meeting with Giuseppe Lo Piccolo, the website commercial director, I suddenly found myself fascinated and catapulted into the Swing Fever world.

Currently, my role is to manage the social part and the contents of the platform, to take care of relationships with customers and suppliers and to study marketing and project development strategies. Swing Fever was born in June 2011 to promote the Roman festival "Saturday Swing Fever", unique edition: for the first time a large dance floor in Rome, normally used for the Salsa nights, opens to Swing music and Swingfever.it has been the event promoter. The name "Swing Fever" is taken from the title of an American musical comedy of 1943. In September 2011, Swingfever.it turns into a container where event organizers, dance schools, musicians and locals of Rome can publish Swing events organized in the capital, becoming the first portal for the dissemination of Swing culture in Rome. At the beginning of 2012, event organizers from all over Italy are starting to ask for publishing their events on Swingfever.it, widening the scope of the platform to a national level. Since then the portal has grown: in addition to the events, new sections have been created to spread and promote the various artistic realities present in Italy, from dance schools to musicians, from locals to dancers. The portal goes beyond Swing and embraces the other dance disciplines and musical genres of those years, from Lindy Hop to Rock n’Roll, from Jazz to Balboa and from Boogie Woogie to Blues.

Since I was a teenager, I have always seen technology as another mean of expression, to show my vision of the world quickly and effectively, reaching more people.
Through technology, I can express my creativity and the ideas that were only in my head, giving them life on digital platforms, developing them and sharing them with other individuals which have the same passions like mine.

(iii) **What is the role of ICT / technology in your business?**

Swing Fever is the first in Italy portal of music and dance from the 20s to the 60s. It represents a showcase for dance schools, artists, shops and event organizers and anyone who wants to promote their project, as long as it is inherent to the Swing world.

(iv) **How long have you come with your company and plans for the future?**

Our mission is to spread the culture, music and dance of that era (1920s - 1960s), through the promotion of the activities of dance schools and artists, the publication of events and Swing festivals in Italy, the articles related to the Swing world on our Blog and the publication of in-depth articles through interviews with the mayor actors of the Italian Swing scene. All this makes Swing Fever a point of reference in Italy for the fans and the curious of this fantastic world.

We are at present working on the promotion of our dance schools and events, in view of the start of new courses in September. The main objective remains to promote more and more dance schools in Italy and the next goals will concern the promotion of vintage clothing stores, given the high demand of our users.

(v) **How can ICT and technology empower women?**

Technology is a means to make life easier. The use of technology helps the worker, saves her / him time and physical effort. Women, often in difficulty to balance private and working life, can take advantages from the use of technology to dedicate themselves better their professional activity.

(vi) **Have you ever thought about quitting?**

I have never thought about it: I’m not scared of difficulties, they push me to do better!

(vii) **Your advice to girls and women, who want to realize their dreams**

Be curious, nothing is impossible if the goal is clear! Listen to the advice of those with more experience and be open to new things.

Technology is constantly evolving; do not settle for the results achieved: there is always something more to learn, to improve!
3.2 NORWAY – DENMARK – FINLAND – SWEDEN - UK

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Charlotte Aschim, NO</td>
<td>TotalCtrl</td>
<td>Co-Founder &amp; CEO</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eva Fog, DK</td>
<td>DigiPippi</td>
<td>Founder &amp; CEO</td>
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<td>Bev Hurley, UK</td>
<td>Enterprising Women</td>
<td>Founder &amp; CEO</td>
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<td>Linda Liukas, FI</td>
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<td>Michela Magas, Croatia, SE, UK</td>
<td>Stromatolite Design Innovation Labs Music Tech Fest</td>
<td>Founder</td>
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The Norwegian EITIC partner, the European Centre for Women and Technology was founded in 2008, based in Oslo with National Point of Contacts (national chapters) in thirty countries in Europe. For this reason it was natural for ECWT to select five role models, who reflect the profile of the organization – truly European.

Charlotte Aschim, NO  
Co-Founder & CEO

Photo: Charlotte Aschim  
totalctrl.com

(i) How did the idea of the business you founded come up?

The idea came to my mind when I was working at Kiwi during my studies at NMBU – The Norwegian University of Life Sciences, where we became more aware of all the food being wasted and I started a logbook to register expiration dates to help give the store a better overview, especially over canned food and long-life goods, and started to think about how technology could benefit the business.

The realization started in 2016, when I could convince one of my best friends, Ingrid Østby, the store manager of Kiwi so we could combine her knowledge of the branch with my IT expertise. First, we created the solution as an internal tool for the grocery industry.
We thought it was the grocery and food service industry that threw the most food, but research shows that consumers account for as much as 61 percent of all food waste. And the main reason is the expiration date. That's what we took as our starting point as we further developed the solution.

(ii) When and how were your passion and interest for entrepreneurship born?

I’ve worked since I was 12. One of my jobs was in a supermarket where I could see the food wasted firsthand. Ever since then I was passionate about finding a solution to food waste!

(iii) What is the role of ICT / technology in your business?

We want to help consumers and believe it can be best done through digitalization and automation. We therefore had to go with someone who is on digital platforms.

My vision for the food system in 10-15 years is that it becomes sustainable. We’re far from that right now. We should have more traceability and use the data better - as the chief engineer Charlotte emphasizes.

(iv) How long have you come with your company and plans for the future?

The solution in the form of an App was piloted in collaboration with Handleriet.no "When you get your food delivered home, all items will appear in the app sorted by expiration date and you will be notified before the goods expire. The app gives you an overview of the food you have at home - and the chance to use it before it's too late"

Our partnership resulted in a real win-win as Handleriet, was on the verge of going bankrupt and through our collaboration, during the last three years they went all the way to the top and became best-in-test in this year's prestigious Customer Service Award in the online food category. And our company TotalCtrl has become a real success story!

And best of all: The app is free for consumers. To date, Total Ctrl is connected to the Dealer's purchase app, and you must buy your goods there if you want to use the solution. But it is also possible to add food you buy in traditional stores manually, so you get a complete overview.

The thrilling start was followed by a series of fascinating adventures: TotalCtrl became part of the Smart Incubator at Smart innovation Norway, in October 2017 Charlotte travelled to San Fransisco as one of 20 selected female entrepreneurs and investors from Norway (the She Community, which promotes female entrepreneurs and investors in a male-dominated world). Simula Gründergarage partnered with TotalCtrl and became one of the award winning projects of the Simula start-up support programme. In 2019 TotalCtrl has been been named a Top 100 Nordic Impact Startup by the Norrsken Foundation.
From idea to global success it took a bit more than a year! However, today everyone is using different software that’s not really connected so there is a lot of potential there! TotalCtrl is looking to integrate with other software companies for even more advanced food management solutions!

(v) How can ICT and technology empower women?

Charlotte has been named one of Europe’s most inspiring food waste change makers, one of the top 80 Norwegian leaders under 35, and is a European Green Capital Ambassador.

“In five years, I want our technology to be used all over the world so that in 20 years our children get to grow up in a world completely without any food waste. Just imagine a future where you're 'totally in control' of what you eat and what you chuck. Never throw food in the bin again!”

No doubt about a convincing answering to Q5 – facts are hard core issues!

(vi) Have you ever thought about quitting?
We never put this question to Charlotte!

A day in the life: TotalCtrl Cofounder Charlotte Aschim

(vii) Your advice to girls and women, who want to realize their dreams

Charlotte has some very hands-on advice:

A. Make sure you are solving a need that people are willing to pay for!
B. Sell before you build!
   Show hard sales and throw away your elevator pitch!
C. Building a business model based on sales is scalable, will increase shareholders values quickly and reduce the need for capital!
How did the idea of the business you founded come up?
The unconscious biases we encounter from society, media and our own upbringing have taught us that tech is for males. The lack of visible female role models is staggering, and the cultures in both the educational system and businesses help to keep the biases alive. That’s where the work we do at DigiPippi really matters. Role models are key! For the young women, it’s about cultivating the reasons why they should have an interest in technology and making sure, that the educational system is ready to let them learn.

When and how were your passion and interest for entrepreneurship born?
I’m also a self-taught tech geek with a little too much creative thinking and a desire to change the world. I was introduced to computers in 1990 and it was love at first sight. I had an uncle who worked in tech and he kept providing my mother, brother and me with computers, and I looked up to him. The only problem was that no-one saw me and my interest, so nobody guided me in a technical direction.

I worked as a Waldorf/Steiner pedagogue until 2015 and realized more and more that in the school world nothing had changed in 20 years. Then I got stubborn and decided to work on bringing about a change. In 2015, I founded DigiPippi, a club for girls, which teaches girls to find interest in technology, with the help of the incubator program through Reach for Change Denmark.

What is the role of ICT / technology in your business?
With Digipippi I thought I was just going to make workshops for girls, but ended up starting a system change! And with the help of technology I´m delighted to see that I can do this today world-wide!

How long have you come with your company and plans for the future?
Empowering girls and women and sharing with them the joy of technology has no limits!
How can ICT and technology empower women?

Each person is a potential role model for someone else, so if you don’t do it for yourself, do it for others. But just do stuff and network!

I am fortunate enough to have created my own network inside of DigiPippi, where I find my daily strength and support. I’m a part of Women in Tech, both locally and internationally. I am also part of a group of tech women that all work for the same cause. I’ve just been accepted into an exclusive network called BRIDGIT formed by the global Reach for Change organisation. Reach for Change has impacted children and youth worldwide. Reach for Change has a portfolio of 1000+ social entrepreneurs in 18 countries across three continents (Africa, Central Asia and Europe).

My continued inspiration is the girls. There are no words that can describe what it feels like to see a girl come out of her shell, eyes glimmering, and see her embrace her own power. It happens at every workshop we’ve in Digipippi, and that’s what keeps me going. Changing just one girl's self-esteem - that’s enough!

With the help of technology, I could actually become a specialist in children and IT in a 360° view!

Have you ever thought about quitting?

During our first year with Digipippi we reached out to almost 4000 girls, in 2017 we reached also more than 25000 adults, our movement is unstoppable!

And remember the saying of Astrid Lindgren’s Pippi Longstocking: "I have never tried that before, so I should definitely be able to do that!"22

Your advice to girls and women, who want to realize their dreams

I don’t think that all girls have to learn to code, however, we all need to realize the joy of technology and we, through the use of technology, can create a world which includes us all!

22 Astrid Lindgren, Pippi Långstrump (1945) “Det har jag aldrig provat förut, så det klarar jag helt säkert!”
Our interview with Bev Hurley, has to be special, as Bev is special! Bev is an institution, an inspiring serial entrepreneur, one of the UK’s leading experts on growing sustainable and successful women-owned businesses.

Bev is one of the few that’s been there and got the T-shirt, from running a micro-business as a single mum to taking a high growth company through 35% growth each year for four years and employing over 100 people.

Bev grew three successful companies prior to being appointed Chief Executive of the YTKO Group, which under Bev’s has achieved significant growth in turnover, profit and productivity year after year and underpins YTKO’s 2020 mission to support over 20,000 businesses, raise £50 million in growth finance, and create 10,000 new jobs.

Bev is particularly passionate about how to unlock the potential of women entrepreneurs to grow their business. She’s one of the few that’s been there and got the T-shirt, from running a micro-business as a single mum to taking a high growth company through 35% growth each year for four years and employing over 100 people.

And on top of all the above, Bev is an active mentor, angel investor, in-demand public speaker, and passionate UK Women’s Enterprise Ambassador and holds a dozen of non-executive directorships, awards and appointments of which the most special ones are CBE for Services to Enterprise and Queens Award for Enterprise Promotion.

(i) How did the idea of Enterprising Women come up?

My employer, YTKO Group bid for a tender, - the regional development agency put out to improve the support for female entrepreneurs: to increase the number of startups and support existing businesses to grow and basically transform the way support for women was delivered - and we won. Our idea was to put an online community at the heart of our business model. This was in 2006, before Twitter. We were also paid by the government to deliver start-up programmes, networking events, conferences and awards and to set up a mentor bank.

(ii) When and how were your passion and interest for entrepreneurship born?

My work-life started with a first exposure to poverty and inequality, and it became a key factor in why I champion wealth creation and inclusive growth today. I started my first business buying up rundown property and converting it into flats. I then moved to Canada to a brand new gold mine and helped bring about the world’s first non-unionised mine, which led to an amazing safety record, low staff turnover, and record gold production. I later returned to the UK and started and sold several new businesses, including management buy-out of an industrial design agency, interior furnishings and professional mediation company, all as a single Mum. I joined YTKO as CEO in 2000, and took over the company in 2014. I’ve launched successful disruptive new services launched every three years since 2006, and led the company through doubling and redoubling in size. After my first successful business I was hooked.

(iii) What is the role of ICT / technology in your business?

Technology is a key enabler – it has enabled women to have a much more flexible working pattern because they can work at home much more easily. Technology is also a key enabler for women for finding and collaborating with a mentor.

(iv) How long have you come with your company and plans for the future?

We launched Enterprising Women in 2006 with a brand new approach, centering on the concept of building a supportive community, and advancing women’s enterprise through providing support at all stages of the business journey, including growth. We transformed the support landscape for women, starting in the East of England with funding from the Regional Development agency.

Other unique attributes were the 100% focus on being led by the needs of the women we served, our own significant first-hand experience of the highs and lows of running our own successful businesses, and a passion for wanting to share our skills and knowledge in a creative, collaborative and supportive environment and enable others to do so to.

Our high quality, real-world training courses are designed both to extend functional business skills and learning at the same time as developing women's management and leadership skills.

In 2010, we established Enterprising Women as a not-for-profit company and this is a really important part of our ethos. In tough economic times, our members need to know and trust that we're doing everything we can to increase value to them, not to us.

Our community today reaches over 45,000 women across the UK. We've picked up prestigious awards and commendations along the way, including UK Government and European Best Practice for SME and gender support, but the
thing we value most is our high levels of member satisfaction and hearing about their successes.

We continually invest in developing and evolving new business services. We're now building our network of Business Clubs through our volunteer hosts, who provide that all important face to face local contact each month. At the same time, we're increasing our strategic partnerships around the world to help members who are looking to trade internationally, and developing our corporate partnerships to enable us to bring funded or subsidised services to our members. And there's much, much more in the pipeline!

(v) How can ICT and technology empower women?

The massive enabling impact of technology across all aspects of work and life has been the biggest change! My first business was before fax machines came in and everything was done on typewriters, manually and by post!! The business revolution started in terms of speed and efficiency of communication.

To achieve gender parity in business ownership on a national level (where woman are at best 20%) we would need significant investment for tailored support to help more women start and scale their businesses (as implemented in the US).

(vi) Have you ever thought about quitting?

I’m - for better or worse - the sort of woman, who has to have challenges and obstacles in her life, to be told ‘it can’t be done’. It’s a real driver for me, because I believe nothing is impossible, and I thrive on finding a way round, through, under or over as needed!

(vii) Your advice to girls and women, who want to realize their dreams

Believe that you can, and you will!
This presentation of Linda Liukas is also unique, in the sense, that ECWT has discovered this “rare pearl” immediately after graduating from Aalto University, awarding Linda through Aalto University, ECWT’s Finnish National Point of Contact with the Women of the Future Award in 2011 for developing the 'Rails Girls' tools and community. The year after ECWT launched Linda as a keynote speaker at the e-skills Week 2012 final conference in Copenhagen and the rest is history! The same year Linda was chosen Digital Champion for Finland. In 2013/2014 Linda moved towards new adventures: to write and illustrate a book for young children about the magical world of technology - Hello Ruby. To raise funding for the publishing, Linda decided to test the crowdfunding platform Kickstarter and smashed its $10,000 funding goal after just 3.5 hours and gathering 380,747 dollars in total funding during the funding period of 30 days (Jan 23 2014 - Feb 22 2014), becoming the platform's most highly funded children’s book.

(i) How did the idea of Hello Ruby come up?

For Linda it’s all about curiosity, playfulness and logic. Hello Ruby provides tools for kids, parents and educators to learn to understand programming in a fun and creative way.

“I was teaching myself programming and started googling the Ruby character in my notes. Whenever I ran into a problem like what is garbage collection or how does object oriented programming work, I’d try to imagine how little Ruby would explain it. The imaginative viewpoint of a small girl soon started to pop up everywhere in the technology world and I knew I had a book in my hands!”

(ii) When and how were your passion and interest for entrepreneurship born?

It all started in 2001 when 13-year-old when Linda fell in love with Al Gore. As a teenager growing up in Finland, she followed U.S. politics very closely. She couldn’t quite explain it, but for some reason she became fascinated with the former vice president of the United States, who she thought he had a great belief system and values. She wanted to find a way for him to notice her and only one thing came to her mind, to make a website to show him how much

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24 Hello Ruby campaign on Kickstarter: https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/lindaliukas/hello-ruby
he meant to her. The website was up and running, but alas, Gore failed to notice Liukas, and she put programming on hold.

For about 10 years Linda didn’t focus on technology at all. She went on to study philosophy, business, French and mechanical engineering. However, the spark to get into programming never left her

(iii) What is the role of ICT / technology in your business?

“Programming was and still is, a means to an end to me, a way for me to express myself creatively”.

(iv) How long have you come with your company and plans for the future?

Hello Ruby started off with a book that is now published in over 25+ languages, including Catalan, Chinese, Dutch, English, Finnish, French, Hungarian, Korean, Polish, Spanish, Swedish, Taiwanese, Ukrainian.

(v) How can ICT and technology empower women?

Achievement is all about advancement, progress, power, optimization, analysis and challenging others. Often when we talk about programming and play, we stop here. But in reality, there’s also stuff like making friends, collaboration, group achievement, finding and giving support, exploration, roles, appearances and even escape from real world. All part of programming practice, but when teaching programming, we tend to forget the two other motivations. My work has to do with bringing all of these aspects of play to programming education.

Our kids should learn to bend, join, break and combine code in a way it wasn’t designed to. Just as they would with crayons and paper or wood and tools. The most important is enjoying what you do – having fun! Coding goes far beyond the if/else statements or arrays on a screen; it’s about expression, creativity – and practical application.

(vi) Have you ever thought about quitting?

My mission is preparing kids for a world where so many problems are computer problems – this is a task I have chosen myself and love and will continue to do as long as I live!

(vii) Your advice to girls and women, who want to realize their dreams

You have a unique opportunity to discover and shape the world and tell your stories, in your own way! Go for it!
The last interview of our EITIC e-book us the official interview given by Michela Magas in connection with her award-winning ceremony in 2017\(^2\). In fact, several of the questions are similar to our previous interviews, others are more focused on the added value of innovation. From this interview you will have take-aways, that will for sure provide you inspiration for the years ahead, enjoy!

*Michela Magas is an innovation catalyst who bridges the worlds of science and art, design and technology, and academic research and industry, with a track record of over 20 years of innovation.*

*In 2016 she was presented with an Innovation Luminary Award for Creative Innovation and the year thereafter, Michela was awarded European Woman Innovator of the Year 2017.*

*Michela is the founder of Stromatolite, a Design Innovation Lab that has built the Music Tech Fest platform, a global community platform of over 8000+ creative innovators and scientific researchers. The platform provides a test case for innovation in areas as diverse as neuroscience, forestry, microcomputing design and art.*

\(^2\) https://musictechfest.net/michela-magas-interview/
Rather than taking a single product to market, her ecosystem has yielded multiple innovative products and services enabled by her ideas of Open Product, Market Adoption, and Innovation IP, creating a fast track to innovation.

(i) What made you choose to become an entrepreneur?

There are things I want to create or make possible in the world that simply cannot be achieved in the context of conventional employment. The process of (re)invention starts from the ground up.

I like to question how something is organised; what are the guiding principles; do they still reflect the state of technological progress; do they still fulfil their social obligation? Most traditional employment requires a narrow view, one that fits neatly into a slot and follows a linear progression without questioning its foundations. I find that real solutions to challenges often require a rethinking of the supporting structures, which may be perceived as disruptive by conventional standards. Becoming an entrepreneur is the result of this quest to find truly useful solutions from the ground up.

(ii) What advice would you give to a woman taking the step of setting up her own business?

Go for it! We need more of the female perspective reflected in our every-day business practices. Countries which insist on 50/50 female/male Steering Boards have registered greater prosperity as a result.

(iii) What does the term ‘innovator’ mean to you personally?

An innovator is traditionally someone driven by solutions to challenges, or by curiosity and discovery. It can be someone who imagines the world to be different and sets out to create that difference, or someone who experiments and discovers a different world. Both bring together creativity and science, and in today’s society neither can operate entirely alone. For me personally, an innovator is someone who knows how to join the dots between knowledge from different fields of research and industry, and a variety of cultural viewpoints. It is at the intersection of worlds that we currently find the most promising scenarios, and through knowledge collisions that we discover the best solutions.

(iv) You have led two of the four large scale research projects of Stromatolite, funded by the Commission’s 7th Framework and the HORIZON 2020 Programme.

Was the research and innovation funding helpful to you?
Radical ideas require validation before they can seek traditional funding. Where ideas are potentially disruptive, they can find resistance from investors because of the high level of risk attached and lack of clear business models upfront. EU research and innovation funding is uniquely placed to support highly risky but potentially game-changing initiatives. Especially where the social impact is notable, the EU funding can afford to take the long-term view and measure the impact beyond immediate income potential. For all these reasons the EU funding was an essential enabler for our initiatives.

(v)  **Have you faced any prejudice being a woman in your domain?**

I was once asked by a male professor in front of a large auditorium of hundreds of students, how did I feel about being a woman designer and entrepreneur - did I feel equal to men?

I answered: “With no disrespect, I do not wish to be anything like you. I believe I bring a lot more to the table by offering a woman’s perspective.” An entrepreneur is a state of mind, not a gender!

(vi)  **How can Europe encourage more women innovators?**

Our tests show that by opening challenges to creativity and experimentation we get a much better gender balance. We have a clear 50/50 gender split across our children’s workshops, as well as in our creative laboratories for professionals of all backgrounds. We have reached 33% female innovators in our industry testbeds.

(vii) **Is there a symbol, a proverb, a quote, an idea, that has guided you throughout your professional or private life?**

Since my early studies, back in 1990, I had Michael Faraday’s “All this is a dream – still examine it with a few experiments” pinned up on my desk. It has never failed me.

The Dennis Gabor quote “The future cannot be predicted, but futures can be invented” and the later version by Alan Kay “The best way to predict the future is to invent it” has become the motto of our community.

(viii) **Was it an easy road to arrive where you are now?**

I haven’t ‘arrived’ yet - I am still on a journey. It has never been an easy road, there have always been great obstacles and I am still experiencing many of those, but it is a tremendously rewarding journey when you are travelling in the company of a community of brilliant and intelligent people.
(ix) What future did you dream about when you were a child?

From a very early age, I was always inspired and fascinated by those people who received the Nobel Peace Prize. It seemed grandiose and far-fetched within the context I was living in at that time, growing up in what was then a restricted, and severely troubled country, about to embark into a war. I was mocked for being a child with big ambitions, but I wanted to be the sort of person who can make a positive impact of that kind.

(x) How should we encourage young kids to become interested in science and innovation?

What we should be encouraging above anything else is the spirit of experimentation, in both the arts and the sciences. There are many ways in which children can meaningfully express themselves. Currently we are focusing almost exclusively on the written word, but modern technology offers children many useful methods of expression that can bridge language barriers and social divides.

We need to allow and encourage our kids to create their own language and expression by discovering their own methods and building their own tools. In order to achieve this, just as with sport, children need some equipment, a place to play and some supportive coaching. With the help of wonderful coaches and role models from our community, parents tell us that their children have become ‘hooked for life’ on science, engineering and creative experimentation.

(xi) Are there any life events or persons who have changed your life and contributed to make you the person you are today?

All of the places and people around us make us who we are. I came from a place which is at the crossroads of several European cultures, and from a very early age learnt how to bridge between them.

I also witnessed the horrors of civilian conflict and what fear of the unknown can do even to the most educated minds. It often takes just one person to have the courage to create a space where people can “suspend disbelief” and come to a place of common understanding, and this often happens through the arts. For us music has become the social glue - it attracts people from all cultural, intellectual and social backgrounds. It enables them to experiment freely with technology on neutral ground without the pressures of peer reviews or restrictions of jargon. Instead they become fascinated by the other’s knowledge and form strong, long-
term bonds which allow them to combine disparate fields of knowledge to solve complex challenges. This not only serves to prevent future conflicts but the resulting innovations also make sound economic sense.

(xii) What else is there close to your heart that you would like to share with us?

Conflict resolution and economic advancement thorough innovation go hand in hand. Where fear is used to drive profits, this usually creates a short term cash injection, but long-term leaves entire nations poorer.

Creating new ways to communicate and exchange knowledge is one of the most effective ways to enrich cultures and advance economies. We have witnessed entirely new methods of communication in our testbeds.

The written word is a wonderful “method of translation” for ideas popularised by the technological invention of the printing press, but also presents cross-cultural challenges. New technologies allow us to rely less on the written word and more on gesture and signalling, the way that children do.

A new kind of intelligent communication medium will emerge from this world (imagine it as a new kind of “Twitter”), and when it does, you will want to invest in it!
3.3 ROMANIA

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<th>Name</th>
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<td>CivicTech.ro</td>
<td>Co-Founder</td>
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<td>Ana Goron</td>
<td>Doorie</td>
<td>Founder &amp; CEO</td>
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<td>Iona Hasan</td>
<td>SmartBill</td>
<td>Co-Founder and Product Manager</td>
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<td>Ana Stamatescu</td>
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Ligia Adam
Co-Founder

CivicTech.ro

https://issuu.com/civictechro
https://www.linkedin.com/in/ligiaadam/
https://twitter.com/ligiaadam
http://instagram.com/ligiaadam

(i) How did the idea of the business you founded come up?

I’m a millennial, passionate about tech, about all things digital, as well as about being part of something meaningful and making a difference in my community, to the best of my abilities.

My passion for civic tech projects started when I joined GovITHub, a governmental fellowship program in Romania aimed to involve young IT&C specialists in the process of making simpler, easier tools for citizens to engage with public institutions.

After the fellowship program ended, successfully delivering 12 national acclaimed nation projects by a joint effort from both public representatives and engaged citizens – we knew we needed to continue.

(ii) When and how were your passion and interest for entrepreneurship born?
In Romania, we enjoy one of the fastest internet connections in the world. That enabled my passion for digital, which became a sure thing in 2005, when I started blogging. Being online at an early age helped me pick my career in marketing communications and also, a few years later, blogging landed me my first job. Since then I became closely connected to digital technology and a part of its world.

(iii) What is the role of ICT / technology in your business?

CivicTech Romania started as a non-profit community of developers working to upgrade public services in Romania through various projects related to smart cities, open data usage and digitization of tools that serve a civic purpose.

After a few years, CivicTech Romania started to evolve and pivot into new directions. It gave birth to new organizations with more specific purpose, as well as to stand alone digital tools and projects which now follow a life of their own.

(iv) How long have you come with your company and plans for the future?

Some of CivicTech Romania’s projects include www.fiipregatit.ro, Romania’s nation information platform on official emergency situation guidelines, www.albaiuiliasmartcity.ro the platform presenting Alba Iulia’s top smart city initiatives, or www.openenergy.ro, a platform showcasing the electrical energy consumption in over 20 schools and public institutions.

(v) How can ICT and technology empower women?

Entrepreneurship requires resilience and faith in your ideas, no matter the genders, so ICT should, in my opinion, promote ways to overcome adversity. For women, adversity comes in all kinds of forms so technology can empower everybody by bridging the gap between those who consider, those who try, those who do and those who fail. No matter the gender, I believe connected communities can offer the support for empowerment.

Year 2018 was a milestone for me: I was elected on the “Forbes Top 100 Women Entrepreneurs in Europe to follow in 2018” and the “Forbes Romania 30 under 30 in 2018” list. Although the financial evidence of success was still missing, the recognition from Forbes was evidence, that we were on the right track and it gave me the power to continue.

(vi) Have you ever thought about quitting?

I had many thoughts related to quitting. I even did it at some point, although it was one of the hardest things I did so far in life. In my experience, quitting is something you can deal with only if you consciously recalibrate it as a decision to change direction. To reprioritise. To pursue something new.

Quitting is also inevitable, I found, and often times is not even a choice.

But there’s life after quitting. There’s even success, if you’re lucky and work
hard for it. Reaching to the point of your limits is one of the most empowering things you can do to develop as an individual. So quitting is not something to be afraid of. But judging yourself for it is.

(vii) Your advice to girls and women, who want to realize their dreams

The best advice I ever received from a stranger was: “Pick your battles” The best advice I ever received from a loved one was: “Trying is never a bad choice” My personal advice to anyone would be a combination of these two: “Follow your instinct, but pick your battles along the way and remember that, no matter the outcome, trying is never a bad choice”

Ana Goron  A hotel app totally about You!  Doorie  Founder & CEO

https://www.doorie.io
@doorieapp
https://bg.linkedin.com/company/doorie

(i) How did the idea of the business you founded come up?

I am a young female entrepreneur from Romania with background studies and research activities in the field of Artificial Intelligence. However, I am not the typical entrepreneur and I don’t have a typical entrepreneurial story. Mostly, if i think of my first years, I was a very scared, little girl suffering from severe asthma attacks, who considered herself as very unlucky and with not so many talents as other perfectly healthy kids. However, even when sick I was always driven by the idea that when I grow up I will do something with a positive impact for suffering people in this world.

And one day after graduating from my studies and working for different tech companies and projects, traveling and being a lot of time on the road away from home, feeling exhausted and depressed, this opportunity came. Being alone in a hotel room thousand of km away, around 2 am with jetlag and very hungry, but not wanting to disturb somebody from the kitchen to bring me a sandwich I had an idea. What if I could apply the technology that I learnt about to solve this
problem here in this hotel, but also the problem with home sick, with feeling alone and depressed and this is when I started to think of a concept and gather a team to implement the travel assistant doorie.

Doorie is the perfect companion for travellers to keep a record of their habits, wishes, special requests and preferences, like their favorite food, special diet or a specific habit that makes their evening better after a long and bad working day. But not only keep the information, but actually taking action and informing hotel staff, restaurant employees and even airlines about them in advance, so that you can be treated exactly like you were at home even when miles away.

(ii) When and how were your passion and interest for entrepreneurship born?

Since I was a little girl I was always curious and creative, using my imagination in almost everything I did. My upbringing was an average Eastern European one. I graduated as a valedictorian from a Computer Science high-school and continued my education attending the Technical University from my city. During all this time, I was very torn up inside between my dreams and aspirations to do something meaningful in the world using my free spirit and creativity and having to be realistic at the same time and practical based on the chosen education path. Then at some point during my university years, while attending an introductory course on Artificial Intelligence more than 12 years ago, I had my moment of epiphany and realized that I could combine my technical skills with my creativity in order to bring a contribution to the field of A.I. So that is when I started my research activity and continued with a Ph.D. in this field.

(iii) What is the role of ICT / technology in your business?

Doorie.io is a universal travel assistant using deep tech and Artificial Intelligence in order to support people during their time spent away from home and also helping the travel industry people in offering personalized services and warmer interactions. The program learns about the specifics of each traveller, their likes, their preferences, their travel habits and makes sure to transmit all this information to their chosen accommodation, airline, host before they even arrive there so that they can make them feel like they arrived at home.

(iv) How long have you come with your company and plans for the future?

The project is in its pilot phase, working now with several hotels, travel agencies and property management system providers in order to make a smooth integration in the travel process and we are currently focusing to launch it officially in Romania, but also in a few other European countries.

Our scope is to extend the project at an international scale and include new modules focused on improving the mental wellbeing of the traveller when away from home.
(v) How can ICT and technology empower women?

If we look back in time, technology in general helped us become more connected, more aware about the happenings in this world, brought us closer to one another and kept us informed. Therefore, why not use it as a powerful tool and means of informing, connecting and helping women all over the world in making their voices heard, making their dreams come true and mostly giving them a chance to use their power in order to follow and achieve their entrepreneurial dream, being a tech one or not?

Speaking from my own experience, I struggled a lot being a female in this entrepreneurial journey, but learning about and connecting with other female entrepreneurs, gave me more hopes that “if she can do it, so can I”.

In 2018 I came fortieth on “Forbes Top 100 Women Founders in Europe” list and this award has raised in me the question of a big responsibility. It put me in the spotlight to become over night a role model for a young girl or boy who wants to follow a similar path, giving also a chance to use my knowledge not only for my personal good, but also for the good of others. So, today I am strongly focused on doing that exact thing.

(vi) Have you ever thought about quitting?

I would be lying to say that I haven’t. To be honest, I have this thought every single day, sometimes even twice or ten times in a day, but when I decided to start this journey I thought a lot and said that no matter what happens, even if I were to fail, this won’t happen because of my fear and disbelief.

(vii) Your advice to girls and women, who want to realize their dreams

Yes. I would definitely encourage girls and women to do whatever they aspire to because if the mind can imagine something, then the mind with the help of outside tools can bring this vision to life.

Girls should not feel intimidated or discouraged by embracing technology and even if they find themselves in front of a challenge, they will manage to pass it with help from outside if required, but mostly having faith in their own capacity. Don’t be afraid to ask for help, inform and support one another in your journey, be honest, be authentic and mostly be kind!
How did the idea of the business you founded come up?

We have started our company almost 13 years ago, while I was still in college. We did not have an exact plan, our parents gave us 200 euros to incorporate the company and we started out by going 'door to door' to places like restaurants to ask people if they wanted a site for their business. In 2007 we started selling domains & web hosting to companies and we understood what it means to sell the same product to multiple customers, a much more scalable business model than the one where you get paid by the hour. When the Romanian Invoicing legislation changed in 2007 we formally registered SmartBill, a very easy to use invoicing software. For me it was one of the hardest and busiest times ever, but it was all very exciting: Radu and I were programming all day (and were also testing our product and doing support), and also planning our wedding and I was still going to school where I was used to getting good grades.

After SmartBill, we tried creating other products (a website builder, a time-table scheduler for schools) but none of them had the same success. We learned a lot of things the hard way, through trial and error. A big change for us was when we went to a startup crash course in 2011, School for Startups, it was like a new beginning, a bit of an eye opener. It was then when we started developing our business skills and it is one of the things we regret we did not do sooner, it would have saved us from a lot of mistakes and would have saved us a lot of time and money. But better late than never!

I never really thought of myself as of an entrepreneur but skills can be developed! Letting go of programming and switching to product management with strong focus on user experience was actually quite hard for me, but now I can say I found a new passion in creating products that help people and that people enjoy using, it's a different way of building stuff.
(ii) **When and how were your passion and interest for entrepreneurship born?**

Although I am no longer a programmer (for quite some time now), I knew before high school that I wanted to study computer science. I believe that the fact that my mother was a programmer, was a big influence on me, since I always looked up to her 😊 We ‘split’ things evenly as my sister became a doctor, like my dad 😊

(iii) **What is the role of ICT / technology in your business?**

SmartBill’s main mission is to become the Romanian entrepreneur’s best friend (“part of your team” as our tagline says). SmartBill is concentrating its efforts on becoming a business’ operating system, being in the centre of its operations, providing crucial business information and automating many tasks.

SmartBill is a clear market leader in Romania in the field of online invoicing & inventory management and has maintained this position thanks to its customer-centric approach and strong focus on automation and user experience.

(iv) **How long have you come with your company and plans for the future?**

Following the development of the Accounting & Payroll and Point of Sale software, SmartBill now provides a financial ecosystem of integrated cloud business management solutions to small businesses. In addition, we also provide integrations with a wide range of complementary platforms, such as banks, online retailers, marketplaces, etc

(v) **How can ICT and technology empower women?**

Don’t think I have any words of wisdom here but…I think that when you have an online business, especially in the IT sector, quality speaks for itself. It is not immediately visible who is behind this business so, maybe this helps with biased people 😊

(vi) **Have you ever thought about quitting?**

Yes, many times and I think it is something most (if not all) entrepreneurs consider at times, because being an entrepreneur is not easy. But it is something I believe you think of less and less, once you learn how to better ‘navigate’ this rollercoaster.
(vii) Your advice to girls and women, who want to realize their dreams

Starting and growing a company is certainly not easy, it is an exciting ride, with a lot of ups and downs, and a lot of getting out of your comfort zone - which is also the best way to grow. One of the hardest things for me was talking to people but it is something that you get used to eventually.

I believe it is very important to choose the right people to accompany you on your ride, it is with them that you share the good and the bad, and you do get to share a lot of your time with them. You spend most of your time building your company so you should be in good company.

Diana Miron
CEO & Front end developer

https://www.jsleague.ro/
https://twitter.com/JSLeague_ro
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https://www.instagram.com/dianadesign19/
https://www.linkedin.com/in/diana-miron/

(i) How did the idea of the business you founded come up?

Hi, first of all I am a front-end developer and designer and since high-school I knew that I wanted to have my own business.

The JSLeague story started 3 years ago within the Bucharest JavaScript community, the biggest community of JavaScript developers in Romania. Every month we organize meetups where members are able to present new ideas and interesting projects on different technologies.

Along with JSGirls and JSHacks, JSLeague started from this community with a focus on providing higher education to developers and taking them from good to
great, inspiring them to be leaders within their teams and unite them into developing solutions for real problems.

(ii) **When and how were your passion and interest for entrepreneurship born?**

When I was a kid, my aunt showed me how to make a basic web page and I guess something stuck to me to this day. I started drawing comics and illustrations, bought my first domain in high school and then in the first year of college I learned to make my own website to get my illustrations online. It seemed fascinating to me that a few lines of code can create some nice things on the web.

This is how I got into contact with web development, then I hired myself as a front-end developer for a few months and started studying and learning a lot of new things related to front-end, design, components and JavaScript. Later on, things came naturally as I got into contact with the BucharestJS community of developers and I’ve been in the core team and mentor of a few startups.

It’s fascinating that tech is an industry in which things change very quickly, it is incredibly dynamic and there are always new things to learn. In the end of the day, what matters is the people, who use and interact with products, website or application.

(iii) **What is the role of ICT / technology in your business?**

JSLeague is a program that delivers both enterprise trainings on all JavaScript technologies and community free workshops.

We want to give developers from our community free access to the best tech trainers and the newest JS curricula throughout our JS workshops. We cover all JS tech stack and beyond, focusing on both the technical and soft skills by integrating Agile and Scrum methodologies with the help of our partners, Developers.

(iv) **How long have you come with your company and plans for the future?**

Along with meetups and the hackathon, JSLeague is the first organization to have built such an ecosystem around web technologies in Romania.

At this point we have done several enterprise trainings and more that 10 community workshops with around 80 participants and we have been technical partners and delivered workshops at different technical conferences such as JSHeroes and VoxxedDays Frontend and collaborated with Codette in projects that promote coding and Computer Science in high school students.

We also launched the first technical podcast in Romania, JSLeague Show and at the current time of writing we have recorded bi-monthly, with 11 episodes recorded. We had both Romanian entrepreneurs and developers and international ones such as Vitaly Friendman (co-founder Smashing Magazine) or Ives van Hoorne (founder CodeSandbox.io).
(v) How can ICT and technology empower women?

Having a network of like-minded people can help you a long way in the entrepreneurial journey. For me it was really helpful to have mentors and other strong women role models as women and I try my best to give back to the community and help as many other women in this path.

I think that every one of us should try to invest as much as possible in the community and in the future.

In 2019 I was selected to the Forbes 30 Under 30 Europe for Technology Award. This is a recognition for both the JSLeague’s team efforts and dedication and for the community of JS developers. For me it represents that we are on the right path of changing the world, one block of code at a time.

(vi) Have you ever thought about quitting?

Looking back on this journey, even though it has just started, there were some difficult and tough times that I personally and as a team went through, but then again this is how life is.

I have never thought about quitting, because I have chosen this path that suits my personality best. Quitting would mean that I revoke my freedom and hence promised myself that I would do my best and keep going until all that I’ve dreamt of starts to materialize.

(vii) Your advice to girls and women, who want to realize their dreams

My advice is to start experimenting, implementing, seeking for advice and mentorship and to not be afraid to fail because it is an important part of the process.

We are currently living in an advanced technological world, where the possibilities of innovation are limitless and everyone should take advantage of the liberty that today and tomorrow offers. Dream big!
Hi! My name is Ana Stamatescu, I am 28 years old, I am a Romanian “tech for good geek” and I love bats (the real ones, not Batman 😜). For more than 10 years now, I have volunteered and worked in the nonprofit sector, mostly in the education field. Currently, I am also a Europe Code Week Ambassador, a grassroots initiative of the European Commission to support digital skills for children and youth.

The Online NGO program began to take shape at the end of 2014 when Asociația Techsoup had been running already for 4 years the TechSoup Program in Romania (www.techsoup.ro), an international program of IT resources intended exclusively for non-governmental organizations. In communicating with the approximately 1,000 NGOs registered and validated at that time in the Program (today, the TechSoup community counts more than 3,000 NGOs), Techsoup noticed that organizations are prevented from accessing technical and online resources due to the lack of technical literacy, lack of specialized training and especially lack of information about resources dedicated to them.

The few learning resources that existed on the market exceeded the budgets of Romanian organizations. In response, the Digital School for NGOs was born, a program which offers free training. I am constantly searching for new topics that would be of interest for Romanian NGOs and develop new resources for them to expand their ICT skills.

Sometimes I jokingly say that I didn’t have a choice but to be interested in technology. I was born in a family of Engineers (my parents and my older brother). From an early age I have been between computers (those “old, weird” looking ones from nowadays standards) and electrical components.
Although I have a BSc in Automatic Control and Applied Informatics, I think my real passion and interest for technology came later on, when I saw how it can really change the world we live in. It can make people’s voices heard, empower students and children to express their brilliant ideas, transform teachers in actual changemakers in their communities, raise awareness and the lists goes on and on.

(iii)  What is the role of ICT / technology in your business?

NGO Online offers free online and offline trainings, local and national, and online learning materials adapted to the Romanian non-profit sector. The Digital School aims to increase the capacity of NGOs to manage projects, to raise funds, and grow their supporter base using online and other ICT tools. All the resources (recordings of webinar, video tutorial, e-books and articles) are available on the program’s platform: https://ongonline.techsoup.ro and anyone can access them anytime.

(iv)  How long have you come with your company and plans for the future?

We train about 400 volunteers and employees annually, the online platform has reached (in 4 years) almost 2.000 users and we continue to expand the range of topics we work with each year, always adapted to the NGOs real needs.

(v)  How can ICT and technology empower women?

It can help in so many ways: it can give them visibility, help them see other best practices and role models, present networking and remote mentoring opportunities, build prototypes of their ideas, bring larger audiences for their business.

(vi)  Have you ever thought about quitting?

Yes, sure! But not because I was a woman, but just because I had my bad days and weak moments, like any other human being. But at the end of the day, I didn’t quit! That is what matters the most: the end of the day, not the moments in between. I have had the luck to be in the shoes of an entrepreneur and an intrapreneur and I can say that you make your own path and if you are sure about it, nobody can stop you.

(vii)  Your advice to girls and women, who want to realize their dreams

Never give up. And as the saying goes: “when the fight becomes hard, fight harder”. Pursue your dreams, your vision of the world you want to live in. Don’t be easily influenced by others and always follow your heart and your instincts.
3.4 SPAIN

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**Alicia Asín Computer Engineer, Libelium Co-founder & Executive Director**

![Alicia Asín](image)

www.libelium.com
@libelium
@aliciaasin

(i) **How did the idea of the business you founded come up?**

Libelium was born in 2006 by Alicia Asín and David Gascón, co-founders, when we were in the last course of Computer Engineering at the University of Zaragoza. From the beginning we saw an opportunity in the development of wireless sensor networks and from there we created a platform that integrates more than 120 sensors and that is capable of transmitting information through any communication protocol to any cloud platform on the Internet.

(ii) **When and how your passion and interest for entrepreneurship were born?**
I do not agree at all, with those who say that many girls do not choose science careers due to stereotypes that society imposes them, for lack of referents, for lack of empowerment by its teachers, etc.

The world becomes digital and technology will have more and more weight in the economy, therefore, if women do not access these studies, they will be out of reach of positions with greater responsibility and higher salaries.

You have been awarded the Jaime I Entrepreneur Award 2017 and before, the National Young Entrepreneur Award in 2014. In both cases, you have been the first woman to receive them. What has it meant to you?

Each prize is a boost of energy and inspiration to take advantage of. It connects you with the best version of yourself and the experience of receiving it usually forces you to leave the office a couple of days to think away.

The awards are exceptional opportunities to interact with interesting companies and to make Libelium better known through the media. The King Jaime I Foundation and the Federation of Young Entrepreneurs Associations do a great job so that the winners get great public notoriety.

Regarding the gender part, it is sad that when a man wins, no one questions his merits, but if a woman does it, the news is the gender and many people question her real value. I hope that little by little all this will change, it is important that women are setting references for future generations.

(iii) What is the role of ICT / technology in your business?

Libelium creates sensors that connect anything to the Internet in more than 120 countries since 2006, working to solve the biggest challenges on the planet.

We have developed very interesting projects that contribute to improving the quality of life of people and the competitiveness of companies in any productive sector. To highlight some success stories, we can talk about the monitoring of a volcano in Nicaragua for the prediction of eruptions, of multiple cases of measurement of pollution and noise in cities around the world, of the control of water quality in fish farms from Vietnam and Iran (two of the largest exporters of fish to Europe) or even from a project for the measurement of nuclear radiation after the Fukushima accident in Japan.

(iv) How long have you come with your company and plans for the future?

In recent years the growth of Libelium has been constant. Now we are committed to making the leap and that the Internet of Things sector passes from the state of POCs (proof of concept and pilot projects) to large deployments in which the investment in devices is greater.

In Asia, investments in smart cities are exceeding those of any other continent and that will take off the IoT sector.
(v) **How can ICT and technology empower women?**

I prefer to talk about the fact that real conciliation and teleworking allow more men to be 100% co-responsible with family tasks so that it is not women who pay the cost of being mothers at work.

If we look at examples of successful start-ups, many are created from technological projects in the university, but for them to be led by women, the first thing we need is to have more girls in technical careers, hence the importance of education.

It is important that specific training on security, privacy and good use is given to young people, especially women, so that technology is a tool of empowerment and not of subjugation.

Technology is not only necessary for women. It is essential for the evolution of society: men, women, children. Of course, technology as an element of empowerment, but more importantly, as instruments for continuous employability and intergenerational communication. How many parents today have no idea what their children do on social networks due to ignorance of its use? The generation gap that opens from the technological domain is very serious.

(vi) **Have you ever thought about quitting?**

The path of entrepreneurship is winding, not only full of curves, but also up and down slopes. The important thing is constancy and having a medium-long term vision without losing sight of the origins. The short-term perspective is very dangerous because it takes you to an unrealistic emotional state. I always say that for better and for worse, nothing lasts forever, especially in technology, where times are exponential. This mantra makes me have my feet on the ground when we win prizes or sign great projects and it helps me not to despair when we find rough patches along the way.

(vii) **Your advice to girls and women, who want to realize their dreams**

I think girls today need mirrors to look at, references that make them think: "I want to be like this." They have more examples of women working in traditional professions such as medicine, law or education and that does not allow them to imagine that they can develop a very interesting professional career from engineering, mathematics, physics or any scientific discipline. But everything requires constant effort and sacrifice that are low-priced values in today's society. Many young people look for the easy ball, the quick win only exists in the movies.
(i) Hi Alice, could tell us more about yourself and how did the idea of Focus on Women come up?

I've always been a time traveler. Since my childhood, my passion has been to discover different cultures. When I grew up, thanks to my work as a singer and the scholarships I got, I was able to travel around Europe, the Middle East and some Latin American countries. That was the beginning of a series of travel adventures that led beginning of a series of travel adventures to the creation of something different, the dream of my life, a travel agency that would give visibility to women's cultures around the world. Throughout these 10 intense years, I have learned how hard it can be to develop a new concept in a period of crisis that affects the whole population. I have also learnt how positively an idea like this can be received by so many women willing to travel alone, waiting for someone like me to create a distinctive travel option, exclusively designed for women.

(ii) When and how were your passion and interest for entrepreneurship born?

The truth is that when I was young, I wanted to be an archaeologist and a diplomat and I ended up studying Economics instead of History because I listened to my parents since according to them, it was a field with many opportunities. Fortunately, since I was a child, I also showed promise as an artist, and I was able to combine my studies with my work in theatres. I didn't have time to play cards at the University like my classmates, because I had to go rushing to rehearse or sing and I managed to finalize my studies in the theatres' dressing rooms. I always thought that I was be risk-averse, but in reality, I had set up a lot of things without realizing it. When the crisis arrived and I realized that I wasn't fulfilled by what I was doing, so I said to myself, "Why not? Let's try it seriously" and, as the Italians say, "che sará sará".

(iii) What is the role of ICT / technology in your business?

Since I created Focus on Women, ICTs have been basic. In fact, one of the issues I faced was the online domain. In 2009 there were no small, niche online travel agencies like mine, so people didn't understand why I didn't have a
physical space. We are a paperless technology company, where everything is mainly based on an online contact, although the personal relationship with customers is basic, whether by phone call, WhatsApp, Skype or even in person for those needing it.

(iv) How long have you come with your company and plans for the future?

Focus on Women organizes trips for small female groups, where tourism is not the only focus point, but also provide experiences and encounters with each country’s most interesting women (writers, intellectuals, businesswomen, sportswomen, etc...), who share with us the reality women in their countries live, allowing us to enter their private sphere, something that is almost impossible when we travel as a regular tourist.

(v) How can ICT and technology empower women?

Nowadays, if you don’t exist in St. Google, you’re nobody. That means that technology is basic for any kind of entrepreneurship, both female and male. However, it is true that it has required us, women, quite much more effort to have and use technology on a daily basis and above all to feel comfortable using it.

I believe that given that we, women, are the ones who conciliate and the ones required to conciliate the most (due to the unequal family burden we have), we need technology to make our lives easier. And that’s what technology’s mission is: here and now online to leave it all solved. I am convinced that robots will make our lives easier and we will be able to dedicate more time to our dreams or projects.

(vi) Have you ever thought about quitting?

Many times! Being an entrepreneur is very hard and until you live it you can’t understand it. That’s why I think it’s essential to have family or professional support to help you get up when things look bad or when you have to make tough decisions.

(vii) Your advice to girls and women, who want to realize their dreams

When I started my own business, I said to myself, if I happen to fail, at least I will have learned something. Always look at your glass half full and get the positive side of any experience.

Entrepreneurship is something very fulfilling and undertaking it with a technological approach even more so, because technology is the future. Women have a lot of skills and have to be more present in technological careers. The myth that women are more suitable for social careers and men for technological careers must be dispelled. Let’s not forget that many of the technological discoveries were made by female scientists, but it was never made visible until now, finally because it was about time!

Silvia Barrera Ibáñez
Hi Silvia, how did the several roles that you carry out as police inspector on leave come up?

I started in Cybersecurity in 2007, at the Brigade of Technological investigation of the Spanish Police, when cyberinvestigation was still unknown. The opportunity arrived to me through an Inspector who needed investigators, and as we had worked together previously, he knew my inquisitiveness and my knowledge on technology. In that same year, the Networks Department (currently Social Networks Department) of the Spanish Police was born, with an Inspector and the Police Officer Silvia.

I focused on self-training, investigation and writing about the Internet, cybercrime and social networks. There was not much documentation, and less experience in the field. In 2013 I started writing in a personal blog and in websites where I was asked to collaborate, something that I had always wanted to do. My posts were focused on cybercrime, experience and my own researches.

In short time, my posts raised a lot of interest, and I started to be asked to speak in lectures, courses, conferences, and to write in the IT website of Atresmedia production company. That is how “Internet, Ciudad con Ley” (“Internet, a City with a Law”) was born.

From 2013 to 2018 my participation in trainings and lectures, and collaborations with media and public events of cybersecurity was so intense that I hardly had free time. At the same time my role was being responsible of the investigating groups, I was never released of that duty.... The five years from 2015 to 2018 were very hard ones. In 2015 I started directing the group of digital forensics of the Unit of Technological Investigation, I managed the investigations, participated in a very active and intense way in the international workgroups of EUROPOL and INTERPOL, collaborated in weekly publications, and lectured and taught at the University and in March 2018 I requested an unpaid leave.
(ii) When and how your passion and interest for entrepreneurship were born?

Police regulations do not allow to juggle the work Police work with private activities. The truth is that when I started the unpaid leave, I received several very interesting proposals, and have not lacked opportunities. I am very happy with the welcome of my profile in the private sector. It has not been hard for me to adapt because, even being a public worker, my work rhythm was very high.

(iii) What is the role of ICT / technology in your business?

Technology is more present than ever in Society and is transforming enterprises and entrepreneurial sectors completely. This, implies a series of important challenges for small and medium companies and public institutions, is also now a great opportunity for the creation of value.

I have no doubt that in Spain, during the next 5 years, we will live a very important process of digital transformation, so the creation of new companies, and the adaptation and technological transformation must not be seen only as a change before a threat of destruction of traditional values, but as a powerful tool to foment competitiveness.

The power of ICTs moves much faster than any other previous change and technology and those in Spain who do not manage to adapt, both in the public and private sector, would have wasted many years of development. They will be left behind and they will lose, if not all their competitiveness or efficacy, a great part of it.

(iv) How long have you come with your plans for the future?

Between 2015-2018 many things happened: I wrote my first book: "Key elements of Technological Investigation", which was awarded by Circulo Rojo, the auto-editing publishing house as best learning book; my blog "Internet, a City with a Law" was also awarded by the Foundation of the National Police to the best blog of Police issues; I received the Red Cross to the Police merit, currently the highest Police distinction, and some other recognition to my work in the field of cybersecurity; I published my second book, “Instinto y Pólvora” (“Instinct and Gunpowder”) through Planeta (editorial); I also obtained my Master's Degree in Computing Security, to start my PhD.

Currently, I am a consultant in computing security, cyber intelligence and networks investigation, I continue with my training work and have future projects.

I only have one objective: to be happy. And I am for now, doing what I am doing and in the situation I am. My experience and my ambitions circle around cybersecurity and I will focus on it, at least, in the coming years. I will continue writing in communication.
How can ICT and technology empower women?

The education, the attitude towards risk taking and the lack of referents are some of the factors that, in my opinion, explain the scarcity of women entrepreneurs in the technological field.

And it must be also taken into account that the majority of investors are men, and they demand different projects from the ones that women can offer.

During my years in cybersecurity and after having participated in hundreds of events, I have rarely met a CEO or a Director of big companies, saying let’s not talk about technological ones. If there are no women in a growing and future industry, this is going to be left in the hands of men, as other companies, sectors and public institutions (like the one I come from), are.

When I was manager of the departments of social networks and digital forensics, except from one occasion, I did not receive resumes of women, and the ones I talked to, said “I do not want to do a technical job nor being near the devices; the less, the better”. The reason? I don’t know. Sometimes I believe that some women think that they lose femininity or humanity if being near the machines. Not at all! I don’t have any issues to wear heels and a skirt to an event while I try to recover an Apache server in a virtual machine to carry out a demo on how a firewall works. You don’t have to wear a black t-shirt and a hoodie.....

I do not think that there are no women Directors or CEOs of big technological companies or technological departments due to their lack of technical education. There are men with none, and there they are....

In fact, since I published my second book, there are many girls (also men, but a minority) that write to me saying: I have read your personal story and now feel capable of everything, of achieving the challenges I have left aside thinking they were not at my reach.

I’ve read about everything you’ve been through and what you represent now and I realize that it is possible. I'm going to try again until I get it. It's the best thing you can hear! Women need references to refer to!

Have you ever thought about quitting?

Believe me, you do think about quitting everything and returning to the Administration. I can tell you that I could have done things better, but if there is one thing that is clear to me in my life is that I have not been able to do or sacrifice more because it is impossible. If you need that level of sacrifice to get (if you get there) where others already have the job for the simple fact of being a man, it makes you want to quit.

But on the other hand, you realize that life has never been easy for any woman. When I see the life of struggle, self-sacrifice and no complaint that my mother has led and is leading, I don’t need any other reference, and I
think: I can't complain, I have to do it, at least for her. And even less so for those who preceded us, and there they were, fighting. We can't be less, or otherwise we'll never move forward. We have to do it!

(vii) Your advice to girls and women, who want to realize their dreams

I would tell them to be whatever they want to be, in whatever sector it is, because that is the only way they will be able to do great things. But if you opt for technology, it's a magical field, full of opportunities where we have a lot to contribute and where, always, those of us who are already there, we will be delighted to support you so that you can reach, if you can, even further than your predecessors.
How did the idea of the business you founded come up?

Líbolis arose by thinking I have always been a very curious person who loves to connect things that at first seem unrelated. I have always been curious about what happens to children aged 10 and when they are 5. In our educational system if you have high grades you are labeled as intelligent and if you have low grades, your intelligence is, as the school marks’ report says, "enough".

As I grew older and actually saw how real-life works, I saw that the grades didn't reflect people’s professional "success". I have never been one of those who excel at school, however, I did have certain skills that I soon noticed were those that companies sought in their employees. So, I asked myself, "What are companies really looking for then?".

I did enough job interviews to investigate first hand that what differentiated you is your ability to apply in a practical way what you have learned theoretically: communication, oral expression, teamwork, creativity, negotiation, problem solving, ... a bunch of skills out of which none is given the sufficient importance in our educational system. Then it became clear to me. If in reality these skills and abilities are so important as to be related to an entrepreneurial profile, how is it possible that we don't teach these skills to people starting from childhood?

And that's how Líbolis, the company I'm the founder of, was born. In Líbolis we design and implement educational experiences that foster children's entrepreneurial spirit. Our goal is not to teach them how to start a business, but to teach them how to develop projects, based on their own ideas, that solve specific problems or needs. In other words, our objective is to develop all the necessary skills and competencies to be successful in the people and talent era.
(ii) **When and how was your passion and interest for entrepreneurship born?**

I was lucky enough to find out what were my personal interest that got me into the “flow”. When I finished my degree I realised that since childhood I had always liked working with ideas. That's why I decided to pursue an MBA specialized in entrepreneurship where Libolis became my final master's degree project. When people know what I do, they don't understand the connection. I assume that having us think linearly at school makes us think that an Economist can only work in a bank. Education and business are two of my great passions that I have connected and that allows me to fully enjoy both dimensions.

(iii) **What is the role of ICT / technology in your business?**

At Libolis, one of our company's core values is efficiency. Efficiency in every sense. And technology helps us to be efficient on a daily basis.

Using processes in a technological way allows us to be more efficient when executing and more added value for our customers. Technology is the backbone of our business.

(iv) **How long have you come with Libolis and plans for the future?**

We believe that in the 21st century, our children must develop certain skills and competencies such as public speaking, teamwork, negotiation, ... and it is our objective to develop these skills from early childhood so that they can adapt to this new era, of People and Talent, where success depends on what can be learned and not on what is already known.

We design experiences for companies, public entities and families. In different formats, such as holiday campuses, activities, workshops, master campuses, etc. intended for employees' children, clients; or marketing or social actions. Our objective has always been to be the benchmark company at a national level in innovative activities that encourage children's entrepreneurial spirit. That is why we are starting to market our services nationally, in line with our objectives.

**You were recognized as one of the 75 Reference women entrepreneurs in Spain by El Referente in 2016 and awarded the Accésit a la Innovación XVIII Premios Emprende Aje A Coruña in November 2017. What has this meant for you?**

The recognitions and awards reward a heavy daily effort full of difficult moments, sleepless nights, many hours of work, crying, joy, passion, patience, ... that perhaps is not always visible and those are the real challenges.

I firmly believe that all people are entrepreneurs by nature, but not everyone has skills or dreams to become a businesswoman or businessman. I believe taking the leap to turn from entrepreneur to businesswoman is one the most difficult stages an idea aspiring to grow and improve has to undergo.
The reality is that the business world is dominated by men and people 40+. But important changes are happening, there are more women and more youth. Society is changing to new organisational models in which the entrepreneur figure plays the main role as possible flexible working models.

(v) \textbf{How can ICT and technology empower women?}

Technology has changed our daily habits in a way we would not have imagined relatively few years ago. Technology has permitted great advances and I believe that the most beneficial one for entrepreneurship is access to communication with people from all backgrounds. A few years ago, communicating with certain people was unfeasible or time consuming. Right now, it's free, we carry it in our pocket and it's called LinkedIn.

(vi) \textbf{Have you ever thought about quitting?}

Once I read on social networks a phrase that made me think. It said "If I'm going to throw in the towel, let it be in the sand". It's clear that when you go through a difficult time, negative thoughts always come to mind and say "Stop it, don't lose any more energy in it". But the next day you remember why you started that project, and if you are passionate enough you will persevere, you will change your path, ... but throwing in the towel is not an option.

(vii) \textbf{Your advice to girls and women, who want to realize their dreams}

I always say the same sentence to all those young ones and not so young ones, with whom I have the pleasure to share my time: Choose what you like and are passionate about, because you will have to dedicate a lot of time to it. And all that dedicated time is what will make out of you the best in it and convert you in a happy person. We need happy people, committed with their work and values. Being a girl or a boy should not determine our future. And it is our society's responsibility to provide education so that young people can simply pursue their careers based on their interests and not on their gender.
(i) How did the idea of the business you founded come up?

It's very difficult to talk about oneself, but if I identify myself with something, it's with passion. I am passionate about life, my family and my work. I always say that Fintonic is like my fourth child, because I have three other children who were born and are growing up in parallel. I put all my energy into making the most of my personal and it's very difficult to talk about oneself, but if I identify myself with something, it's with passion. I am passionate about life, my family and my work.

I always say that Fintonic is like my fourth child, because I have three other children who were born and are growing up in parallel. I put all my energy into making the most of my personal and professional life and I think I manage it, above all, by being very organized and having a clear idea of what I want and how I'm going to achieve it.

Fintonic, therefore, is a life project. That is why I dedicate all my effort and try to transmit this to my partners Sergio Chalbaud and Aitor Chinchetru, to our investors and to the over 80 professionals working for Fintonic.

It was in 2011, together with Sergio Chalbaud we began to design the seed of what today is Fintonic. The app has evolved a lot, but the objectives that drove us to create the company remain intact: helping citizens to easily control money, freely decide what they want to do with it and get the most out of it.
(ii) When and how was your passion and interest for entrepreneurship born?

I graduated in Business Administration and Management from CUNEF and in a first stage I fully dedicated myself to the world of banking. Initially I worked in New York, where I was able to complete my training with the guidance of excellent professionals. Then I came back to Madrid and specialized in treasury and commercial banking. My leap into the entrepreneurial world was my incorporation as a partner to IDEON, a reference in the area of financial consulting. From there we developed many projects, and the idea of Fintonic was born, and Sergio and I decided to dedicate 100% of our time to Fintonic. As founding partners, we were very inspired to create an ideal financial service, to help people get the most out of their finances in a transparent and easy way and in December 2012, we launched Fintonic's first user version.

From very early stage it was clear to me that finance was a topic I was passionate about and that passion, combined with my interest in entrepreneurship resulted in Fintonic.

(iii) What is the role of ICT / technology in your business?

Fintonic, the first finance platform to organize your money and save in a transparent and simple way. ICT is really the soul of our platform solution.

(iv) How long have you come with your company and plans for the future?

After a year of intense activity, Fintonic reached 70,000 users and 36,000 downloads in the App Store... Every new user was a celebration and still is today. We consider our users as Fintonic community members. We don't know who they are, because the app's use is anonymous, but we all share the same philosophy: we own our money and, therefore, we do what we like with it. Right now, we have over 450,000 active users, who keep informing us how to develop Fintonic and what are their needs.

Now we are expanding Fintonic to Latin America. In Chile, we have been operating since 2016 and have currently 40,000 users. The next destination is Mexico and we hope to continue making progress in other markets little by little.

(v) How can ICT and technology empower women?

It is obvious that technology has permitted us to overcome many barriers of space and time. We can be 100% active and working side by side with our team without physical presence and this option gives us a certain flexibility, or avoids having to move around and waste time.

But I want to insist that we should not set ourselves limits, as it is an advantage for both men and women.
(vi) Have you ever thought about quitting?

Sometimes we make the mistake to idealize the entrepreneurship. It is very rewarding to start your own project and to live in first-hand how it evolves, but it is also very demanding. Sometimes you just hit walls and you have to go around a hundred times until you find the way again. Sometimes you can't even avoid falling to get back on your feet. But if we put the moments of pessimism and optimism on a scale, the latter wins by a landslide.

(vii) Your advice to girls and women, who want to realize their dreams

I believe that we all should be driven by our vocation. But to those girls interested in the world of science, mathematics, technology... I would tell them not to let themselves be misled by stereotypes, not to doubt about their abilities. The future labour market is going to need the diversity of talents and therefore they will be given many opportunities if they go for a STEM career.

If we want more women to be involved, we must firstly begin in schools by showing pupils female referents who have achieved great things and show them how STEM careers can bring enormous benefit to many people. It is important to help girls build their self-confidence in order for them to understand, already at a critical age, that if they start with coding, they should go for it, it is worth the effort!
4. MANUAL OF GOOD EXAMPLES OF INITIATIVES AND PROJECTS

Chapter four presents initiatives and projects carried out in EITIC partner countries and beyond with the goal to foster entrepreneurship and innovation among women, using ICTs. Examples of diverse approaches and actions aimed at promoting entrepreneurship and digital literacy among women for the improvement of their employability.

Behind these good examples we find in most cases communities and partnerships of public, private actors, universities, social enterprises and not for profit organizations, that develop BLUEPRINTS to empower women for more creative use of digital technologies.

Do you have an idea yourself? Just do it and join our EITIC network by contacting one of the EITIC County Co-ordinators (see page 6).

LET’S BUILD SOLUTIONS FOR GENDERED ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND INNOVATION TOGETHER!
1) ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

- BRAIN-POWERED GAMES
- INNOVATIVE AI SOLUTIONS
- ROBOTICS
- FLYING LABS

COUNTRY UK, ES
WEBSITE mariaperezortiz.com
CONTACT María Pérez-Ortiz
Computer Scientist
Department of Computer Science & UCL AI Centre,
University College London (UK)

COUNTRY UK
WEBSITE www.cortechs.ie
CONTACT Aine Behan is the founder and CEO of Cortechs. BSc in Neuro science, a PhD in Neuropathology

WHAT THEY DO
Research in computer science with a passion for machine learning and biomedicine/environmental applications

WHAT THEY DO
Develop products to improve the lives of children with attention deficit. combine neuroscience and brainwave technologies to create brain powered play to create a more resilient mind.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>DE, DK, EE, ES, NL, NO, SE, UK, US, 17 partners from 9 countries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WEBSITE</td>
<td><a href="coca-project.eu">coca-project.eu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONTACT</td>
<td>Prof. Dr. Andreas Reif</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>University Hospital of Frankfurt</td>
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<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>NO, UK, NL, DE, FR, DK, FI, SE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WEBSITE</td>
<td><a href="www.noisolation.com">www.noisolation.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONTACT</td>
<td>Karen Dolva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Founder &amp; CEO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>Sonja Betschart</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Co-Founder &amp; Chief Entrepreneurship Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEBSITE</td>
<td><a href="werobotics.org">werobotics.org</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**WEWHAT THEY DO**

Provide new knowledge and tools to professionals and society to prevent adolescent and young adult ADHD from escalating into detrimental comorbidities with mood and anxiety disorders, SUD, and obesity.

**WHAT THEY DO**

Fighting social isolation and loneliness through innovative Artificial Intelligence solutions.

WeRobotics was born out of the CoFounders passion for how robotics technologies can impact social good. We believe that localizing robotics technologies in a sustainable and meaningful way will allow to solve challenges that are unsolved today and create new opportunities and jobs in the Global South.
2) WOMEN EMPOWERMENT THROUGH DIGITAL INITIATIVES

**DigITALL**

**COUNTRY** IT / Turin  
**WEBSITE** www.apid.to.it  
**CONTACT** Brigitte Sardo  
President APID

**WHAT THEY DO**  
Support digital transformation on local level. Motivate 100+ girls to go for STEM careers, provide digital mentoring, enable girls to test serious games, go for a 3 min pitching for their company.

**EmpowerWOMEn**

**COUNTRY** TR, ES, IT, RO, AT, PT  
**WEBSITE** empowerwomet.eu/  
**CONTACT** Piera Sciam  
EU Project Manager

**WHAT THEY DO**  
Erasmus + project between 2016 and 2018. Successful entrepreneurial empowerment of women in Start-up Business. The main outputs: an online forum, a policy recommendation report on women´s entrepreneurship in Europe, a video reportage, an entrepreneurship guide for women starting or managing their own SMEs.
**WHAT THEY DO**

Empowering women through the use of ICT.

"Ideally, it would be great if some investors says, "Yes, amazing, inspiring, love the structure, love the research, love all your international connections and all the women you’re involved with, let’s do it!"

**WHAT THEY DO**

Improve the integration and employment of Moldavian women in Italy through ICT training, VET education, entrepreneurship education.

---

**WHAT THEY DO**

Support digital transformation and women’s entrepreneurship on local level (in Vareggio) and through international collaboration.

**WHAT THEY DO**

We believe that more diversity in the tech scene will generate more innovation and a stronger community! Women In Tech Denmark’s mission is to inspire women to start their own business or pursue a career in tech.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>Emilia Romagna</th>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>Calabria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WEBSITE</td>
<td>workwidewomen.com</td>
<td>WEBSITE</td>
<td><a href="http://www.youngwomennetwork.com/">www.youngwomennetwork.com/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONTACT</td>
<td>Linda Serra, CEO &amp; Co-founder</td>
<td>CONTACT</td>
<td>Martina Rogato, Sustainability Consultant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**WHAT THEY DO**

- **Re-skilling of 5000+ women** in collaboration with Google Italy to support tech employment of women 35-55 years.
- *In 2015* best successful entrepreneur award by CNA Young Emilia Romagna,
- *In 2016* received The Gender Gap Award,
- *In 2017* WELCOME work for refugees integration award,
- *In 2019* awarded by ENEL Italy with the Open Innovation Women award.

- **Empowering and economic sustainability of young women in Calabria.**
- 700+ members + 400 associates and 39 voluntary staff
- Activities in four core areas: networking, mentoring 200+ young women annually, soft & digital skills training, advocacy.
- Training annually 150 young women and men in digital marketing.

*"Our dream is to expand our organization in the cities of South Italy where there are less opportunities and where our support is more necessary!"*
3) INNOVATION ECOSYSTEMS

**COUNTRY**: ES  
**WEBSITE**: fusionpoint.eu  
**CONTACT**: Kyriaki Papageorgiou, Anthropologist, Senior Researcher @ ESADE  
Ramon Bragós, Ass.Professor @ UPC

**WHAT THEY DO**: Fusion Point is an initiative designed to find innovative solutions to real-life challenges through interdisciplinary work in education and research. We bring together students from business and law from ESADE, engineering and technology from the Polytechnic University of Catalonia (UPC) and design from IED Barcelona Design University.

**COUNTRY**: UK & SE  
**WEBSITE**: musictechfest.net  
**CONTACT**: Andrew Dubber, Director MTF

**WHAT THEY DO**: 1st Real Innovation Ecosystem with a community of over 8000 innovators. Michela Magas, the Founder of MTF - Winner of the European Women Innovation Award 2017

**COUNTRY**: HU  
**WEBSITE**: Publishdrive.com  
**CONTACT**: Kinga Jentetics, Founder & CEO

**WHAT THEY DO**: An innovative platform for the e-book publishing industry, which help authors sell more books and helps writers become successful entrepreneurs. Sells e-books on a royalty-share basis to more than 400 stores and 240K digital libraries worldwide, including major retailers such as Amazon, Apple, Google, Kobo, Barnes and Noble.

**COUNTRY**: LT  
**WEBSITE**: www.vinted.com  
**CONTACT**: Milda Mitkute, Founder & CEO

**WHAT THEY DO**: An innovative clothing exchange platform to make second hand the 1st choice worldwide. World’s largest second-hand fashion marketplace with a community of 12 million users in 10 countries. Today 4+ million women are actively buying, selling and swapping clothes on Vinted each month!
### 4) ALTERNATIVE FINANCING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>WEBSITE</th>
<th>CONTACT</th>
<th>WHAT THEY DO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EE, EL, ES, HU, IT, NL, NO, PT, SL, UK</td>
<td><a href="http://www.altfinator.eu">www.altfinator.eu</a></td>
<td>Eva Fabry, Director ECWT</td>
<td>Alternative financing for businesses across Europe. Knowledge transfer from Western Europe to Southern, Central and Easter European regions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RO, ES, IT, PL, SL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Exchange of experiences: adults in exclusion situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT, EL, SL, CY, ES, BG, UK</td>
<td>seewban.eu</td>
<td>Apostolina Tsaltampasi, CEO OECON Group</td>
<td>Increase the number of Women Business Angels and WBA investments in Europe, Middle East and Asia.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5) REVERSE INNOVATION

COUNTRY ES
WEBSITE femnet.org
CONTACT Catherine Nyambura

A 2016 Mandela fellow & a 2016 Women Deliver young leader.

WHAT THEY DO
Fostering innovation in the field of sexual & reproductive health & rights (SRHR). They run the #WhatWomenWant campaign & “Young Feminist Blog Series”

COUNTRY ES
WEBSITE Laboratoria.la
CONTACT Mariana Costa
Founder & Executive Director

WHAT THEY DO
Community of 80 people in four countries w 800+ female graduates making careers as developers in global companies supplying talent to more than 300 companies. We train women & organizations to promote a better digital economy.

COUNTRY ES
WEBSITE OpenBioprinting.org
CONTACT Nieves Cubo Mateo
PhD student @UCM, CSIC, TUD

WHAT THEY DO
Low cost 3D printing in medicine and research with citizens participation
DIWO, Do It With Others - Blog
6) ENTREPRENEURSHIP COMMUNITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>WEBSITE</th>
<th>CONTACT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RO, BG, AT, CR, DE, SL, HU, BA, MD</td>
<td><a href="http://www.interreg-danube.eu">www.interreg-danube.eu</a></td>
<td>Mariya Zlateva Project Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT</td>
<td>terziariodonna.confcommercio.it/</td>
<td>Patricia Caimi Founder &amp; President</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WHAT THEY DO

Fostering the Young Women Entrepreneurship in the Danube Region (15 partners from 9 countries) 2018-2021 State of the art report, establishment of 4 Women Entrepreneurship Centers-EWCs in B&H, BG, HU, RO. 1st Women’s Entrepreneurial Center opened in Sarajevo, July 2019. Policy recommendations.

WHAT THEY DO

Support network for Businesswomen in the province of Pesaro and Urbino. Action platform for the circular economy in Italy.
7) STEAM²⁶ INNOVATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>TR, DE, IT, PT</th>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>ES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WEBSITE</td>
<td>@BreakingGlassCeilingWomenAdministration</td>
<td>WEBSITE</td>
<td>@Jenrodes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONTACT</td>
<td>Ruhi Sarpkaya, Professor</td>
<td>CONTACT</td>
<td>Jennifer Rodriguez Esparza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Founder, Social Entrepreneur</td>
</tr>
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WHAT THEY DO

Breaking the Glass Ceiling for Women Administrators (BIG-CEFA)

WHAT THEY DO

A collaborative technology creation hub for the inclusion of people with disabilities in educational settings. New communication platforms & applications for young people.

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<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>RO, CZ, IR, IT, UK</th>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>UK, IR, NO, DE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WEBSITE</td>
<td><a href="http://www.projectwithsense.eu">www.projectwithsense.eu</a></td>
<td>WEBSITE</td>
<td>stementrepreneurs.eu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONTACT</td>
<td>Giampiero Bianchini</td>
<td>CONTACT</td>
<td>Eva Fabry, Director ECWT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Training Expert UTC, Umbria</td>
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</tbody>
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WHAT THEY DO

Innovative new methodology and training courses for STEM Supporters for Modern Ways of Engaging Young People in STEM Education and fighting stereotypes.

WHAT THEY DO

Innovative VET regional partnerships to support more women entrepreneurs in STEM.

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5. CONCLUSIONS

Girls and women today, with a computer and Internet connection can realize their dreams and start-up and succeed with their business, as never before!

Based on the success of the InnovadorasTIC\textsuperscript{27} Spanish national project for promoting women’s entrepreneurship and social innovation led by Cibervoluntarios, Spain three organizations from Italy (IAL), Norway (ECWT) and Romania (METODO) joined forces in the EITIC project co-financed by the ERASMUS+ Programme in 2018-2020 to develop and test new tools for inspiring young women, girls of multicultural background, unemployed women and women on maternity leave to start and grow their businesses!

Are you one of these ladies? This e-book aims at presenting inspirational role models, showcasing good examples of initiatives and projects and giving a list of tips, contacts, references and literature to all interested in taking their business to the next level.

- Get clear on your business vision,
- Move past the fears and doubts that can get in the way,
- Understand your audience, so you can truly connect with them,
- Package your services and sell from day one,
- Create your brand and build a tribe of fans, subscribers, and customers
- Manage your time, stay focused, and keep going in the right direction
- Condition yourself for success
  . . . NO EXCUSES!

If you’re a creative and ambitious female entrepreneur, or One contemplating the entrepreneurial path,
This e-book will provide you the best of inspiration and Hands-on tools you need to realize your dream!

GO FOR IT!

\textsuperscript{27}https://www.innovadorastic.org
### 6. ROLE MODELS – OUR CHANGEMAKERS

A – Z PER COUNTRY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Specialization</th>
<th>Country</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ligia ADAM</td>
<td>CivicTech</td>
<td>Making public services digital by default for the benefit of citizens.</td>
<td>Romania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nancy AHARPOUR</td>
<td>DonnaJobs</td>
<td>Women freelancers job platform</td>
<td>Italy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlotte ASCHIM</td>
<td>TotalCtrl</td>
<td>Leading global player for food waste reduction</td>
<td>Norway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alicia ASiN</td>
<td>Liberium</td>
<td>A sensor-network that connects anything to the Internet in more than 120 countries</td>
<td>Spain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silvia BARRERA</td>
<td></td>
<td>Training and consultancy in computing security, cyber intelligence and networks investigation</td>
<td>Spain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noemí BELLAS</td>
<td>Libolis</td>
<td>Fostering children’s entrepreneurship</td>
<td>Spain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chiara BURBERI</td>
<td>Redooc.com</td>
<td>Primary school platform for math and financial education</td>
<td>Italy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desire CIAMPA</td>
<td>We do it for you - D4Y</td>
<td>Job services for women</td>
<td>Italy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alice FAUVEAU</td>
<td>Focus on Women</td>
<td>Niche travels for women with unique experiences</td>
<td>Spain</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eva FOG</td>
<td>DigiPippi</td>
<td>Making tech fun for girls 7-13 years old</td>
<td>Denmark</td>
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<tr>
<td>Daniela GOMES</td>
<td>ExcluSivix</td>
<td>Tech funding services from Brussels</td>
<td>Italy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anca D GORON</td>
<td>DOORIE</td>
<td>Your personalized hotel services app</td>
<td>Romania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ioana HASAN</td>
<td>Smart Bill</td>
<td>Online invoicing and inventory management</td>
<td>Romania</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bev HURLEY</td>
<td>Enterprising Women</td>
<td>Community building and all you need to know about women owned businesses</td>
<td>UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lupina ITURRIAGA</td>
<td>FINTONIC</td>
<td>The pioneering personal financial management application</td>
<td>Spain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linda LIUKAS</td>
<td>Hello Ruby &amp; Rails Girls</td>
<td>Coding, Rails Girls Programing and Hello Ruby for children - a unique global leading methodology</td>
<td>Finland</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## GOOD EXAMPLES OF INITIATIVES AND PROJECTS
### A-Z PER COUNTRY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project/Initiative</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Specialization</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Focus</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ALTFinator</td>
<td>Eva Fabry</td>
<td>Alternative financing of gendered entrepreneurship &amp; gendered innovation</td>
<td>EE, EL, ES, HU, IT, NL, NO, PT, SL, UK</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Michela MAGAS  | Stromatolite & Music Tech Fest | The End of Binary - a global leading community for innovators in STEAM | Sweden, Croatia - UK |                        |
Diana MIRON     | JS League      | JavaScript Enterprise trainings & Community workshops                         | Romania                 |                        |
Ilari PAGLIUCA  | Swing Fever    | 1st Italian portal of music and dance from 20s to 60s                          | Italy                   |                        |
Claudia SCARPARI| We do it for you - D4Y | Job services for women                                                         | Italy                   |                        |
Ana STAMATESCU  | Digital School for NGOs | On-line training and community services for the not-profit sector               | Romania                 |                        |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Lead</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Partners</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Breaking the Glass Ceiling for Women Administrators (BIG-CEFA)</td>
<td>Ruhi Sarpkaya</td>
<td>State of the art Country studies, training &amp; mentoring programmes</td>
<td>TR, PT, DE, IT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Artificial Intelligence</td>
<td>Maria Pere Ortiz</td>
<td>Artificial Intelligence Labs</td>
<td>Spain</td>
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<tr>
<td>Co-Crear para Educar</td>
<td>Jennifer Rodriguez Esparza</td>
<td>Communication System for Educational Inclusion</td>
<td>Spain, Colombia</td>
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<tr>
<td>CorTechs</td>
<td>Aine Behan</td>
<td>Brain-powered games to fight ADHD</td>
<td>UK</td>
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<td>CoCa Project</td>
<td>Prof. Andreas Reif</td>
<td>HORIZON2020 project on ADHD</td>
<td>DE, DK, EE, ES, NL, NO, SE, UK, US 17 partners from 9 countries</td>
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<tr>
<td>DigITAL</td>
<td>Giulia Chinnici &amp; Brigitte Sardi APID</td>
<td>Support digital transformation on local level</td>
<td>Italy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do Your Best – Just Invest</td>
<td>Carmen Babutau</td>
<td>Exchange of experiences: adults in exclusion situation</td>
<td>RO, ES, IT, PL, SL</td>
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<tr>
<td>EmpowerWOMENt</td>
<td>İkbal Karaman, Turkey</td>
<td>Successful Entrepreneurial Empowerment for Women in Start-up Business</td>
<td>TR, ES, IT, RO, AT, PT</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Female Voice</td>
<td>Hilary Jo Caldis</td>
<td>Empowering women through the use of ICT</td>
<td>Spain</td>
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<td>FEMNET</td>
<td>Catherine Nyambura</td>
<td>Fostering innovation in the field of sexual and reproductive health &amp; rights (SRHR)</td>
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<td>Fusion Point</td>
<td>Kyriako Papageorgiou</td>
<td>Innovation Rambla</td>
<td>Spain</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project Name</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laboratoria</td>
<td>Mariana Costa</td>
<td>80 people + 800 students in four countries in Latin America</td>
<td>Spain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MTF - Music Tech Fest</td>
<td>Andrew Dubber</td>
<td>1st real Innovation Ecosystems with a community of over 8000 innovators. Winner of the European Women Innovation Award 2017</td>
<td>UK &amp; SE</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>No Isolation</td>
<td>Karen Dolva</td>
<td>Innovative AI solutions to fight social isolation &amp; loneliness</td>
<td>NO, UK, DK, FI, SE, DE, FR, NL</td>
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<td>OpenBioPrinting</td>
<td>Nieves Cubo Mateo</td>
<td>Low cost 3D printing in medicine and research</td>
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<tr>
<td>PublishDrive</td>
<td>Kinga Jentetics</td>
<td>An innovative platform for the e-book publishing industry, which help authors sell more books and helps writers become successful authorpreneurs</td>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Safe Bridges for Migrant Workers</td>
<td>Marianna Muin (IAL FVG)</td>
<td>Improve employment situation of Moldavian women in Italy through ICT training, VET education</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEEWBAN</td>
<td>Apostolina Tsaltampasi</td>
<td>Business Angel investment in Europe, Middle East &amp; Asia</td>
<td>IT, EL, SL, CY, ES, BG, UK</td>
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<tr>
<td>Selena Italy</td>
<td>Wanda Pezzi</td>
<td>Support digital transformation &amp; women’s entrepreneurship on local level</td>
<td>Italy / Tuscany / Viareggio</td>
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<tr>
<td>SENSE</td>
<td>Giampiero Bianchini</td>
<td>Shaping, Enhancing and Nurturing STEM in Europe, fighting stereotypes</td>
<td>Romania</td>
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<td>Terziario Donna</td>
<td>Patrizia Caimi</td>
<td>Support Network for Businesswomen</td>
<td>Italy</td>
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<td><strong>VINTED</strong></td>
<td>Milda Mitkute</td>
<td>An innovative clothing exchange platform to make second hand the first choice worldwide</td>
<td>Lithuania</td>
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<td><strong>WeRobotics</strong></td>
<td>Sonja Betschart</td>
<td>Robotics, Flying Labs &amp; technology for social good in Global South</td>
<td>Spain</td>
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<td><strong>WISE - Women in STEM Entrepreneurs</strong></td>
<td>Eva Fabry</td>
<td>Innovative VET regional partner-ships to support more women entrepreneurs in STEM</td>
<td>UK, IR, NO, DE</td>
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<td><strong>Women in Business - INTERREG Danube Transnational Programme 2014-2020 project</strong></td>
<td>Mariya Zlateva</td>
<td>Fostering the Young Women Entrepreneurship in the Danube Region</td>
<td>RO, BG, AT, CR, DE, SL, HU, BA, MD</td>
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<td><strong>Women in Tech DK</strong></td>
<td>Joo Runge</td>
<td>Increase women’s employability and networking through sharing of good examples</td>
<td>Denmark</td>
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<td><strong>Work Wide Women</strong></td>
<td>Linda Serra</td>
<td>Support tech employment of women (35-55)</td>
<td>Italy / Emilia Romagna</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Young Women Network - YWN</strong></td>
<td>Martina Rogato</td>
<td>Empowering &amp; economic sustainability of young women</td>
<td>Italy / Calabria</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. **LITERATURE & REFERENCES**


Irene Kamberidou, Springer Verlag, Journal of Innovation and Entrepreneurship Vol. 9, Article nr: 3 (2020)

Janice Byrne, Salma Fattoum, Maria Cristina Diaz Garcia. “Role Models and Women Entrepreneurs: Entrepreneurial Superwoman has her say” Journal of Small Business Management, 2019 57(1), pp.154-184


Mastercard Index of Women Entrepreneurs (MIWE), 2018

This e-Book is made by women for women. It contains analysis on the situation of women and entrepreneurship in the four countries of the project: Spain, Italy, Norway and Romania, and inspiring stories of innovative entrepreneur women and initiatives created or developed by women who use ICTs to promote innovation and empowerment.

More info on the EITIC project: www.eitic.innovadorastic.org

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