WED

Celebrating Female Leadership

Celebrating Female Entrepreneurship, Leadership and the Power of Potential

Women's Entrepreneurship Day brings together inspiring women from different walks of life to celebrate female leadership and the many ways women shape our societies. This year, we turn our attention to ***potential*** of ideas, talents and opportunities. Through personal stories, inspiring addresses and conversations we will explore how potential takes shape, what allows it to flourish and how recognising it in ourselves and others can make a lasting impact.

Celebration Evening, European Parliament, Brussels
Wednesday, 18 November 2026

PHS12 Presidential Salon

Doors: 18:30
Programme: 19:00 - 22:00
End: 22:30

18:30 **Arrival Reception**
Welcome drinks

19:00 **Master of the Ceremony takes the stage**
Ásdís Olafsdottir
Head of Communication and Information, EFTA



19:05 **Opening of the Evening by Roberta Metsola**
President of the European Parliament



19:10 **Welcome by**
Jörgen Warborn
MEP, President of SME Europe of the EPP
Sari Rautio
President of the EPP Group in the European Committee of the Regions, Vice-President of EPP Women



19:15 **Group picture with President Metsola**

Refreshments & Music Break
Refreshments served throughout the evening

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19:50 **Special Address by**
Eva Maydell
MEP, Vice-President of SME Europe

Turning the potential of AI and emerging technologies into new possibilities for women entrepreneurs to scale, innovate and lead



20:10 **Voices that inspired WED**
**featuring the women whose personal stories shaped this year's Women Entrepreneurship Day campaign*

Isabelle Guenou & Marilena Yo Schmich
Co-Founders of The Blood

Portrait Film and On-Stage Welcome



20:20 **Voices that inspired WED**
Valeria Foglar-Deinhardstein
Multipreneur, Founder of Viedonna, Co-founder of Loxotec

Portrait Film and On-Stage Welcome



20:30 **Special Address by**
Karin Nilsdotter
Strategic Head of Space & Defence at Innovatum Science Park, Founder of Women in Space Sweden

What if we dared to fail? Rethinking Europe's culture of innovation, ambition and discovery



20:50 **Refreshments & Music Break**

21:10 **Voices that inspired WED**
Irene Sangiani Galbiati
Philanthropist and Humanitarian

Portrait Film and On-Stage Welcome



21:20 **Special Address by**
Aissatou Diallo
Executive Director of the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) Executive Secretariat at the World Trade Organization (WTO)

Beyond our own horizon:
A new vision for global trade and investment



21:40 **Special Address by**
Dolors Montserrat
MEP, Secretary General
of the European People's Party



21:50 **Reflections & Closing by**
Jörgen Warborn
MEP, President of SME Europe of the EPP



22:00 **Refreshments & Music**

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Voices of the Evening



Eva Maydell

Eva is a Member of the European Parliament representing Bulgaria, serving her third term with the European People's Party (EPP). A leading voice on innovation, artificial intelligence and Europe's technological future, she was among the key negotiators of the EU's AI Act and Chips Act. Beyond her parliamentary work, she co-founded Education Bulgaria 2030, an initiative dedicated to improving educational opportunities for young people, and the Council on the Future, launched in partnership with the Munich Security Conference to foster global cooperation on emerging technologies. She is also a World Economic Forum Young Global Leader and Vice-President of SME Europe.



Karin Nilsdotter

Karin is a Swedish space entrepreneur, founder of Women in Space Sweden, Strategic Head of Space & Defence at Innovatum Science Park and a member of Virgin Galactic's Future Astronaut programme. As CEO of Spaceport Sweden, she has pioneered efforts to develop commercial human spaceflight and make space more accessible for research, innovation and tourism. Recognised as Sweden's Technology Woman of the Year, she champions greater diversity in the space industry and inspires the next generation of women to pursue ambitions beyond conventional boundaries.



Aissatou Diallo

Aissatou is Executive Director of the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) at the World Trade Organization, bringing over 25 years of experience in international trade and economic development. A prominent female leader in global trade, she has dedicated her career to advancing the interests of the world's least developed countries and ensuring they have a stronger voice in international markets. Through her leadership, she champions trade as a driver of economic opportunity, helping countries and businesses unlock their potential and participate more fully in the global economy.

Voices that inspired WED



Isabelle Guenou & Marilena Yo Schmich

Isabelle and Marilena are the co-founders of theblood, a Berlin-based FemTech startup pioneering the use of menstrual blood as a source of valuable health data. Driven by personal experience and a shared ambition to close the gender health data gap, they are working to unlock new possibilities for research and diagnostics in women's health.



Valeria Foglar-Deinhardstein

Valeria is an Austrian-Italian multipreneur. She is co-founder of Loxotec, an innovative biotechnology company developing animal healthcare and hygiene products, and Viedonna, an interdisciplinary women's health initiative in Vienna. She is also a co-founder of Gran Ballo Italiano, bringing together business, culture and diplomacy.



Irene Sangiani Galbiati

Irene is an Italian philanthropist whose life has been dedicated to hospitality and human solidarity. Deeply involved in her Catholic community and guided by a strong commitment to serving others, she and her family have opened their home to people from different countries and backgrounds, offering friendship, support and a sense of belonging.